International Journal of Instruction *January 2013 ● Vol.6, No.1*
e-ISSN: 1308-1470 ● www.e-iji.net *p-ISSN: 1694-609X*

Motivation to Read: How Does It Change for Struggling Readers with and without Disabilities?

Macid A. Melekoğlu
Asst. Prof., Department of Special Education,
Education Faculty, Eskisehir Osmangazi University, Turkey
mamelekoglu@ogu.edu.tr
Kimber L. Wilkerson
Prof., Department of Rehabilitation Psychology and Special Education,
School of Education, University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA
klwilkerson@wisc.edu

Lack of reading motivation impedes upper elementary and secondary school students' willingness to improve critical reading skills and strategies to be successful in school. Struggling readers often show a negative attitude towards reading tasks and manifest low motivation to read. Although the importance of motivation is clear, there is limited research on reading motivation of struggling adolescents with disabilities. This study examined whether reading motivation of struggling readers with and without disabilities significantly changed after an eighteen week period of reading instruction in two elementary schools and one high school in a Midwest state of the United States of America (USA). Findings yielded significant improvement in motivation for adolescents without disabilities while motivation scores declined for students with disabilities. An overview of students' answers to survey questions is provided and some evidence-based methods that teachers can utilize to improve reading motivation of upper elementary and high school students are summarized.

Key Words: Motivation to Read, Reading, Motivation, Disabilities, Struggling Readers

INTRODUCTION

Many elementary and high school teachers in the USA encounter students with very low motivation to read in their classrooms (Guthrie, 2008). Since students with low reading skills struggle while reading any text at their grade levels (Fuchs et al., 2001; Therrien et al., 2006), reading for pleasure, which is one of the ultimate goals of learning to read, has become less observed among upper elementary and high school students (Ivey, 1998; Moje et al., 2000). Students without necessary reading skills cannot derive meaning from what they read, and thus, their motivation to read decreases significantly (Morgan and Fuchs, 2007; Pitcher et al., 2007; Strommen and Mates,

2004). Additionally, adolescents who are unmotivated can then exhibit a contrary attitude towards all activities involving reading and writing (Guthrie, 2008). Nevertheless, students' motivation to read is a critical factor in getting them involved in reading and improving their reading skills.

Even though the importance of motivation to read for adolescent readers is widely recognized, there is very limited research on unmotivated students, and tools and strategies that teachers can utilize with those students to encourage long lasting motivation to read (Guthrie, 2008). Secondary teachers who work with students with low motivation for reading in their classes can end up spending a substantial amount of time controlling behavioral problems. Due to high content area demands from teachers, secondary students rarely receive instructional support to increase their motivation and engagement in reading activities (Guthrie, 2008).

The majority of struggling adolescent readers and many adolescents with disabilities in upper elementary and high school read below the basic level and are still challenged by the literacy demands of their grade levels (Grigg et al., 2007; Lee et al., 2007; Wagner et al., 2003). To improve students' reading skills, adolescents' motivation to read is a critical intervention point; a lack of motivation adversely affects adolescents' abilities to enhance vocabulary and reading comprehension skills and to develop powerful reading strategies (Roberts et al., 2008). Due to serious problems with reading skills and consequently frustration, struggling readers often exhibit a negative attitude and low motivation to read (NJCLD, 2008; Swanson and Deshler, 2003). A limited numbers of studies have investigated the correlation between students' motivation to read and students' success in reading (Morgan and Fuchs, 2007). Since students' motivation to read may predict reading achievement, reading interventions for adolescents should also include strategies to improve motivation.

Continuous enhancement of adolescents' reading skills is important to be able to help them tackle challenging and complex academic tasks. However, continuous enhancement becomes more difficult with this age group compared to elementary grade students because adolescents typically do not exhibit great motivation to perform better in reading (Biancarosa and Snow, 2006). In addition, the majority of adolescents, irrespective of their reading ability, devote less time to reading compared to younger pupils (Moje et al., 2000), and do not set time apart for recreational reading due to low motivation to read (Strommen and Mates, 2004). However, research shows that promoting students' motivation to read can enhance the reading competency of struggling adolescent readers (Strommen and Mates, 2004). A national survey about the importance of motivation on reading achievement showed that there is a strong correlation between motivation and reading abilities (McKenna et al., 1995).

Although educators acknowledge the importance of reading motivation to become a proficient reader, adolescents' motivation to read has not been widely examined in reading research for students with disabilities (Strommen and Mates, 2004). The purpose of this study was to investigate whether motivation to read, as assessed by the Adolescent Motivation to Read Survey (AMRS), changed significantly for struggling adolescent readers with and without disabilities after eighteen weeks of reading

instruction in upper elementary and high schools. One sample t-tests were conducted to investigate whether students' motivation scores significantly improved from pretest to posttest. In addition, students' answers to questions in the AMRS are broadly examined. After the discussion of the results, practical methods to increase reading motivation of struggling adolescents are highlighted.

METHOD

Participants

Struggling readers with and without disabilities between grades four and twelve who are exposed to a structured, research-based reading program for students with reading difficulties at local elementary and high schools were the target of this study. "Struggling readers" was defined as students who obtained scores at a "basic" level (i.e., reading scores less than current grade level) or "below basic" level (i.e., reading scores significantly less than current grade level) on their most recent standardized reading test, the Scholastic Reading Inventory. A total of 45 students from two elementary schools and one high school in two rural cities in a Midwest state in the USA participated in this study. Participating students consisted of 10 students from fourth grade, 14 students from fifth grade, and 12 students from sixth grade in the two elementary schools, and 3 students from tenth grade, 5 students from eleventh grade, and 1 student from twelfth grade in the high school.

Table 1: Overall participating student characteristics

	%	*n*
Gender		
Female	62.2	28
Male	37.8	17
Ethnicity		
Caucasian	84.4	38
Hispanic	2.2	1
African American	2.2	1
Asian/ Asian American	4.4	2
Multi-racial/Multi-ethnic	6.7	3
Grade Level		
Fourth Grade	22.2	10
Fifth Grade	31.1	14
Sixth Grade	26.7	12
Tenth Grade	6.7	3
Eleventh Grade	11.1	5
Twelfth Grade	2.2	1
Disability Status		
Identified with a disability	42.2	19
Non-disabled	57.8	26

Of participating students, 62.2% were female (n = 28) and 37.8% were male (n= 17). The majority (84.4%) of participating students were Caucasian (n= 38) while 4.4% were Asian/Asian American (n= 2), 2.2% were Hispanic (n= 1), 2.2% were African American (n = 1), and 6.7% were from multi-racial/multi-ethnic background (n= 3). In

terms of disability status, 42.2% of participating adolescents (n= 19) were identified with a disability (i.e., learning disability, emotional and behavioral disorder, speech and language disorder, or other health impairment) by their school district while 57.8% were students without disabilities (n= 26).

Reading Instruction

The reading program that students were exposed to during the study period combines various evidence-based teaching methods including whole-group, small-group, and technology-integrated instruction. Each day, instruction starts with a 20 minute whole-group instruction session with the teacher. During this instruction period, teachers use various activities (e.g., vocabulary instruction, modeling of reading strategies, and read alouds) to improve specific reading skills. After the whole-group instruction, teachers divide students into three groups for the small-group rotations. For rotations, students have three instruction options: small-group instruction with the teacher, instructional software, and modeled and independent reading. Each rotation takes 20 minutes, and each group of students rotate among these activities. During the small-group instruction with the teacher, students are engaged in guided reading activities to practice specific reading strategies and improve their reading skills. At the instructional software rotation, students work independently on a computer to practice reading skills. During the modeled and independent reading rotation, students select a book from the paperbacks or audiobooks of the reading program to read silently and provide written responses to questions related to what they have read. After completing all rotations, students get back together as a whole group for a 10 minute wrap-up. The teacher quickly goes through the key points of the instruction, lets students share their reflections, and closes the instruction session.

For the purpose of this study, the instruction was delivered in specific classrooms allocated for the implementation of the reading program by school administration. The program was carried out at different time periods in the week determined according to daily schedules of schools. The reading classes consist of students from different grade levels and all students in the reading classes received the instruction five days a week in blocks of 90 or 100 minutes depending on the school district.

Adolescent Motivation to Read Survey (AMRS)

Motivation to read of participating adolescents was assessed with the AMRS. The motivation survey consists of 20 questions which students respond to using a four-point scale, and mainly assesses self-concept as a reader and the value placed on reading (Pitcher et al., 2007). The motivation surveys were administered by the first author to whole classes before and after the 18-week instruction period according to the survey administration directions. The survey took approximately 10 minutes to complete. Students' motivation scores were calculated according to the survey scoring directions.

The previous version of the motivation survey, Motivation to Read Survey for Elementary Grade Students, was evaluated for internal consistency and pre and posttest reliability with 330 third and fifth grade students in 27 classrooms in 4 schools (Gambrell et al., 1996). Internal consistency calculations yielded moderately high

reliability for both subscales (self-concept= .75; value= .82). Pre and posttest reliability coefficients of the survey also indicated moderately high reliability for both subscales (self-concept= .68; value= .70).

The entire session of each administration of the AMRS was recorded by using a digital voice recorder, and all recordings were checked for the fidelity of administration by using a checklist, which was created based on the teacher directions. Results of the fidelity checks yielded 99.8% fidelity in administering the AMRS (range, 98.4% to 100%) in pretest and 99.7% fidelity (range, 98.4% to 100%) in posttest. Additionally, motivation scores were recalculated for 20% of students to obtain reliability for calculation of the motivation scores, and the results indicated that students' motivation scores were calculated with 100% reliability.

RESULTS

Changes in Motivation Scores

The difference between motivation scores from pretest to posttest indicated changes in motivation to read for participating students. The results of the AMRS revealed three motivation scores: Self-Concept, Value of Reading, and Full Survey scores. One sample *t*-tests were conducted for each score to examine the significance of changes in those motivation scores (see Table 2). The results showed that Self-Concept scores of adolescents with disabilities decreased an average of 0.47 point (*SD*= 11.67; range, -27 to 25) but the change was not statistically significant (*t*[18]= -0.18, *p*= .862). Additionally, Value of Reading scores for students with disabilities declined an average of 4.16 point (*SD*= 10.47; range, -25 to 10), though this change was also not significant (*t*[18]= -1.73, *p*= .101). Likewise, the Full Survey scores of adolescents with disabilities decreased an average of 2.26 point (*SD*= 8.95; range, -26 to 14) and this decline was not significant (*t*[18]= -1.10, *p* = .285). On the other hand, Self-Concept scores of adolescents without disabilities improved an average of 4.35 points (*SD*= 8.66; range, -13 to 22) and this increase in Self-Concept was statistically significant (*t*[25]= 2.56, *p*= .017). The Value of Reading scores of students without disabilities also increased an average of 0.85 point (*SD*= 9.47; range, -15 to 23) but this change was not significant (*t*[25]= 0.46, *p*= .653). Similarly, the Full Survey scores of adolescents without disabilities increased an average of 2.77 points (*SD*= 7.47; range, -13 to 16), though this improvement was also not significant (*t*[25]= 1.89, *p*= .070).

Table 2: Results of one sample t-tests for changes in motivation to read

	Students with Disabilities			*Students without Disabilities*		
	M	*SD*	*t*	*M*	*SD*	*t*
Self-Concept	-0.47	11.67	-0.18	4.35	8.66	2.56*
Value of Reading	-4.16	10.47	-1.73	0.85	9.47	0.46
Full Survey	-2.26	8.95	-1.10	2.77	7.47	1.89

*$p < .05$

The results of *t*-tests yielded that only the Self-Concept scores of students without disabilities significantly increased over the study period. Although the Value of Reading and Full Survey of adolescents without disabilities improved from pretest to

posttest, those changes were not statistically significant. For adolescents with disabilities, all motivation scores decreased from pretest to posttest but those changes were not significant. To further investigate changes in adolescents' motivation to read, changes in students' answers from pretest to posttest for each question in the AMRS for adolescents with disabilities as well as students without disabilities were analyzed. This analysis provides a better understanding of students' thoughts about their Self-Concept and Value of Reading.

Analysis of Questions in the AMRS

Although the overall findings of the AMRS showed that the reading motivation of students with disabilities decreased while adolescents without disabilities exhibited improved motivation, an individual analysis of each question in the survey shows a better picture of changes in students' perception about reading. The AMRS consists of 20 questions with half of those questions focused on students' Self-Concept as a reader and the other half investigating students' thoughts about the Value of Reading. Table 3 demonstrates the changes in percentage of answers from pre to posttest for Self-Concept questions, and Table 4 shows those changes for Value of Reading questions.

As delineated in Table 3, students' answers to Self-Concept questions indicated that even though all of the participating students were reading below their current grade level, according to their reading achievement scores, only one student without a disability indicated that his or her friends think that he or she is "a poor reader" at the pretest and no one chose that response at the posttest. Most of the adolescents with disabilities claimed that they read "about the same as" their friends and do not experience significant problems with comprehending what they read at the posttest. Another noteworthy change in students' responses was that while most of the adolescents without disabilities

Table 3: Students' answers to self-concept as a reader questions in the AMRS

		Students without Disabilities			
Questions	Choices	Pretest % (*n*)	Posttest % (*n*)	Pretest % (*n*)	Posttest % (*n*)
My friends think I am….. reader	a very good	31.6 (6)	21.1 (4)	30.8 (8)	34.6 (9)
	a good	15.8 (3)	42.1 (8)	34.6 (9)	42.3(11)
	an OK	52.6(10)	36.8 (7)	30.8 (8)	23.1 (6)
	a poor	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	3.8 (1)	0.0 (0)
I read…..my friends	not as well as	42.1 (8)	26.3 (5)	23.1 (6)	11.5 (3)
	about the same as	36.8 (7)	47.4 (9)	53.9(14)	50.0(13)
	a little better than	15.8 (3)	15.8 (3)	11.5 (3)	34.6 (9)
	a lot better than	5.3 (1)	10.5 (2)	11.5 (3)	3.8 (1)
When I come to a word I don't know, I can….. figure it out	almost always	36.8 (7)	26.3 (5)	30.8 (8)	50.0(13)
	sometimes	57.9(11)	52.6(10)	69.2(18)	50.0(13)
	almost never	5.3 (1)	21.1 (4)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
	never	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
When I am reading by myself, I understand…..I read	almost everything	47.4 (9)	36.8 (7)	57.8(15)	65.4(17)
	some of what	42.1 (8)	57.9(11)	34.6 (9)	30.8 (8)
	almost none of what	10.5 (2)	0.0 (0)	3.8 (1)	3.8 (1)
	none of what	0.0 (0)	5.3 (1)	3.8 (1)	0.0 (0)

I am…..reader	a poor	0.0 (0)	15.8 (3)	3.8 (1)	0.0 (0)
	an OK	63.2(12)	31.6 (6)	26.9 (7)	26.9 (7)
	a good	31.6 (6)	42.1 (8)	46.2(12)	46.2(12)
	a very good	5.3 (1)	10.5 (2)	23.1 (6)	26.9 (7)
I worry about what other kids think about my reading …..	every day	5.3 (1)	15.8 (3)	3.8 (1)	0.0 (0)
	almost every day	26.3 (5)	5.3 (1)	11.5 (3)	3.8 (1)
	once in a while	36.8 (7)	42.1 (8)	38.5(10)	46.2(12)
	never	31.6 (6)	36.8 (7)	46.2(12)	50.0(13)
When my teacher asks me a question about what I have read, I…..of an answer	can never think	0.0 (0)	10.5 (2)	3.8 (1)	0.0 (0)
	have trouble thinking	15.8 (3)	5.3 (1)	15.4 (4)	7.6 (2)
	sometimes think	57.9(11)	63.2(12)	38.5(10)	46.2(12)
	always think	26.3 (5)	21.1 (4)	42.3(11)	46.2(12)
Reading is…..for me	very easy	5.3 (1)	10.5 (2)	46.2(12)	50.0(13)
	kind of easy	57.9(11)	52.6(10)	30.8 (8)	42.3(11)
	kind of hard	36.8 (7)	36.8 (7)	19.2 (5)	7.7 (2)
	very hard	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	3.8 (1)	0.0 (0)
When I am in a group talking about what we are reading, I….. talk about my ideas	almost never	21.1(4)	15.8 (3)	7.7 (2)	3.8 (1)
	sometimes	47.4(9)	63.2(12)	46.2(12)	38.5(10)
	almost always	21.1(4)	21.1 (4)	26.9 (7)	30.8 (8)
	always	10.5(2)	0.0 (0)	19.2 (5)	26.9 (7)
When I read out loud I am….. reader	a poor	21.1(4)	15.8 (3)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
	an OK	47.4(9)	52.6(10)	46.2(12)	38.5(10)
	a good	15.8(3)	21.1 (4)	30.8 (8)	34.6 (9)
	a very good	15.8(3)	10.5 (2)	23.1 (6)	26.9 (7)

Note. AMRS = Adolescent Motivation to Read Survey.

(69.2%) indicated that they can "sometimes" figure out an unknown word while reading in the pretest, half of the adolescents without disabilities claimed that they can "almost always" figure out an unknown word while reading at the time of the posttest. Students' answers also showed that perceptions of adolescents with disabilities about their reading ability changed over the study period with 15.8% of them indicating that they are poor readers at the posttest, whereas none had claimed that they were poor readers in the pretest. Additionally, perceptions about the difficulty of reading in general improved from pretest to posttest for adolescents in both groups.

Table 4: Students' answers to value of reading questions in the AMRS

		Students without Disabilities			
		Pretest	Posttest	Pretest	Posttest
Questions	Choices	% (*n*)	% (*n*)	% (*n*)	% (*n*)
Reading a book is something I like to do	never	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)	3.8 (1)	3.8 (1)
	not very often	26.3 (5)	15.4 (2)	15.4 (4)	7.7 (2)
	sometimes	57.9(11)	69.2 (9)	53.8(14)	76.9(20)
	often	15.8 (3)	15.4 (2)	26.9 (7)	11.5 (3)
My best friends think reading is …..	really fun	5.3 (1)	15.4 (2)	7.7 (2)	3.8 (1)
	fun	15.8 (3)	7.7 (1)	26.9 (7)	30.8 (8)
	OK to do	52.6(10)	53.8 (7)	46.2(12)	46.2(12)
	no fun at all	26.3 (5)	23.1 (3)	19.2 (5)	19.2 (5)
I tell my friends about good books I read. I…..	never do this	31.6 (6)	23.1 (3)	23.1 (6)	11.5 (3)
	almost never do this	5.3 (1)	15.4 (2)	23.1 (6)	23.1 (6)
	do this some of the time	57.9(11)	53.8 (7)	42.3(11)	46.2(12)
	do this a lot	5.3 (1)	7.7 (1)	11.5 (3)	19.2 (5)
People who read a lot are…..	very interesting	15.8 (3)	23.1 (3)	11.5 (3)	11.5 (3)
	interesting	47.4 (9)	30.7 (4)	57.7(15)	69.2(18)
	not very interesting	21.1 (4)	38.5 (5)	19.2 (5)	7.7 (2)
	boring	15.8 (3)	7.7 (1)	11.5 (3)	11.5 (3)
I think libraries are…..place to spend time	a great	26.3 (5)	15.4 (2)	26.9 (7)	34.6 (9)
	an interesting	21.1 (4)	15.4 (2)	19.2 (5)	7.7 (2)
	an OK	31.6 (6)	53.8 (7)	46.2(12)	46.2(12)
	a boring	21.1 (4)	15.4 (2)	7.7 (2)	11.5 (3)
Knowing how to read well is…..	not very important	0.0 (0)	7.7 (1)	0.0 (0)	0.0 (0)
	sort of important	5.3 (1)	15.4 (2)	3.8 (1)	3.8 (1)
	important	42.1 (8)	23.1 (3)	34.6 (9)	34.6 (9)
	very important	52.6(10)	53.8 (7)	61.5(16)	61.5(16)
I think reading is ….. way to spend time	a boring	5.3 (1)	15.4 (2)	11.5 (3)	15.4 (4)
	an OK	63.2(12)	53.8 (7)	57.7(15)	50.0(13)
	an interesting	15.8 (3)	15.4 (2)	15.4 (4)	19.2 (5)
	a great	15.8 (3)	15.4 (2)	15.4 (4)	15.4 (4)
As an adult, I will spend….. reading	none of my time	10.5 (2)	7.7 (1)	7.7 (2)	3.8 (1)
	very little time	26.3 (5)	15.4 (2)	11.5 (3)	26.9 (7)
	some of my time	52.6(10)	61.5 (8)	69.2(18)	50.0(13)
	a lot of my time	10.5 (2)	15.4 (2)	11.5 (3)	19.2 (5)
I would like for my teachers to read out loud in my classes…..	every day	21.1(4)	23.1 (3)	19.2 (5)	26.9 (7)
	almost every day	31.6(6)	23.1 (3)	11.5 (3)	15.4 (4)
	once in a while	47.4(9)	46.1 (6)	57.7(15)	38.5(10)
	never	0.0 (0)	7.7 (1)	11.5 (3)	19.2 (5)
When someone gives me a book for a present, I feel…..	very happy	47.4(9)	23.1 (3)	26.9 (7)	30.8 (8)
	sort of happy	31.6(6)	53.8 (7)	53.8(14)	38.5(10)
	sort of unhappy	5.3 (1)	7.7 (1)	15.4 (4)	26.9 (7)
	unhappy	15.8(3)	15.4 (2)	3.8 (1)	3.8 (1)

Note. AMRS = Adolescent Motivation to Read Survey.

As can be seen in Table 4, most of the students reported that they sometimes or often like reading a book despite the fact that they are struggling readers. While the responses of adolescents with disabilities did not significantly change from pre to posttest for the question on whether they like reading a book, the percentage of adolescents without

disabilities who reported that they sometimes like to read a book increased from 53.8% at the pretest to 76.9% at the posttest. However, some of those adolescents believe that their friends think reading is not a fun activity and reading is a boring way to spend time. Interestingly, most of the adolescents with disabilities and students without disabilities report that knowing how to read well is very important. Although some adolescents with disabilities and students without disabilities claim that they won't spend any time reading when they are adults, many adolescents indicate that they will devote some of their time for reading.

DISCUSSION

Findings of this study indicated that there was no significant change in motivation to read of students with disabilities from pretest to posttest; their all motivation scores declined. These results support others' findings that since students with disabilities struggle with serious problems with reading comprehension (Denton and Vaughn, 2008; Newman, 2006), they manifest extremely low reading motivation (Pitcher et al., 2007; Strommen and Mates, 2004). The reason behind the negative changes in motivation to read of participating adolescents with disabilities might have been their continuous struggle with reading and below grade level reading performance. As adolescents with disabilities improve their reading skills and start to perform at or above grade level, their reading motivation may also develop at the same time.

Furthermore, all motivation scores of adolescents without disabilities increased from pretest to posttest but only the change in Self-Concept scores was statistically significant. These findings support that, perhaps due to serious difficulties in reading, adolescents with disabilities showed lower motivation to read compared to their peers without disabilities (NJCLD, 2008). Additionally, since there was an escalating trend for Value of Reading and Full Survey scores of adolescents without disabilities over the study period, a longer exposure to reading instruction may have yielded greater changes in those motivation scores as well.

Findings of the motivation survey yielded that Value of Reading scores of all participating adolescents improved the least compared to other motivation scores. In fact, students' responses to Value of Reading questions on the AMRS were fairly positive at pre and posttest. As adolescents developed their reading skills, they started to think positively about their reading abilities and thus, may have improved their Self-Concept as a reader. However, having better reading skills did not significantly change students' thoughts about the importance of reading as reported in the survey responses. The lack of gains in Value of Reading explains the lack of significant findings related to overall improvement in motivation to read as measured by the Full Survey scores for both adolescents with and without disabilities. One implication of this finding for practice is that reading teachers should consider focusing on the importance of reading for students' lives in addition to improving their reading skills. If adolescents appreciate the value of reading, they might develop higher motivation to read and thus make even more improvements in reading.

Practical Tips to Improve Adolescents' Motivation to Read

To increase adolescents' willingness to read, basic reading skills of struggling adolescent readers should be enhanced as a first step (Morgan and Fuchs, 2007; Pitcher et al., 2007; Strommen and Mates, 2004). Technology-based reading instruction can improve students' motivation to read because user-friendly computer programs make teaching easier for educators and instruction more enjoyable for students. As a result, technology can become a motivating factor for struggling adolescent readers who receive instruction for improving their reading skills (Hall et al., 2000).

Self-directed learning is a crucially important instructional technique that requires motivation and needs to be taught explicitly to struggling adolescent readers. Competent readers do not succeed in other content areas without engagement and motivation (Biancarosa and Snow, 2006). In order to improve adolescents' motivation to read, teachers should offer a variety of reading materials, and dedicate independent reading time to their daily instruction (Biancarosa and Snow, 2006). Providing reading choices does not mean that adolescents should be left entirely on their own because continuous teacher support is critical to successful completion of reading assignments and for improving motivation. Additionally, motivation of adolescents with reading difficulties can be enhanced by teaching students how to analyze the relevancy between their reading materials and their experiences in life (Biancarosa and Snow, 2006).

Providing constructive feedback regarding adolescents' individual reading gains is also crucial to improve motivation to read (Marzano, 2003). If a teacher creates a competitive environment in the classroom, only a small number of students will be considered successful and many students won't exhibit motivation to excel in reading classes. However, if the teacher regards the reading gains of each student individually and does not compare them to each other, everyone can enjoy success and can become motivated readers (Marzano, 2003). Additionally, teachers can direct students to work in pairs and have them provide suggestions to each other about their reading work since students usually benefit from their peers' feedback regarding their reading own performance (Guthrie and Humenick, 2004). Furthermore, naturally engaging reading activities and tasks increase reading motivation of youth in school (Marzano, 2003). When providing a reading task or activity, teachers should consider whether students are capable of tackling the task without too many struggles, and provide tasks that are exciting and intriguing.

Having adolescents choose a reading task among various options can also improve adolescents' curiosity to read, and hence, their willingness to spend more time reading (Guthrie and Humenick, 2004). To keep adolescents motivated in reading classes, teachers can have students develop and work on long term projects of their own. Encouraging students to construct a project that is interesting and exciting to them significantly improves their engagement in the project, and consequently, student motivation to complete the project will increase in the classroom (Guthrie and Humenick, 2004; Marzano, 2003). Additionally, when teachers explain how students' approach to reading tasks influences their motivation and the importance of motivation

for success in school, students can better understand the dynamics of motivation and hopefully change their disposition accordingly (Marzano, 2003).

In short, teachers should blend and utilize various methods to increase the reading motivation of adolescents in their classrooms. Focusing on the motivation of struggling adolescent readers is critical because, while students who are motivated to read readily and autonomously enhance their reading performance and comprehension skills, unmotivated adolescents are usually reluctant to improve their reading and do not acquire the necessary skills to become a proficient readers. For these reasons, motivation is considered an important factor in ensuring gains in reading and attention to motivation should be an indispensable component of daily reading instruction.

REFERENCES

Biancarosa, C. & Snow, C. E. (2006). *Reading next- A vision for action and research in middle and high school literacy: A report to Carnegie of New York (2nd ed.)*. Washington, DC: Alliance for Excellent Education.

Denton, C. A. & Vaughn, S. (2008). Reading and writing intervention for older students with disabilities: Possibilities and challenges. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice, 23*, 61-62.

Fuchs, L. S. et al. (2001). Oral reading fluency as an indicator of reading competence: A theoretical, empirical, and historical analysis. *Scientific Studies of Reading, 5*, 239-256.

Gambrell, L. B. et al. (1996). Assessing motivation to read. *The Reading Teacher*, *49*, 518-533.

Grigg, W. et al. (2007). The nation's report card: 12^{th}-grade reading and mathematics 2005 (NCES 2007-468). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. Retrieved March 18, 2008, from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007468

Guthrie, J. T. & Humenick, N. M. (2004). Motivating students to read: Evidence for classroom practices that increase reading motivation and achievement. In P. McCardle & V. Chhabra (Eds), *The voice of evidence in reading research* (pp. 329-354). Baltimore, MD: Paul H. Brookes Publishing.

Guthrie, J. T. (2008). Reading motivation and engagement in middle and high school. In J. T. Guthrie (Ed.), *Engaging adolescents in reading* (pp. 1-16). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Hall, T. E. et al. (2000). Computer assisted instruction in reading for students with learning disabilities: A research synthesis. *Education and Treatment of Children*, *23*, 173-193.

Ivey, G. (1998). Discovering readers in the middle level school: A few helpful clues. *National Association of Secondary School Principal (NASSP) Bulletin*, *82*, 48-56.

Lee, J. et al. (2007). The nation's report card: Reading 2007 (NCES 2007-496). Washington, DC: National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education. Retrieved November 5, 2007, from http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.asp?pubid=2007496

Marzano, R. J. (2003). *What works in schools: Translating research into action*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

McKenna, M. C. et al. (1995). Children's attitudes toward reading: A national survey. *Reading Research Quarterly*, *30*, 934-956.

Moje, E. B. et al. (2000). Reinventing adolescent literacy for new times: Perennial and millennial issues. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *43*, 400-410.

Morgan, P. L. & Fuchs, D. (2007). Is there a bidirectional relationship between children's reading skills and reading motivation? *Exceptional Children*, *73*, 165-183.

National Joint Committee on Learning Disabilities (NJCLD). (2008). Adolescent literacy and older students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disability Quarterly*, *31*, 211-218.

Newman, L. (2006, July). *Facts from NLTS2: General education participation and academic performance of students with learning disabilities*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International. Retrieved February 10, 2009, from http://www.nlts2.org/fact_sheets/nlts2_fact_sheet_2006_07.pdf

Pitcher. S. M. et al. (2007). Assessing adolescents' motivation to read. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *50*, 378-396.

Roberts G. et al. (2008). Evidence-based strategies for reading instruction of older students with learning disabilities. *Learning Disabilities Research and Practice*, *23*, 63-69.

Strommen, L. T. & Mates, B. F. (2004). Learning to love reading: Interviews with older children and teens. *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy*, *48*, 188-200.

Swanson, H. L. & Deshler, D. (2003). Instructing adolescents with learning disabilities: Converting a meta-analysis to practice. *Journal of Learning Disabilities*, *36*, 124-135.

Therrien, W. J. et al. (2006). Boosting fluency and comprehension to improve reading achievement. *Teaching Exceptional Children, 38(3)*, 22-26.

Wagner, M. et al. (2003). *The achievements of youth with disabilities during secondary school. A report from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2)*. Menlo Park, CA: SRI International. Retrieved February 12, 2009, from http://www.nlts2.org/reports/2003_11/nlts2_report_2003_11_ complete.pdf