

## Conclusion

The acknowledgment of reading motivation as an important factor contributing to reading development has increasingly been addressed by researchers across the globe. Large-scale international assessments such as PISA have examined the ways in which motivation to read relates to reading achievement, particularly among 15-year-olds. Similarly, cross-cultural studies have analyzed changes in reading motivation over time, correlations with other variables such as reading ability, socioeconomic status, gender, and ethnicity. The impact of family literacy practices on children's motivation has also emerged as a topic to consider as communities become more diverse due to immigration and globalization. Finally, the extent to which reading motivation has been a consistent predictor of reading ability is a topic of increasing interest, with theoretical and practical consequences that are relevant across countries.

The current volume encompasses many of these compelling questions, and in doing so, contributes to a wider understanding of the complexities that surround reading motivation. More specifically, these chapters focus on gender differences in motivation to read across the wide spectrum of factors we mentioned earlier: age, ethnicity, family factors, grade level, socioeconomic variables, peer influences, instructional components, and reading achievement. Some chapters also consider the social dimensions of early reading motivation, particularly among struggling readers, while others discuss pedagogical interventions and insights that promote the development of reading motivation equally between boys and girls. The authors also adopt various theoretical perspectives and question some widely accepted warrants about differences in motivation to read between boys and girls. Surely, many studies across the globe provide evidence of significant differences in reading motivation scores and a bias that favors girls over boys. However, these differences are far more complex when they are examined contextually.

In the Introduction, Arango reminds us of the biological and environmental factors that affect the trajectory of motivation, particularly in relation to learning. These factors are further discussed from theoretical and empirical standpoints in the

chapters that follow. In this sense, the authors of each individual chapter have also adequately addressed the sociocultural features that interplay with reading motivation in the diverse populations they address. For example, Chiu's discussion of family, peer, and societal aspects in the development of reading motivation (Chapter 3) shows differences in the ways in which boys and girls place themselves in relation to reading and reading-related activities. The notion that greater cultural possession and cultural communication within the family and its bias towards girls' higher interest in reading is an interesting component that may be present in some cultures and not in others (Chiu and Chow 2010). Peer and societal influences on reading motivation shape girls' and boys' reading attitudes, but the ways in which they do so may vary depending on gender roles that are specific to each culture as well. Huang discusses this in Chap. 8 through findings that show that Chinese students place greater value on grades and social recognition in relation to reading motivation, and that these valuing practices were connected to parents' and teachers' expectations of success. The strong influence of a hierarchical testing culture, thus of extrinsic motivation, can therefore be seen as a factor to influence the ways in which Chinese boys and girls value reading.

From an instructional perspective, Borrero (Chapter 12) describes those practices that have more recently been underscored as necessary for the development of avid readers. Drawing from several meta-analyses and compilations, she explains how the different components of literacy instruction can be integrated in ways that promote literacy Motivation of boys and girls. Borrero also explains how recent research contributions from neuroscience and cognitive psychology can facilitate teachers' understandings of how differently boys and girls approach reading, and what can be done in the classroom to help all students acquire a passion for reading. In line with these similar research paradigms, but incorporating sociocultural approaches, the use of inquiry kits demonstrates how the selection of reading material that address both students' interests and needs can foster reading engagement, autonomy, competence, and relatedness, as Sailors, Villarreal, Schutz, Sellers, Wilburn, and Minton suggest in Chapter 11.

In their study, they describe the ways in which developing kits that encompass a big idea, which in turn is related to an issue of social justice, can provide students with a literary framework that both facilitates their comprehension while at the same time engages them in topics that interest them. The underlying expectation is that these students will not only continue to read other texts touching on the same topic, but also that they will become critical readers which will consider the topic through a social justice lens. Such reading perspectives are strongly needed in a world in which there is an overflow of information, oftentimes misleading or blatantly false.

On the other hand, motivation to read has also been affected by changes in the modes of reading that young people engage in, as Brozo demonstrates in Chap. 10, using the case study of Malik, a male adolescent who displays engaged reading and literacy behavior outside of school, specifically through rap recitation. As with online literacy engagement, some teachers are beginning to value and incorporate these practices into their daily instruction, and have shown that alternative texts

such as music, graphic novels, video games, and online reading may be contexts in which students who otherwise struggle with literacy may show their talent and interest. The growing interest in understanding boys' lack of interest in reading has been a consistent topic that researchers have attended to, and in this book, Merisuo-Storm and Aerila discuss it widely in Chapter 9. This topic is significant in Finnish education, where girls outperform boys in reading achievement and show higher levels of motivation to read than boys across the grade levels (Kupari et al. 2012; Mullis et al. 2009). Research in Finland has explored how female and male distinctive personality traits, such as, paying attention to details or even acknowledging readers' strengths and weaknesses, influences reading motivation. From an instructional perspective, being aware of these differences is fundamental, considering that in many countries teachers are predominantly female and may tend to choose reading materials which do not necessarily tap into boys' interests or preferred formats.

Together with instructional practices, theoretical and empirical evidence point to the quality of teacher-student interactions as a factor of great importance to academic and non-cognitive outcomes such as self-regulation and motivation. In the third chapter, Lerkkanen describes how the quality of those interactions may contribute or hinder reading motivation at a very early phase, and how motivation, in turn, affects reading achievement. This includes not only the quality in dialogue between students and teachers, but also choice in reading-related activities, and how differentiating these by gender may be especially beneficial for boys. This research focus is currently growing at unexpected rate and will surely shed light into the reading motivation construct in the next few years. Interaction and book reading go hand in hand; but many teachers lack experiences of dialogic reading or book conversations. Much remains to be done at the level of pre-service and in-service teacher education so that teachers incorporate dialogic reading as an everyday reading practice.

Extensive literature has also analyzed the correlations between reading motivation and reading achievement. Some (e.g. Morgan and Fuchs 2007) point to a bidirectional relationship with moderate correlations between the two constructs, a finding that was also observed by Orellana and Baldwin in Chap. 7 about the development of motivation and reading achievement for Chilean students in grades 3, 4 and 5. One interesting aspect that this chapter indicates is the importance of readers' self-value for boys, given that this factor can explain a significant portion of variance in reading achievement as early as grade 3, and that percentage of variance increases as children progress throughout school. On the other hand, younger struggling readers showed that gender differences in the constructs of reading self-concept, value of reading and literacy out loud can be observed as early as Kindergarten, and that, contrary to what previous studies had shown, reading motivation for students in grades 2 and 3 tends to be higher, as Gambrell, Hubbard, Roberts, Jacques, and Corbett demonstrate in their study of 52 struggling readers who were followed across the school year (Chapter 6).

More recent studies have examined the predictive nature of reading motivation regarding reading achievement. The chapter by Orellana provides a systematic

account of some of the findings where the variance in reading achievement scores can be explained by motivational factors beyond verbal and cognitive ability. There is a wide range in the percent of variance explained by intrinsic motivation, a finding that once again reminds us of the multidimensionality and complexity that motivation involves. What these studies show us, however, is that across very different cultural and linguistic contexts, motivation continues to be a strong predictor of reading achievement, a finding that has important pedagogical implications.

The strong connection between reading achievement and reading motivation has been investigated for over two centuries, but as Phillips, Loerke and Hayward note in the first chapter, there are important misrepresentations about the actual gender differences both in reading ability and motivation. They explain how various factors impact a child's low level of reading and academic motivation, and how these levels impact competence, but also stress that when data is wrongly interpreted or incomplete, certain stereotypes predominate and negatively impact instruction. These biased findings have negative implications for the ways in which teachers approach reading and reading motivation in the classroom.

The chapters in this volume, apart from increasing our understanding about reading motivation in boys and girls, demonstrate that this is a topic that continues to be of interest to researchers, practitioners and the public in general. While we have not discussed the outlooks on reading motivation from a public policy perspective, we also hope that findings about how motivation trajectories unfold across different countries, grade levels, and other factors can bring about changes that favor reading for pleasure and reading interest. Access to books, amount of time spent on actual reading, and freedom to choose books are still critical factors that can make the difference between those who choose to read and those who don't.

## **Future Research**

Motivation to read has captured the attention of researchers and practitioners across the globe, and the acknowledgment of gender-based differences in its trajectory across the lifespan has also been addressed in current studies. The multidimensionality of the construct, however, makes it possible to conceive of many other research questions in the future. We anticipate that the correlational impact of reading motivation and reading achievement will continue to be a topic of interest, and one that will certainly be further studied. Cross-cultural studies, where motivation to read is examined from perspectives of very different populations will also be a focus of research, particularly at an age in which immigration and culture blending has become a usual practice. For example, how does reading motivation unfold among children coming as immigrants or refugees? How do reading experiences in a second language and foreign culture shape the reading motivation of boys and girls coming into other countries?

While many of the studies in the current volume have used the same or very similar tools to assess motivation and achievement, more research is necessary to design

new instruments that target these variables in new contexts and from different perspectives. This is particularly true in the context of Spanish-speaking countries, where most of the tools used are translations and/or adaptations of questionnaires or surveys created either in Europe or the United States. Similarly, and although considerable motivation studies have addressed engagement in new literacies (Rideout et al. 2005; Vásquez 2003; Xu 2004), there are still interesting questions about the extent to which motivation to read text in unconventional sources impacts reading achievement, or how this kind of motivation varies between boys and girls, children from different age levels, ethnicities, countries, and socioeconomic status. Taken together, these topics (and certainly many others) will surely contribute to our ongoing understanding of the importance of reading motivation in children's lives and the instructional dimensions that it can target so that all children become lifelong readers.

## References

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