

# New Mediators of Youth Literature: Analysis of the most important Spanish-Speaking *BookTubers*

## Nuevos mediadores de la LIJ: análisis de los *BookTubers* más importantes de habla hispana

### *Novos mediadores da literatura juvenil: análise dos mais importantes BookTubers de língua espanhola*

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**ABSTRACT** | This article aims to study *BookTubers* as mediators of reading among young people and adolescents. These users present themselves as creators of audiovisual content linked to Youth Literature and suggest a reading canon linked to the literary interests of their audience. To do so, we designed a mixed research in which, on the one hand, we analyzed the sociodemographic characteristics and influence on the YouTube platform (N=165) and, on the other, the readings and textual preferences published in the Goodreads platform (N=122) of the most influential Spanish-speaking *BookTubers*. The data shows that these influencers are mainly young women, with a developed reading habit, and their influence is based on a long reading experience and a long presence on the Internet. The proposed readings revolve around Youth Literature, but with a great variety of topics. In addition, influencers have been adapting and diversifying between mainstream platforms: the current *BookTubers* are the natural evolution of literary blogs. The study concludes with the important implications that this phenomenon has for education in formal contexts and in the configuration of a school canon.

**KEYWORDS:** *BookTubers*; social networks; reading habits; reading; youth literature.

#### HOW TO CITE

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**RESUMEN** | Este artículo tiene por objeto de estudio a los BookTubers como mediadores de lectura entre los jóvenes y adolescentes. Estos usuarios se presentan como creadores de contenido audiovisual relacionado con la Literatura Juvenil y sugieren un canon de lecturas vinculado a los intereses literarios de su audiencia. Para ello, se ha diseñado una investigación de carácter mixto en la que se han analizado, por un lado, las características sociodemográficas e influencia en la plataforma de YouTube (N=165) y, por otro, las lecturas y preferencias textuales publicadas en la plataforma Goodreads (N=122) de los BookTubers más influyentes de habla hispana. Los datos muestran que estos influencers son fundamentalmente chicas jóvenes, con un desarrollado hábito lector, y su influencia se basa en una dilatada experiencia lectora y prolongada presencia en la red. Las lecturas propuestas giran en torno a la literatura juvenil, pero con gran variedad temática. Además, los influencers se han ido adaptando y diversificando entre las plataformas mainstream: los actuales BookTubers son la evolución natural de los blogs literarios. El estudio concluye con las importantes implicaciones que posee este fenómeno para la educación en contextos formales y en la configuración de un canon escolar.

**PALABRAS CLAVE:** BookTubers; redes sociales; hábito lector; lectura; literatura juvenil.

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**RESUMO** | O objetivo deste artigo é estudar os BookTubers como mediadores da leitura entre jovens e adolescentes. Esses usuários se apresentam como criadores de conteúdos audiovisuais vinculados à Literatura Juvenil e sugerem um cânone de leitura vinculado aos interesses literários do seu público. Para isso, foi elaborada uma pesquisa mista na qual, por um lado, foram analisadas as características sociodemográficas e a influência na plataforma do YouTube (N=165) e, por outro lado, as leituras e preferências textuais publicadas na plataforma Goodreads (N=122) dos BookTubers de língua espanhola mais influentes. Os dados mostram que esses influencers são principalmente mulheres jovens, com um hábito de leitura desenvolvido e sua influência é baseada em uma longa experiência de leitura e uma longa presença na Internet. As leituras propostas giram em torno da literatura juvenil, mas com uma grande variedade de temas. Além disso, os influencers têm se adaptado e diversificado entre as plataformas convencionais: os atuais BookTubers são a evolução natural dos blogs literários. O estudo conclui com as implicações importantes que esse fenômeno tem para a educação em contextos formais e na configuração de um cânone escolar.

**PALAVRAS-CHAVE:** BookTubers; redes sociais; hábito de leitura; leitura; literatura juvenil.

## INTRODUCTION

The school no longer has the monopoly on teaching and learning, and the Internet has democratized access to knowledge. Whether intentionally or accidentally, important ubiquitous learning is developed in the network in non-formal education contexts (Cobo & Moravec, 2011; Cope & Kalantzis, 2010). All this has forced us to review traditional learning theories (behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism) to study the current digital reality as learning scenarios. From this perspective, connectivism (Siemens, 2004) and navigationism (Brown, 2006) stand out, which give the network a central role regarding the users' knowledge.

One of the network's main potentialities is to facilitate the creation of spaces that bring together a multitude of users united solely by a shared interest, affinity, or passion (Maeda & Ramírez, 2015). In the specific field of literary reading, there are virtual communities of users who share the process of receiving a given work, literary affinities, or textual preferences in general (García-Roca, 2016). In this vein, we can highlight the study conducted by Zhao (2017), which concludes that even in social networks based on interests (specifically Goodreads), users are grouped around even more specific affinities. These communities promote the participation and learning of users since they are spaces of affinity (Gee, 2011).

Thus, in terms of Cassany (2009) a multitude of new vernacular literate practices are conducted within these virtual communities. Precisely, from a more anthropological and sociocultural perspective, the New Literacy Studies have focused their analysis on these new literacies (New London Group, 1996; Lankshear & Knobel, 2008; Cope & Kalantzis, 2000). These works reconsider concepts such as literacy since they are closely related to the context and must necessarily be constantly updated.

These activities, when related to literary reading, allow young people and adolescents to extend the reception experience far beyond the work decoding. This does not imply a creative response from the readership in general, but rather that, in these virtual scenarios, there are many modes and levels of participation: from reading with an invisible or silent participation (Nonnecke & Preece, 2001) to participating in the creation of new narrative content (Guerrero-Pico, 2014).

This work is interested in the BookTube phenomenon and its protagonists: BookTubers. This community has been the object of analysis of different researches that study it from different perspectives, especially from the educational and sociocultural point of view. Different academics highlight that these are unique opportunities not only for the promotion of reading among young people, but also for literary training (Rovira-Collado, 2017; Ehret, Boegel, & Manuel Nekouei, 2018). In this regard, proposals for didactic intervention are already being proposed in

educational centers (Torralba, 2018), as well as activities to promote reading in public libraries (see bibliotubers). BookTubers are users who try to encourage the reading of youth literature in young people and adolescents; they coincide with the age group that reads the most for pleasure in Spain (Federación de Gremios de Editores de España, 2019).

Considering the above, the questions that guided the research are the following:

- Who and how are the most influential Spanish-speaking BookTubers?
- Are they users with a reading habit, literary experience, and consistency in their reviews?
- What reader intertext, in terms of Mendoza (2004), do they have?
- What are their points of interest, understood as recommended readings and favorite authors?
- What explain the success of these users?

## LITERATURE REVIEW

In the last decade, reception studies that show great changes introduced by new technologies in reading modes, behaviors, and habits have multiplied. From this perspective, it is evident that the digital reader is not so much because of the format that he/she uses to read as because of the integration of new technological possibilities in his/her readings. In this regard, previous research defines the current reader as a transreader (Scolari, 2016), social (Cordón García, Alonso-Arévalo, Gómez-Díaz, & Linder, 2013), active, and creative (Jenkins, 2006, 2010), who reads in a fragmented and hypertextual way (Landow, 2009).

Therefore, digital readers not only want the work's decoding and personal interpretation, but they also give importance to the elements that surround it. Paratextual elements in general and epitextual elements, in particular, acquire special prominence, following the terminology proposed by Genette (1989): *BookTrailers*, fan communities related to a book, its author's social networks, interviews, etc. The digital age has positioned these peripheral elements as central and relevant in promoting reading and fostering the reading habit (Álvarez & Romero, 2018; Rovira-Collado, 2017). Specifically, public virtual epitexts are, in the words of Lluch, Taberner-Sala and Calvo Valios (2015), "documents of various types, with the communicative functions of commenting, disseminating, modifying, and expanding" (p. 798). These elements make it possible to expand the reception process and turn it into a social, participatory and (re)creative activity.

Thus, users remain connected to the network: from the choice of the work to its final evaluation on social networks, reading cataloging websites, or comments on the purchase platform.

The 2018 Spain Reading Barometer prepared by the Federation of Publishers Guilds of Spain (Federación de Gremios de Editores de España, 2019) analyzes some elements of reading in that country and concludes that the criteria for selecting literary readings and leisure readings have also changed with the irruption of the new technologies. In this regard, this study finds that 62.9% of readers seek information or recommendations on the Internet about new books to read. Among the most used resources we can highlight social networks, forums, blogs, etc. (25.6%); webpages specialized in literature (23.9%); reviews in digital newspapers (8.7%); Internet search in general (6.5%), and reviews in online newspapers (6.8%). From this perspective, research by the Association for Media Research (Asociación para la Investigación de Medios de Comunicación, 2018) finds that 48.1% accessed the Internet to consult opinions and comments (to which they place great trust) related to products and services. Finally, 92% of Generation Z (16 to 23 years old) follow an influencer, especially on Instagram and YouTube (Interactive Advertising Bureau, 2018). In other words, the aforementioned studies indicate that virtual public epitexts are decisive in the selection criteria of Spanish readers.

This work points precisely to these new selection mechanisms since it is a priority line of research in the field of educational and sociocultural research. Considering the importance of the Internet in choosing a book to read, what elements influence the choice of a work? Or who influences the personal canon of young people and adolescents? These are especially relevant issues when the gap between the school canon (selection of readings proposed by educational institutions) (Cerrillo, 2013) and the students' one is so big.

The main previous research has focused on the analysis of virtual communities and pages of reading cataloging (Vlieghe, Vandermeersche, & Soetaert, 2014), thematic social networks, and reading influencers. From this perspective, BookTubers are a clear example: they act as trusted prescribers, mediators, or literary critics. BookTube is a community of readers who share videos on YouTube. It became popular in Spanish-speaking countries from 2012 and, since then, the community has not stopped growing.

In their productions, video bloggers share impressions, reviews, experiences related to reading, etc., especially works of fantastic literature, crossovers or young-adult (Hughes, 2017). From this perspective, previous research indicates that BookTubers are users between the ages of 15 and 25 (García Canclini, Gerber, López, Nivón, Pérez, Pinochet, & Winocur, 2015). It is important to point out that

they are not literary critical experts, nor do they formally analyze literary works, but rather, with an informal, apparently spontaneous, and heavily adjectival discourse, they share their experience of one or more books. In this way, they try to persuade and spread the reading of literary works (Lionetti, 2016; García Canclini et al., 2015). Generally, they are short videos (6–10 minutes) in which they argue and talk about their subjective experience of reading. Academics such as Lluch (2017), Rovira (2016, 2017), García Canclini and others (2015) consider that BookTubers are a natural evolution of the audiovisual era and the popularization of YouTube; i.e., many of these users were already administrators of literary blogs and adapted to the new audiovisual possibilities.

This community is based on recommendations and humanized reviews. I.e., BookTube allows young people (target audience) to successfully choose their next book, based on the experience of other ordinary readers. In this regard, it contrasts with other platforms such as Goodreads or Boolino (or online stores such as Amazon or *Casa del Libro*) that make use of complex algorithms based on massive data to offer suggestions based on the user profile, previous readings, or recently consulted books. (Lionetti, 2016).

However, publishers, aware of the important role played by these users as mediators, collaborate with BookTubers: they offer them books, marketing, gifts, etc. This fact has been the subject of criticism and susceptibilities, as it might seem counterproductive to leave a negative review to a publisher that offers freebies for doing so. To this we must add the reflections of Ana Garralón (2014), a specialist in children's and youth literature, who questions this phenomenon, arguing, among other elements, the homogeneity in tastes, titles, authors and criteria, as well as the lack of depth in their reviews.

These users promote a reading canon that is far from the one proposed by educational institutions, closer to the philological or hegemonic one. BookTubers and reading influencers in general are, above all, young readers. Therefore, their literary tastes are more related to youth literature. Currently, YouTubers (and other influencers) are social references and have a direct impact on the construction of the identity of their followers (Pérez-Torres, Pastor-Ruiz, & Abarrou-Ben-Boubaker, 2018). Their audience shares these interests and follows their recommendations for books to read. Young students receive two lists of works: one academic, imposed, based on educational interests, and another informal, proposed and based on recreational interests. In this vein, the study by Lluch (2017) stands out, which analyzes the phenomenon in general and the main BookTubers in particular and concludes that it is an activity that socializes reading and is developed apart from educational or institutional agents.



On the other hand, BookTube, despite being a fundamentally vertical social network (a creator and a more or less interactive audience), is complemented by other spaces or social networks such as Instagram, Twitter or Facebook, and other reading cataloging communities such as Goodreads and Anobii, which follow a more horizontal participation scheme based on collective intelligence (Lévy, 2004; Tanase, Tessone, & Algesheime, 2018).

Finally, the audience is concentrated in a reduced number of content creators and there is a long-tail distribution (Tomasena, 2019): 10% of the BookTubers concentrate 75.82% of subscribers and 80.74% of views (ibid.).

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study follows a quantitative descriptive research modality in which we attempt to evaluate the nature of the existing conditions and to characterize the BookTube phenomenon. However, we have also conducted correlational explorations between the variables analyzed to discover the relationships between them.

For this, we followed an intentional and non-probabilistic sampling of the most relevant Spanish-speaking influencers, and with the greatest social and cultural impact. Thus, we carried out an exhaustive search of Spanish-speaking BookTubers by using the most used terminology in BookTube in the YouTube search engine and from each influencer friends' network (they are usually connected through the platform). As the BookTubers have a very specific theme and a direct target, in this work we operationalized the term influencers starting at 2,500 followers.

After this process, a total of 440 (total population) users were determined, who mostly shared videos talking about their love of reading<sup>1</sup>. Of these, the 165 most influential users (according to their number of followers, with a minimum of 2,700) were selected for analysis. The data was collected during the last quarter of 2018.

To answer the research questions related to BookTubers' suggested readings and preferred authors, we collected data using information from BookTubers' Goodreads profiles. This was possible because 85.54% of the analyzed users have a public profile in that reading cataloging community. To comply with bioethical and data protection aspects, users with a private profile were discarded. After this process, to analyze the reading experience and journey on other platforms, the sample was reduced in this second phase from 165 to 122 influencers.

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1. Channels that included videos catalogable as BookTubers, but whose base was of another theme (series, movies, video games, etc.) were excluded.

The information collected allowed triangulating (and completing) the data obtained from YouTube. For data collection, we used the sociometric tool for social network analysis Socialblade. Regarding the extraction of the evaluations of the readings of each Goodreader, we used the Google Chrome extension Table Capture. All these data were processed with the SPSS 23 quantitative data analysis program and a multivariate analysis was performed.

## RESULTS

### General characteristics of BookTubers and their influence

In the first place, to answer the question of who and how are the most influential Spanish-speaking BookTubers, we analyzed their general and sociodemographic characteristics. Thus, data such as gender, age, country of residence and starting age on YouTube are described. In addition, we studied the number of followers, number of videos, journey on the platform, and total views of all their videos to analyze their impact, relevance, and influence.

In this regard, the distribution of the BookTubers with the most followers regarding gender is unbalanced: 75.6% are girls, which shows that it is a fundamentally female platform. Despite this, this imbalance is not as pronounced in users with the highest number of followers.

Regarding the country of residence, it is noteworthy that they are spread throughout the Spanish and Latin American geography. From this perspective, BookTubers from up to 10 different countries have been found. However, Spain (45.8%) and Mexico (23.9%) account for 69.7% of the most important reading video bloggers in the world. This does not mean that the viewers are necessarily from these countries since it is a phenomenon of international scope.

On the other hand, age is a variable with relatively little dispersion. Although the data present a wide range ( $R=41$ ), with BookTubers from 14 to 55 years old, the measures of central tendency coincide: the mean is 26 years old, the median is 25 and the mode, 24. Regarding the deviation that the results present in their distribution with respect to the arithmetic mean, a standard deviation of 6.139 and a variance of 37.689 were found. There are no significant differences in age based on gender.

As for the number of followers, it is important to note that data has been taken from users who have at least 2,700 followers, since we found BookTubers with a few hundred followers who could not be (yet) considered influencers. However, there is a great data dispersion, since the mean is 22,596 followers, the median is 10,399 and standard deviation is 110,581. In this regard, their channels have, on average, more than 14,998,000 views. *Raizarevelles99* stands out with 69,142,002 views, as well as *Clau Reads Book* (24,220,918) and *Las Palabras de Fa* (23,468,227). Considering that most of the content they share is related to reading and literature, it is a very large audience.



	Country of residence	Frequency	Percentage	Valid percentage
Valid	Spain	65	39.4	45.8
	Mexico	34	20.6	23.9
	Colombia	8	4.8	5.6
	Peru	6	3.6	4.2
	Panama	1	0.6	0.7
	Argentine	13	7.9	9.2
	Chile	11	6.7	7.7
	Germany	1	0.6	0.7
	Bolivia	1	0.6	0.7
	United Kingdom	2	1.2	1.4
	Total	142	86.1	100
Lost		23	13.9	

**Table 1. Distribution of BookTubers according to country of residence**

*Source: Own elaboration.*

User name	Followers	Gender	Residence country	Channel's creation (year)
raizarevelles99	1,429,520	Girl	Mexico	2011
Clau Reads Books	424,004	Girl	Mexico	2006
Laspalabrasdefa	359,193	Girl	Mexico	2012
JavierRuescas	282,761	Boy	Spain	2010
El coleccionista de Mundos	244,985	Boy	Spain	2012
AbriendoLibros	222,153	Boy	Mexico	2012
Josu Diamond	188,839	Boy	Spain	2010
Fly like a butterfly	185,105	Girl	Spain	2010
Andreo Rowling	162,873	Girl	Spain	2012
Mayrayamonte	121,896	Girl	Spain	2011

**Table 2. Summary of the most important Spanish-speaking BookTubers**

*Source: Own elaboration.*

As for the 10 BookTubers with the most followers, we can highlight that they all have more than 100,000 followers and are Spanish or Mexican channels. The differences in followers among content creators are notorious; see the example of the subscribers of the two most influential: *raizarevelles99* (1,429,520) and *Clau Reads Books* (424,004) or *Laspalabrasdefa* (359,193) and *Javier Ruescas* (282,761).

On the other hand, they are users with a multitude of shared videos; it has been detected that the BookTubers have deleted the first videos they made or have “cleaned” the channel. In any case, they currently have an average of 196 videos published and the median is 166. They have at least nine published videos and a maximum of 943. In this regard, the channels have an average age of 5 years and 6 months, all created between September 2008 and December 2016. Big differences can be seen in the first videos, which were recorded with smartphones or low-quality cameras, without concern for lighting, sound, or any technical element, and with hardly any post-production editing. They are videos recorded in dark bedrooms, without pauses, of longer duration, and the protagonists do not seem concerned about their physical appearance (makeup or hairstyle) or the setting (ordered or decorated room). They were videos aimed at a much smaller audience. By gaining popularity, BookTubers have polished all these aspects and therefore they remove their origins from the network. This also indicates that they began to participate by producing videos in the BookTube community when they were around 21 years old (calculated with the current age and date of publication of the first video).

The BookTube community has a hub and that is YouTube; however, it feeds back from other affinity spaces or social networks. In this regard, on their YouTube channel, in the description of the videos or in the content itself, they promote other spaces they manage: 27.3% of BookTubers manage a literary blog and 17.6% have a webpage dedicated to their passion for reading or writing, in which they share their reviews and opinions; 33.1% maintain a Twitter account in which to share brief comments; 16.7% manage a Facebook page; 28.1%, in addition to video bloggers, are Instagrammers and, finally, 85.54% have a profile on the most important reading cataloging platform: Goodreads. In other words, BookTube is one more channel of communication for these reading influencers. It has been found that on each platform (blog, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Goodreads, etc.) users share different content adapted to each of the virtual spaces.

### **Goodreads profiles**

Since the vast majority of BookTubers have an account on Goodreads (85.54%) and that in this community they share their ratings, comments, and recommendations, we analyzed data from this platform, because it offers much more information than that provided by YouTube. This social network will allow answering the research question related to the reading intertext (Mendoza, 2004) and the reading habit of these BookTubers.

In this part of the analysis, therefore, the sample has been reduced from 165 to 122 BookTubers since the data has been cleaned and the Goodreads private profiles, those that are not updated, or are poorly developed, have been eliminated. Most of the users discarded are those with the least number of followers or less time on the platform.

BookTubers are also veterans of the Goodreads platform: users with an average of nearly six years in the largest reading cataloging community. Some of them are goodreaders since the appearance of the community (2007). Almost all BookTubers had a Goodreads account long before they started sharing videos on YouTube related to literary reading. Likewise, many of these users come from the already classic literary blogs. We can see this in the significant differences between the average age of users who manage a blog (=30 years) and those who do not (=25). All this shows that BookTube is a natural and audiovisual evolution of traditional literary blogs.

All this reading experience that has been shared in different virtual spaces shows that they are users with a developed reading habit that has been maintained over the years. This translates into a great intertext and literary experience:

- On their Goodreads profile, the top BookTubers indicate that they have read, on average, more than 300 works of literature. The data presents a great dispersion ( $SD=256$ ) since there are users with more than 2000 works read compared to others with barely a hundred. This is also due to factors such as time on the platform ( $\Phi=0.404$ ,  $p=0.000$ ). As previously mentioned, there are users with more than 10 years on the platform and others with little more than one.
- In addition, the Goodreads platform allows them to make and share a list of works they would like to read in the future. Almost all BookTubers publish what their next readings will be. This list is made up, on average, of 195 works, although this exorbitant number is due to certain users who exceed 1,500 works. The median, on the other hand, stands at 90 books.
- They are readers who enjoy reading several books in parallel. This can be said as the platform allows sharing which books are currently being read. On average, they are reading four books simultaneously.

Some variables that quantify the influence of BookTubers are the number of followers on YouTube and views and followers on Goodreads. What variables are related to the influence of BookTubers? What are the keys that explain the success of these users? To have the influence of these users, it is necessary to read regularly and for a long time. In addition, intense activity in different communities and social networks is required. These users acquire recognition not only on a specific platform, but as noted above they diversify and are influencers in different spaces. It is an elliptical process of feedback between the number of works read, the number of videos shared, and the ratings and reviews published. All of this makes it possible to increase the impact measured by the number of followers on different platforms (Goodreads, YouTube, Instagram, blogs, websites, Twitter, etc.), views, and interactions.

		Total readings	Total books read	Currently reading	To read
Mean		523.99	302.34	3.86	194.93
Median		404	256.5	2.5	90
Standard deviation		483.768	256.57	5.366	288.88
Rank		3628	2051	40	1575
Maximum		3629	2052	40	1575
Percentiles	25	236	144	1	26.5
	50	404	256.5	2.5	90
	75	667	356.25	5	222
N	Valid	122	122	122	121
	Lost	43	43	43	44

**Table 3. Statistics of the works read, reading and to read**

Source: Own elaboration.

		Videos	Goodreads ratings	Reviews	Followers on Goodreads	Average rating on Goodreads	Total read
YouTube followers	Pearson's corr.	0.233**	0.035	0.006	0.946**	-0.104	0.023
	Sig.	0.005	0.695	0.949	0.000	0.244	0.800
	N	143	128	128	120	128	122
Videos	Pearson's corr.		0.272**	0.209*	0.198*	0.111	0.246**
	Sig.		0.002	0.018	0.031	0.214	0.006
	N		127	127	119	127	121
Goodreads ratings	Pearson's corr.			0.718**	0.079	-0.026	0.989**
	Sig.			0.000	0.396	0.774	0.000
	N			128	119	128	121
Reviews	Pearson's corr.				0.022	0.016	0.705**
	Sig.				0.809	0.859	0.000
	N				119	128	121
Followers on Goodreads	Pearson's corr.					-0.159	0.083
	Sig.					0.085	0.370
	N					119	119
Average rating on Goodreads	Pearson's corr.						-0.041
	Sig.						0.652
	N						121

\*\* The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (bilateral).

\* The correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (bilateral).

**Table 4. Correlations between different variables related to the data obtained from Goodreads and YouTube**

Source: Own elaboration.

### Activity and ratings on the platform

We will now analyze the activity developed in the Goodreads reading cataloging community and the evaluations that they share of their read books. This has allowed knowing the degree of thoroughness of the BookTubers, their participation, and recommendations.

Based on platform data, on most occasions when these users read a book (73.3%), they share a rating ranging from one to five stars. This results in a mean of 286 ratings for each influencer, although there is a large standard deviation (SD=244). The interesting thing is to know how they evaluate their readings. In this regard, the average rating of all the analyzed BookTubers is 3.86 stars (N=122). This is a high score, only 0.085 points below the general evaluation of the platform in the same works.

Sometimes these ratings are accompanied by comments that justify or reinforce the score. Thus, 41% of the evaluations are accompanied by a brief review or comment. From this point of view, it is noteworthy that there is a general tendency for comments to be more common in low evaluations. I.e., the BookTubers try to justify to a greater extent why they have not liked a certain book.

Regarding the favorite “genres” (following the platform’s terminology), there is a great heterogeneity. More than 30 different “genres” were found, which shows the diversity of works that they read and comment on. However, the favorites are young-adult (71.45%), fantasy (69.38%), romance (64.29%), the classics (54.08%), and science fiction stories (52, 04%). In this regard, among the most widely read authors we can highlight John Green, J. K. Rowling, Rainbow Rowell, and Suzanne Collins, all of them writers of children’s literature. However, it is noticeable that being the most read author does not translate into the best rated (see table 4).

	Number of reviews on Goodreads	Average rating on Goodreads	Reviews
Mean	285.91	3.86	119.82
Median	237	3.92	85
Standard deviation	243.98	0.516	134.349
Variance	59.526.26	0.266	18.049.75
Percentiles	25	141.75	34
	50	237	85
	75	339.75	170.75
N	Valid	128	128
	Lost	37	37

**Table 5. Statistics of the number of ratings and reviews and their average score**

*Source: Own elaboration.*

Author	Booktubers that have read him/her(N=122)	Average number of reviews on Goodreads	Average Booktube rating	Average Goodreads rating
John Green (United States)	100	1,196,170	3.76	3.98
J. K. Rowling (United Kingdom)	96	2,291,670	4.45	4.58
Rainbow Rowell (United States)	89	341,116	4.03	4.08
Suzanne Collins (United States)	88	3,247,216	4.22	4.43
Cassandra Clare (United States)	79	465,473	4.18	4.28
Neil Gaiman (United Kingdom)	78	204,235	4.08	4.1
Antoine de Saint-Exupéry (France)	74	1,014,771	4.43	4.28
Veronica Roth (United States)	73	1,319,187	3.92	4.01
Rick Riordan (United States)	72	579,165	4.31	4.32
Stephenie Meyer (United States)	71	1,689,311	3.42	3.65

**Table 6. Authors most read by BookTubers**

*Source: Own elaboration.*

On the other hand, among these authors we can find writers of a wide variety of themes: romance stories, fantasy, dystopia, horror, etc., and different ways of narrating (novels, comics, illustrated books, etc.). On the other hand, they are mostly contemporary (except for Antoine de Saint-Exupéry) and international authors. Laura Gallego, the most read Spanish-language author in the sample, is in the 11th position with an average score on BookTube and Goodreads of 3.96 based on 4,070 reviews.

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The results obtained show a clear imbalance of BookTubers according to gender. This result is in line with the works Lluçh (2017) and Rovira-Collado (2017). However, there are certain differences regarding the age of the BookTubers (26 on average) with respect to previous research that places the age between 15 and 25 years (Pérez & López, 2015; García Canclini et al., 2017).



Finally, as for the country of residence, previous research speaks of Latin America in general, but we can consider that they are fundamentally Spanish and Mexican BookTubers.

Regarding their notable relevance, the results are consistent with the study by López (2017): they are experienced users with a long history on the platform. To gain influence and followers who follow their recommendations on YouTube, they have needed several years and a presence in different virtual spaces. In this research, it has been found that an important part of BookTubers, especially the most veteran ones, come from other similar communities (bloggers, Goodreaders, etc.) or diversify into other social networks. Several academics have previously highlighted this relationship (Lluch, 2017; Rovira-Collado, 2017, etc.). Video bloggers use different platforms as means of expression, publish different content on each one of them, and adapt to the language and possibilities that the virtual space offers them. All this enables their followers to live a transmedia experience (Jenkins, 2006).

Their extensive experience, perseverance and developed reading habits have allowed them to have a great literary background and intertext. This seems to suggest that to be a recognized BookTuber it is necessary to have a great literary and reading intertext knowledge and several years of intense content production on social networks and the Internet (which goes beyond the BookTuber community) related to their readings. However, the results indicate that they are not more critical readers than the rest of the Goodreads users.

As for the “genres” and favorite authors, it is remarkable that there are similarities with the analysis of the canon of English-speaking Booktubers performed by Hughes (2017): young-adult, bestseller, romantic and fantasy literature. There are certain differences concerning the writers, since in this list there are authors as Neil Gaiman and Antoine de Saint-Exupéry that do not fall in those categories. Therefore, there is no stable reading canon proposed by these influencers but is ephemeral and constantly updated, and responds to publishing novelties or public successes.

If YouTubers are, as evidenced by previous studies (Establés, GuerreroPico, & Contreras-Espinosa, 2019; Pérez-Torres et al., 2018), social references, microcelebrities and role models, it can be inferred that, potentially, these users influence the reading habit of their audience. Let us remember, in this regard, that most Spanish adults recognize that their love of reading began at the age of 15 (Federación de Gremios de Editores de España, 2019). Their followers have created a faithful and interactive community around these public figures. In other words, in this context, there is a convergence of the affective and emotional bonds

established between followers and influencers (who share tastes, characteristics, and a relationship of admiration is established) and a group identity (being part of). All this with youth literature at the center. In addition, these influencers not only superficially influence the selection of an isolated reading, but also, due to the evolutionary process of their audience (adolescence or emerging adulthood), they intervene in the users' identity construction (Pérez-Torres et al., 2018).

On the other hand, it should not be ignored that BookTubers are perfect marketing tools (Álvarez & Romero, 2018). They are consumers who base their attention on the emotional bond they establish with the product/book. Therefore, BookTubers are not literary critics, it is not their claim to be. Despite this, Lluch (2017) mentions a lack of understanding between the academy and reading influencers (Garralón, 2014; Lionetti, 2016). This could be due, in the words of Lluch, to the fact that "booktubers seek and offer entertainment while others have only seen culture [in this phenomenon]" (2017, p. 50). In this regard, Tomasena (2019, p. 1) indicates that the discourses used by the academy and BookTubers are totally different: "This discourse differs from traditional literary criticism in its emphasis on the emotional experience of books and its vindication of the authority of 'the passionate common readers'" (Scolari, Tomasena, & Fraticelli, 2021). García-Canclini and colleagues point out that these users "do not present critics but summaries, news about the author, sometimes the interview they did" (2015, p. 14).

Spanish-speaking BookTubers are avid readers who, from a very young age, share their subjective experiences in front of a computer: first on blogs and now on YouTube (and other social networks). In any case, they regularly bring together millions of readers to listen to their literary experiences, although as Tomasena (2019) points out, very few manage to stand out. To achieve this, and stand out in the BookTube community, reading experience, participation, and a journey are needed.

It is becoming increasingly necessary to interweave formal and informal education contexts as they overlap and remix (Scolari, Lugo, & Masanet 2019). The BookTubers positively value the school canon (Cerrillo, 2013), however, their proposals are more linked to contemporary youth literature and, specifically, to bestsellers. Nevertheless, what is interesting is that influencers communicate horizontally with their followers, young people and high school students (Interactive Advertising Bureau, 2018). Thus, these mediators do not impose readings, but rather propose them. In a context in which a third of Spaniards do not read books for pleasure (Federación de Gremios de Editores de España, 2019), these users normalize, make visible, and thereby promote reading. Therefore, if these boys and girls act as mediators and get young people to read more and do it for pleasure, they deserve all the attention of cultural and educational institutions.

Finally, this research opens new questions that could be developed in future research, among them: What is the canon of reading that BookTubers propose? What do influencers think of the school canon and canonical literature? Or, how do influencers and their audience interact?

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