Constructing the identity of youth in fiction: interviews with professionals

CHARO LACALLE (DIRECTORA)[1]
Professor of journalism at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Rosario.Lacalle@uab.cat

Abstract

Creativity is a fundamental part of producing fiction but, on television, production processes and the target of programmes also play a decisive role in designing characters and plots. This article summarises the opinions expressed by 18 professionals of TV fiction, interviewed as part of research into the social construction of the identity of youth in Catalan and Spanish TV fiction. The sources of inspiration, the construction of stereotypes and the most common types of young characters, the construction of credibility the use of language and fashion are some of the aspects explored. In spite of numerous coincidences, the answers present some significant differences depending on the type of TV channel or the age of the scriptwriters.

Key words

Young people, television, fiction, interviews, professionals.

Resum

La creativitat és una part fonamental de la producció de ficció, però, a la televisió, els processos productius i el target dels programes també tenen un paper determinant en el disseny de personatges i de trames. Aquest article resumeix les opinions expressades per 18 professionals de la ficció televisiva, entrevistats en el marc d'una recerca sobre la construcció social de la identitat juvenil a la ficció televisiva catalana i espanyola. Les fonts d'inspiració, la construcció d'estereotips i les tipologies de personatges joves més recurrents, la construcció de versemblança, l'ús del llenguatge o la moda són alguns dels aspectes explorats. Malgrat les nombroses coincidències, les respostes presenten algunes diferències significatives en funció del tipus de cadena televisiva o de l'edat dels guionistes.

Paraules clau

Joves, televisió, ficció, entrevistes, professionals.

The importance attributed historically to information, both in forming public opinion and in terms of influencing viewers, partly explains the large number of studies on the journalistic profession carried out as from the 1980s.[2] Nevertheless, the predominance achieved by TV fiction in the 21st century has been decisive in increasing the bibliography of Anglo-Saxon origin on the processes involved in producing fiction.[3] Complementary to this, the diversification of the economic exploitation of fiction is exponentially multiplying merchandising.

Along the line of contributions such as those by Nazzaro (2002) and Priggé (2005), studying the contribution of professionals in TV fiction by directly interviewing the professionals, this article summarises the opinions expressed by 18 interviewees as part of research into the social construction of the identity of youth in Catalan and Spanish TV fiction. The people interviewed are mostly scriptwriters, whom Priggé considers to be those ultimately responsible for the impact of a project of fiction (Priggé 2005, 1). There is also one director, three producers (one of whom directs) and a TV producer, as well as the collective interview with the fiction production group of Notro TV.[4] Finally, we have included quotes from scriptwriters from the two most popular series among young Catalans in

2009: *Física o Química* and *El Internado*, from interviews published on different websites specialising in television.

The quality and large number of Catalan professionals in the area of TV fiction, most of whom work both in Catalonia and Madrid, has led us to include a large number of Catalans. Another point of interest in selecting the people to be interviewed has been the possibility of having five young professionals (four scriptwriters and one producer responsible for one of the large Catalan production houses, Diagonal TV). The discrepancies or coincidences between young professionals and the rest can help us to understand the role of professionalisation in representing the young image.

The director and TV producer Lluís Maria Güell and the scriptwriter Javier Olivares were interviewed in depth, while a standard interview model was used for the rest of the professionals, with a pre-established script, differentiated according to the professional groups. Based on an initial draft of a general interview, three slightly different questionnaires were developed for scriptwriters, directors and/or TV producers and producers, respectively. Except for the two in-depth interviews, where interpersonal communication between the interviewee and interviewer was essential, the rest of the professionals

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chose how they preferred to do the interview (face-to-face, by telephone or in writing). Although the oral interviews were carried out with some flexibility, the script always formed the backbone of all the interviews.

The interview script was structured around the construction of young characters and the processes of identification or projection intended in the viewer. In the first case, the interviewees reflected on the need to adapt to the programme's target, the sources of inspiration, the use of stereotypes and the development of character. The aspects of the relationship with the viewer considered by the professionals focused on the construction of credibility and on activating mechanisms of identification or projection. In order to make it easier for the reader, we have always grouped together coinciding replies, systematically contrasted with any qualifications or discrepancies that have been observed throughout the analysis.

1. Including young characters due to thematic requirements or aesthetics?

In general, the people interviewed state that whether young characters are included depends on the characteristics of the production (a mix of the channel, production company, plot and target audience). Xavier Uriz and Mercè Clascà think that young characters are mainly included due to the potential audience; i.e. the target for the TV product.

Young scriptwriters give a lot of weight to the characteristics of the broadcasters. Agustín Ortiz points out that including characters aged between 15 and 29 is related to the channel's policy. Ángela Armero believes that channels with a preferably young target are more likely to produce fiction aimed at this audience, while Irene Pascual contrasts the systematic introduction of characters of all ages in Spain with the United States, where fiction is always aimed at a more specific audience.

Joan Sol and Piti Español state that the channels are demanding increasingly more family fiction, representing all age ranges. However, Lluís Arcarazo points out the dramatic need to include young characters in programmes that are not aimed specifically at a young target; Kiko Ruiz[6] shares his opinion. Similarly, according to Irene Pascual, young productions also require adult characters so that the young people have someone to confront and to show rebelliousness (parents, teachers, etc.).

Among other reasons that warrant the introduction of young characters, Manuel Ríos and Victoria Dal Vera state that "youth provides a breath of fresh air and elements that are very valuable for a series, just like in life". Along the same lines, Sergi Pompermayer talks of "the cult of youth", which leads channels and production companies to believe that young characters "sell" more. Paula Ortiz also believes that beauty and appeal are the main values of a production environment in which commercial aims take priority over any other consideration.

Table 1. Reasons for including young characters in fiction

Need to attract a potential target and establish the channel's image
Demand for family fiction by channels in order to reach general audiences
Aesthetic and specific thematic reasons related to young people

Source: Author.

2. Sources of inspiration

According to the people interviewed, the main sources of inspiration for developing young characters are life itself and reality per se,[7] in accordance with the replies of the great North American scriptwriters (Mark Brazill, Alan Ball, Dave Hackell, etc.) in the book by Priggé (2005). This is a compendium of resources, such as life experiences on the one hand and contact and dialogue with young people on the other, although there are scriptwriters such as Joan Sol, Lluís Arcarazo, Kiko Ruiz or Ángela Armero, and also the producer Alexandre Bas Abril, who admit that they include events and behaviour inspired by the news (bullying, violence towards teachers, new forms of communication, etc.).[8]

Raimon Masllorens also resorts to personal experience but adds the importance of the creator's audiovisual background and, together with Uriz and Pascual, admits that he is inspired by other fictional characters. Joan Sol, meanwhile, contradicts this last point and states that, in general, this kind of reference is avoided, as does Agustín Ortiz. Like Sol, the director Lluís Maria Güell also believes that inspiration comes from life's experiences and that the use of already successful models of fiction is dangerous. Kiko Ruiz, TV producer of *Ventdelplà*, says that, in his case, characters are also developed based on the requests by the Catalan government, which asks to include contemporary social issues, such as immigration, AIDS, abortion, drugs, etc.

In conclusion, there are many sources of inspiration used by scriptwriters when developing characters, to the extent that it is practically impossible to determine them, as pointed out by Ríos San Martín and Dal Vera.

Table 2. Sources of inspiration to include young characters in fiction

Characters based on one's own life and reality presented in the media
Including experiences from films and other fictional programmes
Characters with social traits defined by public institutions

Source: Author.

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3. Constructing young characters

Ten interviewees believe that there is no kind of difference in constructing young characters compared with adults and, as stated by Sol, "the same scriptwriters for the series construct characters of all ages". It is therefore not a question of age but of degree of complexity, says Pompermayer, while Masllorens highlights the tendency to stereotype young characters, principally because they are secondary characters in most cases.

Curiously, the younger scriptwriters do see appreciable differences in the construction of different characters. Paula Ortiz claims that young people, unlike children, adults or the elderly, are not based on the range of the real population but are rather a mix of trends and aesthetic fashions. Irene Pascual remembers that attempts are often made to integrate young characters within an urban tribe or to label them under a social group, something that is generally not done with adult characters. Agustín Ortiz points out that, in the case of young characters, the first thing we must know about them is their age, a characteristic that immediately determines their activity.

Javier Olivares takes the middle way when he states that the development of characters is the same for all age ranges but adds that, when a character is created, a logic is applied that varies according to the age. However, a dozen scriptwriters admit, one way or another, the importance of age in constructing character. Arcarazo, Ríos and Dal Vera agree that age constitutes an important part of the character, as it has its own characteristics, goals and conflicts at each stage of life and this is what enables them to establish the objectives, desires, concerns and expectations of each one.

3.1. Specific or constructed characters?

All the people interviewed defended the position that specifying the features of a character from the start is not at all incompatible with allowing the character to develop but rather that these are different undertakings. Sol believes that one thing is a consequence of the other, from the time when a coherent development depends on a precise definition of the character. Ríos and Dal Vera state that good fiction requires both a solid initial definition and consequent development as the story develops. Uriz believes that, on occasion, the need for characters to develop might even make them escape the hands of their creator and therefore recommends defining them very well right from the time they are created. Pompermayer also qualifies the importance of a character's initial construction.

In general, the professionals think that it is simpler to relate characters to each other and create coherent plots with their environment, problems and personality; at the same time, these also stop the character from becoming distorted and losing credibility and realism.[9] In other words, the characters must always preserve the basic elements of their personality, what makes them attractive and identifiable in the eyes of the viewer but, as pointed out by Arcarazo, the need for characters to evolve is inherent in fictional stories. Masllorens distinguishes between the cinema, where a character's development or transformation is gradual, subtle and especially partial, and stories told on television. However, the young producer Bas Abril states that the decision to define characters from the start or to make them develop with the story is subject to their importance in the programme (leading or secondary).

Apart from the cases of actors leaving a programme voluntarily, radical development or the disappearance of a character depends both on intrinsic factors (a plot line running out, introducing new lines, etc.) as well as extrinsic factors (viewer preferences) but also on the quality of acting and how well the actor suits the character. For example, Pascual says that, if a character gets more attention thanks to the actor playing the role, then he or she is given more weight, while Güell points out that, when the wrong actor has been chosen, the only thing you can do is "get rid of them and look for another", otherwise the character will also disappear.

3.2. Typologies or stereotypes?

Seven interviewees believe that the range of young characters that might feature in TV fiction is highly varied. Referring to fiction on TV3, Sol says that they are like the young people in any Catalan town, "with the same concerns and problems as their peers in real life". The scriptwriter Arcarazo, the team of the production company Notro TV and the producer Bas Abril agree that, rather than types, the fundamental element of any young character is conflict, a typical characteristic of their age. According to Arcarazo, there are some key issues that must be included in constructing young characters, such as "discovering love, tension between freedom and commitment, between affection and the need to experience things that makes them grow as people". Along the same lines, the young scriptwriter Ángela Armero points out that the narrative appeal of youth lies in the fact that it is the time of life when the most important decisions are taken (work, partner, etc.).

Ríos and Dal Vera, Pascual, Olivares, Paula Ortiz and Armero herself outline types of young characters. Armero points out that most young characters are problematic, rebellious and provocative, and that some stereotypes abound, such as unsure people, those who flirt with drugs, etc. Among other stereotypes, Ríos and Dal Vera highlight "the ladies man, the girly swot, the thug who couldn't care less, the shy intelligent female, the popular sexy woman, the freak, the funny guy out for a good time, etc.". Agustín Ortiz claims that typologies need to "seem very real" and particularly that a lot of things need to happen.

Olivares also says that young characters are based on universal stereotypes, including "the handsome guy, pretty girl, the one who's not handsome, the hero, the girlfriend, etc." and Clascà recalls the dramatic functions invariably found in any kind of plot: "the star, the antagonist, the star's friend, the romantic character, etc.". However, Pascual clarifies that the identity of characters depends on the place they occupy within the group.

Five scriptwriters are critical of the repetition of young stereotypes. Paula Ortiz states that, although Spanish fiction has not copied certain North American archetypes (the cheerleader, the member of the science club, the captain of the American football team, etc.), it has created much more dangerous clichés, such as alternative types, the sexy, attractive girl or the problematic guy, among others. Similarly, Pompermayer states that he does not watch much Spanish young fiction, precisely due to the abundance of pigeon-holed and stereotyped characters. "A very specific kind of young person is portrayed, basically urban youngsters, from the area of Madrid, essentially concerned about what they look like and about scoring". Uriz summarises the young archetypes in fiction in the following terms: "Flat characters with problems, idiots who fall in love with idiots who have flat problems".

3.3. Characteristics and values

Seven of the people interviewed agree that there is no "table" with characters' values and traits. But, while four insist that each character is different from the rest, the other three dare to list a few essential elements, easily identifiable in young characters. Arcarazo believes that young characters are different from adults principally in how they tackle conflict. Sol demands coherence and thoroughness in constructing young characters, while Uriz claims there is a need to treat them based on specific concerns and values and in accordance with their age.

The young scriptwriters agree on the basic ingredients of young programmes. For Ángela Armero, these are "large doses of falling in love, passion, sex, idealism, rebellion, rivalry, nonconformism, risky behaviour and bad relations with their parents and the previous generation ", while Paula Ortiz adds "sexual conflict and initiation to sex and affection" to this list. Irene Pascual highlights the usual characterisation of young characters with "a more open mind" regarding issues such as immigration, ethical differences and homosexuality. Among the adult scriptwriters, the team from the Notro TV production company highlight physical attraction and Pompermayer criticises the abundance of young stereotypes associated with situations such as going out at night, drinking alcohol, taking drugs, sleeping around, etc. Along the same lines, Ríos and Dal Vera state that, since the start of humanity, there have been characteristics and values that we all like and that, although TV fiction does not have to reflect them, it usually does: "beauty, sensuality, braveness, intelligence, a sense of humour, originality, freedom, a talent for something, self-confident people, charming people, ingenuity, etc.".

Curiously, the young Armero claims that the difference according to gender and format does not substantially alter characters' values or traits, while Ríos and Dal Vera, as well as Sergi Pompermayer and the producer Bas Abril, think the opposite.

3.4. Polarised or ambivalent characters?

There are 13 interviewees who prefer non-polarised characters. In other words, those with both positive and negative values and traits because, in addition to being credible, they provide more scope in terms of plot and narrative. However, the young scriptwriters state that "good guys" and "bad guys" are frequent in fiction, as we are reminded by Pascual. Agustín Ortiz admits that, although TV fiction has been trying to move away the good/bad dichotomy for some time now, in genres such as detective series there will always be "cops and robbers", i.e. good guys and bad guys, from the time when these genres are based on a constant reference to reality.

The characteristics of the different genres and formats play a key role in characterisation. Sol, Paula Ortiz, Arcarazo, Ruiz, Masllorens and Bas Abril state that comedy, especially sitcoms, always present polarised, stereotypical, archetypal, radical and even caricatured characters, while drama tends to try to balance the good guys and the bad guys. On the other hand, Piti Español does not entirely agree with these professionals and states that, in serials, polarised characters work better, especially in the case of the bad guys. Perhaps this is due to what Pompermayer says when he states that, the more polarised a character, the greater the conflict and "the more hate or compassion aroused by the characters in the audience". Armero and Olivares also confirm the polarisation of characters in serials, accentuated by the fact that this kind of product is less demanding. Masllorens agrees on this point when he says that, in the most popular products, "basically, what people do expect from you is to identify in half a second who is good and who is bad and that the bad guy should be as bad as possible and the good as good as possible".

Finally, five interviewees refer to the possible differences between public and private channels in character polarisation. Sol maintains that private channels can take greater risks with clearly bad characters, while public channels must be more careful and watch any conduct and behaviour that might be offensive or offend sensibilities. Other scriptwriters, such as Paula Ortiz and the Notro TV team, also agree that there are differences between channels, as does Masllorens, who stresses that on public channels "there are controls and private channels don't have such controls". On the other hand, both Pompermayer and Bas Abril state that there isn't much difference in how fictional young characters are constructed on public and private channels. Agustín Ortiz goes further and believes that all public channels today function as if they were private and that, consequently, there's no difference regarding how characters are defined.

4. Constructing credibility

Regarding the question of whether young characters are realistic or not, the interviewees range between "yes, always" and "it depends on the genre". Clascà, Sol, Español, Bas Abril and the Notro TV team state that the youngsters represented are realistic. Sol, Armero and Arcarazo establish differences between genres and remind us that the characters in comedies are often

Table 3. Constructing young characters in fiction

There are no differences in how young and adult characters are constructed
Specified personality traits from the start but with the possibility to develop
Young characters range between stereotypes and general typologies
They are frequently related to values such as love, sex, rebellion, beauty, etc.
The preference is to construct young characters with non-polarised traits
Disagreement regarding the tendency to polarise depending on genre and format
Influence of the channel's image and ownership

Source: Author.

caricaturised. But Mariano Baselga, executive producer of *El Internado*, and Luis Morillo, scriptwriter for the same series, claims that the characters are realistic even in a fantasy thriller such as theirs.[10]

Ríos and Dal Vera, Armero, Arcarazo and Ruiz mention the concept of credibility to explain the influence of the genre or format on constructing a more or less realistic character. Pompermayer reminds us that if characters were realistic instead of credible, they might be extremely flat, "basically because, in real life, fortunately, not as many things tend to happen as they do in a fictional series". The director Lluís Maria Güell is of a similar opinion to Pompermayer and notes that fiction condenses stories because "otherwise it would be incredibly boring".

Fiver interviewees question the "realism" of young characters in Catalan and Spanish fiction. Paula Ortiz believes that, unlike other age ranges, young characters are not realistic at all. "Youth is much richer, multifaceted, surprising and alive […] than what is shown by TV fiction". An idea also outlined by Sergi Pompermayer when he states that the young people represented are only a part of those that really exist. Masllorens and Olivares agree with the position taken by Ortiz and Pompermayer, although with some nuances. In this respect, Masllorens points out that, in constructing young characters, the perception adults have of them takes priority. This same scriptwriter adds that it is considered more profitable to show extreme things and situations taken to the limit, such as those experienced by the characters in *Física o Química*, rather than common situations that would be experienced by a normal young person.

4.1. Identification between viewers and characters
All the interviewees agree that it's fundamental for TV viewers to identify with the characters, although they justify this from different perspectives.[11] Both Español and Armero state this

identification forms the basis of "gaining viewer loyalty" while Arcarazo adds that striving for identification forms part of the dramatisation process. Paula Ortiz also confirms the importance of identification but reminds us that it's not always achieved.

Uriz underlines the importance of empathy with the characters, while other interviewees, such as Pompermayer and Agustín Ortiz, place age at the centre of the identification process. Bas Abril also mentions the importance of age and reminds us that, while adult viewers identify young people with their own children, the opposite rarely happens.[12]

Sol believes that young TV viewers are much more demanding that the rest in terms of representing their peers. "If the young characters that are supposed to represent them don't think, talk, feel or act like them, they reject them and don't want anything to do with the series". Félix Jiménez Velado also observes this radical nature of young viewers against anything that might seem "moralising" to them. "If young people suspect moralising in the dialogues or content, they give up on the series".[13]

4.2. The use of language
Five interviewees state the widespread belief that one of the most important elements to achieve identification with young viewers is how the characters talk, a statement that authors such as Valeria Selinger also believe to be fundamental (Selinger 2008, 73). Félix Jiménez Velado claims that scripts attempt to introduce neutral language that young people like but doesn't bother the parents and admits that producers demand from dialogue writers that the characters should speak like the young people being represented. "Producers ask us to make them talk like young people or be more explicit in sex in order to sell the series".[15]

Ruiz believes that the language of young characters is key to achieving a realistic result. "Language is more important among young people than adults. If the words in a script for a young person aren't well chosen, even though the acting is good, it won't be realistic". This TV producer and director also believes that credibility through the use of Catalan must take into account the fact that this language exists side by side with Spanish, because "there are some things they say in Spanish when they're talking".

Pascual and Güell highlight the role of young actors in the use of language on television, to the extent that some of the professionals adapt the script to the current speech of young people, as pointed out by Pascual. "I try not to put too much slang in because the actors themselves already include some slang, words". Velado points out that the way of speaking and the voice are essential complements to the character, added by the actor. "We do create characters on paper without a face, without a body, without a voice and then they give them a body and we mould ourselves a little to that". On the other hand, Javier Olivares believes that actors should adjust to the language of the script, albeit admitting the need for advice on the part of professionals.

Table 4. Constructing credibility in young characters in fiction

Young characters must be more credible than realistic
Professionals disagree regarding the degree of realism in Spanish fiction
It is considered fundamental for viewers to identify with the characters
Age affinity is a decisive factor when identifying with the characters
Characters' language is key to achieving the desired effects of credibility

Source: Author.

5. Characters and fashion

Ten interviewees state that they do not aim to set trends, fashions or styles through the characters. Ruiz, Pompermayer and Sol claim that they have never worked on series that have this objective but Sol states that it is normal to receive letters from viewers asking for information on the clothes worn by characters or elements of the set.

Pascual thinks that, rather than setting trends, TV fiction attempts to show them and reflect them. Clascà, Arcarazo and Armero don't think the aim is to set trends either but admit that doing so means being able to connect with the public and that this is yet another consequence of the programme's success. Armero adds that trying to set trends would be like "starting to build a house with the roof".

Paula Ortiz criticises the constant desire for identification through fashion trends and claims that characters are desired in TV fiction that set these trends. "They want 'Amayas Salamancas' and 'Hugos Silvas'. People who set trends rather than constructing deep affective experiences with stories that reflect young people and teenagers". Similarly, Agustín Ortiz believes that TV is always a platform for beauty, youth and, evidently, it also "creates trends in many things: music, style, fashion, etc.".

Español also believes that private channels do try to set trends through fiction. Masllorens agrees with Español and says that this is the reason why brands give clothes for free but he does point out that perhaps this isn't done deliberately.

Bas Abril claims that setting trends depends largely on the style and type of series being produced and notes that merchandising plays a key role in series aimed at a young target. Ríos and Dal Vera do believe that artistic and commercial gains are desired but that the phenomenon has already happened and the effect has been noticed, as demonstrated by the characters in *UPA Dance* or *Física o Química*.

Table 5. Fashion and young characters in fiction

Young characters' fashion attempts to show and reflect that of youngsters in reality
Disagreements regarding the construction of characters that set trends or fashions
Differences between chains in the importance given to fashion and style

Source: Author.

6. Conclusions

The interviews carried out confirm our initial hypothesis regarding the broad range of freedom (within a market logic) enjoyed by scriptwriters in constructing fictional characters once the corresponding production company and channel have determined the genre and overall theme for the programme. However, the answers given highlight that the programme's target and the ownership of the channel that broadcasts it (public or private) exercises a self-regulating role, to some extent comparable to the political orientation or ideology of journalistic organisations.

There are many different reasons why young characters are chosen to appear in a fiction programme, starting with the desire to reach this target, the most highly coveted by the channels. The requirements of the plot, a request by the production company or the inevitable association between youth and beauty in a society where aesthetics play a key role in the construction of social representations are other reasons acknowledged by the people interviewed. Fashion, design and aesthetics in general are considered to be highly efficient vehicles to capture the youth target, although a programme is unlikely to set any trends.

The interviewees do not see any notable differences between the construction of young and adult characters and point out that there is no "table" of values or traits for young characters. But while some believe that there are not many differences when constructing a young character compared with any other from a different age group, other interviewees dare to list a few elements related systematically with young characters: going out at night, consuming alcohol or drugs irresponsibly, sleeping around, unwanted pregnancies, idealism, rebellion, rivalry, non-conformism, risky behaviour, bad relationship with parents and the previous generation, etc. Scriptwriters take their inspiration from their own experiences although the youngest ones admit to being influenced by television and cinema, principally North American.

All the professionals believe it is necessary to define characters well from the start but with sufficient room for them to grow and develop. One part of them also recognises the role of the genre and format in the creation of more or less stereotypical characters, although they tend to avoid polarised charac-

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ters. However, publicly owned channels and the image of some of these may influence both the construction of characters and the events narrated.

It is essential for young TV viewers to identify with the characters because this target is much more demanding than the rest of the age groups in everything that affects them in one way or another. The aim is to make young characters more credible rather than realistic and the narrated events are inspired by the real world, although everyone believes it's necessary for there to be a great deal of conflict to ensure a lot of things happen in the plot. How the young characters speak is one of the most important elements in order to produce this effect of realism and to encourage viewers to identify with them.

The agreement in most of the answers given by the interviewees and the certainty with which all of them define the process of constructing young characters in TV fiction provide an unmistakable indication of the practices accepted by professionals. A fact that is reinforced by the disagreements shown between the younger and older scriptwriters, highlighting that creativity does not exclude, at all, the professionalisation of this group of people.

Notes

1 Aquest article ha estat escrit en el marc de la recerca *La representació dels joves a la ficció televisiva catalana i espanyola: construcció d'identitats, atribució de rols socials i correspondència amb la realitat,* finançada per l'Agència Catalana de la Joventut de Catalunya. En el projecte, dirigit per la professora Charo Lacalle, hi han participat les investigadores Beatriz Gómez, Manuela Russo, Mariluz Sánchez, Lucía Trabajo i Berta Trullàs.

2 Vegeu la clàssica síntesi d'Andrea Garbarino (1985).

3 Vegeu Hyde 2003, Readman 2003, Meibach i Duran 2004, Douglas 2005 i Smith 2009.

4 El corpus d'anàlisi comprèn tots els programes de ficció d'estrena emesos a TV3 i a les cadenes estatals al llarg de 2008, amb un total de 306 personatges de 15 a 29 anys, 11 *focus groups* realitzats en deu localitats catalanes entre el maig i el juny de 2009, i les entrevistes a professionals presentades en aquest article.

5 Vegeu la relació de noms amb un breu currículum de cadascun dels entrevistats a l'annex, al final de l'article.

6 Ruiz posa l'exemple del Biel, el fill de la protagonista de *Ventdelplà*, que ha obligat els guionistes a crear un entorn juvenil, incorporant-hi un grup de joves i desenvolupant diferents trames al seu voltant.

7 L'analista de guió Miguel Machalski arriba al punt de considerar que els personatges són sempre, en certa manera, *alter egos* de l'autor (Machalski 2009, 68).

8 Els professionals nord-americans també insisteixen en la importància de l'experiència personal en la construcció dels personatges. Vegeu Selinger 2008, 77.

9 Igual que els professionals, els autors que estudien la construcció dels personatges a la ficció consideren que la seva definició inicial ha de deixar sempre un marge suficient per tal que puguin créixer i evolucionar (Selinger 2008, 80).

10 *Hablamos con los guionistas*, <Antena3 vídeos.com http://www.antena3.com/PortalA3com/El-Internado/Hablamos con-los-guionistas/PA_84035_9850744_9850685> [Última consulta: 25 de juliol de 2009].

11 Pràcticament tots els autors que parlen de la construcció dels personatges coincideixen a subratllar la importància de les emocions per atraure l'espectador, des dels formalistes russos fins a aportacions més recents com la d'Anne Huet (2006, 52).

12 Chion parla d'identificació (favorable o desfavorable) i fins i tot de contraidentificació, quan l'espectador es creu millor que el personatge (Chion 2009, 216).

13 Agencia Efe. *Expertos iberoamericanos analizan el lenguaje de los SMS y las series de televisión para jóvenes*. 10 d'abril de 2008, a <http://noticias.terra.es/2008/genteycultura/0410/ actualidad/ expertos-iberoamericanos-analizan-el-lenguaje-de-los-sms-y-las-series-de-television-para-jovenes.aspx> [Última consulta: 7 de desembre de 2009].

14 Vegeu la nota 12.

15 *Op. cit.*

16 Vegeu la nota 9.

17 *Op. cit.*

18 *Let's FoQ 2*, Antena3 vídeos.com <http://www.antena3videos.com/video/5444/fisica-o-quimica/let%C2%BFs-foq> programa-2/lets-foq-2-_parte1 [Última consulta: 29 de juliol de 2010].

Annex: list of people interviewed

Ángela Armero, young scriptwriter on *MIR* and *20 tantos* (Telecinco), and *18 RDC* (Antena 3 TV), among others.

Lluís Arcarazo, scriptwriter on *El cor de la ciutat*, *Serrallonga*, etc. (TV3), and on the film *Salvador*, among others.

Alexandre Bas Abril, head of Content and New TV Formats at Diagonal TV. He has taken part in *700 euros* and *90-60-90* (Antena 3 TV); *Amar en tiempos revueltos* (La 1); *Mar de fons*, *Ventdelplà*, *Zoo* and *Infidels* (TV3), among others.

Mercè Clascà, scriptwriter on *Calle Nueva* (La 1) and the TV film *Laia*, *regal d'aniversari* (TV3), among others.

Victoria dal Vera, actress, scriptwriter, dialogue writer and documentary maker. She has worked on *Yo soy el Solitario* and *Raphael* (Antena 3 TV), and *El comisario* (Telecinco), among others.

Piti Español, scriptwriter and co-creator of *El cor de la ciutat* and of *Majoria absoluta* (TV3), among others.

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Lluís Maria Güell, director of *Les veus del Pamano*, *Ventdelplà* (TV3), *La señora* and *Amar en tiempos revueltos* (La 1), among others.

Raimon Masllorens, executive producer of *13 anys... i un dia!*, *A pera picada* and the TV film *Pacient* 33 (TV3), among others.

Notro TV, subsidiary of the production company Notro Films for television, responsible for *Cuestión de sexo* and *HKM* (Cuatro); *La familia Mata* and *Doctor Mateo* (Antena 3 TV); *Plan América* (La 1) and *Los simuladores* (Telecinco), among others.

Javier Olivares, executive creative director, scriptwriter and responsible for the original idea behind Infidels; scriptwriter on Ventdelplà and Zoo (TV3), Los Serrano (Telecinco) and Los hombres de Paco (Antena 3 TV), among others.

Paula Ortiz Álvarez, young scriptwriter and director of three shorts and one feature film. Scriptwriter for the children's educational series *Hoobs Enciclopedia*.

Agustín Ortiz, young scriptwriter who has written and directed several shorts. He has written plots for the serial *Llàgrima de sang* (IB3).

Irene Pascual, young scriptwriter who has worked on *Águila Roja* (La 1), *Un golpe de suerte* (Telecinco) and *HKM* (Cuatro).

Sergi Pompermayer, scriptwriter for *13 anys... i un dia!*, *Porca misèria*, *L'un per l'altre* (2003), *Jet Lag*, *Plats bruts*, *Lo Cartanyà* (TV3), among others.

Manuel Ríos San Martín, director of Fiction for the production company Boca Boca. Scriptwriter and director of *Yo soy el Solitario*, *Compañeros* (Antena 3 TV). He has participated in *Médico de familia* (Telecinco) and *Mis adorables vecinos* (Antena 3 TV), among others.

Kiko Ruiz, TV producer for the serial *Ventdelplà* (TV3), for which he has also directed some episodes, as well as on *Zoo* (2008) and *Mar de fons* (2006-2007), among others.

Joan Sol, fiction content coordinator for the Drama Department of TV3. Scriptwriter on *El cor de la ciutat* and on comedies such as *Pobre noi* (TV3), among others.

Xavier Uriz Nadal, scriptwriter and theatre director. Scriptwriter on *Mossèn capellà*, *Llàgrima de sang* and *Laberint de passions* (IB3), among others.

Interviews published on websites specialising in television
Mariano Baselga,[16] scriptwriter and executive producer on *El Internado*, *Los hombres de Paco* (Antena 3 TV); *Los Serrano*, *Los 80* and *20 tantos* (Telecinco), among others.

Luis Murillo,[17] scriptwriter on *El Internado* (Antena 3 TV) and *Génesis. En la mente del asesino* (Cuatro), among others.

Jaime Vaca,[18] script coordinator for *Física o Química* (Antena 3 TV); scriptwriter on *Los Serrano* (Telecinco), among others.

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