


From the page to the screen: TikTok in children's and young adult literature

Gloria Gómez-Escalonilla 
Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, Spain
gloria.gomezescalonilla@urjc.es

Received: 24-July-2025

Accepted: 16-January-2026

Abstract


This article aims to analyse how Spanish children's and young adult literature publishers use TikTok as a reading recommendation tool in the digital environment. More specifically, it aims at identifying how many publishers are present on this network, characterise their posts—both in content and form—and evaluate their impact through interaction metrics. To that end, a content analysis methodology was applied, examining the accounts of children's and young adult publishers and the five most recent posts of each. The results reveal a still-minor and under-established presence on TikTok. Posts tend to be informative, focused on showcasing books or making simple recommendations. The impact is limited in terms of followers and interactions, although notable cases are identified where the use of influencers and more visual strategies generate greater reach. The study concludes that, although its development is still incipient, TikTok represents a channel with great potential for promoting reading among young audiences.

Keywords: Social media; reading promotion; publishing industry; children's literature; peer influence.

How to cite: Gómez-Escalonilla, G. (2026). De las páginas a la pantalla: TikTok en la literatura infantil y juvenil. *Ocnos*, 25(2). https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos_2026.25.2.645



De las páginas a la pantalla: TikTok en la literatura infantil y juvenil

Gloria Gómez-Escalonilla 
Universidad Rey Juan Carlos, España
gloria.gomezescalonilla@urjc.es

Recibido: 24-Julio-2025

Aceptado: 16-Enero-2026

Resumen

El artículo tiene como objetivo analizar cómo las editoriales españolas de literatura infantil y juvenil utilizan TikTok como herramienta de prescripción lectora en el entorno digital. En concreto, busca identificar cuántas editoriales tienen presencia en esta red, caracterizar sus publicaciones —tanto en contenido como en aspectos formales— y evaluar su impacto a través de las métricas de interacción. Para ello, se aplicó una metodología de análisis de contenido, examinando las cuentas de las editoriales de infantil y juvenil y las cinco publicaciones más recientes de cada una. Los resultados revelan una presencia todavía minoritaria y poco consolidada en TikTok. Las publicaciones tienden a ser informativas, centradas en mostrar libros o realizar recomendaciones sencillas. El impacto es limitado en términos de seguidores e interacciones, aunque se identifican casos destacados donde el uso de *influencers* y estrategias más visuales generan mayor alcance. El estudio concluye que, aunque su desarrollo aún es incipiente, TikTok representa un canal con gran potencial para la promoción lectora entre el público juvenil.

Palabras clave: Redes sociales; promoción de la lectura; sector editorial; literatura infantil y juvenil; influencia de los iguales.

Cómo citar: Gómez-Escalonilla, G. (2026). De las páginas a la pantalla: TikTok en la literatura infantil y juvenil. *Ocnos*, 25(2). https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos_2026.25.2.645



INTRODUCTION

The publishing sector, which has traditionally been characterised by its methods of book production and distribution, has undergone significant changes in recent decades due to the rise of digitalisation and new technologies (Gómez-Escalonilla, 2002). The first significant change was the online sale of printed books, a development spearheaded by Amazon, alongside other changes in the distribution and marketing of books. Digital books are also published, although the industry still relies primarily on printed books: EUR 2.858 billion in revenue from printed books compared with EUR 165.5 million from digital books (FGEE, 2025). Whilst the essence of the sector has not changed, certain areas have, such as book promotion and reading recommendations. One of the first changes is the websites set up by publishers, where they not only talk about their books but can also sell them. These changes have exacerbated and diversified with the emergence of social media, where users have introduced new ways of communicating and promoting books, opening up new avenues of connection between readers. Against this backdrop, publishers specialising in children's and young adult literature in Spain have begun to adapt their digital strategies with the aim of connecting with an audience that is increasingly active in digital environments. This research aims at examining the presence of children's literature publishers on social media, specifically on TikTok, in order to gain a better understanding of this phenomenon. How many publishers have a presence on TikTok, since when, what their posts are like, which books they mention, what format they use, and how many followers they have—these are some of the questions this study aims to answer.

The research presented here draws on numerous references that analyse various aspects of the phenomenon: the effects of digitisation and new technologies on the world of books (Chartier & Scolari, 2019), with references from outside Spain (Martin & Tian, 2016; or Szpilbarg, 2024), and within Spain (Magadán-Díaz & Rivas-García, 2019; Toledo et al., 2021); the impact of social media on the publishing sector (Jarast, 2020; Gómez-López & Hellín-Ortuño, 2019; Magadán Díaz & Rivas-García, 2020). Furthermore, there is also a wealth of literature on the TikTok and BookTok phenomenon, particularly in the English-speaking world (Abidin, 2021; Asplund et al., 2024; Dezuanni & Schoonens, 2024). All these references have paved the way for research more closely related to the present study, which analyses children's literature on social media. Therefore, the study by López-Verdejo et al. (2024) analyses this sector on Instagram; Rovira-Collado and Ivanova (2019) analyse the influencers who review children's literature on Instagram and YouTube. Vila-Carneiro and Martín-Macho (2022) also investigate the presence of children's and young adult publishers on social media, focusing on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook. No research has been identified in the Spanish-speaking world that focuses on children's literature publishers on TikTok; consequently, this study may be seen as paving the way for a new line of research into this social media platform.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Changes in the publishing industry

Children's and young adult literature is understood as a whole that encompasses the period from when children are told stories until they are considered adults (Jiménez-Pérez & Fabregat-Barrios, 2019). These books play a key role in cognitive, emotional and social development, as well as encouraging a love of reading. Furthermore, it creates a stable economic environment. The fact is that the publishing sector in Spain is the country's leading cultural industry: in 2024, it reached EUR 3,037.51 million, returning to turnover levels seen before the 2008 crisis (FGEE, 2025). Since the pandemic, the publishing market has continued to grow, including the children's literature sector, which in 2024 generated turnover of EUR 551.48 million, accounting for 18.2% of the total, an increase of almost 2% on the previous year.

In terms of corporate structure, the sector is characterised by a high degree of concentration, dominated by large media groups, particularly Planeta and Penguin Random House, a structure that also

affects children's literature: Destino Infantil y Juvenil (Planeta) and Alfaguara Infantil y Juvenil (PRH). There is also the Loqueleo imprint, which is part of the Santillana group. Other Spanish groups whose growth has been driven by education include: Anaya, SM, Edelvives and Edebé, as well as independent publishers—some with a significant presence, such as Kalandraya, Ekare and Norma Editorial, and others on a smaller scale, such as Takatuka, A Buen Paso, Thule, Diego Pun and Editorial Juventud.

Children's literature publishers still maintain a high standard of publishing, characterised by superb production values and a wide variety of themes ([Observatorio de la Lectura y el Libro, 2017](#)). This positive trend is reflected in the figures, both for consumption and production.

Overproduction in publishing

According to the Report on Reading Habits and Book Purchasing in Spain ([Conecta, 2025](#)), the reading rate among children is very high: 82.5% of children aged 6 to 9 read books other than textbooks. The figures for young people aged 14 to 24 are also high: at 75.3%, this figure has been rising in recent years and is 10 percentage points above the national average (the reading rate in Spain stands at 65.5%).

As reading becomes more popular, so does the range of books available for young children. In 2024, of the 59,758 titles published in print, 10,246 were children's and young adult books. The average print run for a children's book (5,524 copies per title) far exceeds the average print run for a book aimed at adults (3,517 copies). Based on these figures, book production totals over 56 million copies published. It has increased by more than 9% compared with last year's figures.

Both in the publishing sector as a whole and in children's literature, the market is characterised by an overproduction of books. The reason why so much is produced has to do with the dynamics of publishing: to achieve the "catalogue effect", to focus on new releases, to increase the chances of success... ([Gómez-Escalonilla, 2002](#)). This trend towards an increasing supply of books requires maximising strategies that raise the profile of a title and increase opportunities to promote reading through conventional methods: advertising campaigns, press relations, book launches, book fairs, shelf placement in bookshops, chains and high-street retailers, or engagement with various stakeholders, such as booksellers, librarians, teachers and other "cultural influencers" ([Trivez, 2024](#)). However, in recent years, other online strategies have been introduced: pop-up websites, content marketing, online advertising, SEO optimisation on e-commerce platforms ([Gómez-López & Hellín-Ortuño, 2019](#)), collaborations with literary influencers, and a social media presence – the latter being the focus of this study.

The digital impact

Digitalisation is having an impact on many aspects of the publishing industry, one of which is the editing process. According to the book's Domestic Trade section ([FGEE, 2025](#)), turnover for this format in children's books stood at EUR 9.781 billion, although this figure accounts for only 5.5% of total turnover. Although e-books have not managed to replace paper books, other digital formats have certainly gained prominence in the children's and young adult sector. According to the Report on Reading Habits and Book Purchasing ([Conecta, 2025](#)), there has been a significant increase in the reading of websites, blogs and social media among teenagers: 25% of 10- to 14-year-olds already read social media, a figure that rises to 68.5% among 15- to 18-year-olds.

From the perspective of how people spend their free time, websites, blogs and social media may be activities that take time away from reading books, but these digital platforms can also help to encourage reading if they are used as a means of recommending books. In fact, although friends, colleagues or family remain the main source of recommendations when buying or reading a book (51.4%), the internet now accounts for 32.3% and social media for 23%.

Given this significance, publishers targeting this audience regard their online presence as a key factor; indeed, most authors would prefer to have their work reviewed on a blog or forum with thousands of visitors rather than in a cultural supplement reserved for the cultural elite ([Marcos-Recio et al., 2010](#)).

TikTok and new forms of influencer marketing

Social media doesn't just serve to raise the profile of books and promote them; it also enables a new connection with audiences. Researchers who have investigated the impact of digitalisation on reading among young people are already referring to the "social reading" (Rovira-Collado, 2015) made possible by children's literature 2.0. One of the most widely researched areas is how communities use these networks in relation to books. It inspires such a proactive response from the public that children's literature 2.0 definitively breaks down the barriers between author and reader. It is children and young people who actively seek out information on the texts that interest them (Rovira-Collado, 2013).

This ability for users to search for, create and share content can be profitable if it attracts visitors and brands sponsor such activity. They are influencers, and they have a greater impact on younger audiences because they are relatable, use accessible language and look similar to them: they are peers who communicate, offer advice and make recommendations, and their followers believe and trust their messages.

From 2012 onwards, booktubers, booktagrammers and booktokers began to proliferate, racking up millions of views. Unlike recommendation algorithms, which suggest content based on users' online preferences and behaviour, influencers personalise recommendations by acting as trusted opinion leaders (Pretel-Jiménez et al., 2024); they discover books, discuss plots, play games or compete around the works, thereby creating a community of followers whose enthusiasm can influence a book's commercial success.

Publishers, taken aback by this phenomenon, are beginning to take notice of them and forge relationships with them: by sending them their books or featuring them on their own social media profiles, which they began to create as the 21st century progressed, diversifying their online presence and adapting it to the characteristics of each platform (Lluch-Crespo & Sanz-Tejeda, 2024). The latest to emerge is TikTok, the platform on which this study focuses.

TikTok was launched in 2016 by ByteDance, a Chinese technology company, under the name Douyin, but in 2017 it rebranded as TikTok as part of its expansion outside China. In 2018, following the acquisition and integration of Musical.ly, the platform saw significant growth among young audiences thanks to its short-form video format, its tailored algorithm and the ease with which users could create and share creative content.

The impact on the world of books began in 2020 through the community known as BookTok: readers and content creators who started recommending books via videos, creating trends that have had a direct impact on the publishing market and book sales. There is no exact figure for how many users are on BookTok, as it is a very large and constantly growing online community. However, the hashtag #booktok has racked up over 38 billion views and 55 million mentions on TikTok, highlighting its massive reach. Although there are other social media platforms that host communities of book influencers, TikTok's current popularity and its highly visual and viral nature justify the decision to focus this research on this particular platform.

METHODOLOGY

Generally, this study aims at analysing the presence and characteristics of children's and young adult literature publishers on TikTok. More specific objectives include:

- To find out how many publishing houses have a profile on TikTok.
- To understand aspects of visual identity, the age and performance of children's literature accounts.
- To understand your engagement metrics.

- To analyse the posts of children’s literature publishers: their narratives and the books mentioned therein.
- To familiarise oneself with the formats and formal requirements of these posts.

As in other studies analysing social media (Jarast, 2020; Dezuanni & Schoonens, 2024; López-Verdejo et al., 2024; Vila-Carneiro & Martín-Macho, 2022), this study employs content analysis. This research technique, based on the “objective, systematic and quantitative analysis of the manifest content of communication” (Berelson, 1952, p. 18), involves defining the corpus under study. In this case, the study population comprises the 103 publishers listed by the Spanish Federation of Publishers’ Associations in its directory of children’s literature publishers by subject area. Each name followed by “publisher” was searched for using TikTok’s search engine, with institutional profiles identified by their profile description and the use of a logo as their profile picture. The search revealed that only 25 of the 103 publishers had a TikTok account at the time the search was carried out, in May 2025.

A two-part content analysis was carried out on these 25 profiles: the first focused on the profiles themselves; the second analysis examined the five most recent posts on each profile, filtered by “recent” and excluding pinned posts. As Triqueta Editora has no content and Conecto has only two posts, a total of 117 posts were ultimately analysed.

This corpus, comprising 25 profiles and 117 posts, has been analysed using variables that enable a comprehensive characterisation of both the profiles and the videos, combining aspects of identity, audiovisual composition and performance. Firstly, the profile information includes the type of image used (specifying what is shown: a personal photograph, a logo, an illustration or a cartoon). The year the profile was created is also recorded, based on the date of the first post. The total number of posts on their profile is also displayed. The tracking metrics provided by the platform itself are recorded; in this case: followers and “likes”.

As regards the content of the posts, most of the coding used for the variables is dichotomous, based on whether the variable is present or absent. The system checks whether an influencer or author appears, as well as their gender. It also identifies visual and narrative elements: the setting in which it is filmed, the type of shot (long shot, medium shot, close-up, etc.), the type of voiceover used (voice-over or on-camera), and the use of visual or sound effects, as well as the presence of music and subtitles. The variables relating to the books examine how many appear in the posts, their literary genre, the degree to which their covers are visually recognisable, and whether they appear upside down – a common feature in front-facing camera recordings. The format is also classified using the most widely accepted classification system, along with its tone and the hook – that is, the reason behind the message. These features are complemented by engagement metrics (views, likes, favourites, shares and comments), which enable us to measure the impact and level of audience engagement.

Table 1

Variables in the analysis sheets

Profile: (Corpus: (25 publishers)	Posts: (Corpus: 117)
- Profile picture, logo, photograph, cartoon or other.	- Duration
If the profile picture is a photograph, gender could be interests	- Influencer (Yes / No)
- Year of commencement	- Author (Yes / No)
- No. of posts	- Gender: Male / Female / Other)
- Followers	- Background: Interior with bookcase / Other interior / Exterior with bookcase / Other exterior / Other
- Like	- Type of plan: Miscellaneous / Close-up / Medium / General / NA
	- Voice: Voice-over / On-screen narration
	- Visual effects (Yes / No)
	- Sound effects (Yes / No)

Profile: (Corpus: (25 publishers)	Posts: (Corpus: 117)
	- Music (Yes / No)
	- Subtitles (Yes / No)
	- Books: One / More than one / No books
	- Book genre: (Novel / Horror / Science Fiction / Thriller / Romance / Fantasy / Children's and Young Adult / Poetry / Classics / Essay / Self-help / Other / Non-fiction)
	- Visual identification of the book(s) (Yes / No)
	- Reversed cover layout (Yes / No)
	- Post type: Review / Unboxing / Books haul / Book tag / Bookshelf / Wrap-up / Top books / Visual storytelling / Graphic design / Other
	- Tone: Positive / Negative / Neutral
	- Hook: (Yes / No)
	- Views
	- Likes
	- Favourites
	- Shares
	- Comments

These variables relating to the 25 publishers and 117 posts were entered into an Excel spreadsheet, and frequency tables have been created to perform quantitative analyses of the data obtained and, on this basis, to draw inferences and interpretations, all carried out in accordance with the relevant ethical considerations.

ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

The presence of children's book publishers on TikTok

Of the total of 103 publishers monitored, only 25 (24.2%) have a TikTok profile, confirming that the sector has a limited presence on this platform. The absence of the two major publishers in the duopoly—Alfaguara Infantil y Juvenil (PRH) and Destino Infantil (Planeta)—is not due to a lack of interest in social media, but rather to the fact that both operate through general corporate accounts (Penguinlibros and Planetadelibros), following a pattern already seen in other digital environments.

Among the major publishers, Anaya Infantil y Juvenil and Edelvives do have a presence, whilst SM does not have an active account, despite being frequently mentioned by other users (around 150 times), which indicates recognition and interest from the reading community.

The group of active profiles reflects a wide range of publishers is made up as follows:

- Imprints designed for children: Andana, Conecto, Cuento de Luz, Litera Libros, Zahorí, Triqueta, Crononauta.
- Imprints aimed more at teenagers or young adults: Juventud, Nova Casa, Obscura and Ra-ma, with a strong focus on comics and manga.
- Imprints with educational themes: Bruño, Sentir and Editorial GEU.
- Mixed imprints or imprints with an additional adult catalogue: Norma, Bromera and Plutón.
- Publishers specialising in specific formats: Exlibric (autopublicación), Libros del Zorro Rojo and Tramuntana (picture books).

This diversity suggests that content on TikTok does not follow a single editorial model, but rather a range of approaches that are still in their experimental stages.

Profile characteristics: identity and activity

As regards visual identity, all publishers use their logo as their profile picture. This approach, consistent with institutional practice, makes it easier to identify content in an environment where mentions, remixes and third-party posts about the books are rife.

As regards the age of the accounts, there are no profiles dating from before 2020, which suggests they have only recently joined the TikTok ecosystem. Most of the openings are scheduled between 2020 and 2022, with a significant increase in 2021. The most recent edition is published by Editorial Sentir (2025).

Activity on these accounts is limited:

- 18 publishers have fewer than 100 posts.
- 6 have between 100 to 500.
- None of them has reached 500 posts, although Cuento de Luz is the most consistent (468 videos).

Overall, the activity suggests exploratory or one-off strategies, rather than a sustained or professionalised presence.

Scope and engagement metrics

Profile scope, based on the number of followers, varies considerably:

- A small group with just over 100 followers (Conecto, Ra-ma, Sentir, Diego Pun, Zahorí).
- Most have between 100 and 1,000 followers.
- An intermediate group ranges from 1,000 to 2,000.
- Two cases stand out: Nova Publishing House: 7,235 followers (young adult romance) and Norma Editorial (@normaedmanga): 22,400 followers.

The data suggests that certain genres—particularly manga—align more closely with the consumption patterns characteristic of TikTok’s algorithm (Alcalá-Pérez, 2024).

With regard to video views and engagement, the average number of views per video (853) varies considerably, ranging from fewer than 100 to more than 6,000.

Engagement is low: average number of “Likes”: 23; “Favourites”: 3,5; “Comments”: 1.8. There are very few “Shared” cases: just three.

Although some publishers exceed these figures (Nova Casa, Edelvives, Juventud, GEU), the interaction tends to be superficial, and the content is largely expository and does little to encourage active participation.

Qualitative analysis: narratives and communication strategies

Book-centred stories

The main focus is on the physical presentation of the book (cover, interior pages, illustrations). TikTok acts as a “showcase”, in keeping with its highly visual environment.

This strategy, which is consistent with the nature of the publishing product, makes books—especially short stories—the narrative focus of the videos. The exhibition focuses primarily on the interiors, illustrations and visual details of the items, drawing on the aesthetic appeal of the objects themselves to attract visitors. This trend reflects an intention to convey the content through the book’s own design, format and visual presentation, rather than relying on external narratives or fictional stories created around the title. As a fast-paced, visual platform, TikTok serves as an effective showcase for this type of content, as shown in [Figure 3](#), although in many cases there is little interaction beyond the direct presentation of the book.

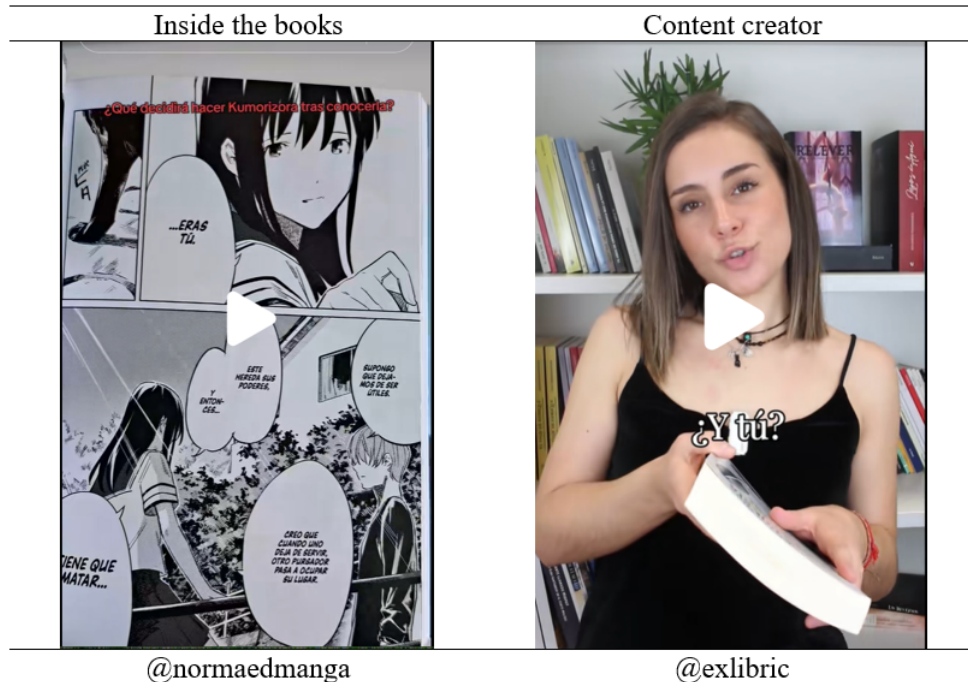
People-centred stories

In 49 posts, the focus of the video is on the people.

- 61% feature female protagonists, reflecting common trends among readers and in recommended content.
- Almost half (23 out of 49) are external influencers, whose use appears to be an effective strategy for “translating” editorial content into the TikTok style and capitalising on established communities. Examples of how they are used include content creators: @sandracuestall (Zahorí Books) or @laauuvzqz (Nova Casa Editorial).
- Authors and illustrators are credited in 19 cases: a strategy with great potential, though one that remains underdeveloped, particularly given that authors are an exclusive asset of the publisher and bring unique symbolic and emotional value. Their involvement not only helps to bring the book to life and give the public an insight into the creative process, but can also forge stronger bonds with readers by putting a face and a voice to the content.

Figure 3

Examples of key stories

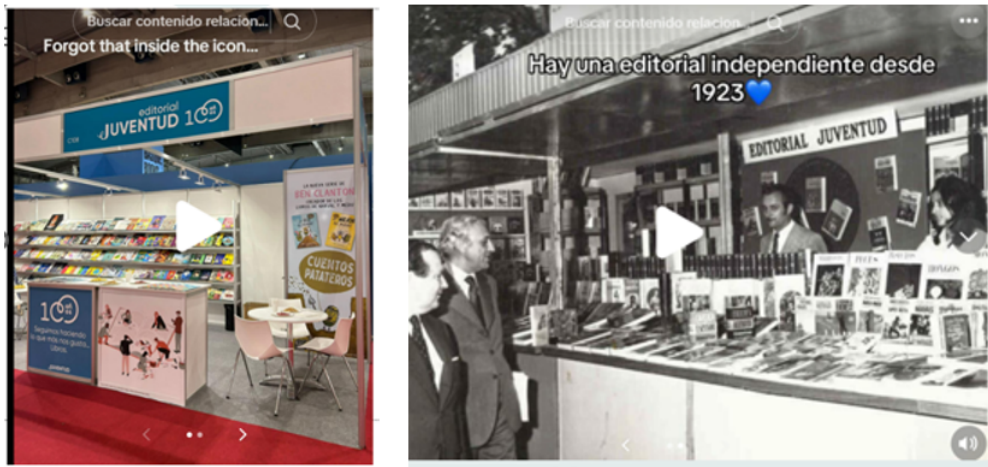


Other stories

Some publishers are experimenting with other stories aiming at to showcasing the day-to-day workings of the publishing industry. One of these features involves staff from the publishing house, who appear in some videos explaining their work, sharing insights into the editorial process, or simply showing the environment in which they work. Another interesting story revolves around publishers' participation in book fairs and other literary events. This narrative approach makes the most of the behind-the-scenes aspect, which is highly valued on social media, and allows the publisher to share not only its books but also its involvement in the process. Another interesting example is that of the publishing house Juventud, which has a video showing its stand at a trade fair in 1923 and today, as can be seen in [Figure 4](#).

Figure 4

Published by Editorial Juventud



Source: *TikTok*

Content and tone of posts

- There are references to the books in 96 posts: 49 refer to more than one book, 47 refer to just one.
- In 21 videos (18%), no title is mentioned, with coverage of events (presentations, trade fairs, etc.) being the most common.
- In 13 cases, the title cannot be identified, which limits its promotional value.
- A total of 109 books are listed: 58 children’s literature books, and the rest are novels, fantasy, romance and poetry.
- The most common format is Bookhaul (55 instances), followed by reviews/recommendations (17).
- The tone is largely positive (70%) compared with other neutral posts, as there are no posts that highlight negative aspects.
- 36 posts make use of thematic “hooks” (Book Day, Father’s Day, etc.), in line with standard cultural marketing practices.

Visual, auditory and formal aspects

The analysis reveals patterns consistent with TikTok’s general style:

- A predominance of indoor spaces (70 cases), particularly shelving units (44).
- Predominant use of medium shots and close-ups (30), creating a sense of intimacy and authenticity.
- Music has been included in 90 videos, in line with the algorithm’s prioritisation of popular audio tracks, such as songs by Taylor Swift or Quevedo.

- Few visual and audio effects (22 and 8 instances respectively).
- Widespread use of on-screen text (92 videos), which improves accessibility and retention.

Overall, the resources are there, but they remain largely untapped in terms of creativity.

DISCUSSION

In 2010, [Marcos-Recio et al.](#), when asking publishing house communications directors about their recommendation and promotion strategy, noted that its main purpose is to create a distinct communication strategy for each book. Given that the children's literature sector publishes 10,246 new titles a year, the only way for each title to be promoted individually would be through social media. This is a possibility, although it is not yet a reality, in light of the data provided, because the presence of children's and young adult publishers on TikTok is clearly still in its infancy and at an exploratory stage, in contrast to the trends observed in previous studies on the publishing sector's adoption of social media platforms—a pattern also seen in other contexts ([De-Amo-Sánchez et al., 2023](#)). Thus, in their study, [Gómez-López and Hellín-Ortuño \(2019\)](#) concluded that the three publishers they examined—Balduque, Alba and Anagrama—all used social media for promotional purposes, although Facebook was the most widely used, in line with research in Argentina, where publishers' use of social media is led by Facebook (87%) and Instagram (80%) compared to the minority use of YouTube (10%) ([Mihal and Saferstein, 2024](#)). Spanish studies also agree that Facebook is the most widely used platform ([Vila-Carneiro & Martín-Macho, 2022](#); [Magadán-Díaz & Rivas-García, 2020](#)). The low proportion of active publishing houses on TikTok identified in this study (24.2%) and the low level of activity on most profiles suggest that TikTok has not yet been systematically incorporated into publishing houses' communication strategies, unlike other social media platforms.

This situation stands in stark contrast to TikTok's growing influence on young people's reading habits—as evidenced by phenomena such as BookTok and reports on reading habits—and highlights a disconnect between the platform's potential and how it is being utilised by institutions. The fact that some large publishers, such as Alfaguara Infantil y Juvenil (PRH), Destino Infantil (Planeta) and SM, do not have their own profiles but are mentioned by users suggests that discussions about their books are taking place, though not always with their direct involvement.

The quantitative data confirms that TikTok's algorithm does not favour only the major agents, but rather the content that is best suited to the platform's language. Significantly, small and medium-sized publishers achieve levels comparable to—or even higher than—those of large publishers in terms of relative engagement. This phenomenon had already been suggested in research on cultural micro-communities on TikTok ([Tobeña, 2020](#)), confirming that visibility is not strictly proportional to the size of a creator's library or the number of followers they have, but rather to their ability to produce creative, reusable content or content that is in line with current trends.

The distribution of narratives reinforces this interpretation. The prevalence of the showcase format (displaying covers, interior pages and new releases) reflects an almost direct transfer of strategies typical of other social media platforms, such as Instagram or Facebook, to TikTok ([López-Verdejo et al., 2024](#)). This “linear” translation explains the low engagement: TikTok's most effective formats—viral audio clips, duets, fast-paced storytelling, transitions, miming, and participation in challenges—appear only marginally in the corpus. This scarcity limits the circulation of content and restricts its integration into the algorithmic dynamics characteristic of “remix” culture ([Francés, 2021](#)).

One notable interpretation is that publishers appear to prioritise safe, controlled communication over participatory communication; a conclusion reinforced by the minimal use of visual effects, limited experimentation with TikTok's native formats, and the scarce presence of editorial staff, which is likely due to brand management considerations or a lack of specialist resources. Unlike BookTokers, whose content is characterised by emotional expressiveness and a sense of intimacy, publisher profiles adopt a more formal tone, which can limit their ability to build a community.

Furthermore, the presence of external influencers in almost half of the videos featuring a person suggests that some publishers recognise the strategic value of these intermediaries. However, this strategy appears to be ad hoc rather than systematic. The lack of authors and illustrators in videos, despite the potential they offer to humanise the brand, also points to an untapped area. [Lluch-Crespo and Sanz-Tejeda \(2024\)](#) have found that the professional accounts of publishers, bookshops, libraries and writers use hashtags related to World Book Day or Sant Jordi's Day on Twitter, and that these accounts become sources of content which other users then disseminate and share. In this regard, the high level of use of "hooks" identified in this study bodes well for these children's literature publishers to take the lead and generate viral content on this social media platform.

Finally, the low level of engagement observed raises an important question: Are publishers reaching out to the people who actually use TikTok to discover new books? Viewing and engagement data suggest that the audience exposed to the videos may not fully align with BookTok's most active user segments. This hypothetical mismatch between the target audience and the actual audience opens up a line of future research and suggests that, without greater adaptation to TikTok's cultural ecosystem, publishers' influence will remain limited.

CONCLUSIONS

This study shows that the presence of children's and young adult literature publishers on TikTok remains limited and sporadic, despite the central role the platform currently plays in the circulation of reading recommendations among young people. The limited activity, the lack of narrative experimentation and the prevalence of expository strategies suggest that the sector is in a period of transition, exploring the platform but without fully integrating it into its communication dynamics.

The results confirm that visibility does not depend on the size of the publisher, but on how well the content is adapted to TikTok's language. Small and medium-sized publishing houses can achieve significant levels of engagement, which opens up opportunities to democratise cultural curation, provided they adopt more creative and participatory strategies.

In terms of content, the qualitative analysis reveals an approach that is still largely "borrowed" from other platforms: there is an abundance of videos focusing on covers, new releases and catalogues, whilst narratives that make use of elements characteristic of TikTok culture—humour, trends, viral audio clips, transitions, emotional storytelling, creator involvement and collaborations with creators—remain in the minority. Strengthening these practices could boost the content's algorithmic relevance and its ability to foster a sense of community.

Overall engagement is modest, suggesting that current strategies are unlikely to achieve the level of engagement typical of BookTok. To improve this aspect, it would be advisable to: systematise the use of influencers and specialist content creators; develop narrative formats specific to the platform; increase the presence of authors, editors or mediators; diversify genres and topics beyond simply showcasing new releases; and incorporate more meaningful metrics (such as the likes-to-followers ratio and comments per view) into the evaluation of results.

As for the study's limitations, the short time period analysed and the variability of publishing activity on TikTok make it impossible to identify conclusive long-term trends. The absence of certain corporate groups also affects the sector's overall representativeness. Future research could expand the corpus, involve users, or analyse networks of interaction between publishers and reader communities.

Despite these limitations, the results paint a clear picture: TikTok presents a real opportunity for promoting children's and young adult literature, but publishers are still making only limited use of it. Adopting strategies that are more in line with the platform's inherent creative, algorithmic and community-based approach could enhance its editorial impact and foster new forms of reader engagement.

FUNDING

This study is part of the project called “Cultural Scape. Cartografía de los modelos de mediación literaria en línea. Desafíos para el sistema mediático y oportunidades para la alfabetización cultural”. This project was conducted and funded by Universidad Rey Juan Carlos in 2025. IP: Gloria Gómez-Escalonilla.

REFERENCES

- Abidin, C. (2021). Mapping Internet celebrity on TikTok: Exploring attention economies and visibility labours. *Cultural Science Journal*, 12(1), 77-103. <https://doi.org/10.5334/csci.140>
- Alcalá-Pérez, M. A. (2024). La comunicación en los creadores de contenido otakus españoles: Lolweapon y Wade Otaku. *Miguel Hernández Communication Journal*, 15, 267-294. <https://doi.org/10.21134/mhcj.v15i.427>
- Asplund, S. B., Egeland, B. L., & Olin-Scheller, C. (2024). Sharing is caring: Young people's narratives about BookTok and volitional reading. *Language and Education*, 38(4), 635-651. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09500782.2024.2324947>
- Berelson, B. (1952). *Content analysis in communication research*. Free Press.
- Chartier, R., & Scolari, C. A. (2019). *Cultura escrita y textos en red*. Gedisa Editorial.
- Conecta. (2025). *Hábitos de lectura y compra de libros en España 2024*. Federación de Gremios de Editores de España (FGEE). https://federacioneditores.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/02/Habitos-de-Lectura-y-Compra-de-Libros-2024-ESPANA_DETALLADO.pdf
- De-Amo-Sánchez, J. M., Baldrich-Rodríguez, K., & Domínguez-Oller, J. C. (2023). Estrategias virtuales de promoción lectora en libros de no ficción: Un estudio netnográfico. *Revista Colombiana de Educación*, (89), 252-274. <https://doi.org/10.17227/rce.num89-13867>
- Dezuanni, M., & Schoonens, A. (2024). #BookTok's peer pedagogies: Invitations to learn about books and reading on TikTok. *Social Media + Society*, 10(4). <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051241309499>
- Federación de Gremios de Editores de España (FGEE). (2025). *Comercio interior del libro en España 2024*. FGEE. https://federacioneditores.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/10/Comercio-Interior-2024_Interior.pdf
- Francés, M. A. (2021). Dialogic creation of the popular canon and social capital on Twitter. *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies*, 98(10), 983-1001. <https://doi.org/10.3828/bhs.2021.57>
- Gómez-Escalonilla, G. (2002). La edición de libros: Un sector potente a la defensiva digital. En E. Bustamante (Ed.), *Comunicación y cultura en la era digital: Industrias, mercados y diversidad en España* (pp. 67-96). Gedisa.
- Gómez-López, A., & Hellín-Ortuño, P. A. (2019). Estrategias de comunicación de las editoriales literarias de España. *Investigación Bibliotecológica: Archivonomía, Bibliotecología e Información*, 33(80), 57-71. <https://doi.org/10.22201/iibi.24488321xe.2019.80.57982>
- Jarast, N. (2020). La comunicación editorial de LIJ en tiempos de redes sociales. *Cuadernos del Centro de Estudios de Diseño y Comunicación*, (124). <https://doi.org/10.18682/cdc.vi124.4429>
- Jiménez-Pérez, E., & Fabregat-Barrios, S. (Coords.). (2019). *La literatura infantil y juvenil: Investigaciones*. Octaedro.
- Lluch-Crespo, G., & Sanz-Tejeda, A. (2024). Contenidos, formas, usos e impactos de los bookstagrammers y booktokers: Una revisión. *Profesional de la información*, 33(4). <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2024.0402>

- López-Verdejo, M., Hoster-Cabo, B., & Sánchez-Canales, V. (2024). Divulgación de la literatura infantil a través de cuentas de influencers en Instagram: Factores que influyen en el nivel de engagement. *Elos: Revista de Literatura Infantil e Xuvenil*, 11, 1-21. <https://doi.org/10.15304/elos.11.9338>
- Magadán-Díaz, M., & Rivas-García, J. (2019). Digitalización y modelos de negocio en la industria editorial española. *Journal of Technology Management & Innovation*, 14(1), 63-72. <https://doi.org/10.4067/S0718-27242019000100063>
- Magadán-Díaz, M., & Rivas-García, J. (2020). Las editoriales españolas en las redes sociales: Presencia, actividad y compromiso. *Revista de Comunicación*, 19(1), 149-170. <https://doi.org/10.26441/RC19.1-2020-A9>
- Marcos-Recio, J. C., Sánchez-Vigil, J. M., & Olivera-Zaldua, M. (2010). Evolución de los departamentos de comunicación en las editoriales. *El profesional de la información*, 19(1), 52-56. <https://doi.org/10.3145/epi.2010.ene.07>
- Martin, B., & Tian, X. (2016). *Books, bytes and business: The promise of digital publishing*. Routledge.
- Mihal, I., & Saferstein, E. (2024). Libros y mediatización en redes sociales: Estrategias de comunicación editorial durante la pandemia en la Argentina. *TSN. Revista de Estudios Internacionales*, (16), 187-201. <https://doi.org/10.24310/transatlantic-studies-network.16.2024.20208>
- Observatorio de la Lectura y el Libro. (2017). *Los libros infantiles y juveniles en España*. Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deporte.
- Pretel-Jiménez, M., Del-Olmo, J. L., & Ruíz-Viñals, C. (2024). El engagement de los influencers literarios con sus seguidores en Instagram: Contenido y estrategia de los Bookstagrammers. *Revista Mediterránea de Comunicación*, 15(1), 305-321. <https://www.doi.org/10.14198/MEDCOM.24251>
- Rovira-Collado, J. (2013). LIJ 2.0. Estudiando la literatura infantil y juvenil en la web social. *Lenguaje y Textos*, (37), 161-170.
- Rovira-Collado, J. (2015). Redes sociales de lectura: Del libro de caras a la LIJ 2.0. *Investigaciones sobre Lectura*, (3), 106-122.
- Rovira-Collado, J., & Ivanova, M. D. (2019). Educación literaria y LIJ 2.0 ante la internet de la imagen: Bookstagrammers, booktubers y otras redes de lectura. *E-SEDLL*, (1).
- Szpilbarg, D. (2024). Un análisis del impacto del covid-19 en el mundo editorial en Argentina: Redes sociales, digitalización y activismo digital. *TSN. Revista de Estudios Internacionales*, (16), 177-186.
- Tobeña, V. (2020). Pensar el futuro de la escuela desde comunidades de prácticas: Claves desde TikTok. *Dilemata*, (33), 221-233. <https://www.dilemata.net/revista/index.php/dilemata/article/view/412000363>
- Toledo, E. G., García, A. G., & Rodríguez, J. M. (2021). Digitalización en las editoriales académicas. *Trama & Texturas*, (44), 33-44.
- Trívez, J. (2024). La LIJ y sus lectores, locomotora de la lectura en España. En *Anuario Iberoamericano sobre el Libro Infantil y Juvenil 2023*. Fundación SM.
- Velasco-Urbano, L., & Trillo-Domínguez, M. (2019). La evolución de la crítica literaria en los nuevos medios: Del papel al booktube. *Mediatika*, (17), 169-191.
- Vila-Carneiro, Z., & Martín-Macho, A. (2022). Bibliotecas, editoriales y LIJ en la red: Análisis bajo el prisma del fomento lector. *Didáctica: Lengua y Literatura*, 34, 183-193. <https://doi.org/10.5209/dida.84157>