



***I dedicate this work with all my heart to***

*My caring and supportive parents, whose endless love and sacrifices have shaped who I am.*

*My only and unique sibling, Billal, truly the best brother anyone could ever wish for.*

*My closest and loyal friends.*

*My wonderful and best cousins, Nabila and Sarah.*

*My dear “Tata Louiza”*

*My hardworking and sweetest research partner, Hafidha.*

*The version of myself who didn't give up, who kept going through the stress and exhaustion.*

***Sabrina.***

***I dedicate this work to***

*My parents who are the source of my success, I am grateful for all the support they gave me and the constant encouragement to reach my goals*

*My beloved siblings, Yazid, Haoua, and Hamza.*

*My best friend Lilia, thank you for your endless love, care, and your presence during the highs and lows of this journey*

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*To all the ones who have contributed to my success*

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## Abstract

In an era where social media platforms increasingly influence educational practices, TikTok has emerged as an unexpected yet impactful space for promoting reading engagement among students. Against this backdrop, the present study has explored the correlation between TikTok book recommendations and the reading motivation of EFL students from the departments of English and French at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou. More specifically, it has aimed to identify how TikTok book recommendations enhance students' motivation to read, explore how BookTok (a sub-community on TikTok dedicated to books and reading) creators perceive the role of TikTok book recommendations in enhancing EFL students' reading motivation, and examine the potential integration of TikTok book recommendations into formal English language learning environments. The research is based on Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory, Deci and Ryan's (2000) Self-Determination Theory, and Siemens' (2004) Connectivism. Adopting a mixed-methods design, data have been collected through a questionnaire administered to students and an interview conducted with BookTok creators, then have been analyzed through descriptive statistics and qualitative content analysis. The findings have indicated that TikTok book recommendations have enhanced EFL students' reading motivation through algorithmic personalization and engagement, multimodal features, and perceived ease of use. BookTok creators have perceived that reading motivation arises from the role of TikTok book recommendations in fostering positive attitudes toward reading, reinforcing students' self-efficacy, and providing support. Additionally, the study has suggested that TikTok book recommendations can be effectively integrated into classroom settings. Ultimately, the research has confirmed a positive correlation between TikTok book recommendations and EFL students' reading motivation.

**Key terms:** Algerian EFL Students, BookTok Creators, Classroom Integration, Reading Motivation, TikTok Book Recommendations.

## List of Abbreviations

- ❖ **App:** Application
- ❖ **EFL:** English Foreign Language.
- ❖ **H:** Hypothesis
- ❖ **L1:** Licence 1
- ❖ **L2:** Licence 2
- ❖ **L3:** Licence 3
- ❖ **M1:** Master 1
- ❖ **M2:** Master 2
- ❖ **MMUTO:** Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou.
- ❖ **Q:** Question
- ❖ **QCA:** Qualitative Content Analysis
- ❖ **RQ:** Research Question
- ❖ **SCT:** Social Cognitive Theory
- ❖ **SDT:** Self-Determination Theory
- ❖ **TBR:** TikTok Book Recommendations
- ❖ **TRD:** Triadic Reciprocal Determinism

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**General Introduction**

- **Statement of the Problem**

In an era marked by the widespread influence and integration of digital platforms in daily life, the way individuals interact with information, culture, and education has changed dramatically. Social media, initially intended for interpersonal communication, has evolved into a significant aspect of educational practices worldwide (Fazel & Sayaf, 2025). Historically, reading habits and access to literature were largely shaped by educational institutions and libraries. However, the rise of social media platforms has challenged these traditional pathways, offering new and dynamic ways for individuals to connect with books and ideas. Among these platforms, TikTok has become a widely used and influential option, particularly among younger audiences. Ismail et al (2021) note that “*as of 2021, TikTok is one of the world's most popular applications*” (p.1). Traditional methods of acquiring knowledge have shifted, and reading habits are no exception. Chikhi and Guettaf (2023) highlight that TikTok serves as an entertaining and dynamic tool for students to develop their language abilities, offering a more stimulating approach compared to traditional educational techniques. The platform has experienced rapid growth in recent years, drawing millions of users globally. Its algorithm-driven content curation, defined as the automated selection and personalization of digital material based on users’ past interactions and preferences, allows users to discover videos tailored to their interests and facilitates the swift spread of trends, challenges, and recommendations. One notable trend is BookTok, a vibrant community where readers, authors, and publishers come together to share book reviews, reading experiences, and literary discussions, often regarded as a modernized book club adapted to the digital environment.

The connection between social media and education is intricate and layered. On one hand, social media are often criticized for encouraging superficial engagement and reducing attention spans (Phan, 2023). On the other hand, it provides opportunities for enhancing motivation,

creativity, and community building. For English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students, who frequently struggle to stay motivated and engaged in their language learning journey, platforms like TikTok could be beneficial. They provide access to a diverse array of reading materials and foster a supportive environment for discussing and reflecting on texts. The significance of reading motivation in EFL contexts is crucial; it plays a vital role in shaping learners' engagement with texts, comprehension abilities, and overall language development (Guthrie & Wigfield, 2000, as cited in Rana and Rana, 2024).

Considerable scholarly interest has been directed toward investigating how TikTok and education overlap. One notable study, titled *"Welcome to BookTok: Understanding the Impact of TikTok on Reading Motivation"* by Sarah Elizabeth Jerasa (2023), conducted at the University of Houston in the United States, explored how BookTok community on TikTok influences students' reading motivation. Overall, the findings revealed that engaging with BookTok significantly enhanced students' motivation to read, with watching BookTok content showing the strongest correlation to increased reading motivation. Another relevant study, *"The Best Thing About BookTok is That You Get Inspiration: A Study on Swedish Students' Reading Habits and What Influences Them"*, by Yasemin Yigit, focused on Swedish upper-secondary students in 2023. This research examined the influence of BookTok on students' reading habits. It found that while many students were not avid readers, those engaged with BookTok were inspired to read more frequently in both Swedish and English. It concluded that BookTok positively impacts reading habits and language development for some students.

While numerous existing studies have provided valuable insights into the intersection of TikTok and education, including its impact on language skills and reading habits at an international level, they leave a significant gap regarding the Algerian context, particularly for EFL students.

Little to no attention has been given to how TikTok book recommendations influence reading motivation among Algerian EFL students. Therefore, further research is needed and this study aims to enlighten this overlooked area.

- **Aims and Significance of The Study**

The central aim of this study is to explore the correlation between TikTok book recommendations and EFL students' reading motivation, with a specific focus on students from the departments of English and French at MMUTO. The objectives of the research are threefold: first, to identify how TikTok book recommendations enhance students' reading motivation. Second, to investigate how influencers who recommend books on TikTok perceive the role of TikTok book recommendations in enhancing students' reading motivation, and third, to examine the potential integration of TikTok book recommendations into formal English language learning environments.

This investigation is significant in its potential to challenge the prevailing negative perceptions of TikTok as a platform primarily associated with harmful content (Hidayat & Hilmiyah, 2024) and time-wasting (Awan, 2024). Rather than reinforcing these views, the study explores TikTok's positive role in education, particularly as a motivational tool that can support the development of reading skills. By examining its educational potential, the research aims to provide practical insights for educators seeking to integrate social media into their teaching strategies. In doing so, it contributes to the broader field of English language teaching, especially within the Algerian context, by illustrating how digital platforms like TikTok may enhance reading motivation and engagement with literature.

- **Research Questions and Hypotheses**

To achieve the desired outcomes of this research, it is essential to address the following key questions:

**Q1.** How do TikTok book recommendations enhance students' reading motivation?

**Q2.** How do BookTok creators perceive the role of TikTok book recommendations in enhancing students' reading motivation?

**Q3.** Can TikTok book recommendations be integrated into formal English language learning environments?

In response to the research questions, the following hypotheses are put forward:

**H1.** TikTok book recommendations enhance EFL students' motivation to read through engaging features and easily accessible content.

**H2.** BookTok creators perceive that TikTok book recommendations play a significant role in enhancing students' reading motivation by cultivating a positive reading mindset and a genuine sense of encouragement

**H3.** TikTok book recommendations can be effectively integrated into formal English language learning environments.

- **Research Techniques and Methodology**

This study adopts a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data to explore the correlation between TikTok book recommendations and EFL students' reading motivation in the departments of English and French at MMUTO. Data collection is carried out using two primary tools: a questionnaire designed to gather EFL students' perspectives on TikTok

book recommendations and their impact on reading motivation, as well as their educational relevance, and a semi-structured interview conducted with Algerian bookTokers. The questionnaire consists of both close-ended and open-ended questions to obtain thorough responses. The collected data are analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistical analysis and qualitatively through qualitative content analysis.

To guide this research, Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination Theory (SDT), and Siemens' (2004) Connectivism Theory serve as the analytical framework to interpret the findings. By applying these theoretical approaches, the study aims to uncover the mechanisms through which TikTok fosters reading motivation and engagement among EFL students, providing a deeper understanding of the platform's educational potential in the Algerian context.

- **Structure of The Dissertation**

This dissertation is organized according to the simple traditional structure, consisting of a General Introduction, four core chapters, and a General Conclusion. The statement of the problem, its significance, the research questions and objectives, as well as the gap in the existing literature that the study seeks to fill are presented in the General Introduction. The Literature Review constitutes the basis of Chapter One where an overview of prior research related to the topic is given along with the theoretical framework guiding the study. The Research Design and Methodology are the focus of Chapter Two where the research approach and method used to conduct the research are outlined. The Findings are presented in Chapter Three through an extensive analysis of the obtained data. Chapter Four, Discussion of the Findings, the results are interpreted based on the research questions, theory, and current literature. The General Conclusion

then provides an overview of the entire work, determines the contribution of the research, and offers recommendations for future research.



**Review of the Literature**

### Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of the literature relevant to the investigation. It begins with an overview of the TikTok platform, discussing both its negative and positive impacts. The focus then shifts to TikTok's role in education, English language learning, its curation algorithm, and the rise of BookTok. A section on reading motivation follows, distinguishing between intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Finally, it examines the correlation between TikTok book recommendations and reading motivation, concluding with the study's analytical frameworks based on Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory, and Siemens' Connectivism Theory.

### 1.1 TikTok Platform

TikTok, currently recognized under its present name, was first introduced in China in 2016 as "Douyin," meaning "shake the music," by the Beijing-based company ByteDance (Fernández, 2021, as cited in Guzmán Merino, 2021). Its subsequent development is closely linked to Musical.ly (Domingues et al., 2020). According to J. Wu (2021), Musical.ly, launched in 2014, has enabled adolescents in the United States and Europe to produce and share short lip-synchronization videos, whereas Douyin has not been able to achieve comparable traction in these international markets, where Musical.ly had already established a dominant presence. Recognizing the potential of this platform, ByteDance acquired Musical.ly in 2017 for \$1 billion and integrated it into TikTok in 2018, transferring its users, content, and functionalities to the newly consolidated platform.

TikTok is defined as:

a social media app where users can create videos or watch videos created by others. There are videos with all kinds of content where only the imagination sets the limits. It can include content such as dances, music, recipes, humor, motivational speeches, movies, and book recommendations, to name but a few. Depending on whether users create a video themselves or just upload it, a video can be between 60 seconds for the first alternative and up to 3

minutes for the second alternative. Creators can also ‘stitch’ or ‘duet’ a video, which means you can use or collaborate with other creators’ videos. (Yigit 2023, p.2)

This means that TikTok functions as a multifaceted platform where users can create short videos and interact with others’ content through remixing or responding. In contrast to the Chinese version of TikTok, which is known for its strong emphasis on educational and knowledge-oriented content (Sisi & Zainudin, 2025), the global platform offers a wide range of subject matter, creating a space for both entertainment and education.

Similarly, McCashin and Murphy (2023) explain that *“TikTok allows users to consume and create short videos between 15–60 s in length; using various filters, music and lip-syncing templates”* (p.280). The videos are user-generated and may include a wide variety of content, ranging from popular dance challenges, humorous clips, and celebrity-related posts to videos focused on social issues, educational topics, current events, or simply individuals speaking directly to the camera from their rooms (Anderson, 2020; Klug et al., 2021, as cited in Larssen, 2023), corroborating the view that TikTok functions as a dynamic platform, where users actively participate as both creators and consumers of a wide variety of content.

TikTok maintains consistently high levels of user engagement (Scherr & Wang, 2021) . With a user base exceeding 1.5 billion, primarily comprising children and adolescents (Weimann & Masri, 2020), the platform is widely recognized as one of the most rapidly expanding video-sharing services globally (KaChristine et al., 2021, as cited in Heyang & Martin, 2022).

### **1.1.1 Pros of TikTok**

Although often criticized for negatively impacting students' academic performance, TikTok also offers significant advantages in the field of education. Fahdin (2020, as cited in Simanungkalit & Katemba, 2023) supports this claim, stating that TikTok significantly influences users'

development due to its potential for educational use. Relatedly, Simanungkalit & Katemba (2023, p.147) suggest:

There are several advantages by using TikTok for learning. First, the video can be used many times without waiting for the teacher or classmates to be around. Second, the learning experience is unlimited because the student can use the phone wherever and whenever they are. Third, learning can be fun and not stressful for the students to get the education efficiently. Fourth, the speaker in the video is a native speaker so it will be easier to learn the accent also.

To clarify, TikTok's flexibility, accessibility, and engaging content make it a valuable tool for enhancing language acquisition and supporting independent learning, particularly for students who may struggle with traditional classroom settings.

Furthermore, it is important to emphasize that TikTok allows users to freely express themselves, explore their creativity, and showcase their individuality, which can significantly reduce feelings of embarrassment and enhance self-confidence (Palupi et al., 2020, as cited in Bahagia et al., 2022). In addition to its benefits for learners, TikTok also offers practical advantages for educators. It simplifies the process of sharing educational content, as teachers no longer need to gather students in a physical classroom (Bahagia et al., 2022). Instead, they can create engaging instructional videos and share them directly on the platform (Bahagia et al., 2022), establishing a learning space that supports all students and adapts to their individual needs.

In addition to its educational aid, TikTok also contributes positively to users' personal development and emotional well-being. Udenze and Uzochukwu (2021, p.21) emphasize that *"TikTok is a healer, helping young people to curtail the negative impact of compulsory isolation"*, as it offers a space for connection, self-expression, and emotional support during challenging times. With the platform's fun nature, TikTok also helps teenagers openly discuss serious personal issues such as acne, bullying, mental health, and eating disorders in a manner that feels enjoyable

(McCashin & Murphy, 2023). Together, these qualities position TikTok as both a source of comfort and a meaningful tool for addressing youth concerns.

From a marketing perspective, TikTok has grown into a major marketing tool (Wahid et al., 2022). The platform offers a wealth of opportunities for businesses (Lennartsson, 2023). More brands are getting into TikTok affiliate marketing because of its effective advertising methods (Jaffar et al., 2019, as cited in Sibulan and & Limos-Galay, 2024). By collaborating on TikTok, brands can significantly boost customer engagement and brand exposure, often leading users to make purchases (Sibulan & Limos-Galay, 2024).

### **1.1.2 Cons of TikTok**

Recent literature has increasingly raised concerns about the potential negative effects of TikTok usage on adolescent mental health. Gopal et al (2024, p.3) confirm “*The possible negative impacts of TikTok usage, particularly on mental health, are nevertheless becoming a significant worry*”. TikTok’s advanced features, including algorithmic recommendations, hashtags, continuous scrolling, and interactive functions, enable the delivery of high-quality and personalized content, making it highly engaging and potentially addictive for users (W. Wu, 2023). In fact, higher levels of depression, anxiety, and stress have been strongly linked to TikTok addiction (Sha & Dong, 2021), indicating its significant impact on users' mental well-being. Additionally, excessive use of TikTok and other social media platforms can lead to insomnia, which may result in decreased concentration, lack of interest, and reduced motivation to learn (Yuliana et al., 2023). This can subsequently cause students to neglect their academic responsibilities. (Andriani et al., 2024). Besides, TikTok has faced criticism for hosting content that promotes self-harm, eating disorders, and drug abuse (Artz, 2023), further contributing to mental health concerns.

### 1.1.3 TikTok as an Educational Platform

TikTok is being reconceptualized as a pedagogical tool for delivering educational content in a way that resonates with today's learners. In support of this perspective, a study titled "The Use of TikTok in Higher Education as a Motivating Source for Students" revealed that, "*a highly positive attitude on the part of the students both towards innovative methodologies in general and towards the use of TikTok as an educational tool in particular.*" (Yélamos-Guerra, García-Gámez, et al., 2022, p.96). This response reflects a growing acceptance of non-traditional learning tools among students, particularly those that align with their digital habits.

Additionally, as noted by Sajonia (2024), TikTok presents educational content in an engaging and impactful way across various disciplines. This has positioned the platform as an effective tool for boosting student motivation and encouraging creative learning strategies within higher education (Escamilla-Fajardo et al., 2021, as cited in Sajonia, 2024).

Moreover, Radin & Light (2022) highlight the emerging educational opportunities that TikTok offers within the realm of science communication. They assert that "*continuing to incorporate social media platforms such as TikTok into higher education is a valuable way to both teach course material and develop 21st-century science communication skills*" (Radin & Light, 2022, p.3). To put it another way, the use of TikTok enables educators to connect with students through innovative methods, promoting the clear and engaging communication of complex scientific ideas.

### 1.1.4 TikTok for English Language Learning

Learning the English language continues to pose significant challenges for many learners. In response to these difficulties, researchers have begun to explore the potential of social media platforms such as TikTok as innovative tools for language learning. In this context, Simanungkalit

& Katemba (2023, p.138) assert that, “*People often find it difficult to understand the English language. It is now possible to think of using TikTok as a language learning tool*”, underscoring that TikTok platform can be a useful tool for facilitating language acquisition and supporting learners in overcoming language barriers.

In continuation, learning vocabulary is considered “*the basic thing to do when someone finally decide [sic] to learn English*” (Wardani, 2022, p.2), as it enables learners to express themselves clearly and understand others. On this point, TikTok offers a contemporary and engaging approach to vocabulary development. Its short videos, which include English-language content, expose learners to new words in meaningful contexts, helping them enhance their English vocabulary (Anumanthan & Hashim, 2022, as cited in Alghameeti, 2022).

Ultimately, Laili's (2023) research on students' perspectives regarding the use of TikTok as a medium for learning English demonstrated that the platform contributed to improvements in various language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing, with many reporting progress in vocabulary and grammar comprehension.

### **1.1.5 Curation Algorithms: TikTok Platform**

Algorithms can be defined as “*encoded procedures for transforming input data into a desired output, based on specified calculations*” (Gillespie, 2014, as cited in Guehring, 2023, p.13). In other words, an algorithm is a sequence of instructions designed to process information and produce a specific outcome. It organizes how data are handled, ensuring that each step is followed in a precise way to achieve the desired result. While simpler algorithms typically take a given input to compute an output, recommender systems function differently. These systems leverage past user activity, along with reactions from other users, to generate personalized recommendations (Kayser-Bril, 2022).

Strong algorithmic technical support can be considered a fundamental advantage in the development of TikTok (Xu et al., 2019). The platform benefits from a sophisticated recommendation system that combines artificial intelligence with advanced content algorithms. Building on this, Xu et al. (2019, p.60) further affirm that, *“Today’s headline has a powerful algorithm +artificial content recommendation mechanism, and TikTok is also mainly using the human body key detection technology to achieve accurate user posture to target posture. Matching is based on AI intelligent algorithm technology”*, to indicate that TikTok’s ability to deliver personalized and engaging content is deeply rooted in its use of AI-driven technologies, which analyze user behavior and physical movement to enhance the user experience.

Furthermore, TikTok algorithm curates a unique set of video recommendations for each user on the For You page, a selection of videos suggested to users based on their engagement and activity within the app (Cervi et al., 2021), making it a valuable resource for delivering personalized content, including book-related recommendations. Boeker and Urman (2022) conducted an empirical study using a virtual agent to simulate user behavior on TikTok, demonstrating that interactions such as liking, following, commenting, sharing, and extended video viewing significantly influence how content is personalized and featured on the For You page over time. In the same vein, Matsakis (2020, para 8) adds:

The For You page algorithm looks at other elements, like song clips, hashtags, and captions, to categorize them and then recommend more videos like them. That’s why you may have noticed that your For You page often includes videos with the same sounds, helping to incubate new auditory memes and launch the careers of new musical artists, as well as worm catchy lyrics into your brain.

That is to say, the For You page algorithm does not solely rely on user engagement, such as likes and follows, but also analyzes additional factors like song clips, hashtags, and captions. In this way, while user actions influence content recommendations, this broader scope helps drive the

popularity of specific songs, amplify viral trends, promote new artists, and make catchy songs unforgettable.

### 1.1.6 BookTok

The term BookTok is outlined by Guehring (2023, p.12) as “*a community on TikTok that focuses on reading, discussing, and recommending books, as well as related topics and phenomena*”, signifying that BookTok is an active group of users on TikTok who come together to share their passion for literature. This allows them to engage in discussions about their favorite books, recommend new reads, and explore topics such as genres, authors, and reading challenges. Dezuanni et al. (2024, p.2) elaborate by positing that “*BookTok videos provide opportunities for people to learn about books and reading culture on an unprecedented scale*”, reinforcing that BookTok gives people the chance to discover, learn about, and engage with books and reading culture in ways that have never been possible before.

Along the same lines, BookTok is a space where reading extends beyond traditional educational settings. As Boffone and Jerasa (2021, p.7) plainly put it, “*BookTok exists and thrives as an out-of-school literacy practice*”, allowing readers to engage with literature outside the constraints of formal classrooms and explore books through novel approaches.

BookTok is a relatively new platform that offers easy access for participation. Unlike BookTube and Bookstagram, its content is described as energetic, spontaneous, and dynamic, providing a rich, multi-sensory experience (Martens et al., 2022). By establishing itself as a powerful community, it has transformed the way readers interact with literature, blending creativity and spontaneity to foster a unique space where book lovers can engage, explore, and shape literary trends in entirely new ways.

### 1.2 Reading Motivation

Reading is a complex cognitive activity that goes beyond the recognition of letters and words, involving the thoughtful interpretation and understanding of the meaning behind the text. In this sense, Sehar and Ghaffar (2018, p.1) characterize it as “*an art of decoding message through written words*”. Central to this process is motivation, which Mao (2011, as cited in Putera et al., 2023) defines as a combination of effort and desire aimed at achieving language learning goals. Motivation plays a particularly essential role in reading, as it initiates students' engagement with texts and sustains their focus throughout the reading experience (Mihandoost, 2011, as cited in Adem and Deneke, 2024).

Guthrie and Wigfield's (2000, as cited in Davis, et al., 2018, p. 3) definition of reading motivation as an “*individual's personal goals, values, and beliefs with regard to the topics, processes, and outcomes of reading*”, suggests that the motivation to read is deeply personal, shaped by what readers aim to achieve, what they consider important, and what they believe about reading. These factors influence their reading choices, how they engage with texts, and what they expect to gain from reading, such as acquiring knowledge, experiencing enjoyment, or reaching academic goals.

Complementing this view, reading motivation is a crucial factor influencing individuals' engagement with texts and their overall reading proficiency. Barotas & Palma (2023, p.18) explicitly acknowledge its central role, describing it as “*one of the key factors in cultivating students' academic performance*”. Generally, reading motivation is categorized into two types: intrinsic reading motivation and extrinsic reading motivation. (Alhamdu, 2015).

### 1.2.1 Intrinsic Reading Motivation

Intrinsic motivation is understood as an internal psychological desire that leads individuals to engage in activities, primarily for the inherent satisfaction, pleasure, and enjoyment derived from the activity itself (Ryan & Deci, 2019, as cited in Fajardo, Mañá et al., 2021). This type of motivation is central to reading; Wang & Guthrie (2004, as cited in Medford & McGeown, 2012) stress its beneficial role, noting the positive impact it exerts on reading achievement. They identify three key elements of intrinsic motivation: *curiosity*, which involves a desire to explore personally interesting topics; *involvement*, which is the enjoyment derived from the act of reading itself; and *challenge*, the sense of satisfaction gained from understanding difficult concepts (Wang & Guthrie, 2004, as cited in Khan et al., 2017). Readers with strong intrinsic motivation can sustain reading for extended periods with ease (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997, as cited in Kurnaz and Kurnaz, 2021). Consequently, this promotes deeper intellectual growth.

### 1.2.2 Extrinsic Reading Motivation

In contrast to intrinsic reading motivation, extrinsic reading motivation refers to engaging in reading due to external factors or expectations, instead of reading for its own sake (Ryan & Deci, 2000, as cited in Wang, Jia et al., 2020). This implies that when engaging in an activity such as reading, individuals are motivated by rewards, recognition, grades, or the desire to avoid punishment rather than personal enjoyment or interest in the content. For example, a student who reads a novel solely to prepare for an exam or to earn extra credit in class is exhibiting extrinsic reading motivation, as the primary purpose of reading is to achieve a tangible outcome rather than to enjoy the story or improve literacy for personal satisfaction.

Wang and Guthrie (2004, as cited in, Khan et al., 2017) identify five additional elements that contribute to extrinsic reading motivation, including *competition* (reading to surpass others),

*compliance* (reading to follow assigned rules and tasks) *recognition* (reading to gain praise), *grades* (Reading with the expectation of receiving good marks) and *social* (reading to connect with others). However, it has been argued that the benefits of reading are “*substantially reduced when the motivation is extrinsic*” (Suárez-Fernández & Boto-García, 2019, p.2), which leads to shorter reading durations, with individuals generally tending to avoid reading (Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997, as cited in Kurnaz & Kurnaz, 2021).

### **1.3 The Correlation between TikTok Book Recommendations and Reading.**

The rise of social media platforms like TikTok has significantly influenced various aspects of modern life, including reading motivation. To enrich the understanding of this phenomenon, Judijanto et al (2025) examined the BookTok trend's impact on Generation Z reading behavior in Indonesia. Their findings highlight a strong correlation between TikTok book recommendations and increased reading engagement. By sharing book reviews, recommendations, and personal reactions through short and captivating videos, BookTok creators are able to capture the attention of their peers, thereby fostering a sense of community around reading. This digital interaction not only makes books more accessible but also enhances readers' emotional connection to the content, motivating them to read more. The study suggests that the interactive nature of TikTok, with its blend of entertainment and education, plays a key role in boosting reading motivation among young people, demonstrating the potential of social media platforms in shaping modern literacy practices.

### **1.4 The Analytical Framework: Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), Self-Determination Theory (SDT), Connectivism**

This study draws on three key theoretical frameworks: Bandura’s Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), Deci and Ryan’s Self-Determination Theory (SDT), and Siemens’ Theory of Connectivism.

These theories collectively offer insights into how TikTok book recommendations can enhance EFL students' motivation to read, the role they play in fostering reading motivation, and how they can be effectively integrated into academic environments.

### **1.4.1 Social Cognitive Theory (1986): Albert Bandura**

According to McAlister et al (2008), Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) has originally been developed as Social Learning Theory. As outlined by Bandura (1977, as cited in McAlister et al., 2008), it emphasizes that individuals learn within a social context through observation, imitation, and modeling. Later, cognitive psychology concepts have been incorporated to reflect the mental processes involved in interpreting and learning from social experiences, leading to the renaming of the theory as Social Cognitive Theory (Bandura, 1986, as cited in McAlister et al., 2008).

In SCT, Bandura (1971, as cited in Yurt, 2022) posits that learning occurs through observing others, with social interaction and individual mental capacity influencing how modeled behaviors are understood and adopted. In the context of this study, it means that SCT explains how students can develop motivation and reading habits by observing BookTokers who model positive attitudes toward reading in English; they are exposed to behaviors they may choose to imitate. The extent to which this observational learning occurs depends on the learner's cognitive capacity to process and internalize the modeled behavior.

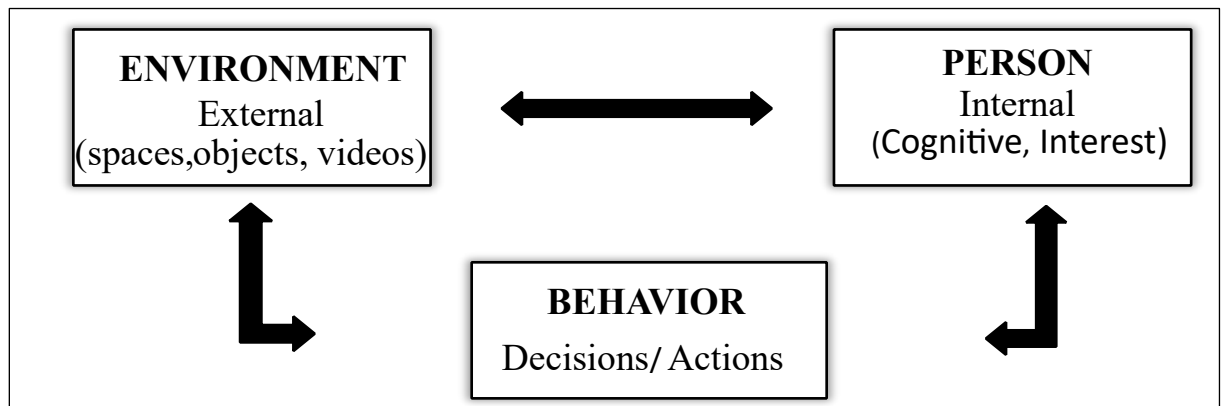
As far as SCT is concerned, several fundamental concepts, including reciprocal determinism, observational learning, and self-efficacy, are pivotal in elucidating the mechanisms through which learning and motivation are shaped.

#### **1.4.1.1 Triadic Reciprocal Determinism (TRD)**

SCT highlights the principle of reciprocal determinism, where individuals and their environments constantly shape and affect one another through ongoing mutual influence.

Mahmoud et al (2024, p.9) claim that SCT describes learning as “*a social process that is embedded in a social context and is marked by a reciprocal and dynamic interaction between an individual, their environment, and their behavior*”. Put differently, TRD stresses the bidirectional influence between personal factors, behavior, and the environment. Rather than acting in isolation, these elements function in a dynamic system where each component affects and is affected by the others, indicating that people do not simply react to what happens around them. Instead, they play an active role in shaping their own experiences. Their thoughts, emotions, and actions influence the environment they are in, just as the environment influences them.

For conceptual clarity, the following figure presents Bandura’s Triadic Determinism, illustrating the interdependent interaction among personal factors (cognitive and emotional processes), environmental conditions (external context), and behavior (actions and decisions performed by individuals).



**Figure 1:** Bandura’s theory of Triadic Reciprocal Determinism (1986).

**Note:** This design is our own creation.

For instance, when EFL students engage with BookTok content on TikTok, their interest in English reading (personal factor) leads them to interact with and follow BookTokers (behavior).

In response, TikTok's algorithm (environment) curates and presents more book-related content tailored to their preferences. This further demonstrates the ongoing reciprocal interaction between the components (see Figure 1).

### 1.4.1.2 Observational Learning

Observational learning, also described as vicarious learning or modeling, is a central concept in SCT that occurs when individuals adopt and replicate behaviors they had not learned before exposure to the models (Bandura, 1969, as cited in Schunk and Usher, 2012). In other words, it refers to the process by which individuals acquire new behaviors or knowledge by observing others rather than through direct experience. The originator of SCT expands on this idea by governing it into four component processes (Bandura, 1989, as cited in Artino, 2007), involving attention, retention, production, and motivation.

According to Bandura and Wood (1989), *attentional Processes* are the cognitive capacity to selectively focus on and observe the model's actions, enabling individuals to acquire the necessary information for subsequent imitation and effective learning. *Retention processes* are cognitive functions responsible for storing observed behaviors. The ability to remember and recall the information is essential for learning, as it would be ineffective if the observer had no memory of the model's behavior. The third component concerns *reproduction processes*, which stands for the ability to perform what was previously observed and remembered. It involves translating the stored information into physical action, which requires the necessary mental and motor skills. They elaborate on the fourth and last element, *motivational processes* as the internal and external factors that affect an individual's decision to engage in observed behavior. Simply put, motivation is influenced by the expected outcomes, including the perceived costs and benefits of performing the behavior (McAlister et al., 2008).

In summary, in line with Bandura's framework, observational learning is contingent upon four essential conditions: individuals must attend to the model's behavior, effectively retain the observed actions through cognitive processes, possess the capability to produce the behavior, and be sufficiently motivated to perform it (Schunk and DiBenedetto, 2019).

### **1.4.1.3 Perceived Self-Efficacy**

Central to Social Cognitive Theory is self-efficacy, a term defined by Bandura (1986, as cited in Carillo 2010, p.3) as "*People's judgment of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances. It is concerned not with the skills one has but with judgments of what one can do with whatever skills one possesses*". Essentially, it is the belief in one's ability to succeed in different situations, distinguishing between merely having the necessary skills and being able to use them effectively, especially under difficult circumstances. This belief influences how individuals approach tasks, goals, and obstacles, shaping their cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses, as well as their motivational outcomes.

### **1.4.2 Self-Determination Theory (2000): Edward L. Deci & Richard M. Ryan.**

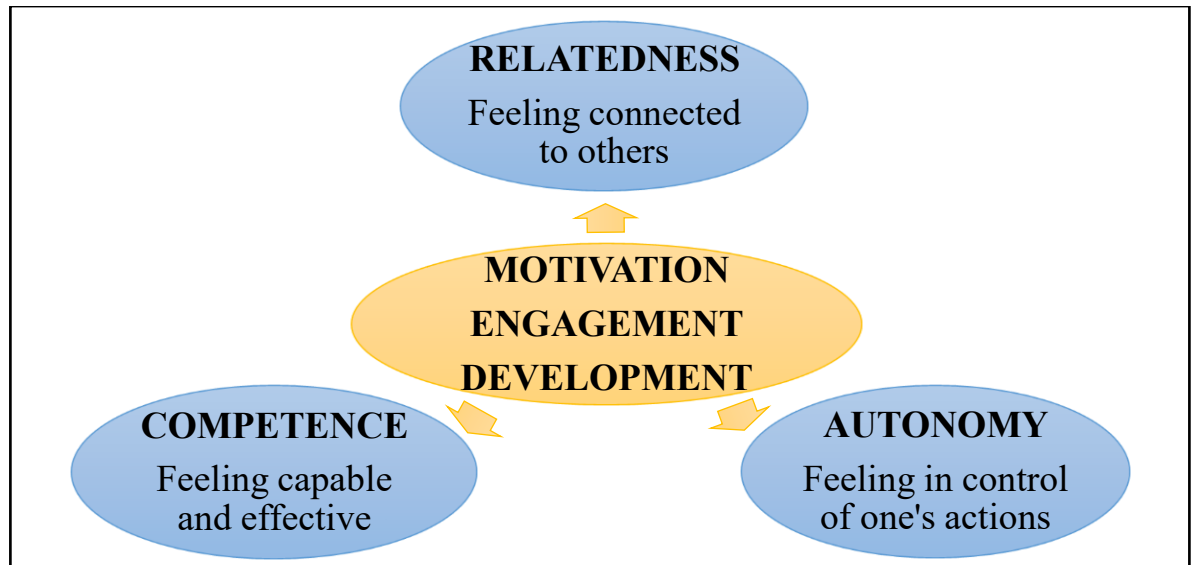
Self-Determination Theory (SDT) has progressively developed over the past four decades into a foundational theory of human motivation (Gagné and Deci, 2014). As a leading framework in motivational research, SDT has demonstrated its value in identifying the psychological factors and conditions that influence motivation and behavior in various life domains (Deci & Ryan, 1985, 2000, as cited in Hagger, Chatzisarantis et al., 2008).

SDT (Deci & Ryan, 1985, as cited in Meyer and Gagné, 2008) identifies two main types of motivation: intrinsic and extrinsic. *Intrinsic motivation* refers to engaging in an activity out of genuine interest or personal enjoyment. In contrast, *extrinsic motivation* involves performing an

activity to achieve external outcomes, such as rewards, recognition, or avoiding negative consequences.

Accordingly, this theory is fundamentally concerned with the role of social and contextual influences in either supporting or undermining individuals' psychological growth, which is deeply rooted in the satisfaction of three fundamental innate psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Ryan & Deci, 2000, as cited in Legault, 2017). According to Deci and Ryan (1991, as cited in Ntoumanis, 2001), *autonomy* is the need to feel in control of one's behavior and decisions; these actions are self-chosen and reflect a sense of personal initiative and willingness. *Competence* involves the need to feel effective and capable in one's activities. A strong sense of perceived competence enhances individuals' willingness to engage in tasks with confidence and perseverance, which, in turn, facilitates the internalization of motivation. *Relatedness* is the need to feel connected to others, to have meaningful, supportive relationships, and a sense of belonging. When these needs are supported by the surrounding environment, individuals are more likely to experience motivation, engagement, and personal development (See Figure 2). Conversely, when these needs are thwarted, it can lead to diminished well-being and impaired functioning.

The figure below portrays the conceptual model of the key psychological needs, positioning relatedness, competence, and autonomy as essential drivers for an individual's motivation, engagement, and development.



**Figure 2:** A summary of Ryan and Deci’s Self-Determination Theory (2000).

**Note:** This design is our own creation.

### 1.4.3 Connectivism: George Siemens (2004)

In a world where information is abundant and constantly evolving, Connectivism theory provides a vital framework for understanding how learning takes place through digital networks. Siemens (2004, as cited in Şahin, 2012, p.441), a key figure of modern learning theories and the founder of connectivism, argues that, “*Connectivism presents a model of learning that acknowledges the tectonic shifts in society where learning is no longer an internal, individualistic activity*”. For him, learning is a fluid and networked process in which knowledge is not confined to individual cognition but is distributed across a web of social and technological connections.

Unlike traditional learning theories such as behaviorism, cognitivism, and constructivism, which emphasize teacher-led instruction and classroom-based learning, the theorist challenges these paradigms by highlighting the transformative role of technology in the learning process. He argues that digital tools are not merely supplementary aids, but essential mechanisms for storing,

accessing, and constructing knowledge in modern contexts (Siemens, 2005, as cited in Taylor, 2023). The rationale behind this shift lies in the recognition that earlier theories were developed during eras in which learning occurred in more stable, localized, and technologically limited environments. As Şahin (2012) explains, the models that guided previous generations of learners must now be reconsidered in light of today's rapidly evolving digital landscape. In this new paradigm, the ability to connect with diverse information sources and technological networks becomes a fundamental learning activity. Thus, connectivism offers a more relevant and adaptive framework, addressing the demands of a knowledge society where technological fluency and networked thinking are indispensable. By applying this theory, TikTok book recommendations transcend their role as mere entertainment, becoming a potent tool for active learning in the classroom.

### **Conclusion**

A review of the main literature informing this research has been provided in this chapter. First, it has focused on the TikTok platform, shedding light on its evolution, core features, and widespread influence, along with the documented risks and potential benefits. It has also examined TikTok's growing significance in educational contexts and English language acquisition, highlighting the crucial role of its curation algorithm, as well as the emergence of BookTok as a cultural force driving literary interest. Second, it has addressed reading motivation, clarifying the distinction between intrinsic and extrinsic aspects. Third, it has established the correlation between TikTok book recommendations and reading motivation. Lastly, it has explained the analytical framework guiding this study: Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory, and Siemens' Connectivism Theory.



**Research Design and Methodology**

### Introduction

A thorough understanding of the correlation between TikTok book recommendations and students' reading motivation necessitates a well-defined research methodology. This chapter introduces the methodological framework that underpins the research, structured into three main sections. The first section presents the research method and design, explaining the approach employed. The second section focuses on the data collection procedure, providing details about the study's setting, timeline, participants, and the tools used for data gathering. The final section outlines the data analysis procedure, describing how the collected data have been analyzed to answer the primary research questions.

### 2.1 Research Method and Design

A mixed methods approach is applied to fulfill the objectives of this research, incorporating numerical data and textual information to examine the research topic from multiple perspectives and achieve a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem. Ahmed et al. (2024, p.1) acknowledge the methodological strength of this strategy, describing it as “*an approach that combines qualitative and quantitative research methodologies within a single study. This integration allows researchers to draw on the strengths of both methods, providing a more comprehensive understanding of research questions*”. Given the overall aim of this current inquiry, the use of both methodologies is particularly valuable. While a survey questionnaire with a set of structured, closed-ended questions offers measurable and beneficial insights, the inclusion of qualitative methods can reveal unexpected discoveries that enrich and expand the knowledge of the research topic and support the interpretation of the quantitative results (Wasti et al., 2022).

This investigation is an exploratory case study, aligned with its aim of understanding real-world behaviors. It is particularly well-suited to explore the relationship between TikTok English

book recommendations and students' reading motivation, addressing a contemporary issue within its real context. In addition, the study draws on survey research, which involves collecting data by asking individuals questions, either through written questionnaires or interviews (Panacek, 2008). These two tools are purposefully selected to enable both quantitative and qualitative data collection, ensuring a comprehensive view of the topic.

### **2.2 Data collection procedure**

This section presents the procedures followed to collect data. Two primary instruments have been used to explore the impact of TikTok book recommendations on students' motivation to read: a questionnaire for students and interviews with Algerian bookTok creators. The questionnaire aims to gather quantitative data, while its open-ended questions and interviews provide a qualitative understanding.

#### **2.2.1 Context and Sample**

This research was undertaken during the 2024-2025 academic year in the departments of English and French at the University of Mouloud Mammeri, Tizi Ouzou. The questionnaire was distributed online from April 22 to April 26, 2025. As for the influencers' interview, one participant was interviewed in person on April 24, while the others participated virtually on April 25.

The participants of this study comprise students from all levels (L1, L2, L3, M1, and M2) in the Departments of English and French. They have been selected through convenience sampling, defined as a non-probability technique in which participants are chosen based on practical criteria such as accessibility, availability, willingness to participate, and alignment with the purpose of the study (Dörnyei, 2007). This approach is adopted because TikTok usage is not universal, and interest in English literature varies among students in the Department of French. Students from both departments have been asked whether they use the TikTok platform, since meaningful contributions

to the investigation can be provided solely by users. Furthermore, only French students who have confirmed their interest in the English language and literature, as verified through pre-screening, have been considered eligible to participate as EFL learners. Consequently, the generalizability of the findings is limited to students meeting these criteria. A total of ninety (90) responses have been received from all students. However, some answers are deemed inappropriate and unrelated, such as “*you are dumb*”, “*I don’t care*”, or even emoji-only responses, leading to their exclusion from the data. Thus, the final sample is composed of fifty-one (51) participants. As part of the interview process, fifty (50) Algerian BookTok creators have been randomly contacted and selected. Out of these, only four (4) influencers have agreed to participate, as some refused and others did not respond.

### **2.2.2 Data Collection Tools**

#### **2.2.2.1 Questionnaire**

##### **2.2.2.1.1 Definition**

The questionnaire was designed by Sir Francis Galton and is defined as: “*a research instrument consisting of a set of questions (items) intended to capture responses from respondents in a standardized manner*” (Bhatacherjee, 2012, p.74). In other words, a questionnaire is a structured set of questions used to gather information from participants. It is one of the most common tools in research for collecting data directly from individuals. Questionnaires can be distributed in paper form, online, or a combination of both (Ponto et al., 2010, as cited in Ponto, 2015) and are usually designed to collect responses related to opinions, behaviors, or experiences.

##### **2.2.2.1.2 Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire used in this study is tailored for undergraduate students from the departments of English and French. It comprises seventeen (17) diverse items that blend precision

and depth by incorporating closed-ended and open-ended questions. The open-ended items serve as follow-ups, encouraging participants to elaborate on their choices and providing deeper insights into their perspectives, thereby enriching the data beyond predefined options.

The questionnaire is structured into four sections, each addressing a key aspect of the research, with an introductory paragraph preceding them that outlines the research aim, ensures participants' anonymity and confidentiality, and encourages honest responses. The first section, "*General Information*", which consists of three (3) items, collects background details such as academic level, field of study, and frequency of reading English books. The second section, "*TikTok Usage and Book Recommendations*", which includes three (3) items and one follow-up question, explores students' interaction with book-related content on TikTok. The third section, "*TikTok Book Recommendations and Reading Motivation*", is composed of seven (7) questions and four (4) follow-up items that investigate the platform's influence on students and their motivation to read. The final section, "*Educational Impact of TikTok Book Recommendations*", containing four (4) questions and three (3) follow-up questions, examines whether such content contributes to language learning and its potential educational use.

By mixing dichotomous yes/no questions (Q5, Q10, Q12, Q13, Q14, Q16, Q17), Trichotomous questions (Q6, Q7, Q15), multiple-choice items (Q1, Q2), frequency-based responses (Q3, Q4), Likert-scale questions (Q8, Q11), multiple responses (Q9), and open-ended formats (the follow-up questions attached to Q5, Q9, Q10, Q11, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q16), the questionnaire captures both statistical patterns and participants' reasoning, offering a comprehensive picture of how digital platforms like TikTok intersect with literacy development and motivation.

### 2.2.2.1.3 The Pilot Study

As an essential preliminary step before administering the final version of the questionnaire, a pretest has been implemented with a small group of five (5) participants from the target population to assess its clarity, reliability, and overall effectiveness. In general terms, the feedback obtained has been overwhelmingly positive. Participants have reported that the questionnaire is clear and intelligible. There have been no negative comments regarding the wording or the organization of the questions, suggesting the instrument's overall efficacy and validity.

### 2.2.2.2 Interview

#### 2.2.2.2.1 Definition

Ruslin et al (2022, p.22) define the interview as *“an interaction between two people on a particular occasion, where one acts as an interviewer and another as an interviewee”*. That is to say, an interview is a method of collecting information, involving one person (the interviewer) asking questions and another person (the interviewee) responding. Compared to questionnaires, interviews provide a more detailed understanding of participants' experiences, views, and insights on a particular subject (Burns & Grove, 1993; Gillis & Jackson, 2002, as cited in Wakelin et al., 2024). Among the various types of interviews, the semi-structured interview is used in this case, which is described as *“sufficiently structured to address specific dimensions of your research question while also leaving space for study participants to offer new meanings to the topic of study”* (Galletta, 2013, p. 1-2). Simply put, a semi-structured interview is a qualitative data collection method that combines a set of pre-determined open-ended questions with the opportunity for the interviewer to explore additional topics that emerge during the conversation. While traditionally conducted in person, interviews are now increasingly carried out online due to the widespread

availability of communication technologies (Jorgensen & Lindgren, 2022; Newman & Gallo, 2019, as cited in Wakelin et al., 2024).

### **2.2.2.2.2 Description of the Interview**

The Semi-structured interview has been conducted with four (4) Algerian BookTok creators, aiming to explore their perspectives on the role of TikTok book recommendations in fostering EFL students' reading motivation. Among the participants, one has been interviewed face-to-face, while the remaining three participated in a group interview via the online platform Google Meet, with each providing individual responses in succession. The interview guide is made up of fourteen (14) questions, arranged to move from broad to more focused topics. Throughout the interviews, some questions, including the third and the fifth (see Appendix B), have opened the way for additional clarification, enabling the participants to expand on their initial responses, which reflects the flexibility inherent in semi-structured interviewing. This approach ensures a comprehensive exploration of the influencers' insights, allowing for both depth and diversity in the collected data.

## **2.3. Data Analysis Procedure**

Once the data are collected, the analysis phase follows, using both quantitative and qualitative methods, selected and applied according to the nature of the data. The Numerical data are presented using descriptive statistical analysis while the textual data are examined through Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)

### **2.3.1 Descriptive Statistical Analysis**

Singpurwalla (2013) refers to descriptive statistics as a process of utilizing “*numerical and graphical methods to look for patterns in a data set, to summarize the information revealed in a data set, and to present information in a convenient form that individuals can use to make decisions*” (p. 9). That is, descriptive statistics simplify large amounts of information into

comprehensible formats, such as percentages, pie charts, tables, and graphs, by focusing solely on what is directly contained in the data, making it easier to interpret and act upon the findings. Furthermore, this type of analysis is concerned with summarizing the characteristics of a specific sample without applying probability theory to draw general conclusions beyond the data itself. In this investigation, the primary focus is to gain insights from participants in the field of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) study from two distinct academic backgrounds: French and English, without attempting to draw any comparisons among the different groups.

### **2.3.2 Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA)**

Qualitative content analysis is utilized to systematically interpret and analyze the content gathered from influencers' interviews and students' open-ended questionnaire responses. QCA is *“a method for describing the meaning of qualitative material in a systematic way. You do this by assigning successive parts of your material to the categories of your coding frame”* (Schreier, 2012, p. 1). This approach plays a pivotal role in interpreting and categorizing data, enabling researchers to identify recurring themes and key ideas, connect findings to existing theoretical frameworks, and uncover critical aspects of the data that may not be obvious at first glance. This process, therefore, facilitates a detailed exploration of how influencers and students express their views, particularly regarding TikTok book recommendations in enhancing reading motivation and their potential integration into classroom settings.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter has outlined the research methodology applied to explore the correlation between TikTok book recommendations and students' reading motivation. It is divided into three main sections: Research Method and Design, Data Collection Procedure, and Data Analysis Procedure. In this study, a mixed-methods approach has been adopted to integrate quantitative and

qualitative perspectives, providing a comprehensive understanding of the research problem. The data collection procedure has detailed the research context, participant selection, and instruments used, including a pretested questionnaire administered to students from the Departments of English and French, as well as a semi-structured interview conducted with Algerian BookTok creators. As the final section of this chapter, the data analysis procedure employed descriptive statistics to summarize and interpret numerical data and qualitative content analysis to systematically analyze textual responses.



**Presentation of the Findings**

### Introduction

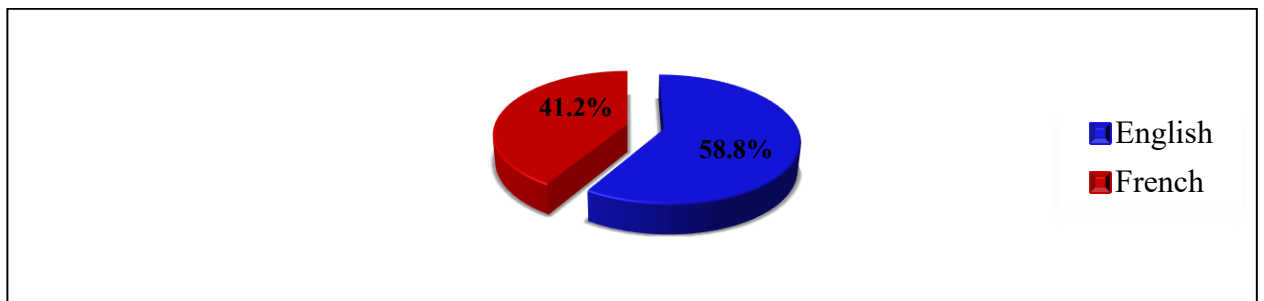
This chapter details the key findings derived from the data collected during the research process. It offers a comprehensive analysis of the participants' responses, which are gathered from students in the departments of English and French at MMUTO, as well as from influencers on the TikTok platform. It is organized into two main sections. The first section reports on the data obtained from fifty-one (51) participants who have completed the online questionnaire. The second section focuses on the results drawn from interviews conducted with four (4) BookTok creators.

### 3.1 Results of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire is composed of four sections, each targeting a specific dimension of the study: “General Information”, “TikTok Usage and Book Recommendations”, “Reading Skills and Motivation”, and “Educational Impact of TikTok Book Recommendations”.

#### 3.1.1 Findings from Section One: General Information

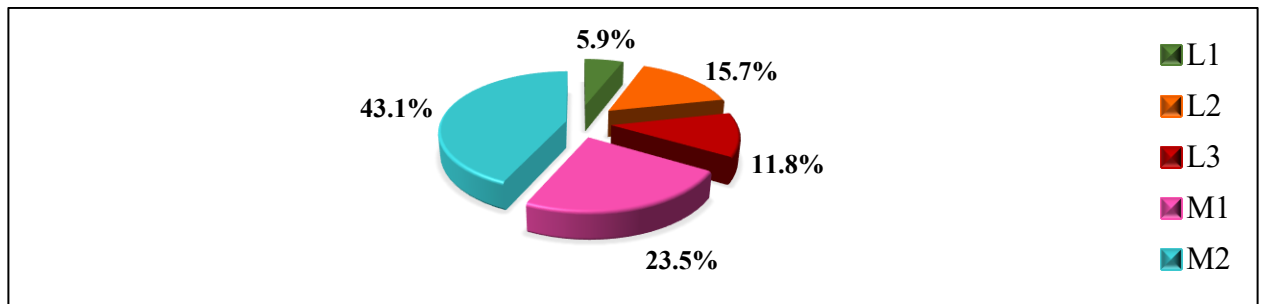
**Q1:** What is your field of study?



**Diagram 1:** Students' Field of Study

Diagram 1 represents the students' field of study. It shows that 58.8% of the students are studying in the field of English while 41.2% are in the French field.

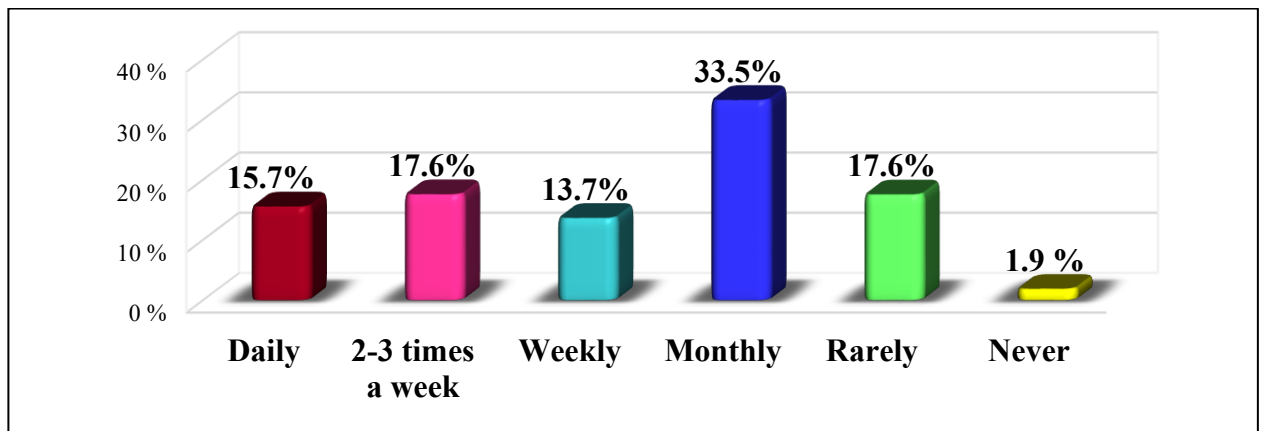
**Q2:** What is your current university level?



**Diagram 2:** Students' University Level

This pie chart illustrates the distribution of students according to their university level. The majority (43.1%) are enrolled in Master 2 (M2), followed by Master 1 (M1) with 23.5%. Second-year (L2) students make up 15.7%, third-year (L3) students account for 11.8%, and only 5.9% are in first-year (L1).

**Q3:** How often do you read books in English?



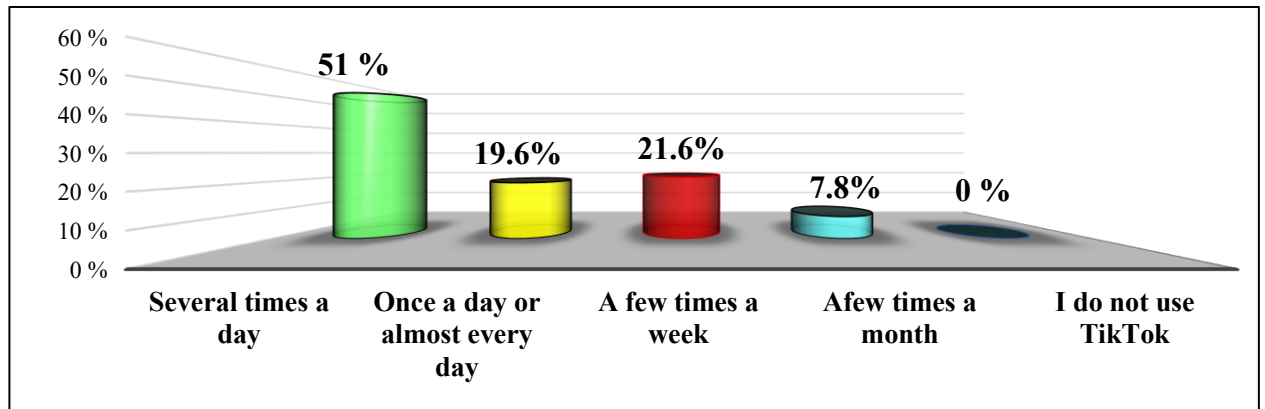
**Diagram 3:** Students' Book Reading Frequency

Diagram 3 shows how frequently students read books. The majority (33.5%) report reading monthly. An equal percentage of students (17.6%) indicate that they read either 2–3 times a week

or rarely, while 13.7% of them read weekly. Only a small percentage (1.9%) of students say that they never read.

### 3.1.2 Findings from Section Two: TikTok Usage and Book Recommendations

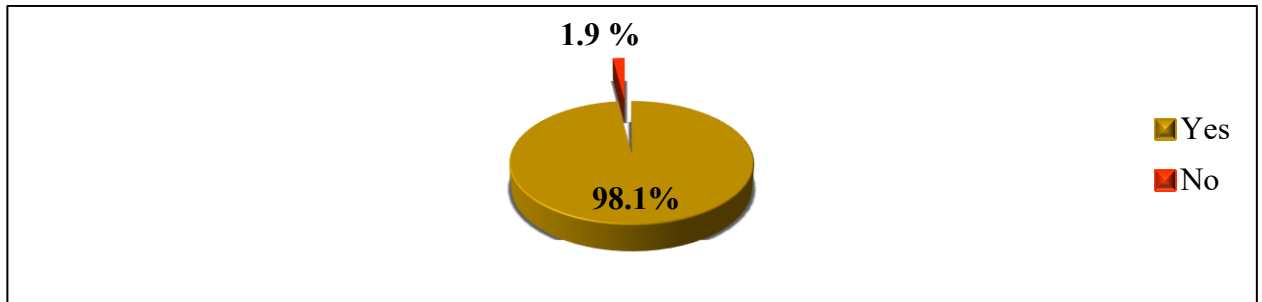
**Q4:** How often do you use TikTok?



**Diagram 4:** TikTok Usage Frequency by Students

The chart above displays how often students use TikTok. The data reveal that the majority of students, 51%, engage with TikTok several times a day. A smaller but still significant portion (21.6%) use the platform a few times a week. This is followed by 19.6% of students who access it once a day or almost every day. Less frequent usage appears among 7.8% of students, who mention opening TikTok a few times a month. Notably, none of the respondents (0%) claim that they do not use TikTok.

**Q5:** Have you ever come across book recommendations in English on TikTok?



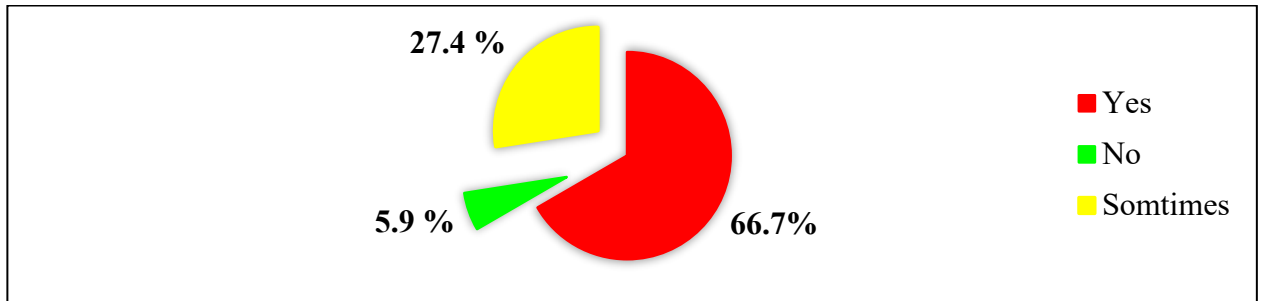
**Diagram 5:** Percentage of Students Encountering English Book Recommendations on TikTok

The pie chart clearly demonstrates that a large number of students encounter book recommendations on TikTok, with 98.1% responding “yes” and only 1.9% indicating “no.”

\* If yes, what initially led you to them (e.g., through friends, Algorithm suggestions, actively searching... etc.)?

Out of the fifty-one (51) participants, forty (40) have responded to this question. A predominant number of them attribute their exposure to book-related content on TikTok to algorithmic suggestions. Some have elaborated that the algorithm gradually introduces them to BookTok content after interacting with similar videos, resulting in personalized recommendations appearing on their “For You” page based on their viewing habits and interests. Other respondents claim actively searching for books or authors using keywords in the search bar. Meanwhile, a smaller group confirms that they discover book recommendations through friends who share or suggest such videos based on their own experiences. Finally, a few students have added employing a combination of strategies, including both active searching and algorithmic suggestions.

**Q6:** Do you interact with TikTok book recommendations (e.g., liking, commenting, sharing, following)?

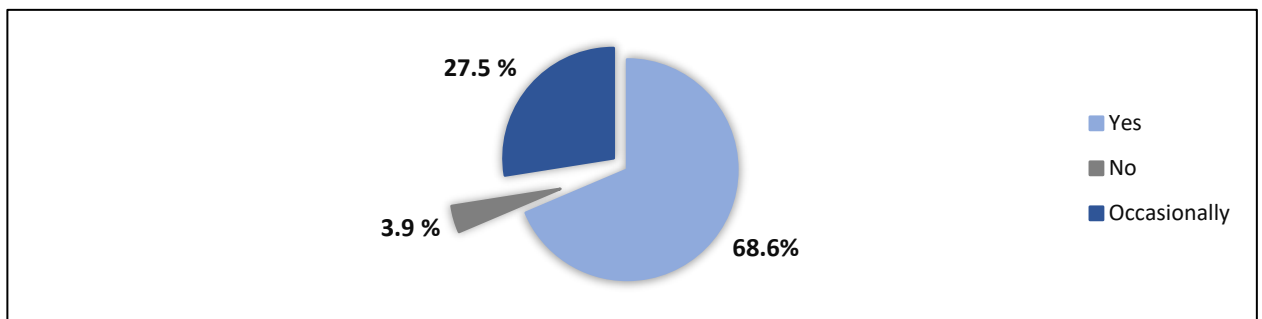


**Diagram 6:** Students' Interaction with TikTok Book Recommendations

Based on the data in Diagram 6, students' interaction with TikTok book recommendations varies. A high percentage of participants, representing 66.7%, regularly interact with these recommendations. On the other hand, 27.4% of students engage only occasionally, and a small portion (5.9%) do not interact.

### 3.1.3 Findings from Section Three: TikTok Book Recommendations and Reading Motivation

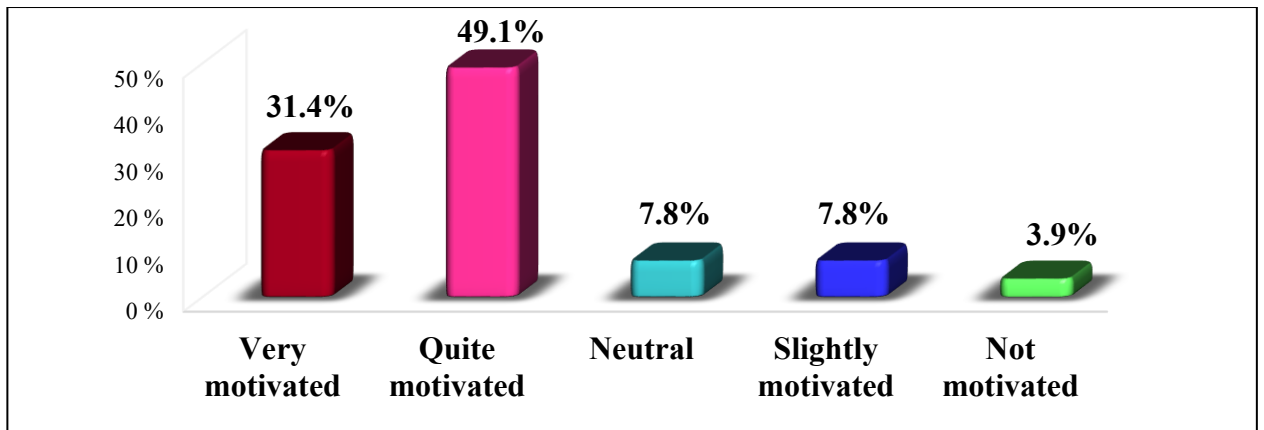
**Q7:** Have TikTok book recommendations influenced your decision to read a book?



**Diagram 7:** Influence of TikTok Book Recommendations on Students' Reading Decisions

Diagram 7 reveals that TikTok book recommendations significantly shape students' reading choices, with 68.6% acknowledging their influence. An additional 27.5% are occasionally affected, while only 3.9% report no impact.

**Q8:** How motivated are you to read English books after seeing TikTok recommendations?



**Diagram 8:** Students' Motivation to Read English Books After TikTok Recommendations

In the eighth diagram, the findings suggest that nearly half of the participants (49.1%) report feeling “Quite motivated” to read the suggested books while 31.4% describe themselves as “very motivated”. A smaller group (7.8%) remains “neutral”, and another 7.8% feel only “slightly motivated”. In contrast, 3.9% admit being “not motivated” at all.

**Q9:** What aspects of TikTok book recommendations motivate you to read? (you can choose more than one answer)

**Table 1:** Students’ Motivating Aspects of TikTok Book Recommendations to Read

Options	Number of Selections	Percentages
Short videos	24	47.1%
Quick and easy book summaries	30	58.8%
Fun and creative presentation	22	43.1%
Visual appeal (e.g., images, graphics)	25	49%
Relatable personal experiences	18	35.3%

**Note:** As the question allows for multiple responses, the percentages indicate how many respondents selected each option.

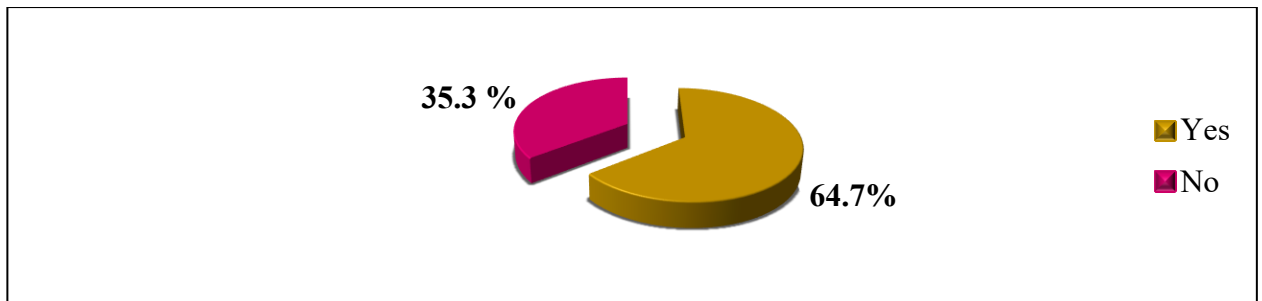
Table 1 presents the key features of TikTok book recommendations that motivate students to read. The most influential feature is “Quick and Easy Book Summaries”, chosen by 30 students, representing 58.8% of the sample. Visual elements also have a strong impact, with 25 students drawn to “Visual Appeal”. This is closely followed by “Short Videos”, which appeal to 24 students (47.1%), and “Fun and Creative Presentations”, appreciated by 22 students. Additionally, “Relatable Personal Experiences” motivate 18 students, accounting for 35.3% of the sample.

\*Other (please specify)

Among the nine (9) additional responses regarding aspects that motivate students to read, three participants have identified commentaries and personal reviews by other readers as particularly influential, as they help determine whether a book aligns with their interests. Some

respondents further elaborate on the provided options by highlighting the value of targeted images and concise phrases, which facilitate quick comprehension. Spoiler-free summaries, vivid descriptions of characters and events, and comparisons between books, ideologies, or philosophies also stand out as persuasive features that often spark curiosity and guide reading choices. One participant specifically appreciates when creators read short excerpts, as this provides an opportunity to evaluate the author’s writing style and assess its compatibility with personal reading preferences.

**Q10:** Have you ever bought or borrowed a book because of a TikTok recommendation?



**Diagram 9:** Students' Book Purchases and Borrowing based on TikTok Recommendations

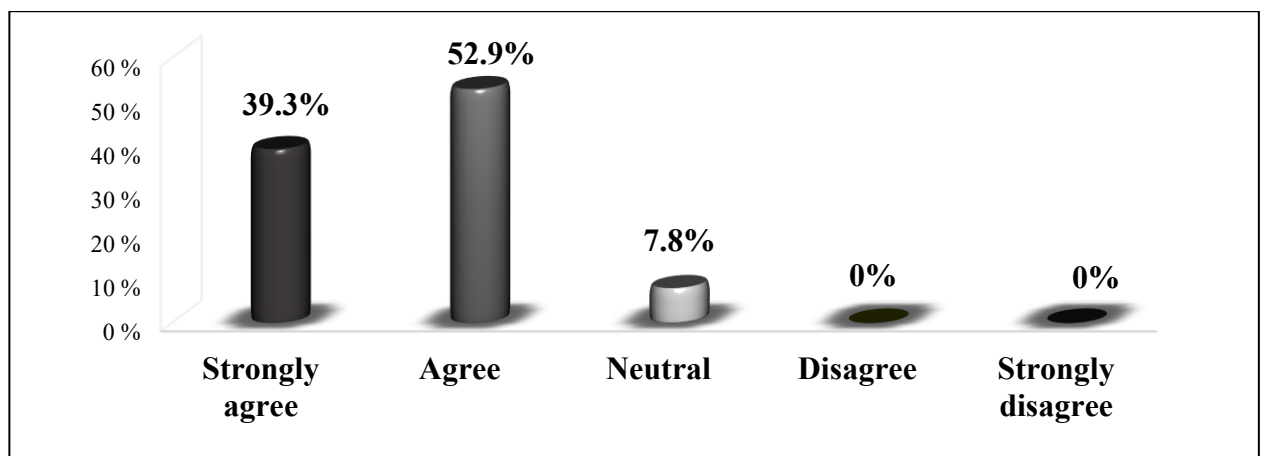
Diagram 9 visualizes how students’ decisions to purchase or borrow books are influenced by TikTok recommendations. According to the chart, 64.7% of students have purchased or borrowed books due to TikTok recommendations, whereas 35.3% have not.

\*If yes, please give an example of the book and briefly explain which part of the TikTok recommendation caught your attention the most.

Out of 51 participants, 20 have not responded to this question. Among the remaining 31, the most frequently mentioned books are “*It Ends with Us* and *It Starts with Us*” by Colleen Hoover. Other titles include “*The Silent Patient*” by Alex Michaelides, “*A Thousand Splendid Suns*” by Khaled Hosseini, “*Before the Coffee Gets Cold*” by Toshikazu Kawaguchi, “*The Magus*” by John

Fowles, *“The Travelling Cat Chronicles”* by Hiro Arikawa, *“Sparkling Cyanide”* by Agatha Christie, *“A Court of Thorns and Roses”* by Sarah J. Maas, and *“The Housemaid”* by Freida McFadden. Participants explain that TikTok videos often catch their attention through emotional reactions, impactful quotes, and expressive storytelling. Many appreciate how emotional summaries, aesthetic visuals, and creative narration make complex or heavy themes more accessible and engaging. Some respondents have also expressed a preference for books related to personal growth and self-awareness. For example, one participant has chosen *“Mindset”* by Carol Dweck because the TikTok summary emphasizes the theme of competence, an area he/she wishes to improve. Likewise, books focusing on self-development and mental resilience, such as *“Mastery”* and *“The Laws of Human Nature”* written by Robert Greene, *“The Subtle Art of Not Giving a F\*ck”* by Mark Manson, *“Atomic Habits”* by James Clear, and *“Can’t Hurt Me”* by David Goggins, resonate with several participants who see these works as tools for addressing personal challenges that they want to overcome.

**Q11:** Do you agree that the ease of use of TikTok book recommendations makes English reading easier, more interesting, or more enjoyable?



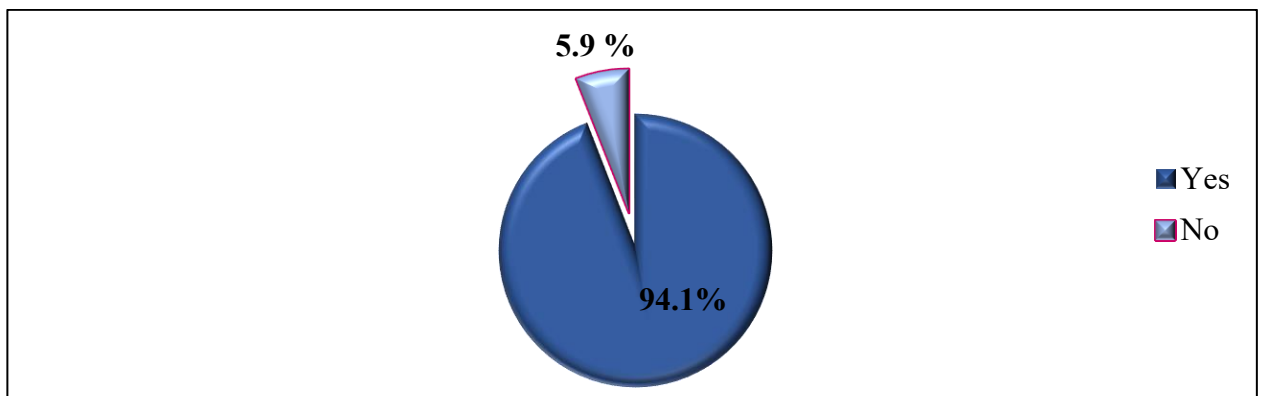
**Diagram 10:** Students’ Degree of Agreement on TikTok Recommendations’ Role in English Reading

Diagram 10 summarizes students' degree of agreement regarding whether the ease of use of TikTok recommendations makes English reading easier, more interesting, or more enjoyable. A majority of respondents express positive views, with 52.9% agreeing and 39.3% strongly agreeing. 7.8% of them are neutral. Interestingly, no students disagree or strongly disagree.

\*If you disagree, please briefly explain why.

None of the 51 participants disagree that TikTok book recommendations make English reading easier, more engaging, and more enjoyable. One participant has added a positive answer, describing how a sibling who was previously disinterested in reading becomes motivated and willing to read a book after encountering a TikTok recommendation.

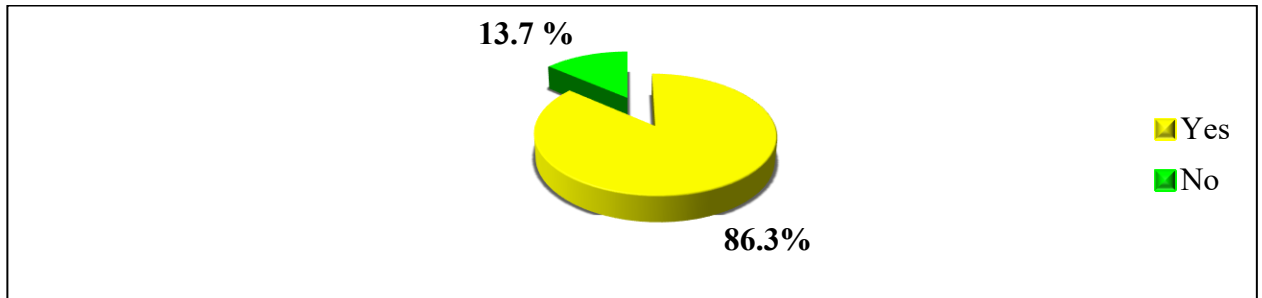
**Q12:** Do you feel more confident about reading in English after engaging with TikTok book recommendations?



**Diagram 11:** Students' confidence about reading in English after engaging with TikTok Book Recommendations

The results of Diagram 11 unveil that nearly all students feel more confident reading in English after engaging with TikTok book recommendations. An overwhelming 94.1% answer "Yes". Conversely, the minority (5.9%) report no change.

**Q13:** Have TikTok book recommendations helped you figure out your reading preferences in English (e.g., fiction, non-fiction, personal development, romance, ...etc.)?



**Diagram 12:** Students' Views on TikTok Book Recommendations in Shaping English Reading Preferences

Diagram 12 illustrates students' opinions on whether TikTok book recommendations have helped them figure out their English reading preferences. The results indicate that 86.3% of respondents have answered "Yes", while 13.7% have answered "No".

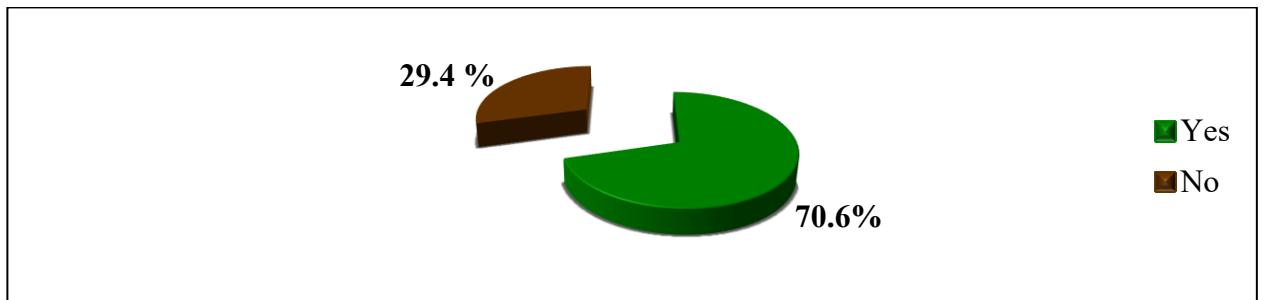
\* If yes, how did this influence your reading habits?

For thirty-six (36) students, TikTok book recommendations have positively influenced their reading habits. Many have experienced a newfound love for reading, increased reading frequency, and openness to exploring diverse genres such as fiction, romance, fantasy, self-development, and even niche interests like horror and esotericism. Some students argue that exposure to reviews and readers' reactions helps them better select books aligned with their interests, making reading more enjoyable and efficient. Others highlight that TikTok encourages them to try genres they had previously ignored, and helps them discover their reading preferences, resulting in richer vocabulary, more consistent reading habits, and greater creativity, especially in writing. For some,

this process of self-discovery positively impacts their confidence, emotional expression, and personal identity.

### 3.1.4 Findings from Section Four: Educational Impact of TikTok Book Recommendations

**Q14.** Are TikTok book recommendations better than traditional book recommendations (e.g., from teachers or friends)?



**Diagram 13:** Students' Preferences Between TikTok and Traditional Book Recommendations

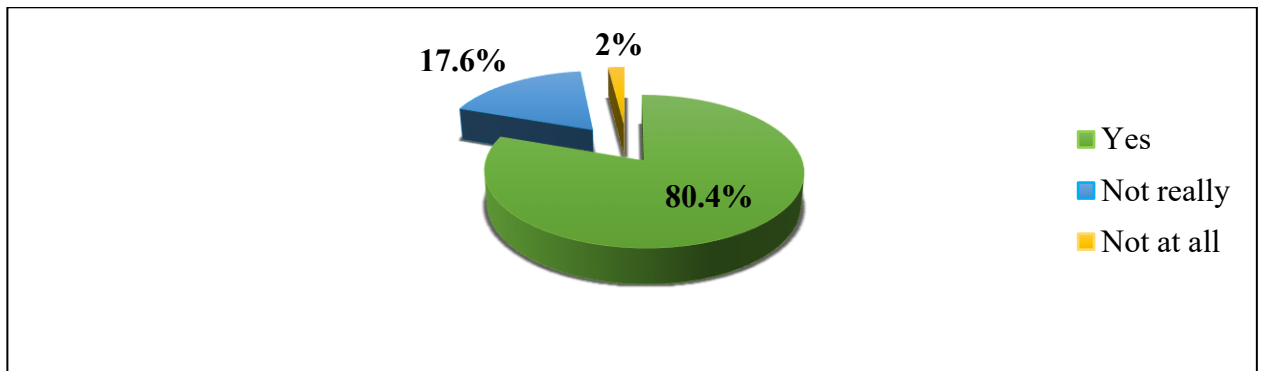
The pie chart in Diagram 13 reveals students' preferences when choosing between book recommendations from TikTok and those from traditional sources. According to the data, 70.6% of students favor TikTok as their preferred platform for book suggestions, while the minority (29.4%) still opt for traditional recommendations.

\* If yes, why do you think so?

Thirty-six (36) respondents who have addressed this question highlight several reasons for their preference. Many emphasize the platform's algorithmic personalization, which introduces users to a diverse array of books across various genres, including both popular and lesser-known titles, offering broader options compared to the limited selections provided by one's immediate social circle. Some others also value the platform's engaging format, characterized by short videos

featuring genuine reactions, concise summaries, and aesthetically pleasing presentations, making books more appealing. Moreover, the authenticity and emotional depth of creators' reviews are regarded as more influential than traditional methods. Lastly, the interactive nature of TikTok fosters a sense of community, encouraging discussion and shared literary experiences

**Q15:** Do you think TikTok book recommendations have improved your English reading skills?



**Diagram 14:** Students' Perceptions of TikTok Book Recommendations in Improving English Reading Skills

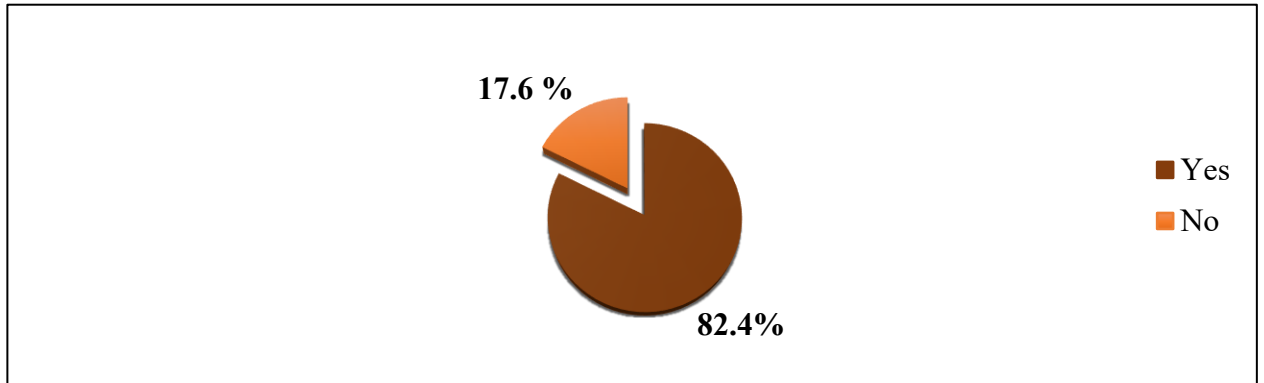
In Diagram 14, 80.4% of students believe TikTok book recommendations improve their English reading skills, 17.6% are lukewarm, and only 2% see no benefit at all.

\* Have they benefited any other area of your language learning?

Many of the fifty (50) students who have responded affirm that TikTok book recommendations have indeed benefited other areas of their language learning. The most commonly reported improvements include vocabulary. Several students have added benefits in listening, speaking, writing, grammar, and critical thinking. Some specifically mention that watching native speakers and audiobook summaries have helped with their pronunciation and understanding of everyday English. Moreover, a number of participants claim to gain confidence

in expressing opinions and developing cultural awareness through exposure to varied perspectives. However, a few students note no significant improvement in reading but enjoy reading for pleasure.

**Q16:** Do you think TikTok book recommendations could be used as a teaching tool in English classes?



**Diagram 15:** Students' Perspectives on TikTok Book Recommendations as an English Teaching Tool

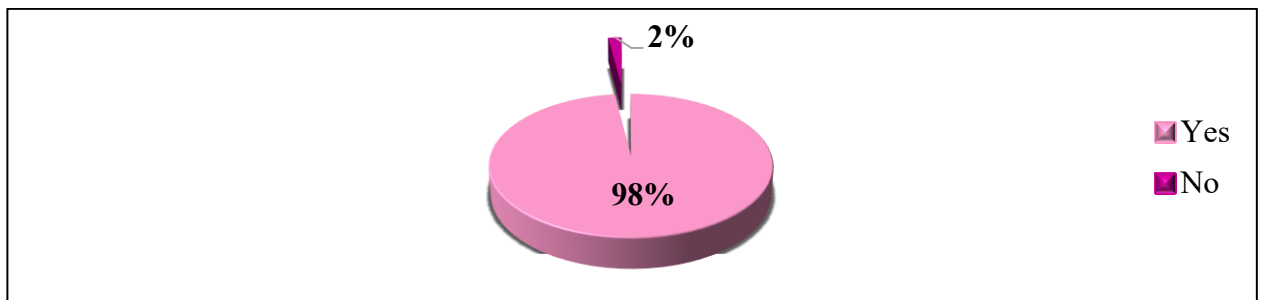
Looking at the pie chart, it is evident that the idea of using TikTok book recommendations as a tool for teaching English gains strong support among students, with 82.4% in favor. Only a minority, 17.6%, do not share this perspective.

\* Please share the reasons behind your response

Out of the forty-nine (49) given answers, the students who view TikTok book recommendations as a valuable English Teaching tool have provided several reasons for their positive stance. Many highlight the platform's concise, emotionally engaging videos featuring authentic reader reactions, which help make literature more relatable and appealing to students. Integrating TikTok into the classroom is seen as a way to increase their motivation, reshape

perceptions of social media as a potential educational resource, and connect literary content with a platform that they already use and enjoy. Some participants emphasize that TikTok book recommendations promote group discussions, peer-to-peer sharing, and primarily encourage reading for pleasure rather than for education. Additionally, others note that TikTok could assist teachers in renewing their teaching methods and anticipating changes by integrating new readings beyond the classic curriculum. On the other side, the students who express skepticism doubt the educational value of TikTok book recommendations, suggesting that they are more for fun and entertainment rather than educational purposes. Others question the appropriateness of integrating social media platforms into the educational system, citing potential negative impacts on students.

**Q17:** Would you recommend TikTok as a tool for discovering books and improving English reading skills?



**Diagram 16:** Students' Views on Recommending TikTok for Book Discovery and English Reading

Diagram 16 shows that almost all students (98%) would recommend TikTok as a tool for discovering books and improving English reading skills. In contrast, only 2% would not.

### 3.2 Results of the interview

The second part of this chapter presents the findings from semi-structured interviews conducted with four (4) Algerian BookTok creators. These participants, who regularly produce book recommendation videos for a wide audience, have been selected for their active involvement in promoting reading, with a particular emphasis on English-language books. They have been chosen at random from the TikTok platform after an initial outreach to fifty (50) influencers contacted via direct messages and email. While the majority have either declined or not responded, four have agreed to take part in the study. The interview has been conducted using two formats: three have been held online via Google Meet, and one has been conducted in person. Given the limited number of participants, the interviewees nonetheless provided rich and detailed responses that offer valuable insights in alignment with the study's aims.

**Q1:** What inspired you to start your TikTok account?

Each interviewee has revealed unique inspirations for starting their TikTok accounts. The first interviewee expresses a desire to help others improve their lives and make better decisions by offering guidance through personal experiences. The second, an introverted book lover, finds it challenging to discuss books face-to-face and sees TikTok as a way to connect with like-minded individuals who might feel isolated, offering them a relatable and comforting voice. The third interviewee aims to promote the value of classic literature and to create positive educational content. Lastly, the fourth interviewee is motivated by his/her long-standing use of TikTok and a lifelong passion for fiction, which inspires her/him to begin sharing book-related content.

**Q2:** What led you to focus specifically on book recommendations?

All four influencers have indicated that their passion for reading drives them to recommend books. Two BookTokers claim to help the audience discover their preferences by recommending different genres. The third interviewee highlights the transformative effect reading has had on her/his own life, leading to a strong desire to share those benefits with others facing similar struggles. The fourth interviewee shares a sense of mission in encouraging reading among individuals who might otherwise avoid it, viewing it as a mentally enriching escape from daily stress and a means to foster imagination and critical thinking.

**Q3:** Do you prefer TikTok over other platforms for sharing book-related content? Why?

All four participants prefer TikTok over other social media platforms, considering its global reach and algorithm-based content discovery. They view TikTok as the most effective medium for recommending books online, particularly due to the “For You” page, which enhances book visibility and fosters engagement within the book-loving BookTok community.

**Q4:** How do you design your videos to make book recommendations appealing to your audience?

Participants employ various creative strategies to engage their audience and stimulate interest in reading. One BookToker highlights the use of short, intriguing pieces of information from books during live sessions to spark curiosity and prompt viewer interaction. The other mentions using audio clips from audiobooks, relatable memes, and humorous edits to make content entertaining and emotionally resonant. The third one focuses on visually appealing content, such as showcasing book covers, characters, and ambient reading setups, to enhance the viewing experience and portray reading as an enjoyable lifestyle. The fourth participant includes another strategy of using quotes

and controversial themes to stimulate reflection, provoke discussion, and create a sense of community through shared reactions and values.

**Q5:** Do you believe that the way you design and structure your videos actually helps motivate people to read? If so, could you explain how?

The interviewees have all agreed that their videos help motivate people to read. One content creator explains that using specific strategies helps create an emotional connection with viewers, which in turn increases their curiosity about the books. Two others assert that sharing personal experiences with a book or quoting a powerful line often leads viewers to feel inspired to explore the book themselves. Another interviewee highlights the importance of tailoring content to the viewer's interests or mental state, believing that personalized recommendations enhance motivation and make viewers feel understood and supported.

**Q6:** Do students like, share, or comment as a way of giving you positive feedback? If so, how did that make you feel?

All participants confirm receiving both direct messages and in-person positive feedback from their audience, reflecting appreciation and enthusiasm for the recommended books. Influencers share that people have credited them for inspiring them to read certain books. Another highlight how their relatable, personal storytelling and emotional engagement in videos have motivated viewers. This feedback reinforces BookTokers to continue creating content, leaving them feeling proud, accomplished, and inspired to keep going.

**Q7:** Can you recall a specific example where TikTok book recommendations have impacted EFL learners' attitudes toward reading and motivated them to read more?

All four influencers have shared impactful experiences illustrating how their TikTok book recommendations have positively transformed EFL learners' attitudes toward reading and boosted their motivation. The first influencer has emphasized that recommending self-development books in English has helped followers improve their self-esteem and language proficiency, with many expressing gratitude for rediscovering a love for reading and feeling more motivated. The second influencer has noted that although some students initially struggled with reading, their videos have encouraged these learners to see reading as an exciting adventure rather than a chore, inspiring them to read for pleasure. The third and fourth influencers have both received messages from individuals who previously disliked reading but were inspired by the TikTok content to start reading in English. This shift has not only enhanced their motivation but also improved their vocabulary, listening, and writing skills.

**Q8:** Do you think that TikTok book recommendations help EFL learners believe in their ability to read in English? Does this affect their motivation?

Three of the four BookTok influencers believe that TikTok book recommendations support EFL learners' belief in their ability to read in English, which in turn enhances their motivation. The first has explained that recommending self-help books centered on confidence-building helps not only in life but also in learners' ability to understand and benefit from English texts, which often inspires them to read more willingly. The second has stressed that when content is presented with simplified explanations and previews, learners feel more prepared and less intimidated, which reinforces their belief that they can manage the reading and motivates them to explore more titles.

Similarly, the third has added that this effect is even noticeable with more challenging or classic books, as accessible summaries help learners feel more capable of handling them. In contrast, the fourth influencer has emphasized emotional and social factors, such as peer support, as more central to reading motivation than self-efficacy alone.

**Q9:** Can TikTok act as a supportive tool for English learners who struggle with motivation to read?

Why or why not?

All four interviewees agree that TikTok serves as a supportive tool for English learners who feel less motivated to read. They even emphasized some points that have been mentioned earlier. Interviewee one has pointed out that showing real emotions when talking about books, such as excitement or sadness, can encourage learners on an emotional level. Interviewee two has described influencers as friendly guides who remind learners that reading does not have to be hard or boring. For interviewee three, even a short video that introduces a book, a quote, or a single word can be enough to spark interest and provide support without overwhelming learners. Finally, interviewee four has highlighted that, unlike school settings where students may feel judged, TikTok offers a more positive, informal space where reading feels exciting and pressure-free.

**Q10:** What is your perspective on TikTok being seen only as an entertainment application?

The influencers have unanimously rejected the idea that TikTok is solely for entertainment. Interviewees one, three, and four describe it as a double-edged sword that offers both entertainment and educational content, depending on user engagement and intent. Interviewee two aims to challenge this perception by creating educational content, particularly in the realm of reading.

**Q11:** Do you believe seeing English books recommended by peers like you on TikTok encourages EFL learners more than traditional school methods? Why or why not?

Each of the four participants favors modern book recommendations over the traditional school-based approaches, which they perceive as obligatory, disconnected, and disengaging for students. They criticize the way teachers recommend books, describing it as forced and imposed. Instead, they emphasize the value of reading for pleasure rather than out of obligation. This is why they prefer modern platforms like TikTok, where book recommendations are presented in a more engaging, accessible, and appealing way, making reading feel enjoyable and motivating.

**Q12:** Have you ever recommended a book specifically because you thought it could help someone improve their English learning?

All interviewees confirm they have recommended books for English language improvement. Two of them suggest books with simple vocabulary like “*The Midnight Library*” by Matt Haig and “*Man Search for a Meaning*” by Viktor E. Frankl. Interviewee three prefers books with modern English to comprehend language easily, but also emphasizes the value of classic literature for developing the habit of engaging with more challenging texts. Interviewee four customizes book suggestions to match the readers’ abilities and improve key learning skills.

**Q13:** Do you think BookTok could be integrated into classroom activities to support reading? Why or why not?

All four participants agree that integrating BookTok videos into academic settings can be highly beneficial. They have emphasized that such integration fosters a positive attitude toward reading and encourages consistent engagement with books, largely due to the platform's

algorithmic promotion of relevant content. Another participant points out that short, engaging videos make learning more enjoyable and accessible, contributing to the development of all four English language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. One participant also recommends that teachers incorporate popular BookTok titles into their reading lists, as these books tend to capture students' interest and motivation.

**Q14:** What do you think teachers can learn from BookTok?

All four interviewees provide aspects that teachers can learn from BookTok. The data reveals the following answers: The first and second interviewees believe that using the same platform as students, helps teachers create a closer connection with them. Interviewee three explains that BookTok demonstrates the power of interest-based learning, where learners are motivated not by formal instruction but by engaging content shared within online communities. She/he suggests that teachers could adopt more student-centered practices, allowing students to explore books that resonate personally. Interviewee four states that teachers can learn to present literature, including classic books by adopting the Booktok style. This means making it more accessible and appealing by using formats such as short videos, summaries, and visual storytelling.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has presented the core findings obtained through both the online questionnaire completed by fifty-one (51) students in the departments of English and French at MMUTO and the semi-structured interview conducted with four Algerian BookTok creators. The results highlight the main perceptions and patterns that emerged from both data sources, offering a clear descriptive overview of students' engagement with TikTok book recommendations and the perspectives of

BookTok creators who contribute to this phenomenon. A more comprehensive interpretation of these results is discussed in the next chapter.



**Discussion of the Findings**

### **Introduction**

This chapter discusses the findings presented in Chapter 3 in direct alignment with the research questions outlined in the general introduction, thereby linking empirical findings to established theoretical frameworks. It also compares the findings with previous research, highlighting consistencies and divergences. The discussion is structured into three sections, each dedicated to answering the corresponding research questions and confirming or refuting the hypotheses.

### **4.1 Answer to Research Question N#1: EFL Students' Reading Motivation Enhancement Through TikTok Book Recommendations.**

This section addresses research question one (1) through an analysis of data collected from both the questionnaire and the interview. It aims to exhibit how TikTok book recommendations enhance students' reading motivation.

#### **4.1.1 Students' Frequent Exposure to TikTok**

The first four questions of the questionnaire intend to gather general information about participants' academic backgrounds, reading behaviors, and digital habits. The results show that the majority of students from the English (58.8%) and French (41.2%) departments are enrolled across various academic levels: Master 2 (43.1%), Master 1 (23.5%), L2 (15.7%), L3 (11.8%), and L1 (5.9%). These students report a moderate level of engagement with English reading, suggesting that while they are not entirely disconnected from reading practices, they are not deeply immersed either (see Diagram 3). Data from question 4 further reveal that the vast majority of participants use TikTok multiple times a day (see Diagram 4).

This high level of interaction supports Scherr and Wang's (2021) assertion regarding TikTok's capacity to maintain higher levels of user engagement (see Section 1.1 in Chapter 1), as well as Liang's (2023, p.1) observation that "*TikTok has more than 600 million daily active users. As TikTok stands out in the whole industry, it is becoming more and more widely used among college students nowadays.*" Such findings underscore the platform's deep integration into students' daily routines.

While Mekler's (2021) findings suggest that frequent TikTok use correlates with a decreased academic focus in some cases, the platform's unique algorithm and engaging features also provide a tailored environment conducive to learning, if the content is appropriately leveraged. The challenge lies not in condemning TikTok usage, but in reimagining it as a tool for academic growth. Students' frequent exposure to TikTok positions the app as a powerful influencer of reading motivation.

### **4.1.2 Algorithmic Discovery, Interaction, and Engagement with BookTok.**

The results of Q5 of the questionnaire, which asks students whether they have encountered English book recommendations on TikTok, reveal that a striking 98.1% of respondents have indeed come across such content. When asked in the follow-up question what initially led them to these recommendations, six (6) students out of forty (40) who have responded have mentioned that they have actively searched for book-related content using specific keywords, while four (4) report receiving such videos from friends or through shared links. The remaining majority, representing 30 students, attribute their discovery to the platform's algorithmic suggestions

Based on the findings discussed above, it is reasonable to infer that this mechanism not only facilitates content discovery but also plays a crucial role in fostering students' motivation to read. At the heart of TikTok's influence lies its algorithmic recommendation system, which curates a

personalized stream of content through continuous analysis of user behavior. When applied to literary material, this system introduces students to book-related content that aligns with their viewing patterns. As a result, students are systematically exposed to a diverse array of English-language books, many of which they might not have encountered otherwise.

Moreover, the algorithm's repeated presentation of literary content reinforces reading and reframes it as a dynamic and integrated part of students' digital environments. This process normalizes English reading as a social and enjoyable activity and encourages students to engage more frequently with English-language texts. In this way, the data conclude that persistent algorithmic recommendations significantly enhance students' motivation to read, fulfilling a key aspect of the study's primary research question.

To deepen the discussion, interaction emerges as a critical dimension in shaping algorithmic recommendations and enhancing motivational outcomes. Questionnaire results from question 6 reveal that 66.7% of students interact with TikTok book content by liking, sharing, commenting, or following BookTok creators, with another 27.4 % engaging occasionally (see diagram 6). These interactive behaviors play a decisive role in training the platform's recommendation algorithm. This is in accordance with Boeker and Urman's (2022) empirical study, which demonstrates that interactions such as liking, commenting, and following significantly influence the TikTok algorithm's personalization process, directly affecting the type of content featured on users' For You pages (section 1.1.6 in Chapter 1). In this sense, the more students engage with book-related content, the more the algorithm refines and increases the frequency of similar recommendations. This ongoing personalization deepens students' exposure to literature in English, and consequently increases their motivation to read.

Similarly, Question 6 from the BookTok creators' interview, which investigates whether students interact with content through liking, commenting, or sharing, and how such interactions

affect the influencers, reveals a strong sense of positive reinforcement and emotional fulfillment. They emphasize how these acts of engagement contribute to a sense of mutual recognition and community-building. For instance, one has expressed, “*Seeing likes, shares, or a message saying ‘thank you’ for recommending a book really encourages me to post more*”.

These reactions underscore how interaction fulfills a dual function: it supports content creators’ motivation and reinforces the motivational climate for students by creating a space where reading is appreciated and shared. Furthermore, the emotional and personal connections that influencers foster through their videos, by sharing relatable experiences or offering genuine reactions to books, play a critical role in enhancing a motivational environment. Students are not just consuming content; they are engaging in a social exchange with influencers, further solidifying the communal aspect of the BookTok community. In line with Ryan and Deci’s (2000) Self-Determination Theory, such exchanges nurture the basic psychological need for **relatedness**, the feeling of being socially connected and supported by others. Indeed, based on influencers’ perspectives, these interactions appear to affirm their efforts and help students experience a sense of belonging within a broader reading community. This connection can enhance motivation and engagement, as reading becomes a socially shared experience.

Thus, these findings collectively explain that TikTok’s algorithm, shaped by students’ interactive behaviors, significantly contributes to motivating them to read in English. This outcome can be meaningfully interpreted through Bandura’s concept of **Triadic Reciprocal Determinism**, which highlights the continuous and mutual influence between personal factors, behaviors, and environmental elements (see Figure 1). In this case, as illustrated in the analytical framework, students’ interest in reading (personal factor) drives them to engage with BookTok content by liking, sharing, and following (behavior), which in turn trains the TikTok algorithm (environment) to present increasingly tailored book recommendations. This cyclical interaction exemplifies how

reciprocal determinism operates in digital environments, showing that motivation is not the result of a single factor, but rather the product of interconnected influences between individuals, their actions, and the TikTok algorithm.

### 4.1.3 The Multimodal Impact of Video Content.

The analysis proceeds with the findings from questions 7 and 8 of the questionnaire, which explore the influence of TikTok book recommendations on students' reading choices and motivation. They indicate that over 96% of respondents are positively affected (see Diagram 7), highlighting TikTok's strong role in shaping reading behavior. In much the same way, nearly half of the participants (49.1%) report feeling highly motivated to read after seeing TikTok recommendations while 31.4% describe themselves as quite motivated (see Diagram 8), further confirming that TikTok fosters a sustained motivational response toward English-language texts.

The data provide strong evidence that multimodal book recommendations on TikTok significantly enhance students' motivation to read. When asked what specific aspects of TikTok book recommendations motivate them to read (Q9). The top motivator is the availability of **quick and easy book summaries** (58.8%), followed by **short-form videos** (47.1%), **visually appealing content** (49%), **fun and creative presentation styles** (43.1%), and **relatable personal experiences** (35.3%).

The follow-up responses further enriched these insights, with students mentioning additional motivational elements such as *comparisons between books*, *engaging yet spoiler-free summaries*, *impactful quotes*, *targeted visuals and short phrases*, and *soundtracks aligned with story themes*.

These results are supported and further illuminated by qualitative data from the interview with BookTok content creators. In question 4, which asks how they design their videos, influencers have explained that they strategically incorporate various techniques to enhance viewer

engagement, including text, images, and sounds. For example, one influencer has shared, *“I use voices from different content creators, quotes from the audiobook version, and memes to make the video funny and amusing”*. These design choices reflect an awareness of how multimodal tools can convert viewers into readers.

Beyond merely sparking interest, the influence of TikTok book content is clearly reflected in students’ actions. According to question 10 of the questionnaire, 64.7% of participants report having bought or borrowed a book as a result of a TikTok recommendation. In the follow-up open-ended responses, where students are asked to provide examples and explain which specific aspects of the videos have captured their attention, many have highlighted emotionally expressive reviews, aesthetically pleasing visuals, and powerful, thought-provoking quotes as major influencing features. Several students have also emphasized that themes such as self-awareness, personal growth, and mental resilience particularly resonate with them, suggesting that TikTok not only broadens reading preferences but also responds to users’ emotional and intellectual needs.

In question 5 of the interview, all influencers have agreed without opposition that the way they structure their videos directly contributes to viewers’ motivation to read. This aligns with students’ own reflections and further affirms that multimodal techniques serve as effective tools for promoting literacy and motivation.

In sum, the motivational power of TikTok lies in its ability to blend entertainment with educational content, using multimodal tools to inspire a genuine interest. These previously identified findings exhibit that TikTok significantly influences students’ reading motivation by making books more appealing and accessible through multimodal content. Influencers intentionally use various multimodal strategies to enhance viewer engagement, and students often act on their recommendations by purchasing or borrowing books.

This coheres closely with Bandura’s concept of observational learning, a key component of Social Cognitive Theory. As outlined in the analytical framework, observational learning occurs when individuals adopt and replicate behaviors they had not learned before exposure to models (Bandura, 1969, as cited in Schunk and Usher, 2012, p. 16). In other words, individuals acquire new behaviors by observing others. Bandura (1989, as cited in Artino, 2007) identifies four essential cognitive processes involved in observational learning: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation. **Attention** is evident when students focus on the actions and recommendations of BookTok creators. **Retention** is supported by the frequent and creative use of visuals, sound, text, and gestures, which helps store the content in students’ memory. **Reproduction** takes place when students translate what they have seen into tangible actions, such as borrowing or purchasing the recommended books. Finally, **motivation** is strengthened as students observe others enjoying reading and are encouraged to adopt similar behaviors themselves.

### 4.1.4 TBR’s Ease of Use

Question 11 of the questionnaire explores students' degree of agreement with the statement that TikTok book recommendations’ easy-to-use format makes English reading easier, more interesting, and more enjoyable. An overwhelming **92.2%** of participants (combining “strongly agree” and “agree” responses) affirm the statement, while **7.8%** remain neutral. Notably, none of the respondents disagree. (see diagram 10)

To interpret the results above, it becomes evident that the key element contributing to TikTok’s success as a motivational tool for reading is its ease of use. As a platform that students are already familiar with, TikTok’s interface and format reduce cognitive load, allowing students to engage with content effortlessly. As a result of this simplicity, English reading is perceived as more enjoyable, more interesting, and easier by learners. Indeed, the platform’s straightforward

design, easy navigation, and immediate engagement enable users to quickly access book-related content without requiring extensive effort or prior knowledge. This accessibility helps lower the perceived difficulty of English reading and promotes its approachability for EFL students, ultimately enhancing their motivation to read. For instance, in the follow-up question, one participant has shared that her/his sibling previously uninterested in reading, became excited to read after coming across a book recommendation on TikTok. This anecdote reinforces the idea that TikTok's motivational power lies in its simplicity, as it enables EFL students to interact with reading materials without feeling overwhelmed by long texts or complex instructions.

Contrary to the claim by W. Wu (2023) that TikTok's advanced features and personalized content make the platform highly engaging and potentially addictive (see Section 1.2 in Chapter 1), the data suggest a different kind of impact. Rather than leading to passive media consumption, TikTok's accessible and enjoyable format appears to foster a positive form of "addiction", increasing the potential for viewers to become 'addicted to reading', a form of addiction that, in this context, is beneficial, as it encourages consistent engagement with texts and supports academic achievement.

On this point, the perceived ease of use appears to have a direct and significant impact on learners' confidence in reading English, with 94.1% of participants affirming that they feel more confident about reading in English after engaging with TikTok book recommendations (see Diagram 11). This points to the idea that TikTok, through its accessible and user-friendly interface, contributes significantly to learners' perceptions of their own reading capabilities. That is, by simplifying access to content and reducing reading obstacles, TikTok fosters a sense of competence, one of the three basic psychological needs in Ryan and Deci's (2000) Self-Determination. Their framework confirms this outcome by emphasizing how the experience of competence enhances confidence in task engagement and supports long-term motivation.

Beyond fostering competence, the platform's ease of use also contributes to learners' sense of autonomy. As shown in Diagram 12, 86.3% of participants affirm they have been able to identify their English reading preferences through exposure to content on the platform. This discovery process appears to deepen students' engagement with reading by aligning content with their evolving tastes. The preferences they develop are not imposed but emerge from their own choices. Such autonomy parallels another core psychological need outlined in Self-Determination Theory. Which is referred to as the feeling of having control over one's actions and decisions (Ryan & Deci, 1991 as cited in Ntoumanis, 2001). In this case, the freedom to explore and select preferred reading genres empowers learners, fostering greater ownership over their reading habits.

The follow-up responses to Question 13 of the questionnaire reveal a diverse and insightful range of positive changes in students' reading habits resulting from their engagement with TikTok book recommendations. Among those who have responded affirmatively, many have reported reading more frequently, developing a stronger interest in specific genres, and becoming more open to exploring unfamiliar themes. Several participants have emphasized that this journey of literary self-discovery significantly enhanced their confidence as readers.

From a more targeted perspective, students' reflections further exhibit how TikTok's ease of use nurtures intrinsically motivated engagement. A notable number of respondents have described reading as an activity they now pursue "for pleasure". Many shared similar responses, such as: *"Now I read before bed just to relax"*.

These comments highlight how the platform, by its easiness, encourages voluntary and enjoyable reading experiences. Rather than reading for external requirements, students engage with texts out of personal interest, curiosity, and emotional satisfaction. Such responses align closely with the concept of internally driven engagement mentioned in the study's theoretical framework, particularly Wang and Guthrie's (2004, as cited in Medford & McGeown, 2012) perspective on the

beneficial role of intrinsic motivation, which includes the elements of curiosity, involvement, and challenge (see Section 1.2.1, Chapter 1). These findings also resonate with Deci and Ryan's (1985, as cited in Meyer et al., 2008) definition of intrinsic motivation as engaging in an activity out of genuine interest and personal enjoyment (see Section 1.4.2, Chapter 1).

Thus, TikTok's ease of use creates a sense of competence that builds confidence, enables the development of personalized reading preferences that reflect autonomy, and transforms reading into an intrinsically rewarding and personally meaningful activity. Collectively, these outcomes contribute to sustained motivation and consistent reading practices.

Seen in their entirety, and drawing on selected elements from both the questionnaire and interview data, the findings indicate that TikTok book recommendations significantly enhance EFL students' motivation to read in English. This enhancement is shaped by four interrelated factors: students' frequent exposure to TikTok, algorithmic discovery and engagement with BookTok, the multimodal impact of video content, and TikTok's ease of use. The combination of these elements creates an accessible, appealing, and interactive digital reading environment that encourages students to engage with English texts more willingly.

Compared to Amin's (2023) research, both studies recognize the value of TikTok's multimodal format in engaging students with English reading. However, the present study extends this perspective by examining how BookTok influences EFL students' overall reading motivation. Therefore, these findings answer the first research question (how TikTok book recommendations enhance students' reading motivation) and confirm the first hypothesis.

### **4.2 Answer to Research Question N#2: BookTokers' Perceptions on The Role of TikTok Book Recommendations in Enhancing EFL Learners' Reading Motivation.**

This section discusses the results obtained from the semi-structured interview with four BookTok creators. It aims to understand how they perceive the role of TikTok book recommendations on EFL students' reading motivation.

#### **4.2.1 BookTokers' Background.**

The first three questions (Q1, Q2, and Q3) are designed to collect general background information about the BookTok influencers, including their inspiration for starting their account, their choice to focus on book content, and their reasons for preferring TikTok over other platforms.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, interviewees' inspiration for becoming BookTok creators is deeply rooted in a shared passion for reading and a strong desire to connect, inspire, and uplift others through literature. In brief, each influencer has begun their TikTok journey whether to offer life guidance, celebrate the richness of classic literature, simply express love for fiction, or build a safe space for introverted readers who might feel isolated, an idea supported by Udenze and Uzochukwu (2020, p.21), who affirm, "*TikTok is a healer, helping young people to curtail the negative impact of compulsory isolation*" (see section 1.1.1 in Chapter 1). This passion naturally evolves into a focus on book recommendations, driven by their own transformative experiences with reading and a commitment to helping others discover the joy and meaning books can bring. These findings highlight that BookTokers see recommending books not just as content creation but as a purposeful act.

Additionally, all four participants have explained that TikTok is their preferred platform due to its global visibility and algorithmic power, especially through the “For You” page, which curates a unique set of video recommendations based on user engagement and activity (Cervi et al., 2021) (see section 1.1.5 in Chapter 1). This function enables them to reach a wide and diverse audience, making TikTok a powerful and engaging space for promoting book-related content and fostering vibrant literary discussions.

### **4.2.2 TikTok as a Medium for Positively Transforming Learners’ Attitudes Toward Reading.**

The findings from question seven (7) have revealed the impact of TikTok book recommendations on EFL learners’ attitudes toward reading. All four BookTok influencers have recalled impactful instances in which their content has reshaped learners’ perceptions of reading, who “*at first, have seen it as a chore, but now find it to be an exciting experience*”. This shift has also led to improvements in vocabulary, listening, and writing skills.

These findings further point to the emergence of intrinsic motivation among EFL learners, as reflected in their growing desire to read in English not out of obligation, but because they genuinely enjoy it. Learners no longer perceive reading as a classroom requirement, but as a personally rewarding and fulfilling activity. This shift supports Ryan and Deci’s (2000) concept of intrinsic motivation in their Self-Determination Theory. Intrinsic motivation is represented as the most self-determined type, where individuals engage in an activity purely for the enjoyment and satisfaction it brings (Deci & Ryan, 2000; Ryan & Deci, 2017, as cited in Manninen et al., 2022). Such internalized motivation fosters a learning environment in which students read in English by choice, driven by personal value, emotional engagement, and sustained interest.

On a more profound level, it is apparent from the data that TikTok book recommendations have significantly contributed to enhancing EFL learners' motivation to read in English by positively reshaping their attitudes toward reading. Initially, many learners maintained negative attitudes toward reading; however, exposure to TikTok book recommendations has led to a noticeable shift. Learners have begun to enjoy reading and develop a genuine passion for it. This transformation has, in turn, played a crucial role in sustaining and amplifying their motivation to engage with English texts.

These results can be meaningfully compared to a study by Dera, Brouwer, and Welling (2023), which contrasts with the present one in terms of the extent of transformation observed. Their research found that BookTok mainly appealed to students who were already avid readers, while those with negative attitudes remained disengaged. At the same time, so-called 'book doubters students' responded more positively than complete avoiders. This investigation highlights the potential of TikTok book recommendations to engage students who initially disliked reading. This contribution, therefore, adds a new dimension to the existing literature by demonstrating TikTok's transformative impact on reluctant learners, shifting their attitudes from negative to positive.

In essence, BookTok influencers perceive TikTok book recommendations as a transformative tool that helps shift EFL learners' attitudes from disinterest to enjoyment, ultimately enhancing their motivation to read.

### **4.2.3 TBR in Strengthening Self-Efficacy**

In response to whether TikTok book recommendations help EFL learners believe in their ability to read in English and whether this affects their motivation (question 8), three out of four BookTok influencers have agreed. By offering simplified previews, friendly explanations, and

confidence-building recommendations, they help learners reduce fear and realize that some books are easier than expected, increasing their belief in success.

It is then emerged from the data that TikTok book recommendations enhance EFL learners' reading motivation by strengthening their belief in their ability to read. This psychological construct is known as self-efficacy, which, according to Bandura (1986, as cited in Carillo, 2010, p. 3), refers to "*people's judgments of their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performances. It is concerned not with the skills one has, but with judgments of what one can do with whatever skills one possesses*".

In this light, learners are motivated by the perception that they can successfully engage with English texts. TikTok contributes to this process by simplifying complex material, offering concise explanations and previews, and boosting learners' confidence. As a result, learners begin to view English reading as more achievable and believe in their ability to succeed, which, in turn, increases their willingness to engage with texts, regardless of the challenges.

#### **4.2.4 TBR as a Supportive Tool**

As expected, the findings have revealed that all four interviewees have perceived TikTok as a supportive tool for English learners and have acknowledged its contribution to enhancing their reading motivation (question 9). Each participant has provided distinct insights that have reinforced this perspective. They have emphasized that the platform's concise content, emotional engagement with books, and informal, low-pressure environment make reading approachable and enjoyable. This kind of support is often lacking in traditional school settings, yet TikTok book recommendations have been able to offer it almost instantly.

These results paint a compelling picture of the role TikTok book recommendations play as a supportive tool in enhancing learners' reading motivation. By offering concise content, cultivating

a relaxed and non-judgmental environment, and showcasing emotional responses to books, the platform provides learners with consistent and meaningful support. This supportive ecosystem helps lower the barriers to reading and ultimately strengthens learners' motivation to engage with texts. This observation finds a clear reflection in a key finding by Jerasa (2023, p.61), which furnishes "*insight into the inner workings of #BookTok videos and the power and pull they hold to encourage and motivate individuals to read*".

Even though no research has been found that directly explores BookTokers' perceptions of the role of TikTok book recommendations in enhancing students' reading motivation, the study by Ventura Pedro (2024), titled "*BookTokers e a visibilidade de livros no TikTok em Portugal [BookTokers and the Visibility of Books on TikTok in Portugal]*", provides a valuable point of comparison. While Ventura Pedro investigates how BookTokers perceive their role in increasing the visibility of books on TikTok within the Portuguese context, the present research examines BookTokers' perceptions from a motivational and pedagogical angle, particularly focusing on Algerian EFL learners.

This contrast highlights the originality of the current study, which adopts a more educational perspective, exploring how TBR fosters reading motivation by reshaping learners' attitudes toward reading, strengthening their self-efficacy, and functioning as a supportive tool. Considering the discussion, the second research question (How do BookTok creators perceive the role of TikTok book recommendations in enhancing students' reading motivation?) is thus answered, and the second hypothesis confirmed.

### **4.3 Answer to Research Question N#3: The Integration of TikTok Book Recommendations into Classroom Settings**

This section discusses insights from both the interview and questionnaire data to examine the potential for integrating TikTok Book Recommendations into classroom settings.

#### **4.3.1 TikTok as More Than Entertainment**

Regarding Question 10, all influencers have strongly refuted the claim that TikTok functions solely as an entertainment application. While they have acknowledged its popularity for recreational use, they have emphasized its potential as a valuable educational space, depending on how users interact with the content. As explained by one of them, *“If you consume nonsense, you’ll get nonsense. But if you interact with books, education... your feed becomes a digital library and a learning tool”*.

From these findings, it can be deduced that influencers perceive TikTok as an educationally purposeful environment. When used intentionally, it becomes a space for promoting literacy and fostering motivation. Their descriptions point to TikTok’s multimodal affordances, which reinforce earlier findings from Question 4 of the interview, discussed in the first section of this present chapter. These features have been identified as key elements in sustaining learners’ interest and motivation in reading. This interpretation corresponds to Sajonia’s (2024) claim that TikTok presents educational content in an engaging and impactful way across various disciplines. In the discipline of EFL reading, BookTok influencers contribute to this educational potential by presenting books in ways that meaningfully enhance learners’ motivation to read in English.

As such, this leads to the conclusion that BookTok influencers perceive TikTok as a hybrid platform, capable of merging entertainment with education; they see it as a strategically designed

learning space that supports EFL students' engagement with English reading and, more importantly, fosters and sustains motivation to read. This confirms that influencers view the platform as uniquely effective for education. For this reason, based on their insights and experiences, one could assert that TikTok book recommendations meaningfully enrich classroom learning by making reading more engaging and motivational for EFL students.

### 4.3.2 TBR as an Innovative Pedagogical Approach

Questions 11 of the interview and question 14 of the questionnaire both explored students' preferences for TikTok Book recommendation methods compared to traditional ones. The data presented in Diagram 13 have revealed that 70.6% of students favor TikTok for book recommendations while only 29.4% continue to rely on traditional sources. This significant difference is further supported by the 36 respondents who have elaborated on their preferences, citing its tailored algorithm, engaging visuals, concise summaries, and short video format. The authenticity and emotional impact of BookTok creators' reviews, combined with TikTok's interactive features that foster community, make the recommendations more persuasive than those from teachers and encourage reading as a social and enjoyable experience.

Likewise, the interview responses reinforced these findings. All participants have agreed that book recommendations on TikTok, particularly when made by peers like them, are more effective in encouraging EFL learners than traditional school-based methods. They have described school recommendations as "*obligatory*", "*disconnected*", and "*boring*", noting that teachers often disregard students' interests. Conversely, TikTok promotes reading for pleasure, with its accessibility and visual appeal making it a more effective and motivating tool for encouraging engagement with English books.

The results above crystallize the understanding that TikTok Book Recommendations (TBR) offer a compelling and learner-driven alternative to traditional book suggestion methods, particularly for EFL students. The overwhelming preference for TBR reflects a growing demand for reading experiences that feel relevant and engaging. Unlike teacher-assigned reading, which students often view as disconnected from their interests, TBR draws them in through personalized algorithms, peer recommendations, and emotionally resonant content. It reframes reading as something enjoyable rather than obligatory. The platform's use of short, visually appealing videos and sincere reviews creates a sense of accessibility that traditional methods often lack.

More importantly, these qualities suggest that TBR is a powerful pedagogical tool that reflects how today's learners engage with information and find motivation. Integrating TBR into classroom settings could therefore revitalize students' relationship with reading by making it more interactive and emotionally meaningful.

Viewed from this lens, the preferences expressed by students and interviewees substantiate Rozaki's (2023) belief that BookTok, as an innovative approach, offers a distinct advantage over traditional recommendation methods. Its strength lies in delivering content that feels relevant and personalized, aligning with the interests and preferences of younger audiences. These findings reinforce TikTok's potential as an innovative pedagogical tool, calling for a shift toward integrating platforms like BookTok into classrooms to enhance engagement and motivation in reading.

### **4.3.3 TBR as a Pedagogical Medium for EFL Learners' Skill Development**

As presented in the previous chapter, Diagram 14 shows that a significant 80.4% of students believe TikTok Book Recommendations have contributed positively to their English reading skills. A smaller group of respondents (17.6%) have expressed a neutral stance, while only 2% have reported no noticeable impact.

In addition, follow-up responses from 50 students have elaborated on whether TBR has benefited other areas of their language learning. Notably, 31 participants have specifically reported improvements in vocabulary. Nine others have claimed gains in listening, speaking, writing, grammar, comprehension, confidence, motivation, and even critical thinking. Although ten students have not observed significant improvement in language skills, they have still appreciated TBR for making reading more enjoyable.

Complementary perspectives from the interviewees who have been asked whether they have ever recommended a book specifically to support someone's English learning (Q12) further support these findings. Responses indicate that books with simple vocabulary, such as *The Midnight Library* (Haig) and *Man's Search for Meaning* (Frankl), are recommended to support English learning, while others use modern English or are adapted to learners' abilities to facilitate comprehension and skill development. Engagement with classics is also noted to help build the habit of reading more complex texts and enhance vocabulary over time.

The findings suggest that TikTok Book Recommendations support not only the development of English reading skills but also contribute to improvements in other key language areas, including vocabulary, listening, writing, grammar, language comprehension, speaking, and even critical thinking. This is in agreement with the results of Laili (2023), whose study has demonstrated that students engaging with TikTok content experience measurable progress across these same areas, particularly in vocabulary acquisition, pronunciation, and the four core language skills. (see section 1.1.4 in Chapter 1)

In aggregate, the consistency between these findings and those of Laili (2023) strengthens the argument for TBR's effectiveness as a learner-centered tool that enriches EFL learning beyond reading alone. That is, it reveals strong pedagogical potential, making it highly relevant to the

diverse needs of today's language learners. Therefore, its thoughtful integration into classroom settings can offer significant benefits for language instruction and learner engagement.

### 4.3.4 Validating TBR as Advantageous for Classroom Settings

The last two questions of the questionnaire (Q16 and Q17) and the final two questions of the interviews (Q13 and Q14) further support the idea of integrating TikTok Book Recommendations (TBR) into classroom instruction.

Diagram 15 has revealed that 82.4% of students believe TBR could serve as an effective teaching tool in English classes. Among the forty-nine (49) students who have explained their responses, many have emphasized the educational value of short, emotionally engaging videos that showcase authentic reader reactions. Students have noted that these features help literature feel more accessible, increase motivation, and encourage reading for pleasure. Several respondents have also highlighted TikTok's potential to reshape traditional reading practices, facilitate group discussions, and connect students with literature through a platform they already enjoy using. The 17.6% of respondents who have expressed skepticism mostly question TBR's educational value, viewing it as more entertainment-oriented, which stands in contrast to the interviewees' perspectives in question 10; and some of their previous positive answers regarding other questions. Some have also raised concerns about the appropriateness of integrating social media platforms into academic contexts.

Support for TBR's classroom potential is even more evident in Diagram 16, where 98% of students have stated that they would recommend TikTok as a tool for discovering books and improving English reading skills. This strong agreement suggests that students view TikTok not merely as a casual social platform, but as a meaningful source of language exposure and literary

engagement. This finding is consistent with Laili's (2023) analysis, in which many students also recommended TikTok for English learning.

Complementing the questionnaire results, all four interviewees have agreed that integrating BookTok into classroom activities would be advantageous (question 13). They have explained that BookTok, through its short and engaging videos, helps establish joyful and consistent reading habits, improves motivation, and supports the development of the four core English language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing

When asked what teachers can learn from BookTok (question 14), the interviewees have offered further validation for its integration. Responses suggest that using the same digital platforms as students could help teachers build stronger relationships and foster a more inclusive, student-friendly classroom culture. They have also pointed to the value of interest-based learning, arguing that TikTok demonstrates how students are more motivated by pleasure than obligation, and that teachers should adopt a similar mindset by moving away from viewing reading as a compulsory task.

Concretely, these findings affirm that TikTok Book Recommendations possess strong pedagogical potential for classroom integration. The widespread student approval and the thoughtful insights shared by interviewees reveal that TBR not only resonates with learners' digital habits but also aligns with effective teaching practices. Its emotionally engaging, visually appealing, and student-centered nature supports the development of key language skills while simultaneously fostering motivation and personal connection to reading, making the experience more enjoyable and meaningful. Therefore, as stated in the analytical framework, the models that guided previous generations of learners must now be reconsidered in light of today's rapidly evolving digital landscape. (Şahin, 2012)

These outcomes naturally resonate with Siemens' (2004) Connectivism. This theory views knowledge as distributed across the web and technological connections. That is, connectivism provides a new perspective on how learning theories are shifting toward the digital era by incorporating technology and emphasizing the importance of forming meaningful connections through it. (Mukhlis et al., 2024)

Within this framework, the findings of the present study reveal that TBR fosters learning by enabling students to engage with authentic content, peer recommendations, and emotionally resonant literary experiences on a platform they interact with daily. Students have reported gains in vocabulary, comprehension, motivation, and other core language skills, which have been supported by the dynamic, social, and personalized nature of BookTok. These interactions reflect the core of connectivist learning, where learners are empowered through networked environments. By moving away from traditional models, connectivism highlights the transformative role of technology in the learning process. Ultimately, this theoretical perspective further supports the integration of TikTok into classroom settings as a valuable tool for modern, student-centered education.

As far as the integration of TBR into classroom settings is concerned, these results are similar to Olsen (2023), who has shed light on the potential of integrating Booktok into classroom settings, especially for enhancing individuals' reading for pleasure habits. As a logical extension, by considering TikTok as more than just entertainment, as an innovative pedagogical approach, a medium for EFL skill development, and a/ valuable classroom tool, the data clearly show that TikTok Book Recommendations can be effectively integrated into classroom settings. This directly answers the third research question, namely, "Can TikTok Book Recommendations be integrated into classroom settings?" and confirms the third hypothesis.

Taken as a whole, this scholarly investigation demonstrates a clear positive correlation between TikTok Book Recommendations and the reading motivation of EFL students. These findings align with those of Judijanto et al. (2025), who similarly observed the motivational impact of TikTok content on Generation Z learners in Indonesia (see Section 3, Chapter 1). However, while their study has been conducted within a broad Indonesian context, the present research offers a localized perspective by focusing specifically on Algerian EFL learners enrolled in the Department of English at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi Ouzou.

Moreover, compared to the present study, Jerasa's (2023) study involved a significantly larger sample size, with Four hundred and fifty (450) eligible responses collected in the United States, and employed a different research methodology. Despite this difference in scale, context, and methods, the findings align closely. Jerasa (2023) concluded that engaging with BookTok videos on TikTok demonstrated the strongest link to increased reading motivation; an observation that is also reflected in the results of the current study.

### **Conclusion**

This chapter has analyzed and interpreted the findings presented in Chapter Three through the theoretical perspectives of Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory (2000), and Siemens' Connectivism (2004), while also drawing on the literature reviewed earlier and other relevant studies. Based on data gathered from questionnaires distributed to EFL students in the Departments of English and French at Mouloud Mammeri University of Tizi-Ouzou, along with interviews conducted with BookTok influencers, the study results have shown that TikTok book recommendations play a meaningful role in enhancing students' reading motivation. This impact is linked to the platform's algorithmic engagement, multimodal features, and overall ease of use. BookTok creators perceive that this motivational

boost stems from TBR's role in fostering positive attitudes toward reading, reinforcing EFL students' sense of self-efficacy, and offering ongoing support. TBR can also be effectively integrated into classroom settings, addressing the three research questions and hypotheses outlined in the general introduction.



**General Conclusion**

This dissertation has explored the correlation between TikTok book recommendations and reading motivation among EFL students at MMUTO. Focusing on students from the departments of English and French, the study has aimed to achieve three main objectives: to identify how TikTok book recommendations enhance students' reading motivation, to investigate how influencers who recommend books on TikTok perceive the role of TikTok book recommendations in enhancing EFL students' reading motivation and to examine the potential integration of TikTok book recommendations into formal English language learning environments.

The study has been guided by Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1986), Ryan and Deci's Self-Determination Theory (2000), and Siemens' Connectivism Theory (2004). To achieve the research objectives, address the stated research questions, and assess the validity of the proposed hypotheses, a mixed-methods research design has been employed. Data collection has involved two primary instruments: an online questionnaire completed by fifty-one (51) EFL students from the departments of English and French, and a semi-structured interview with four (4) Algerian BookTok creators. Quantitative data have been analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques, while qualitative data have been examined through qualitative content analysis.

Findings related to the first research question indicate that TikTok book recommendations significantly enhance EFL students' reading motivation through algorithmically tailored content, user engagement, and the multimodal nature of BookTok videos. In addition, the platform's perceived ease of use has helped many learners develop greater self-confidence, leading them to feel competent; it has also enabled them to identify their reading preferences and engage in autonomous reading practices. This ultimately contributes to a sustained increase in their overall motivation to read. Regarding the second research question, the data suggest that BookTokers perceive the role of TikTok book recommendations as instrumental in transforming EFL students'

negative attitudes toward reading into more positive ones. These recommendations have also been seen to strengthen learners' self-efficacy and serve as valuable tools for supporting reading, thereby nurturing a stronger motivation to read. As for the third and final research question, the findings strongly support the integration of TikTok book recommendations into formal educational contexts. Data from both student questionnaires and interviews show that participants view TikTok book recommendations not merely as entertainment, but as an innovative pedagogical tool that promotes skill development and offers meaningful advantages within academic settings.

Overall, the findings support all three research hypotheses and reveal a positive correlation between TikTok book recommendations and the reading motivation of EFL students. While these results should be interpreted within the limitations of the study, they carry significant implications. They challenge negative stereotypes about TikTok, positioning it as a viable tool for fostering literacy and language skills. Moreover, the findings indicate that book recommendations on TikTok could contribute to increased motivation to read and may serve as useful resources for educators and curriculum designers seeking to implement more student-centered language learning approaches. Furthermore, by encouraging students to explore and engage with reading materials beyond the classroom context, such recommendations promote autonomous learning and foster a sense of ownership over their language learning journey.

Like all empirical research, this study has its limitations. One significant constraint is the limited access to certain scholarly articles and books, which may have narrowed the scope of the literature reviewed and restricted engagement with a wider range of theoretical perspectives. Additionally, although the study has aimed to include insights from TikTok influencers who recommend books, the number of participants is limited. While fifty (50) influencers have been

contacted, most have either declined to participate or have not responded, which has reduced the diversity of viewpoints and has limited the representation of BookTokers within the findings.

Despite these constraints, the study lays the groundwork for further exploration. Future research could conduct comparative studies across various social media platforms, examining the impact of TikTok book recommendations on Algerian EFL students' reading motivation with platforms like Instagram or YouTube, to identify which platform exerts the greatest influence. Additionally, further research, in the Algerian context, could explore how teachers perceive the integration of BookTok content into their teaching practices, shedding light on potential challenges and pedagogical benefits. Lastly, in light of the small-scale nature of this study, further research is strongly encouraged to revisit this topic with a larger and more diverse sample of participants.



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**Appendices**

## **Appendix A:** Students' Questionnaire

Dear learner,

This questionnaire is an essential component of our research study and serves as one of the data collection tools. It is designed to explore how book recommendations on TikTok influence your motivation to read. Your sincere and thoughtful participation is vital, as your responses will directly contribute to the accuracy of our findings. We kindly ask you to dedicate approximately 8 minutes to complete the questionnaire attentively. We guarantee that all the collected data will be processed in an entirely anonymized manner and used exclusively for academic purposes. We deeply value your time and contribution to this scholarly investigation.

Instructions: Please select the adequate answer or provide a complete one where necessary.

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### **Section 1: General Information**

**Q1.** What is your field of study?  French  English

**Q2.** What is your current university level?

L1  L2  L3  M1  M2

**Q3.** How often do you read books in English?

Daily  2-3 times weekly  Weekly  Monthly  Rarely  Never

### **Section 2: TikTok Usage and Book Recommendations**

**Q4.** How often do you use TikTok?

Several times a day  Once a day or almost every day  A few times a week

A few times a month  I do not use TikTok

Q5. Have you ever come across book recommendations on TikTok?  Yes  No

\* If yes, what initially led you to them (e.g., through friends, algorithm suggestions, actively searched ...etc.)

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Q6. Do you interact with TikTok book recommendations (e.g., liking, commenting, sharing, following)?

Yes  No  Sometimes

### **SECTION 3: TikTok Book Recommendations and Reading Motivation**

Q7. Have TikTok book recommendations influenced your decision to read a book?

Yes  No  Occasionally

Q8. How motivated are you to read English books after seeing TikTok recommendations?

Not motivated  Slightly motivated  Neutral  Quite motivated  Very motivated

Q9. What aspects of TikTok book recommendations motivate you to read?

Short videos  Quick and easy book summaries  Fun and creative presentation

Visual appeal (e.g., images, graphics)  Relatable personal experiences

\* Other (please specify):

**Q10.** Have you ever bought or borrowed a book because of a TikTok recommendation?

Yes  No

\* If yes, please give an example of the book and briefly explain which part of the TikTok recommendation caught your attention the most:

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**Q11.** Do you agree that the ease of use of TikTok book recommendations makes English reading easier, more interesting, or more enjoyable?

Strongly agree  Agree  Neutral  Disagree  Strongly disagree

\* If you disagree, please briefly explain why:

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**Q12.** Do you feel more confident about reading in English after engaging with TikTok book recommendations?

Yes  No

**Q13.** Have TikTok book recommendations helped you figure out your reading preferences in English (e.g., fiction, non-fiction, personal development, romance, etc.)?

Yes  No

\* If yes, how did this influence your reading habits?

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**Section 4: Educational Impact of TikTok Book Recommendations**

**Q14.** Are TikTok book recommendations better than traditional book recommendations (e.g., from teachers or friends)?

Yes  No

\*If yes, why do you think so?

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**Q15.** Do you think TikTok book recommendations have improved your English reading skills?

Yes  Not really  Not at all

\* Have they benefited any other area of your language learning?

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**Q16.** Do you think TikTok book recommendations could be used as a teaching tool in English classes?

Yes  No

\* Please share the reasons behind your response:

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**Q17.** Would you recommend TikTok as a tool for discovering books and improving English reading skills?

Yes  No

**Appendix B: Interview**

**Q1.** What inspired you to start your TikTok account?

**Q2.** What led you to focus specifically on book recommendations?

**Q3.** Do you prefer TikTok over other platforms for sharing book-related content? Why?

**Q4.** How do you design your videos to make book recommendations appealing to your audience?

**Q5.** Do you believe that the way you design and structure your videos actually helps motivate people to read? If so, could you explain how?

**Q6.** Do students like, share, or comment as a way of giving you positive feedback? If so, how did that make you feel?

**Q7.** Can you recall a specific example where TikTok book recommendations have impacted EFL learners' attitudes toward reading and motivating them to read more?

**Q8.** Do you think that TikTok book recommendations help EFL learners believe in their ability to read in English? Does this affect their motivation?

**Q9.** Can TikTok act as a supportive tool for English learners who struggle with motivation to read? Why or why not?

**Q10.** What is your perspective on TikTok being seen only as an entertainment application?

**Q11.** Do you believe seeing English books recommended by peers like you on TikTok encourages EFL learners more than traditional school methods? Why or why not?

**Q12.** Have you ever recommended a book specifically because you thought it could help someone improve their English learning?

**Q13.** Do you think BookTok could be integrated into classroom activities to support reading? Why or why not?

**Q14.** What do you think teachers can learn from BookTok?