gressing from a comprehensive initial analysis to a more detailed and nuanced examination.

5.1   Corpus Analysis

To systematically examine the characteristics of popular jazz videos on TikTok, one effective method is the corpus analytical approach. This approach involves the systematic organization of content from multiple videos that are selected for being as representative as possible within a specific field of investigation. This content is organized on the basis of a set of pre-defined descriptive categories, which are modified or refined during the research process. These may include, for example, the musical repertoire played in the most popular jazz videos on TikTok, the settings in which musicians perform, or the assignment of musicians to categories of social difference, such as gender and *race*. In this way, certain patterns and regularities can be identified within a limited cultural field. At the same time, initial interpretations can be formulated regarding content and musical forms of expression that may be more relevant than others within the given field, and for what reasons. Such an exploration of the field of study is a particularly useful tool for research on digital platforms. The sheer volume of content on digital platforms necessitates a targeted and judicious selection of research cases. While this selection should not be arbitrary, it is also important to recognize the limitations of comprehensive analysis within the context of such a vast and diverse corpus of material. The objective is to conduct a rigorous and systematic exploration of the field, guided by a well-considered and well-founded selection of illustrative examples that are as representative as possible.

In order to make such a selection, it is first necessary to conduct an open and focused observation of jazz-related content on TikTok, preceding the actual corpus analysis. This is essential for the researcher to gain insight into the underlying logic of video popularity within the chosen field of investigation. It enables the identification of key content creators, repertoires, and representational conventions, as well as the formulation of criteria for a meaningful selection of examples for analysis. The *walkthrough method* (Light, Burgess and Duguay 2018) was developed for the systematic exploration of digital platforms. In this approach, the researcher becomes acquainted with the pertinent rules and functional logics from the perspective of the user through targeted observation and active use of the respective platform or its corresponding app:

"The walkthrough method is a way of engaging directly with an app's interface to examine its technological mechanisms and embedded cultural references to understand how it guides users and shapes their experiences" (Light, Burgess and Duguay 2018, 882). This systematic process commences with signing up on the digital platform as a user. This is followed by a series of phases of actual use, which conclude with the observation phase, which may end with deregistration or discontinuation of use. One central concern in this approach is to identify the affordances of the respective applications or platforms. Additionally, the aim is to understand why certain usage patterns are more likely to emerge on certain platforms than on others (Light, Burgess and Duguay 2018, 886). Despite the authors' proposal of a comprehensive analytical framework, it has become evident that a singular, inflexible methodology cannot be universally applicable to all research endeavors in the platform context. This is largely due to the inherent diversity and dynamism of platforms, which are constantly evolving (Duguay and Gold-Apel 2023, 1). Nevertheless, the systematic investigation of the selected field is a fundamental aspect in all cases, although the focus may vary depending on the subject matter and research question. For instance, several researchers employ the walkthrough method to analyze content on TikTok (see, for instance, Bhandari and Bimo 2022; Zulli and Zulli 2022). In some instances, comparable approaches are also referred to as *digital ethnography* (e.g., Schellewald 2021; Southerton 2021; see also Hjorth et al. 2017; Pink et al. 2016). Some of the authors utilized the TikTok platform for a period of several months, during which they documented their observations and organized the content in a systematic manner. For example, they sought out prevalent topics, hashtags, and creators, observed interactions between creators and other users, took screenshots, and downloaded videos with the aim of gradually becoming acquainted with the established norms within their respective field of study (cf. Schellewald 2021, 1441–42; Southerton 2021, 3253).

Following the observation phase, the next step is to select the cases for analysis in the corpus. In order to ensure that the selected analysis cases are as representative as possible within the chosen field of investigation, it is essential to implement a considered and strategic selection process. Selecting videos based on recommendations on the researcher's For You page is not an appropriate approach. While observing TikTok activity, it is essential not to overlook the landing page as a crucial element of the platform. However, as previously discussed, the suggestions on the For You page are generated through automated analysis of individual user behavior, making it unlikely to yield insights

into the content that is particularly popular among other users and therefore representative of a specific field of research.

If the objective is to identify peaks of popularity within a defined research area, using hashtags is a logical approach for locating suitable cases for analysis. The non-mandatory but common practice of using hashtags serves to categorize videos on TikTok to a certain extent by linking them to specific keywords and assigning them to particular topics. During the observation phase, it is essential to identify which hashtags are popular within the respective field of investigation and could, therefore, be relevant for the selection of cases for analysis. A compilation of videos pertaining to specific topics on the platform can then be created based on the use of designated hashtags. This is a logical conclusion when analyzing popularity peaks within a limited field of study. The objective is to understand which type of content or creator is most likely to succeed on the platform (Hautea et al. 2021, 5). In the extant literature on TikTok, it is customary to commence analysis with the most popular videos, such as those with the highest viewership or like count tagged with a specific hashtag (e.g., Minadeo and Pope 2022, 3; Ryan and Tileva 2022, 168–169; Southerton 2021, 3253).

Once the pertinent hashtags have been identified, web scrapers can facilitate the aggregation of data. This software is capable of extracting and analyzing data provided by platforms through application programming interfaces (APIs). Web scrapers can be utilized to collect and organize information on a multitude of videos. To illustrate, if one is searching for a particular hashtag on TikTok, web scrapers enable the compilation of all videos that have been tagged with that hashtag on the platform. Additionally, the number of likes, views and comments, the time of posting, and the length of the video are often provided as supplementary information. The metadata associated with TikTok videos can be organized and prepared for further analysis using standard software, such as spreadsheets. The use of web scrapers is common practice in TikTok research, particularly in the context of studies that require the analysis of large data sets. For example, Klug et al. collected and analyzed data from more than 300,000 videos (Klug et al. 2021, 86; see also Hautea et al. 2021, 4; Zeng and Abidin 2021, 5; Zeng, Schäfer and Allgaier 2021, 3220–22). It should be noted that only data made available by TikTok via the application programming interface (API) can be collected in this manner; in-depth information on the specific usage patterns of individual users or even the underlying functional logic of the platform is not accessible. As Jean Burgess notes, the "research affordances" (Burgess 2021, 31) of digital platforms present a significant challenge

for researchers. The functional logics of these platforms often exert a decisive influence on the types of research questions that can be posed within the platform context. Consequently, platform-related research is, to a certain degree, inherently constrained by the platforms themselves.

Once the cases for analysis have been selected, the content of the TikTok videos must be systematized. This entails assigning the videos to a variety of descriptive categories to identify specific patterns and regularities. Similar approaches have long been employed in the field of image analysis (cf. Bell and Milic 2002) and are suitable for studying large corpora of Instagram images (e.g., Lucibello et al. 2021; Zappavigna 2016). In the context of research on TikTok, corpus analytical approaches are frequently employed to categorize the content of multiple videos within a specific research area (see e.g., Schellewald 2021; Zeng and Abidin 2021; Zeng, Schäfer and Allgaier 2021). For the analysis, appropriate categories must first be defined to which the individual elements of the selected videos can be assigned. The system of descriptive categories developed in this step must be further refined throughout the research process in order to adequately categorize the heterogeneous audiovisual content. While there are no binding guidelines on which analytical categories to apply, the analytical procedure must always be concretized in line with the specifics of the respective field of analysis and the individual research question. This is necessary, in part, due to the heterogeneity of the potential analysis examples. For example, in the context of more general observations on recurring patterns of TikTok videos, the focus can be on categories such as the type of protagonist (e.g., ensemble or solo artist), the setting (e.g., bandstand, rehearsal room, or bedroom), and the visual effects (e.g., filters) (Schellewald 2021, 1443). A focus on the systematization of TikTok-specific practices is also conceivable, for example with regard to the sounds used in a video (original or template) or the performative practices that are typical of the platform (such as lip-synching or dance challenges) (Zeng and Abidin 2021, 6). If the focus is on a specific topic, such as science communication on TikTok, it is recommended that the videos be organized according to categories such as the respective scientific discipline (e.g., chemistry, physics) or the method of knowledge transfer in the videos (e.g., demonstration of experiments or verbal explanation) (Zeng, Schäfer and Allgaier 2021, 3223–25).

5.2   Undertaking the Corpus Analysis

In line with the key work steps described above, the first step was to explore
and observe the field of jazz on TikTok. Once the core idea of investigating
the representation of jazz on TikTok had been established, the exploration
commenced with preliminary Google searches, exemplified by the search
term combination "TikTok jazz." The results at the top of the list pertained to
a number of prominent creators whose usernames included the term "jazz,"
yet who were largely not associated with jazz in a musical capacity. However,
the most frequently occurring search results invariably included a link to the
page in the TikTok desktop view, situated under the heading "#jazz | TikTok."
This page lists videos that have been tagged with the hashtag #jazz, sorted
by popularity in terms of views and likes. By visiting this page and viewing
a substantial number of the listed videos, we were able to gain insight into
the specific aspects of jazz that are particularly popular on the platform. The
TikTok application was then downloaded onto a smartphone to facilitate a
user-centric examination of the conventional platform. Concurrently, popular
jazz creators and popular jazz-specific hashtags were searched for on both
Google and the TikTok desktop and mobile applications. The results indicated
that the #jazz hashtag was the most prevalent hashtag with a distinct jazz
reference on TikTok. At the time of the initial research on this topic in early
2022, videos tagged with this hashtag had been viewed over two billion times
in total. Approximately two years later, this number had nearly quadrupled.
Other popular hashtags included #jazztok, #jazzsinger, #jazzstandard, and
#greatamericansongbook.

   In terms of content, it became evident that younger individuals on Tik-
Tok tend to achieve notable success by performing relatively old U.S. jazz stan-
dards, in alignment with hashtags such as #jazzstandard and #greatamerican-
songbook. While improvisation – a hallmark characteristic of jazz – is not a
prominent feature in the majority of the videos observed during this phase,
a considerable number of videos with a comedic focus were identified. The
videos are typically tagged with hashtags such as #jazzmemes and employ a
jocular tone with regard to conventional jazz stereotypes. These include the use
of specific vocabulary and musical clichés that are pervasive in the jazz genre.
Videos featuring the rhythmic-melodic pattern known as *the lick* are particu-
larly prevalent. This pattern occurs frequently in jazz improvisations and has
gained recognition within the jazz community due to a compilation of such
passages that was posted on YouTube (Judd 2022; see chapter 2). Similarly, in-