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Promoting books and encouraging reading through book influencers on TikTok

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Abstract

The emergence of the new BookTok reading community has led to the appearance of the figure of the book influencer who disseminates, through their own channels and content, their literary preferences to young users interested in reading. This study analyses the communicative strategy of book influencers on TikTok. Content analysis is used to study the profiles of the main 30 Spanish book influencers and their 1,471 videos posted between 24th February and 24th April 2022 —coinciding with the International Book Day campaign— and in-depth interviews with 7 booktokers to find out their point of view in relation to their contributions to the promotion of reading and the increase in book consumption in Spain. The study concluded that book influencers collaborate with publishers due to the wide reach of their content. Furthermore, they believe that the communicative and promotional actions booktokers carry out contribute to the increase in sales and the promotion of reading.

Keywords: Book reviews; reading promotion; book influencers; social networks; web 2.0 technologies; Spain.

Promoción de libros y fomento de la lectura a través de *influencers* literarios en TikTok

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Resumen

El surgimiento de la nueva comunidad lectora *BookTok* ha permitido la aparición de la figura del *influencer* literario que difunde, a través de canales y contenidos propios, sus preferencias literarias a jóvenes usuarios interesados en la lectura. Este estudio analiza la estrategia comunicativa de los *influencers* literarios en TikTok. Se utiliza el análisis de contenido para estudiar los perfiles de los principales 30 *influencers* literarios españoles y los 1471 vídeos publicados entre el 24 de febrero y el 24 de abril del 2022 --coincidiendo con la campaña del Día Internacional del Libro-- y las entrevistas en profundidad a 7 *booktokers* para conocer su punto de vista con relación a sus contribuciones para el fomento de la lectura e incremento del consumo de libros en España. A partir del estudio se concluye que los *influencers* literarios colaboran con las editoriales debido al gran alcance que tienen sus contenidos. Además, intuyen que las acciones comunicativas y promocionales de libros que realizan los *booktokers* contribuyen al incremento en la venta y fomento de la lectura.

Palabras clave: Reseña de libros; promoción de la lectura; *influencers* literarios; redes sociales; tecnología web 2.0; España.

INTRODUCTION

Social networks are important tools for the dissemination of messages and content of great reach and impact. Proof of this is that TikTok has 908 million monthly active users (Statista, 2023) and is the most popular and used social network (IAB, 2023).

As in most digital communities, there are niches and opportunities that allow users share experiences and interests. Booktokers are TikTok users who share content about books and reading experiences (Guiñez-Cabrera & Mansilla-Obando, 2022). Just likepublishing communities on YouTube (BookTube) and Instagram (BookStagram), BookTok allows readers, mainly teenagers, to meet and connect with their peers to create spaces based on a common interest: reading. Pedagogies and peer-to-peer learning are often central features of the relationships formed between "microcelebrities" (Senft, 2008) and their fans. TikTok users share their passion for books, bringing to life the titles they love and reshaping the publishing industry.

Unlike traditional media, users produce content in an entertaining way, which makes the space more welcoming and the experience more satisfying. Its interactive nature improves young people's engagement with reading and can influence the reader's choice (Fuentes-González & Quiles-Cabrera, 2023). Therefore, this paper focuses on analysing the communication and content of book influencers on TikTok as well as their perceptions regarding the promotion of reading.

Evolution of the publishing sector in Spain

According to Vázquez-Millán (2021), there are two main publishing groups in Spain that cover a large part of the market: Grupo Planeta and Grupo Penguin Random House, which in turn have independent publishers with a greater diversity of literary genres.

Digital transformation has led to changes in the format and consumption of reading. This is confirmed by the barometers in *Hábitos de lectura y compra de libros en España en 2017* y *2022* (Reading habits and book purchases in Spain in 2017 and 2022). Reading in non-analogue format is growing, having risen from 12% in 2012 to 27% today, especially considering that in 2010 only 5% of readers chose this format (FGEE, 2018; 2022). Furthermore, it shows that the age group that buys the most books is between 14 and 24 years old (74.8%).

The book industry has had to adapt its promotional strategy to go online through digital marketing, having a presence in social networks and benefiting from digital literary communities (Álvarez-Ramos & Romero-Oliva, 2018).

Influencers and commercial communication

Influencers and digital media are a social and commercial phenomenon, as influencer marketing has an impact on the decision-making of consumers. Based on the impact of former celebrities (Fernández-Gómez et al., 2023), their power attracts marketing professionals, advertisers and agencies in sectors such as fashion (Martínez-Sanz & González-Fernández, 2018; Tentori et al., 2023; Vinader-Segura et al, 2020); beauty (Villena-Alarcón & Fernández-Torres, 2020); healthy living (Sokolova & Pérez, 2021) or tourism (Fedeli & Cheng, 2023; Martínez-Sala et al. 2019) under materialistic motivations (Lee et al., 2022) but effectively (De-Veirman et al., 2017; Jarrar et al., 2020; Leung et al., 2022).

Publishers and authors seize this opportunity and try to forge a digital reputation in the hands of a consumer (crossumer, prosumer, persumer, fansumer) who, thanks to social media, spreads and shares their opinions and experiences (Del-Pino-Romero et al., 2013). According to Ferrer-López (2020), content starring influencers receives more attention among young people and facilitates their understanding, thus encouraging them to purchase the recommended products, although sometimes bordering on illegality

(Castelló-Martínez et al., 2023; Segarra-Saavedra et al., 2022; Segarra-Saavedra & Hidalgo-Marí, 2018; Sixto-García & Álvarez-Vázquez, 2020).

According to Rovira-Collado (2016), the publishing industry uses interactive spaces to maintain direct contact with readers. For Etchevers (2020), publishers have had to face changes in production, consumption and format. New technologies and social networks have opened up a world of formats such as BookTok, starring young readers who share their reading opinions to the point of becoming an extremely important publishing promotion tool because they also use their own language, with a mastery of audiovisual communication and technique (Rovira-Collado, 2017), thus diluting the figure of the publisher as the main promotional agent (Álvarez-Ramos & Romero-Oliva, 2018).

TikTok and the BookTok phenomenon

TikTok fuses music with lip-sync, comedy and trending content from microblogs within 15-second videos, allowing users to easily align the special visual effects of the videos with the chosen music (Lu & Lu, 2019).

It has progressively increased its notoriety, becoming the fastest growing social network in number of users (IAB, 2023), but its algorithm is different: the more time a user spends on a video, the more likely it is to go viral and will allow more videos from the creator to appear the next time the user checks their own homepage, even if they do not follow the creator. However, TikTok is also guided by trends and hashtags that allow users to find content.

According to Forbes, 17-year-old Charlie D'Amelio was the highest earning tiktoker in 2021 at EUR 17 million (Telecinco, 2022) and her sister Dixie D'Amelio was the second highest paid (EUR 10 million in revenue) (Brown and Freeman, 2022). Overall, tiktokers grossed USD 55.5 million, a 200% increase over 2020 (Interactiva, 2022). This is not surprising according to Brown and Freeman (2022), for whom TikTok stars can charge up to half a million dollars for a post.

In the publishing sector, the BookTok community has emerged as the TikTok subculture dedicated to the reading and discussion of (mostly) young adult literature (Jerasa & Boffone, 2021) where users talk about their favourite books or dissect their favourite literary tropes. Emerging initially as a reading community with the same set of skills, uses, codes and interests (Chartier, 1999), it has shifted towards the digital, shaping a community that develops diverse forms of exchange: sharing comments, annotations, evaluations, tags and, in some cases, books and readings (Cordón-García & Gómez-Díaz, 2013).

Social reading or reading 2.0 defines a new reality where reading mediation is transformed (García-Roca, 2021; Jerasa & Boffone, 2021; Lluch-Crespo, 2011) into open spaces (Quiles-Cabrera, 2020) and shared interests (Merga, 2021), allowing interaction between readings and readers (López-López, 2017; Rovira-Collado, 2016) through recommendations of titles, authors, genres and theatrical inside jokes about literature (Harris, 2021; Pozzoni, 2023), thus making literature memorable, fun, engaging and socio-culturally relevant. BookTok is a new way for teenage readers to meet and connect because in addition to reading, readers want to talk about and recommend what they read, and the Internet is the ideal medium for this as it allows them to do so in a massive and amplified way (Observatorio de la lectura y el libro, 2014). Likewise, the BookTok community represents a reconversion of the amateur reader into a reader-promoter and energiser of reading that mobilises a diversity of strategies and content related to the world of literary fiction (Manresa and Margallo, 2016).

Medina-Serrano et al. (2020) analysed the use of hashtags on TikTok and found that #BookTok was one of the most popular contents that continue to be used, especially as of March 2020, the hashtag grew significantly (…), and there are currently more than 5 million videos, amounting to a total of more than 22 billion views (BigBang News, 2022).

METHODOLOGY

Objectives and hypothesis

The general objective of this research is to analyse the profiles and contents of the main booktokers in Spain, as well as to examine their opinions regarding their contribution to the increase in reading and book consumption. In order to achieve this, the following specific objectives are proposed:

- SO1. To analyse the publishing sector in Spain.

- SO2. To identify the main book influencers on TikTok in Spain.

- SO3. To analyse their communication and contents linked to the industry.

- SO4. To identify the most popular books and their characteristics.

- SO5. To find their point of view in relation to their contributions to the promotion of reading and the increase in book consumption.

The following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1. The publishing industry in Spain has increased book sales in recent years.

- H2. The majority of TikTok book influencers in Spain are women.

- H3. The reading of eBooks is mainly encouraged.

- H4. They perceive that this increase in sales and book reading is due to the actions they carry out on TikTok and other social networks, such as YouTube and Instagram.

Research tools, sample and inclusion/exclusion criteria

This qualitative and exploratory research uses content analysis of the profiles and content of book influencers on TikTok, as well as seven in-depth interviews, as Guiñez-Cabrera and Mansilla-Obando (2022) and Saez (2022) did, with book influencers to determine their point of view and relationship with the publishing industry and its impact on the promotion of reading and the increase in book consumption.

The identification of the Spanish booktokers was based on a search on TikTok using the hashtags #booktok, #booktoker, #booktokespaña and #booktokespañol. We then proceeded to select those who had more than 9,000 followers and more than 260,000 likes on their posts, given that they are the most active and share frequent content.

Table 1

Sample of thirty influencers analysed

No.	User	URL	No. of followers	No. of likes	No. of videos
1	@ir_zuIryna	https://www.tiktok.com/@ir_zu	1.400.000	70.600.000	1.200
2	@maryam.and.books	https://www.tiktok.com/@maryam.and.books	1.400.000	16.800.000	444
3	@mar.flz	https://www.tiktok.com/@mar.flz	252.100	4.600.000	744
4	@letiziaalg21	https://www.tiktok.com/@letiziaalg21	201.800	9.000.000	1430
5	@adictaalibros	https://www.tiktok.com/@adictaalibros	180.700	4.700.000	345
6	@josudiamond	https://www.tiktok.com/@josudiamond	161.800	4.300.000	348
7	@anyreads	https://www.tiktok.com/@anyreads	142.000	3.400.000	147

No.	User	URL	No. of followers	No. of likes	No. of videos
8	@raquelbookish	https://www.tiktok.com/@raquelbookish	130.400	1.800.000	435
9	@puchiibooks	https://www.tiktok.com/@puchiibooks	127.000	4.100.000	583
10	@booksbymaria_	https://www.tiktok.com/@booksbymaria_	121.100	3.800.000	654
11	@ohvioletbooks	https://www.tiktok.com/@ohvioletbooks	121.000	349.700	246
12	@paycivbooks	https://www.tiktok.com/@paycivbooks	96.000	3.000.000	529
13	@lonoabooks	https://www.tiktok.com/@lonoabooks	89.000	3.200.000	258
14	@esperanzalruz	https://www.tiktok.com/@esperanzalruz	88.100	5.000.000	1217
15	@gemmabooks	https://www.tiktok.com/@gemmabooks	83.700	2.000.000	429
16	@goikobooks	https://www.tiktok.com/@goikobooks	72.500	1.500.000	402
17	@patriciabema	https://www.tiktok.com/@patriciabema	66.700	861.500	198
18	@liasmoments	https://www.tiktok.com/@liasmoments	49.000	2.100.000	299
19	@andreorowling	https://www.tiktok.com/@andreorowling	49.000	539.000	86
20	@be.betweenbooks	https://www.tiktok.com/@be.betweenbooks	42.800	857.500	283
21	@vanessarmigliore	https://www.tiktok.com/@vanessarmigliore	28.300	374.300	307
22	@bibianainbookland	https://www.tiktok.com/@bibianainbookland	24.600	259.800	269
23	@fantasyliterature	https://www.tiktok.com/@fantasyliterature	23.400	469.600	630
24	@anhelbooks	https://www.tiktok.com/@anhelbooks	21.500	1.000.000	505
25	@nosoyclauuu	https://www.tiktok.com/@nosoyclauuu	20.000	959.400	226
26	@talibookclub	https://www.tiktok.com/@talibookclub	19.100	602.400	116
27	@adeladombooks	https://www.tiktok.com/@adeladombooks	15.600	256.600	659
28	@b0oks4u	https://www.tiktok.com/@b0oks4u	12.000	504.600	91
29	@mareads	https://www.tiktok.com/@mareads	11.200	372.600	99
30	@nuripeer	https://www.tiktok.com/@nuuriper	9.479	398.000	90

Source: own authors.

Study period, content analysis units, variables and categories

The content analysis covered 60 days (from 24th February to 24th April 2022), coinciding with the promotional period prior to 23rd April, International Book Day, when the main book fairs in Spain usually take place.

Two units of analysis have been taken as a reference:

- The profile on TikTok.

- Each of the contents posted in that period.

On 22nd April 2022, the profiles of the 30 book influencers on TikTok were analysed using these variables:

- Name and surname.

- User.

- Profile URL.

- Tag/s.

- Bio.

- No. of followers, followed, likes and videos posted.

The 1471 videos of the 30 book influencers were analysed between 24 April and 10 June 2022 using these variables and categories:

- User.

- URL.

- Date posted.

- Day of the week.

- Type of production: own; duo (reaction to another user's video); paste (use of part of another user's video to post one of your own).

- Content type: video; live or other.

- Duration of the live video.

- Influencer presence: alone; with other influencers; anonymous people; or known people.

- Use de

• Text.

• Questions to encourage interaction and number.

• *Hashtags* y number.

- Identification of advertising content and type: not applicable; advertising; ad; in collaboration with; sponsored by; ambassador of; thanks to; gifted; other.

- Placement of advertising identification: not applicable; text; image; audio; below username; other.

- Type of post according to Velasco-Urbano and Trillo-Domínguez (2019): review; unboxing; top; book haul; wrap up; bookshelf tour; vlogs; book tags; book challenge; theatre.

- Number of books promoted.

- Title.

- Year of publication.

- Audience: children's; juvenile; adult.

- Publisher.

- Type: print; PDF; ePub; Mobi; AZW; FB2; LIT; LRF; PDB; TCR; other.

- Literary genre and sub-genre: epic narrative; lyric from classical Greece; dramatic tragedy; didactic essay.

- Gender and number of male/female influencers.

- Number of authors/coordinators, name and surname.

- Mention of the price of the book.

- Price in euros.

- Indications of where to buy/download it.

- Promotional action: reference to awards, distinctions; nominations; favourable, unfavourable or neutral opinion; giveaway; no promotion.

- User tagging and number of tags.

- Interactions: number of comments; likes; shares; views (Tafesse and Wood, 2021).

Interviews

This study contacted the 30 tiktokers whose content was being analysed (table 1), but only 7 replied (23.3% response rate). They were asked about 1) identity, age and education/profession; 2) interests in posting content on BookTok, most useful types of posts and elements considered; and 3) relationships or collaborations with publishers, conditions and influence on sales through digital promotions.

RESULTS

Profiles

The influencers with the most followers are not always the ones with the most likes, because not all videos posted become trending, but it depends on the type of post and the TikTok algorithm.

Table 1 shows that they posted between 86 and 1430 videos since they opened their profiles (average=442), they have between 9 thousand and more than 1 million followers on TikTok and the likes on their posts range between 200 thousand and 70 million.

Booktokers are mostly women (96.7%), with @maryam.and.books and @ir_zuIryna, who have more than 1.4 million followers, being the most popular. However, @ir_zuIryna is more active (1,200 videos) than @maryam.and.books (444) and this influences the number of likes (70.6 and 16.8 respectively). Also noteworthy with more than 100 thousand followers are @mar.flz, @letiziaalg21, @adictaalibros, @josudiamond, @anyreads, @raquelbookish, @puchiibooks, @booksbymaria_ and @ohvioletbooks. It is worth noting that @raquelbrune_, in addition to being a booktoker, is a writer and the author of *Los guardianes de almas*, one of the most promoted books in this research.

The influencers with the most likes on their videos are @ir_zuIryna, @maryam.and.books and @letiziaalg21, who have more than 9 million.

The booktokers with the fewest followers and likes are @mareads and @nuripeer, as they do not post frequently, while @letiziaalg21 and @esperanzalruz are the most active.

Contents

Between 24th February and 24th April 2022, 1,471 videos are counted. The distribution by day of the week is hardly relevant, only Thursday stands out (17%), followed by Wednesday and Monday (both with 15%). 38% of the profiles posts 2 contents per day and only 2% posts 5 videos per day.

The production of own content prevails (99.4%), so they do not depend on other profiles, as well as the video format (100%), not taking advantage of the incipient live broadcasting.

In almost all videos (99%), influencers appear alone. Only 1% appear with anonymous people.

Although they predominantly use videos with text (99%) and mostly use terms related to the BookTok phenomenon (image 1) to make it easier for TikTok users to find their videos by searching for these keywords, they do not ask their followers any questions (95.2%).

Image 1

Most used keywords in videos
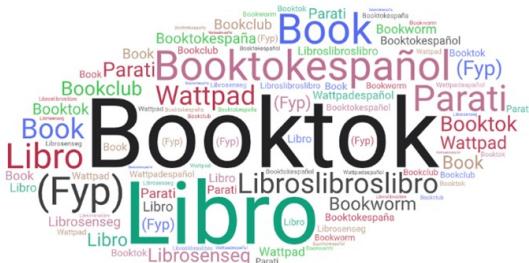
Source: own authors from nubedepalabras.com

On the other hand, they tend to include hashtags (92%) with the majority averaging between 4-7 per video (36.7%) and 8-11 (21.6%).

Only 12% of posts identify advertising content under the tags "advertising" (11.1%), "ad" (0.7%), and "in collaboration with" (0.2%). These identifiers appear mainly in the image (12.4%) or audio (0.1%).

Regarding the type of post, the category "other" stands out (84.4%), which considers the TikTok trend adapted to readers, "To be read" (reading of the month), new books and reading book extracts, among other options. This is due to the changing style of content produced by influencers. However, unboxing (7.2%), reviews (4.1%), and bookshelf tours (1.4%) are also detected.

Books

In 64% of the videos, the title of the book is not mentioned, it does not appear visually or in an image and the user is not tagged. Only 34.7% visually show the title of the book in the posts. Of the videos that mention books, individual mentions (26.1%) or quartet mentions (6.2%) are more common.

Even so, 884 books were counted in the 1471 posts analysed. The main books recommended (table 2) include *The Shadows Between Us. A Court of Thorns and Roses. The Love Hypothesis* and *Crescent City.*

Table 2

Most popular books on TikTok and frequencies

The Shadows Between Us	33	*Mi amor de wattpad*	8
A Court of Thorns and Roses	30	*Crave*	7
The Love Hypothesis	21	*Twilight*	7
Crescent City	20	*From Blood and Ash*	7
Hasta que nos quedemos sin estrellas	20	*Kingdom of the Cursed*	7
Trilogía Fuego	20	*Fresas con chocolate*	7
Nosotras en la luna	19	*Gallant*	7
A Court of Mist and Fury	18	*It Happened One Summer*	7
Anne sin filtros	13	*A Touch of Darkness*	7
El mapa de los anhelos	13	*La ciudad del silencio*	7
The Invisible Life of Addie LaRue	13	*Reino de papel*	7

Te espero en el fin de mundo	13	*Un cóctel en chueca*	7
Court	12	*Boulevard*	6
Crush	12	*The Language of the Night*	6
Heartstopper	12	*The Cruel Prince*	6
Truly Devious	11	*Skandar and the Unicorn Thief*	6
A Court of Frost and Starlight	11	*Todo lo que nunca fuimos*	6
Antes de diciembre	10	*Un cuento perfecto*	6
Fleur	10	*Yerba buena*	6
A Court of Silver Flames	10	*Lo que cuentan de nosotros*	5
Bad Ash	9	*A Kingdom of Flesh and Fire*	5
Cuando no quedan más estrellas que contar	9	*A Deal with the Elf King*	5
Los guardianes de almas	9	*XOXO*	5
The Seven Husbands of Evelyn Hugo	9	*Beautiful bastard*	4
A Court of Wings and Ruin	9	*Shadowhunters*	4
Destroy Me	8	*El vals de la bruja*	4
The Comfort Book	8	*The Ex Hex*	4
		Others	339

Source: own authors.

The promotion of recent books (graph 1), mainly published in 2022 (50.3%) and 2021 (17.4%), is more important. As the publication date moves further away, their presence on TikTok decreases.

Graph 1

Year of publication of the promoted books
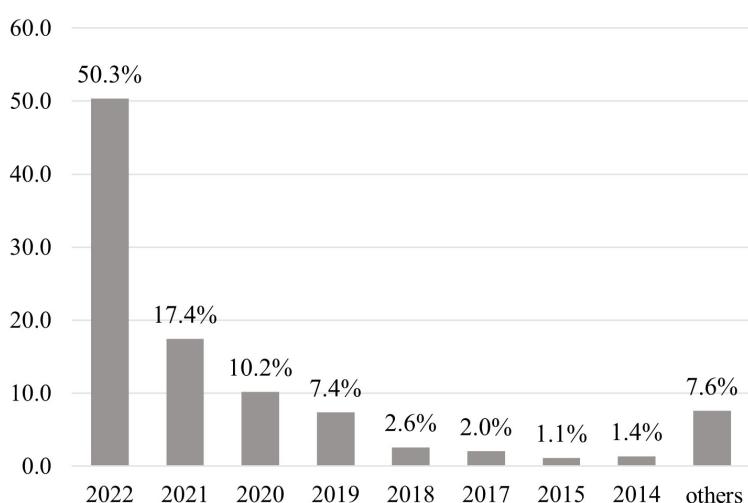
Source: own elaboration.

The books promoted are mainly aimed at young people (97.2%), coinciding with TikTok's age profile, and to a lesser extent adults (2.4%) and children (0.5%).

Table 3 shows the most represented publishers.

Table 3

Publishers and frequencies

CrossBooks	188	DeBolsillo	12
Planeta	111	Avon Books USA	11
Puck	48	Vr Europa	10
Montena	40	Independent Publishing	9
Umbriel	34	Ediciones B	8
Contraluz	30	Wonderbooks	8
Booket	21	Siren Books	7
Alfaguara infantile y juvenil	20	Hidra	6
Harper Collins	20	Montena	6
Hidra	18	Ediciones Gigamesh	6
Molino	15	Nocturna Ediciones	6
Titan Books	13	Salamandra Infantil	6
Titania	13	La Galera, S.A.	5
Alfaguara	12	Alianza Editorial	4
Penguin Books	12	Penguin	3
		Others	182

Source: own elaboration.

Despite being an online channel and targeting young audiences, printed books (95.6%) and ePub (4.4%) predominate in the promotion on TikTok. Narrative and novels (99.8%) stand out as the most promoted literary genre and sub-genre. In terms of gender of authorship, women (91.6%) stand out compared to men (8.4%).

In the videos, there is no record of the price of the books. 92.4% of the videos do not make any promotion, 4.5% offer a neutral opinion about the book and 2.4% a favourable one.

Only 7% of the 1471 publications tag users. There are 116 tagged users/profiles (table 4), mostly publishers, which suggests that the influencers collaborate with them.

Table 4

Tagged users and frequencies

@teenplanetlibro_	27	@Duomo Ediciones	2
@penguinlibros	17	@ariana_godoyc	2
@Harperkids Ibérica	12	@byme.app	2
@planetadelibros	3	@Josu Diamond	2
@wonderbooksed	3	@Tamara	2
@Soy Cáf	3	@Penguin Random House	1
@yossebooks	3	@Planeta Cómic	1
@PlanetadeLibros.com	2	Others	34

Source: own elaboration.

Taking into account the books that appear in the videos, it has been possible to extract the authorship and their frequencies (table 5). The American fantasy writer Sarah Janet Maas stands out.

Table 5

Authorship of books mentioned and frequencies

Sarah J. Maas	106	Alina Not	10	Claire Elise Kovarick	6
Alice Kellen	38	Jennifer L. Armentrout	10	Elisabeth Benavent	6
Tricia Levenseller	35	Taylor Jenkins Reid	10	Flor Salvador	6
Tracy Wolff	34	Matt Haig	9	Julia Quinn	6
Joana Marcús	31	Raquel Brune	9	Nina Lacour	6
V. E. Schwab	25	Kerry Maniscalco	8	Ursula K. Le Guin	6
Ali Hazelwood	21	Penélope Douglas	8	Victoria Resco	6
Ariana Godoy	20	Tahereh Riggs	8	Axie Oh	5
Inma Rubiales	20	Christina Lauren	7	Cassandra Clare	5
Andrea Longarela	18	Collen Hoover	7	Laura Gallego	5
Maureen Johnson	15	Jazmín Riera	7	Leigh Bardugo	5
Holly Black	14	Josu Diamond	7	Belén Martínez	4
María Martínez	14	Scarlett St. Clair	7	Jay Kristoff	4
Alice Oseman	13	Selene S. Campos	7	Rachel Hawkins	4
Iria Selene	13	Stephenie Meyer	7	Others	255
Tessa Bailey	11	Annabel Steadman	6		

Source: own elaboration.

As for engagement, 1) the posts with the most comments include unboxings, readings of book extracts and reader trends; 2) in terms of likes, videos in which other users are tagged and unboxings, readings of book extracts and reader trends stand out; 3) the most shared posts are those in which other users are tagged and there are readings of book extracts and reader trends; and 4) the videos with the most views also tag other users and are readings of book extracts and reader trends. However, it is not always the booktokers with the most followers who get the most comments, likes, shares and views.

The point of view of the book influencers

According to their answers, the booktokers are between 16 and 27 years old, 4 are in their last years of high school, 2 have finished their Bachelor's degree and 1 has a Master's degree.

Most of them, when they were interviewed, were not part of a book club, but they started to post content due to their interest in reading, in order to recommend the books they liked the most and to share their literary tastes (Gemma González: "Empecé a leer y no veía que se recomendara lo que yo leía, así que me animé" (I started reading and I didn't see what I was reading being recommended, so I took the plunge).

The posts that they publish the most and that generate the most impact are reviews, recommendations of the latest reading and popular trends on TikTok adapted to books (Adela Domínguez: "Sobre todo creo vídeos con recomendaciones de libros y algún reto viral de la plataforma adaptado a la comunidad lectora. Creo que los que más impacto tienen son aquellos que contienen opiniones impopulares" (I mainly create videos with book recommendations and some viral challenges on the platform adapted to the reading community. I think the ones that have the most impact are those that contain unpopular opinions). For Aiona Avellana, the posts that have the greatest reach are "vídeos haciendo reseña a libros, trends populares en ese momento adaptados a libros y una serie de vídeos

que suele gustar mucho es cuando relacionamos series/películas con libros porque su historia es parecida" (videos reviewing books, popular trends at the time adapted to books and a series of videos that tend to be liked a lot is when we relate series/movies to books because their story is similar). This is related to the fact that TikTok trends adapted to BookTok influence the algorithm and, consequently, the video may have more reach.

Among the issues they take into account when recording videos are originality, good lighting, technical quality, stories to be told, transmission of passion for reading and honest opinion of the books. An influencer who remained anonymous commented that "lo más importante es la sinceridad. Con esto me refiero a dar una valoración honesta sobre el libro que haya leído" (the most important thing is sincerity. By this I mean giving an honest opinion of the book I have read), from which it can be inferred that reviews are not always positive.

Most influencers have entered into collaborations with publishers. These consist of publishers sending them books free of charge in exchange for featuring them on their social networks or writing a review. So much so that some booktokers work with publishers, such as Letizia Guerrero: "Actualmente me encuentro trabajando con Crossbooks de Editorial Planeta y me dedico a subir videos a su cuenta de TikTok. Asimismo, he hecho algunas campañas para Penguin" (I am currently working with Editorial Planeta's Crossbooks and I upload videos to their TikTok account. I have also done some campaigns for Penguin). Another influencer explains: "Umbriel manda un formulario con las novedades de cada mes y de esas elijo como máximo dos de cada una y hago una reseña a cambio y Penguin me suele mandar sus novedades del sello de Wattpad. Aunque a veces escritores se ponen en contacto conmigo para mandarme su libro" (Umbriel sends me a form with each month's new releases, I choose a maximum of two of each and write a review in exchange; and Penguin usually sends me their new releases from the Wattpad imprint. Sometimes writers contact me to send me their book).

More and more booktokers are spreading the word about books in their social networks through reviews or unboxings. As one of the interviewees commented: "He hecho colaboraciones con dos editoriales: Duomo Ediciones y Harper Collins. Las condiciones son bastante libres, ya que el contenido que puedo realizar tras leer el libro está bajo mi propio juicio. Lo que hago comúnmente son dos vídeos, el primero haciendo un unboxing del paquete y tras haber leído la obra grabo otro diciendo qué me ha parecido y si lo recomendaría" (I have collaborated with two publishers: Duomo Ediciones and Harper Collins. The conditions are quite free, as the content I can make after reading the book is under my own judgement. What I usually do is two videos, the first one unboxing the package and after having read the book I record another one saying what I thought of it and if I would recommend it).

According to Esperanza Luque, one condition is that "la colaboración depende mucho de lo que te pida la editorial en cuestión. Pero, mínimo, enseñar el libro en redes sociales" (collaboration depends a lot on what the publishing house asks of you. But, at the very least, you have to show the book on social networks). However, "Hay algunas que ponen muchas condiciones, algunas te ponen fechas en las que te tienes que leer los libros, te dicen que tienes que grabar 'x' vídeos, depende mucho de la editorial y/o autor del libro, ya que ellos también contactan contigo para mandarte su libro y ellos te ponen sus condiciones" (there are some that set a lot of conditions, some give you dates on which you have to read the books, they tell you that you have to record an exact number of videos. It depends a lot on the publisher and/or author of the book, as they also contact you to send you their book and they set their own conditions). For Ainoa Avellana: "Hay varias editoriales que nos han enviado libros más de una vez, una de ellas es Planeta. Las condiciones que normalmente ponen es que sus libros aparezcan en nuestro perfil para que les hagamos publicidad y que tengas bastantes seguidores para que llegue a más gente" (There are several publishers who have sent us books more than once, one of them is Planeta. The condition they normally set is that their books appear in our profile so that we can advertise them and that we have enough followers to reach more people).

Professionalisation is detected, since according to Letizia Guerrero: "Las editoriales te mandan una guía de estilo con lo que debes hacer en el vídeo y luego de grabarlo deben dar su aprobación" (The publishers send you a style guide with what you have to do in the video and after recording it they have

to give their approval), as well as a diversification of techniques (Esperanza Luque: "Me invitaron a la #FiestaCrave, que es una fiesta de Halloween que organizó Planeta sobre la Serie Crave" (I was invited to the #FiestaCrave, which is a Halloween party organised by Planeta about the Crave Series).

As far as economic issues are concerned, the situation varies. One booktoker states that "Hay algunas editoriales que pagan, otras que no" (there are some publishers that pay, others that don't), showing that there are publishers with a budget for promoting books and encouraging reading through influencers.

Publishers do not usually inform influencers about changes in terms of sales due to the promotion of books through social networks, but they do sense it (Letizia Guerrero: "Nunca una editorial, pero sí que lo he notado especialmente con una saga. Cuando empecé a recomendarla no era muy popular y ya va por la 12ª edición" (Never a publisher, but I have noticed it especially with a saga. When I started recommending it, it wasn't very popular and it's now in its 12th edition); as another said: "Editoriales no, ya que es muy difícil saber quién ha generado esas ventas ya que normalmente nos envían a varios booktokers los mismos libros, pero autores que me han enviado sus libros sí que me han comentado. O también los mismos compradores te mandan un mensaje diciéndote que se han comprado 'x' libro porque lo recomendast" (Not publishers, as it's very difficult to know who has generated these sales, because they normally send us the same books to several booktokers, but authors who have sent me their books have told me about it. Or even the buyers themselves send messages saying that they have bought some book because I recommended it).

This confirms that publishers, despite using book influencers, are not transparent about the possible increase in sales; however, it would be possible to identify this growth given the popularity acquired by books or sagas through the promotion of booktokers, in addition to other marketing and communication techniques.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This research has found that publishers consider influencers as a relevant advertising resource for the dissemination and promotion of their books. Therefore, booktokers recommend, review or offer opinions on books, having the possibility of making them popular.

The BookTok community is an exponential phenomenon that has taken relevance in recent times, encouraged by the growth in book publishing, increasingly digital (H1). Book influencers, through their channels and content, are characterized by their authenticity, share literary tastes and generate more closeness with reading communities, in an increasingly professional manner (Van-Driel and Dumitrica, 2021).

Among the main book influencers in TikTok Spain, women predominate (H2), most notably @ir_zu, @maryam.and.books, @mar.flz, @letiziaalg21 and @adictaalibros. Aged between 16 and 27, they are in their last years of high school or have finished their Bachelor's degree, have published up to 1430 videos, have more than 1.5 million followers on TikTok and 73.5 million likes.

The main publishers that collaborate with book influencers are Teen Planet, Harper Collins, Penguin books and Planeta de Libros. *The Shadows Between Us, A Court of Thorns and Roses, The Love Hypothesis* and *Crescent City* were the most widely spread books. Novels are the most popular, mostly published by Crossbooks, Planeta, Puck, Montena and Umbriel. Contrary to what was expected (H3), they mainly promote printed books, despite using digital channels for their prescriptive work. This data contrasts with the barometers of the Federación de Gremios de Editores de España (FGEE) [Federation of Publishers' Union of Spain] 2017 and 2022, which make clear that digital book publishing is on the rise. Books published recently and aimed mainly at young people and children are the most popular, data that coincide with the FGEE (2017; 2022), which identifies people between 14 and 24 as the main buyers of books.

Booktokers perceive that the increase in sales and book reading is due to the promotional actions carried out on TikTok, YouTube and Instagram (H4). However, these opinions may be biased and it would be appropriate to appeal to the transparency and reliability of information from publishers, as well as

in the point of view of readers. The results of this study coincide with Rovira-Collado (2016), according to whom publishers adapted to the BookTok community through relevant book influencers by giving or offering them books to increase their sales.

Publishers are more aware of the importance of collaborating with influencers for the dissemination of their books and publishing brands and therefore contemplate them in their communication (Castelló-Martínez a& Del-Pino-Romero, 2015) and commercial strategies. Thus, more studies on BookTok and the publishing industry are pertinent, given that studies were only found on other social networks such as YouTube or Instagram, or in other economic sectors such as cosmetics and fashion. The hybridization of influencer marketing, the publishing industry and TikTok are the main contributions of this study. Methodologically, it is proposed to analyse the audience and reading community through interviews or surveys, but also to know the experience of authors and publishers through in-depth interviews, for example, with marketing, communication and sales managers.

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AUTHOR'S CONTRIBUTIONS

Jesús Segarra-Saavedra: Project administration; Formal analysis; Conceptualization; Writing - original draft; Writing - review a& editing; Investigation; Methodology; Supervision; Validation; Visualization.

Yuri-Edith Torres-Huamanyauri: Formal analysis; Conceptualization; Data curation; Writing - review a& editing; Investigation; Methodology; Visualization.

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