Examensarbete i Engelska och Lärande
15 högskolepoäng, avancerad nivå

Since reading is a girly thing:
A study on boys’ underachievement in reading literacy in relation to PISA

Eftersom läsning är en tjej sak:
En studie om pojkars lågpresterande i läsförståelse i förhållande till PISA

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Engelska och lärande, 270 hp
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2014-11-07
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Abstract

Underachievement in reading literacy for boys in secondary school seems to be a general norm in many countries around the world today. PISA’s studies highlight that Sweden also is one of countries that has big differences in between the genders in reading literacy; moreover, the results showed that almost every third boy is underperforming in reading literacy. A lot of studies have been made on this subject and the researchers have tried to find the source to the problem. However, no one seems to have found the solution to the problem just yet. Therefore, we became interested in finding out how teachers can remedy boys’ lower performances in reading, in Swedish language classrooms. Through the use of a research synthesis and a pilot study, the question whether teachers can remedy boys’ underachievement in reading literacy is dealt by carefully analyzing articles, journals and books. The results revealed four themes that may play a big part in increasing boys’ achievement in reading. These four themes are: motivation, teacher modeling, text interest and choices, and the importance of time frame.

Keywords: Gender differences, attitudes, underachievement, boys, motivation, literacy, reading, second language learning, PISA
The individual contributions to the synthesis

A requirement of this degree project is that individual contribution of each student should be underlined. In accordance, we therefore state that throughout this degree project, both students/researchers have been equally engaged in all parts. These parts include:

- Brainstorming and setting up a timeline
- Decision on the researched topic and the research question
- Planning the project
- Searching for relevant articles, dissertations, and books
- Results and discussion
- Concluding our structure and our findings.

In addition, we divided the theoretical background where Elma focused on finding the definition of reading literacy and the biological aspects and Sara focused on examining the definition of underachievement and the sociocultural aspects of students’ learning.
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1. Introduction

Reading is seen as a fundamental skill necessary for language development and intellectual growth since texts appear everywhere in today’s society. To have good reading skills and absorb what is read are keys to a successful outcome both in school subjects and participation in society. Thus, the potential of improving students’ second language ability through reading is valued accordingly in teaching. Maj-Gun Johansson (2004) indicates that there is a connection between the students’ results on the reading comprehension test and their grades in most of school subjects which encapsulates the importance of reading literacy in teaching. As John Norris and Lourdes Ortega (2010) argue “reading is also a crucial source of input for L2 development” (p. 214).

Moreover, the significance of reading comprehension is also emphasized by Skolverket in *The Curriculum for Compulsory School* (2011). According to the syllabus, language, learning and identity development are closely associated. Hence, students should develop their ability to communicate and thus build confidence in their language ability through rich opportunities in speaking, reading and writing (Skolverket, 2011).

However, an ongoing debate about Swedish students’ reading literacy is often highlighted by the media about studies, such as PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment). The study shows that not only have students’ reading literacy decreased in Sweden, but, boys are weaker than girls in their language development. PISA (2012) points out that the results for girls as well as boys have been negative, “but the performances of boys have declined more than the performance of girls. The students’ performance differences within the genders are significantly larger than those between them” (PISA 2012).

Students’ reading ability is a topic that researchers have done extensive research on. There are researchers such as Sarah McGeown, Hannah Goodwin, Nikola Henderson, and Penelope Wright (2012) who argue that the gap between boys and girls is the effect of students’ gender identity, rather than their sex differences. Moreover, Mieke Von Houtte (2004) also argues from a social perspective that the differences between girls and boys academic results might
have to do with the study culture. He points out that boys, during puberty, prioritize being cool and popular.

In contrast, other researchers, such as, Michael Gurian (2011) states from a biological perspective that the gender gap depends on the brain differences between the two genders, Gurian explains that in most aspects of developmental chronology, girls’ brains mature earlier than boy’s brains (2011, p.25). According to Betsy Gunzelmann and Diane Connell (2006), since boys fail in the federal tests and that the tests are a big advantage for the girls, it makes the boys feel more pressured and that is, what makes the boys feel school is a girl thing, thus leading boys to give up (p.99).

In our survey paper, we explore the different perspectives said to be behind boys’ underachievement in reading. Therefore, the aim of this paper is to gain an understanding of how and if English teachers can remedy boys’ underachievement in reading literacy, and stimulate the interest in reading for both sexes. The more teachers understand the differences or the cause of the gap, the better they can address the needs of all students. Therefore, we have conducted a pilot study in the form of a questionnaire. The aim was to investigate whether language teachers in secondary schools know about the issue and deal with the gender gap in reading literacy. First, we begin with a pilot study to shed light on the local context.

1.1 Pilot study

The aim of our pilot study was to investigate whether teachers in northwest of Skåne region were aware of the gender differences in reading literacy, and if so, whether they were addressing the issue. This was done in order to get a clearer view of boys’ underachievement and if it is noticed in reading literacy and whether it is addressed or not in teaching. By using questionnaires, Ian Brace (2008) argues that we must construct and use the questionnaire to help respondents give us, as the researcher, the best information that they can (p. 3). The type of questionnaire we used was a semi-structured questionnaire. A semi-structured questionnaire implies that our questions were a mixture of close and open-ended questions (Salkind, 2010). With the use of questionnaires, we were able to ask all of our respondents the
same questions. Brace (2008) states that asking the questions in the same way to different people is the key to most survey research, otherwise, it would be impossible to interpret the answers (p. 4).

Our close-ended questions are the following;

**Question 1.** Are boys’ underachievement in reading discussed in your school/classroom?

**Question 2.** Do you think it is important to remedy the gap in reading between the genders?

**Question 3.** Some researchers talk about “school smart” and “anti-study culture” between the genders as the cause of gender differences in reading. Is this noticeable in your classroom?

**Question 4.** Do you think the gender differences are because of the cultural phenomena?

**Question 5.** “For a long time, teacher students got their degree without having enough knowledge on how to work with language—reading and writing development”. Do you think that this is a contributing factor to the students reading difficulties?

**Question 9.** Do you think there are some differences between boys and girls attitudes against reading?

![Figure 1: the results of our questionnaire](image)

The results displayed by the charts, show that 4 out of 5 teachers mentioned that the subject about boys’ reading literacy has been discussed in schools. The answers show that 4 out of 5
teachers think that teacher education has not provided enough knowledge about language-
reading and writing development which has contributed to students’ reading difficulties.

Another question was that technology is said to be good for reading comprehension. Most of
the teachers agreed with that statement. Regarding what kind of technology they used, all of
them wrote iPads, Chrome, and different websites.

The pilot study served as an indicator of whether or not the subject matter was a concern in
the local area and if it needed to be discussed. Based on these results, we argue that not only
should teachers counteract boys’ underachievement in reading literacy, but should also arouse
the interest in reading for both sexes.

1.2 Purpose and research question

As previously mentioned, our survey paper will focus on the potential causes of the gap
between girls and boys in reading literacy and what can and should be done by English
teachers to reduce the differences. The importance of this topic is that the difference between
girls outscoring boys' reading proficiency is starting to be surprising in PISA. The difference
in average performance between girls and boys is greater in Sweden than in OECD and has
increased from 37 points in 2000 to 51 points in 2012. Thus, the percentage of girls
underachieving in PISA’s literacy are 14% and boys 31%.

A greater understanding of this topic, may provide teachers with some insight into the type
of learning environment in which schools may best deal with differences in school
performance and pedagogical development to help students develop their English learning.
This topic also evoked our interest to increase our knowledge of boys’ underachievement in
reading literacy and become more conscious of the attitudes towards it.

In our paper, we study and discuss the different aspects that point to the differences
between boys and girls and their attitudes in second language classrooms. Firstly, our paper
will include a literature review on sociocultural aspects, biological aspects, and the
differences in reading strategies that may be the main reason for the gap between the two
genders in reading literacy. We hope to gain new knowledge and inspiration with the
discussion and the results of our study on how to work actively with students’ reading literacy. Therefore, this is the research question guiding our paper:

1. How can teachers remedy boys’ underachievement in reading literacy revealed by PISA?

Although we write about girls as a group and boys as a group, we are aware of the huge variations within the same sex. All girls are not the same and that boys are not the same.
2. Theoretical background

To be able to perceive the differences between girls’ and boys’ reading literacy in Sweden, one needs to first look at what reading literacy means, what underachievement is and how the gap can be looked at in different aspects. This section presents a theoretical background to the study of PISA’s results, useful research conducted on different reasons of the gender gap, and other relevant terms in the context of our study.

2.1 The definition of reading literacy

According to Bo Lundahl, reading literacy is something between reproduction and production. Reproduction stands for a recount. It is when we are retelling something we already have read; on the other hand, production stands for something new that is created. When reading, reproduction and production can only happen when we add our own experience and knowledge to it. The learning occurs in the intersection between the new and the old knowledge which you already have (2012, p. 247).

Furthermore, literacy is a fundamental human right and provides a foundation for lifelong learning ("UNESCO," n.d.). The use of ones’ literacy for exchange of new knowledge is steadily developing, along with the technology progress. In a report by Skolverket (1995) they asserted that reading literacy is something necessary and that it is highly valuable potential in Sweden. To be able to read in today’s society is almost obligatory both in private and working life (ibid).

Reading is important because it improves the mind thinking, it also makes us discover new things, and it develops our imagination and critical thinking (“Learn to Read”, 2003). While reading, you develop your language skills and your vocabulary. When developing your reading literacy, you can educate yourself in any area which you are interested in with the
help of magazines, internet and books. Diane Davis claims that we live in an age where we are overwhelmed with new information all the time, but reading is the main way to take advantage of all the information, which is why it is so important (“Learn to Read”, 2003).

Furthermore, Ingvar Lundberg (1984) argues that reading literacy is an active and constructive process. The meaning of this process is when the reader and the text, which is being read, interact with each other on another level. He further states that, when decoding is learned by the reader and are made automatically every time when reading, it means that it is syntactic competence. For example, the reader creates in his own mind an inner image, fills in the gaps between the sentences, connects previous read information with the text and binds together the cohesion, which is something major for reading literacy.

PISA’s comprehension of reading literacy is as followed; the ability to understand, use, reflect and engage in texts to accomplish their goals, develop their knowledge and potential and to be able to be a part of the society. Reading literacy overall is necessary for people to function in today’s society (“OECD,” 2009).

Further, reading is usually assumed to be simply decoding, or reading aloud, whereas the purpose of this is to measure something larger and deeper (OECD, 1999, p. 21). Finally, the term “literacy” usually is referred as a tool which the readers use gain new knowledge (ibid).

### 2.2 The definition of Underachievement

Underachievement is a term being used in different context whether it is in school or by the media. As cited in Gorard and Smith (2004), even though the term underachievement has been used by politicians, journalists, and academics to describe relatively poor academic performances, different reviews of literature suggest that a consensus on its definition and measurement is something hard to come by (Gorard, 2000c). Gorard and Smith (2004) further explains that one of the problem with the notion of underachievement is simply in understanding what underachievement should be related to.

Is it related to some kind of innate ability on the part of the individual or is it achievement relative to that of a larger group? In this latter case a more appropriate term might be ‘low achievement’ or, more generally, ‘differential
achievement’, which might be lower achievement relative to other groups, or lower achievement than would be expected by an observer. (Gorard & Smith, 2004, pp. 209-210)

Moreover, it is important to explain what we mean by underachievement since it can be adapted to different areas and in different ways. Since we are looking at the Swedish results as a nation, we speak about underachievement as nations since PISA is a study that compares the results between countries and over the years. The benefit of this study is that it allows the government to track the students’ progression in Sweden. With that in mind, we use the term underachievement in relation to boys’ lower performances in PISA, in comparison with the girls in Sweden. The results from PISA helps us to see the differences between the genders and between the years of 2000 to 2012.

2.3 Gender differences in Swedish students’ performance

Before discussing what teachers can do to remedy the gender gap in relation to the different theories, it is important to scrutinize the statistics from PISA. In addition, this section includes most of our own translations from Swedish to English, mainly the PISA documents.

The Programme for International Student Assessment also known as PISA is an international assessment of the reading, mathematical and scientific literacy of 15-year-old students. PISA comes from a larger Organization called Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development also known as OECD. PISA’s assessment takes place in a three year cycle. It allows researchers to observe the students’ achievement and performances, and also identify other factors of the educational system. It is one of the largest assessments done in the world. According to PISA, they assess the students’ real life knowledge, their skills and their preparations for their future adult participations in society. In line with OECD, “What 15-year-olds know and what they can do with what they know”, the assessment in PISA “does not just ascertain whether students can reproduce what they have learned; it also examines how well they can extrapolate from what they have learned and apply that knowledge in unfamiliar settings, both in and outside of school” (2014, p. 3).
When constructing the reading tasks for students, PISA assess the following:

Individual’s ability to understand, use and reflect over and engage in texts to accomplish their own goals, and develop their knowledge and potential to be able to participate in society. Beyond the decoding and sufficient understanding, interpretation and reflection as well as using reading to accomplish their goals in life, PISA’s focus is based on reading to learn rather than learning to read and therefore it does not measure students’ most basic reading abilities. (PISA, 2012, p.12, our translation).

Moreover, reading literacy has been assessed in two ways: traditional reading tasks and digital reading tasks. The traditional reading tasks means that the tasks were done with paper and a pen, and the digital tasks were done through a computer. The reading levels are divided in six levels, where level 1 is the lowest and level six shows the best performance. The first interesting data shows that Sweden overall has a decreasing results comparison to the OECD’s average value (see, figure 1). It shows the percentage of students who performed below level 2 in traditional reading tasks.

Figure 2: The overall students’ percentages who performed under level 2 in reading
Other interesting data (see, figure 2 and 3) shown from PISA are the results between girls and boys in reading. The results shows a clear gap between the genders; both in traditional reading tasks and in digital reading. In Sweden, girls average value were 509 points while boys had 458 points. In comparison, the overall average value of OECD is 515 points for girls and 478 points for boys (PISA, 2012).

Figure 3: The differences between girls and boys in reading results in points
In Figure 2, the results reveals that the differences in Swedish students’ average is significantly higher than OECD’s average on the differences between girls and boys (PISA, 2012). This gap has been shown to grow over the years. In 2000, the differences between girls and boys in points were 37 and in 2012 the differences were 51 points.

Figure 4: Percentage of girls and boys on the different levels in reading

![Figure 4: Percentage of girls and boys on the different levels in reading](skolverket.se (2013) 15åringars kunskaper i matematik, läsförståelse och naturkunskap-PISA. Retrieved from http://skolverket.se)

Figure 3 shows the differences between the genders in each level. The results show that almost every third boy is performing under level 2. The table above shows there are more girls that reach the goals in level five and six than the boys. On level two and under, the percentage of the boys is greater than the percentage of girls which means that there are more boys reaching to level two and under in reading. Thirty-one percent of the boys were under level two in comparison to fourteen percent of the girls. “The difference in average performance between girls and boys is greater in Sweden than in the OECD and it has increased since 2000 and 2009 (PISA 2012, p. 142).
2.3.1 The Swedish Curriculum

The Swedish compulsory school curriculum mentions that students should be given the environment to develop their language ability. This development includes to be able to “understand and interpret the content in spoken English and in the different texts, /.../ and use language strategies to make themselves understand and be understood. The teachers should also help students develop skills /.../ and given the opportunity to use different tools for learning, understanding, creativity, and communication. Therefore, the teaching needs to help students to improve, including their reading. However, there are still many students who do not reach the goals of English.

Figure 5. Students who did not reach the goals in the ninth grade between the years 2008-2013

The table above (5), shows that there were more boys not reaching the goals in the ninth grade in the subject of English. However, we can notice that majority of the boys reach the goals of the subject math than girls.

The Swedish Curriculum (Lgr11) also mentions that students need to adjust their listening and reading after the requisition forms, content and purpose (years 6-9). Therefore, students need to use strategies in order to comprehend a text. Two strategies mentioned by Lena Börjesson (2012) were the bottom-up approach and the top-down approach. Börjesson (2012) states that researchers have mentioned that usually readers, first decode what they read.
(bottom-up), and secondly create a meaning in what has been read by interpreting its context and their understanding (top-down).

2.4 Different aspects

This part of the study deals with the differences between boys and girls and what influences may underline boys’ underachievement. These aspects are included: Sociocultural aspects and biological aspects. Regardless of the differences between the two aspects, we got the same outcome on how teachers can remedy boys’ underachievement, which we will discuss further in the results section.

2.4.1. Sociocultural aspects

One of the reasons posited to be behind the gender gap is an anti-study culture that exists in many compulsory schools. According to Mats Björnsson (2005), this culture has an effect on many boys in the earlier school years. It is a part of how boys see themselves and in what kind of level they seek after both popularity and masculinity. Björnsson (2005) explains that the boys who want to work quietly in school run the risk of being bullied as cowards by other boys within the school. According to Gunzelmann, and Connell (2006) there is also a “Boy Code” which is an unwritten rule of societal beliefs about how boys should act. This boy code requires them to act though and hide their feelings; therefore, they are likely to not speak up when experiencing difficulties in school. Björnsson (2005) argues that masculinity needs to be challenged as well in Swedish schools since it may be a reason behind boys’ lower performances in school. Björnsson mentions that the content of masculinity is not challenged seriously in Sweden. “To live and work as an adult man in today’s Sweden with a picture in mind of his own masculinity is one thing; but, to be a boy that handle the manliness requirements in the social everyday life is another”(2005, p.39). These descriptions, Björnsson (2005) argues, shows that boys face different messages on how they should act and what they should not be.
This belief is also argued in an article called “Why Boys Achieve Less at School than Girls”, Houtte (2004) argues that the difference between girls’ and boys’ academic results might have to do with the study culture. He explains that most girls and boys, during puberty, value the importance of being cool and popular; but, the way to achieve this differs between the two genders. Girls can be accepted among the classmates as both cool and smart, whereas, boys tend to exclude study achievement as if it is something that would intensify their image. The boys can go to extensive lengths to protect their manly image and their feeling of self-esteem by their senseless behavior, and this behavior is what puts them and others in the same class, from doing well. Houtte also mentions that in general girls spend more time doing homework; they display less disturbing behavior in the classroom than the boys do. Girls generally have higher expectations of themselves while boys take it easier in school, work less hard with the homework and are distracted more quickly (2004, p. 160).

The different sociocultural theories argues that the sociocultural aspects may affect boys in their reading performances, therefore one must also notice that this pattern is shown to be global. As the PISA data shows, it can be stated that there are pattern throughout the OCED countries that is relatively similar. Girls’ better performance seems to be a thread throughout the OCED countries. Nevertheless, the big difference between boys’ and girls’ reading performance in Sweden is not everywhere. Therefore, by using different international studies, one may reveal different strategies teachers in Sweden can use to remedy the gender gap.

2.4.2 Different learning strategies

In a paper called “Why Boys Don’t Like to Read: Gender Differences in Reading Achievement”, Canadian Council on learning (2009) mentions that many factors contributed to the gender gap in literacy. Girls’ outperformance was said to do with girls’ habituated ways of using reading strategies such as scanning, re-reading, and discussing text. Additionally, girls tend to do more non-assigned reading than boys (2009, p. 4). Poole (2010) reached the same conclusions, claiming that in comparison to the males, girls use individual reading comprehension strategies far more than the boys, which may be explained, in that way, that they are better readers and that they generally spend more time in school-related reading outside of class hours (p. 318).
Boys are said to view reading more as a feminine activity and this view can reduce their motivation to read. Gender differences in reading attitudes, behaviors and preferences have an impact in reading assessments. Canadian Council on learning (2009) suggests multiple ways of how to change reading differences, their suggestions were: to encourage boys to read from an early age, provide boys with more reading choices, and take advantages of the online resources.

To be able to counteract the stereotype image the boys have about reading, the Canadian Council on learning (ibid) argue that it is important to expose boys to books and reading from an early age, to make the boys gain their interest in reading (p. 5). It is vital whether the boys are in school or at home, to provide them with books that appeal to them.

### 2.4.3 Biological aspects

According to some international studies, girls have significantly better skills in reading than boys. Reading comprehension differences according to gender follow similar trends in almost all countries (Skolverket, 2011). In a PISA study, which was presented in December 2010, nearly a quarter of the boys who participated in the 2009 test did not reach the level of passing, which according to the school agency's definition is necessary as a foundation to be able to take in other knowledge.

As mentioned in Skolverket (2011), there are some biological differences, which contribute to why boys achieve less at school than girls usually do. Further, this also includes a number of different biological factors, which may help to explain why girls perform better in school than boys. There are some common differences between the genders regarding cognitive functions, emotional regulation and maturation rate. All in all this suggests that the differences between the genders are not just produced by social causes.

Girls develop the capacity for concentration and attention much earlier than boys. Boys as well have a later maturity in their language development than girls. Gurian explains that, “girls, for instance, can acquire their complex verbal skills as much as a year earlier than boys” (2011, p. 26). Moreover, he explains that quite often a preschool girl reads faster and with a larger vocabulary than a peer boy does. He states that in general female brains develop more quickly than male brains (ibid).
As Gurian (2011) further explains, another structural difference in the brain is the corpus callosum, which is a bundle of nerves that connects the right and left brain hemispheres. He asserts that the “females’ callosum” tends to be larger than the males’, which gives the females more crosstalk between the two brain halves. This also gives females the advantage because it makes them hear better, better sense of smell, be better in controlling their impulsive behavior (p. 26).

Lastly, Gurian mentions that the girls are the generally better listeners; they hear more of what is said and are more receptive to the details in a lesson or conversation (2011, p. 46). Boys on the other hand, tend to hear less and more often ask for clear evidence and questions to support their teacher’s claim, while the girls seem to be more “comfortable with more instructional meandering” (Ibid). Moreover, Gurian (2011) affirms that boys and girls develop differently both mentally and physically and these differences might contribute to a larger part of the gender gap within reading literacy.
3. Methods

Our chosen method used in this paper is a research synthesis. Our paper aims to obtain a greater understanding on boys’ underachievement in reading literacy in comparison to girls, and receive a greater understanding of how and if teachers can remedy the gap and help boys improve their literacy. The research synthesis is an appropriate method to our research questions since there is a possibility to discover new knowledge. By conducting a research synthesis on this topic, we gained a better understanding of how to encourage language development for both boys and girls in a second language classroom. Nevertheless, by becoming more familiar with the primary research in this area, we discovered what more needs to be done on this topic.

According to Norris and Ortega (2006), the research synthesis is a systematic secondary review of collected primary research studies and has a potential value for helping those interested in language and teaching to make sense of research. It reviews the available literature at important turning points in the progress of a research. It can be said to be “what is already known about a particular question or problem, to understand how it has been addressed methodologically, and to figure out where we need to go next with our research” (ibid, p. 5). Norris and Ortega (2006) also mentions that doing a systematic research synthesis is not always easy since it depends a lot on the availability of good primary research and the potential of the secondary researchers.

As mentioned in the introduction, students’ reading ability is a topic that researchers have done extensive research on. Therefore, it is important to carefully go through our criteria for the data since there are plenty of studies to base the results on. Lourdes Ortega (2010) mentions that as long as the study meets the group of inclusion criteria at the start of the synthesis, it should be included. However, if the researcher excludes certain studies for the reason of poor research quality, the decision can always be challenged, as methodological rigor is often in the eyes of the beholder (Ortega, 2010).
3.1 Data gathering

The data in our research synthesis paper were collected first and foremost through electronic databases such as EBSCO, ERIC via EBSCO, Education Research Complete, ERIC via ProQuest. We also made use of the National Swedish Agency of Education (Skolverket) to gain useful information on students in compulsory schools in Sweden.

The first database searches done in ERIC included words such as: *underachievement*, *male*, *teaching methods*, *reading literacy*. We limited our search results to only full texts and peer reviewed journals which were available between the years 2000 and 2014. The searches resulted in 216 results in ERIC via EBSCO, and in ERIC via ProQuest only 5 results. However, the results in all of the database searches did not include much relevant research for our thesis. We had to modify our search words to be able to arrive at our concluding words.

3.1.1 Inclusion Criteria

In our research synthesis paper we used articles, journals and different research that were provided to us through the database searches at Malmö University’s own website called Summon. With the help of Summon, we could search through Malmö University’s library electronic to see if some of the articles there matched our research questions. With no result from Summon, we passed on to ERIC via EBSCO, ERC, EBSCO and Google Scholar; further on, we took help by previous mentioned electronic search databases and did the same search as in Summon but did still not find relevant researches for our thesis.

We had to modify our search words to arrive to our final keywords presented below. Further, with the inclusion criteria we included the results which favored our research. After the database research, we included and excluded articles and journals on the basis of our inclusion criteria: *focus on boys’ underachievement, focus on teaching approaches and methods, and focus on the gender gap.*

Thus, some of our keywords were (combined or separate): *Male, achievement, gender differences, effectiveness, teaching methods, strategies, reading, literacy, PISA, attitudes,*
motivation, English classroom, second language learning and L2. In addition, the research presented in this study focus on boys’ between the ages 13 to 17.

As presented in the theoretical background, we are aware of the differences between the social and biological aspects which might affect students English language learning. However, as Hult (2012) states, English can be seen as a transcultural language in Sweden in the sense that it has the potential to guide concurrently local and global meanings and that “ELT (English language teaching) in Sweden, thus, may be characterized as occupying a grey area between these perspectives, serving as a nexus point for the duality of local and global dimensions of English in the Swedish context” (p. 235). For that reason, the chosen primary researches includes English as a second language; however, some researches were in a context of English as a first language. Hence, they were included since the studies make use of different gender approaches that were significant regardless of teaching students with English as their first or second language.

3.1.2 Exclusion Criteria

While researching for information in connection to our study, we found a lot of relevant articles regarding boys’ underachievement. We have included the articles and thesis papers that were most significant for our study. The articles and journals chosen were important for our study and to be able to answer our research question stated in the beginning of our paper. Most of the research that was excluded were journals and articles that were not available through Malmö University’s databases. In addition, all the materials that were published before the time frame 2000 to 2014 were excluded. That is because we wanted recent resources to be close between the years of the articles and journals to the PISA studies. However, research that referred to other studies done before 2000 were not excluded.

Furthermore, our exclusion criteria contained: research published before 2000, excluded, non-full texts, focus on oral production, focused on any other form in reading comprehension, focused under the ages of 13, we also excluded journals and articles about reading disabilities.
3.2 Summary of studies

We have our complete list of sources in the reference list and all the extra material such as questionnaires are put in our Appendix list. A summary of our research aspects are presented in the table below (figure 5). Kindly note that, one article might cover more than one area of themes, so that the number, if added together, will surpass our total number of used articles and research. Our results will have four sections based on our findings, two of them are: Motivation and Teacher Modeling. Furthermore, two sections are added since they also contribute to an interesting approach to remedy the gender gap in reading literacy. These subjects are: Time frame, and text choices, and were arisen through our searched keywords and through the articles on motivation and teaching approaches. The articles which included the perceptiveness of text choices and time frame were: eleven articles.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Area of Theme</th>
<th>Total number of references</th>
<th>Number of references used</th>
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<tr>
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<td>13</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
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<td>Teaching approaches</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Text choice and interest</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
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The criteria searched on the first database called ERIC via EBSCO resulted in one relevant article for our study, however, when searching with our criteria in ERC we found four relevant articles in which fulfilled our inclusion and exclusion criteria. When applying the exclusion and inclusion criteria on the third search in EBSCO, the results of relevant articles were nine chosen articles. The remaining articles were acquired through an examination of other articles’ references. We added these since they qualify our criteria; in addition, they add other interesting perspectives to our results. In total eighteen articles and thesis papers were chosen to provide us an understanding of our problem area.
4. Results and Discussion

This part of the paper includes our results and discussions, and has the following structure: each section of our research has its own theme; however, these themes can be linked together since they can influence each other. The themes are: motivation and engagement, teacher modeling, matter of text choices, and the importance of time. The last two themes were added when reading different articles searched with our keywords. These new themes are important since they contribute an understanding to our study. When it comes to the different sections, some researchers have covered all four aspects and will therefore to a great extent be referred to. Moreover, what we found regardless sociocultural and biological approaches, we got the same tool kit on how teachers can remedy boys’ underachievement.

As mentioned previously, our research question is the following: How can teachers remedy boys’ underachievement in reading literacy revealed by PISA?

4.1 Motivation and Engagement

This section focuses on the perspective included most often in the articles. We believe that motivation is often used in connection to students’ behavior, therefore it is a big part of students’ language development. Additionally, there were many articles relating to students’ motivation in reading; nevertheless, motivation is difficult to measure, and therefore most of the chosen articles can be regarded as qualitative research.

Many researchers argue that motivation can be the reason behind boys’ underachievement in reading. However, teachers should first start by observing their own classes and determine
whether boys’ achieve less in reading because of their ability or lack of interest, or both. Moreover, if there are gaps in ability, teachers need to find the appropriate intervention programme in order to counteract the problem (Sadowski, 2010).

When searching about motivation, the “teacher leaders”, Douglas Fisher and Nancy Frey (2012) designed an intensive ninth-grade English curriculum which they intended to encourage students reading and writing daily. The research reveals that by creating different teaching approaches, the students created a need to read because by reading the students found the answers to questions and helped them to reflect on different themes in books.

William Brozo, Gere Shiel and Keith Topping (2007) argue that increasing the engagement for boys would improve boys’ reading literacy. This opinion was in agreement with PISA’s suggestion which strongly proposed that engagement is a key factor for boys’ reading performance. The researchers states that it is important to encourage independence and responsibility in adolescents so that they can channel their engagement levels and manage their interactions with texts in strategic ways. They propose using technology to motivate boys to read, and that teachers should take advantage of computers to increase boys’ engagement and depth of thinking for personally meaningful and classroom-based topics.

In the article Bridges to literacy for boys, William Brozo (2006) states that teachers need to look at students’ competencies, interests and personal needs and experiences as resources. Moreover, by observing boys in and out of the classroom, and forming meaningful relationships with them, teachers can gain from the resources that boys already have for becoming engaged and competent readers.

When it comes to motivating boys to read, there seems to be no doubt that students perform well when they are motivated, which aids in developing their language learning. Many of the articles identified in our search, refer to motivation as being one aspect that is a big part of students’ performances, whether it is about teachers’ ability to motivate, or motivation as a part of the results in studies.

William G. Brozo, Sari Sulkunen, Gerry Shiel, Christine Garbe, Ambigapthy Pandian, and Renate Valtin (2014) analyzed findings of cross national testing where they proposed recommendations based on those findings. The findings were based on the countries Finland, the United States, Korea, and Ireland. Students’ engagement in reading is strongly associated with performance, regardless of students’ socioeconomic background, in all participating
countries, therefore, students’ engagement may be the key to increasing reading literacy achievement for boys (OECD, 2010). Brozo, et al., (2014) argues that what other countries can learn from the countries mentioned above, are the ways they address the gender differences in reading literacy. One example in Finland was that the revision of the national curriculum that started in 2012 had a greater potential for addressing the gender differences in reading. The curriculum emphasized more than ever reading engagement, on widening the range of texts and intensifying reading instructions. Another way of addressing boys’ motivation in reading is by “critical literacy practices /…/ which support boys’ exploration of narratives of masculinity and how they are defined by media and popular culture” (p. 591). This approach was done in Ireland, since it was pointed out a need to provide boys with more opportunities to engage with nonliterary texts and other text that boys may show an engagement to. The Irish Department of Education and Skills, called for a change to curricula at the lower- secondary level which would lead to greater engagement by all students, with a broader range of texts.

As the above articles state, motivation and engagement are key factors that can aid boys’ achievement in reading. In addition, as Anne Watson, Michael Kehler, and Wayne Martino mentions (2010), “it is important to understand that not all boys are at risk and that their poor performance is not inevitable” (p. 537). However, all students will achieve better results in reading by being engaged and motivated.

When it comes to answering our research question: “How can teachers remedy boys’ underachievement in reading literacy revealed by PISA? The research shows that motivation is indeed a key factor in order for the students to develop their reading ability. By using different teaching approaches, teachers can, through planning and evaluating on a continuous basis, help students, boys in particular to become engage in reading and deconstruct the ways masculinity is seen in relation to reading. We argue that teachers need to observe the students in class, and from there use the approaches needed in order for them to engage.
4.2 Teacher modeling

Fisher and Frey (2012) mention that “for too many boys, classroom practices that limit choice, value compliance over purpose, and place the teacher as the keeper of all knowledge, will squeeze the vital juices out of the act of reading” (p. 595). Therefore, they mention that by using different teaching approaches, boys became more motivated to read. One of their teaching approaches was to let students write an essay in which they answer questions in relation to reading materials. One of the questions were; what’s worth fighting, or even dying, for? The essential questions in relation to students’ reading created a need to read. The questions were not easy to find an answer, and the students had to read in order to answer the questions. Fisher and Frey (2012) noticed that the inquiry resulted in meaningful discussions where students talked about the questions as a help to capture their interests and hooked them into reading several books.

Another teaching approach Fisher and Frey (2012) present is reading and writing aloud which invites the student to the teacher’s mind. The students mentioned that this aspect of instruction made content more understandable and they enjoyed hearing what teachers think. Fisher and Frey (2012) referring to (Davey, 1983; Wilhem, 2008) agree upon that: “teachers model their thinking while reading or problem-solving such that students hear experts and how experts process information” (p. 592). Thus, students who have problems with the ability with reading comprehension might have the teacher as a scaffolding to know how to achieve the goals for reading tasks.

This approach is also supported by Lynda Delo (2008). In Delo’s article, she points out that reading aloud is helpful since most students achieve higher listening comprehension than reading comprehension. Therefore, reading aloud, whether it is to or with students, is a good way to role model positive reading behavior to introduce books students may not normally read “and to help create a positive attitude toward books and reading in general” (ibid, p. 34). Delo (2008) argues that this can be achieved by simply reading a book out loud to students throughout a semester or have students actively participate and read aloud and follow along. Delo (ibid) also argues that in dialogic reading, teachers should be responsible for open-ended questions while students read. For example, while reading aloud teachers can confirm if the
students understand what was being read, what they believe is going to happen, and how they feel about the book.

Furthermore, research by Donna Lester Taylor (2004) supports the idea of expanding teachers’ teaching styles to address boys’ specific needs as students. In order to do that, teachers need to develop and implement innovative teaching approaches. One of these teaching approaches is explicit teaching in the classroom. Tylor (2004) referring to (Pirie, 2002), adds that “when these reading activities are made explicit through think-aloud and other forms of classroom instruction, poorer readers suddenly have a chance to see these secret habits and try them out” (p. 295). Tylor concludes that that our teaching styles need to invite boys into discussions in a sensitive manner that allows them to make connections with characters’ feelings and motivation.

In many ways, the stereotypical ways of looking at masculinity can be said to be one of the causes of boys’ underachievement in schools. Relating it to Watson, Kehler, and Martino’s (2010) arguments, the teacher and the school should also challenge culturally and socially constructed understandings of masculinity through pedagogical activities than to reinforce and provide them with a boy’s friendly environment. Due to the influence of boys’ peer pressure and the media’s exaltation of hegemonic masculinity, they argue that schools should question and interrogate what it means to be a man.

In conclusion, teachers own teaching styles might be practical help in order to remedy the underachievement for both boys and girls, and also achieve a greater understanding in reading literacy. Additionally, it is important for the teachers to examine the classroom and study what the underachieving boys need help with, as well the underachieving girls, whether it is motivational, or their ability to comprehend reading literacy.

By using different innovative strategies as a teaching style, Tylor (2004) suggests that it will help boys to engage in reading. Examples from the articles were: engaging boys with reading through drama, inviting men into classroom for book talks, or inquiry-based instruction. Inquiry-based instruction is when students or teachers formulate questions and then students research the answers using many sources. This approach can be seen as a scaffolding of boys’ need for competence, problem solving and personal engagement. With an agreement to Watson et al (2010) statement, “Make learning active and purposeful” to engage boys and girls in reading (p. 360).
The research presented above, shows that teachers’ own way of teaching can help boys achieve better in reading literacy. Therefore, we draw the conclusion that teachers should examine their own teaching styles and expand different strategies to gain the students interests in reading. Whether it is boys or girls who have difficulties to comprehend the reading tasks, teachers should try to add different teaching styles that might help them improve. Addressing boys’ engagement in reading literacy might challenge the societal representations of masculinity and make them more engaged in the variety of reading.

4.3 Matter of interest and choice

This section of the paper is another researched perspective which we choose to analyze after noticing the contribution it has on lesson planning. Interest and choice is also an important factor for boys reading literacy. Often when boys are not successful in school, their confidence are lowered and they lose interest in reading. It is the teacher's' job to be there for the unmotivated boys to help them gain and enhance their interests in reading.

Taylor (2004) states that researchers have defined interest and choice as an interaction between a person and the environment or the context (p. 283), the author begins to write her article as a result of her son’s struggles with literacy. The author (ibid) mentions that it is the main key for the male students, to make them motivated, engaged and to make them able to assimilate on a deeper level. Taylor (2004) also provides a summary of present research about literacy issues which boys are facing every day in school and she offers practice and strategies that might help to bridge the literacy gap for the boys.

When elaborating on the subject of text choices, Michael Smith and Jeffery Wilhelm (2002), propose that teachers should “offer more choices and explore the meanings of different kinds of texts with particular powers to engage and express [boys]” (p. 186). Brozo (2002) agrees with Smith and Wilhelm (2002) and suggests that “books with traditional appeal have the greatest likelihood of engendering engagement in reading for boys” (p. 323). Wilhelm also mentions in “Getting boys to read: It’s the Context!” that “Boys who see the relationship between the text read and their current lives are more likely to be engaged and to respond to the text” (2002, p. 17).
Taylor (2004) mentions that teachers assertion about what books the boys should read, should not come from a stereotypical assumption because all boys are special individuals and they do not all act the same (p. 284). When giving the students a choice to choose what they want to read, teachers are making them more interested in reading the book, since they are involved in the selection part. As teachers, we have to make materials accessible for the students. Taylor also states that “giving students choice and control in reading material plays an important role in involvement with and enjoyment of reading” (2004, p. 284).

Brozo, Shiel, and Topping (2008), conducted a study called *Engagement in reading: Lessons learned from three PISA countries*, which focused on three countries: United States, United Kingdom and Ireland. The article showed the countries’ results in PISA, and further on argued that to be able to make boys become better readers and writers, it is necessary for the boys to be engaged with a variety of text types. To let the boys read non-continuous text will serve the boys in creative and motivating contexts, and lead to reading of more traditional print sources (p. 312). The non-continuous texts do not have a beginning and end written in the same way, examples of non-continuous text are, ads, surveys, tourist brochures, and information texts online (Börjesson, 2012, p. 5, our own translation). A continuous texts are the opposite and are formed by sentences organized into paragraphs. These fit into larger sections, chapters and so on. “For example, newspaper reports, essays, novels, short stories, reviews and letters for the print medium, and reviews, blogs and reports in prose for the digital” (PISA, 2012).

Furthermore, observations showed that boys were more motivated and were able to achieve higher scores with the non-continuous text. It is, as mentioned above, important to make materials accessible for boys to make their “pleasure sustain their interests, develop their knowledge and maybe lead them to exploring more traditional print texts” (2008, p. 312).

If we then look at the research from Julie Gorlewski and Louis Martinez, they found that it is essential to let the boys read texts they can relate to (2010, p. 121). They certify that if the boy students were able to choose books after their own interests, they would be able to change their view on printed work. Their conclusion is that the teachers need to try new things, introduce the students to a variety of different books, authors and genres and maybe even
“leave their own comfort zone, to make the students enrich themselves, to support them and benefit the students” (2010, p. 124).

Katya Henry, Anna Lagos and Frances Berndt (2012), discuss the importance of choice and interest when choosing books. They state that the boys are going after personal interests when choosing their reading materials, and as we already mentioned above, it is important to have such reading materials available for them. The authors argue that the materials must “reflect an image of themselves, make them laugh and focus on more than emotions” (2012, p. 145), to be able to engage them with reading.

Student conferences revealed that “many boys would rather fail their reading comprehension than read a certain texts” (Gorlewski and Martinez, 2010, p. 123), which shows that it was obvious that text selections made by the teachers were critical to the boys reading encounter (ibid). Henry et al., (2012), recall that letting students choose texts can be very successful when implementing free choice for the boys’ reading literacy.

Fisher and Frey (2012) also point out that choice, is one of the main reasons boys read as much as they do and want to read (p. 593). The authors have further investigated that there are different ways to encourage boys to read. Their first argument was that there must be texts worthy for them available to read. But the authors also state that it is not only the availability of the texts which is going to make the boys interested in reading; it is the teachers’ responsibility to keep the students interest growing while reading. As an example, the teachers can poll the students about interesting questions about the book to make the students read more to find the answers to the asked questions (p. 594). As a teacher you could also invite the students for peer-to-peer sharing, let the students talk about their books with each other, to increase their background knowledge and to increase their reading volume. Teachers may also ask the students to write about their reading, to be able to develop their reflectiveness and think about what they have read while writing a journal, blog or a weekly letter to their teacher (ibid).

There are many researchers who are studying students’ interest and choices with reading materials. The articles presented in this section show that the choice and interest affects the students’ reading literacy positively. By making the male students interested in reading and giving them the opportunity to choose their own reading materials after their own interests, teachers may engage boys to endeavor in reading.
In sum; “How can teachers remedy boys’ underachievement in reading literacy revealed by PISA?” When it comes to the choice and interest, we agree that both of the previous mentioned factors are playing a big part when wanting to read. If there is no interest in the reading material the students will have difficulties learning something from it. As James Maloney confirms with the statement: “A good book for a boy is one he wants to read” (as cited in, Henry, Lagos and Berndt, 2012, p. 145).

Many of the articles we read pointed out that making reading materials assessable for the students is the main key to developing the boys’ engagement with reading literacy. Another main key with reading literacy is that, we as teachers should follow up the boys’ reading, to see how it has developed, ask questions, make them write a book review when done reading or make a presentation when finished reading. As Fisher and Frey referring to (Millard, 2010), explain “They [boys] want to find themselves and lose themselves in books as girls do” (as cited in, Fisher and Frey, 2012, p. 595). By enhancing the boys’ confidence in reading, there is a possibility to let boys feel the same way girls do when reading.

4.4 The importance of time

Many sources claims that the time frame has an effect on students’ reading intervention. Viktoria Rodrigo, Daphne Greenberg, and Don Segal (2014), argue that the reading habits are an important part when discussing reading. Rodrigo, Greenberg, and Segal (2014) refers to Scales & Rhee, 2001, who explain that the reading habit concept definition as “how often, how well, and what adults like to read” (2014, p. 73).

Rodrigo, Greenberg, and Segal (2014), analyzed reading habits by measurements of how frequently the students read novels and whether the reading habits remain over time. The researchers (2014), refer to (Kim, 2003), who mentions that some researchers have also found an important factor with the development of their reading habits. The importance for developing students reading habits is a positive attitude toward reading in general. Rodrigo, Greenberg, and Segal (2014), argue that the more one reads, the better one becomes a reader (p. 75).
Some researchers have also founded that motivation and reading habits are closely linked. Rodrigo, Greenberg, and Segal (2014), refer to (Clark & Rumbold, 2006), who confirms that motivation is affected by the level of enjoyment and achievement resulting from the students reading experience (p. 85). Rodrigo, Greenberg, and Segal (2014), developed a reading pattern survey which they used at the beginning, at the end, and 6 months after the intervention. Some of their results showed that positive attitude towards reading is not enough to help the students with their reading enhancement and to be able to develop their reading habits. Consequently, Rodrigo, Greenberg, and Segal argue that the results showed that the students developed sustained motivation to read: they continued to read still after the reading intervention had ended, they read complete books, and still read more often (2014, p. 86).

If we then look at the article from Frank Serafini (2013), he explains how the most important part of the teacher’s job is to help unmotivated boys, to support them with their reading and to develop and enhance their interests in reading. He suggests that teachers should not only provide the students with access and support for their selection of reading materials, instead the teachers need to provide the students with a “greater amount of time to read and talk about their texts” (2013, p. 42). It is important as a teacher to talk to the boys and ask them questions about their reading, when it is optimal for them to read. Serafini (2013), states that, “you cannot get better at reading if you don’t spend time reading; it’s just that simple” (p. 42).

Bev Harrison (2012), is also interested in the same subject area as the previous researchers. She suggests a way to encourage boys’ literacy and that is to create pauses of time in which the boys are allowed to read freely. The lack of time for reading has also been identified by other researchers as a serious impact on the boys’ engagement with literacy. The activities Harrison (2012), used to encourage reading were designed in way to increase interest in reading and also have the further benefit of creating time that could be devoted to the reading itself (p. 44).

Additionally, Harrison (2012), suggests that one way to encourage reading for pleasure amongst the boys is to produce “pockets of time in which boys can read material of their choice” (p. 45). The researcher’s final conclusion is that it is possible to encourage boys to read for pleasure. By letting the boys choose reading materials for their own interests and making a student-centered environment, in which, the boys have “a greater sense of
involvement” (2012, p. 45). Harrison (2012), also states that the teachers should connect more with the peer culture, since it is important for the teacher to not only to adopt traditional interpretations of literacy, but to increase the use of and accept multimedia literacies which also can be an key benefit for the boys (p. 45).

Lastly, to summarize all the researchers and their different theories highlights the importance of time frames in reading, the researchers showed that the time frame which is set up for the students, are essential in developing their reading literacy and making them interested in reading. This will contribute to boys’ achievement reading literacy since they will be able to have the time to focus more on the process of understanding the books. It is important for the teacher to be involved in the students reading and to set up a relevant time frame for them.

Through these articles, we noticed that time frame is important when planning a reading task. The articles showed that the given choice of reading materials is a key point for the boys, as well as the time frame. It is the teacher's' task to gain the boys interest in reading and also to make them want to continue reading.
The main purpose of this section is to deliver a short summary of the complete paper and our conclusion based on our results which was introduced previously in the paper. The section will also include the before mentioned themes, possible implications with our study and suggestions for further research.

5.1 Summary

With the use of research synthesis as a method, we investigated different aspects that might remedy boys’ lower performances in reading literacy, where these aspects were connected to research on motivation, teacher modeling, text choices and time frames. Even though we mention two aspects that may be the cause of the gender gap, the sociocultural and biological, we found the same tool kit to remedy boys’ underachievement in reading.

The results indicate that motivation is a key factor in order for the students’ to develop their reading abilities. Therefore, teachers should examine their own styles to be able to expand different teaching strategies in order to remedy the low performances in reading. Through the use of teacher modeling, the research showed positive outcomes on boys and girls. When it comes to choosing reading materials, interests, choice and time frame are said to play a big role in boys’ participation. However, the results showed that the teachers need to be involved in students’ reading development by using different approaches; moreover, they should give the students a relevant time frame to focus more on the process of understanding the reading materials.

To conclude, our four themes can be used to counteract the problems in reading. Nevertheless, some scholars argue that teachers and schools should challenge the constructed understanding of masculinity through pedagogical reforms by developing a critical approach
that persuade the students to question the social construction of gender and the stereotypes of masculinity. The deconstruction of masculinity can affect boys’ engagement in reading literacy, and therefore should also be challenged by society.

5.2 Conclusion

The aim of this degree project was to obtain a greater understanding on boys’ underachievement in reading literacy in comparison to girls, and evaluate how teachers can remedy the gender gap and help boys improve their literacy. The results showed four above mentioned themes such as, motivation, teacher modeling, text’s interest and choices, and time frames. These are said to contribute to students’ improvements and development in reading and the possibilities of the students in the language classrooms can be enhanced.

The data gathered from our pilot study, the articles, dissertations, and books for this study, have provided some interesting findings. By carefully examining the existing research on our area, the linguistic theories suggest that motivation, teacher modeling, choice and interest in texts, and the importance of time frame will bridge the gender gap in reading literacy. There were rarely any quantitative evidence in the articles since students’ motivation is difficult to measure; however, numerous articles, books, and dissertations present the advantages of focusing on motivation and engagement, since it plays a big role in students learning. With a mix of qualitative and quantitative data, some articles showed that to a great extent that the interest in text, time frame, and teacher modeling also played a role in a students’ language development, and therefore these four themes may play a crucial part in remedying the gender gap in reading literacy.

We conclude that teachers indeed can help boys improve their reading literacy but teachers also need the time to observe students’ performances and have the time to carefully plan what can be done to help students achieve better in reading literacy.

Furthermore, we found that the current issue on boys’ decreasing achievement is increasingly discussed and debated by researchers; nonetheless, more needs to be done in this field. There is still a great deal we do not know about boys’ underachievement in school subjects.
5.3 Limitations and suggestions for further research

As with most research, this research has also a couple of limitations. Firstly, our study was limited by our small sample size in our pilot study, with only five secondary language teachers, the results lack representation of the secondary school teaching population because of the small sample size. Thus, a larger sample size of involvement in the pilot study would have a different impact on the results, because a larger amount of participants would make the results more reliable which might reflect what the school teaching population indicates.

Another limitation in this study is that there may be a risk that it includes publication bias, since we primarily used articles that are publicized. Norris and Ortega (2006) mention that research synthesis that use published articles should be conscious of publication bias. The issue with publication bias is that studies that do not publicize statistically significant results are in a great risk of being rejected and are unlikely to be published; however, Ortega (2010) suggests that synthesis might not only use published studies, but also include unpublished materials, even though there is a risk of relying on partial and biased sources (p. 114).

As stated above, it has been acknowledged that teachers and researchers are facing great challenges for trying to remedy the gender gap in reading literacy. We suggest that one can look at the effects in the gender gap development from a Swedish school context. The interest lays in further investigation on the different methods used to remedy the gender gap as an example the use of strategies or how to motivate the boys to perform better with their reading.

Other interesting approaches that are worth investigating would be to conduct a larger pilot study with more participants involved, to be able to receive more trustworthy results and to gain a better understanding of how teachers are working to bridge the gap between the genders, what methods the use and how they use them.

Furthermore, we propose further research on analyzing how schools can challenge the constructed understanding of masculinity through different pedagogical reforms; in addition, more research should be done in focus on Swedish boys’ language development in reading from a linguistic and gender perspective.
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Appendix

1. First teacher

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Malmö Högskola

Hej!


Vi har ett antal frågor som vi skulle vilja att ni svara på för att hjälpa oss med vår studie. Vi är väldigt tacksamma för er hjälp!

FRÅGOR:

1. Enligt PISA har svenska elevers läsförmåga förorsakats drastiskt, speciellt pojkar.
   * Är det något som har diskuterats i skolan/klassen?

   ![Ja/Nej]

2. Tror du att det är viktigt att hitta lösningar för att motverka skillnaderna mellan de två könen?

   ![Ja/Nej]

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, Varför?

---

Självklart... Att endast häfta av var utformning bygger upp det hår dömdet och där till störsexenter eller om att se av en annan skolform... manhavde skolan kunne inte vara i stora delar av skolans...
3. Vissa forskare talar om skolduktighet och antipluggkultur mellan de olika könen kan vara orsaken till könsskillnader i läsningen, är det något du har märkt av?

[JA]  [NEJ]

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, på vilket sätt har du märkt av dem?

[JA]  [NEJ]

4. Tror du könsskillnaderna kan bero på kulturella företeelser?

5.

"Lärarstudenter fick under lång tid sin lärarexamen utan att ha fått tillräcklig kunskap om hur ett språk- läs- och skrivutvecklande arbete ser ut".

-tror du att detta är en bidragande faktor till elevernas lässvårigheter?

[JA]  [NEJ]


[JA]  [NEJ]

7. Hur motiverar ni elever till att läsa?

Hitta böcker och texter som engagerar. Mycket
bägärväckande av böcker och gemensam läsning
8. Går ni efter elevernas intresse när det gäller att välja böcker eller väljer ni de traditionella skönlitteratur böckerna?

En handlingsstrategi jag säg en möte, de traditionella böckerna skulle jag välja, relevanta för eleverna.

9. Tycker ni det är någon skillnad mellan pojkar och flickors attityd gentemot läsning?

JA

NEJ

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, Varför?
2. Second teacher

Hej!


Vi har ett antal frågor som vi skulle vilja att ni svara på för att hjälpa oss med vår studie. Vi är väldigt tacksamma för er hjälp!

FRÅGOR:

1. Enligt PISA har svenska elevers läsförståelse försämrats drastiskt, speciellt pojkar.

   * Är det något som har diskuterats i skolan/klassen?

   

   

   NEJ

2. Tror du att det är viktigt att hitta lösningar för att motverka skillnaderna mellan de två könen?

   

   

   NEJ

Om du svarar JA på ovanstående fråga, Varför?

"för att det ska bli ett jämlikt samhälle"
3. Vissa förskarar talar om skolduktid och antipluggkultur mellan de olika könen kan vara orsaken till könsskillnader i läsningen, är det något du har märkt av?

JA

NEJ

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, på vilket sätt har du märkt av dem?

Det är inte "ione" bland pijkor att plugga

4. Tror du könsskillnaderna kan bero på kulturella företeelser?

JA

NEJ

5. 
"Lärarstudenter fick under lång tid sin lärarexamen utan att ha fått tillräcklig kunskap om hur ett språk- läs- och skrivutvecklande arbete ser ut".

- tror du att detta är en bidragande faktor till elevernas lässvårigheter?

JA

NEJ


Det är bra för elever med visst diagnosi

Ja, använder datorer i dag.

7. Hur motiverar ni elever till att läsa?

Genom att berätta hur uppfattade de läs- från hem...
8. Går ni efter elevernas intresse när det gäller att välja böcker eller väljer ni de traditionella skönlitteratur böckerna?

Elevernas intressen styr mycket.

9. Tycker ni det är någon skillnad mellan pojkar och flickors attityd gentemot läsning?

JA

NEJ

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, Varför?

Att inte riktigt att läsa, pojkar

Förskräckas inte ord.
Hej!


Vi har ett antal frågor som vi skulle vilja att ni svara på för att hjälpa oss med vår studie. Vi är väldigt tacksamma för er hjälp!

FRÅGOR:
1. Enligt PISA har svenska elevers läsförståelse försvänts drastiskt, speciellt pojkar.

   Är det något som har diskuterats i skolan/klassen?

   JA   NEJ

2. Tror du att det är viktigt att hitta lösningar för att motverka skillnaderna mellan de två könen?

   JA   NEJ

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, Varför?

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3. Vissa forskare talar om skolduktighet och antiplugkkultur mellan de olika könen kan vara orsaken till könsskillnader i läsningen, är det något du har märkt av?

JA  NEJ

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, på vilket sätt har du märkt av dem?


4. Tror du könsskillnaderna kan bero på kulturella företeelser?

JA  NEJ

5. "Lärarstuderter fick under lång tid sin lärarexamen utan att ha fått tillräcklig kunskap om hur ett språk- läs- och skrivutvecklande arbete ser ut".
   – tror du att detta är en bidragande faktor till elevernas lässvårigheter?

JA  NEJ


   Vid använder mycket Ipads cronobooks mc och PC i skolan och det är bra i mycket, men det är oxå viktigt att ha läs teman, läsa bok, återberätta, jobba med ordförståelse. Vi har nu på skolan ett läsprojekt __________________________
7. Hur motiverar ni elever till att läsa?

Att berätta för eleverna att det ingår i betygskriterierna och hör samman med hela språket. Läser du mycket bidrar det till att ordförståelsen blir bättre, skriftspråket blir bättre och även den muntliga biten.

8. Går ni efter elevernas intresse när det gäller att välja böcker eller väljer ni de traditionella skön litteratur böckerna?

Elevers intresse

9. Tycker ni det är någon skillnad mellan pojkar och flickors attityd gentemot läsning?

JA

NEJ

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, Varför?

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4. Fourth teacher

Hej!


Vi har ett antal frågor som vi skulle vilja att ni svara på för att hjälpa oss med vår studie. Vi är väldigt tacksamma för er hjälp!

FRÅGOR:

1. Enligt PISA har svenska elevers läsförståelse försämrats drastiskt, speciellt pojkar.

   * Är det något som har diskuterats i skolan/klassen?

      JA  NEJ

2. Tror du att det är viktigt att hitta lösningar för att motverka skillnaderna mellan de två könen?

      JA  NEJ

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, Varför?

Viktigt med jämställdhet i skolan, pojkar behöver också få fördelarna som kommer med läsning
3. Vissa forskare talar om skolduktighet och antipluggkultur mellan de olika könen kan vara orsaken till könskillnader i läsningen, är det något du har märkt av?

JA
NEJ

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, på vilket sätt har du märkt av dem?

Tjejer är mer motiverade att läsa medan pojkar inte orkar

4. Tror du könsskillnaderna kan bero på kulturella företeelser?

JA
NEJ

5. “Lärarstudenter fick under lång tid sin lärarexamen utan att ha fått tillräcklig kunskap om hur ett språk-läs- och skrivutvecklande arbete ser ut”.

– tror du att detta är en bidragande faktor till elevernas lässvårigheter?

JA
NEJ


Vi använder oss av datorer, både ja och nej. Vissa elever öppnar andra sidor istället för att plugga

7. Hur motiverar ni elever till att läsa?

Genom att försöka se till ha uppgifter som intresserade
8. Går ni efter elevernas intresse när det gäller att välja böcker eller väljer ni de traditionella skönlitteratur böckerna?

**Blandat**

9. Tycker ni det är någon skillnad mellan pojkar och flickors attityd gentemot läsning?

| JA | NEJ |

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, Varför?

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5. Fifth teacher

Hej!

Vi har ett antal frågor som vi skulle vilja att ni svara på för att hjälpa oss med vår studie. Vi är väldigt tacksamma för er hjälp!

FRÅGOR:

1. Enligt PISA har svenska elevers läsförmåga försämrats drastiskt, speciellt pojkar.
   *
   Är det något som har diskuterats i skolan/klassen?

   JA
   NEJ

2. Tror du att det är viktigt att hitta lösningar för att motverka skillnaderna mellan de två könen?

   JA
   NEJ

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, Varför?

För att det ska vara rätt utbildning alla har lika
3. Vissa forskare talar om skolduktid och antipluggkultur mellan de olika könen kan vara orsaken till könsskillnader i läsningen, är det något du har märkt av?

JA  
NEJ  

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, på vilket sätt har du märkt av dem?


4. Tror du könsskillnaderna kan bero på kulturella företeelser?

JA  
NEJ  

5.  
"Lärarstudenter fick under lång tid sin lärarexamen utan att ha fått tillräcklig kunskap om hur ett språk- läs- och skrivutvecklande arbete ser ut".  
– tror du att detta är en bidragande faktor till elevernas läsvärigheter?

JA  
NEJ  


[Undantag, google, drivet, vilja, mycket]

[Undantag, google, drivet, vilja, mycket]

7. Hur motiverar ni elever till att läsa?

Genom intressanta böcker och att de väljer

[Genom intressanta böcker och att de väljer]
8. Går ni efter elevernas intresse när det gäller att välja böcker eller väljer ni de traditionella skönlitteratur böckerna?

Blandet

9. Tycker ni det är någon skillnad mellan pojkar och flickors attityd gentemot läsning?

JA  NEJ

Om du har svarat JA på ovanstående fråga, Varför?

Tigger ni mer för läsning medan pojkarn
Tycker att det är förkastligt.