

BookTokers' Communicative Strategies in the Digital Context of Generation Z in Spain

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How to cite this article / Standard reference

Moreno Tenorio, Lucía; Puebla-Martínez, Belén, & Sánchez-Pita, Fernando (2026). BookTokers' Communicative Strategies in the Digital Context of Generation Z in Spain. *Revista Latina de Comunicación Social*, 84, 1-29. <https://www.doi.org/10.4185/RLCS-2026-2682>

Date of Receipt: Dec. 19, 2025

Date of Acceptance: March 23, 2026

Date of Publication: March 27, 2026

ABSTRACT

Introduction: The rise of social media has transformed the cultural practices of young people, establishing TikTok as a prominent platform for recommending cultural content, particularly within the digital landscape of Generation Z. Against this backdrop, BookTok emerges as a digital community dedicated to promoting reading. This study analyzes the communication strategies employed by BookTokers to encourage reading among young Spaniards and how these strategies relate to their perception of literary content. **Methodology:** The research adopts a quantitative, descriptive approach. A content analysis of 662 BookTok videos published by booktokers in 2024 is combined with a survey of 269 users aged 18 to 30. The analysis considers formal, narrative, and interactive aspects, as well as audience reading habits and evaluations. **Results:** The results indicate a predominance of short videos with simple aesthetics and a low degree of commercial explicitness that center on personal experiences. TikTok is establishing itself as a relevant channel for discovering books, though visibility doesn't always lead to reading them. **Discussion:** BookTok functions as a space for cultural mediation, articulating recommendations, fostering a sense of community, and circulating literary trends. **Conclusions:** TikTok contributes to the redefinition of reading recommendation mechanisms and reinforces reading as a shared cultural practice in digital environments.

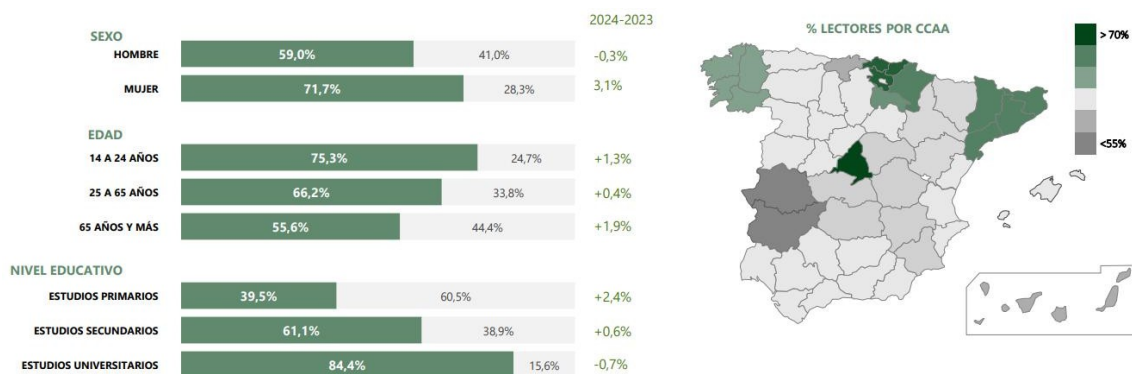
Keywords: reading, TikTok, Generation Z, publishing industry, reading promotion, BookTok, influencer.

1. INTRODUCTION

Intensive social media use has substantially altered how information is accessed and how interpersonal interactions occur. This change is particularly visible in contemporary youth environments, with Generation Z serving as a common reference point due to their connection with digital ecosystems (Doardi, 2021; Marugán Solís & Martín Critikián, 2022). Among the various platforms, TikTok has positioned itself as a relevant space in this context due to its playful nature and growing function as a source of information (Martínez-Estrella et al., 2023). According to Dataportal, Spain has 16.63 million TikTok users, 61.1% of whom are between 18 and 24 years old (Pastor-Rodríguez & Frutos-Torres, 2024). This demographic profile makes the platform a priority for brands seeking to reach this population segment.

The publishing sector is currently experiencing a period of expansion amid technological advancements and changing reading habits (Magadán-Díaz & Rivas-García, 2022). According to the *Asociación de Editores de Madrid*¹ (2025), the book market has maintained an upward trend since 2019. In 2024, there was a 9.8% growth compared to the previous year, reaching 77 million copies sold and a turnover exceeding €1.2 million. This growth corresponds with an increase in reading habits. In 2024, 65.5% of the population over the age of fourteen reported reading books for leisure in their free time, compared to 25.2% who read for work or academic reasons. The annual report *Reading and Book Buying Habits in Spain*, prepared by the Spanish Federation of Publishers' Guilds (FGEE, in Spanish), shows that women between fourteen and twenty-four years old with university degrees predominate within the group that reads for pleasure. The report identifies the Community of Madrid as the region with the highest reading rate, followed by the Basque Country and Catalonia, as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Sociodemographic Infographic on Reading Habits in Spain.



Source: Federation of Publishers' Guilds of Spain (FGEE, 2025, p. 6).

The same report highlights a transformation in the channels through which publishers reach their audiences. Book promotion and recommendations have evolved significantly in recent years, establishing social media as a central component of communication strategies in the Spanish publishing industry. Recognizing that phenomena like BookTok boost sales has led publishers to invest in the platform through collaborations with content creators and corporate profiles, as shown in Figure 2. In this context, it is important to analyze how booktokers promote reading among Generation Z, the characteristics of their communication strategies on BookTok, and how these strategies fit into the broader dynamics of reader socialization, recommendations, and content distribution.

¹ *Asociación de Editores de Madrid*

Figure 2. Profiles of Spanish Publishing Houses and Bookstores on TikTok.



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

1.1. BookTok, Booktokers and Digital Reading Communities

The BookTok phenomenon falls within this context. It refers to the TikTok community that shares short videos related to reading recommendations, reviews, and experiences linked to reading habits (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021). Within this community, BookTokers stand out—they are content creators who regularly publish videos of literary recommendations and share reading experiences with their audience. It is important to distinguish between TikTok as a technological platform, BookTok as a phenomenon and digital community centered around books and reading, and BookTokers as individual content producers within this environment. Thus, while TikTok provides the infrastructure for distribution, BookTok refers to the thematic, relational, and symbolic space. Booktokers embody this phenomenon through their posts. This movement has strengthened spaces for literary exchange and discovery, transforming reading into a participatory, social practice (Cuestas et al., 2022). According to platform data, over 1.2 million literary-themed videos were shared in the first ten months of 2024 (TikTok, 2024), demonstrating the platform's growing importance in book promotion.

Digital communities linked to books and reading share characteristics with other forms of participatory culture in digital environments, particularly with regard to peer interaction and the formation of affinity spaces around shared interests (Jenkins, 2006; Santa María et al., 2024). In the case of BookTok, these dynamics manifest as book recommendations, the exchange of reading experiences, and the formation of literary socialization communities (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021).

In this context, digital communities dedicated to reading emerge on social networks, as does the term "bookfluencer." A bookfluencer is a social media influencer who specializes in books (Guiñez-Cabrera & Mansilla-Obando, 2022). They are content creators who specialize in literature and have a significant community of followers on social media. They generate value for publishers and brands by regularly disseminating book-related content. On TikTok, these content creators are known as booktokers. BookTok should not be understood as merely an aggregation of posts; rather, it is a collective phenomenon that gains visibility through the actions of booktokers. Through practices of recommendation, review, self-presentation, and interaction with the audience, these agents embody the cultural and participatory dynamics associated with BookTok.

BookTok's origins lie in fanzines and early online forums (Cuestas et al., 2022), and later in the BBB community (bookbloggers, booktubers, and bookstagrammers). Bookbloggers emerged within this group in the first decade of the 2000s, commenting on and discussing literature through blogs. Then, in the second decade of the 21st century, booktubers appeared; their name reflects their use of YouTube as a dissemination platform. Burgess and Green (2018) emphasize that this network was one of the pillars of participatory culture. Around 2014, bookstagrammers emerged on Instagram, integrating elements of the previous two literary communities. By the end of the decade, the BookTok community had solidified, establishing TikTok as the preferred platform

for these activities. This community's growth has influenced trends in the publishing sector, boosting sales and encouraging reading among young people (Currenti, 2023).

1.2. Electronic Word-of-Mouth (e-WOM), Influencer Marketing and Digital Literary Recommendation

The configuration of BookTok as a digital community and the role of booktokers as mediating agents point to the recommendation and prescription logics that structure content circulation on social networks. In this context, eWOM (electronic word of mouth) becomes particularly relevant. It is defined as the set of opinions, evaluations, and recommendations voluntarily shared in digital spaces (Haro-Sosa et al., 2024). Henning-Thurau et al. (2004) define eWOM as "any positive or negative statement made by potential, current, or former customers about a product or company that is made available to a multitude of people and institutions via the internet" (p. 39). In the digital environment, peer recommendations like these influence content perception and can affect decision-making, especially when the people issuing these messages are seen as approachable, expert, and reliable (Jin et al., 2024; Nofal et al., 2022). Against this backdrop, influencer marketing has emerged, introducing strategies that connect with audiences through figures who are perceived as trustworthy and credible (Belanche et al., 2021). This approach leverages eWOM (electronic word-of-mouth marketing) to increase the visibility, acceptance, and recommendation of a product or brand. This gives rise to the social media influencer, who is characterized by shared interests with their community, specialization in a specific field (Lou & Yuan, 2019), and the ability to influence public decisions through peer-to-peer messaging (Cheong & Morrison, 2008; Cheong & Thadani, 2012). less intrusive and more personal for audiences, making it a particularly effective alternative when traditional advertising tends to generate distrust (Ooi et al., 2023). Credibility, trust, and social identification are key factors, carrying more weight than the reach of the person making the recommendation (Roldán Gallego & Sánchez Torres, 2021). These conditions are highly relevant in the case of BookTok, where BookTokers act as prescribers within a community in which credibility, affinity, and proximity are crucial for the circulation of recommendations.

Influencer marketing has currently established itself as one of the most effective strategies in the digital ecosystem. Content creators have acquired a prominent role in promoting brands, products, and services. According to IAB Spain and Primetag, Spain is one of the European countries with the largest influencer populations. The market has grown around 40% in recent years, reaching 207,000 active profiles in 2024. TikTok is the platform with the largest number of influencers. Additionally, between 50% and 80% of social media users follow at least one content creator. On average, 60% of people who see a promotion subsequently make a purchase. Publishers have incorporated these dynamics into their communication strategies by collaborating with content creators to increase the visibility of their catalogs (da Silva et al., 2025). Publishers have responded by deploying various strategies, most notably collaborating with content creators, particularly booktokers, to promote their titles (Blanco, 2023). Several studies have linked these dynamics to increased visibility for specific titles and the consolidation of reading trends among young people (Segarra & Torres, 2023). In the case of BookTok, literary recommendations rely on peer-to-peer prescribing logic where booktokers' communication strategies combine thematic affinity, perceived authenticity, and the ability to circulate within the community. Thus, this study is interested not only in describing eWOM as a general phenomenon but also in understanding how booktokers' communication strategies can influence the perception of literary content and Generation Z's relationship with the books shared on BookTok.

1.3. Reading, Gratifications, and the Diffusion of Innovations in Digital Spaces

To understand these dynamics, an interpretive framework is needed to allow viewing reading as a social activity, the reasons behind its popularity, and how certain books become popular and circulate in digital spaces. Structural-functionalist theory is a useful framework for interpreting reading as a cultural practice that is linked to social cohesion and the symbolic integration of those who participate in reading communities (Merton, 1980). From this perspective, reading is an activity that not only occurs individually, but also articulates bonds, shared values, and forms of collective recognition.

The uses and gratifications hypothesis, on the other hand, considers the audience to be an active participant in selecting media and content to meet specific needs (Katz et al., 1973). This perspective is relevant to the present study as it allows us to analyze the needs reading satisfies for Generation Z, such as cognitive, affective, integrative, social integration, and escapist needs. When applied to the digital environment, this theory helps explain why literary content disseminated by booktokers is consumed not only for informational value, but also for entertainment, identification, and a sense of community.

According to the spread of innovation theory, diffusion is the process by which an innovation is communicated through specific channels over time among the members of a social system (Rogers, 2003). In this study, this perspective is relevant for analyzing booktokers as agents who promote the visibility and spread of books, series, and reading trends on BookTok.

This study supports the interpretation of booktokers as agents who promote the visibility and circulation of books, series, and reading trends within BookTok.

Ultimately, it's important to note that this study doesn't focus on strategies developed by publishers or bookstores. Rather, it focuses on communication strategies deployed by booktokers and how they're received by young people in Spain. These strategies are attributed to BookTokers as creators, though they are embedded in the participatory and cultural logics inherent to the BookTok phenomenon (Jerasa, 2025). From this perspective, BookTok is approached as a reading socialization and cultural mediation phenomenon, and booktokers are considered the agents who deploy the analyzed communication strategies. Thus, the study considers the community aspect of the phenomenon, the logic of digital literary recommendations, and the motivations and processes involved in young TikTok users' relationship with reading.

2. OBJECTIVES

The overall objective of this work is to analyze the communication strategies used by booktokers regarding the recommendation and dissemination of literary content among young TikTok users in Spain during 2024. Based on this approach, the following specific objectives are established:

- To identify the formal, content, production, and interaction characteristics present in the videos published by booktokers intended to promote reading.
- To analyze the reading patterns and preferences shown by the surveyed sample and their relationship with the books promoted through videos published by booktokers.
- To examine the needs and motivations that the surveyed sample aspires to meet through reading.
- To explore the relationship between the communication strategies deployed by booktokers and the perception of literary content by the surveyed sample and their participation in the BookTok digital community.

In relation to these objectives, the following working hypotheses are formulated:

1. Literary review videos and the use of audiovisual resources, such as music and effects, are the main characteristics of the content created by booktokers to promote reading.
2. The reading patterns observed in the surveyed sample are related to the books most widely shared by booktokers.
3. The participants turn to reading to address emotional and social needs.
4. The communication strategies developed by booktokers are related to a favorable perception of literary content and to ways of following and identifying with the BookTok community among the surveyed sample.

3. METHODOLOGY

This research falls within the category of descriptive studies, understood as those that seek to define the properties and characteristics of a phenomenon under analysis. Regarding methodology, a quantitative approach has been chosen, allowing for the examination and measurement of the core elements of the communicative strategies employed by the booktokers featured in the analyzed videos from various perspectives. This approach facilitates the collection of information based on measurable concepts and is structured through a hypothetico-deductive procedure that enables the testing of formulated hypotheses, maintaining objectivity in the interpretation of the results (Bernal Torres, 2016).

To strengthen the reliability and consistency of the findings, various analytical techniques have been used (Morgan, 2024). This study has applied different interpretive perspectives: structural-functionalist theory, the uses and gratifications hypothesis, and the diffusion of innovations theory employed respectively to interpret reading as a social practice, reading motivations within Generation Z, and the role of booktokers in the visibility and dissemination of titles; and the combined use of data collection and analysis techniques, which enriches the understanding of the phenomenon.

In relation to content analysis (Berelson, 1971), its application aimed to identify the main characteristics of videos promoting reading on TikTok, as well as to observe the interaction generated between the audience and these posts. More specifically, the analysis focused on videos published by booktokers within the BookTok community. The conceptual delimitation of the object of study served as the basis for the coding process into variables and categories structured in five dimensions: the video; the content; the books mentioned; the production; and the interaction metrics. These dimensions operationalize the communicative strategies being analyzed, understood as the set of formal, narrative, production, and interaction resources present in the videos. Table 1 summarizes the considered dimensions and variables. The variables are in numerical and nominal formats, and the categories are organized as numerical ordinals, dichotomous nominals, polytomous nominals, and open nominals. The categories were defined according to the criteria proposed by Andréu (2019), who states that they must be exhaustive, mutually exclusive, meaningful, clear, and replicable. Complete information regarding the variables and categories can be found in Annex A.

Table 1. Summary of dimensions, variables and categories

Dimension	Variables
Video	Publication date; duration; language; number of words in the description
Content	Type of content; commercial purpose; featured publisher; presence of an influencer; presence of contributors; type of contributor; appeal to the audience/community
Books	Book mentions; number of books mentioned; book title
Production	Shot type; on-screen text; voiceover; on-camera voiceover; music; effects/filters
Metrics	Number of likes; number of comments; number of shares; number of hashtags; hashtags

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Although some of the variables and categories included draw on proposals used in previous research on social networks, such as those by Vicente et al. (2020) and García and Salvat (2022), others were developed specifically to address the topic of this study. Since the reliability of an instrument is linked to the reduction of discrepancies in the results (Andréu, 2019), a pretest was administered to 15% of the sample using stratified random sampling. Three coders participated in the pretest coding process. To ensure the reliability of the content analysis, the degree of agreement between them was assessed using the alpha coefficient of Krippendorff (2002, pp. 197-199), focusing on the variables that required interpretation by the coders. The results obtained yielded values greater than 0.90, indicating a high level of inter-coder reliability for the analyzed variables. The coding and analysis process was carried out during the months of June and July, 2025.

Each content creator was considered a stratum, and the videos were selected proportionally to their size relative to the total (Otzen & Manterola, 2017). Consequently, the pretest was applied to 99 videos distributed as follows: 13 from @maryam.and.books, 20 from @ir_zu, 35 from @soysamaracadenas, and 32 from @sisoylectora. This allowed for more precise adjustment of the variables and categories of analysis, ensuring a balanced representation of the different content styles present in the analyzed booktoker profiles.

The universe of content analysis encompasses all TikTok videos aimed at promoting reading. However, for this study, a sample of 662 videos from 2024 was selected to examine the last complete natural year. Profiles were identified using the Heepsy² platform, applying filters based on keywords related to the topic (*reseñaliteraria*, *booktokespañol*, *librosrecomendados*, *librostok*, *librosen60segundos*, *booktok* and *libros*)³, in addition to a minimum threshold of 100,000 followers. This search process was complemented by a direct search on TikTok, designed as an additional means of verification to confirm the inclusion of the most visible accounts related to the study. Finally, the sample consisted of videos published by four Spanish content creators: @maryam.and.books (85 videos), @ir_zu (132), @soysamaracadenas (230), and @sisoylectora (215), as shown in Table 2. The selection of high-visibility profiles was adopted as a sampling delimitation in order to observe the forms of literary recommendation with the greatest public presence within BookTok. This criterion is not intended to represent the entire community, but rather to focus the analysis on accounts that, due to their reach and activity, allow for a consistent examination of the communication strategies deployed around literary content. Thus, the analysis is deliberately limited to a specific subsegment of BookTok, and its results should be interpreted within that framework.

² <https://www.heepsy.com/>

³ bookreview, Spanish booktokes, recommended books, booktoks, booksin60seconds, booktoks, and books.

Table 2 . Profiles selected for the content analysis sample

Booktoker	Followers	Publications 2024	BookTok Publications	Pretest 15%
maryam.and.books	1,900,000	98	85	13
ir_zu	1,900,000	316	132	20
soysamaracadenas	786,300	237	230	35
sisoylectora	218,000	252	215	32
			662	99

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

The objective is to analyze videos that promote reading. Thus, videos that did not address book-related content, such as posts about influencers and their personal lives, were excluded. Therefore, content unrelated to reading and personal posts that did not align with the booktokers' communication strategies for promoting reading were excluded from the analysis. The content analysis was conducted in Excel between June and July of 2025; therefore, the obtained metrics (number of likes, comments, shares, etc.) refer to that specific period. This clarification is important because data is dynamic and changes over time.

Additionally, a survey was designed to gather direct information from readers and TikTok users. In social media studies, surveys are a common tool for analyzing users' perceptions, motivations, and usage patterns. They allow researchers to gather information from a large number of participants and measure multiple variables through structured questionnaires (Bauer & Tian, 2024).

This questionnaire examined four main dimensions related to the reading experience and consumption of literary content on TikTok. First, it aimed to characterize participants' reading habits by considering variables such as the number of books read in the past year, how often they read each week, and their motivations for reading. Second, the questionnaire identified participants' literary tastes and preferences by asking about their preferred genres and specific popular titles. Third, the questionnaire analyzed TikTok's role as a source of literary information by exploring the extent to which respondents use the social network to discover new books, authors, or trends. Finally, it examined the surveyed sample's perception of literary content disseminated on TikTok, their level of interaction with the BookTok digital community, and the potential influence of these posts on their reading behavior. Regarding reading motivations, the questionnaire included a variable designed to identify the needs that readers hope to satisfy through reading, in accordance with the uses-and-gratifications hypothesis (Katz et al., 1973). This variable was measured using a five-point Likert scale, with values ranging from 1 (I strongly agree) to 5 (I strongly disagree). Due to the ordinal nature of the scale, the analytical treatment involved calculating medians.

A questionnaire specifically designed for this study using Microsoft Forms (see Annex B) was used as the instrument. It was structured around a series of variables that were turned into questions aimed at addressing the research objectives. As previously mentioned, the focus was not on evaluating publishing agents' or bookstores' strategies, but rather on how content published by booktokers is received and its potential impact on reading practices. To ensure consistency in responses and subsequent data analysis, the questionnaire consisted of only closed-ended questions. Additionally, three filter questions were included at the beginning of the form to guarantee that the survey was answered only by relevant participants. The response format included single-choice (dichotomous and polytomous) and multiple-choice questions. Questions requiring the ranking of different options and items based on Likert scales to measure degree of agreement or disagreement and Osgood scales to assess perceptions using pairs of opposing adjectives were also included (Kumar, 2017).

The questionnaire was designed specifically for this study, based on variables defined in accordance with the research objectives. Items based on Likert scales were treated as ordinal variables, so their analysis was performed using frequencies, percentages, and medians. Due to the descriptive and exploratory nature of the study and the use of non-probability sampling, inferential significance tests were not applied. Similarly, an overall internal consistency coefficient was not calculated since the questionnaires do not constitute a single, homogeneous scale but rather encompass distinct dimensions related to reading habits, perception of BookTok, and its influence on reading practices. To improve the clarity and suitability of the instrument, a pretest was conducted with 10% of the estimated sample size. This allowed for adjustments to the length of the questionnaire, revisions to the wording of some items, and refinements to certain statements before its final application. The pretest sample was selected using non-probability convenience sampling, which provided an initial approximation of the target sample.

Once the questionnaire was complete, a non-probability snowball sampling method was used to distribute it, which expanded the scope of the research and allowed access to the required profile. A total of 366 responses were obtained. Of those, 61 were discarded for not meeting the age criterion, eight for not having read in 2024, and 28 for not using TikTok. Consequently, the results analysis was based on 269 valid responses⁴. While the study is framed within the sociocultural context of Generation Z, the results are limited to the units of analysis studied: videos published by high-visibility book bloggers and the sample of young Spanish TikTok users surveyed. The survey's reference universe corresponds to the Spanish population aged 18 to 30, totaling 6,829,065 people (INE, 2024). Using the Calculator.io⁵ sample calculator, a 95% confidence level and a $\pm 5.97\%$ margin of error were determined.

4. RESULTS

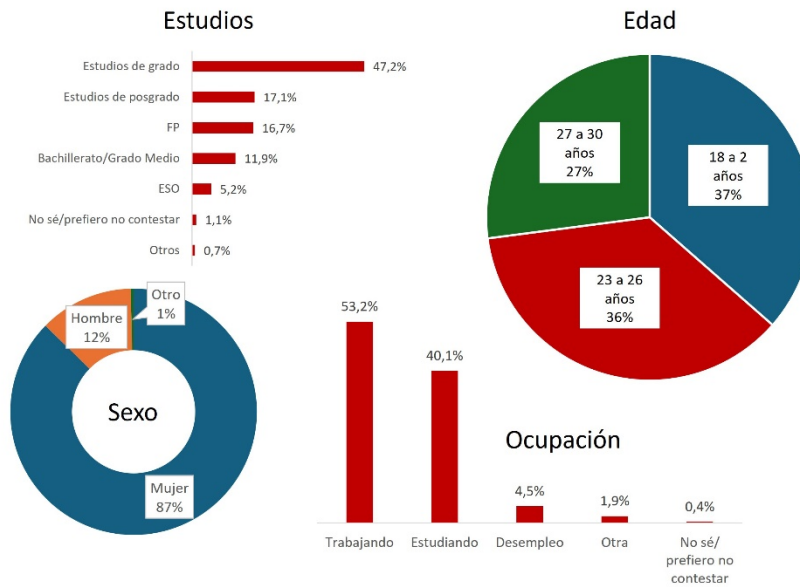
4.1. Sociodemographic Profile of the Sample

Before presenting the results related to the specific objectives, the sociodemographic characteristics of the surveyed sample are outlined, as shown in Figure 3, given their relevance to contextualizing the interpretation of the data. A total of 269 people participated, the majority of whom were women (87%). The age distribution was concentrated in the 18-22 age range (37%), followed by the 23-26 age range (36%) and the 27-30 age range (27%). Regarding occupation, slightly more than half (53.2%) were employed, while 40.1% were students. The predominant educational level was university studies (47.2%), followed by postgraduate studies (17.1%).

⁴One key limitation was the difficulty of obtaining a statistically valid, representative sample because the target population had to meet two criteria simultaneously: being a reader and a TikTok user. This significantly reduced the number of participants. Additionally, achieving gender balance was challenging because it was more difficult to recruit male participants, resulting in an imbalanced sample composition.

⁵ <https://www.calculator.io/>

Figure 3. Sociodemographic Data of Respondents

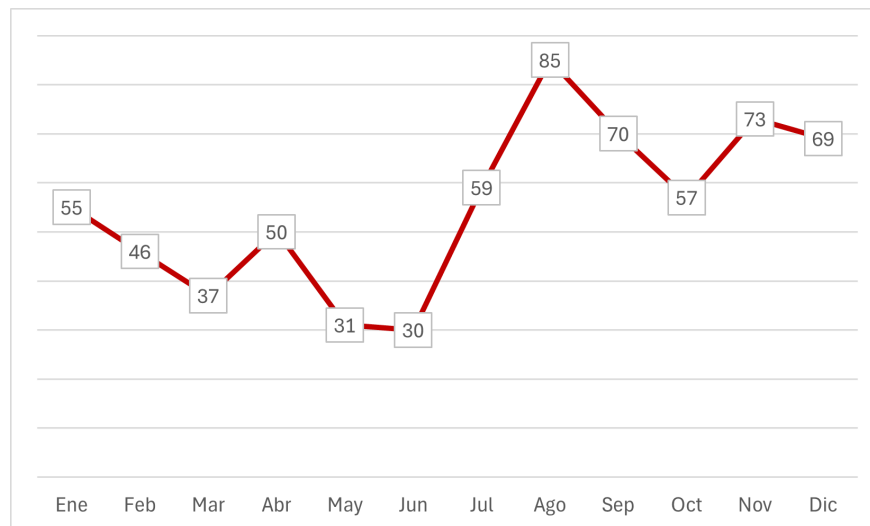


Source: Elaborated by the authors.

4.2. Formal, Content, Production, and Interaction Characteristics of Videos Published by Booktokers

A total of 662 videos published by booktokers were examined. On average, the videos were 1 minute and 52 seconds long, and 99.8% of them were produced in Spanish. The average description was 8.6 words long. Figure 4 shows that June had the least activity (30 videos), while August had the highest volume of posts (85 videos).

Figure 4. Seasonality of Video Posts



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

On the other hand, April saw a slight increase in activity with 50 videos posted. Similarly, the final quarter of the year had a consistently high volume of posts, which coincided with the start of the academic year and the Christmas holidays. Regarding interaction metrics, the results show a medium level of engagement with the

analyzed content. On average, each video received 28,212 likes and 3,453 saves, while comments and shares were less frequent, with only 136 comments and 739 shares. This pattern indicates that the audience primarily interacts through low-effort actions, such as liking or saving, which require a reduced degree of engagement, and uses actions that require greater involvement, such as commenting or sharing, less frequently.

The average number of hashtags per video was 7.2, with #booktok and #booktokespañol being the most frequent ones. Figure 5 shows that the most common content type was phrases or reflections with which the audience could identify, followed by book hauls⁶ and book tags.

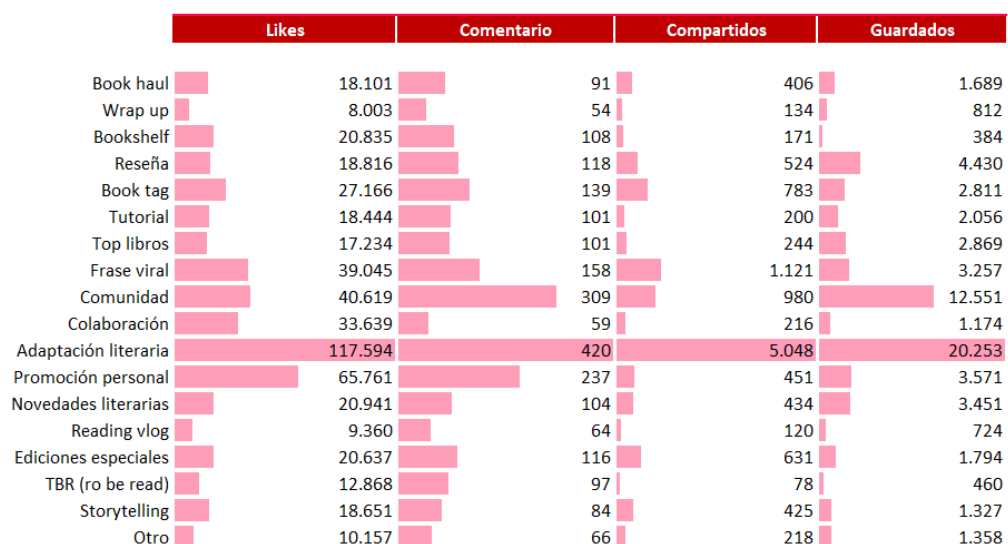
Figure 5. Content Typology



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

To complement the analysis of content types, interaction with each video category was examined using the previously mentioned metrics. As shown in Figure 6, the results indicate that videos related to literary adaptations generate the highest levels of interaction, even when they focus on films or series based on literary works.

Figure 6. Interaction with Different Types of Content



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

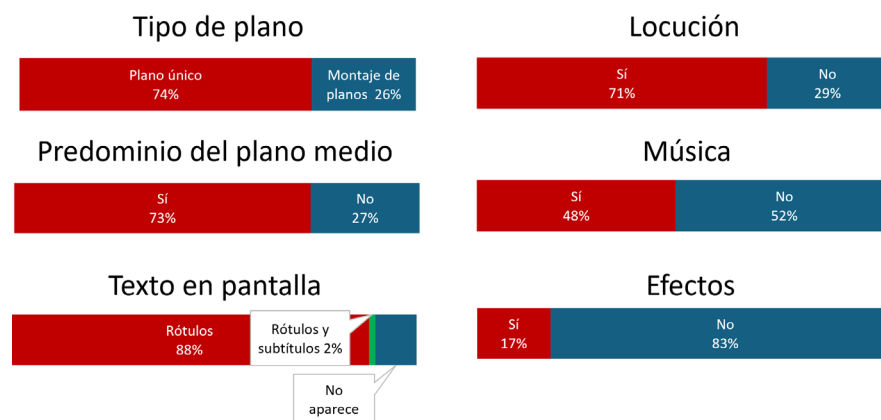
⁶English expression that refers to the presentation of recently acquired books.

Similarly, content aimed at fostering community participation registers a high level of interaction, consistent with the purpose of these types of videos, which seek to actively engage the audience. Regarding likes, self-promotional videos, in which the creator shares their own work, stand out; while in the case of shared content, posts based on viral phrases are the most popular.

Regarding the commercial nature of the videos, the content analysis shows that only 13% of the examined pieces can be classified as advertising, either due to explicit brand mentions or the use of the #publi hashtag. Consequently, the majority of the videos (87%) do not present an obvious commercial component. However, when examining this small percentage of promotional content, it is observed that collaborations are concentrated primarily in the publishing sector (55%), followed by bookstores or department stores (16%) and streaming platforms (12%). In this last area, the publishers that have collaborated most with booktoker profiles are Cross Books, Penguin Libros, and Planeta, while the most frequently featured bookstores have been Fairy Loot, Casa del Libro, and Fnac.

With regard to other characteristics of the videos, it was found that the individual appears in 99% of the units analyzed, while other people—such as a partner (38%), friends (26%), or other well-known figures (18%)—appear in only 6% of the videos. It is also significant that only 5% of the videos explicitly address the audience as a community. As for technical aspects, 74% of the videos are recorded in a single shot. However, 26% feature edited footage. In terms of framing, the medium shot predominates in 73% of cases, a common technique on social media, although 29% employ other types of shots that introduce some variety. The use of lower thirds is also noteworthy, present in 88% of the sample, which facilitates quick identification of the content when accessing the profile. Furthermore, 71% of the videos include voiceover, generally recorded on camera (96%). While 29% forgo it and opt for background audio or music. At this point, some diversity is evident, as the presence of music is distributed almost equally between those who use it and those who don't. Finally, as shown in Figure 7, 83% of the videos do not use effects as a technical resource.

Figure 7. Technical Aspects of the Videos



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

4.3. Reading Patterns and Their Relationship With Books Promoted by Booktokers

Regarding reading habits, the majority (164 people) reported reading more than twenty books during 2024, followed by those who read between eleven and twenty books (48 participants) and those who reported reading between six and ten books (28 participants). As for reading frequency, 49.8% stated they read every day, 22.3% read between five and six times a week, and 19% read between three and four days, indicating a readership with a stable and regular reading habit.

Regarding the mention of specific books in the analyzed videos, it was found that 56% included explicit references to literary works, while the remaining 44% did not. Focusing on the set of videos that did mention works, 389 different titles and 233 authors were identified, with an average of 3.6 books cited per video. Based on this data, two rankings were created, as shown in Figure 8: one relating to the most frequently mentioned books and another dedicated to series, in order to offer a more comprehensive analysis. In the list of individual works, the most recurring title was *Magnolia Parks: How Many Loves Do You Get in a Lifetime?* by Jessa Hastings, followed by *Binding 13* by Chloe Walsh, and *No confíes en Asher Hall* (Don't trust Asher Hall) by Myriam M. Lejardi. As for the series, the most cited were *Boys of Tommen* by Chloe Walsh (to which *Binding 13* belongs), *From Blood and Ash* by Jennifer L. Armentrout, and *Twisted* by Ana Huang.

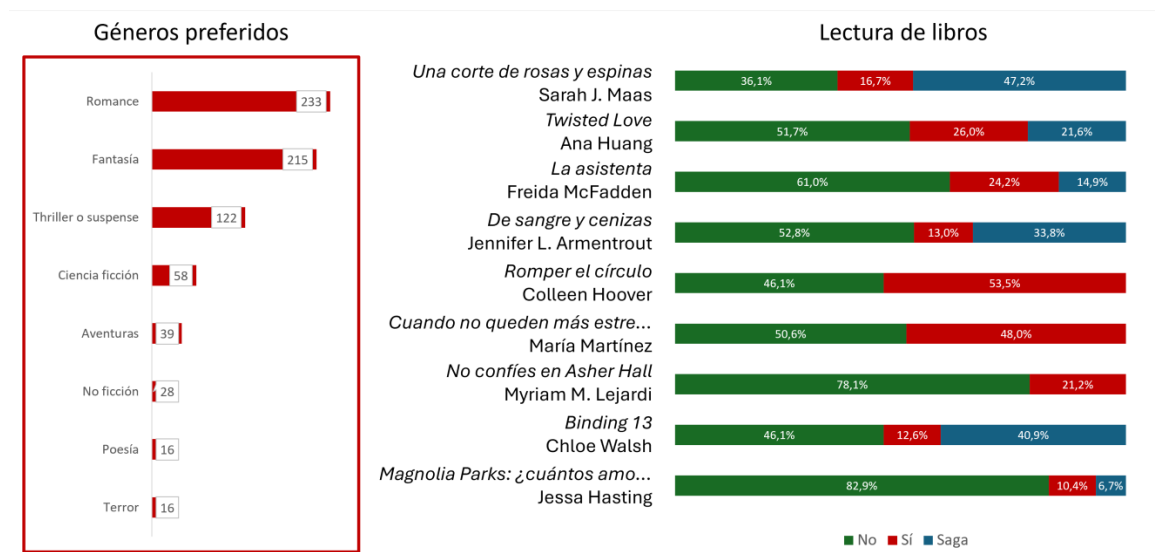
Figure 8. Mention of Books on TikTok

Sagas más mencionadas	Libros más mencionados
1 Los chicos de Tommen	1 Magnolia Parks: ¿cuántos amores te tocan...
2 De sangre y cenizas	2 Binding 13
3 Twisted	3 No confíes en Asher Hall
4 Acotar	4 Cuando no queden más estrellas que...
5 Universo Magnolia Parks	5 Romper el círculo
6 La asistenta	6 De sangre y cenizas

Source: Elaborated by the authors.

To compare the visibility of titles on TikTok with their reception among respondents, the books and series most frequently mentioned in the videos were compared with the works read by the sample. Regarding the most mentioned books and series, the survey data, as shown in Figure 9, reveals that the most read works belong to the *ACOTAR* series by Sarah J. Maas and *Binding 13* by Chloe Walsh, a significant finding given the latter's high presence on TikTok. *It Ends With Us* by Colleen Hoover also stands out. Conversely, *Magnolia Parks: How Many Loves Do You Get in a Lifetime?* and *No confíes en Asher Hall* (Don't trust Asher Hall) (the first and third most mentioned books in the analyzed videos) registered a lower percentage of readers among respondents, with romance, fantasy, and suspense being the most prominent genres. These results align with the predominant genres in both the most mentioned books on TikTok and the most read works.

Figure 9. Most popular books on TikTok

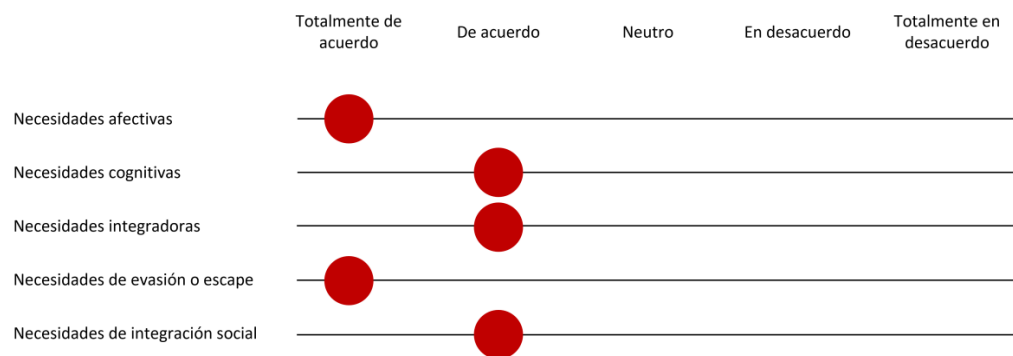


Source: Elaborated by the authors.

4.4. Needs That are Expected to Be Met Through Reading

To delve deeper into the motivations behind reading, the needs that respondents seek to meet through this activity were analyzed. The results show that affective needs and escapist needs were the most prominent. However, as shown in Figure 10, positive assessments were also recorded for cognitive, integrative, and social integration needs, although to a lesser extent.

Figure 10. Assessment of Needs Related to Reading

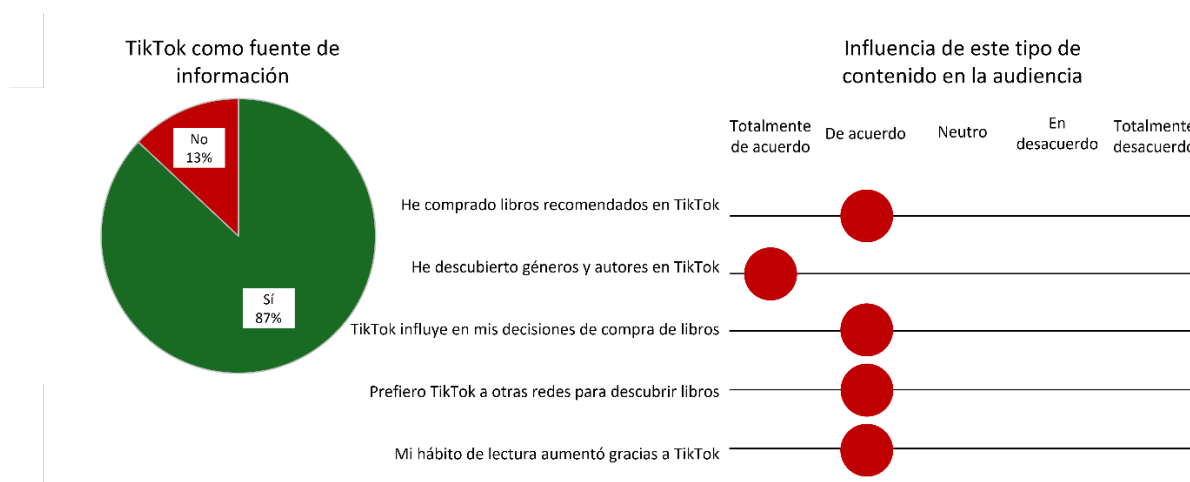


Source: Elaborated by the authors.

4.5. Book Discovery, Content Perception, and Participation in the BookTok Digital Community

Figure 11 shows that 87% of respondents have used TikTok to find information about books, indicating its role as a source of literary information, a platform for discovering books, and a space for community reference. When asked about their primary channel for this purpose, 43.9% of respondents indicated TikTok, while 37.2% mentioned other social media platforms, such as Instagram, YouTube, or Facebook.

Figure 11. TikTok as a Source of Information and a Driver of New Readings



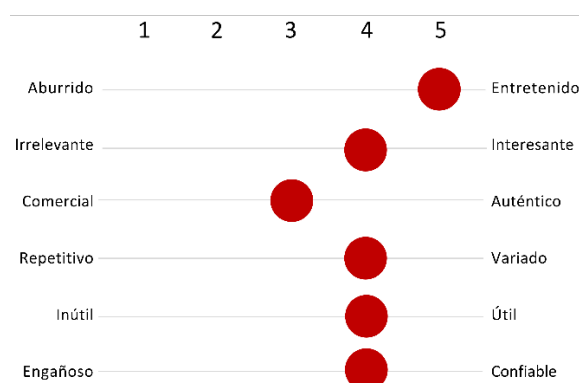
Source: Elaborated by the authors.

Similarly, using a Likert scale, various statements related to TikTok's role in discovering books and authors, as well as in accessing literary content shared on the platform, were evaluated. The results indicate that the highest-rated statement was that TikTok has allowed them to discover new books and authors, although, in general, all the statements received positive ratings.

Finally, regarding interaction with the BookTok digital community, the data shows that respondents frequently consume this type of content published by booktokers and identify with this community. Although they do not express complete agreement, they state that they have interacted with the videos and produced similar content on TikTok. This suggests that the connection with BookTok is primarily manifested in practices of following, acknowledging, and occasional interaction. In this sense, the digital community functions mainly as a reference point around literary interests, where the reception of content predominates over the creation of original posts.

Furthermore, the survey results reveal a predominantly positive perception of this content. As shown in Figure 12, the adjective that best fits the opinions is "entertaining," while "commercial" occupies an intermediate position.

Figure 12. Perception Regarding the Content of BookTok



Source: Elaborated by the authors.

When comparing the types of content identified in the analyzed videos with the preferences expressed by the survey respondents, differences are observed: literary reviews are indicated as the preferred format, followed by book hauls and recommendation lists. This divergence indicates that the frequency of appearance of certain content is not necessarily related to the preference expressed by the audience.

5. DISCUSSION

The results allow for the contextualization of the BookTok phenomenon based on the characteristics of the surveyed sample, which exhibits a well-established reading profile, a high level of education, and active participation in social networks. According to Jerasa and Boffone (2021), this positions BookTok as a space for reading socialization that extends beyond the school and publishing frameworks. This finding is consistent with recent reviews that identify BookTok as an environment for recommending books and building a community around reading (Dera, 2024). This combination of factors coincides with data from the Spanish publishing market (FGEE, 2025), suggesting that the BookTok community plays a significant role in the cultural socialization of the young readers represented in the sample. Furthermore, the high female presence in the sample aligns with trends observed in the publishing sector, where young women play a significant role in driving literary consumption. However, the Spanish case offers a specific nuance: this community's centrality coexists with appropriation linked to discovering, recommending, and sharing titles among peers.

Analysis of the videos reveals a type of content with a simple structure and a focus on the use of visual resources, consistent with TikTok's nature as a platform geared towards immediacy. The average duration of less than two minutes introduces a nuance, as it doesn't allow these pieces to be classified as short in absolute terms, but rather as videos of moderate length within the TikTok ecosystem. The almost total absence of digital effects and the minimal complexity of the editing reinforce the idea of communication based on proximity and spontaneity. This finding coincides with Currenti (2023), who emphasizes that TikTok's potential for the publishing sector lies in its ability to convey native, agile messages that resonate with the platform's consumption patterns. The formal simplicity, along with a duration that deviates from the shorter formats typically associated with the platform, can be explained by TikTok's logic and by a strategy of adaptation employed by booktokers, who tailor their messages to the audience's consumption habits without forgoing more in-depth discussion when the literary recommendation warrants it. Unlike more elaborate or explicitly advertising-oriented promotional forms, the data suggest that the communicative effectiveness of this content relies on an aesthetic of spontaneity and low technical sophistication. This trait does not contradict TikTok's audiovisual dynamics but rather aligns with them (Meza et al., 2023; Schellewald, 2023). However, this duration introduces a unique aspect to the case analyzed, which nuances the image of the ultra-short video as the dominant format on TikTok and suggests that, in the realm of literary recommendations, certain content may require a somewhat more extensive development.

Regarding seasonality, the increased video production at specific times of the year (World Book Day, the Christmas season, etc.) confirms López's (2024) observation regarding the correlation between holidays and increased literary consumption. This suggests that booktokers adapt their posts to calendar events that are conducive to book visibility and a greater predisposition to consumption, thus reinforcing the promotional function of these digital communities, even when the content is not explicitly commercial. However, this calendar-based approach should be understood as a pattern observed in the sample and not as a practice that can be extrapolated without further analysis to the entire BookTok ecosystem.

Interaction metrics show that low-effort actions predominate over those involving greater participation, which aligns with the findings of López et al. (2023) regarding different levels of engagement. However, the fact that videos generate a significant volume of interactions, albeit of moderate intensity, suggests that BookTok acts as a space where the community participates consistently, even if it doesn't always engage in more participatory actions. This indicates an active community, but one whose engagement is based on

consumption, saving, or observation, rather than on visible, high-intensity participation.

The positive evaluation of the content, especially in terms of entertainment, and the lack of clarity regarding its potential commercial nature reveal a relevant phenomenon: the boundary between spontaneous recommendation and promotional activity appears blurred. The intermediate position of the adjective "commercial" in the responses suggests that the audience does not always clearly distinguish between sponsored and non-sponsored content, which may be related to the natural aesthetic that characterizes the videos. This finding is particularly significant within the framework of influencer marketing, as the perception of authenticity conditions the effectiveness of recommendations. This interpretation aligns with the most recent international literature, which has highlighted the importance of emotional connection, social validation, and the credibility of booktokers in shaping reading intentions (da Silva et al., 2025). Likewise, the predominance of collaborations with publishers coincides with the findings of Segarra et al. (2023) regarding the positive impact of these actions on the book market. The presence of streaming platforms among the most frequent collaborations is also related to the high level of interaction generated by audiovisual adaptations, suggesting a possible feedback loop between literary and audiovisual consumption. In contrast to international studies that have highlighted both the identity and community dimension of BookTok, as well as its capacity to influence reading intentions and book consumption (Jerasa, 2025; da Silva et al., 2025), this study observes an ambivalent mediation, in which visibility and perceived authenticity do not always mean reading or purchasing.

Another noteworthy aspect is the prevailing narrative structure of the videos. The limited explicit appeal to the community and the predominance of a single shot reflect a strategy focused on personal storytelling rather than direct conversation. This is further enhanced by the technical simplicity, marked by the absence of effects, the recurring use of captions, and the constant presence of the content creator, which seems to respond more to a stylistic code specific to the platform than to production limitations. This characteristic introduces a nuance compared to international approaches that emphasize the identity and community dimension of BookTok, since in the Spanish case, self-representation appears more restrained and subordinated to book recommendations rather than to the explicit construction of the reading self (Jerasa, 2025; Merga, 2021). From a critical perspective, this suggests that the BookTok community is not built solely through direct calls for participation, but also through forms of individual self-representation that generate recognition and identification.

In terms of reading behavior, the widespread use of TikTok as a source of literary information confirms the transformation of the recommendation ecosystem. This finding aligns with Jerasa and Boffone (2021), who identify BookTok as an environment for reading discovery and extracurricular digital literacy, and also with Currenti (2023), who positions it as a mediating instrument between publishers, content creators, and young audiences. In the analyzed sample, the platform competes with and even surpasses traditional channels such as bookstores or friends, reinforcing the relevance of interpreting this phenomenon in light of the diffusion of innovation theory. According to Rogers (1983), users rely on familiar agents to adopt new proposals, something reflected in the importance attributed in the survey responses to the discovery of books and authors through TikTok. In this sense, the role of the BookToker profile can be interpreted as a mediator in the diffusion of literary innovations. However, unlike what was observed by da Silva et al. (2025), where the booktokers' recommendations are significantly associated with reading intention, in this study the association is more clearly seen in the discovery phase than in the conversion of that exposure into effective reading.

The survey participants not only consume this content but also express varying degrees of identification with the digital community. This behavior aligns with Rheingold's (1993) theory of community formation based on shared interests, where interaction is a key element of cohesion. However, the average level of interaction observed and the limited original content production suggest that BookTok, in this sample, functions primarily as a reading reference space rather than an environment for intensive participation. Nevertheless, in contrast to approaches that emphasize the affective and identity-related dimensions of digital literary socialization

(Santa María et al., 2024), this study observes an articulation centered on book recommendations and peer recognition.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, it is possible to assess the degree to which the research objectives were met and the empirical support achieved by the hypotheses, always within the limits of a descriptive design and a non-probability sample. Regarding the first objective, the results show that the most frequent content is not literary reviews or complex audiovisual resources, as formulated in the initial hypothesis, but rather short phrases or reading experiences with which the audience can identify. Furthermore, the average duration of these pieces places them within a moderate range on TikTok, which offers a relevant nuance regarding the image of the ultra-short video that is usually associated with the platform. The predominant technical elements (single shots, captions, minimal use of effects, etc.) demonstrate an aesthetic of simplicity characteristic of the platform and consistent with its expressive codes; therefore, the first hypothesis is not supported by the data. Regarding the second objective, the relationship between promotion on TikTok and the reading patterns of the surveyed sample is only partially evident. While some titles do show a correlation between visibility and readership (such as *Binding 13* or the *Acotar* series), others do not, indicating that platform exposure alone does not determine reading behavior. Factors such as literary genre, thematic affinity, or the existence of audiovisual adaptations appear to have a greater impact. Consequently, the second hypothesis is also not confirmed.

The third objective was to identify the needs satisfied through reading. The results indicate that the analyzed sample uses reading to fulfill emotional, escapist, and social needs, which aligns with previous literature and validates the third hypothesis. Interaction within BookTok and the desire to share reading experiences reinforce the social dimension of reading habits in this group. The fourth objective explored the relationship between the communication strategies employed by BookTok users and the perception and participation of the surveyed sample. The results show that the analyzed content is associated with the discovery of new books, a positive perception of the content, and a degree of identification with the community. In this respect, the fourth hypothesis receives partial support, particularly regarding the discovery of new reading material, the positive evaluation of the content, and the recognition of the community as a point of reference.

Overall, the study concludes that BookTok constitutes, for the analyzed sample, a relevant space for mediation and socialization of reading, where dynamics of recommendation, title visibility, and peer recognition converge. The results suggest that TikTok acts as a prominent channel for literary discovery, complementing and, in some cases, displacing traditional methods of recommendation. Consequently, the results allow us to discuss the functions and tensions inherent in this phenomenon, but do not support broad generalizations or attribute a uniform effect on reading to the platform.

Finally, the main limitations of the study include the non-probabilistic nature and predominantly female composition of the surveyed sample, the focus of the content analysis on specific profiles, and the methodological challenges associated with coding and examining the volume of videos. Therefore, the findings should be interpreted as trends observed in the sample, not as generalizable results. Future research could incorporate methodologies that delve deeper into users' motivations and perceptions. Additionally, comparative studies between platforms or longitudinal approaches could be used to observe the evolution of BookTok's dynamics over time.

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AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS, FUNDING AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Funding: This research did not receive any funding.

Conflict of interests: The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

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Professor and researcher at the International University of La Rioja (UNIR), where he carries out work related to the evaluation of scientific output within the Office of the Vice Rector for Research. He holds a Doctorate in Social Sciences from the University of Salamanca and he is a member of the PROCOMM research group. He is part of the editorial team of the scientific journal *index.comunicación* as an associate editor. His research focuses on the study of scientific publishing media, scientific communication, and communication carried out by cultural institutions.

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ANNEXES

Annex A. Code

Dimensions	Variables	Categories
Video	V1. Publication Date	Numeric
	V2. Duration	Numeric (seconds)
	V3. Language	1. Spanish 2. Catalan 3. Basque 4. Galician 5. Valencian 6. Another
	V4. Number of words in the description	Numeric
Content	V5. Content Type	1. Book haul 2. Wrap up 3. Bookshelf 4. Review 5. Book tag 6. Tutorial 7. Top books 8. Viral phrase 9. Community 10. Collaboration 11. Literary adaptation 12. Personal Promotion 13. New literary releases 14. Reading vlog 15. Special editions 16. TBR 17. Storytelling 18. Another
	V6. Commercial character	1. Yes 2. No (If V6 = 1, V7 is registered)
	V7. Brand/Publisher being mentioned	Open
	V8. Influencer presence	1. Yes 2. No
	V9. Presence of collaborating people	1. Yes 2. No (If V8 = 1, V9 is registered)
	V10. Type of collaborating person	1. Partner 2. Family 3. Friends 4. Influencers 5. Writers 6. Various 8. Another 7. Unknown
	V11. Appeal to the audience/community	1. Yes 2. No
Books	V12. Book Mention	1. Yes 2. No (If V12 = 1, V13 to V14 are registered)
	V13. Number of books being mentioned	Numeric

	V14. Book Title	Open
Production	V15. Type of shot	1. Single shot 2. Assembly of different shots
	V16. Predominance of the medium shot	1. Yes 2. No
	V17. Text on screen	1. Signs 2. Subtitles 3. Both 4. It does not appear
	V18. Voiceover	1. Yes 2. No (If V18 = 1, V19 is registered)
	V19. On-camera voiceover	1. Yes 2. No
	V20. Music	1. Yes 2. No
	V21. Effects/Filters	1. Yes 2. No
Metrics	V22. Number of likes	Numeric
	V23. Number of comments	Numeric
	V24. Number of shares	Numeric
	V25. Number of hashtags	Numeric
	V26. Hashtags	Open

Annex B. Questionnaire

Initial questions

1. Are you between 18 and 30 years old?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

2. Have you read any books this past year (2024)?
 - A. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I don't know/ I prefer not to answer

3. Do you use TikTok?
 - A. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

Leisure reading habits

4. How many books have you read during last year (2024) in your free time?
 - a. None
 - b. 1 to 2 books
 - c. 3 to 5 books
 - d. 6 to 10 books
 - e. 11 to 20 books
 - f. More than 20 books
 - g. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

5. How often do you usually read during your free time each week?
- I don't read frequently
 - 1 to 2 days a week
 - 3 to 4 days a week
 - 5 to 6 days a week
 - Every day of the week
 - I don't know/I prefer not to answer
6. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about reading.
- I read books because they make me feel emotions.
I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree
- I read books because they allow me to learn and acquire new knowledge.
I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree
- I read books because I identify with the characters.
I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree
- I read books because it allows me to disconnect from my routine and relax.
I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree
- I read books because they help me socialize with other people who share my interests.
I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree
- Reading allows me to disconnect from reality.
I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree

Tastes and preferences in books

7. What are your three favorite literary genres? Please select a maximum of 3 options.
- Thriller or suspense
 - Romance
 - Fantasy
 - Science fiction
 - Adventures
 - Terror
 - Poetry
 - Non-fiction (self-help, personal development, gastronomy, art...)
 - I don't know/I prefer not to answer

Reading books

8. Have you read the following books?
- Magnolia Parks: How Many Loves Do You Get in a Lifetime?* by Jessa Hastings *
- Yes, I've read it
 - Yes, I have read it and I have continued reading the saga
 - No, I haven't read it.
 - I don't know/I prefer not to answer
- Binding 13* by Chloe Walsh
- Yes, I've read it
 - Yes, I have read it and I have continued reading the saga
 - No, I haven't read it.
 - I don't know/I prefer not to answer

No confíes en Asher Hall (Don't trust Asher Hall) by Myriam M. Lejardi

- a. Yes, I've read it
- b. No, I haven't read it.
- c. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

Cuando no queden más estrellas que contar (When There Are No More Stars Left to Count) by María Martínez

- a. Yes, I've read it
- b. No, I haven't read it.
- c. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

It Ends With Us by Colleen Hoover

- a. Yes, I've read it
- b. No, I haven't read it.
- c. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

From Blood and Ash by Jennifer L. Armentrout

- a. Yes, I've read it
- b. Yes, I have read it and I have continued reading the saga
- c. No, I haven't read it.
- d. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

The Housemaid by Freida McFadden

- a. Yes, I've read it
- b. Yes, I have read it and I have continued reading the saga
- c. No, I haven't read it.
- d. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

Twisted love by Ana Huang

- a. Yes, I've read it
- b. Yes, I have read it and I have continued reading the saga
- c. No, I haven't read it.
- d. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

A Court of Thorns and Roses by Sarah J. Maas

- a. Yes, I've read it
- b. Yes, I have read it and I have continued reading the saga
- c. No, I haven't read it.
- d. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

Searching for information about books

- 9. How do you usually discover new books?
 - a. Literary blogs or forums
 - b. Recommendations from friends or family
 - c. Physical or online bookstores
 - d. TikTok
 - e. Other social networks (Instagram, YouTube, etc.)
 - f. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

10. Are you looking for information and reviews about books on TikTok?

- A. Yes
- b. No
- c. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

Perception of BookTok content

11. What do you think of this type of content about books on TikTok?

Boring	1	2	3	4	5	Entertaining
Irrelevant	1	2	3	4	5	Interesting
Commercial	1	2	3	4	5	Authentic
Repetitive	1	2	3	4	5	Varied
Useless	1	2	3	4	5	Useful
Deceptive	1	2	3	4	5	Reliable

Perception of BookTok content

12. Order the following types of TikTok content creator videos related to books according to your preference, from the one you like the most to the one you like the least.

Book haul: videos where they show new books they have received or bought.

Viral phrases: video with short phrases that you can relate to.

Reviews: videos where people talk about and give their opinion on a book.

Top books: videos where they provide lists of books they recommend reading.

Reading vlog: videos of "a day" or "a week of reading with me."

Book tag: videos with viral literary questions or challenges.

Wrap up: a video where they mention the books they have read during the previous month.

Community: videos in which they interact with the audience, reading or responding to comments.

13. Indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about reading .

I frequently consume content from BookTok.

I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree

I've bought books recommended on TikTok.

I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree

I comment on and participate in posts by content creators about books on TikTok.

I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree

I feel like I belong to the BookTok community.

I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree

I've discovered new genres and artists thanks to TikTok.

I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree

TikTok influences my book buying decisions.

I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree

I prefer TikTok to other social media platforms for discovering books.

I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree

My reading habit has increased thanks to TikTok.

I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree

I've created content about books on TikTok.

I strongly agree 1 2 3 4 5 I strongly disagree

Sociodemographic data

14. Gender
 - a. Man
 - b. Woman
 - c. Other
 - d. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

15. Age
 - a. From 18 to 22 years old
 - b. From 23 to 26 years old
 - c. From 27 to 30 years old
 - d. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

16. Occupation
 - a. Student
 - b. Worker
 - c. Unemployed
 - d. Other
 - e. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

17. Level of education
 - a. No studies
 - b. Primary education
 - c. Compulsory Secondary Education (ESO, in Spanish)
 - d. Vocational Training (VT)
 - e. High School Diploma or Intermediate Vocational Training
 - f. University studies (Degree)
 - g. Post-university studies (master's or doctorate)
 - h. Others
 - i. I don't know/I prefer not to answer

Related Articles

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