

# Analysis of Narrative Strategies in Independent Non-Fiction Narrative Podcasts in Ibero-America

Raúl Rodríguez-Ortiz <sup>1</sup>  and Manuel Fernández-Sande <sup>2</sup> 

<sup>1</sup> Faculty of Communication and Image, University of Chile, Chile

<sup>2</sup> Faculty of Information Sciences, Complutense University of Madrid, Spain

**Correspondence:** Raúl Rodríguez-Ortiz ([raul.rodriguez@u.uchile.cl](mailto:raul.rodriguez@u.uchile.cl))

**Submitted:** 30 July 2024 **Accepted:** 23 December 2024 **Published:** 24 February 2025

**Issue:** This article is part of the issue “Balancing Intimacy and Trust: Opportunities and Risks in Audio Journalism” edited by Mia Lindgren (University of Tasmania), fully open access at <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.i467>

## Abstract

This study analyses the narrative strategies employed in 11 independent narrative non-fiction podcasts from seven Ibero-American countries: Argentina, Brazil, Spain, Portugal, Colombia, Chile, and Mexico. The research concentrates on identifying the primary narrative trends applied within this genre of audio journalism, focusing on how the role of the narrator and the structure of the story boost credibility and listener engagement. The methodology combines semi-structured interviews with 16 podcast producers and content analysis of 73 episodes to explore how these podcasts shape their narrative approaches. The results reveal that these podcasts use various journalistic subgenres, including interviews, sound chronicles a recognised genre within narrative and radio journalism in Ibero-American, and other more artistic or experimental formats such as radio features, along with narrative structures like episodic, Aristotelian, and counterpoint, allowing for diverse forms of storytelling. In addition, the study underscores the incorporation of sound archives, personal life stories, and other audio techniques to enhance the narrative’s depth and emotional resonance. These elements contribute to producing socially relevant stories that often challenge stereotypes and address underrepresented voices in society. Ultimately, this research highlights the role of independent non-fiction podcasts in the evolution of audio journalism in Ibero-America.

## Keywords

audio journalism; Ibero-America; independent podcast production; narrative podcasts; non-fiction podcasts; podcasts; podcast narrator; podcast storytelling; Portuguese podcasts; sound narrative strategies; Spanish podcasts

## 1. Introduction

This study aims to identify the main narrative techniques used in independent non-fiction podcasts in Spanish and Portuguese across Ibero-America that contribute to creating compelling narratives in audio journalism. It particularly focuses on the role of the narrator and the narrative structure to analyse how these elements enhance story credibility and listener involvement. This approach brings new perspectives to the field of narrative non-fiction podcasts in Ibero-America in that the use of narrative strategies in independent productions is an area that has been largely overlooked in prior studies. Although there is previous research on non-fiction podcasts and the evolution of narrative audio journalism (Esteban & Otón, 2023; Gutiérrez et al., 2019; Lindgren, 2016; McCracken, 2017; McHugh, 2022; Santos & Peixinho, 2019; Spinelli & Dann, 2019; among many others), this article differs by concentrating on the specific narrative subgenres and techniques employed by independent podcasts produced in Ibero-America. Through the analysis of the narrator's figure and the narrative structures used, the study offers a detailed view of how these independent productions renew the conventions of traditional audio journalism. This research fills a gap in the scientific literature by investigating how independent narrative podcasts in Spanish and Portuguese address relevant social issues and give voice to often underrepresented characters and communities. Moreover, it also provides a clear conceptual framework for the traditional radio subgenres that comprise this form of podcast, discussing how they are being renewed and how other more sophisticated subgenres, such as the radio feature, are included.

Non-fiction narrative podcasts have been attracting interest both from producers and listeners in Spain and Ibero-America. This kind of podcast has only been surpassed by conversational podcasts in Spain, i.e., informal discussions where one or more hosts chat among themselves or with a guest about a specific topic, sharing stories or opinions on it (Ivoox Observatory, 2023) as well as by interview-based podcasts, according to the pod survey conducted in Ibero-America (Podcasteros, 2022).

A decade after the concept of podcasting was coined (2004), the genre of narrative non-fiction podcasting emerged, thanks to *Serial* (2014), which marked a turning point in true-crime storytelling in the English language (Hardey & James, 2022; Sherrill, 2022). For Latin America, *Radio Ambulante* had the same impact with its audio chronicles (Vicente & de Lima, 2021). However, Santos and Peixinho (2019) point out the difficulty of conceptualising and classifying podcasts and their narratives, while Esteban and Otón (2023) caution that "it is still too early to classify podcast genres, although certain narrative and stylistic elements can be identified, unlike radio genres" (pp. 155–156). On this basis, we can propose a definition and identify certain features.

The narrative non-fiction podcast or documentary podcast is considered a genre within podcast production, in the same way as conversational podcasts and fiction podcasts (Esteban & Otón, 2023). Santos and Peixinho (2019) argue that the narrative non-fiction podcast is based on real lives or the stories of its characters in order to connect with the audience and evoke empathy for the story's protagonists.

This form of podcast is perceived as "flexible and malleable" (Gutiérrez et al., 2019). Given that it is a flexible genre, it can encompass a range of genres from journalism as well as other tools and techniques found in the social sciences, communication, and the arts, including life history, soundscape, and sound experimentation. In this way, the production of the narrative non-fiction podcast adapts to the needs of the story, its characters,

and the scenarios. Although the narrative structures and subgenres used may be aligned with journalistic and radio tradition, such as the chronicle, when the journalist witnesses, narrates, or describes an event, they use their individual perspective, creative freedom, and context (Martínez-Costa & Damas, 2008). In Latin America especially, the chronicle is understood as a form of narration that combines journalistic and literary elements, with a focus on subjective narrative and sociocultural context. The interview, which is considered more than a radio genre, reflects the ability of a journalist to discover the interviewee's truth and communicate it effectively according to the characteristics of the radio medium (Balsebre, 2004; Balsebre et al., 1998). Similarly, the report narrates and describes events of social interest, adding a context of interpretation through a creative structure and diverse sources (Damas, 2007; Villafranca, 2021).

Other subgenres can also be experimented with. The feature tells real stories with “sounds,” like a hybrid genre between journalism and art, seeking to raise audience awareness of social issues (Biewen, 2010; Lechuga, 2015; Ortiz & Galay, 2020; Rodríguez, 2021). The sound essay combines oral narrative with scientific reflection to disseminate more complex or sophisticated knowledge (Esteban & Otón, 2023), and the soundscape is like a sensitive recording and experience, capturing the auditory environment of characters, territories, or spaces (Carles, 2009; Montibeller, 2018; Schaeffer, 1966; Schafer, 1977). Meanwhile, radio drama or audio fiction is currently experiencing a new phase on podcast platforms, as it exploits the artistic forms of radio to communicate content that can mobilise the audience (Galay, 2010; Villafranca & Salar, 2020). In this regard, Esteban and Otón (2023, p. 154) recognise that the narrative non-fiction podcast:

Is a variant of the audio on demand associated with great radio reports and documentaries (Legorburu, Edo & García-González, 2021), but through sound structures and resources (ambiences, shots, music, effects...) less linked to immediacy and more to serenity and depth.

In the realm of the narrative non-fiction podcast, various tools and techniques can be incorporated, including the narrator (Gutiérrez et al., 2019), who provides empathy and credibility (McHugh, 2022), and the sound archive, which provides content, structure, and context (Reséndiz, 2022). Life stories presented as oral biographical or autobiographical accounts are also used (Pujadas, 1992; Valles, 2002), having gained strength because they allow for the construction of personal, intimate narratives that are close to the listener's reality (Lindgren, 2016; McHugh, 2012), as well as sound experimentation (McHugh, 2012; Ortiz & Galay, 2020) and even fictional elements, such as the recreation of past events of which there is no record (Galay, 2010). Podcasts of this genre demonstrate a remarkable ability to integrate techniques that reinforce the credibility of the story while also deepening the listener's emotional connection and engagement with the narrative.

Specifically, the key to captivating the listeners in these stories told through journalistic, artistic, and experimental means lies in the narrators, who are not only the “writer, performer, and guide” (McHugh, 2022, p. 18) but also the ones who engage with the audience through their voices, stories, and relationships with the characters, creating a bond with the listeners (Lindgren, 2023) and transforming them into co-researchers (Spinelli & Dann, 2019).

Taking into account these defining characteristics of the narrative non-fiction podcast genre, along with the subgenres and techniques that producers use to tell the story, we propose to analyse them within the context of the Ibero-American independent production. The independent podcast, with cultural roots in stand-up, fanzine, and community radio (Galay, 2015), is characterised by its editorial and creative freedom

(Adler, 2021, 2022; Bonini, 2015; García-Marín, 2020). Bonixe's (2006) study focused on the profiles of Portuguese podcasters, while Markman (2011) and Millette (2011) carried out exploratory research on independent English-language podcasts. The main findings of these studies revealed independence from conventional radio, the freedom to create their own productions without any editorial restrictions, the free use of technologies, and participation in different social groups. According to Markman (2011, p. 552): "An independent audio podcaster is someone who creates and distributes a regular podcast, whose origin is not a pre-existing traditional media programme." Subsequent research identified two clear trends in independent podcasts. The first is an English-language tradition, where podcasters trained in public radio leave it to launch their own podcasts, enjoying editorial, financial, and cultural freedom (Bonini, 2015), and the other trend is in Latin America, linked to community and alternative radio with a social focus (da Silva & de Oliveira, 2020; de Oliveira et al., 2023; Galay, 2015).

Additionally, another four key aspects can be found in research on independent production (Adler, 2021, 2022; Contreras et al., 2022; Fernández-Sande, 2015; Jorgensen, 2021; Ortiz-Díaz & Moreno-Moreno, 2023; Sellas & Bonet, 2023; Spinelli & Dann, 2019; Tennant, 2023): (a) the reasons for making a podcast, the most salient being creative freedom; (b) financial strategies and models which feed their productions, and how they are conceived in relation to industrial economic capital; (c) editorial decisions and production practices; and (d) participation and relationships with audiences. On this basis, we understand that independent podcasts draw from media and alternative culture and produce audio stories that are politically aware, seeking to be independent of economic, media, and platform powers and creatively free. This presents a broader focus of interest for scientific research, as it raises questions about how they tell stories, what types of media they use, and how they appropriate mass media strategies to insert themselves into the audio industry.

Authors Santos and Peixinho (2019) set out an evolutionary analysis of art through storytelling, underlining how the narrative is a persuasive way of communicating, combining ancestral means of communication with audio storytelling expressed in slow journalism (Greenberg, 2015) and feature and narrative journalism, among other forms. Noteworthy elements include new ways of building the narrative arc of a story, which spreads due to serialisation (Dann, 2014). With the growing popularity of non-fiction podcasting, driven by the success of the true-crime podcast *Serial*, factors such as narrative objectivity and listener co-inquiry in the story construction process have gained interest (McCracken, 2017; Spinelli & Dann, 2019). Extensive research has been conducted by Lindgren (2014, 2016) on personal narratives and how intimate stories foster listener engagement, contributing to the development of digital audio journalism. Meanwhile, McHugh (2012, 2016, 2022) began a discussion on using sound to tell stories and how the storytelling format differs from that found in radio narratives. With a special focus on narrative podcasts, McHugh (2022) identified history, characters, script, structure, sounds, and art as key factors. According to Gutiérrez et al. (2019), events in audio narratives are not merely presented but are explored in great depth with a "narrative strategy" in a series format, encouraging new ways of narrating. Constructing a narrative arc is crucial for ordering and managing the information given. In the interview with two podcast producers, Hebah Fisher, from *Kerning Cultures*, and Maeve McClenaghan, from *The Tip Off*, Goujard (2018) stressed certain key techniques like planning the narrative arc before producing it and finding sensitive and eloquent characters.

Drawing from the research on film narration by Field (2005) and Villafranca's (2023) adaptation to sound documentaries in the Spanish language, this research incorporates four narrative structures. The classic

Aristotelian structure, and those derived from it, follows a three-act format with a narrative line: First, the characters of the story are introduced, then the conflict they face is presented, and finally, the denouement or resolution of the conflict is revealed. The parallel (Brechtian) structure involves different stories being told that share a thematic nexus and occur in the same historical time, with no apparent continuity. It employs an episodic structure where each episode develops a plot or a series of subplots, which together respond to the story's central plot. The counterpoint structure contrasts two situations at the narrative level, where two different characters, whether or not they are linked by a bond, are brought together by an unexpected event. Finally, the master replay structure is derived from the classic linear structure and typically involves more than one main character who tells the story from different points of view.

Based on the literary studies by Genette (1989), the exploration of the radio story (Martínez-Costa, 1998), and the documentary podcast (Villafranca, 2023), we can establish three kinds of narrators for our analysis. The heterodiegetic narrator, who is not in the story (Genette, 1989), narrates it as a voice-over but does not participate as a character (Martínez-Costa, 1998). The homodiegetic narrator has the role of an observer who provides information obtained as a character or witness at the scene (Genette, 1989; Martínez-Costa, 1998). Meanwhile, the autodiegetic narrator “tells their own experiences as the main character in the story” (Martínez-Costa, 1998, p. 100).

## 2. Methodology

The main objective is to analyse the narrative strategies employed in independent non-fiction podcasts in Ibero-America, focusing on how the narrator's role and the structure of the story enhance credibility and listener engagement. The specific objectives are (a) to determine the role played by the figure of the narrator within the stories presented in independent non-fiction narrative podcasts in Ibero-America, (b) to identify and analyse the subgenres and techniques that constitute the narrative non-fiction podcast in order to gain insight into their diversity and unique characteristics in the field of audio journalism, and (c) to explore the narrative structures of these podcasts and the key elements that boost audience comprehension and interest.

The research questions below address independent non-fiction narrative podcasts from Ibero-America in Spanish and Portuguese:

RQ1: What is the narrator's role in constructing narrative structures in podcasts?

RQ2: How does the type of narrator (heterodiegetic, homodiegetic, or autodiegetic) establish a link with the characters and listeners?

RQ3: What subgenres and techniques make up the narrative non-fiction podcast, and what are their distinguishing characteristics?

RQ4: How do narrative structures, especially non-linear ones (such as Brechtian or counterpoint structures), condition the listener's understanding and interest?

This research involves several exploratory and descriptive case studies using a mixed methodology. It includes 15 interviews—14 individual and one group—with 16 producers of 11 independent non-fiction

narrative podcasts from seven Ibero-American countries. In addition, a content analysis of 73 episodes from the selected productions was conducted to become acquainted with their audio narratives, both in Spanish and Portuguese. This methodological design was divided into three stages: defining the sample, selecting the information-gathering techniques, and developing the instruments for data recording and analysis.

Out of the 22 countries that make up Ibero-America, the seven countries in the study were chosen because they represent important markets for podcast consumption. This is supported by the main research from digital news reports (Newman, Fletcher, Robertson, et al., 2023; Newman, Fletcher, Schulz, et al., 2021) and secondary data from Statista for Brazil in 2021, and Colombia and Mexico in 2021 and 2023 (Statista, 2021, 2023; see Table 1). On this basis, the sample design was drawn up to include the analysis unit, sampling procedure, sample size, and corpus selection (Tamayo, 2000).

The podcasts chosen were released between 2020 and 2023. These may have consisted of one or more series, whether these be in episodes, units, or a combination of both. The sample was taken over three periods between 20th February 2022 and 15th July 2023. The productions chosen underwent the following selection criteria. First, they had to be non-fiction, independent narrative podcasts from broadcasters, radio stations, and large producers and platforms. Second, they had to fulfil at least one of the three independent but complementary conditions: (a) feature in the Spotify rankings; (b) be a podcast which has received awards, been nominated, or been a finalist in any national or international festival; or (c) be a podcast recommended by specialists. And third, they also had to fulfil one of the following features: (a) be a podcast with just one series; (b) be a podcast with one series with independent unit episodes; (c) be a podcast with over one series and independent unit episodes; and (d) be a podcast with over one series with mixed episodes (that is, unitary and in a series). At least two episodes from each series were analysed (see Supplementary Material).

The sample is made up of podcasts that function independently from traditional media, be they media conglomerates, radio companies, or large podcast production companies, reflecting the editorial, creative, and economic autonomy that characterises these types of productions. In addition, they should correspond to the narrative genre of non-fiction and be true stories based on both current journalistic events and historical facts, being told with greater narrative and aesthetic depth. Finally, the fact that these productions receive the listeners' attention, are acknowledged by a specialist in audio journalism, and/or have obtained an award or a nomination indicates the recognition of journalism, the media, and the podcast industry,

**Table 1.** Consumption of podcasts in selected countries.

Country	Digital News Report 2021 ( $\bar{X}$ = 31%)	Digital News Report 2023 ( $\bar{X}$ = 34%)
Argentina	29%	33%
Brazil	41%	57%
Chile	35%	39%
Colombia	25%	37%
Spain	38%	45%
Mexico	34%	47%
Portugal	41.5%	38%

Source: Newman, Fletcher, Robertson, et al. (2023), Newman, Fletcher, Schulz, et al. (2021), and Statista (2021, 2023).

highlighting the quality of the script, production, narrative, and sound design, among other aspects. The selection criteria applied ensured a representative and varied corpus of high-quality and relevant independent podcasts, which stand out for their narrative richness and depth. This allowed for a thorough analysis of narrative strategies and provided a solid basis for exploring diverse techniques and creative approaches.

According to these criteria and subcriteria, 11 podcasts were selected, corresponding to Argentina (two), Brazil (two), Colombia (one), Chile (one), Spain (two), Mexico (one), and Portugal (two). A total of 73 episodes were analysed (see Supplementary Material). Here, qualitative research was performed, and semi-structured interviewing techniques were used (Brennen, 2017; Valles, 2002) along with content analysis (Bardin, 1996; Mayring, 2000; Piñuel, 2002). The first was through a questionnaire with seven questions encoded by Atlas Ti v.7 software. It covered how producers defined their podcasts, chose the topics, and told their stories, as well as the subgenres and tools used and the role the narrator played.

The selection criteria to be met by the interviewee was that they had to be the director of the production company and/or producer of the podcast analysed, managing the entire production phase of the podcast. When two team members were interviewed (as in the case of Argentina, Mexico, Spain, and Portugal), it was because the information provided by one complemented the information shared by the other, leading to complete responses to the questions. Gender (five women and 11 men), age (35 to 50 years old), and profession (all journalists and audiovisual communicators) were less relevant criteria for their selection.

**Table 2.** Interviews.

Country	Podcast	Interviewees
Argentina	<i>La Segunda Muerte del Dios Punk</i> from Erre Podcast productions and Nicolás Maggi	Nicolás Maggi, producer and narrator, and Martín Parodi, artistic director
Argentina	<i>Fugas</i> from Anfibia productions	Tomás Pérez Vizzón, director, and Sebastián Ortega, researcher, scriptwriter, and narrator
Brazil	<i>Praia dos Ossos</i> from Rádio Novelo	Branca Vianna, producer
Brazil	<i>Até Que se Prove o Contrário</i> from Agência Pública	Ricardo Terto, producer
Colombia	<i>Un Periódico de Ayer</i> from La No Ficción	Juan Serrano, director
Chile	<i>Relato Nacional</i> from La Factoría	Nancy Castillo, director
Spain	<i>Brazalete Negro</i> from Panenka podcast productions and Radio Primavera Sound	Aitor Lagunas, director and narrator, and Marta Salicrú, executive producer
Spain	<i>La Historia Es Ayer</i> from El Extraordinario	Marcus Hurst, director and producer
Mexico	<i>Así Como Suena</i> from Puro Contenido	Carlos Puig, director, and Yissel Ibarra, producer
Portugal	<i>Segurança Privada, Exército de Precários</i> from Fumaça	Pedro Santos, producer
Portugal	<i>110 Histórias, 110 Objetos</i> from 366 Ideias and the Higher Technical Institute	Marco António Gonçalves, producer, and Joana Lobo, coordinator

This questionnaire was supplemented with a content analysis of 73 episodes using a registry sheet designed for this purpose. The 18 variables, which corresponded to the basic data from the podcast and the audio narratives (topic, structure, narrative podcast mode—i.e., true crime or narrative documental podcast—subgenre, tools, techniques, and narrator), were then encoded. The use of both designs enabled the audio narratives in the 11 podcasts to be analysed on the basis of a non-probability sample and according to the selection criteria explained. Together, the analysis categories mainly concentrated on: (a) topic and kind of story; (b) podcast structure; (c) subgenres and techniques, and (d) author's perspective.

### 3. Results and Analysis

#### 3.1. Classification of Topics in Non-Fiction Podcast Narratives

The topics are varied, from murder (*Praia dos Ossos/Beach of Bones*, Brazil; *Brazalete Negro/Black Bracelet*, Spain), suicide (*La Segunda Muerte del Dios Punk/The Second Death of the Punk God*, Argentina), prison escapes (*Fugas/Escapes*, Argentina), to research on the justice system (*Até Que se Prove o Contrário/Reasonable Doubt* from Brazil) and private security (*Segurança Privada, Exército de Precários/Private Security* from Portugal). There are also stories about purposeful lives (*Relato Nacional/National Story*, Chile) and about countries (*110 Histórias, 110 Objetos/110 Stories, 110 Objects* from Portugal; *Un Periódico de Ayer/Yesterday's News* from Colombia; *Así Como Suena/That's How it Sounds* from Mexico; and *La Historia Es Ayer/History Was Yesterday* from Spain).

Based on this thematic diversity, the podcasts were classified into two main thematic trends: historical narrations and personal stories. This classification reflects not only the variety of narrative approaches but also the different creative challenges the genre poses. Historical narrations address past events that have not been told in depth or offer a novel or unexplored point of view (Gutiérrez et al., 2019; Lechuga, 2015), while personal stories are intimate or biographical stories of a person or a group of people, which may have a significant or global scope (Lindgren, 2016). Both categories are especially relevant in the context of independent production in Ibero-America. Historical narrations allow us to review significant events from local or alternative perspectives, providing another understanding of history. Personal stories reflect the challenges, struggles, and experiences of underrepresented people and communities, connecting directly to the region's socio-political and cultural realities. This distinction facilitates a thorough analysis of how narrative strategies seek to capture the listener's attention and generate a deep connection to complex realities. Of the 73 chapters analysed, 47 are historical narrations, representing 64% of the sample, with the remaining 26 being personal stories, which account for 36% (see Table 3, whose percentages were ordered from most to least frequency).

Among the historical narrations podcasts identified were: *Praia dos Ossos* from Brazil; *Fugas* from Argentina; *Un Periódico de Ayer* from Colombia; *Segurança Privada, Exército de Precários* and *110 Histórias, 110 Objetos*, both of which are from Portugal; and *Brazalete Negro* and *La Historia Es Ayer* from Spain. Numerous instances from Latin America highlight a strong emphasis on human rights and state-sponsored violence. We see personal stories in podcasts such as *Até Que se Prove o Contrário* (Brazil), *Relato Nacional* (Chile), *La Segunda Muerte del Dios Punk* (Argentina), and *Así Como Suena* (Mexico). In most cases, common everyday stories act as a springboard for broader and more profound reflections. The Mexican producer Yissel Ibarra argues: "In effect, as the narrative podcast, we give a voice to these people who never have one, and these are topics that perhaps would never be on the radio as they are on the independent podcast."



**Table 3.** Summary of main trends in the podcasts analysed.

Categories	Subcategories	Frequency of occurrence
Kind of story	Historical narration	Most frequently
	Personal stories	Frequently
Narrative structure	Episodic story	Most frequently
	Aristotelian classic	Frequently
	Replay story	Less frequently
	Parallel or Brechtian; counterpoint	Infrequently
Subgenres	Interview, documentary	Most frequently
	Sound chronicle	Frequently
	Soundscape, audio essay	Less frequently
	Fiction	Infrequently
Techniques	Audio archives	Most frequently
	Recreation of events	less frequently
	Life stories	Infrequently
Narrator role	Heterodiegetic	Most frequently
	Homodiegetic	Less frequently
	Autodiegetic	Infrequently

Notes: Ranges from most frequently, frequently, less frequently and infrequently in relation to obtained results.

Whether these be personal stories or historical narrations, an interest in documentaries and a vocation for journalism is reflected in all podcasts, where the tales encourage critical reflections on certain problems, the country, or the whole of society. This is confirmed by Ricardo Terto, producer of *Até Que se Prove o Contrário* from Brazil:

Beyond individuals, these injustices impact society as a whole. So why do I care about these stories? Because beyond the tragic element of their lives, these stories affect Brazilian society, showing how the Brazilian justice system is flawed....This path has shifted from the micro to the macro.

Despite the differences among the 11 podcasts, they share a social commitment by dealing with historical cases, such as topics that challenge stereotypes, discrimination, or unseen reality, which many ordinary people experience and can identify with as they are universal. Although these podcasts are not based on community or alternative radio, they have approaches and narratives which are inherent to non-conventional media.

### 3.2. Analysis of the Narrative Structure

The literature shows extensive research on audio narratives in podcasts (McHugh, 2022; Santos & Peixinho, 2019; Spinelli & Dann, 2019; among others). This includes those with a fairly traditional structure, as seen in true crime (Hardey & James, 2022), and less conventional documentary narrative podcasts (Gutiérrez et al., 2019; Lindgren, 2016). However, Sherrill (2022) proposes a different approach to the classic North American true crime, in line with what interviewees Sebastián Ortega (*Fugas* from Argentina) and Branca Vianna (*Praia dos Ossos* from Brazil) said about the search to establish an identity for Latin American true crime. Sherrill (2022) notes that successor podcasts to *Serial*, like *Undisclosed* (2015–2022), which dealt with wrongful convictions in the United States and *Suspect Convictions* (2017–2018), which investigated two real crimes in Heartland or Midwestern United States critique the genre and reverse the order of victims and

perpetrators by giving black, poor, and LGBTQIA+ people the position as victims they have never been granted as marginalised members of society. Ortega is convincing in this regard:

It's not that the term [true crime] bothers me, but I think a more appropriate term is missing for Latin American narratives. We're talking about prison escapes, many of which are related to the political and social context and the political violence in Argentina and Uruguay, as well as in other Latin American countries.

Based on the content analysis and the proposed classification of structures, this research aims to show an eclectic arc in the Ibero-American world, with the structure aiming to keep the listener's interest until the end. Juan Serrano, director of *Un Periódico de Ayer* from Colombia, argues that "although internally we may say that structure isn't everything, it almost always is, as it's a crucial point in the process of producing a podcast."

Out of the 73 cases analysed, two narrative structures appear most frequently: the episodic story (39 episodes, 53%) and the Aristotelian classic (20 episodes, 27%). The replay story is seen in seven episodes (10%), and the parallel or Brechtian in four episodes (5%). Meanwhile, the counterpoint narrative structure is observed in three (4%; see Table 3). Even when the narratives are traditional, based on literature, cinema, and true crime itself, more daring structures are used involving audio and technological media to make storytelling more appealing.

According to the interviewees, the preeminence of the episodic plot structure is associated with the predominance of chronological narration, which is found within each episode in a relatively linear order. This type of structure is intended to hook listeners, compelling them to continue with the following episodes, and can be seen in two episodes of *Fugas* (Argentina), in the complete series of *Até Que se Prove o Contrário* (Brazil), and in four of the eight episodes of *Segurança Privada, Exército de Precários* (Portugal).

Found in second place is the significant presence of the classic Aristotelian structure, which is also based on the linear or chronological structure. Podcasts such as *Así Como Suena* (Mexico), *Un Periódico de Ayer* (Colombia), *110 Histórias*, *110 Objetos* (Portugal), and various episodes of *Relato Nacional* (Chile) follow this structure. Juan Serrano, director of *Un Periódico de Ayer* (Colombia), argues why this classic form of storytelling is still valuable for today's narrative podcast: "I'm a big fan of the chronological way of telling a story because I think it's the easiest way to order the information and I don't want to confuse the listener."

In other cases, the structure varies in each episode. For example, three of the five episodes analysed in *Relato Nacional* from Chile follow a classic Aristotelian structure, while the other two use the counterpoint structure. In other examples, like in *Así Como Suena* (Mexico), three of the seven episodes studied have replay narratives, and three have parallel ones. *Fugas* from Argentina, *Relato Nacional* from Chile, and *La Historia Es Ayer* from Spain experiment with less traditional structures, which may also be the "secret" to their success in their prize-winning podcasts. Marcus Hurst, director and screenwriter of *La Historia Es Ayer*, explains that:

I'm not that orderly or methodical, although I do start from a central point and add more ingredients. There is no fixed structure, such as a knight and king, but I do like a lot of rhythm and changes to keep the brain awake.

Being able to keep the audience's attention is a major challenge in the context of personalised, asynchronous, and mobile podcast consumption. The intention to sustain the listener's interest is clearly reflected in the idea of a "hook" or "bait," which several producers of the studied podcasts mention. In this regard, Portuguese producer Marco António Gonçalves, of *110 Histórias*, *110 Objetos*, points out that:

What I try to do is to capture the listener's attention and convince them to stay for the rest of the story. Essentially, I throw out a kind of bait when I'm the fisherman, trying to catch the listener and keep them there.

Beyond the tendency to privilege linear structures to tell the story over more experimental ones in the cases studied, the aim is to maintain the listener's attention. As Nicolás Maggi, producer of the Argentinian podcast *La Segunda Muerte del Dios Punk* puts it: "Our goal is to ensure that order is at the service of history."

### 3.3. Analysis of Subgenres and Techniques in Non-Fiction Podcast Narratives

The 11 podcasts selected can be classified as narrative podcasts, among which four of the productions, *La Segunda Muerte del Dios Punk* and *Fugas* from Argentina, *Praia dos Ossos* from Brazil, and *Brazalete Negro* from Spain follow the true crime format. The remaining seven use the documentary narrative mode, *Até Que se Prove o Contrário* from Brazil, *Relato Nacional* from Chile, *Un Periódico de Ayer* from Colombia, *La Historia Es Ayer* from Spain, *s* from Mexico, and *Segurança Privada*, *Exército de Precários* and *110 Histórias*, *110 Objetos* from Portugal.

These productions feature several subgenres, which can be observed in the narrative format used. Among the 73 episodes, 72 use the interview as a subgenre (99%), illustrating its fundamental role in non-fiction narrative podcasts and the importance of having first-hand knowledge about the stories and statements the main characters make (see Table 3). Thus, the interview is valuable from the outset of the project when it is used in the pre-production stage to gather information about the context, the circumstances of the story, and the characters. Afterwards, it is the genre par excellence when the characters come to life in the narrative structure. Sebastián Ortega, scriptwriter and narrator of *Fugas* from Argentina, sums it up very well: "The function of the interview in our work is twofold: first, as an input or source of information, and second, as the testimony, where an individual shares their story."

Another prevailing subgenre is the documentary, present in 47 episodes (64%), with various interviewees emphasising this format and defining their podcasts as such. A third subgenre is the chronicle, seen in 34 episodes (47%), where the narrator/researcher narrates and describes the events from their own perspective. In their role as witnesses, they can provide a more expressive and free narrative. Ricardo Terto, producer of Brazil's *Até Que se Prove o Contrário*, reflects on the creative impetus these subgenres give to narrative non-fiction:

When I joined the production company "Agência Pública," one of the things that most caught my attention, given that I'm not a journalist but an audiovisual producer, is that they called me precisely because they wanted me to give the podcast a distinct colour and a narrative force from that of a journalistic podcast. My main challenge was how to present a very serious subject while delivering what they asked for: soundscape, creation of the soundtrack, and the chronicle.

The soundscape is utilised in 13 episodes (18%), whereas fiction is included in four (5%). Podcasts such as *La Segunda Muerte del Dios Punk* use the soundscape in every episode, while *Así Como Suena*, *Praia dos Ossos*, and *Fugas* incorporate it in three, two, and one, respectively. Meanwhile, in four episodes, three from *Brazalete Negro* and one from *La Historia Es Ayer*, fiction is used as a subgenre (5%). This could be attributed to the merging of documentary and fictional narratives to depict events that have no existing record.

The interview stands out among the subgenres as a fundamental basis for researching stories, testimonies, and experiences. The chronicle and the soundscape often complement each other, blending subjective narratives, creative freedom, and the natural sound spaces provided by field research, a feature that distinguishes this type of podcast from other podcasts, such as the conversation podcast. Specifically, sound chronicles have a long history, stemming from the tradition of narrative and radio journalism in Ibero-America. In the cases analysed, chronicles are used to tell stories in an attractive and emotive way, connecting with the audience through sounds, voices, and music.

Fiction is used when there is no sound record of an event or to make the development of the plot more dynamic and attract the listener's interest. Some podcasts incorporate it to stir up the narration, and for this purpose, 16% use recreation, which involves reconstructing a voice or a past event of which there is no record. This can be seen in *Praia dos Ossos* from Brazil, where 1970's radio news is recreated using information from the main character Ângela Diniz, and *Brazalete Negro* from Spain, which reenacts personal stories or news with modern-day voices.

Certain podcast producers, such as *La Historia Es Ayer*, *Praia dos Ossos*, and *La Segunda Muerte del Dios Punk*, mention incorporating audio essays, which is observed in 10 episodes (14%; see Table 3). This suggests a link between deliberate reflection and experiments with sound. Meanwhile, the report is only used in the series *Segurança Privada, Exército de Precários* from Portugal.

Within the selected narrative podcasts, the use of various subgenres stands out, defined as "specific ways of organizing content" (Villafranca, 2021, p. 33), ranging from the most informative (including chronicles and interviews), interpretative (like reports and opinion), to more artistic subgenres, such as soundscapes and fiction. That is to say, although informative and interpretative genres of reality are used, fictional elements are also incorporated to tell, recreate, or make the story being narrated more striking.

Apart from the subgenres mentioned, the podcasts employ other narrative tools and techniques, the most salient of which is narration in all cases. Also used are audio archives (56%), life stories (8%), and the recreation of events (16%). The audio archive is expressed in several formats: WhatsApp audios, YouTube videos, and legal and press archives, which are later narrated or recreated, supplementing and supporting the narrator and/or character stories. Branca Vianna, producer of *Praia dos Ossos*, says: "We obtained the audio of the trial, which was essential to create the atmosphere of the story." This audio, which can be heard in episode two, "O Julgamento" (the trial), refers to the first trial, held three years later in 1979, against the murderer of Ângela Diniz, Doca Street, who died in 2023 at the age of 86. In this case, the audio recordings not only serve to complement the story but also play a descriptive role in the podcast's narrative arc.

"The work of sound archaeology, i.e., searching for a given video or audio, is tremendous, as it enriches the script and the sound narrative" reflects Aitor Lagunas, director of *Brazalete Negro* from Spain, on the value of the sound archive and its importance for telling the story.

The sound archive, which has been the subject of more intensive study in recent years, both as a heritage and as a sound document (Reséndiz, 2022), is a tool that allows us to better illustrate the history, providing depth and bringing to life the testimonies, sounds, and music that capture a moment and an era. Indeed, this tool makes it possible to evoke and transport the listener to a time that would otherwise be inaccessible. A creative example of the valorisation of sound archives is *La Historia Es Ayer* (Spain), which features the “archaeological” rescue of audiovisual archives from other periods and in different languages. Other examples include *Un Periódico de Ayer* (Colombia), *Fugas* (Argentina), and *Así Como Suena* (México), which highlight the value of the “historical” sound archive to explore past events related to human rights in a context of violence, repression, or disappearance, whether in dictatorship or democracy.

Life stories are also used in some podcasts, such as *Relato Nacional* (Chile) and *Un Periódico de Ayer* (Colombia). In biographies, life stories are explored and enrich the subject matter to create an intimate story with which listeners can identify; in other words, a personal and immersive narrative, as Lindgren (2016) explains. On this level, the life story presented in these podcasts allows us to enhance the value of successive interviews to get to the heart of the characters and thus build a reliable, accurate, intimate, and revealing account of their lives. These techniques reveal both the depth of research with which the story is produced and the quest to connect with listeners through intimate stories that they can relate to or that evoke their empathy.

### 3.4. Analysis of the Narrator Role

The role of the narrator is pivotal in the podcasts chosen. In 75% of cases (55 episodes), the producers mostly used the heterodiegetic narrator, i.e., someone who is objective, carries out research objectively, and does not participate in the story. The role of this type of narrator is more akin to research journalism, seeking to engage listeners in the story. Indeed, concerning the predominance of the heterodiegetic narrator, the interviewees describe the narrator more as a guide or witness, as McHugh (2022) highlights, who accompanies the story and sets the scene.

Branca Vianna, producer of Rádio Novelo in Brazil, analyses her role as a narrator in *Praia dos Ossos*: “What is the narrator’s role? I think it’s always that of a guide, someone who is always guiding and directing the listener, not in an obvious way but subtly because nobody likes to be told what to do.” Juan Serrano, director of *Un Periódico de Ayer* from Colombia, confirms this idea about the heterodiegetic narrator: “I really like the idea of taking the listener by the hand” to show them the actions, circumstances, and context of the characters in the story.

Another type of narration is homodiegetic and can be found in 15 episodes (21%). Here, the narrator is a witness or supporting actor who participates in the action but does not interfere. Meanwhile, the autodiegetic narrator, the protagonist of their own stories, is used in only three episodes (4%; see Table 3).

Although the narrator is a central figure in this type of podcast, they are mainly a heterodiegetic or objective narrator in the cases studied. The homodiegetic narrator—as a direct witness of the story—and the autodiegetic narrator—as the protagonist of their own story—have enough room for exploration and to connect more directly with the listener without neglecting the veracity of the facts that are being told. In this sense, the author’s perspective is guaranteed through a journalistic ethic, as referred to by the interviewees, in which the real facts are thoroughly investigated and even checked by specialists within the

production company, as is the case for *Praia dos Ossos* from Brazil, and *Segurança Privada, Exército de Precários* from Portugal, which have a fact-checking team.

Through their voice, their story, and their relationship with the characters, the narrator plays a pivotal role in connecting with the listeners, and thus achieving credibility and intimacy with the audience (Lindgren, 2023), involving the listener in the dramatic progression of the story (Spinelli & Dann, 2019).

#### 4. Conclusions

This study has revealed and analysed in-depth the current trends in the key narrative strategies employed in independent non-fiction narrative podcasts in Ibero-America, providing new insights into the role of the narrator, and the narrative structures and techniques used to generate emotional connection and credibility among listeners.

The predominant use of the heterodiegetic narrator demonstrates a clear tendency towards objectivity in storytelling, with the narrator positioned as a guide or mediator. This figure, though not directly involved in the action, enables the listener to assume the role of witness and collaborator in the reconstruction of events. Despite this distanced approach, the heterodiegetic narrator effectively connects with the audience by not only organising and presenting information clearly but also offering an interpretative context that enhances the understanding of the story. While the presence of homodiegetic and autodiegetic narrators is more limited, their strategic use fosters intimacy and emotional depth. The homodiegetic narrator, acting as a witness or secondary character, brings the listener closer to the story and its characters. In contrast, the autodiegetic narrator, as the protagonist of their own story, creates a stronger emotional bond by offering the listener direct access to personal experiences, which further reinforces the authenticity of the narrative.

The interview stands out as the core resource in the podcasts analysed, serving both as a research tool and a crucial component in the construction of the narrative. This subgenre allows the characters to express their experiences directly, facilitating empathy and identification on the part of the listener. Incorporating documentary and chronicle formats, combined with sound techniques such as soundscape, offers a multidimensional narrative approach that enriches the development of stories and deepens the exploration of social, historical, and personal themes. These techniques reinforce authenticity and provide an immersive experience that distinguishes the narrative non-fiction podcast from other genres. Although some researchers associate podcast narratives with reports, only *Segurança Privada, Exército de Precários* from Portugal develops this subgenre, and the documentary occupies a higher ranking, as stated by several interviewees.

The documentary narrative serves as the primary modality, although true crime is also relevant. There is also a strong social commitment, as seen in *Praia dos Ossos* from Brazil, or more creatively regarding true crime in football in *Brazalete Negro* from Spain. While fiction occupies a lower place as a subgenre, it plays a significant role in recounting a past event of which there is no record, such as an audio file or a sound statement. Thus, recreation is a valuable tool for creative storytelling that complements the other subgenres or resources used.

The principal narratives used tend towards the episodic and classical structures, suggesting a preference for linear forms that make it easier to follow the story. This linear approach allows for greater clarity in the narrative, ensuring that the listener can follow the unfolding events effortlessly. However, although less

frequent, more experimental structures such as counterpoint and Brechtian offer a more sophisticated and challenging narrative that, in some cases, enhances listener interaction by presenting multiple perspectives and timelines within a single story. This demonstrates that the ability to experiment with more complex structures broadens the narrative repertoire while capturing the attention of audiences seeking more innovative content. As for narrative structures, producers recognise that they depend on the story and, above all, on keeping the listener's attention.

These productions stand out for their socially aware topics, whether through historical narrations or personal experiences, which are meant for universal appeal and are in keeping with life stories and subjective approaches. By employing flexible and different narrative structures that are not limited to traditional journalistic formats, narrative non-fiction podcasts present an innovative approach to storytelling. They allow topics to be dealt with in a deeper and more human way, with the intensive use of interviews, life stories, and sound re-enactments providing an emotional and personal connection with listeners. The findings of this study suggest that non-fiction narratives in independent podcasts in Ibero-America have managed to balance objectivity and emotion, creating narratives that are not only informative but also deeply immersive, as well as allowing complex and sensitive topics to be addressed with a more social and holistic perspective, ultimately fostering a more complete and human-centred audio journalism.

Although this study has focused on identifying the main narrative strategies in 11 independent non-fiction podcasts in Ibero-America, a future line of research could address a comparative analysis by country in the region. This approach would allow us to explore how cultural and linguistic contexts influence narrative strategies and the use of sub-genres in each country.

Future lines of research could include also extend the analysis to podcasts of other countries to explore how narrative strategies vary in different environments. Furthermore, it would be relevant to investigate how podcast platforms and their evolution influence the narrative techniques employed by producers, as well as how listeners interact with the stories.

### **Acknowledgments**

We would like to express our gratitude to the 16 podcast producers interviewed.

### **Funding**

This publication is part of the R&D&I project PID2023-149124OB-I00 funded by MICIU/AEI/10.13039/501100011033 and by ERDF/EU.

### **Conflict of Interests**

The authors declare no conflict of interests.

### **Supplementary Material**

Supplementary material for this article is available online in the format provided by the authors (unedited).

### **References**

Adler, F. (2021). The tension between podcasters and platforms: Independent podcasters' experiences of the paid subscription model. *Creative Industries Journal*, 15(1), 58–78. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17510694.2021.1890417>

- Adler, F. (2022). Podcasting about yourself and challenging norms: An investigation of independent women podcasters in Denmark. *Nordicom Review*, 43(1), 94–110. <https://doi.org/10.2478/nor-2022-0006>
- Balsebre, A. (2004). *El lenguaje radiofónico*. Cátedra.
- Balsebre, A., Mateu, M., & Vidal, D. (1998). *La entrevista en radio, televisión y prensa*. Cátedra.
- Bardin, L. (1996). *Análisis de contenido*. Akal Ediciones.
- Biewen, J. (2010). Introduction. In J. Biewen & A. Dilworth (Eds.), *Reality radio: Telling true stories in sound* (pp. 1–14). Center for Documentary Studies at Duke University.
- Bonini, T. (2015). La 'segunda era' del podcasting: El podcasting como nuevo medio de comunicación de masas digital. *Quaderns del CAC*, 18(41), 21–30.
- Bonixe, L. (2006, May 12). Um olhar sobre o podcasting português. *Rádio e Jornalismo*. <https://radioe-jornalismo.blogspot.com/2006/05/um-olhar-sobre-o-podcasting-portugus.html>
- Brennen, B. (2017). *Qualitative research methods for media studies*. Routledge.
- Carles, J. L. (2009). *El paisaje sonoro, una herramienta interdisciplinar: Análisis, creación y pedagogía con el sonido*. Centro Virtual Cervantes.
- Contreras, L. M., García-Marín, D., & Ardini, C. G. (2022). Anatomía del transpodcaster: Un nuevo perfil de productor en el podcast independiente. *Austral Comunicación*, 11(2), 1–31. <https://doi.org/10.26422/aucom.2022.1102.con>
- Damas, S. H. (2007). El reportaje en radio, anatomía de un género. *Ámbitos. Revista Internacional de Comunicación*, 16, 91–105.
- Dann, L. (2014). Only half the story: Radio drama, online audio and transmedia storytelling. *Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*, 12(1/2), 141–154.
- da Silva, J. D. A., & de Oliveira, D. L. (2020). Audiodocumentário no cenário podcasting: Por um rádio independente e de caráter social. *Radiofonias, Revista de Estudos em Mídia Sonora*, 11(1), 182–199.
- de Oliveira, D. L., Pavan, R., & da Silva, J. D. A. (2023). A função social dos podcasts independentes: Os exemplos Redes da Maré e Cirandeiras. *Revista ALCEU*, 23(50), 92–110. <https://doi.org/10.46391/ALCEU.v23.ed50.2023.370>
- Esteban, L. M. P., & Otón, L. M. (2023). Los podcasts narrativos de no ficción. In S. H. Damas & J. L. Rojas-Torrijos (Eds.), *Manual de nuevos formatos y narrativas para el periodismo y la no ficción* (pp. 151–174). Tirant Humanidades.
- Fernández-Sande, M. (2015). Radio Ambulante: Narrative radio journalism in the age of crowdfunding. In T. Bonini & B. Monclús (Eds.), *Radio audiences and participation in the age of network society* (pp. 176–194). Routledge.
- Field, S. (2005). *Screenplay: The foundations of screenwriting*. Delta.
- Galay, F. G. (2010). *El radiodrama en la comunicación de mensajes sociales*. Ediciones Jinete Insomne.
- Galay, F. G. (2015). Movimiento podcaster: La nueva concreción de la radio libre. *Question/Cuestión*, 1(46), 135–150.
- García-Marín, D. (2020). Del zine al podcast. Repensar la cultura de la participación desde un análisis comparativo de los medios alternativos. *Doxa Comunicación*, 30, 107–125.
- Genette, G. (1989). *Figuras III*. Lumen.
- Goujard, C. (2018, October 30). *Técnicas narrativas para podcasting*. IJNet. <https://bit.ly/3JBluzH>
- Greenberg, S. (2015). Editing, fast and slow. *Journalism Practice*, 10(4), 555–567.
- Gutiérrez, M., Sellas, T., & Esteban, J. A. (2019). Periodismo radiofónico en el entorno online: El podcast narrativo. In L. P. Esteban & J. M. G. Lastra (Eds.), *La transformación digital de la radio: Diez claves para su comprensión profesional y académica* (pp. 131–150). Tirant lo Blanch.



- Hardey, M., & James, S. (2022). Digital seriality and narrative branching: The podcast Serial, Season One. *Communication and Critical/Cultural Studies*, 19(1), 74–90. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14791420.2022.2029513>
- Ivoox Observatory. (2023). *Datos del consumo de podcasts en Español*.
- Jorgensen, B. (2021). The “cultural entrepreneurship” of independent podcast production in Australia. *Journal of Radio & Audio Media*, 28(1), 144–161. <https://doi.org/10.1080/19376529.2020.1853126>
- Lechuga, K. (2015). *El documental sonoro: Una mirada desde América Latina*. Jinete Insomne.
- Lindgren, M. (2014). ‘This Australian life’: The americanisation of radio storytelling in Australia. *Australian Journal Review*, 36(2), 63–75.
- Lindgren, M. (2016). Personal narrative journalism and podcasting. *The Radio Journal: International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*, 14(1/2), 23–41. [www.doi.org/10.1386/rjao.14.1.23\\_1](http://www.doi.org/10.1386/rjao.14.1.23_1)
- Lindgren, M. (2023). Intimacy and emotions in podcast journalism: A study of award-winning Australian and British podcasts. *Journalism Practice*, 17(4), 704–719. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.1943497>
- Markman, K. (2011). Doing radio, making friends and having fun: Exploring the motivations of independent audio podcasters. *New Media & Society*, 14(4), 547–565. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444811420848>
- Martínez-Costa, M. P. (1998). Tipología y funciones del narrador en los relatos radiofónicos. *Comunicación y Cultura*, 5, 97–104.
- Martínez-Costa, M. P., & Damas, S. H. (2008). *La crónica radiofónica*. Instituto RTVE.
- Mayring, P. (2000). Qualitative content analysis. *Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung Forum: Qualitative Social Research*, 1(2). <https://doi.org/10.17169/fqs-1.2.1089>
- McCracken, E. (Ed.). (2017). *The Serial podcast and storytelling in the digital age*. Routledge.
- McHugh, S. (2012). Oral history and the radio documentary/feature: Introducing the ‘COHRD’ form. *The Radio Journal International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*, 10(1), 35–51.
- McHugh, S. (2016). How podcast is changing the audio storytelling genre. *The Audio Journal—International Studies in Broadcast & Audio Media*, 14 (1), 65–82.
- McHugh, S. (2022). Sounding out stories: A critical analysis of the prince, how to become a dictator, the king of Kowloon, three narrative podcasts on contemporary China. *RadioDoc Review*, 8(1), 1–22.
- Millette, M. (2011, October 10–13). *Independent podcasting as a specific online participative culture: A case of study of Montreal’s podcasters* [Paper presentation]. IR 12.0: Performance and Participation, the annual conference of the Association of Internet Researchers, Seattle, Australia.
- Montibeller, A. C. (2018). Paisaje sonoro y documental. In C. Beauvoir (Eds.), *Historias, terrenos y aulas: La narrativa sonora en español desde dentro* (pp. 75–93). Ediciones Uniandes.
- Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Robertson, C. T., Eddy, K., & Nielsen, R. K. (2023). *Reuters Institute digital news report 2023*. Reuters Institute; University of Oxford. [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2023.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2023-06/Digital_News_Report_2023.pdf)
- Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Schulz, A., Andi, S., Robertson, C., & Nielsen, R. K. (2021). *Reuters Institute digital news report 2021*. Reuters Institute; University of Oxford. [https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital\\_News\\_Report\\_2021\\_FINAL.pdf](https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2021-06/Digital_News_Report_2021_FINAL.pdf)
- Ortiz, R. R., & Galay, F. G. (2020). La contribución del género documental a proyectos de radioteatro en América Latina. In Villafranca, P. L., & Salar, S. O. (Eds.), *El radioteatro: Olvido, renacimiento y su consumo en otras plataformas* (pp. 47–64). Comunicación Social.
- Ortiz-Díaz, G., & Moreno-Moreno, E. (2023). Motivaciones de los podcasters independientes de Puerto Rico: Entre el emprendimiento del creador amateur y del productor formalizado. *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación/Mediterranean Journal of Communication*, 15(1), 1–16. <https://www.doi.org/10.14198/MEDCOM.25074>

- Piñuel, J. (2002). Epistemología, metodología y técnicas del análisis de contenido. *Estudios de Sociolingüística*, 3(1), 1–42.
- Podcasteros. (2022). *EncuestaPod 2022*. <https://bit.ly/3xvNPVg>
- Pujadas, J. J. (1992). *El método biográfico: El uso de las historias de vida en ciencias sociales*. Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas.
- Reséndiz, P. O. R. (2022). Aproximaciones al estudio del pódcast como documento sonoro de origen digital. *Investigación Bibliotecológica: Archivonomía, Bibliotecología e Información*, 36(90), 151–164. <https://doi.org/10.22201/iibi.24488321xe.2022.90.58512>
- Rodríguez, R. (2021). Documental sonoro y arte radiofónico. *Historia y Comunicación Social*, 26(2), 441–451. <https://doi.org/10.5209/hics.79152>
- Santos, S., & Peixinho, A. (2019). A redescoberta do storytelling: O sucesso dos podcasts não ficcionais como reflexo da viragem. *Estudos em Comunicação*, 29, 147–158. <https://doi.org/10.25768/fal.ec.n29.a09>
- Schaeffer, P. (1966). *Traité des objets musicaux*. Le Seuil.
- Schafer, M. (1977). *The tuning of the world*. McClelland and Stewart.
- Sellas, T., & Bonet, M. (2023). Independent podcast networks in Spain: A grassroots cultural production facing cultural industry practices. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 29(4), 801–817.
- Sherrill, L. (2022). The “Serial effect” and the true crime podcast ecosystem. *Journalism Practice*, 16(7), 1473–1494. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2020.1852884>
- Spinelli, M., & Dann, L. (2019). *Podcasting: The audio media revolution*. Bloomsbury.
- Statista. (2021). Statista global consumer survey 2021.
- Statista. (2023). Podcast consumption in Latin America—Statistics & facts. <https://www.statista.com/topics/9770/podcast-consumption-in-latin-america/#topicOverview>
- Tamayo, G. (2000). Diseños muestrales de investigación. *Semana Económica*, 4(7), 1–14.
- Tennant, L. (2023). Podcasting and ethics: Independent podcast production in New Zealand. *Convergence: The International Journal of Research into New Media Technologies*, 29(4), 854–870.
- Valles, M. (2002). *Entrevistas cualitativas*. Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas.
- Vicente, E., & de Lima, R. (2021). Radio ambulante e a tradição do podcast narrativo no radiojornalismo norte-americano. *Estudos em Jornalismo e Mídia*, 18(1), 257–269.
- Villafranca, P. L. (2021). *Formatos sonoros radiofónicos*. Comunicación Social.
- Villafranca, P. L. (2023). Documental sonoro, la alternativa para contra la realidad con mirada de género. *VISUAL Review*, 15(4), 2–12. <https://doi.org/10.37467/revvisual.v10.4636>
- Villafranca, P. L., & Salar, S. O. (2020). *El radioteatro: Olvido, renacimiento y su consumo en otras plataformas*. Comunicación Social.

## About the Authors



**Raúl Rodríguez-Ortiz** is an assistant professor at the Department of Social Communication, University of Chile. He has a PhD in journalism, with international mention, Complutense University of Madrid. Specialised in radio and podcast, with various research projects and artistic creation with a social approach in relation to migration, afrodescendence, and human rights. Author of the books *La Regata: Las Mariscadoras—Radio Dramas From the South of Chile* (2016) and *100 Years of Radio in Chile* (2022).



**Manuel Fernández-Sande** is full professor at the Complutense University of Madrid and co-principal investigator of the R&D&I project Global Study of the Digital Audio Cultural Industry in Spain (PID2023-149124OB-I00, 2024–2027). He leads the research group Analysis of Journalistic Information, Cultural Industries, and Media Economy. A specialist in radio, podcasting, and media companies, he has published over 100 scientific contributions, supervised 13 doctoral theses, and completed research stays at Cambridge University, Universidade de São Paulo, and Glasgow Caledonian University, among others.