



## **Voice or Choice?**

**A study about students' attitudes towards reading aloud in English classrooms in upper-secondary school**

School of education, Culture and Communication

English for Teachers in Secondary and Upper Secondary

School: Degree project in English

Course code: ENA314

Autumn 2022

Rana Hanna Aranki

Supervisor: Gül Bilge Han

Examiner: Karin Molander

Danielsson

## **Abstract**

This study aims to explore and investigate students' attitudes towards reading aloud in English in an upper secondary school in Sweden and whether the students' previous experiences in reading aloud in L2 (English as a second language), as well as their language backgrounds have an impact on their attitudes towards reading aloud in L2. Additionally, the study will investigate which factors that might affect students' attitudes towards reading aloud in L2. The data collection method which has been utilized in this study is a questionnaire. The questionnaire included questions about students' attitudes towards reading aloud in L1 and L2, students' previous experiences in reading aloud in L2, along with the factors that they bear in mind when they read aloud in L2. A mixed-methods approach was used to analyse data, involving both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The participants in this study comprised 90 students in an upper secondary school in Sweden, aged between 16-20. The results of the study show that the students contributing to this study show a reluctance to read aloud in L2. Moreover, prior experiences in reading aloud in L2 from an early age and students' language backgrounds might have a correlation with students' attitudes towards reading aloud in L2. The study also reveals that confidence, concerns about mispronunciation and the impact of reading aloud on comprehension are factors that may influence the students' attitudes towards reading aloud in English.

---

*Keywords:* reading aloud, English as a second language, attitudes, language backgrounds, questionnaire, upper-secondary school, qualitative approach, Sweden

## Table of contents

1	Introduction .....	1
2	Background .....	3
2.1	The English curriculum for upper-secondary school in Sweden .....	3
2.2	Definition of the term attitude.....	3
2.3	Affective filter hypothesis.....	4
2.4	Previous studies .....	4
3	Method.....	7
3.1	Choice of Methods .....	7
3.2	Respondents .....	7
3.3	Variables .....	8
3.4	Data Collection procedure .....	8
3.5	Analysis procedure.....	9
3.6	Ethical considerations .....	10
4	Results .....	10
4.1	Quantitative phase.....	10
4.1.1	Students' attitudes towards reading aloud in English. ....	10
4.1.2	Students' attitudes towards reading aloud in Swedish.....	12
4.1.3	Students' previous experience in reading aloud in L1 and L2.....	13
4.1.4	Correlations between students' attitudes toward reading aloud in L2 and previous experiences in reading aloud in L1.....	15
4.1.5	Correlations between students' attitudes toward reading aloud in L2 and their previous experience in reading aloud in L2. ....	16
4.1.6	Correlations between students' attitudes toward reading aloud in L2 and their language backgrounds.....	17
4.2	Qualitative Phase .....	20
4.2.1	Confidence .....	21
4.2.2	Pronunciation .....	22
4.2.3	Comprehension .....	22
4.3	Results in relation to the research questions .....	22
5	Discussion .....	24
5.1	Discussion of the quantitative data .....	24
5.2	Discussion of the qualitative data .....	26
6	Discussion of the Method.....	27
7	Conclusion.....	28

References

Appendix 1

# 1 Introduction

Reading has long been considered to be one of the most important sources to obtain knowledge, specifically in the context of L2 (second language) learning. Despite the significance, it has become challenging to practice reading in schools and at homes, principally in the past few decades. It should also be mentioned that reading practice in general has declined dramatically, as students these days face many distractions, such as spending too much time on social media applications and digital games. Hence, they appear uninterested in reading in general and reading aloud in particular (Körling, 2012, pp. 6-7). In relation to older students, reading aloud can be considered an opportunity to motivate students to return to reading at a time when visual media dominate. The idea that students might be eager to hear the magical effect of the sounds of words that they only see and read silently in the visual media, can be employed by reading aloud. To read aloud with a specific aim might pique students' interest and motivate them to read more. In fact, reading the first part of a book aloud to students may stimulate their interest in learning more about the content of a book (Soken, 2021, pp. 16-17). According to Huda et al. (2021, pp. 579–580), reading aloud is a learning strategy that can aid students in maintaining their attention, participating fully in conversations and rekindle their interest in reading. Although reading aloud is a practice that can be considered a key component in L2 education both at home and at school, it has received relatively minor attention in regard to actual teaching practices in Sweden (Warner & Crolla, 2015, p. 421). One of the principal reasons for this lack of appropriate attention to reading aloud can be the pressure teachers feel because of time constraints owing to the need to cover the entire curriculum. Apart from such pressures, which pose challenges to teachers practising reading aloud successfully in classrooms, there is also students' reluctance concerning such practice.

Several factors may contribute to students' attitudes towards reading aloud. One of these factors can include previous experiences in reading aloud in the home environment or at school. Homes where reading is practiced early in childhood and carers who use a wider range of language can promote a positive attitude to reading aloud. Children who are raised in homes with a productive language learning environment, with parents and possibly siblings with whom reading aloud, having conversations, and participating in group activities are commonplace, are more likely to have a higher range of language skills regarding reading, listening, and speaking (Alatalo, 2021). Moreover, multilingualism can be another factor that may influence students' attitudes toward reading aloud. Bilinguals' neurolinguistic system

may be considered to have an advantage in the development of language skills in general and reading skills in particular due to the development of their phonological system in comparison to monolinguals (Jasinka & Petitto, 2014).

Reading aloud resembles oral presentations where both are tasks that have common features, for instance conveying information via spoken words. In both cases, effective communication skills, such as clarity, tone, volume, and pace are essential to engage the audience and deliver the message effectively (Drew & Sørheim, 2016, p. 86; Fried & Lundberg, 2021, p. 6). It is acknowledged that oral presentations, which require a good level of self-confidence, put students who worry about how they will be perceived by their teachers and their classmates under pressure. It has been suggested that reading aloud can boost students' self-confidence. Warner & Crolla (2015, p. 425) assert that "Reading aloud is common in and beyond the classroom, valued as confidence-building pedagogy". During my training period as a teacher student in one of Sweden's upper secondary schools, I observed that oral presentations were practiced in classrooms while reading-aloud activities were scarce. Thus, I thought of giving the students the opportunity to learn how to manage stress by practising reading aloud in the classroom. On account of this, I designed a lesson where the students were asked to read aloud a few passages of a book in English. Most of the students showed reluctance to perform reading aloud in class.

To gain a better understanding of students' views pertaining to reading aloud, this study aims to investigate students' attitudes towards reading aloud in English as a second language (L2) and the factors that the students consider regarding reading aloud which might have an impact on their attitudes towards reading aloud. The study will also investigate if there is a correlation between students' attitudes towards reading aloud and their previous experiences with reading aloud in L1 and L2. In addition, the study will examine if there is a correlation between students' attitudes towards reading aloud and students' language backgrounds in one upper secondary school in Sweden. In this study, I aim to answer the following research questions:

- 1) What are the attitudes of students in upper-secondary schools regarding reading aloud in L1 and L2?
- 2) What, if any, correlations can be established between students' attitudes towards reading aloud and their previous experience in reading aloud in L1 or L2?
- 3) What, if any, correlations can be found between students' attitudes towards reading aloud and their language backgrounds?

- 4) What factors, both positive and negative, influence the attitudes of the students in upper-secondary school in relation to reading aloud?

## **2 Background**

This section comprises three main subsections: 2.1 The English curriculum for upper-secondary school in Sweden, 2.2 Definition of the term *attitude* and 2.3 Previous studies.

### **2.1 The English curriculum for upper-secondary school in Sweden**

According to the curriculum for English in upper-secondary school and the Swedish National Agency for Education, teaching English aims to develop receptive and productive communication skills by means of listening, speaking, reading and writing (Skolverket, 2022). The curriculum states that: “The teaching in the course must deal with the following central content: Strategies for listening and reading in different ways and with different purposes”. However, the strategies to employ are not specifically addressed. For example, with reference to practising reading, it is not mentioned whether it should be reading aloud or reading silently, which opens the door to different interpretations and practices of reading activities in school.

### **2.2 Definition of the term attitude**

For a better understanding of the students’ attitudes towards reading aloud, it is important to define what the term *attitude* means. *Attitude* means “a feeling or opinion about something or someone, or a way of behaving that is caused by this” (Cambridge Dictionary, n.d.). In this study, determining that students have a positive or negative attitude towards reading aloud means that they react positively or negatively towards reading aloud. According to Eagly & Chaiken (2007, p. 583), the term attitude has three main characteristics: “evaluation, attitude object and tendency” which together describe a person's inclination to see a certain entity (attitude object) favourably or unfavourably. Thus, reading aloud is regarded as an entity. Therefore, students’ attitudes towards reading aloud can be expressed by their feelings, thoughts, and behaviour and evaluated as favourable or unfavourable, which is how it is defined and applied in this study.

### **2.3 Affective filter hypothesis**

According to Krashen (2013, pp. 4-5), the affective filter hypothesis is a hypothesis that refers to a psychological barrier that can hinder language learning. The affective filter hypothesis suggests that when the affective filter is high, language learning is hindered. Krashen argues that reducing the affective filter by creating a supportive, low-stress learning environment fosters positive emotions, motivation and self-confidence, which are essential for optimal language learning. The practice of reading aloud among students, notably those who suffer from shyness and anxiety, is considered to be effective training for them to manage their anxiety and to strengthen their self-confidence. According to Warner & Crolla (2015, p. 424), there is a connection between reading aloud and confidence, and giving students the opportunity to practice reading aloud may boost their motivation to do so: “the more I do it the better I get”.

### **2.4 Previous studies**

In research about the effect of “book flood”- programs where reading aloud is one of the strategies used in English learning classrooms in countries like Sri Lanka and in the Pacific, Ngo (2012, p. 25-26) states that these programs have proved their benefits not only on children’s L2 and literacy growth, but also in improving children’s attitudes towards reading-aloud activities. Many students who participated in the survey showed positive attitudes towards reading aloud in L2 and reported that reading aloud in L2 classrooms was beneficial for their improvement in L2. Considering that reading-aloud activities comprise both reading aloud and being read to, Ivey & Broaddus (2001), conducted a study in 23 schools to investigate the sixth-grade students’ attitudes towards reading aloud in L1. Students reported that being read to by teachers was rated as motivating and a preferable activity even for those who had a negative attitude towards reading aloud in general.

In the context of learning English as a second language and in relation to the reading process, it is important to highlight how the neurolinguistic mechanism of monolingual or bilingual individuals differ. Bilinguals are more phonologically aware than monolinguals since they have two phonological systems (Jasinka & Petitto, 2014, p. 423). Given that phonology is a crucial component in the reading process, and it plays a crucial role in emerging literacy, this bilingual advantage in phonological processing has significant theoretical implications for the development of bilingual readers. Jasinka & Petitto (2014) conducted a study on monolingual children between eight and ten years old and adult monolinguals who speak English as their first language and bilinguals who speak Spanish as L1 and English as L2. The goal was to examine whether exposure to language from an early

age had an impact on the development of the neural systems for reading. The findings of this study revealed significant variations in the neurodevelopment of monolingual and bilingual individuals, indicating that multilingualism may be able to influence the neurodevelopmental pathways that underlie reading. The study concluded that bilinguals might have a phonological advantage due to this neurological difference. In fact, it has been demonstrated that having exposure to two phonological systems (bilingualism) rather than just one (monolingualism) leads to advantages in both reading and phonological processing. (pp. 423, 436).

Geholt et al. (2020, p. 44) conducted a study to evaluate the reading habits in L2 of Indian students in low, middle and high schools. It has been observed that students with rich vocabularies, good reading habits and self-assurance, when giving oral presentations or expressing their feelings and thoughts in front of others, tend to have well-educated parents who read to their children. Conversely, children who lack such opportunities and rich language environments need to be compensated for this absence whilst at school. Therefore, Körling (2022, pp. 42-44) argues that practising reading aloud in school in L1 is essential where it serves as further training for those students who are not accustomed to practising reading aloud at home. Since these exercises in school compensate for those students who lack these experiences at home, it is explicit teaching that is decisive in compensating for the students' language development with respect to reading skills where “daily practice is required” (Körling, 2022, p. 47).

Henry (2014, p. 5), in his research pertaining to Swedish students' beliefs related to learning English inside and outside school, states that L2 learning practice in Swedish schools is demotivating. Henry also asserts that there is a paucity of oral interactions in L2 in grades 6-9, lack of authentic material and that Swedish students learn much of their English outside of school. In this respect, Drew (2021, p. 171) illustrates the importance of reading-aloud activities in L2 learning. To encourage students' literacy and improve their L2 fluency, Drew suggests activities that involve reading aloud in the classroom, such as shared reading sessions when the students read aloud in small or large groups.

For older students, reading aloud in L2 may provide a chance to perform the role of the reader to improve pronunciation. This exercise allows the teacher to identify pronunciation issues and evaluate the students' fluency. As the role of the teacher is essential in identifying students' pronunciation errors, it is imperative that the teacher remains observant and takes corrective action as necessary to improve fluency (Proença et al., 2017).



Many scholars have also focused on the significant role of reading aloud in improving pronunciation skills. For instance, Senawati et al. (2021, p. 84) maintains that reading aloud can be ideal practice for exposing L2 students to the correct pronunciation model.

Recognising the words in the written form does not give students immediate knowledge of how to pronounce them correctly. Moreover, this is also further complicated by the variety of pronunciations found in the variations of the English language (Jacobs, 2016, p. 1).

Reading aloud is considered a practical resource for improving not only pronunciation but also attention and memory skills in the language learning process. Takeuchi et al. (2012, pp. 4-5) state that reading aloud is effective in language learning because it activates the working memory, which benefits the acquisition of new information such as vocabulary. According to Cerón (2014, p. 95), the results of a vocabulary survey on the advantages of reading stories aloud to young learners in English as L2, and how it affects language proficiency, reveal that more than 50% of the participating students preferred reading aloud as a strategy to increase their vocabulary and train their memory to remember new words. Rich vocabulary storage in L2 is essential for providing students with the required skills to express their thoughts and ideas. Students seem to strongly prefer contextual vocabulary learning for L2, and reading aloud gives this contextualized learning. Nevertheless, when context alone is insufficient for comprehension, reading aloud in class provides students with the opportunity to obtain assistance from teachers and peers, which, in turn, will enhance their ability to learn vocabulary (Jacobs, 2016, p. 1).

Cerón (2014, p. 96) states that confidence in English proficiency is strengthened by speaking and listening skills that are enhanced through reading aloud practices. However, it is also recommended that teachers adopt this strategy carefully since some students find reading aloud to be particularly anxiety-provoking. This means, according to Gibson (2008, p. 32), that reducing students' anxiety will result in increased confidence and a feeling of being better equipped to interact and communicate in front of others in English. Reading aloud allows for dialogue in the target language, as it provides answers to the questions or contributes to the discussion and allows English words to be pronounced (Huda et al., 2015, p. 580. Jacobs, 2016, p. 4). Moreover, reading aloud may have the potential to create an interactive environment where students have the opportunity to interact and participate in conversations and express their thoughts about the text that has been read aloud (Jacobs, 2016, p. 2).

With respect to the aforementioned studies, research on reading aloud in L2 in upper-secondary school has been restricted and focused on reading aloud to younger learners. This indicates a need to examine reading aloud in more detail and explore what attitudes students

have concerning this matter and examine whether previous experiences in reading aloud or language backgrounds have a correlation with their attitudes. This study may fill a gap in the literature and provides a fresh insight into reading aloud in upper-secondary school.

### **3 Method**

This section comprises six subsections: 3.1 Choice of methods, 3.2 Respondents, 3.3 Variables, 3.4 Data collection procedure, 3.5 Analysis procedure and 3.6 Ethical considerations.

#### **3.1 Choice of Methods**

A mixed-methods approach is the most appropriate strategy to apply for this research since it combines both quantitative and qualitative approaches, which results in a more comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Creswell, 2012, p. 535). The quantitative approach is applied so as to include a significant number of respondents in the study to produce accurate and reliable data that can be both generalised and standardised (Denscombe, 2018, p. 23). Moreover, the quantitative approach emphasises “measuring variables and testing hypotheses that are linked to general causal explanations” (Neuman, 2003, p. 139). The quantitative approach has been utilised in this study to obtain findings as regards correlations, if any, between the students’ language backgrounds, their prior experience in reading aloud in L1 and L2, beside their attitudes towards reading aloud. Conversely, the qualitative data in mixed-methods approach provide the research with the opinions of numerous respondents, resulting in richer and more diversified findings, according to Creswell (2012, p. 535). The open-ended question in this study utilises the qualitative approach to provide the students with an opportunity to voice their ideas and explain the factors that influence their attitudes towards reading aloud.

#### **3.2 Respondents**

This study involves 98 students, aged between 16-20 years old and studying English 5, 6 and 7 at an upper-secondary school. The students are from different genders, age groups and language backgrounds. Within the group of students, 53 students are from two classes and read English 5, 33 students are enrolled in two classes and read English 6, while 12 students are enrolled in two classes and read English 7. The students completed 98 questionnaires, although eight responses were omitted due to not being answered seriously. The upper-

secondary school that was selected to conduct this study is located in a medium-sized city and provides 13 academic and vocational study programs.

### **3.3 Variables**

A variable can be defined as any aspect that can change according to individuals, time, environment, or circumstances (Wetcher-Hendricks, 2011, p. 4). In this study, the variables that I have employed for the quantitative data are language background and previous experience in reading aloud in L1 and L2. The purpose of choosing these variables for this study is to understand whether language background as well as previous experience in reading aloud in L1 and L2 are factors that may have a relationship with students' attitudes toward reading-aloud activities.

### **3.4 Data Collection procedure**

To collect data for this study, I contacted a friend of mine who works as an English teacher in the selected upper-secondary school, who, in turn, introduced me to the mentors of six separate classes. I chose to meet the students personally because meeting them personally, according to Denscombe (2018, p. 48-49), may help to develop a relationship, earn their trust, provide clear answers to any questions they may have, as well as encourage them to respond to the questionnaire. Subsequently, when I was introduced to the students in mentor-time, I explained the purpose of the study, I read the content of the questionnaire out loud to the students and clarified all questions and answered all inquiries. I also clarified that reading aloud activity in this study refers to both reading aloud and listening to others reading aloud. I informed the students that the participation in the study was anonymous and voluntary. I visited the school four times to deliver the questionnaire. Two classes were met in one day, another two classes in another day and the other two classes in two different days in accordance with the classes' different mentor-time. The students answered the questionnaire in 15 minutes in each visit, and I was present to answer their questions.

The questionnaire was chosen as it is considered an effective tool to gather information in a considerably short time from a substantial number of participants (Dörnyei and Taguchi, 2010, p. 6) and the data "are fairly straightforward information - relatively concise and uncontroversial" (Denscombe, 2018, p. 244). The questionnaire form used in this study was a paper-based one as according to Dommeyer et al. (2002, p. 458), paper-based questionnaires may produce a higher response rate, more accurate data, be more convenient

for students, and be more likely to make students feel that their responses to the survey are anonymous. The questionnaire (appendix 1) for this study consists of:

- Four questions (questions 3, 4, 8 & 9) related to students' attitudes regarding reading aloud. Questions no. 3 and 4 pertain to reading aloud and listening in English as L2, whereas questions no. 8 and 9 are about students' attitudes towards reading aloud in Swedish as L1 (or any other languages). The question concerning reading aloud in L1 is included to investigate whether the attitudes of students differ when they read in L1 in comparison to reading aloud in L2. These four questions are Likert scale types of questions, where answers are graded from 1-5, where option 1 is strongly reluctant, 5 is strongly positive and option 3 is neutral. Likert scale type questions were chosen due to simplicity and reliability (Dörnyei & Taguchi, 2010, p. 27).
- Five closed questions (questions 1, 2, 5, 6 & 7) were included in the questionnaire. Questions 1 & 2 investigate in which grade the students are and to examine the students' language backgrounds i.e., how many languages they speak. Questions 5 and 6 were included to investigate if the students had experienced reading aloud at early stages at school in English and Swedish. Question 7 was included to investigate whether the students have experienced reading-aloud activities at an early age outside school.
- One open-ended question (question 10) where the students can freely deliver their opinions about reading aloud. Instead of conducting interviews, the open-ended question was included in the questionnaire to capture a wide range of perspectives and experiences, and to give the participants time to produce their responses in written form and have the opportunity to reread and reflect if they needed to do so prior to providing their opinions (Lemke, 2020, p. 36).

Some issues related to question 10 were raised by some students, thus I had to clarify in Swedish that it was about the reasons why they did not prefer reading aloud. Some students asked if they could answer the open-ended question in Swedish rather than in English, so they could express their points of view more easily, so I told them to feel free to do so.

### **3.5 Analysis procedure**

In this study, two data analysis methods were used, one pertaining to the quantitative approach and the other related to the qualitative approach. The results of the quantitative section of the questionnaire were manually transferred into Excel-sheets in which the questions and answers were prepared and organised into tables. A descriptive analysis of the data was conducted by means of inferential statistics and by relating variables to each other

(Creswell, 2012, pp. 175-199). In this study, the inferential statistics method was employed by drawing conclusions about students in general, based on the sample data which are the respondents' answers to the questionnaire.

Concerning the second part of the questionnaire, thematic analysis was chosen to analyse the data from the open-ended question. According to Creswell (2012, pp. 247-248), the research question in a qualitative study can be answered by “developing themes from the data” which are an essential component of qualitative analysis, as they are labels for collecting aggregated and significant ideas. The answers to the open-ended question were reviewed and read, and the codes developed. These codes have subsequently been organised into themes to identify the factors that the students consider that influence their attitudes towards reading aloud.

### **3.6 Ethical considerations**

The data collection process for this study was implemented in accordance with the main ethical requirements pertaining to moral and ethical research, namely the research goal, consent, confidentiality, and use of information (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017). The students who completed the questionnaire were informed about the purpose of the study and its objectives prior to their participation in the study. They were also informed that they were participating in this study voluntarily which means that they had the right to decline and withdraw at any point. They were then assured that their participation would be anonymous to protect their identities and that the data would not be used for any other purpose than mentioned.

## **4 Results**

The findings of this study, which will be presented in this section, are divided into two main subsections based on the approaches employed to investigate the research questions. In subsection 4.1, the findings of the quantitative approach pertaining to research questions 1, 2 and 3 are presented, while the findings of the qualitative approach pertaining to the fourth research question are presented in subsection 4.2.

### **4.1 Quantitative phase**

#### **4.1.1 Students' attitudes towards reading aloud in English.**

The data collection utilised to acquire an understanding of the students' attitudes toward reading aloud was carried out by employing Likert scale-type questions. The data was collected and is presented below.

**Table 1***Students' attitudes toward reading aloud in English (reading).*

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Absolute numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly reluctant	18	20.0
Slightly reluctant	24	26.7
Neutral	29	32.2
Slightly positive	13	14.4
Strongly positive	2	2.2
Blanks	4	4.4
Total	90	100.0

The results in Table 1 reveal the respondents' opinions towards reading aloud in English when the reading-aloud activity refers to reading English texts in front of other students. The proportion of students that reported reluctance to read English texts in front of other students is 46.7%, while the proportion of students that reported that they are positive as regards reading English texts in front of other students is 16.6%. The proportion of students that reported that they feel neutral in relation to reading English texts in front of other students is 32.2%. Four students did not answer the question. Thus, more students are reluctant than positive to read English texts in front of other students, even though you can't say that a majority is reluctant.

The results in Table 2 show the respondents' opinions towards reading aloud in English when the reading aloud activity refers to listening to other students when they read aloud in English.

**Table 2***Students' attitudes toward reading aloud in English (listening).*

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Absolute numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly reluctant	8	8.9
Slightly reluctant	19	21.1
Neutral	26	28.9
Slightly positive	22	24.4
Strongly positive	10	11.1
Blanks	5	5.6
Total	90	100.0

The proportion of students that reported a reluctance to listen when other students read aloud in English 30.0%. The proportion of students that reported that they are positive to listening when other students read aloud in English is 35.5%. The proportion of students that reported that they feel neutral in regard to listening when other students read aloud in English is 28.9%. Five students did not answer the question. Thus, more students are positive than reluctant, even though you can't say that a majority is positive.

#### 4.1.2 Students' attitudes towards reading aloud in Swedish

The results in Table 3 reveal the respondents' opinion towards reading aloud in Swedish when the reading-aloud activity refers to reading Swedish texts in front of other students.

**Table 3**

*Students' attitudes regarding reading aloud in Swedish (reading)*

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Absolute numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly reluctant	10	11.0
Slightly reluctant	20	22.0
Neutral	21	23.0
Slightly positive	24	27.0
Strongly positive	12	13.0
Blanks	3	3.0
Total	90	100.0

The proportion of students that reported reluctance to read Swedish texts in front of other students is 33.0%, while the proportion of students that reported that they are positive as regards reading Swedish texts in front of other students is 40.0%. The proportion of students that reported that they feel neutral in relation to reading Swedish texts in front of other students is 23.0%. Three students did not answer the question. Thus, more students are positive than reluctant to reading Swedish texts in front of other students, though it cannot be considered that the majority of students are positive.

The results in Table 4 show the respondents' opinions towards reading aloud in Swedish when the reading aloud activity refers to listening to other students when they read aloud in Swedish.

**Table 4**

*Students' attitudes regarding attitudes toward reading aloud in Swedish (listening).*

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Absolute numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly reluctant	4	4.0
Slightly reluctant	14	16.0
Neutral	18	20.0
Slightly positive	35	39.0
Strongly positive	16	18.0
Blanks	3	3.0
Total	90	100.0

The proportion of students that reported a reluctance to listen when other students read aloud in Swedish is 20.0%. The proportion of students that reported that they are positive about listening when other students read aloud in Swedish is 57.0%. The proportion of students that reported that they feel neutral in regard to listening when other students read aloud in Swedish is 20.0%. Three students did not answer the question. Thus, the majority of the students are positive to listening when other students read aloud in Swedish.

The results indicate that the students have a more positive attitude toward the reading-aloud activity when it refers to listening to others reading aloud both in Swedish and in English than they have toward reading aloud if it refers to reading aloud to others in either language. However, the students are most positive to listening to others reading aloud in Swedish. The proportion of the students that reported that they are positive to listening to others reading aloud in Swedish is 57.0% while the proportion of the students that reported that they are positive to listening to others reading in English is 35.5%. The proportion of the students that have a positive attitude to reading aloud to others in Swedish is 40.0% while the proportion of the students that have a positive attitude to reading aloud to others in English is 16.6%.

#### **4.1.3 Students' previous experience in reading aloud in L1 and L2**

To investigate whether any correlation can be identified between the students' attitudes to reading-aloud activities and the students' previous experiences of reading-aloud activities in L1 and in L2, information relating to the students' previous experiences in reading aloud were collected and presented below.



**Table 5**

*Distribution regarding students' experience in reading aloud in English in previous stages of schooling.*

Have you ever experienced reading aloud in English in previous stages of schooling		
	Absolute numbers	Percentage
Yes	68	75.6%
No	21	23.3%
Blanks	1	1.1%
Total	90	100.0%

Table 5 shows that 75.6% of the students have previous experience in reading-aloud activities, both listening to others reading aloud and reading to others aloud in English in class, while 23.3% have never experienced reading aloud in English in class. One student did not answer the question. Thus, the majority of the students report that they have previous experience in reading-aloud activities.

**Table 6**

*Distribution of students' previous experience regarding reading aloud in L1*

Have you participated in groups where reading aloud has been an activity since an early age (L1)		
	Absolute numbers	Percentage
Yes	59	65.6%
No	28	31.1%
Blanks	3	3.3%
Total	90	100.0%

Table 6 illustrates that 65.6% of the students in this study have participated in groups where reading aloud has been an activity since an early age, whilst 31.1% have not participated. Three students did not answer. The results indicate that the majority of the students have experienced reading aloud in English in previous stages of schooling and that more than half of the students have participated in groups where reading-aloud activities (reading or listening) at an early age.

#### 4.1.4 Correlations between students' attitudes toward reading aloud in L2 and previous experiences in reading aloud in L1.

To investigate whether there are any correlations between the students' previous experience in reading-aloud activities from an early age and the students' attitudes toward reading aloud, the results in Table 5 and in Table 6 will be evaluated in relation to the results in Table 1. The results are presented in Table 7 and Table 8.

**Table 7**

*Attitudes to reading aloud in L2 among students **with** previous experience of reading aloud in L1*

Attitude	Absolute numbers	Percentage
Strongly reluctant	14	23.7
Slightly reluctant	16	27.1
Neutral	16	27.1
Slightly positive	10	16.9
Strongly positive	1	1.7
Blanks	2	3.4
Total	59	100.0

Table 7 demonstrates the correlation between the students' attitudes toward reading aloud and to their previous experience in reading aloud at an early age. The results show that 50.8% of the students reported that they feel reluctant about reading aloud in English, 18.6% reported that they feel positive about reading aloud in English and 27.1% feel neutral toward reading aloud in English. Two students did not answer the question. Thus, the majority of the students are reluctant about reading aloud in English.

**Table 8**

*Attitudes to reading aloud in L2 among students **without** previous experience of reading aloud in L1*

Attitude	Absolute numbers	Percentage
Strongly reluctant	4	14.3
Slightly reluctant	8	28.6
Neutral	12	42.9
Slightly positive	3	10.7
Strongly positive	1	3.6
Blanks	0	0.0
Total	28	100.0

Table 8 presents the students' attitudes toward reading aloud in correlation to **no** previous experience in reading-aloud activities in L1 from an early age. The results reveal that 42.9%, reported that they feel reluctant about reading aloud in English, 14.3% reported that they feel positive as regards reading aloud in English and 42.9% feel neutral regarding reading aloud in English.

#### **4.1.5 Correlations between students' attitudes toward reading aloud in L2 and their previous experience in reading aloud in L2.**

To determine whether previous experience in reading aloud in L2 has a correlation with students' attitudes concerning reading aloud in L2, the results regarding whether the students have ever experienced reading aloud in English in class are combined with their attitudes toward reading aloud in English in class. Table 9 shows the results for students with experience of reading aloud in English in class in relation to their attitudes toward reading aloud in English.

**Table 9**

*Attitudes to reading aloud in L2 among students **with** previous experience of reading aloud in L2.*

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Absolute numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly reluctant	14	20.6
Slightly reluctant	20	29.4
Neutral	20	29.4
Slightly positive	9	13.2
Strongly positive	2	2.9
Blanks	3	4.4
Total	68	100.0

The results demonstrate that 50.0% of the students **with** previous experience in reading aloud in English reported that they feel reluctant about reading aloud in English, 16.1% reported that they feel positive and 29.4% feel neutral with respect to reading aloud in English. Three students did not answer the question.

**Table 10**

*Attitudes to reading aloud in L2 among students **without** previous experience of reading aloud in L2.*

<b>Attitude</b>	<b>Absolute numbers</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Strongly reluctant	4	19.0
Slightly reluctant	4	19.0
Neutral	8	38.1
Slightly positive	4	19.0
Strongly positive	0	0.0
Blanks	1	4.8
Total	21	100.0

Table 10 presents the results of students **without** experience of reading aloud in English in class in relation to their attitudes toward reading aloud in English. The results show that 38.0% of the students **without** previous experience in reading aloud in English reported that they feel reluctant about reading aloud in English, 19.0% reported that they feel positive and 38.1% feel neutral about reading aloud in English. One student did not answer the question.

The result shows that the proportion of students that are reluctant about reading aloud is greater amongst the students that **have** previous experience (50.0%) compared to the students that do **not** have previous experience (38.0%). Furthermore, the proportion of students that are positive toward reading aloud is greater amongst the students **without** previous experience (19.0%) compared to the number of students **with** previous experience (16.1%) in reading aloud in English in class. The proportion of neutral responses is greater among the students that do not have any previous experience in reading aloud in English in class.

#### **4.1.6 Correlations between students' attitudes toward reading aloud in L2 and their language backgrounds.**

The students' language background was investigated by asking them how many languages they speak.

**Table 11***Distribution of the number of languages that the students speak*

Number of languages	Absolute numbers	Percentage
2	36	45.0%
3	31	38.8%
4	13	16.2%
Blanks	10	-
Total	80	100.0%

Table 11 shows that 45.0% of the students speak two languages, 38.8% of the students speak three languages, whilst 16.2% of the students speak four languages. Ten students did not answer the question. Moreover, 45.0% of the students reported that they speak two languages and 55.0% stated that they speak more than two languages. Hence, most of the students in this study speak other languages in addition to Swedish and English. To investigate whether the students' language background has an impact on their attitude toward reading aloud, the results found in Table 11 are analysed in combination with the results in Table 1 and presented in Tables 12, 13, 14 and 15.

**Table 12***Attitude toward reading aloud for students that speak two languages*

Students that claim they speak two languages		
Attitude	Absolute numbers	Percentage
Strongly reluctant	8	22.2
Slightly reluctant	11	30.6
Neutral	11	30.6
Slightly positive	4	11.1
Strongly positive	1	2.8
Blanks	1	2.8
Total	36	100.0

Table 12 illustrates that 52.8% of the students who claim to speak two languages feel reluctant about reading aloud, 30.6% feel neutral and 13.9% feel positive concerning reading aloud.

**Table 13***Attitudes toward reading aloud for students that speak three languages*

Students that claim they speak three languages		
Attitude	Absolute numbers	Percentage
Strongly reluctant	4	12.9
Slightly reluctant	8	25.8
Neutral	11	35.5
Slightly positive	7	22.6
Strongly positive	0	0.0
Blanks	1	3.2
Total	31	100.0

Table 13 shows that 38.7% of the students that claim to speak three languages feel reluctant about reading aloud, 35.5% feel neutral and 22.6% feel positive toward reading aloud.

**Table 14***Attitudes toward reading aloud for students that speak four languages*

Students that claim they can speak four languages		
Attitude	Absolute numbers	Percentage
Strongly reluctant	2	15.4
Slightly reluctant	2	15.4
Neutral	5	38.5
Slightly positive	1	7.7
Strongly positive	1	7.7
Blanks	2	15.4
Total	13	100.0

Table 14 shows that 30.8% of the students that claim to speak four languages feel reluctant toward reading aloud, 38.5% feel neutral and 15.4% feel positive with respect to reading aloud. To show the correlation between language backgrounds and their attitude toward reading aloud in L2 more clearly the answers of Table 12, 13 and 14 are summarized in Table 15.

**Table 15**

*Presentation of attitudes correlated with language backgrounds*

Attitudes in %	2 languages	3 languages	4 languages
Reluctant	52.8	38.7	30.8
Neutral	30.6	35.5	38.5
Positive	13.9	22.6	15.4

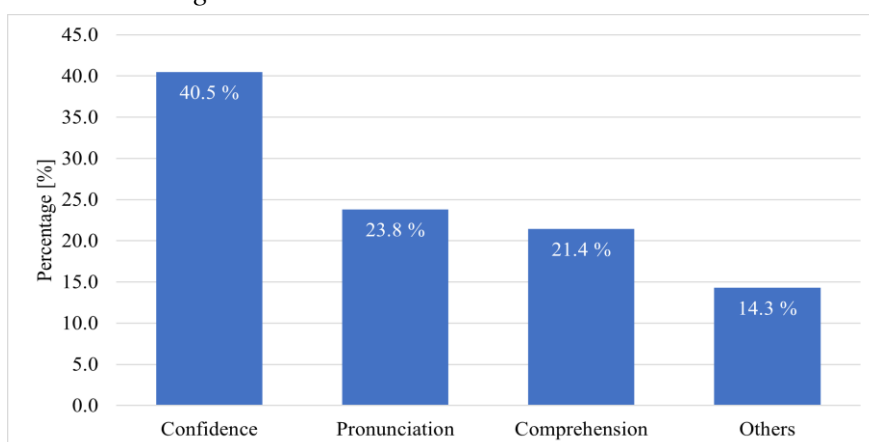
Table 15 shows that the proportion of students that are reluctant towards reading aloud might decrease with increased number of languages that they speak. Similarly, the proportion of students that have a positive attitude toward reading aloud might increase with increased number of languages that the student speaks.

#### **4.2 Qualitative Phase**

In this subsection and to answer research question 4, related to the factors that the students consider influencing their attitudes regarding reading aloud in L2, thematic analysis was utilised to evaluate the data obtained from the respondents (Creswell, 2012, p. 248). Ninety responses were obtained. Of that number, 42 respondents answered the open-ended question. The collected data was read several times, the codes identified, and three main themes generated. In this study, the themes that have emerged from the students' responses are *confidence*, *pronunciation* and *comprehension*. A few responses did not fall into any of these themes, but since they differed too much to suggest an additional theme, they were labelled *Other*. The pronoun *they* is used to refer to students, so as to avoid revealing their gender or identity. A number of students' responses will be quoted along with each theme to allow readers to gain a greater understanding of the students' thoughts, feelings, and experiences. The quotes from students who reported in Swedish were translated into English.

**Figure 1**

*The factors that the students consider influencing their attitudes toward reading aloud*



The themes, as shown in Figure 1, represent the percentages of the responses reported as regards each theme. Concerning this, 40.5% of the answers are related to confidence, 23.8% to pronunciation, 21.4% comprehension and 14.3% pertain to different factors that the students consider influencing their attitudes towards reading aloud.

#### **4.2.1 Confidence**

Confidence is one of the themes generated by means of the student's answers pertaining to the factors they consider concerning reading aloud in L2. Various students reported that reading aloud is an anxiety-provoking activity that requires a high level of self-confidence to perform in front of the others. Student 4, for instance, feels extremely anxious when they read aloud. They remarked: "I feel that the others will make fun of me when I read aloud!". Student 5 reported that the anxiety that *they* feel when reading aloud affects them physically. *They* stated: "I get affected physically when I am asked to read aloud in front of the others. I do not have enough self-confidence to do it!". Similarly, several students mentioned that they are reluctant to read aloud because they feel that there is a noticeable gap between them and the others in the classroom which makes them feel incompetent. This was mentioned by student 7 who asserted: "I feel incompetent compared to some of my classmates, which makes me feel vulnerable and uncertain of their reactions about my performance". The general finding is that the attitudes of some students towards reading aloud are negatively influenced by their lack of self-confidence and the anxiety they experience when they read aloud in the classroom.



### **4.2.2 Pronunciation**

Worries about incorrect pronunciation may influence some students' attitudes towards reading aloud in a way that can cause uncertainty about reading aloud in front of peers in the classroom. Many of the students' responses mentioned that they are hesitant and feel anxious about reading aloud because they are unsure of how to pronounce particular vocabulary or words in English. A number of students mentioned that reading aloud is very embarrassing when they are unsure about how to pronounce words correctly. Student 1, for example, said that: "Due to the different varieties of the English language, reading aloud makes it challenging to pronounce words in front of the others in the classroom". Conversely, some of the students reported that reading aloud can be beneficial in L2 learning as it gives students an opportunity to practice and learn how to pronounce vocabulary and words. Student 3, for instance, asserted that reading aloud in the classroom has the potential to improve pronunciation skills when the teacher is involved in the activity. They answered: "I prefer when the teacher reads first, so the students are encouraged and learn how to pronounce words correctly. It is incredibly beneficial to listen to the teachers' reading and correcting the pronunciations of some words, so that we improve".

### **4.2.3 Comprehension**

Various students reported that they find reading aloud hinders their comprehension of the text. They stated that they prefer to read quietly as it enables them to concentrate fully and understand what is being read. Student 9, for instance, considers reading aloud as a distracting exercise: "It is hard to grasp and comprehend what I am reading when reading aloud. I quickly lose focus on the content of the text I am reading and focus on the pronunciation to avoid making mistakes and being judged by the teacher or by my classmates".

A number of students provided answers that they could not be classified into one distinctive theme. One of these responses was that reading aloud is a time-consuming activity, which students can exploit to work on other assignments. In another response, a student reported that reading aloud is an inappropriate activity for upper-secondary school students.

## **4.3 Results in relation to the research questions**

In this section I will attempt to answer the research questions.

- 1- What are the attitudes of students in upper-secondary schools regarding reading aloud in English as L2 and L1?

The results indicate that the attitude of the students concerning reading-aloud activities in English is dependent on whether the reading aloud activity refers to reading aloud in front of others or if it alludes to listening when others are reading aloud. The proportion of students that reported that they feel strongly or slightly reluctant with respect to reading aloud in front of others in English is greater compared to their attitude regarding listening to others reading aloud in English. Similarly, the proportion of students that reported that they feel strongly or slightly positive toward listening to others reading aloud in English is greater compared to reading aloud in front of other students in English.

2- What, if any, correlations can be found between students' attitudes towards reading aloud in L2 and their previous experiences in reading aloud whether in L1 or L2?

The result shows that the proportion of students that are reluctant toward reading aloud is greater amongst the students that have previous experience (50.8%) compared to the students that do not have previous experience (42.9%). However, the amount of students that are positive in relation to reading aloud is greater amongst the students that have previous experience (18.6%) compared to the proportion of students without previous experience (14.3%) in reading-aloud activities at an early age. Similarly, the proportion of neutral responses is greater among the students that do not have any previous experience in reading-aloud activities from an early age. The result suggests that previous experience of reading-aloud activities in L1 from an early age have a correlation with the students' attitudes toward reading aloud in English, i.e., in L2. The correlation is that students with previous experience of reading-aloud activities from an early age appear more determined regarding their attitudes toward reading-aloud activities in English compared to the students without previous experience of reading-aloud activities from an early age. This is indicated by the smaller proportion of neutral answers among the students with previous experience. The reduction in the neutral answer implies an increase in the reluctant and positive answers. The number of students with previous experience in reading aloud from an early age who are reluctant to read aloud is greater compared to students without previous experience. However, a greater proportion of students with previous experience are positive about reading aloud in English compared to students without previous experience. Thus, one connection as regards students with and without previous experience in reading aloud from an early age and their attitude toward reading aloud in English in class, is that the students with previous experience have a more determined opinion regarding their attitude toward reading aloud. The results suggest

that there is no obvious correlation between previous experience in reading aloud in L2 in English in class and students' attitudes toward reading aloud in L2.

3- What, if any, correlations can be found between students' attitudes towards reading aloud and their language backgrounds?

There appears to be a correlation between the language background and attitude toward reading aloud in English. The results suggest that the proportion of students that feel reluctant about reading aloud in English is higher amongst the students that reported that they can speak two languages compared to students that speak three or four languages. Similarly, the results indicate that the number of students who feel positive toward reading aloud is higher amongst the students that are able to speak more than two languages.

4- What factors, both positive and negative, do influence the attitudes of the students in upper-secondary school in relation to reading aloud?

The findings of the open-ended question in the questionnaire describe the factors that the students consider as regards reading aloud in English. Confidence, concerns about mispronunciation and comprehension are the main factors that the students reported as influencing their attitudes towards reading aloud. These factors appear to be interrelated, as the students' self-confidence, while reading aloud, may influence their pronunciation or vice versa, and students' concerns about pronouncing words incorrectly might be distracting and influence their comprehension of the text they read aloud. A number of students consider reading aloud as a challenging and anxiety-provoking activity, whereas others believe that reading aloud is distracting, inappropriate or even a time-wasting activity. In contrast, some consider reading aloud to be a beneficial activity if it is practised correctly in the classroom.

## **5 Discussion**

### **5.1 Discussion of the quantitative data**

The results in this study indicate that 46.7% of the participants feel reluctant regarding reading aloud in L2 whilst 16.6% of the students feel positive about reading aloud in L2. Thus, the results suggest that the students' have a negative attitude toward reading aloud in L2. However, most students feel positive towards listening to others reading aloud. This is in line with the findings of Ivey & Broaddus (2001), who state that being read to by teachers was

rated as motivating and a preferable activity even for those who have negative attitude towards reading aloud in general. Although Ivey & Broaddus (2001) conducted the study on sixth graders in L1, the results of their study could be utilized to draw parallels with the results of this study. In the light of this evidence, a reading-aloud activity comprises reading aloud and listening to others reading aloud, being read to by adults rather than the child reading could be interpreted as a secondary avoidance strategy for the child's own reading. This study suggests that students with early childhood experience of reading aloud in their L1 will have a more positive attitude toward reading aloud in L2 than students that lack similar experiences with reading aloud in L1. Hence, reading-aloud activities from an early age in L1 has the potential to boost the students' attitudes with respect to reading-aloud activities in L2. Thus, this study indicates that there might be a correlation between early years' experience of reading aloud in L1 and a positive attitude toward reading aloud in L2. No previous studies confirming whether there is a correlation between previous experience in reading aloud in L1 and attitudes toward reading aloud in L2 in upper secondary school were found by the literature search. Therefore, the observed correlation between the students' previous experience in reading aloud in L1 and their attitude concerning reading aloud in L2 should be interpreted cautiously.

The reason why students with previous experience in reading aloud in L2 do not feel more positive in relation to reading aloud in L2 could be related to the type of reading-aloud activities in the L2 classrooms. This possibility concurs with the statement by Henry (2014, p. 5), who asserts that L2 learning practices in Swedish schools are demotivating and that there is paucity of authentic materials that boost students' motivation and engagement in L2 learning. The research conducted by Henry (2014, p. 5) was related to grades 6-9 in Swedish schools. However, as the curriculum for upper-secondary school does not specifically mention reading aloud practice in L2, the teachers might find it challenging to prioritise the reading-aloud practice at the expense of other language learning skills. Thus, students tend to learn most of their English outside school.

Moreover, as reading aloud in L2 has not been systematic and engaging, this could affect the students' attitudes with regard to reading aloud and as a result they demonstrate a negative attitude. There are strategies that teachers can use to change the students' attitudes towards reading aloud in L2. One of the strategies is the "book flood"-program which utilizes reading aloud as a key strategy. Ngo (2012, p. 25-26) states that there are positive effects on attitudes on reading-aloud activities in L2 and to the children's literacy growth. Even though, these are results from a study conducted among children in countries in the Pacific and in Sri

Lanka where English is taught in schools as L2, the results might be applicable to the Swedish school system to improve the attitudes toward reading-aloud activities.

An unexpected finding in this study suggests that there is a correlation between students' attitudes towards reading aloud and their language backgrounds. The students' attitudes towards reading aloud correlates with the number of languages the student's master. The more languages the students speak, the more positive they are about reading aloud. These results are in line with the results presented by Jasinka & Petitto (2014) which state that the exposure to languages from an early age have a positive impact on how the brain develops the neural systems for reading. Thus, there might possibly be a physical difference in the brain functionality between monolinguals and bilinguals. This might explain the results of this study which indicate that students who speak more languages are more positive toward reading-aloud activities than other students. Even though the students in this study were bilinguals and multilinguals parallels could be drawn with the results of Jasinka & Petitto (2014). If there are neurological differences between monolinguals and bilinguals resulting in bilinguals having a phonological advantage, it might be that there are similar neurological differences between bilinguals and multilinguals resulting in a phonological advantage of multilinguals over bilinguals. This unexpected finding could possibly explain the results in this study.

## **5.2 Discussion of the qualitative data**

Scant research has been conducted to understand students' opinions in relation to reading aloud in upper-secondary school. However, the factors that have been reported by the students in this study can be reviewed in the light of the previous research reviewed in the background. Confidence appears to be the principal factor in this study that the students maintain, and it is essential with respect to reading aloud in the classroom. Reading aloud, according to the students, provokes anxiety, which according to Krashen (2013, p. 4-5) is an affective filter that hinders L2 learning. To boost language learning, a decrease in the effect of the affective filter is needed. Reading aloud is the method that is suggested by Warner & Crolla (2015, p. 425), who state that practising reading aloud has the potential to strengthen student's self-confidence and to reduce the anxiety in the classroom which, in turn, may lead to effective language learning. It is also worth noting that the pronunciation of words, which was mentioned in several of the students' answers, is an aspect that reading aloud can provide students with, specifically when the teacher is involved in reading-aloud activity (Proença et al., 2017; Senawati et al., 2021, p. 84).

Comprehension is a further element, that in students' opinions, can be negatively affected by reading-aloud activities. Focusing on how to pronounce words correctly distracts the students and disrupts their concentration on the content of the text. However, Jacobs (2016, p. 2) suggests that reading aloud has the potential to encourage students to participate in discussions about the text. When students follow the same part of the text being read aloud, listening to their classmates read aloud may persuade them to focus on the text and participate in discussions concerning the content of the text. Regarding the other responses pertaining to reading aloud, such as being time-consuming or inappropriate for the upper-secondary school level, there may well be a need to clarify the benefits of reading aloud in L2 learning. Reading aloud activates the memory to memorise vocabulary, according to Takeuchi et al. (2012, p. 4-5).

## **6 Discussion of the Method**

Some of the questions in the questionnaire were not answered by the respondents even though I was present and explained the questions and made sure that the respondents understood them before they started to answer. Those are presented as blanks in the results. However, the number of blanks were not that many that they would significantly alter the overall results. Additionally, questions 5, 6 and 7 could be developed to clarify that reading-aloud activities mean reading to others aloud or being read to by others. However, I clarified to the students that reading aloud in this study comprises both ways of reading aloud. The open-ended question in the questionnaire (question 10) which was selected as an alternative to interviews with students, helped to obtain contextual responses about the students' opinions concerning reading aloud. However, it could be phrased clearer so that the students could feel more engaged to respond. Using the paper form of a questionnaire rather than an electronic link was time-consuming and costly, but it worked effectively in motivating and engaging the students to fill out the questionnaire, specifically the open-ended question. The results pertaining to the correlation between students' attitudes towards reading aloud and their language background are interesting. Also, further follow-up questions related to students' language backgrounds could be valuable in exploring the correlation between language attitudes towards reading aloud and their language backgrounds. Undertaking observations, conducting interviews, and creating focus groups are crucial tools to develop a comprehensive picture regarding students' attitudes when they read aloud in classrooms. However, due to the schools' busy timetable and time constraints, I was unable to observe lessons, or to interview students; hence, neither observations nor interviews were conducted in this research.

## 7 Conclusion

This study investigates the students' attitudes on the subject of reading aloud in L2 in an upper-secondary school in Sweden in relation to two variables: previous experience in reading aloud in L1 and L2 and language backgrounds. The findings of this study suggest that students' previous experience in reading aloud in L1 and in L2 as well as the number of languages they speak, potentially have a correlation with students' attitudes regarding reading aloud in L2. The proportion of the students that feel positive to reading-aloud activities is higher among the students that have previous experience in reading aloud in L1 or in L2. The conclusion is that it is beneficial for the students to be introduced to reading-aloud activities from an early age and to continue reading-aloud activities throughout all the stages of schooling. Teachers should offer more reading-aloud activities in lessons to increase the students' ease with these activities. The results in this study also indicate that the students prefer listening to others reading aloud to them in either L1 or in L2 over reading aloud to others. Thus, the teachers should focus on reading aloud exercises and in particular the reading aloud to others activity, the activity to which the students are most reluctant according to this study. This study also suggests that the students' attitudes toward reading-aloud activities become more positive and increase with the increased numbers of languages that the students speak. The teachers can use the multilingual students didactically and utilize their experiences as resources in the pedagogical practices that are used in the language teaching process. Moreover, the factors that the students in this study are concerned about that might affect their attitudes toward reading aloud are the fear of mispronouncing words, lack of confidence and low comprehension level of texts that they are reading aloud.

Future studies can explore the opportunities for teachers to implement effective reading aloud strategies. It is also important to mention that investigating the most effective instructional strategies, pedagogical approaches, together with teacher preparation methods can enhance the ability to employ reading aloud as a powerful teaching tool. Also, the fact that there is a gap in the research pertaining to reading aloud methods in upper-secondary school, suggests the need for further research about reading aloud.

The findings of this study need to be interpreted cautiously as the study is conducted in one upper secondary school in Sweden and thus cannot be generalised due to the insufficient sample size to draw valid conclusions.

## References

- Alatalo, T. (2021). *Högläsning: didaktik för språk-, läs- och skrivutveckling*. Studentlitteratur AB.
- Cambridge Dictionary. (n.d.). Attitude. In Cambridge Dictionary.org. Retrived January 02, 2023, from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/>
- Cerón, C. N. (2014). The effect of story read-alouds on children's foreign language development. *Gist Education and Learning Research Journal*, ISSN 1692-5777. no. 8, 83–98.
- Creswell, J. (2012). *Educational research: planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Pearson.
- Denscombe, M. (2014). *Forskningshandboken - för småskaliga forskningsprojekt inom samhällsvetenskaperna*. Studentlitteratur.
- Dommeyer, C., Baum, P., Chapman, K., Hanna, R. (2002). Attitudes of Business Faculty Towards Two Methods of Collecting Teaching Evaluations: Paper vs. Online. *Assessment and evaluation in higher education*, vol. 27, no. 5, p. 455-462.
- Drew, I. & Sørheim, B. (2016). *English teaching strategies (3rd ed.)*. Det Norske Samlaget.
- Drew, I. (2021). Promoting EFL literacy through shared and individual classroom reading experiences of literature. *Utbildning & Lärande*, vol. 15, no. 2, 167-184.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Taguchi, T. (2010). *Questionnaires in second language research: Construction, administration, and processing (2nd ed.)*. Routledge.  
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203864739>.
- Eagly, A., & Chaiken, S. (2007). The advantages of an inclusive definition of attitude. *Social Cognition*, vol. 25, no. 5, 582-602. <https://doi.org/10.1521/soco.2007.25.5.582>.
- Fried, H., & Lundberg, N. (2021). Oral presentations in a first and second language. Halmstad University.
- Gehlot, L., Al-Khalaf, H. & Gehlot, H. (2019). Evaluation of the reading habits of Indian students (reading aloud and reading silently) from low, middle and high-class schools. *Academic JHournals*, vol. 15, no. 2, 41-51.  
<https://academicjournals.org/journal/ERR/article-full-text-pdf/50A7AB362791.pdf>
- Gibson, S. (2008). Reading aloud: a useful learning tool?. *E LT Journal*, vol. 62, no. 1, 29-36.
- Henry, A. (2014). Swedish students' beliefs about learning English in and outside of school. In D. Lasagabaster, A. Doiz & J.M. Sierra (eds.), *Motivation and foreign language learning: From theory to practice* (pp. 93-166).



- Hikaru Takeuchi, H., Maruyama, T., Taki, Y., Motoki, K., Jeong, H., Kotozaki, Y., Shinada, T., Nakagawa, S., Nouchi, R., Iizuka, L., Yokoyama, R., Yamamoto, Y., Hanawa, S., Araki, T., Kohei Sakaki, K., Sasaki, Y., Magistro, D., Kawashima, R. (2020). Effects of training of shadowing and reading aloud of second language on working memory and neural systems. *Brain Imaging and Behavior*, (2021) 15:1253–1269.
- Huda, M., Kartanegara, M., Gamal, & Zakaria, N. (2015). The effect of learning strategy of reading aloud on students' achievement in the subject of Islamic studies at secondary school in Semarang, Indonesia. *International Journal of Education and Research*, vol. 3, no. 2, 577– 588.
- Ivey, G., & Broaddus, K. (2001). Just plain reading": A survey of what makes students want to read in middle school classrooms. *Reading Research Quarterly*, vol. 36, no. 4.
- Jacobs, G. M. (2016). Dialogic reading aloud to promote extensive reading. *Extensive reading in Japan*, vol. 9, no. 1, 10-12.
- Jasinska, K. & Petitto, L. (2014). Development of Neural Systems for Reading in the Monolingual and Bilingual Brain: New Insights From Functional Near Infrared Spectroscopy Neuroimaging. *Developmental Neuropsychology*, vol. 39, no. 6, 421-439.
- Krashen, Stephen, D. (2013). *Second Language Acquisition: Theory, Applications, and Some Conjectures*, Cambridge University Press.
- Körling, A.M. (2012). Den meningsfulla högläsningen. *Natur & Kultur*.
- Körling, A.M. (2022). *Väck läslusten i skolan*. *Natur & Kultur*.
- Lemke, L. (2020). Primary Teachers' Decisions for Selecting Multicultural Classroom Read Alouds. *Student Work*. 3691. <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/studentwork/3691>
- Neuman, W.L. (2003). *Social research methods: qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Pearson Education, Inc.
- Ngo, S.M. (2012). *Reading Aloud to Bilingual Students: Examining the Interaction Patterns Between Pre-service Elementary Teachers and Bilingual Children in the Context of Small Group Read Alouds in Mainstream Classroom Settings* (Publication no. 2528) Doctoral dissertation. Boston College.
- Proença, J., Lopes, C., Tjalve, M., Stolcke, A., Candeias, S., & Perdigão, F. (2018). Detection of mispronunciations and disfluencies in children reading aloud. *Interspeech*, 2017, 1437–1441. <https://doi.org/10.21437/Interspeech.2017-1522>.
- Senawati, J., Suwastini, Ni Komang A., Jayantini, I Gusti A.S.R., Adnyani, Ni Luh P. S., Artini, Ni N. (2021). The Benefits of Reading Aloud for Children: A Review in EFL

Context. *Indonesian Journal of English Education*, vol. 8, no. 1, 73-100.

<https://doi:10.15408/ijee.v8i1.19880>

Skolverket. (2022). *Ämne – Engelska*.

<https://www.skolverket.se/undervisning/gymnasieskolan/laroplan-program-och-amnen-i-gymnasieskolan/gymnasieprogrammen/amne?url=-996270488%2Fsyllabuscw%2Fjsp%2Fsubject.htm%3FsubjectCode%3DENG%26version%3D6%26tos%3Dgy&sv.url=12.5dfce44715d35a5cdfa92a3>

Socket, S. (2021). The magic of reading aloud. *English journal*, vol. 110, no. 4, 15-17.

Vetenskapsrådet. (2017). Good research practice. Retrieved from:

[https://www.vr.se/download/18.5639980c162791bbfe697882/1555334908942/Good-Research-Practice\\_VR\\_2017.pdf](https://www.vr.se/download/18.5639980c162791bbfe697882/1555334908942/Good-Research-Practice_VR_2017.pdf)

Warner, L., & Crolla, C. (2015). The practice of reading aloud in the high school: a preliminary investigation. *English Teaching: Practice & Critique*, vol. 14, no. 3, 419-426.

Wetcher-Hendricks, D. (2011). *Analysing Quantitative Data: An Introduction for Social Researchers*. John Wiley & Sons, Incorporated.

## Appendix 1

### A QUESTIONNAIRE ABOUT READING ALOUD

- 1- Which grade are you in? Grade 1  Grade 2  Grade 3
- 2- How many languages do you speak? \_\_\_\_\_
- 3- Grade on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is a strong reluctance that it affects you physically, 5 is a strong positive where you feel very comfortable and positive and 3 is a neutral attitude)
- What do you feel when you are asked **to read aloud in English** in front of the others?
- 1  Strongly reluctant to read aloud in front of the others.
- 2  Weakly reluctant to read aloud in front of the others.
- 3  Neutral to read aloud in front of the others.
- 4  Weakly positive, I read aloud in front of others in English.
- 5  Strongly positive, I willingly read aloud in front of the other in English.
- 4- Grade on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is a strong reluctance that it affects you physically, 5 is a strong positive where you feel very comfortable and positive and 3 is a neutral attitude)
- What do you feel when you **listen to others reading aloud in English in classroom**?
- 1  Strongly reluctant to listen to others reading aloud in English in classroom.
- 2  Weakly reluctant to listen to others reading aloud in English in classroom.
- 3  Neutral to listening to others reading aloud in English in classroom.
- 4  Weakly positive, I listen to others reading aloud in English in classroom.
- 5  Strongly positive, I feel very comfortable when listening to others reading aloud in classroom
- 5- Have you ever experienced reading aloud in English in previous stages of schooling (primary school or secondary school)?
- Yes  No  I don't know

6- Have you ever experienced reading aloud in Swedish in previous stages of schooling (primary school or secondary school)?

Yes  No  I don't know

7- Have you participated in communities where reading aloud has been an activity since an early age?

For example, regularly outside school, at home, reading aloud or listening to someone reading aloud?

Yes  No  I don't know

8- Grade on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is a strong reluctance that it affects you physically, 5 is a strong positive where you feel very comfortable and positive and 3 is a neutral attitude)

What do you feel when you are asked **to read aloud in Swedish (or any other languages)** in front of the others?

1  Strongly reluctant to read aloud in front of the others.

2  Weakly reluctant to read aloud in front of the others.

3  Neutral to read aloud in front of the others.

4  Weakly positive, I read aloud in front of others.

5  Strongly positive, I willingly read aloud in front of the other.

9- Grade on a scale from 1 to 5 (where 1 is a strong reluctance that it affects you physically, 5 is a strong positive where you feel very comfortable and positive and 3 is a neutral attitude)

What do you feel when you listen **to others reading aloud in Swedish (or any other languages)**?

1  Strongly reluctant to listen to others reading aloud in Swedish in classroom.

2  Weakly reluctant to listen to others reading aloud in Swedish in classroom.

3  Neutral to listening to others reading aloud in Swedish in classroom.

4  Weakly positive, I listen to others reading aloud in Swedish in classroom.

5  Strongly positive, I feel very comfortable when listening to others reading aloud in Swedish in classroom.

10- Which aspects do you consider playing the role in your attitude towards reading aloud in English?

---

---