


## Reading preferences of Primary Education students according to sex and type of school

Eulalia Agrelo-Costas   
Universidad de Vigo, Spain  
[magrelo@uvigo.es](mailto:magrelo@uvigo.es)

Isabel Mociño-González   
Universidad de Vigo, Spain  
[imocino@uvigo.gal](mailto:imocino@uvigo.gal)

Carla Míguez-Álvarez   
Universidad de Vigo, Spain  
[camiguez@uvigo.gal](mailto:camiguez@uvigo.gal)

Received: 14/02/2023

Accepted: 14/05/2023

### Abstract

Given the relevance of reading, we are presenting a study on reading preferences among students in 6th grade of Primary Education. The objective is to determine the attitudes towards reading and the reading preferences of these students based on two variables: gender and type of school. To this end, a questionnaire was administered to a sample of 416 6th grade students from 9 schools, in which attitudes towards reading, preferences in the choice of literary genres and topics, as well as the use of new media and language of frequent reading were evaluated. The results, analysed using a descriptive non-experimental method, indicate that girls show more favourable attitudes towards recreational reading, with more diverse interests in terms of genre, topics and language. Likewise, public schools show more encouraging results in all the dimensions addressed. This research highlights the need to review existing reading practices and implement new proposals from the paradigm of literary education, which will result in the development of the reading competence and other types of learning.

**Keywords:** Reading research; reading habits; reading competence; literary education; Primary Education.

**How to cite:** Agrelo-Costas, E., Mociño-González, I., & Míguez-Álvarez, C. (2023). Reading preferences of Primary Education students according to sex and type of school. *Ocnos*, 22(2). [https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos\\_2023.22.2.389](https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos_2023.22.2.389)



## Preferencias lectoras del alumnado de Educación Primaria según el sexo y titularidad del centro educativo

Eulalia Agrelo-Costas   
Universidad de Vigo, Spain  
[magrelo@uvigo.es](mailto:magrelo@uvigo.es)

Isabel Mociño-González   
Universidad de Vigo, Spain  
[imocino@uvigo.gal](mailto:imocino@uvigo.gal)

Carla Míguez-Álvarez   
Universidad de Vigo, Spain  
[camiguez@uvigo.gal](mailto:camiguez@uvigo.gal)

Recibido: 14/02/2023

Aceptado: 14/05/2023

### Resumen

Dada la relevancia de la lectura, se presenta un estudio sobre las preferencias lectoras entre el alumnado de 6º curso de Educación Primaria. El objetivo es determinar las actitudes hacia la lectura y las preferencias lectoras de este alumnado a partir de dos variables: sexo y titularidad del centro educativo. Se empleó un cuestionario con el que se evaluaron las actitudes hacia la lectura y las preferencias en la elección de géneros literarios y temáticas, así como el uso de nuevos soportes y la lengua frecuente de lectura. La muestra estuvo compuesta por 416 alumnos y alumnas de 6º curso de 9 centros educativos. Los resultados, que fueron analizados mediante un método no experimental descriptivo, indican que las niñas evidencian actitudes más favorables hacia la lectura recreativa, con intereses más diversos en cuanto al género, la temática y la lengua. Asimismo, los centros educativos públicos manifiestan resultados más alentadores en el conjunto de las dimensiones abordadas. Esta investigación pone de relieve la necesidad de revisar las prácticas lectoras existentes e implementar nuevas propuestas desde el paradigma de la educación literaria, lo que redundará en el desarrollo de la competencia lectora y de otros aprendizajes.

**Palabras clave:** Investigación en lectura; hábitos de lectura; competencia lectora; educación literaria; Educación Primaria.

**Cómo citar:** Agrelo-Costas, E., Mociño-González, I., & Míguez-Álvarez, C. (2023). Preferencias lectoras del alumnado de Educación Primaria según el sexo y titularidad del centro educativo. *Ocnos*, 22(2). [https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos\\_2023.22.2.389](https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos_2023.22.2.389)



## Introduction

Reading is of great interest in the school sphere, both because it leads to access to knowledge and culture, and because of its transformative nature. Becoming a competent reader involves the control of actions linked to textual comprehension and adaptation to the proposed reading objectives (Lluch & Zayas, 2015). Addressing this task through literary education fosters the development of literary competence (Dueñas, 2013), which requires the mastery of other sub-competences (textual, genre, metaliterary, intertextual, encyclopaedic and cultural), to which should be added attitudes towards learning and the effect of other factors (linguistic, psychological, social, historical, cultural and literary above all) (Cerrillo, 2007).

Reading literacy leads to the enjoyment and voluntary practice of reading, as well as to making progress in reading literacy and gaining other skills (Clark et al., 2011). This wilfulness - beside school prescription - has an impact on the formation of the reading habit (Moreno, 2005), which increases communicative fluency, the improvement of cognitive abilities and the stimulation of the imagination (Ruiz et al., 2022). Students who read more also obtain better grades, although they are more critical of the education system, as they “believe that more time is spent on traditional methodologies (listening to teachers’ explanations) and less on more participatory proposals that leave autonomy and initiative to students” (Fraguela-Vale et al., 2016, p. 74).

The rewarding encounter with reading determines the future attitude towards reading and learning (Dueñas, 2013; Artola et al., 2017), so the teacher-mediator should consider the students’ reading preferences and select literary works capable of seducing them and accompanying them in their education (Merisuo-Storm & Soininen, 2014; Neira, 2016). Moreover, by perceiving that their preferences influence the teacher’s decision, they will be more motivated to read (Merisuo-Storm, 2006; Jarre, 2008; Artola et al., 2013). In fact, these works could be the prelude to others from the academic canon, promote the reduction of texts notable for their popularity and contribute to the enrichment of “their initial spontaneous interests, with the aim of overcoming gender stereotypes” (Melero et al., 2020, p. 176).

On the other hand, teachers should rethink their role as mediators, as their reading influence on students is limited to 15.38% (Asociación Amigos del Libro Infantil, 2018). This is because the environment is the real mediator, i.e. the dominant cultural conception and way of life in a given context, on the basis of which consumerism is encouraged and cultural homologation is promoted (Cid, 2014). This also affects the family, whose share of influence is reduced to 13% (Cid, 2014), despite the fact that their involvement improves reading attitudes and skills (Jiménez-Pérez et al., 2020).

It is essential to pay attention to these aspects in 6<sup>th</sup> grade of Primary Education, becoming an adolescent entails a progressive reduction in reading (Neira, 2015, 2016; Jaraíz et al., 2022), especially among boys (Muñoz & Hernández, 2011). They perceive it as an information tool and not so much as a leisure option (Schwartz, 2002), as well as feeling more demotivated because it does not offer them a repertoire close to their tastes (Jarre, 2008) and because they almost always start from a lower reading competence (Scheiber et al., 2015).

As schools must listen to their students in order to train competent readers (Jover, 2008), generally speaking this paper is aimed at identifying the attitudes towards reading and the reading preferences of students in 6<sup>th</sup> year of Primary Education, taking into account two variables: gender and the type of school. In the first case (boys/girls), to verify whether gender stereotypes emerge from initial readings (Schwartz, 2002; Merisuo-Storm, 2006) and to contribute

to equity in reading; in the second (public/private), because it is relevant to delve into how diverse ecosystems influence reading (Neira, 2015).

This general objective is specified in other more specific ones such as: to determine the attitude towards reading both as a leisure activity and as a regulated practice; and to establish reading preferences in relation to literary genres, themes, media and language, relevant aspects to stimulate the reading habit and personal enjoyment, which strengthen the relationship between reading competence and performance (Gil, 2011; Viramontes et al., 2019).

## Method

This study falls within quantitative research techniques and employs the descriptive non-experimental method to delimit a series of conditions that characterise a given population group (McMillan & Schumacher, 2005).

### Sample

An incidental sample of students from 6<sup>th</sup> year of Primary Education was selected, with non-probabilistic convenience sampling. All 25 primary schools in Pontevedra city council were asked to participate: 18 public and 7 private schools, according to data from the Department of Education of Galicia. 925 students were enrolled in 6<sup>th</sup> year. The aim was to involve as many students as possible. The final sample consists of 416 students, 198 boys (47.6%) and 218 girls (52.4%) attending 9 schools (6 public, 326 students, and 3 private, 90 students). The sample for private establishments is smaller because, of the 5 establishments selected, 2 declined to participate.

### Instruments

In order to conduct this research, a questionnaire of our own was designed, following Artola et al. (2013, 2017) and Neira (2015, 2016). In the first part, it records identification data (gender, country of birth, educational establishment and everyday language) and, in the second part, 26 items are included on the students' reading preferences, assessed using a Likert-type scale. Participants selected one option from the 5 possible answers: 1-*Not at all*, 2-*Slightly*, 3-*Somewhat*, 4-*Quite a lot* and 5-*A lot*.

Items were divided according to the information they assessed into 5 domains: attitudes towards reading (1 and 2); preferences in the choice of literary genres (3 to 8); thematic interests (9 to 23); use of new reading media (24, plus 1 open-ended question); and frequent reading language (25 and 26).

### Procedure

The questionnaire was reviewed and validated by a group of experts made up of university teachers of language and literature didactics from the Primary Education degree, as well as practising teachers from 6<sup>th</sup> year of Primary Education. With the informed consent of the parents and the accompaniment of the classroom tutor, the questionnaires were distributed to the whole class group. The Declaration of Helsinki research protocol was followed. After a series of brief explanations of its purpose and content, their questions were read aloud, with an emphasis on

question 7, to facilitate the identification of the picture book. Students were given 20 minutes to respond.

### Data analysis schedule

The data were computerised and reviewed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach’s alpha and the descriptive data (mean and standard deviation) were analysed as a whole and in groups: boys and girls, and public and private schools. The distribution of responses in the latter 2 groups was compared with the Mann-Whitney U test and the level of significance was calculated with Fisher’s exact method. On the other hand, the correlation between the dimensions into which the items are grouped was calculated using Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient. The level of significance was set at  $p < .05$ , a common index for studies in the Humanities and Social Sciences.

## Results

The reliability of the scale was calculated using Cronbach’s alpha as a tool. The result was  $\alpha = .824$ , which is above the minimum required for reliable research ( $\alpha = .70$ ) (McMillan & Schumacher, 2005). Moreover, this result is very similar to that obtained by Artola et al. (2017), who used a similar questionnaire on a sample of students of 6<sup>th</sup> year ( $\alpha = .86$ ).

Items assessing attitudes towards reading include a liking for recreational reading and for reading prescribed in the classroom. As can be seen in table 1, the participants show an acceptable attitude towards this practice, although the preference for recreational reading is higher than that proposed by the teachers. We find a significant gender difference favourable to girls in voluntary reading, but no significant gender dissimilarity in compulsory reading.

**Table 1. Attitudes towards reading by gender (Mean and SD)**

Item	General	Gender			S	In favour of...
		Boys	Girls			
Do you like reading...						
1. in your spare time?	3.58 (1.14)	3.26 (1.15)	3.88 (1.05)	<.001		Girls
2. the books proposed by your teachers?	3.24 (1.11)	3.13 (1.11)	3.33 (1.11)	.308		

The comparison by school (table 2) shows that, although students in public schools like to read more in their free time, such difference is not significant. However, when it comes to the enjoyment of the books prescribed by teachers, students in public schools tend to prefer them to those in private schools, where teachers’ choices seem to be less accepted.

**Table 2. Attitudes towards reading by type of school (Mean and SD)**

Item	General	Type of school			S	In favour of...
		Public	Private			
Do you like reading...						
1. in your spare time?	3.58 (1.14)	3.64 (1.14)	3.38 (1.13)	0.54		

Item	General	Type of school			In favour of...
		Public	Private	S	
2. the books proposed by your teachers?	3.24 (1.11)	3.37 (1.1)	2.78 (1.03)	<.001	Public school

Items on preferences in the choice of literary genre were elaborated on the basis of Lluich's (2010) classification by literary genre and subject matter. According to table 3, students prefer to read narrative works, comics and picture books, with theatre, poetry and the press being the least popular. In terms of gender, girls gave higher scores to narrative, theatre and press/magazines, while boys gave higher scores to comics.

**Table 3. Preferences in the choice of literary genres by gender (Mean and SD)**

Item	General Average (SD)	Gender		S	In favour of...
		Boys Average (SD)	Girls Average (SD)		
Do you like reading...		Average (SD)	Average (SD)		
3. narrative?	3.6 (1.23)	3.31 (1.30)	3.86 (1.11)	<.001	Girls
4. poetry?	2.62 (1.33)	2.49 (1.30)	2.73 (1.35)	.176	
5. theatre?	2.95 (1.39)	2.57 (1.30)	3.29 (1.39)	<.001	Girls
6. comics?	3.52 (1.44)	4.05 (1.16)	3.05 (1.50)	<.001	Boys
7. picture books?	3.11 (1.27)	3.16 (1.21)	3.07 (1.32)	.377	
8. press or magazines?	2.71 (1.32)	2.49 (1.30)	2.91 (1.32)	.027	Girls

As for the type of school, table 4 shows that students in public schools have a greater preference for works of poetry and comics than students in private schools.

**Table 4. Preferences in the choice of literary genres by type of school (Mean and SD)**

Item	General	Type of school			In favour of...
		Public	Private	S	
Do you like reading...					
3. narrative?	3.6 (1.23)	3.64 (1.21)	3.48 (1.29)	.164	
4. poetry?	2.62 (1.33)	2.69 (1.31)	2.37 (1.37)	.049	Public school
5. theatre?	2.95 (1.39)	2.94 (1.40)	2.99 (1.38)	.792	
6. comics?	3.52 (1.44)	3.65 (1.39)	3.06 (1.50)	<.001	Public school
7. picture books?	3.11 (1.27)	3.09 (1.26)	3.2 (1.28)	.073	
8. press or magazines?	2.71 (1.32)	2.69 (1.31)	2.81 (1.37)	.734	

Thematic preferences were also based on Lluich's (2010) classification. Table 5 shows that the preferred themes are: adventure and action, humour, mystery and horror, and fantasy. By gender, girls give higher ratings to fantasy, love, family, family, police and detectives, mystery and horror stories. On the other hand, boys give significantly higher scores to sports.

**Table 5. Thematic preferences by gender (Mean and SD)**

Item	General	Gender			In favour of...
		Boys	Girls	S	
Do you like to read books about...					
9. adventure and action?	4.31 (.97)	4.3 (.98)	4.32 (.96)	.087	
10. mystery and terror?	3.93 (1.29)	3.93 (1.21)	3.93 (1.36)	<b>.044</b>	Girls
11. fantasy?	3.77 (1.24)	3.47 (1.27)	4.04 (1.16)	<b>&lt;.001</b>	Girls
12. sci-fi?	3.26 (1.81)	3.38 (1.37)	3.16 (1.32)	.335	
13. cops and detectives?	3.41 (1.30)	3.27 (1.26)	3.55 (1.33)	<b>.017</b>	Girls
14. love?	2.46 (1.4)	1.84 (1.08)	3.02 (1.42)	<b>&lt;.001</b>	Girls
15. humour?	4.26 (1.04)	4.3 (1.03)	4.22 (1.06)	.972	
16. family stories?	3.14 (1.20)	2.76 (1.18)	3.49 (1.10)	<b>&lt;.001</b>	Girls
17. everyday problems?	2.67 (1.39)	2.59 (1.36)	2.73 (1.41)	.393	
18. historical events?	3.07 (1.29)	3.16 (1.27)	2.99 (1.31)	.610	
19. animals or plants?	3.13 (1.25)	3.15 (1.20)	3.11 (1.29)	.518	
20. science?	3.28 (1.34)	3.41 (1.28)	3.16 (1.38)	.117	
21. sport?	3.09 (1.51)	3.42 (1.50)	2.78 (1.46)	<b>&lt;.001</b>	Boys
22. historical figures?	2.92 (1.27)	2.98 (1.28)	2.87 (1.26)	.833	
23. other cultures?	3 (1.26)	2.88 (1.25)	3.12 (1.27)	.419	

In terms of differences by type of school, [table 6](#) shows that the distribution is similar, except that students in public schools give higher scores to humour books and stories about everyday problems, while those in private schools opt for police and detective stories.

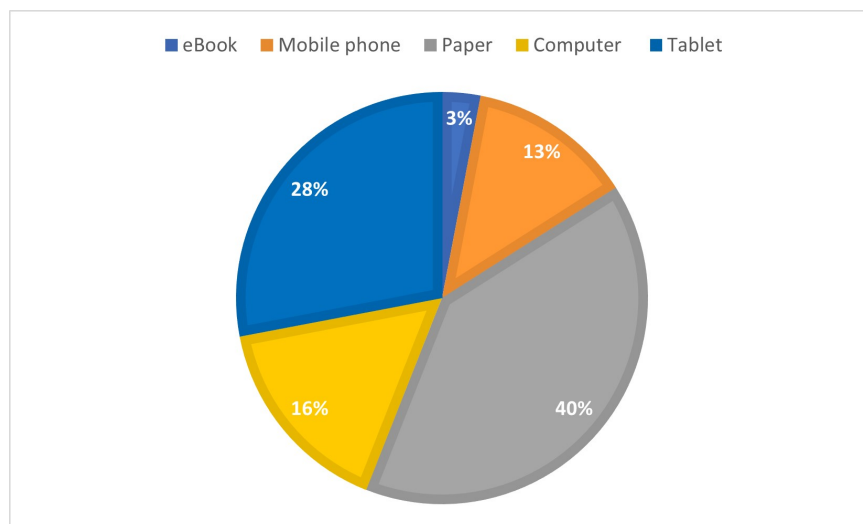
**Table 6. Thematic preferences by type of school (Mean and SD)**

Item	General	Type of school			In favour of...
		Public	Private	S	
Do you like to read books about...					
9. adventure and action?	4.31 (.97)	4.35 (.93)	4.18 (1.10)	.480	
10. mystery and terror?	3.93 (1.29)	3.98 (1.27)	3.77 (1.34)	.486	
11. fantasy?	3.77 (1.24)	3.78 (1.27)	3.73 (1.17)	.431	
12. sci-fi?	3.26 (1.81)	3.31 (1.33)	3.1 (1.40)	.117	
13. cops and detectives?	3.41 (1.30)	3.44 (1.27)	3.3 (1.43)	<b>.009</b>	Private
14. love?	2.46 (1.4)	2.44 (1.39)	2.52 (1.45)	.873	
15. humour?	4.26 (1.04)	4.32 (.99)	4.03 (1.19)	<b>.006</b>	Public school
16. family stories?	3.14 (1.20)	3.17 (1.23)	3.03 (1.10)	.102	
17. everyday problems?	2.67 (1.39)	2.74 (1.40)	2.38 (1.29)	<b>.030</b>	Public school
18. historical events?	3.07 (1.29)	3.1 (1.30)	2.94 (1.26)	.780	
19. animals or plants?	3.13 (1.25)	3.17 (1.23)	3 (1.30)	.435	

Item	General	Type of school			S	In favour of...
		Public	Private	S		
20. science?	3.28 (1.34)	3.3 (1.33)	3.22 (1.36)		.982	
21. sport?	3.09 (1.51)	3.07 (1.51)	3.14 (1.53)		.283	
22. historical figures	2.92 (1.27)	2.93 (1.27)	2.9 (1.28)		.979	
23. other cultures?	3 (1.26)	3.02 (1.27)	3 (1.26)		.947	

The dimension of the use of new reading media was assessed through item 24 and an open-ended question. Figure 1 shows that almost half of the students read on paper (167 responses), followed by tablet (115 responses), computer (66 responses) and mobile phone (54 responses). By contrast, e-books are the least used medium, with only 14 responses. Statistical results show there are no significant differences according to gender ( $p=.314$ ) or school ( $p=.293$ ).

Figure 1. Reading media (%)



The last dimension refers to the usual language of reading (Galician or Spanish). The results in tables 7 and 8 show a preference for Spanish. These results are related to the language of use of the participants: only 9 are Galician-speaking and all belong to public schools.

Table 7. Usual language of reading by gender (Mean and SD)

Item	General	Gender		S	In favour of...
		Boys	Girls		
Do you usually read books in...					
25. Galician?	2.75 (1.24)	2.60 (1.15)	2.89 (1.30)	.037	Girls



Item	General	Gender			
		Boys	Girls	S	In favour of...
26. Spanish?	4.64 (.74)	4.55 (.82)	4.72 (.66)	<b>.050</b>	Girls

**Table 8. Usual language of reading by type of school (Mean and SD)**

Item	General	Type of school			
		Public	Private	S	In favour of...
Do you usually read books in...					
25. Galician?	2.75 (1.24)	2.93 (1.22)	2.11 (1.08)	<.001	Public school
26. Spanish?	4.64 (.74)	4.63 (.73)	4.68 (0.79)	.070	

Finally, the link between the 5 dimensions under study was calculated. The correlation between these was calculated using Pearson’s Correlation Coefficient. Table 9 shows that these dimensions are significantly correlated with each other, excepting dimension 4.

**Table 9. Pearson correlation between dimensions**

	Dimension 1	Dimension 2	Dimension 3	Dimension 4	Dimension 5
Dimension 1	1	.453**	.483**	-.001	.520**
Dimension 2		1	.583**	.034	.403**
Dimension 3			1	.098	.422**
Dimension 4				1	.153**
Dimension 5					1

\*  $p=.001$

## Discussion and conclusions

20 significant results in the 26 items of the questionnaire shows that there are remarkable differences between the reading attitudes (prescribed reading/recreational reading) and the reading preferences (gender, subject matter, medium and language) of students in 6<sup>th</sup> year of Primary Education, taking into account the variables of gender (boys/girls) and the type of school (public/private). These dimensions are significantly related to each other, with the exception of the reading medium, which shows reading habits are made up of different elements (reading attitudes, preference for literary genre, thematic interests and usual language of reading), which are closely linked. Beyond the particularities detailed below, it can be said that the most favourable results in terms of recreational reading correspond to girls, whose reading is more diversified in terms of literary genre, the subject matter of the stories and the language, while the results of the dimensions addressed for public schools are also more encouraging.

In general terms, it is found that the attitude towards reading of these students is acceptable, as Neira (2015) has shown, and a taste for recreational reading stands out as opposed to that indicated by the teacher, especially in girls. This is because they tend to have a stronger reading

habit (Soto et al., 2019) and a stronger intrinsic motivation for reading practice (McGeown et al., 2012), which they enjoy intensely at the beginning of primary school (Merisuo-Storm, 2006). As far as reading prescribed by the teacher is concerned, the difference between girls and boys is not significant, which is different from other studies (Jarre, 2008; Artola et al., 2017), in which it was the boys who did not enjoy their proposals.

If we compare public and private schools, this study shows less interest in recreational and prescribed reading in private schools, results that coincide with Jaraíz et al. (2022), who point out that students in public schools in Cáceres spend more hours reading than those in state-subsidised education. These results contrast with those obtained in a previous study in Spain and 22 other countries, in which Dronkers and Robert (2007) conclude that private schools perform better in reading than public schools. Romero (2007) is along the same lines, explaining these results by the greater number of reading plans and the greater number of people responsible for their implementation in relation to public schools. González et al. (2016) also attribute higher reading activity averages to students in private or state-subsidised schools in their contrastive analysis. However, Ferreiro (2017) dismisses significant divergences between public and private schools in his study in Galicia, which is based on the grades obtained in the subject of Spanish Language and Literature.

The reasons that explain the results in favour of some establishments or others may be due to multiple factors, such as the education of the parents, the economic investment in education of the families, the equipment of the home or the geographic location of the establishment (Jaraíz et al., 2022). In our case, the better position of public schools can be due to their greater involvement in actions related to reading, as revealed in the report of the LIA Plan for School Libraries of the Government of Galicia (<https://www.edu.xunta.gal/biblioteca/blog/?q=node/1613>), whose commitment is to place the library as a central space for the improvement of reading, writing and research skills and the use of information. Other causes of these results can be linked to the existence of a very dynamic environment in terms of the offers associated with reading and other creative expressions, which have their maximum exponent in the Children's and Young Adult Book Fair of Pontevedra, as well as to population aspects and socio-economic, educational and cultural conditions of the context analysed, which are largely analogous to those of Jaraíz et al. (2022).

The data collected call for decisions to be taken in all educational establishments in order to stimulate the attraction for reading. It is essential to introduce dynamics to stimulate reading assiduity and intrinsic motivation, especially in children, because, although frequency is essential, a good attitude, the will to read and the ability to derive pleasure or benefit from reading are more important (Lomas & Mata, 2007). For this reason, methodological procedures and materials must be revised to suit the psychological characteristics and interests of the target audience, which are fundamental starting points for successful reading programmes.

As for the preference in the choice of literary genres, the participating students prefer narrative and comics to poetry and theatre (Neira, 2015, 2016), although in this study the press and magazines are not prioritised as a whole, and the album is included because it is explicitly included in the questionnaire. This may be a result of occasional contact with some of these manifestations or the greater difficulty they may entail (Neira, 2016).

By gender, boys have a greater preference for comics, and girls for fiction, theatre and newspapers or magazines. This trend is found in other studies (Conecta, 2013; Neira, 2016), except for the press and magazines, which tend to be among men's preferences. This is derived from the relationship girls establish with publications on fashion TV programme content, pop culture and

the idol phenomenon at that age (Díaz-Plaja, 2009). Despite not being among their main interests, poetry continues to appeal more to girls (Neira, 2016), which is evidence that gender stereotypes, in this case linked to the sentimental, emerge in initial reading preferences (Merisuo-Storm, 2006). Hence the relevance of incorporating poetry into the classroom, so that its word feels closer, its aesthetic value is appreciated and a greater predisposition to read it is developed (Agrelo-Costas & Piñeiro-Casal, 2021).

With regard to the differences between private and public schools, the latter are significantly more inclined to read poetry, probably because poetry has been addressed tangentially and limited to formal issues in public schools. In relation to the greater reference to comics in private schools, this can be understood as a circumstantial issue, as it provides attractive reading for all ages and is a motivating source from which to project diverse learning and the reading habit (Paré & Soto-Pallarés, 2017).

As for thematic preferences, the taste for adventure and action works, humour, mystery and horror, and fantasy stands out, as corroborated by similar studies (Neira, 2015, 2016; Soto et al., 2019). Girls' greater appreciation of fantasy, family and police stories, and detectives (Clark & Foster, 2005; Merisuo-Storm, 2006; Neira, 2016) or their greater predisposition towards romantic texts with positive characters (McGeown, 2015; Artola et al., 2017; Pérez et al., 2018) also stand out. However, the results obtained differ in that they value mystery and horror stories more highly, which allows us to glimpse a move towards themes linked to masculinity.

Nevertheless, the data obtained suggest that sports are among the most preferred options for boys (Neira, 2016), due to their interest in subjects outside school and their greater preference for short, informative texts (Jarre, 2008; McGeown, 2015; Artola et al., 2017). Although the results are not significant, boys also show a greater inclination for science fiction, historical facts and figures, science or animals (Artola et al., 2017), as opposed to girls' greater motivation for books from other cultures.

As for the media, reading on paper predominates over other media (Jaraíz et al., 2022), with no significant dissimilarities between the variables of gender and type of school. Its justification lies in the persistence of teaching-learning processes rooted in traditional dynamics and resources, which avoid training in new literacies and digital media. Research on the impact of the medium (physical or digital) on young people's reading comprehension indicates more satisfactory results for paper-based content (Delgado et al., 2018; Clinton, 2019; Schwabe et al., 2021).

This is due to the difficulty of comprehending digital texts of more than 500 words (Goodwin et al., 2020), visual fatigue from screen exposure (Jeong, 2012) and weaker local processing of text details (Fisher et al., 2011). The meta-analysis by Furenes, Kucirkova and Bus (2021) with primary school students also confirms that results are superior on paper when reading the same text, unless digital books contain tools to make comprehension easier. Therefore, more attention will be paid to the reading practices of neo-readers, fascinated by technology, but with limited competences for reading in different media (Cerrillo & Senís, 2005).

Lastly, the sample of participants' command of reading in Spanish is justified by their urban context, in which the use of Galician is a minority and their contact with Galician tends to be reduced to the subject of Galician Language and Literature (Mosquera, 2018). This trend is aggravated by the unfavourable bilingual competence of Spanish-speaking youth in Galician, which is alarming in private schools (Loredo & Silva, 2020). Contributing to this situation is the lower level of competence of teachers in relation to the languages spoken in a series of autonomous communities in Spain (Mosquera, 2015), to which is added, in the case of Galician,

a limited repertoire of training practices and materials in this language. The balance of reading, both in the two co-official languages of Galicia and in foreign languages, requires planning based on the conviction that literary reading plays a major role in educational processes (Castillo & Santos, 2022).

Although there are differences in the reading habits among students in 6<sup>th</sup> year of Primary Education, it is clear that even non-readers have certain stimuli and preferences when it comes to reading. Teachers must therefore undertake an initial prospecting process, basing their selections on providing references appropriate to their abilities and interests, as these texts will help to establish the reading habit and maintain the intrinsic value of reading. Experience shows that this empathetic encounter will be the beginning, from which communicating vessels will open up towards more heterogeneous and complementary reading selections. However, this will be implemented by designing programmes aimed at discovering, experiencing and valuing literary reading. It should not be forgotten either that the involvement of the class group is fundamental, as peer-to-peer recommendations are effective in reading dynamics (Margallo & Mata, 2015).

Beyond the above, the present study has some limitations because, although research has been conducted with students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade of primary school (see Neira, 2015, 2016, among others), more detailed studies on reading preferences determined by gender and by whether they belong to a public, state-subsidised or private school would be necessary (Jaraíz et al., 2022). Furthermore, the size of the sample, which depended on the availability of the participating schools and was only carried out in the area of Pontevedra, does not allow the results to be extrapolated to all students in 6<sup>th</sup> year of Primary School in Galicia. It would also be advisable to broaden the field of study of reading interests according to the medium, language in multilingual contexts or other aspects associated with the mediation and evaluation of reading actions. It is therefore necessary to get involved in these tasks, which will have a positive impact on the academic and social sphere.

## Funding

This research has been funded by the Grants conferred under the Programme for the Consolidation and Structuring of Competitive Research Units of the Government of Galicia (GRC, ED431C 2021/52).

## References

- Agrelo-Costas, E., & Piñeiro-Casal, A. (2021). La poesía: educadora de emociones. *Tejuelo*, 33, 185-216. <https://doi.org/10.17398/1988-8430.33.185>
- Artola, T., Sastre, S., & Barraca, J. (2017). Diferencias de género en actitudes e intereses lectores: una investigación de alumnos españoles de primaria. *Bordón*, 69(1), 11-26. <https://doi.org/10.13042/Bordon.2016.37925>
- Artola, T., Sastre, S., Gratacós, G., & Barraca, J. (2013). Differences in Boys and Girls Attitudes toward Reading: A Comparison between Single sex and Coeducational Schools. In *Single sex education: An option in the forefront of Education* (pp. 113-128). EASSE.
- Asociación Amigos del Libro Infantil y Juvenil (2018). *Estudio de hábitos de lectura en bibliotecas públicas*. Universidad de Salamanca.

- Castillo, C., & Santos, I. C. (2022). Hábitos y consumos lectores en lengua materna y lengua extranjera del futuro profesorado de Educación Primaria de la Universidad de Málaga. *Investigaciones sobre lectura*, 17(1), 83-110. <https://doi.org/10.24310/isl.vi17.14483>
- Cerrillo, P. (2007). *Literatura infantil y juvenil y educación literaria*. Octaedro.
- Cerrillo, P. C., & Senís, J. (2005). Nuevos tiempos, ¿nuevos lectores? *Ocnos*, 1, 19-33. [https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos\\_2005.01.02](https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos_2005.01.02)
- Cid, H. (2014). *La incidencia del mediador en las preferencias lectoras de los alumnos de Primaria*. [Dissertation, Universidad Complutense]. <https://hdl.handle.net/11162/122848>
- Clark, C., & Foster, A. (2005). *Children's and Young People's Reading Habits and Preferences: The Who, What, Why, Where and When*. National Literacy Trust.
- Clark, C., Woodley, J., & Lewis, F. (2011). *The Gift of Reading in 2011. Children and Young People's access to Books and Attitudes towards Reading*. National Literacy Trust.
- Clinton, V. (2019). Reading from paper compared to screens: A systematic review and metaanalysis. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 42(2), 288-325. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9817.12269>
- CONECTA (2013). *Hábitos de lectura y compra de libros en España 2012*. Federación de Gremios de Editores de España/Ministerio de Cultura.
- Delgado, P., Vargas, C., Ackerman, R., & Salmerón, L. (2018). Don't throw away your printed books: A meta-analysis on the effects of reading media on reading comprehension. *Educational Research Review*, 25, 23-28. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2018.09.003>
- Díaz-Plaja, A. (2009). Entre libros: la construcción de un itinerario lector propio en la adolescencia. In T. Colomer (Coord.), *Lecturas adolescentes* (pp. 119-150). Graó.
- Dronkers, J., & Robert, P. (2007). Differences in Scholastic Achievement of Public, Private Government-Dependent, and Private Independent Schools. *Educational Policy*, 22(4), 541-577. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0895904807307065>
- Dueñas, J. D. (2013). La educación literaria. Revisión teórica y perspectivas de futuro. *Didáctica. Lengua y Literatura*, 25, 135-156. [https://doi.org/10.5209/rev\\_DIDA.2013.v25.42239](https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_DIDA.2013.v25.42239)
- Ferreiro, S. F. (2017). Análisis comparativo de los centros públicos y privados medido a través del premio extraordinario de la ESO en Galicia. *Contextos Educativos. Revista de Educación*, 2, 181-199. <https://doi.org/10.18172/con.3025>
- Fisher, D., Lapp, D., & Wood, K. (2011). Reading for details in online and printed text: A prerequisite for deep reading. *Middle School Journal*, 42(3), 58-63. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00940771.2011.11461767>
- Fraguela-Vale, R., Pose-Porto, H., & Varela-Garrote, L. (2016). Tiempos escolares y lectura. *Ocnos*, 15(2), 67-76. [https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos\\_2016.15.2.1099](https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos_2016.15.2.1099)
- Furenes, M. I., Kucirkova, N., & Bus, A. G. (2021). A Comparison of Children's Reading on Paper Versus Screen: A Meta-Analysis. *Review of Educational Research*, 91(4), 483-517. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654321998074>

- Gil, J. (2011). Hábitos lectores y competencias básicas en el alumnado de Educación Secundaria Obligatoria. *Educación XXI*, 14(1), 117-134. <https://doi.org/10.5944/educxx1.14.1.274>
- González, M. J., Díaz, G. F., Martín, I., Delgado, M., & Trianes, M. V. (2014). Precisión lectora y nivel lector inicial en niños de Educación Primaria. *International Journal of Developmental and Educational Psychology. Revista INFAD de Psicología*, 3(1), 253-260. <https://doi.org/10.17060/ijodaep.2014.n1.v3.503>
- Goodwin, A. P., Cho, S.-J., Reynolds, D., Brady, K., & Salas, J. (2020). Digital Versus Paper Reading Processes and Links to Comprehension for Middle School Students. *American Educational Research Journal*, 57(4), 1837-1867. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831219890300>
- Jaraíz, F. J., Frutos, M., Tena, R., & Soto, J. (2022). El estudio del hábito lector en centros educativos públicos y concertados. Aproximación estadística en la ciudad de Cáceres. In R. Tena y J. Soto (Ed.), *Estudios sobre los hábitos de lectura* (pp. 33-53). Dykinson. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2gz3v7v.5>
- Jarre, K. R. (2008). Don't Blame the Boys: We're Giving Them Girly Books. *English Journal*, 97(3), 15-16.
- Jeong, H. (2012). A comparison of the influence of electronic books and paper books on reading comprehension, eye fatigue, and perception. *Electronic Library*, 30, 390-408. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02640471211241663>
- Jiménez-Pérez, E., Martínez-León, N., & Cuadros-Muñoz, R. (2020). La influencia materna en la inteligencia emocional y la competencia lectora de sus hijos. *Ocnos*, 19(1), 80-89. [https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos\\_2020.19.1.2187](https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos_2020.19.1.2187)
- Jover, G. (2008). Se está haciendo cada vez más tarde: por una literatura sin fronteras. In C. Lomas (Coord.), *Textos literarios y contextos escolares: la escuela en la literatura y la literatura en la escuela* (pp. 149-178). Graó.
- Lomas C., & Mata, J. (2007). La construcción del hábito de leer. *Textos. Didáctica de la Lengua y de la Literatura*, 44, 9-18.
- Loredo, X., & Silva, B. (2020). *Avaliación da competencia bilingüe nos idiomas galego e castelán do alumnado de 4º da ESO*. Real Academia Galega.
- Lluch, G. (2010). *Cómo seleccionar libros para niños y jóvenes*. Ediciones Trea.
- Lluch, G., & Zayas, F. (2015). *Leer en el centro escolar. El plan de lectura*. Octaedro.
- Margallo, A. M., & Mata, J. (2015). La lectura. Práctica social y formación escolar. Lectura, sociedad y escuela. In J. Mara, P. Núñez y J. Rienda (Coords.), *Didáctica de la lengua y la lectura* (pp. 179-202). Pirámide.
- McGeown, S. P. (2015). Sex or gender identity? Understanding children's reading choices and motivation. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 38(1), 35-46. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9817.2012.01546.x>
- McGeown, S., Goodwin, H., Henderson, N., & Wright, P. (2012). Gender differences in reading motivation: does sex or gender identity provide a better account? *Journal of Research in Reading*, 35(3), 328-336. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9817.2010.01481.x>
- McMillan, J., & Schumacher, S. (2005). *Investigación educativa*. Pearson.

- Melero, Á., Villalón, R., & Izquierdo-Magaldi, B. (2020). Actitudes hacia la lectura, sentimiento de competencia, implicación familiar y comprensión lectora en segundo curso de Educación Primaria. *Electronic Journal of Research in Educational Psychology*, 18(1), 159-182. <https://doi.org/10.25115/ejrep.v18i50.2780>
- Merisuo-Storm, T. (2006). Girls and boys like to read and write different texts. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 50(2), 111-125. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00313830600576039>
- Merisuo-Storm, T., & Soininen, M. (2014). The interdependence between young students reading attitudes, reading skills, and self-esteem. *Journal of Educational and Social Research*, 4(2), 122-130. <https://doi.org/10.5901/jesr.2014.v4n2p122>
- Moreno, V. (2005). Lectores competentes. *Revista de Educación*, núm. extr., 153-167.
- Mosquera, E. (2015). A formación do profesorado de lingua galega: perspectivas pedagógicas e modelo lingüístico. *Revista de estudos e investigación en psicología y educación*, vol. extr., 6, <https://doi.org/10.17979/reipe.2015.0.06.98>
- Mosquera, E. (2018). La enseñanza de la gramática en lengua gallega: problemas metodológicos e implicaciones prácticas. *Lenguaje y Textos*, 47, 25-36. <https://doi.org/10.4995/lyt.2018.7884>
- Muñoz, J. M., & Hernández, A. (2011). Hábitos lectores de los alumnos de la ESO en la provincia de Salamanca. ¿Son el género y el entorno factores diferenciales? *Revista de Educación*, 354, 605-628.
- Neira, M. del R. (2015). La lectura como actividad de ocio en escolares asturianos de 6º de Primaria. *Didáctica. Lengua y Literatura*, 27, 131-151. [https://doi.org/10.5209/rev\\_DIDA.2015.v27.50869](https://doi.org/10.5209/rev_DIDA.2015.v27.50869)
- Neira, M. del R. (2016). Preferencias lectoras en 6º de primaria: una investigación con escolares asturianos. *ALLIJ*, 14, 123-140.
- Paré, C., & Soto-Pallarés, C. (2017). El fomento de la lectura de cómics en la enseñanza de las lenguas en Educación Primaria. *Ocnos*, 16(1), 134-143. [https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos\\_2017.16.1.130](https://doi.org/10.18239/ocnos_2017.16.1.130)
- Pérez, R., Gutiérrez, Á., Soto, J., Jaraíz, F. J., & Gutiérrez, J. A. (2018). Géneros de lectura preferidos por los alumnos extremeños. Datos y análisis. *Información, Cultura y Sociedad*, 39, 71-92. <https://doi.org/10.34096/ics.i39.4208>
- Romero, F. (2007). Utopías lectoras y promoción de la lectura en la escuela. *Anuario sobre el libro infantil y juvenil*, 1, 81-116.
- Ruiz, E. E., Moreno, J. S., & Rodilla, N. A. (2022). Iniciación a la investigación en didáctica de las ciencias sociales: el hábito lector en el Campus de Cáceres. In R. Tena y J. Soto (Eds.), *Estudios sobre hábitos de lectura* (pp. 67-84). Dykinson. <https://doi.org/10.2307/j.ctv2gz3v7v.7>
- Scheiber, C., Reynolds, M. R., Hajovsky, D. B., & Kaufman, A. S. (2015). Gender differences in achievement in a large, nationally representative sample of children and adolescents. *Psychology in the Schools*, 52(4), 335-348. <https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.21827>
- Schwabe, A., Brandl, L., Boomgaarden, H. G., & Stocker, G. (2021). Experiencing literature on the e-reader: The effects of reading narrative texts on screen. *Journal of Research in Reading*, 44(2), 319-338. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9817.12337>

- Schwartz, W. (2002). *Helping underachieving boys read well and often*. Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) Digest.
- Soto, J., Cordero, M., & Jaraíz, F. J. (2019). Estudio de casos sobre el hábito de lectura entre los niños de 0 a 12 años en Extremadura. *Didáctica. Lengua y Literatura*, 31, 147-170. <https://doi.org/10.5209/dida.65946>
- Viramontes, E., Amparán, A., & Núñez, L. D. (2019). Comprensión lectora y el rendimiento académico en Educación Primaria. *Investigaciones Sobre Lectura*, 12, 65-82. <https://doi.org/10.37132/isl.v0i12.264>