

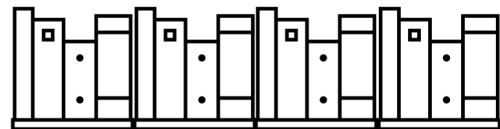


Executive Summary

This study investigates Swedish university students' experiences with academic reading in Swedish and English, focusing on engagement levels and compliance, language preferences, perceived difficulties, and the impact of prior education. Conducted during an ongoing national debate on students' reading proficiency and drawing on a representative sample of 1,000 randomly selected Swedish students, the study aims to provide research-based generalizable insights into students' reading behaviors.

Key results

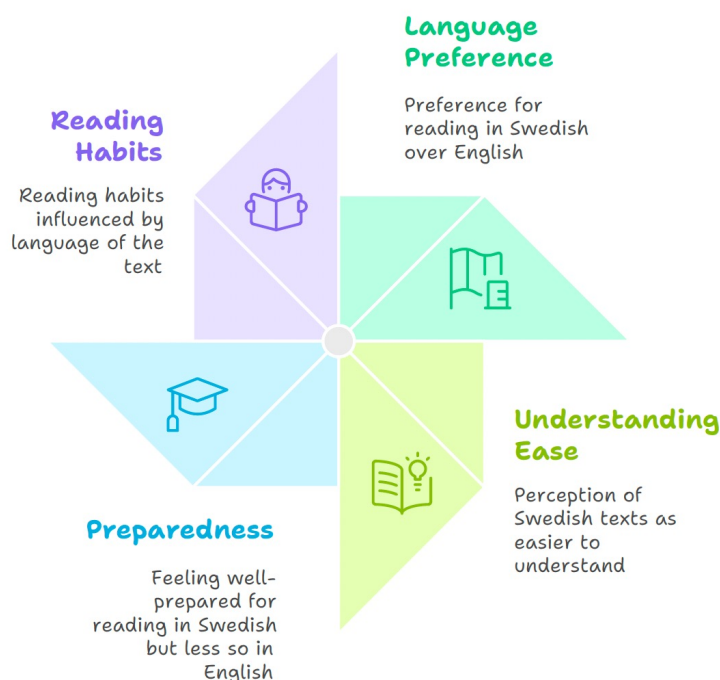
- Most students in Sweden (72%) read mandatory course literature, especially if it is in Swedish.
- In general, students read less when the assigned reading is in English; 33% state that they only read selections or nothing of the assigned reading when the reading is in English.
- A majority (70%) prefer reading in Swedish over English and find Swedish texts easier to understand.
- Students generally feel well-prepared for academic reading in Swedish (61% agreement), but fewer feel prepared for reading in English (41%), with 29% explicitly disagreeing.



Demographic factors affect students' academic reading – some group differences

- Younger students (particularly those aged 18–29) do less of the assigned reading than older students, and younger students are also less likely than older students to find the course literature easy to read and understand.
- Humanities and arts students are the most diligent readers, regardless of the language of the reading; they also find the reading material easier to understand than students in other fields.
- While both male and female students prefer assigned reading in Swedish, women do so to a greater extent, whereas men are more likely to favor English texts.
- Preference for Swedish texts is stronger at the undergraduate level; unsurprisingly, at advanced levels, more students prefer English.
- Students at advanced levels find English texts easier to comprehend compared to those at the undergraduate level.

Students' reading in Swedish and English



Conclusion

While most students manage academic reading well, some may risk marginalization due to insufficient reading or comprehension.