

## *MasterChef's* transmedia storytelling universe: a structured narrative model

*El universo narrativo transmedia de MasterChef: un modelo narrativo estructurado*

*O universo narrativo transmídia do MasterChef: um modelo narrativo estruturado*

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.32870/cys.v2023.8428>

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The aim of this study is to determine the elements that form the transmedia storytelling universe of *MasterChef* in order to examine whether it has a structured model that can be applied to other cases. For this, the fundamental lines of debate on transmedia narrative universes are combined, establishing possible contributions to this field. An interdisciplinary analysis of *MasterChef* allows us to extrapolate a defined narrative model that combines interactive elements, fiction-reality fusion and the production of valuable content that extends the formula to new formats and other countries, maintaining audience interest despite the passage of time.

**KEYWORDS:** Transmedia storytelling universe, *MasterChef*, mixed narratives, narrative model, storyworld.

*El objetivo es descubrir los elementos que construyen el universo narrativo transmedia de MasterChef para examinar si posee un modelo estructurado que pueda aplicarse a otros casos. Para ello, se combinan las líneas fundamentales de debate sobre los universos narrativos transmedia, constatando posibles aportaciones a este campo. Analizar interdisciplinariamente el estudio de caso permite extrapolar un modelo narrativo definido que conjuga elementos interactivos, fusión ficción-realidad y producción de contenidos de valor que expande la fórmula a nuevos formatos y a otros países, manteniendo el interés de la audiencia pese al paso del tiempo.*

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** Universo narrativo transmedia, *MasterChef*, narrativas mixtas, modelo narrativo, storyworld.

*O objetivo é descobrir os elementos que constroem o universo narrativo transmídia do MasterChef para verificar se ele possui um modelo estruturado que possa ser aplicado a outros casos. Para isso, combinam-se as linhas fundamentais do debate sobre universos narrativos transmídia, verificando possíveis contribuições para esse campo. Analisar o estudo de caso de forma interdisciplinar permite extrapolar um modelo narrativo definido que combina elementos interativos, fusão ficção-realidade e produção de conteúdo valioso que expande a fórmula para novos formatos e outros países, mantendo o interesse do público apesar da passagem de tempo.*

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### How to cite:

Vidal-Mestre, M., Freire Sánchez, A. & Gracia-Mercadé, C. (2023). *MasterChef's* transmedia storytelling universe: a structured narrative model. *Comunicación y Sociedad*, e8428. <https://doi.org/10.32870/cys.v2023.8428>

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Submitted: 04/27/22. Accepted: 11/15/22. Published: 06/07/23.

## INTRODUCTION

Studies on transmedia narratives are prolific (Carreño Villada, 2016; Evans, 2011; Freeman, 2017; García-Villar, 2019; Jenkins, 2006; Lastra, 2016; Molpeceres Arnáiz & Rodríguez Fidalgo, 2014; Pratten, 2015; Rodríguez-Ferrándiz et al., 2016; Scolari, 2013) and multidisciplinary (Calvo-Rubio, 2018; Fuente Prieto et al., 2019; Gambarato & Alzamora, 2018; Lacasa Díaz, 2018; Marcos Molano et al., 2019; Villani, 2020). However, researchers have not proposed a theoretical framework that advocates a specific number of elements or components, nor a specific structural model that enables the creation of a transmedia storytelling universe (García-Villar, 2019; Rosendo Sánchez, 2016; Selva-Ruiz, 2021) or concepts derived from it, such as a narrative multiverse (Freire-Sánchez & Vidal-Mestre, 2022) or a fictional universe (Dunford, 2018; Podwalyi, 2020). They do, however, tend to opt for the incorporation of elements defined by transmediality and media convergence. These characteristics include depth, extension, seriality, extractability, immersion, subjectivity, world-building, continuity, multiplicity and attainment (Jenkins, 2006).

Nevertheless, the digital panorama and audiovisual ecosystem have diametrically evolved over the last few years thanks to the emergence and development of audiovisual content creation and distribution platforms such as Twitch, TikTok, Pinterest, Instagram and YouTube, and the rise in the so-called digital prosumer (Paíno Ambrosio & Rodríguez Fidalgo, 2015) or user who creates, chooses, plays, consumes and distributes content on the Internet (Freire, 2018). This context leads us to consider digital storytelling and transmedia (Lastra, 2016) as the first form of interaction with users who consume interactive contents, the so-called *Homo fabulators* (Pérez-Rodríguez, 2020). Consequently, these elements have actively contributed to the transformation of producers and brands, who have gradually transformed into content creators (Ramos Serrano, 2006) and transmedia audiovisual narratives (Saavedra-Bautista et al., 2017).

This study focuses on *MasterChef* as a successful case whose formula has been present in more than 60 countries for over a decade (León-Barroso, 2014). Although *MasterChef* has been studied

before, previous investigations focused on analyzing its transmedia characteristics (Álvarez, 2020) and on determining the tools or elements that enable the extension of its transmedia dimension (León-Barroso, 2014), but did not focus on determining whether it possesses a structural narrative model that enables the creation of a transmedia storytelling universe (TSU from hereon) nor the components making up this model. Therefore, this article proposes the construction of a frame of reference that combines theoretical approaches to the transmedia dimension, narrative universes and storyworlds, making it possible to reestablish the fundamental lines of debate on transmediality and ascertain potential new contributions to this field. These contributions are aimed at determining the possible elements that form and reconstruct the transmedia storytelling universe of *MasterChef* in order to explore whether it possesses a structured narrative model and the dimensions that form it and to evaluate whether this model is potentially applicable to other cases and brands.

#### FRAME OF REFERENCE

The emergence of the concept of *transmedia* lies in the intertextual relationship established between content in different media in television series (Kinder, 1991). Although this context still corresponds to a relationship linked to textual and unidirectional content, the power it can exercise is beginning to be discerned. More than a decade later, Jenkins (2003) establishes for the first time the concept of *transmedia storytelling*. Since then, more academics have taken interest in the social effects of transmedia narratives, both on the communication industry and its professionals (Deuze & Prenger, 2019) and on journalism (Gambarato & Alzamora, 2018) and the transmedia audiovisual storytelling world developed through films and sagas (Freire et al., 2022; Taylor, 2015), series (Corona Rodríguez, 2017; Costa Sánchez & Piñeiro Otero, 2012), television programs (Alonso González & García Orta, 2017), animes and comics (Weaver, 2012), interactive documentaries (Kerrigan & Velikovsky, 2016; Marcos et al., 2019), video games (Ojeda et al., 2019; Selva-Ruiz, 2021) and transmedia branding (Tenderich, 2014), considering it a strategy that generates an

immersive user experience (Alonso González & García Orta, 2017; Bourdaa, 2013; Dena, 2017; Hernández Ruíz, 2019; Piñeiro-Otero, 2020, among others).

Nevertheless, it is important to consider that over the last few years the term *transmedia* has been abused (Calvo-Rubio, 2018), a phenomenon referred to as “transmedia turn” by Rodríguez-Ferrándiz (2017), which has led to the field becoming more complex through the opening of new lines of debate and the proposal of new terms (Arnau Roselló, 2016), as well as the discovery of new forms and types of transmedia connections (Rehak, 2016) and narrative multiverses (Freire-Sánchez & Vidal-Mestre, 2022) or transmedia (Wolf, 2012) and fictional worlds connected to each other (Albaladejo Ortega & Sánchez Martínez, 2019). As Jenkins (2009) pointed out, media convergence requires transmedia storytelling that goes beyond the technique or format itself; Rodríguez and Molpeceres (2014) even point to the need for a narrative construction on the part of consumers: “the contribution of consumers/audiences should not only be active but also creative” (p. 328). For her part, Lastra (2016) considers that this construction is ideal for the new generations and defines it as *transmedia discourses* or *stories*, while Alvarados Ramírez et al. (2011) consider it as transmedia audiovisual storytelling. Some authors have even suggested that life in today’s context can be considered a transmedia narrative experience (Gurfinkel et al., 2010).

It is clear, therefore, that the first area or dimension is the need for storytelling in the creation or extension of transmedia universes. This transmedia storytelling, which converges with cyber textuality (Marcos Molano et al., 2019) and intertextuality (Freire et al., 2022), is defined by Ryan and Thon (2014) as *storyworld*, although other authors have similarly used this term (Marcos Molano et al., 2019; Mohd & Syed, 2021, among others). According to Ciammella et al. (2019), storyworlds should depict stories and characters with their respective evolutionary arc and leitmotif. Along the same line, for Bourdaa (2013), they should also develop plots and subplots that allow users to go deeper into the narrative and generate empathetic bonds: the greater the plot complexity, the greater the audience’s interest.

Another aspect to note is the events within the storyworld. According to Havas Media (2019), transmedia content can be divided into different categories: events, stories, entertainment, solutions and experiences. In parallel, another type of categorization is that proposed by Russell (2007), who distinguishes between advertainment and entertainment, or that proposed by Freire (2018), who distinguishes between infotainment, edutainment and entertainment, thereby differentiating contents that not only inform or distribute knowledge and culture, but are also didactic and educational and, above all, entertaining. In short, the various classifications can be established either by the format type or type of contribution of value to users.

However, in a transmedia context such as today's, the strategy is difficult to classify because the audiovisual narrative converges between different media and formats (Castelló-Martínez, 2020) and evokes the phenomenon of cross-media, that is, the convergent content created between users and advertisers is constantly fed back through various actions, formats and platforms, which ultimately helps to expand and lengthen the useful life of transmedia audiovisual storytelling strategies.

The second area concerns the interactive elements that are specifically aimed at users. This content extension strategy, which is based on interaction and active participation, has merged with multidirectional communication (Paño Ambrosio & Rodríguez Fidalgo, 2015) and the creation of virtual communities, fandoms and legions of followers-turn-creators who consume, create, distribute and provide feedback about the contents of productions and their narrative franchises (Freire, 2018; Reading & Jenkins, 2015). The aim inherent to these strategies is that the users, mainly digital *adprosumers*, form the vital nucleus of these universes, which is achieved in part thanks to some of the characteristics that, according to Scolari's (2013) adaption of Jenkins (2006), possess transmedia narratives such as subjectivity, extractability, extension and depth. These characteristics put the user at the center of attention, converting them into judge, creator and distributor, and add subplots and enrich the various plots thanks to convergence and hypertext with other narrative dimensions, which extends the life of the aforementioned narrative universes and their depth (Ryan, 2016).

We are not therefore just talking about content and transmedia narratives (Scolari, 2013), but about a greater entity, an authentic transmedia universe in which producer and brand content coexists alongside content creators, users, consumers and distributors. Piñeiro-Otero (2020) defines it as “a transmedia world, the evolution of the narrative world, understood as an abstract structure that supports an ensemble of stories and characters” (p. 46), although Gosciola and Tagé (2018) place the focus of the origins of transmedia narratives on the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, while for his part, Scolari (2014) argues, through *Don Quixote of La Mancha*, that many transmedia elements have already existed for centuries. Today’s transmedia paradigm is, therefore, a digital audiovisual space made up of intangible elements and distinctly formatted content that allows users, also known as *adprosumers* (Martínez-Sala et al., 2018), to be participants in and co-creators and assets of the narrative of the original story (Reading & Jenkins, 2015).

To this end, the *Meaningful Brands* report (Havas Media, 2019), according to which 90% of consumers demand interesting and valued content from brands, is appropriate. Although the generation of content is not a new creation process, the co-creation and extension of the transmedia universe as a result of the convergence between the essence and personality of a brand and the bidirectional communication generated in virtual communities, fandom wikis, user generated content (UGC) and social media is. These processes, beyond the occasional tactics or actions of brands, have translated or converted into the axis of advertisers’ communication strategies and are forged as an inherent, reconstructive part of the business narrative, its values and its philosophy.

The third area concerns the so-called mixed realities or mixed pseudo-realities (Pérez-Rodríguez, 2020) or remix culture (Mora Fernández, 2017), which refer to those narratives in which the real world merges with the fictional world and/or vice versa. Some authors (Rodríguez-Ferrándiz, 2017; Selva-Ruiz, 2021) even highlight the need to merge both realities in order to effectively construct a TSU. This can be from the digital world to the real world, as happens, according to Rehak (2016), with *Star Trek*, a phenomenon that corresponds to

extractability (Jenkins, 2009); or it can be from the real world to the fictional one, as happens, according to Bainbridge (2010), with the most successful toys of the 1980s.

This audiovisual space, in which products in various narrative formats, creators, users and adprosumers converge, is no longer separate from the non-digital world, but decisively influences it at various levels, from executive decision-making in the audiovisual industry, the media and content generating businesses (Galán Cubillo et al., 2018) through to the creation of news coverage of planned events (Rampazzo & Tàrcia, 2017), the political agenda (Gambarato & Medvedev, 2017), and the role of *actants* (actors, activities, and audiences) in journalistic communication (Zamith & Braun, 2019). This combination of worlds can be interpreted as a narrative that combines the transmedia experience with the social experience in unison (Fuente Prieto et al., 2019) and that leads to a collaborative culture (Gosciola et al., 2019). In this respect, the user ceases to be a consumer, becoming an “agent capable of shaping, sharing and remixing media content” (Gosciola et al., 2019, p. 46) and allowing a step further in the extension of their narrative.

## METHOD

A qualitative interdisciplinary investigation (Castelló-Martínez, 2020) has been carried out that combines the analysis of an object from different areas of the discipline and through different approaches introduced into the frame of reference (see Table 1).

This analysis focuses on the case study, which is considered a research technique with a long tradition in social sciences and highly relevant when the aim is to understand and explain a phenomenon using as many information sources as possible (Enrique & Barrio, 2018, pp. 160-161). As a subject of study, the culinary reality television series *MasterChef* was chosen and, more specifically, *MasterChef Spain*, in particular, a detailed analysis of the eighth season.

The analysis of *MasterChef* and all its products and elements making up its TSU was considered ideal because: 1) it is a successful

TABLE 1  
MULTIDISCIPLINARY ANALYSIS: TYPE, DESCRIPTION AND PARADIGMS

Type	Description	Paradigms
Elements related to transmedia characteristics	Identifying name of the various elements introduced from the transmedia narrative.	Jenkins, 2006; Kerrigan & Velikovskiy, 2015; Mora-Fernández, 2017; Scolari, 2013.
Storyworld components	Type of interaction brought about by the element (unidirectional, multidirectional).	Bourdaa, 2013; Ciammella et al., 2019; Freire et al., 2022; Marcos et al., 2019; Ryan & Thon, 2014; Wolf, 2012.
Interactive elements	Type of narrative content that develops in relation to the original narrative.	Álvarez-Rodríguez, 2020; Gosciola et al., 2019; Paino Ambrosio & Rodríguez Fidalgo, 2015; Reading & Jenkins, 2015.
Mixed narratives	Analysis of the extrapolation of the narrative element to users' everyday lives.	Mora, 2017; Pérez-Rodríguez, 2020; Rodríguez-Ferrándiz, 2017; Selva-Ruiz, 2021.
Content type	The type of content of the element, which can be didactic, educational or informative.	Freire, 2018; Havas Media, 2019; Russell, 2007.

Source: The authors.

formula, clearly on the rise, that generates great repercussion on social media and encourages interaction with users (Álvarez, 2020), a feature that has effects on fandom (Costa-Sánchez, 2014; Freire, 2018); 2) it promotes and provides brand content which is of interest and value, whether didactic, educational or entertaining (Merino, 2014); 3) it brings about the democratization of a profession, in this case professional haute cuisine, bringing this work environment closer to society and culture, both through the linguistic integration of the culinary sector



and the educational and didactic elements it offers (Reading & Jenkins, 2015), and 4) it allows the fictional transmedia audiovisual narrative to be extrapolated to reality (Álvarez, 2020) thanks to the creation of restaurants and online schools based on certain narrative elements, among other actions.

Specifically, the eighth season was chosen because it garnered the largest audience, with an average of 2.9 million viewers and 22.8% of the audience share (Radio Televisión Española [RTVE], 2020). Both in terms of total viewers and screen share, the season analyzed achieved the highest figures since its fifth season, making it a sufficiently representative sample of *MasterChef's* narrative universe. Although this study was carried out retrospectively and more elements were taken into account, the detailed analysis focused on the first three episodes, with an average length of 100 minutes per program. No further episodes were analyzed due to saturation of the aforementioned sample. The results obtained from the later episodes did not differ from those of the earlier ones and did not contribute any relevant information that had not already been analyzed and included in the first three episodes. Therefore, the first three episodes were identified as being those in which the narrative elements developed throughout the season were established.

With this method the aim was to determine the possible elements that make up and build *MasterChef's* TSU in order to explore whether it possesses a structured narrative model that can be applied to other cases. The information sources are shown in Table 2.

## ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

This section presents the results of the *MasterChef* case study based on: 1) elements related to transmedia characteristics, 2) storyworld components, 3) interactive elements, 4) mixed narratives, and 5) content type.

Regarding the elements related to transmedia narratives, we observed that, through extension and multiplicity, milestones and pre-contest motivations were presented through the participants' own accounts of their lives, as well as in their appearances as guests in

TABLE 2  
INFORMATION SOURCES

Description
Television program
Promotional content
App
Social media
Events
News
Advertising
YouTube channel
RTV Española website
MasterChef Spain website

Source: The authors.

subsequent editions or episodes or in interviews on other programs. In these interviews they described their experience and stated how their appearance on *MasterChef* changed their lives, thereby becoming endorsers of new seasons. Likewise, the transmediality between reality formats (with *Junior*, *Senior*, and *Celebrity MasterChef* versions) helps to extend the narrative and cross-content. With respect to depth, this is reflected in the presence of sociocultural, emotive, and experiential elements that help consumers to extend, share and distribute the content. On many occasions this depth focuses on the participants and their experiences, with new story lines and subplots also being created.

Continuity is confirmed in the repetition of dynamics, storytelling structure, systematization of challenges, and the reiteration of the same elements making up the narrative, which leads viewers to perceive that coherence, correlation and credibility exist between the different formats, editions and episodes. The narrative possesses multiplicity thanks to its adaptation to different formats and modalities, as confirmed in the *Celebrity MasterChef*, *Junior MasterChef* and *Senior MasterChef* versions. The narrative's extractability translates into the various products and services that have become reality, such as MasterChef Restaurant, Junior MasterChef Camps or Online MasterChef Cooking

Courses. Immersion meanwhile is eminently visible in the narrative's capacity to democratize a profession like haute cuisine thanks to the accessibility the contest offers to its viewers and the didactic and pedagogical contents it provides.

The so-called world-building characteristic has a direct relationship with the aforementioned storyworld. The narrative seed focuses on the creation of a story of the vocational dream of becoming a professional chef. For this, the winning contestant receives financial prizes, haute cuisine courses and the possibility of working in Michelin star restaurants. With regard to the structure, *MasterChef's* three-part design consists of: 1) a captaincy test (introduction); 2) outside team challenges (node), and 3) elimination test (outcome and closure). This design allows the contents to be structured and to be adapted to the cognoscible nature vis-à-vis the classical interpretation of tales, myths and stories. On the other hand, it enables the transmission of a cathartic process, despite the program not having ended. This sets up a partial ending, which is a feature of seriality. Likewise, this world enriches itself with tangible and symbolic elements such as the black apron, the white apron, the wooden spoon, the immunity pin and other elements such as the soundtrack, the carefully crafted visual corporate identity and the jury's distinctive and carefully crafted brand identity.

With respect to seriality, *MasterChef's* transmedia narrative is designed in such a way that the contest's different seasons or even its distinct modalities can be consumed independently because, although they form part of a whole, they are partially independent and have their own meaning. The debates related to the decisions taken during the program and the elimination process generate tension and a partial ending that is related more to the series format than the film format and that allows, even without the narrative having ended in one episode, a certain sensation of ending and, at the same time, of waiting. Users' subjectivity is expressed in the possibility of participating directly in the construction of the characters and their evolution within the program. We could say, therefore, that *MasterChef's* storyworld is made up of a story, plots and subplots, characters (with their respective arcs and leitmotifs), various narratives that add layers and complexity, and its own code that combines the brand's own elements with elements that refer to the culinary world.

Concerning interactivity, the main elements include social networks, the *MasterChef* app, i.e. the contest's app, and on the other hand, YouTube channels, the website and forums. This dimension is designed so that the contestants and their families and friends can be protagonists in the narrative, based on the subjectivity of the experience and constant interaction elements, both of the followers through social media or the app and through the breaking of the fourth wall when the contestants talk to the camera about experiences and emotions. Therefore, although the very idiosyncrasy of the contest is geared towards the contestants' first-person experience, as is the case with other reality shows, this program also incorporates other interactive elements, such as voting or the possibility of learning the program's own recipes and techniques methods.

At the same time, the selection tests of the 15 contenders promotes the in situ participation of between ten and fifteen thousand fans, depending on the edition. The content translates into crafted audiovisual storytelling elements with a professional technical level, both in the composition and aesthetics of the shots and camera movements and in the rhythm and composition of the editing and postproduction, which results in the content being attractive and dynamic in terms of composition, aesthetics and audiovisuals. This develops the world-building, as the production and aesthetics possess a unity of form that is repeated in the various episodes and that forms an identifiable style for the consumer.

Regarding the mixed narratives, there is an interesting fusion between the program's fictional world and the real one. To a large extent this is brought about thanks to the fandom and the program's own evocation to extrapolate the cooking recipes created in the contest to reality, while the fans' or followers' own recipes are shared on social media. An emotional and experiential intention is identified that is established in the challenges the contestants have to pass, which are usually against the clock, highly pressurized and highly demanding physically, technically and in terms of skills, which results in intense emotional responses. In this respect, some dynamics encourage viewers to empathize more with the contestants because the latter can talk to the camera and describe their feelings and justify their reactions. This on-camera dialogue breaks the fourth wall and shortens the distance

between the viewers and the contestants' progress in the culinary transmedia space. They all, in their own ways and through different degrees of action and influence in the storytelling universe, participate in it and make it grow. All the elements that form part of *MasterChef's* TSU, having now been identified, are shown in Table 3.

As part of the construction of *MasterChef's* storyworld, we find narrative elements that make up the discourse or the script, cross-content via the guests, brand placement (digital or not), promotional content, references within the development of the reality show itself, references through interaction with viewers, and finally, self-referential mentions by the judges or the special guests (former contestants and other chefs). While no mention can be classified or categorized into a single type, of the total mentions, five types manifest themselves through self-referencing, either because the judges themselves or the guests mention other content that forms part of the transmedia audiovisual narrative, such as *Celebrity MasterChef*, *Junior MasterChef* or *Senior MasterChef* or, as far as the restaurant and the online cooking courses are concerned, with a space dedicated to self-promotion.

The three types of mention are proper to the program's narrative, since they are part of the identifying elements and easily recognized by followers, thus ensuring continuity and multiplicity of the content, such as the black and the white aprons, the immunity pin and the wooden spoon, all with an important narrative connotation for the role they play within the contest and in the evolution of the characters (the contestants). Finally, mentions of live voting or social media seek the interaction of the viewers, trying to involve them as active agents within the development of the content itself.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Thanks to the results obtained, it is possible to conclude that *MasterChef* does present a structured narrative model, as can be seen in Figure 1. The proposed model responds to our research aim. It is, however, a structural model that responds, to a large extent, to the creation of a story that enriches this world through characters, plots and subplots, its own code, and presents narrative complexity thanks to the characters' arcs, conflicts, leitmotifs and events.

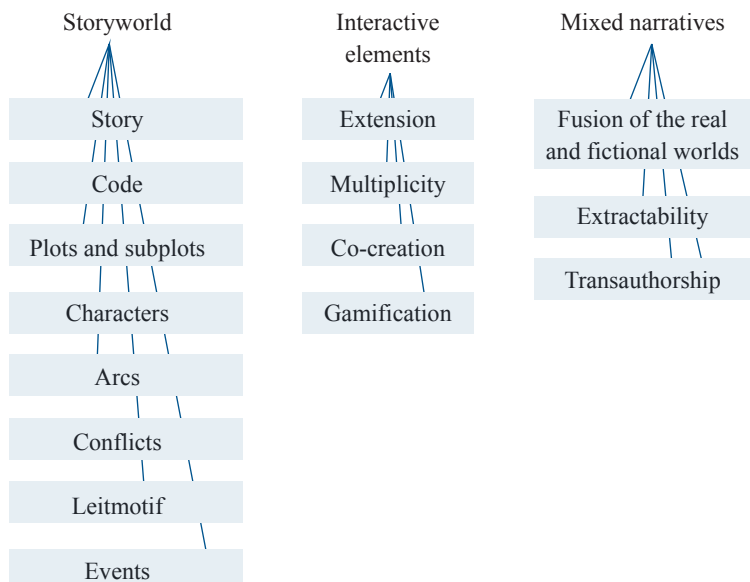
TABLE 3  
TRANSMEDIA UNIVERSE ELEMENTS OF *MASTERCHEF*

Element	Interaction	Narrative elements	Mixed narrative	Content type
<i>MasterChef</i> app	Multidirectional: Interaction with viewers, promotional content and digital product placement	<i>MasterChef</i> cookbook  Narrative content of the program itself (contestants, interesting facts, etc.)	Free service via the app	Entertaining Didactic Informative
Black apron and white apron	Users on social media	Victory / defeat symbolism	Popular vocabulary	Entertaining
Online courses	Unidirectional	The dream of becoming a chef / Cookbook	Paid service, with some parts free	Didactic
<i>MasterChef</i> restaurant	Experiential	From fiction to reality, <i>reverse placement</i>	Paid service	Entertaining
Recipe book	-	The dream of becoming a chef / Cookbook	Commercial product	Didactic
Guide for the amateur chef	-	The dream of becoming a chef / Cookbook	Commercial product	Didactic
Official <i>MasterChef</i> game	-	Narrative content of the program itself (contestants, interesting facts, etc.)	Commercial product	Entertaining and didactic

Element	Interaction	Narrative elements	Mixed narrative	Content type
<i>Junior MasterChef</i> camps	Experiential		Paid service	Entertaining and didactic
Wooden spoon	-	Victory / defeat symbolism	-	Entertaining
Immunity pin	-	Victory / defeat symbolism	-	Entertaining
<i>Celebrity MasterChef</i>	-	Another self-referencing contest from the same franchise	Other brand content	Entertaining and didactic
<i>Junior MasterChef</i>	-	Another self-referencing contest from the same franchise	Other brand content	Entertaining and didactic
<i>Senior MasterChef</i>	-	Another self-referencing contest from the same franchise	Other brand content	Entertaining and didactic

Source: The authors.

FIGURE 1  
STRUCTURED MODEL OF *MASTERCHEF'S* TSU



Source: The authors using Atlas.ti.

Another area of the relationship of the content generated by the production company and the users, which we include under the label “interaction” and in which innumerable actions or tactics or tools have a place, depends both on the fandom and resources, and also on productivity. We believe that combining watertight parts that make it recognizable with dynamic elements that allow the formula to be extended to new formats and other countries will help enormously to make it feel current and fresh over the editions, conditions that can also be extrapolated to other TSUs. Finally, the model also responds to the so-called mixed narratives, which allow the fusion of the real world with the fictional, helping both the content’s concision, the narrative depth and the generation of mixed culture.



In addition to the main objective, we consider the following contributions to the field of study resulting from the case analysis:

- Not every transmedia practice can be considered a transmedia narrative universe. The concept of universe implies the construction of interconnected worlds through stories and narratives that have coherence and connection.
- There needs to be a larger narrative or story that encompasses smaller narratives. This occurs in *MasterChef*, but this has happened before in TSUs such as *Star Wars* or the Tolkien Universe.
- Cybertextuality allows the various storyworlds to be connected within a TSU, while hypertextuality adds depth and extension to the narrative.
- Characters must be constructed on the basis of an evolutionary arc and should have a point of difference from which their personal narrative emerges.
- The number of interactive elements making up the TSU is inconsistent and constantly varies.
- The elements that most provoke interaction are those that are motivated by a point of conflict.

Finally, we believe that this proposed model can be extrapolated to other cases and, although the elements making up the various dimensions may differ, we believe that the three areas comprising a TSU (storyworld, interaction and mixed narratives) will not. On the other hand, new avenues of study are opened from other perspectives that will allow light to be shed on other aspects that have not been addressed, such as, for example, the perception of these types of patterns in transmedia audiovisual narratives by viewers, or the brand's presence in the different dimensions of the TSUs.

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