Investigating the relationship between students’ self-monitoring awareness in reading and their perceptions about reading comprehension.
Abstract.

This study aims to investigate the relationship between students’ perceived self-monitoring awareness and their perception on reading. The reason for conducting this research is to see if students self-monitoring awareness matches their beliefs and perceptions of their own abilities in reading. If students can become aware of the relationship between perception and self-monitoring awareness it will be beneficial for them since they can become aware of eventual discrepancies in their use of self-monitoring strategies and their perception on reading.

Participants of this study were 10 senior-year students from an upper-secondary school in Söderhamn, Sweden. The data collection tool for this study was a questionnaire that consisted of three parts. Findings indicate that in some cases there was a relation between students’ self-monitoring use and their perception on reading. In addition, results show that most students have a positive perception on reading comprehension, and that they use different self-monitoring strategies when comprehending a text. This study can provide insights on how knowing and reflecting about the relationship between students’ perceptions and their self-monitoring awareness can help teachers to notice areas where students need to self-monitor their learning in reading activities.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## 1. INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................. 1

## 2. BACKGROUND ..................................................................................................................... 5

2.1. SELF-MONITORING, SELF-ASSESSMENT, AND SELF-MANAGEMENT. ........................................... 5
2.2 SELF-MONITORING AND BEHAVIOUR .......................................................................................... 5
2.3 METACOGNITION .......................................................................................................................... 6
2.4 LEARNERS’ PERCEPTIONS AND BELIEFS ....................................................................................... 7
2.5 INFORMATION PROCESSING IN L2 READING .............................................................................. 8
2.6 RESEARCH IN THE FIELD ............................................................................................................. 9
2.6.1 SELF-MONITORING FOR STRUGGLING READERS ...................................................................... 9
2.6.3 POOR VS. SKILLED LEARNERS/READERS .................................................................................. 10
2.6.4 COMPREHENSION MONITORING IN READING ...................................................................... 11
2.7 RESEARCH QUESTION ............................................................................................................... 11

## 3. METHOD .............................................................................................................................. 12

3.1 PARTICIPANTS .......................................................................................................................... 12
3.2 MATERIAL .................................................................................................................................. 12
3.3 PROCEDURE .............................................................................................................................. 12

## 4. RESULTS ............................................................................................................................. 13

4.1.1 PARTICIPANTS PERCEPTIONS ON READING ........................................................................... 13
4.1.2 STUDENTS’ PERCEPTIONS ON READING COMPREHENSION. .................................................... 14
4.1.3 PARTICIPANTS’ SELF-MONITORING USE ................................................................................... 15

## 5. DISCUSSION ......................................................................................................................... 16

5.1 RQ: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS’ PERCEIVED SELF-MONITORING AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS ON READING IN GENERAL. ................................................................. 17
5.2 RQ: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN STUDENTS’ PERCEIVED SELF-MONITORING AWARENESS AND PERCEPTIONS ON READING COMPREHENSION. ............................................................................. 18
5.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHING PRACTICES ............................................................................ 23
5.3 LIMITATIONS ............................................................................................................................. 23
5.4 FUTURE RESEARCH ................................................................................................................ 24
5.5 CONCLUSION ............................................................................................................................ 24

## 6. REFERENCES ....................................................................................................................... 25

APPENDIX 1. INFORMATIONSBREV OCH SAMTYCKE ................................................................. 27
APPENDIX 2A. THE READING PART (1/2) .................................................................................... 28
APPENDIX 2B. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS (2/2)................................................................. 29
1. Introduction

In the field of second language (L2) research, self-monitoring is frequently investigated together with other meta-cognitive strategies such as planning for learning. For example, Alavi and Ganjabi (2008) investigated what cognitive and metacognitive strategies learners use more frequently when they read, including planning strategies and monitoring strategies. However, before the arrival of cognitive and more humanistic approaches, a heavy emphasis lied on the teacher and the teaching, and the learner was the last aspect to be considered in the learning process. This is evidenced by the behaviouristic approach to learning that was prevalent in L2 teaching and learning in the 1940s and 1950s. For example, Lightbown and Spada (2013) points out that L2 teaching was mainly focused on imitation, pattern practice, and habit formation.

However, a change in approach allowed the learner to become the main focus in the learning process. Consequently, learner characteristics such as attitude, motivation, and language learning strategies received more attention, allowing for a more learner-centred approach (Alavi & Ganjabi, 2008). For example, Purpura (2014) mentions that research was concerned with understanding the characteristics of the good language learner in the 1970s, and the idea was based on trying to understand what successful and unsuccessful learners do or what strategies they use in their leaning activities. For instance, planning and monitoring strategies were found to be characteristics of a good language learner (ibid., 2014). Moreover, in the 1980’s, language acquisition became more focused on language awareness. According to Carter (2003), this emphasis on language awareness was a reaction to the prescriptive approach to language learning that focused mainly on an atomistic analysis of language such as grammar translation, drills, and pattern practice.

In the field of L2 research today, the learner is a given part of the learning process, and much research has been done on different aspects of the learner that contributes to the learning process. Some research has focused specifically on learners’ perceptions and beliefs. For example, Williams and Burden (1997) mention self-concept as an overarching term for describing all of our perceptions and conceptions about ourselves. Given the broad description of self-concept, the authors point out that research has focus on different aspects of self-concept such as self-esteem, self-image, and self-efficacy. The concept of self-efficacy; that is, “our beliefs about our capabilities in certain areas or related to certain tasks” (Williams & Burden, 1997 p. 97), directly relates to learners’ perception of their own ability in relation to language learning. For example, Samuels, Ediger, Willcutt & Palumbo (2005) emphasize the
effect of learners’ self-efficacy in reading. The authors suggest that whether or not second language learners feel that they can be good readers is dependent on students’ beliefs in their self-efficacy, or their confidence in achieving a learning goal. Thus, students’ beliefs in their own ability to comprehend a text might influence their perception on reading comprehension. On the contrary, students who believe that they cannot achieve comprehension of a text are more likely to be less successful in doing that. In addition, the authors point out that students who believe in their ability might be more likely to employ metacognition and corrective strategies in order to comprehend a text, thus enhancing their reading experience.

Moreover, other research has investigated how L2 learners’ acquire language through information-processing. For example, Lightbown and Spada (2013) suggest that information processing can be explained through declarative knowledge and procedural knowledge. Declarative knowledge is knowledge that learners are aware of having, and procedural knowledge is learners’ abilities to use the knowledge in practical situations. The idea is that procedural knowledge can be practised and then become automatized which as a consequence, makes the learner unaware of the process since it happens automatically. This perspective on language acquisition suggests that once a practised skill has become automatized it is not necessary to think about the declarative knowledge while performing it since this might inhibit the performance of a skill. Similarly, Samuels et al. (2005) points out that strategies can become automatized once learners discover that a particular strategy is used successfully. In accordance with this, O’Malley and Chamot (1990), mention that learners might be consciously aware of rule applications in the initial stages of acquisition, but once proficiency has been achieved they become unaware. However, the authors also suggest that learners can still be aware of certain features of the learning process, and specific strategies such as connecting prior knowledge to new information as a means to aid their learning.

Self-monitoring strategies, like checking one’s own comprehension in L2 learning, allows for more self-directed and independent learning. According to Lightbown & Spada (2013), a popular conception about language learning in recent years is that learners’ errors should be corrected immediately because these errors run the risk of forming bad habits for the learner. In this view, teachers are encouraged to instruct and give feedback to L2 learners’ who makes an error in order to prevent these errors from reoccurring. However, correcting students’ errors also runs the risk of having a negative effect on the learners’ motivation, which is an essential part of language learning (ibid., 2013). According to Hedge (2000), self-monitoring is about identifying errors in the new language, determining which ones are important, tracking the source of these errors and trying to delete them. Thus, self-monitoring allows
learners to notice and correct their errors by themselves, without the risk of having negative effects on other aspects of learning such as motivation.

Purpura (2014) points out that learners use strategies to regulate their thoughts and actions consciously, and in a goal-directed fashion. This makes metacognitive knowledge useful for the attainment of goals in L2 learning. On the other hand, however, some research suggests that these processes are subconscious and happen automatically, without direct awareness or conscious knowledge (Purpura, 2014). For example, readers who quickly and accurately can decode different aspects of language such as words, grammatical structures, or other features of the language are unaware of the process when engaged in their reading (Hedge, 2000). This is something that is acknowledged in the commentary material for the Subject Syllabus in English (SSE, 2015). The commentary material mentions that “Elevernas strategier kan vara medvetna eller omedvetna” / ‘students’ strategies can either be conscious or subconscious’ (Skolverket, 2015 Kommentarsmaterial p. 2).

Moreover, according to Lightbown and Spada (2013), older learners matures in terms of their cognition and that L2 learners’ metalinguistic awareness develops as they get older; therefore, there are differences between younger and older learners in terms of their metacognitive ability. For example, it has been suggested that older learners draw on their problem-solving ability since they no longer can draw on their innate ability to acquire language (Lightbown & Spada, 2013), this should indicate that older learners already have developed a metacognitive ability. Therefore, it is reasonable to think that upper-secondary school students, being older learners, already have a well-developed metacognitive ability. Similarly, older learners use their metacognitive abilities more than younger learners. For example, Flavell (1979) mentions that when younger and older people were asked to memorize and recall a number of things, it was evident that younger learners do not have the same metacognitive awareness as older learners. After studying the things for a while, younger children claimed that they were ready when they were not. Conversely, the older subjects said they were ready, which they usually were. This supports the notion that, metacognitive abilities is something that develops as learners get older.

Previous research on self-monitoring in L2 learning focused on studying students’ behaviours. For instance, Joseph (2005) points out that monitoring occurs at different stages of the metacognitive process and that self-monitoring can be regarded as an attempt to attend to an aspect of one’s behaviour through recording of data; this involves activities like

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1 All translations of quotations from the National Syllabus are mine.
checking one’s comprehension and the effectiveness of one’s efforts or use of strategies. According to the author, “the process of setting goals, devising plans, and monitoring performance is cyclical” (Joseph, 2005, p. 201). Setting goals may mean completing a reading task, reading a precise number of words, or answering a certain number of comprehension questions correctly. Planning for learning might include planning for strategies that learners can use to achieve a learning goal such as using review strategies when answering a series of inferential comprehension questions (Joseph, 2005). In addition, the author argues that a self-monitoring method needs to be implemented to record certain aspects of a learning goal. This could include recording the number of questions one has understood correctly, or recording the amount of time spent silently reading a book. In sum, establishing a goal and formulating a plan for learning are necessary to make the monitoring activity meaningful and product oriented.

In relation to L2 education, a broad description of strategies can be found in the commentary material for the SSE (2015): “varje organiserat, målinriktat och reglerat handlingssätt som en individ väljer för att utföra en uppgift som han/hon sätter upp som mål eller konfronteras med” / ‘every organized, goal-directed and regulated action that an individual chooses to carry out a task that he/she sets up as a goal or struggles with’ (Skolverket, 2015 Kommentarismaterial p. 2). This description emphasises the metacognitive aspects of strategy use, putting goal-directed and regulated action at the forefront, and suggests that learners should make conscious decisions. In addition, the SSE for English in upper-secondary school also stresses that learning strategies are an important feature, as evidenced by the explicit statements in the syllabi for English 6 and 7. Indeed, the Subject Syllabus in English 6 states that teaching should include “Strategier för att söka relevant information i större textmängder” / ‘strategies for searching for relevant information in larger amounts of text’ (Skolverket, 2011 Läroplan p.6). Accordingly, the knowledge requirements for English 6 demand that students can ”välja och med viss säkerhet använda strategier för att söka relevant information” / ‘choose and use strategies for searching relevant information’ (Skolverket, 2011 Läroplan p.7). The Subject Syllabus for English 7 states that teaching should comprise “Strategier för att överblicka och strukturera information i större textmängder” / ‘strategies for overviewing and structuring information in larger amounts of text’ (Skolverket, 2011 Läroplan p. 9).

Language acquisition research has also stressed the importance of language awareness, emphasizing the cognitive advantages of reflecting upon language (Carter, 2003). This is a concept highlighted also in the commentary material for the SSE when suggesting that
learners should develop “medvetenhet om hur man på olika sätt kan lära sig språk och utveckla sin språkförmåga” / ‘awareness of how one can in different ways learn languages and develop one’s language ability’ (Skolverket, Kommentarsmaterial p. 5).

Considering the stress posed in L2 research on the effect of metacognitive strategies in language learning, and the emphasis put on this concept in the SSE in upper-secondary school, the aim of this essay is to investigate the relationship between upper-secondary L2 students’ awareness of their self-monitoring use in reading and their perception of reading comprehension in the subject of English in upper-secondary school.

2. Background


Self-monitoring can be defined by itself, or together with similar concepts. For example, O’Malley and Chamot (1990) define self-monitoring as “checking one’s comprehension during listening or reading, or checking the accuracy and/or the appropriateness of one’s oral or written production while it is taking place” (O’Malley & Chamot, 1990 p. 232).

Moreover, the concept of self-monitoring is often associated together with other similar concepts such as self-assessment and self-management. Although self-monitoring is an important aspect of the metacognitive ability, it seldom occurs alone in practical situations. For example, self-monitoring can be a part in a two-step process in a learning activity. The first step involves self-monitoring where learners measure to what extent they have understood something in an exercise. The second step involves self-assessment, where learners are encouraged to monitor and check their progress. (Hedge, 2000). Thus, self-monitoring and self-assessment seem to be an integrated process.

In addition, according to some authors self-monitoring frequently occurs together with self-management. For example, Clay (1991) mentions self-monitoring in relation to inner control and self-management and emphasises the importance of self-monitoring as encouragement for self-management, talking about self-monitoring as important behavioural signals of inner developing strategic control. In other words, self-monitoring in this case is a strategy that helps the learner to become more automatic or independent in their processing of texts.

2.2 Self-monitoring and behaviour

Mark Snyder, who introduced the concept of self-monitoring in 1974, sought to identify differences in students’ behaviour. According to him, some people have the ability to observe
and control their behaviours, while others lack this ability (which might result in negative and unwanted behaviour). Individuals who display a high level of self-monitoring are referred to as high self-monitors, and individuals who display a low level of self-monitoring are referred to as low self-monitors (Arslantas & Kurnaz, 2017).

Some research suggests that self-monitoring can be a helpful strategy for teachers to regulate student’s behaviour (for example, to eliminate or decrease unwanted behaviours). Self-monitoring in this case, refers to a two-step process where a student observes and records a certain behaviour and then determines the amount of times the target behaviour happens. For example, he or she can record the number of occurrences of a target behaviour, which then can be decreased (Menzies, Lane & Lee, 2009). In relation to managing students’ behaviours, self-monitoring occurs together with other metacognitive strategies such as self-evaluation, self-instruction, and goal setting.

2.3 Metacognition

The theoretical framework for this study is metacognition. Metacognition can be described as “knowledge and cognition about cognitive phenomena” (Flavell, 1979, p. 906), including monitoring of one’s memory, comprehension, and other aspects of cognitive activity. Flavell’s model on cognitive monitoring comprises metacognitive knowledge, which is constituted by combinations of information around the knowledge variables - self, task, and strategies as tools for achieving a specific task. Moreover, metacognition can be referred to as knowledge of one’s own cognitive processes or an “awareness or consciousness of whether or not one knows something” (Samuels et al., 2005 p. 42). For example, if one pauses one’s reading to look for the definition of a certain word when reading, asking oneself what a certain word might mean, and then consulting a dictionary for the definition, a metacognitive process has taken place. In other words, upon realizing that a part of the text is confusing, the learner has monitored his comprehension of the text. Furthermore, self-monitoring is a part of metacognition, since it indicates how learners think about learning and how to make it effective. (Samuels et al., 2005).

In relation to benefits of metacognition in reading, Samuels et al. (2005) suggest that the assumption is that if students become aware of their processes in reading they can become more self-aware and more self-informed, thus being more consciously aware of what action might be necessary to take in order to achieve comprehension of a text. There are four potential aspects to monitoring in reading in relation to intake of information and culmination of information. Firstly, readers might monitor if what they already know about the text
matches what they are reading. Secondly, readers might monitor to see how new information fits together by itself, and comparing this new information to previous inferences. Thirdly, readers may monitor the comprehension of a text, finding out what is understood and what is not understood. Finally, readers might monitor if the new information should stay, if it should go, if it should be held on to, or if it should be inhibited (ibid. 2005).

Furthermore, Fälth (2013) mentions that having the ability to step aside from language and reflect on it is one of the main ideas in linguistic awareness, and it is a prerequisite for gradually becoming more aware of systematic relations. That is, being aware of the structures of language and being able to shift one’s attention back and forth from the contents to the form of language. This ability is necessary to distance oneself from the contents of a text, thus becoming aware of how the language is constructed.

2.4 Learners’ perceptions and beliefs
Williams and Burden (1997) emphasize the role the individual learner plays in the learning process, suggesting that learners’ individual characteristics plays a vital role in their learning process. One important characteristic is the learners’ locus of control, which can be described as their perceived control over a situation or event. However, people will have different ways of controlling their situations. Because of this, they can be subdivided into internalisers and externalisers. Internalisers believe that they are responsible for their actions; on the contrary, externalisers feel that their life events are controlled by external factors such as luck and fate. Learners with high internal locus of control show strong tendencies of seeking out for information and use it effectively in problem-solving tasks.

In relation to reading and readers perception, awareness manifests itself differently in skilled and poor readers. Persson (1994) found that although both kinds of readers have a perception that reading is the best way to learn, good readers express a more positive perception of themselves than poor readers, finding it easier, for example, to answer to questions about themselves. Good readers are also more confident whereas poor readers are more reluctant to give definitive answers, and poor readers often categorize themselves as unsuccessful. In addition, Persson (1994) remarks that poor readers are more aware of their reading flaws and they might mention that they are not interested in reading, or that they have problems in reading; on the contrary, good readers might describe themselves as successful since learning comes generally easy to them. Being aware of their learning and reading difficulties makes poor readers less successful. They do not experience that they are learning something in a traditional sense; instead, it is as if poor readers’ knowledge is automatically
assimilated out of nowhere. Consequently, this means that they are not aware of things they are good at (ibid., 1994). In addition, O’Malley and Chamot (1990) mention that monitoring one’s learning can also be traits of good or poor learners. For example, good language learners manage their learning situations, and analyse task demands.

2.5 Information processing in L2 reading
Research conducted to understand peoples’ abilities to process information has shown that information in the text will activate prior knowledge of some kind (Hedge, 2000). In relation to reading in L2, think-aloud methodology has been used and has shown that the readers’ prior knowledge (for example, topic related knowledge), allows them to predict subsequent content in the text (Hedge, 2000).

Models developed to understand how a learner makes sense of information of a text reading have proposed two contrastive explanations: top-down and bottom-up process. According to proponents of a top-down process, prior knowledge drives the understanding of the text; according to proponents of a bottom-up process, instead, understanding of a text follows the decoding of language features such as words or structures (Hedge, 2000). In addition, O’Malley and Chamot (1990) mention that learners may alternate between top-down and bottom-up processing depending on which type of processing the task demands.

Prior knowledge is however not enough. Fälth (2013) points out that one of the goals in reading is to automatize the process of word decoding. If learners have a problem with decoding, problems with comprehension might occur. Consequently, a large part of readers’ cognition will have to be dedicated to the process of word-decoding, which might hinder readers to solely focus on the comprehension of a text. In addition, strategies for processing a text in reading is something that develops at an early age. For example, Clay (1991) points out that children use many strategies when encountering a new word in a text, making predictions about the meaning of a new word, and using the context of the text as a reference point. And more often than not, they are often successful in doing so. Furthermore, the author suggests that good readers have the ability to use processing strategies that are available to them when trying to make sense of a text, and that these strategies may be employed without conscious awareness.

In relation to L2 acquisition, Krashen has provided a model for second language acquisition that comprises five hypotheses, one of which is the monitor hypotheses. The monitor hypothesis suggests that second language learners use previously acquired knowledge consisting out of rules and patterns that they have learned as an editor or monitor of their own
language system. According to Lightbown & Spada (2013) this acquired language system allows learners to make “minor changes and polish what the acquired system has produced” (ibid, p.106). In addition, O’Malley and Chamot (1990) mentions that learners can monitor their learning once a skill has become autonomous; however, according to the authors the development of a skill goes through a cognitive and an associative stage before finally reaching the autonomous stage. The cognitive stage involves instructions in how to perform a learning task, and observing an expert performing the task. This requires the learner to pay conscious attention to forms and functions of language which typically results in declarative knowledge, allowing the learner to describe the acquired knowledge verbally. The associative stage allow learners make two changes to develop proficiency within a skill. The learner detects and eliminates errors within in one’s own original declarative representation and the declarative knowledge is turned into procedural knowledge. For example, when a learners become more fluent in speaking a foreign language they might still remember the rules of it; therefore, the representation of declarative knowledge is not always lost at this stage. Finally, when the learner has reached the autonomous stage, the skill has become effortless and does not require much working memory and conscious awareness. At this stage, learners might monitor the execution of a certain skill with very little effort.

2.6 Research in the field
Research in field contains studies from different perspectives. Firstly, I will present two research studies that investigated self-monitoring as a remedial strategy for struggling readers. Secondly, I will present a study that focused on learners’ metacognitive strategy use in L2 learning. Thirdly, I will present some research that focuses on differences between poor and skilled learners. Finally, I will present studies that investigate how students monitor their comprehension in language learning.

2.6.1 Self-monitoring for struggling readers
A lot of research has been done on struggling readers’ lack of monitoring use. The two following research articles emphasize the importance of readers’ abilities to self-monitor their reading at an early age. One study shows that self-monitoring can improve struggling readers in terms of reading fluency and accuracy. Kolic-Vehovec (2002) showed that training self-monitoring can help primary school children who struggle in reading. The author investigated the effects of self-monitoring training on second-grade poor readers in terms of reading
accuracy and fluency. Participants were divided into an experimental group and three control groups with 15 participants in each group. Results showed that two reading groups improved in terms of reading fluency, but only the self-monitoring group improved in reading accuracy. The author argued that self-monitoring of word recognition and sentence comprehension might enhance reading accuracy which in turn promotes reading fluency which is an essential part of reading comprehension.

Another study focuses on the role of the teacher, highlighting that teachers can help struggling readers to self-monitor their reading by helping them to understand how teachers can notice and respond to children who struggle with self-monitoring during reading. Anderson and Kaye (2017) proposed three strategies for teachers to help students respond to children who struggle to self-monitor their progress in reading activities, including observing children’s reading behaviour and noticing children’s patterns of responding.

2.6.3 Poor vs. skilled learners/readers

Some researchers have investigated the differences between high achieving/good and low achieving/poor students, and what aspects of learning that constitutes successful learners or readers. For example, Lihua (2013) found that high-achieving students use meta-cognitive strategies more frequently than low-achieving students. These findings highlight the importance and necessity of meta-cognitive strategy training in English teaching, and emphasize the positive effects of learning strategies. In addition, the researcher found that meta-cognitive strategy use has an impact on learners’ proficiency, and that it is important to practice meta-cognitive strategies such as planning, monitoring, and evaluation in L2 learning. Moreover, meta-cognitive strategy use makes learners more aware of their learning, thus helping them to become aware of what areas of language learning they are strong and weak.

Persson (1994) investigated skilled readers and less skilled readers’ perceptions of their own learning. According to the author a common conception amongst poor readers are that there is only one good way of learning. For example, poor readers mentioned listening or reading as source to learn, whereas good readers suggested several ways to learn. Moreover, good readers give more specific descriptions of their learning activities, and describe their active choices in terms of different techniques and methods when learning languages. This suggests that they have an awareness of their metacognitive abilities, which makes them more successful in their reading abilities.
Furthermore, Zhang (2010) studied what types of metacognitive knowledge EFL learners of different proficiency levels had when learning to read EFL. He found that EFL proficiency and readers’ metacognitive knowledge are closely linked together. Additionally, high-scoring readers reported that monitoring strategies were an important aspect of metacognitive knowledge. For example, one subject reported that checking one’s comprehension is important because it allows for him to check and occasionally double-check comprehension and meaning of the text.

2.6.4 Comprehension monitoring in reading
Some research has investigated students’ abilities to monitor their comprehension in reading activities. For example, Baker (1979) investigated college students’ abilities to monitor their comprehension in reading by asking them to recall passages that contained confusions such as inconsistent information, unclear referents, and inappropriate logical connectives. Results showed that participants, after reading the passages, to a large extent failed to notice the confusions in the passages. Although many students failed to report on these confusions, the study found that students’ ability to monitor their comprehension was not the main reason for this problem.

Moreover, Yang (2002) investigated how proficient and less proficient readers monitor their comprehension. Participants of this study were freshmen English classes and the study included a think-aloud procedure, followed by a diagnostic and a remedial procedure. The author found that proficient readers showed more competency in monitoring and tended to monitor their thinking processes all the time to compensate for words that had not been decoded before. In addition, findings of the study reveal the positive effect of learning strategies as well as the importance and necessity of applying strategies training to English teaching.

2.7 Research question
The aim of this study is to investigate the relationship between students’ perceived use of self-monitor strategies in relation to reading comprehension tasks, and their perceptions of reading comprehension. More specifically, it aims to find out which self-monitoring strategies students use more frequently and compare that with students’ views on reading comprehension. Therefore, the following research question is explored: is there any relationship between students’ perceived self-monitoring awareness in reading activities and their perceptions about reading in general and reading comprehension? To investigate this
research question, the hypothesis is that students who have a positive perception on reading will be more aware of their self-monitoring use and; therefore, perceiving themselves as better or more competent readers.

3. Method
3.1 Participants
The participants of this study were ten senior year students (six male) from an upper-secondary school in Sweden in Söderhamn studying English 6 and 7.

3.2 Material
A text from the textbook “Viewpoints” for English 5 was used as base for a reading comprehension exercise proposed to the students. In addition, a questionnaire with questions related to self-monitoring was created and administered to the students. The reading comprehension test was two pages long and had three comprehension questions that related to the text, and each question contained four possible answers, of which more than one answer was possible. The questionnaire was divided into three parts. Part A consisted of eleven items about students self-monitoring use which were taken from the questionnaire designed by Alavi and Ganjabi (2008). The statements elicited students’ self-monitoring strategy use in direct relation to the test which helped elicit students’ self-monitoring strategies in relation to reading comprehension. Part B of the questionnaire was constituted by nine items to which students had to reply using a Likert-scale with alternatives ranging from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree”. Each item was provided with an empty response field which allowed participants to motivate their answers. This part of the questionnaire was designed to measure students’ perceptions on their reading in general and their reading comprehension. Part C included background questions on participants’ gender, course difficulty, and spare time reading.

3.3 Procedure
The students were asked to perform the reading comprehension test first, and then fill in the questionnaire. The subjects were instructed to not use any additional help such as dictionaries or mobile phones when performing the test to ensure that each students’ reading ability was measure without any external help. A brief explanation of how the Likert-scale works was
provided to ensure that students understood correctly how to answer to the statements in part B.

4. Results

In this section, quantitative results from the questionnaire responses will be presented. First, I will present results from students’ perceptions on reading in general, then results from students’ perceptions on reading comprehension, and lastly students’ perceived use of self-monitoring strategies.

4.1.1 Participants’ perceptions on reading

The questionnaire items aimed at checking general and specific perception and strategies on reading. General and specific questions were mixed to ensure that participants could not predict the questions in a certain order. Three questions (Q1, Q6 and Q9) aimed at eliciting students’ perceptions on reading in general.

As shown in figure 1, participants agreed that reading is an important skill in English (90% strongly; 10% agree). Similarly, the majority of participants agreed that reading allow them to learn new words (80% strongly; 10% agree), others remained neutral (10% neutral). Moreover, as displayed in figure 1, most students agreed that spare time reading helps them to understand better in school (50% strongly; 30% agree), others remained neutral or did not agree (10% neutral; 10% disagree). In sum, these results indicate that the majority of participants have a positive perception towards reading in general.

Figure 1. Students’ perception on reading in general
4.1.2 Students’ perceptions on reading comprehension.

The seven remaining questions aimed at eliciting students’ perceptions on reading comprehension in general. For the ease of reading, the results of these remaining questions are divided into two separate graphs. Figure 2a presents results from Q 2-5, and figure 2b presents results from Q 7-8.

As shown in figure 2a, participants agree that they generally find it easy to comprehend a text in English (70% strongly; 30% agreed), and most participants agree that their understanding of a text in English depends on the topic (30% strongly; 50% agree), the remaining do not think so (20% disagree). 80% of the participants agreed that they usually got the main point when reading a story (20% strongly; 60% agreed). Finally, figure 2 indicates that 90% of participants agreed that it usually helps to reread a passage if struggling with it (60% strongly; 30% agree), the remaining did not think so (10% disagree).

In addition, as shown in figure 2b, when pondering whether one should stop when noticing a new word, 50% of participants indicated neutral, 40% disagreed and 10% agreed on that, suggesting that students do not always stop whenever they notice a new word. Finally, most participants agreed that previous knowledge is helpful when reading about a topic (10% strongly; 80% agree), 10% remained neutral.

![Figure 2a. Perceptions on reading comprehension](image-url)
4.1.3 Participants’ self-monitoring use

The last analysis concerns replies to the statements of self-monitoring awareness in the questionnaire. As shown in figure 3, participants used some self-monitoring strategies more frequently than others. As indicated by answers to S1 and S2, translation into L1 and underlining main ideas were amongst strategies that were used sometimes or never. As shown by answers to S3, most of participants reported that they understood the text regardless of their vocabulary knowledge (50% always; 30% usually), the remaining did not (10% never; 10% did not answer). S4 indicates that the majority participants read the questions several times more frequently (10% always; 20% usually; 30% often), while the remaining reported on using this strategy less often (30% sometimes; 10% never). As indicated by answers to S5, the majority of participants reported that they used their prior knowledge during the test more frequently (40% always; 10% usually; 20% often), others used it less frequently (20% sometimes; 10% never). Answers to S6 shows that the majority of participants did not identify easy and difficult test components during the test (20% never; 60% sometimes), while the remaining used this strategy more frequently (10% often; 10% usually). Moreover, as shown by participants’ answers to S7, most participants reported that they were aware of what and how they were doing in the test (60% often; 20% usually), the remaining were not aware as often (20% sometimes). Answers to S8 reveal that participants checked their performance and progress at different amounts (30% never; 30% sometimes; 30% often), the remaining 10% usually checked their performance or progress. Moreover, answers to S9 indicates that 90% of participants frequently attempted to identify the main of ideas of the text (50% often; 20% usually; 20% always), the remaining did this less frequently (10% sometimes). In addition, as
shown by answers to S10 and S11, participants are more aware of their ongoing thinking process (20% often; 40% usually; 20% always) than they were aware of how much of the test remained to be completed (30%, never; 40% sometimes).

**Figure 3.** Participant’s perceived use of self-monitoring strategies (%)

5. **Discussion**

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between students’ perceived self-monitoring awareness in reading activities and their perceptions about reading in general and reading comprehension.

Results have revealed that most participants have a positive perception toward reading in general, and reading comprehension. In addition, some of the results have shown that students who use self-monitor strategies more frequently in their reading process tend to have a positive perception on reading comprehension which aligns with the research hypothesis; however, some results suggest differently. In the following section, the research question and the hypothesis will be discussed together with results from this study, previous research in terms of discrepancies, and unexpected findings in collective cases and individual cases. After this, limitations for this study will be presented as well as future implications for teaching and research.
5.1 RQ: The relationship between students’ perceived self-monitoring awareness and their perceptions on reading in general.

In the following section, I will discuss the results in terms of participants’ perceptions on reading in general (Q1, Q6, and Q9) and their perceived self-monitoring awareness.

Results showed that most participants had a positive perception on reading in general (Q1, Q6 and Q9). These perceptions are consistent with some results on participants’ perceived self-monitoring use. When looking at some of the comments provided to some of these questions, it is evident that participants did not struggle with words when reading the text. For example, some participants argued that “the text might contain a few words I don’t know, but the context explains them” – “some texts use words that you never heard before and because of that you learn a new word” (Q9). This finding corresponds with Krashen’s monitor model which proposes that L2 learners polish and make minor changes in their acquired language system (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). In addition, results revealed that the majority participants perceives reading to be an important skill in learning English (Q1). When looking at some comments to this question, it seems that reading is important for increasing one’s vocabulary. One student mentioned two ways for increasing one’s vocabulary, arguing that “reading and listening is what allows me to understand new words and phrases”. This comment correlates with Persson’s (1994) remarks that good learners mentions more than one way to learn, and that good readers might describe themselves as successful since learning comes generally easy to them. Other participants mentioned reading as the main source for vocabulary acquisition: “I think your vocabulary gets bigger by reading compared to listening” – “Reading gives you an idea of how words are supposed to look and that you get a basic understanding how to spell the words”.

Moreover, as evidenced by results from Q6, most participants had a positive perception towards spare time reading, agreeing that it is helpful (50 % strongly; 30% agree). When looking at some comments provided to this question, participants give different reasons as to why spare time reading is helpful. Some participants seem to point out general benefits of reading on one’s spare time. For example: “If you do something often, you get better at it – “you feel comfortable reading if you do it regularly”. Another student gave more specific details as to why spare time reading is beneficial, pointing out that “[...] I learn new words and expressions using the internet”. These comments correlate with participants’ answers to S2 (Translated into L1: 50% never; 40% sometimes), and S3 (Understood the text regardless of vocabulary knowledge: 40% always; 30% usually) because this suggest that participants are aware that they already have a good understanding of a text when reading. Therefore, this
indicates that participants’ self-monitoring awareness is consistent with their perceptions on reading, which aligns with the research hypothesis.

Furthermore, in answering to Q6, one participant pointed out that one might not be aware of the learning process when reading on one’s spare time: “Probably yes, but I cannot see the progress clearly”. Her perception is consistent with her answers to S7 (sometimes aware of what and how she was doing), S10 (sometimes aware of how much remained to be completed), because this indicates that she was not aware at all times during the test; hence, this might indicate a relationship between this participants’ perceived self-monitoring awareness and her perception on reading. In addition, results also revealed two surprising findings in relation to this question. Firstly, one participant argued that once you have developed an ability to comprehend, spare times reading is not necessarily beneficial: “I think practice helps, but if you’re quite good to start with it doesn’t really make a difference I don’t think”. Secondly, another participant disagreed that spare times reading helps with understanding in school, giving no explanation as to why.

5.2 RQ: The relationship between students’ perceived self-monitoring awareness and their perceptions on reading comprehension.

In the following section I will discuss the results in terms of participants’ perceptions on reading comprehension (Q2-5 and Q7-8) and their perceived self-monitoring awareness.

When looking at comments provided to some of the questions on reading comprehension, several relationships between perceived self-monitoring awareness and perception on reading can be found. For example, as shown by the results, all participants agreed that it is generally easy to comprehend a text in English (Q2), and most participants agreed that rereading can be helpful when struggling with a passage (Q5). When looking at comments provided to these questions, it seems that participants show an awareness in their reasoning. One participant mentioned that “I feel like I tend to focus more when I’m reading English, since it isn’t my first language” – “I might read a passage while I think of something else, and that contributes to me not remembering it”. These comments seem to correlate to his reply on S11 (usually being aware of his thinking process), because it indicates that he is aware that L2 reading activities helps him to become more focused; however, it also indicates he might lose concentration in his reading. This might explain why he chose “usually” instead of “always”. This indicates that his self-monitoring awareness is supported by his perception on reading, which aligns with the research hypothesis.
Moreover, one participant strongly agreed that she usually finds the main point when reading a story (Q4), explaining that: “Usually the text only has a few words I don’t understand, and that way I still can figure out the main point”. This indicates that she understands most of a text when reading. In addition, she agreed that it is generally easy to understand a text in English (Q2). This suggests that she have a strong belief in her self-efficacy, which correspond Samuel et al.’s (2005) comment that learners’ perception of themselves as good readers is dependent on their beliefs in their self-efficacy. When looking at her comments for Q2, it seems she is aware that the character of a text might require different strategic measures, explaining that her understanding “depends on the character of the text”. These two comments seem to be consistent with her replies to S3 (always trying to understand the text regardless of vocabulary knowledge), S4 (usually reading the questions several times), and S9 (always trying to identify the main points in the text) because they indicate that she is aware of her strategy use in reading such as identifying the main point, and understanding most of the text regardless of her vocabulary knowledge. Therefore, this indicates a relationship between this participants’ perceived self-monitoring awareness, and her perception on reading comprehension, which aligns with the research hypothesis.

Furthermore, as indicated by replies to Q3, the majority of participants agreed that their understanding in English depends on the topic. When looking at some comments provided for this question, participants mentioned that interest is an important aspect: “Simply there are topics that you are interested in and I think that has a big impact” – “If I find interest in the subject I dive more deep and find it more interesting rather than a text I find boring” – “It’s harder to understand a text that’s about a subject that I’m not use to talking or reading about”. These comments appear to correlate with the majority of participants’ answers to S1 (underlined main ideas; 30% never; 40% sometimes), and S6 (identified easy and difficult test components; 20% never; 60% sometimes) since there seems to be a connection between participants interest in the topic, and their use of these strategies. On the other hand, in replying to Q3, one participant explained that ”I can talk about most things but since I am from a different culture and I have my own interest, I can’t talk about everything”; this indicates that this participants’ background provides him with the opportunity of having different interests. This view seem to correlate with his reply to S1 (often underlining main ideas), and S6 (usually tried to identify easy and difficult test components) because they indicate that he is aware of using these strategies frequently to achieve comprehension in reading.
Moreover, when looking at the some other comments provided to Q5, some participants’ answers indicated a use of strategies in terms of planning and goal-setting. For example, one participant seemed to have a clear idea of what needed to be done before engaging with a text, mentioning that “First read sets the structure and the second read sets the details”. This comment seems to align with his answers to S3 (always tried to understand regardless of vocabulary knowledge), and S9 (usually attempted to identify the main points) because they indicate that this participant has a habit of planning his learning. This finding corresponds with Joseph’s (2005) claim that planning for learning, and setting up goals for learning are prerequisites for monitoring to happen as well as O’Malley and Chamot’s (1990) remark that good language learners manage their learning situations, and analyse task demands.

Furthermore, this reasoning also correlates with the definition of strategies in the commentary material for the Subject syllabus in English: “every organized, goal-directed and regulated action that an individual chooses to carry out a task” (Skolverket, 2015 Kommentarsmaterial). Moreover, when looking at participants comments on Q5, one can see that they display an awareness in reading. For example, some participants mentioned that “sometimes I might read it wrong and then when I read it again I see where I got it wrong” – “you may not understand the first time but if you read it again you’ll be able to pick up something you miss the first time”. These comments corresponds with Samuels’s et al. (2005) remarks that readers who believe in their ability to process a text are more likely to employ metacognition and corrective strategies in order to comprehend a text, thus enhancing their reading experience.

Moreover, as indicated by replies to Q7, results revealed that the majority of participants marked either neutral or disagree as to whether one should stop reading whenever they noticed a new word. This indicates that most participants display an awareness in terms of self-monitoring their progress since they can decide on whether or not they need to stop reading or continue reading. Conversely, this may also indicate that participants employ other strategies for achieving comprehension when encountering a new word in the text. For example, one participant who declared to usually check his performance, in commenting to Q5 and Q7, explained “it always helps me to reread a passage. It makes you think twice” – “I usually read to the end and then I go back and check on the new words, the rest of the text can sometimes help me with understanding”. This participants’ view conforms to Yang’s (2002) finding that proficient readers monitor their thinking processes to compensate for words that had not been decoded before.

However, when looking at participants replies to S8, results show that participants’ perceived self-monitoring awareness varied in terms of checking one’s performance and
progress during the test (30% never; 30% sometimes; 30% often; 10% usually). Therefore, this indicates a discrepancy since most participants have agree that rereading is helpful (Q5), but not everybody seem to be think that they are aware of this when reading. This does not align with the research hypothesis. On the other hand, participants’ replies to S7 suggest that participants indeed were aware of what and how they were doing at all times (20% sometimes; 60% often; 20% usually). In this case, this would align with the research hypothesis.

Furthermore, some participants argued that rereading words after finishing reading the text might provide an explanation for a new word, or that the context surrounding a new word might provide an explanation for it: “The complete sentence or context might help to understand the meaning of the word” – “it depends on the word. If it seems important to my understanding of the text I stop”. These comments correspond with participants indications on S3, where most participants reported that they either always or usually tried to understand the text regardless of their vocabulary knowledge (30% usually; 50% always). This finding correlates with Clay’s (1991) remarks that readers make predictions about the meaning of a word by using the context as support when doing do. In addition, this finding highlights that most participants are aware of their self-monitoring when reading, and can decide on whether a new word seems important enough for them to stop reading. This aligns with Samuels et al.’s (2005) remark that if students become aware of their processes in reading they can become more self-aware and more self-informed, thus being more consciously aware of what action might be necessary to take in order to achieve comprehension of a text.

When looking at an individual case on Q7, one participant mentioned that one can “maybe just analyze what it might mean, but don’t get put off reading the rest”. This indicates that this participant displays an awareness of checking his performance and progress when reading. When looking at this participant’s replies to S8, he checked his performance and progress often which aligns with his comment on Q7.

Moreover, participants show an awareness of when and how to use prior knowledge. When looking at participants’ perceptions on reading comprehension, the majority of participants agreed that prior knowledge is important when reading about a topic in English (Q8). This correlates with Hedge’s (2000) remark on schematic knowledge in the sense that materials surrounding the text will activate prior knowledge in the mind of the reader. However, when looking participants’ replies to S5, we can see that only some participants reported on always using prior knowledge. In addition, although 40% of participants reported on always using prior knowledge, there were discrepancies in relation to their explanations as to why prior
knowledge helps them when working with a specific topic. When looking at the comments provided to Q8, some participants seem more aware of the benefit of previous knowledge than others. For example, one participant mentioned that “since it is a topic I am familiar with it is easier to understand” – “if it’s the same topic you can usually understand if you have some knowledge from before”. However, other participants who reported on always using prior knowledge were more tentative in their answers as to why previous knowledge is important. For example, one participant commented that “previous knowledge is always good”, and another simply agreed that previous knowledge is helpful when reading about a topic, without providing any further explanation. Therefore, this indicates a discrepancy between students’ awareness of self-monitoring strategies and their perception of reading comprehension, which does not align with the research hypothesis. These findings correspond with Persson’s (1994) observations that good readers are keener to describe their active choices, and that good readers are more confident, whereas poor readers are more reluctant to give definitive answers. In addition, this finding also corresponds with O’Malley and Chamot’s (1990) claim that it is easier for L2 learners to monitor their learning once the skill has become autonomous. However, the lack of further comments to the question might indicate that some participants make use of their prior knowledge without being aware of it. This correlates with Purpura’s (2014) claim that some strategies are nonconscious and happen automatically, and this line of thought is also explicitly expressed in the commentary material for the SSE (2015) which suggests that strategies can be either conscious or nonconscious.

When looking at other comments provided to Q8, some participants seem to think that prior knowledge is not always appropriate or relevant for comprehension, arguing that “If my previous knowledge is correct and relevant it can be good to use it”; “not every time but usually it does”. It depends on if my previous knowledge is ‘relevant’ to the text”. This corresponds with O’Malley and Chamot’s (1990) claim that L2 learners may alternate between top-down processing and bottom-up processing depending on what is required by the task at hand. In addition, this type of awareness correlates with the guidelines for the SSE, which suggests that students should “choose and use strategies for searching relevant information” (Skolverket, 2011 Läroplan p.6). Therefore, it seems that these participants’ awareness of their use of prior knowledge, relates to their perception on reading comprehension which aligns with the research hypothesis.
5.2 Suggestions for teaching practices

Findings from this study revealed firstly that most students’ perceptions on reading in general and reading comprehension correlates with their awareness of their own use of self-monitoring strategies. However, in some cases students’ perceptions on reading comprehension did not match their awareness of their self-monitoring ability; therefore, self-monitoring strategies should be taught explicitly to students who struggle in reading. For example, this could include setting up a goal for completing a set of questions and then plan on using specific strategies to achieve that goal. Doing so will make students more aware in their learning which in turn will make them more self-directed and self-aware in their reading process. However, in a practical situation it might be difficult for the teacher to notice students’ needs since strategies can be either conscious or nonconscious.

Secondly, findings also revealed that students use different self-monitoring strategies to achieve comprehension when reading a text. Therefore, I would recommend teachers to provide opportunities for students to assess and comment on their own strategies during reading comprehension tasks. By doing this, teachers can elicit students’ perceptions of their own learning, and help them to become more aware of their learning. In addition, teachers can see which strategies each student use more frequently and; therefore, become more informed about students’ awareness of self-monitoring strategies. For example, this study revealed that the majority of students perceived prior knowledge to be important for understanding, and that their interest in their topic is the determining factor if prior knowledge is relevant or important but only some students claimed to always use their prior knowledge in reading. This information might help students become more aware of how frequently prior knowledge affects their learning.

5.3 Limitations

Because this study has a small sample size and only includes participants from the city of Söderhamn in Sweden, generalizability is limited. Moreover, this study only examines students’ perceived use of self-monitoring strategies in relation to a few reading comprehension questions. Consequently, the generalizability of this study is limited. In addition, the text provided to participants was originally intended toward English 5 students; therefore, some students might have deemed this material to be too easy. Furthermore, this study only investigates students’ perceptions of reading comprehension and does therefore not account for how students comprehend a text in a practical situation.
5.4 Future research
This study investigated the relationship between students’ self-monitoring awareness and their perceptions on reading comprehension. This sparked an interest in other areas where self-monitoring may be examined or investigated. For example, future research may investigate the relationship between students self-monitoring awareness and their perception of comprehension in other language skills such as speaking and writing. Future research may also examine self-monitoring awareness across different age groups and different programs. This study suggests that there is a relationship between students’ self-monitoring awareness and their perceptions on reading comprehension in upper-secondary school; future research may test this relation with an online test; that is while actually reading a text. By doing this, one can compare if students indeed self-monitor their reading as much as they think they do. Moreover, since this study focus merely on students’ perceptions, future research may also focus on teachers’ perception and attitudes toward teaching self-monitoring strategies in reading.

5.5 Conclusion
Findings of the present study indicate that there is a strong relationship between upper-secondary school students’ self-monitoring awareness and their perceptions on reading. This corroborates results of previous research. In most cases, the participants of this study seem to be aware of their use of strategies and to use different strategies. However, the results also show discrepancies in perceptions between readers. Some seem more aware of their self-monitoring strategy use in relation to reading, whereas others seem less aware. In addition, results also indicate that older students display a well-developed metacognitive awareness, as evidenced by their self-reported use of self-monitoring strategies, and their positive perceptions on reading comprehension. Finally, the results suggest that learners’ strategies can be nonconscious or conscious. Considering these results, I strongly recommend that teachers of English in Swedish upper-secondary school should provide students with opportunities for record and monitor their learning, helping students who struggle in reading activities to become more aware of their learning.
6. References


Appendix 1. Informationsbrev och samtycke

Forskare: Jens Borvall
Institution: Örebro Universitet

Forskningsprojekt: En undersökning om förhållandet mellan elevers förmågor att självövervaka sitt eget lärande och deras uppfattningar om sin läsförståelse.

Syfte: Detta informerade samtycke är tillägnat elever på gymnasieskolan som studerar engelska årskurs 3 på Staffanskolan i Söderhamn. Den har två delar.

Del I: Information om projektet. (för att dela information angående projektet med dig)
Del II: Samtyckesförklaring (för en signatur om du är villig att delta)


Del I: Information om projektet.
Jag håller på med ett arbete om hur elevers användande av självövervakning (self-monitoring) i läsning, relaterar till deras uppfattningar om läsförståelse. Självövervakningsstrategier kan till exempel innebära att man är medveten om sin förståelse under själva läsningen av en text eller att man lägger märke till när man inte förstår i läsningen. Mitt mål är att samla in data från en övning i läsförståelse där eleven svarar på några frågor som är kopplat till en text och från ett frågeformulär som handlar om elevens förmåga att självövervaka sin läsning och elevens åsikter om läsförståelse. För att nå dessa mål, skulle jag vilja samla in:

- Dina svar på läsförståelseövningen.
- Dina svar på frågeformuläret.

All insamlade data kommer att vara anonym och kodad för att skydda din identitet.

Del II: Samtyckesförklaring
Jag har blivit tillfrågad att ge mitt samtycke för insamling av material i gymnasieskolan år 3 på Staffanskolan i Söderhamn. Detta material inkluderar testresultat från uppgiften i läsförståelse och mitt besvarade frågeformulär. Jag har fått kännedom om namnet på forskaren som kan kontakts om jag skulle ha några frågor.

Informerat samtycke
Jag deltar frivilligt i denna datainsamling. Jag förstår att jag kan återkalla mitt samtycke när som helst.

Elevens namn: __________________________________________
Elevens underskrift: _______________________________________
Ort och datum: ____________________________________________
Appendix 2a. The reading part (1/2)

Working to Live

How do you think today’s adults feel about working? Is it possible that our attitude towards work is based on which generation we belong to? In her 2008 article “They don’t live for work... they work to live”, Anushka Asthana outlined how those who today belong to the adult generation (Generation Y) felt about working when they were in early adulthood.

Teenagers and young adults - the so-called Generation Y - have watched with horror as their parents worked punishing hours in their scramble for money and status. Now, as this generation go in search of jobs, they have different priorities. They care less about salaries, and more about flexible working, time to travel and a better work-life balance. And employers are having to meet these demands.

Anushka Asthana reports.

Settling down on the shiny black sofa in the front room of their student house in Jesmond, Newcastle, Alisa McNeil and her flatmates discuss what they would do once they had left university.

The idea of moving into the financial world of London and working long hours inside a massive company does not appeal to me,” said McNeil, placing a textbook down on the cream carpet, among scattered magazines, notes and revision notes. The 20-year-old had a first-year exam for her economics degree the next day.

People in their late teens and early twenties, she argued, were far keener to have a “good life with a standard amount of money” than ‘sky their goals out like their parents. “I saw my mum and dad work really hard, but my work ethic is different”, said McNeil.

“I want to do well but I want to have lots of fun in life. Money and work are not for all and for all. If you put all your effort into your job you lose sense of what you are living for.”

McNeil is not alone. New research has found that a similar attitude to work is beginning among the group of people known as Generation Y - usually defined as those between the ages of 11 and 25. A study of more than 2,500 people born after the early Eighties found that they were revolving around their parents’ values and were determined not to lead lives that revolved around work.

Instead, they were ready to resign if their jobs were not fulfilling and fun, with decent holidays and the opportunity to take long stretches off for charity work or travel. Salary and status were not high on the priority list, according to the study by TalentSmooth, a firm that consults companies in banking, professional services and the law on the changing workforce.

Here is a group that has never known, or even witnessed, hardship, recession or mass unemployment and does not fear redundancy or repossession, according to researchers. The result is a generation that believes it can have it all and is not embarrassed to ask for it: a generation that will constitute the majority of the workforce within a decade.

That is why major companies, emboldened by the challenge to attract the very best graduates, are doing whatever they can to hire them in. The previous generation saw work as a primary part of life, said Madalyn Brooks, HR director at Procter & Gamble. “When they left education, work was a dominant part of what they did and they were not looking for time out. Now we are seeing the growth of a different profile of candidate. They have grown up in relatively affluent families. They want to be sure that they can strike a balance between work and their personal life, and so the opportunity to take time off, to travel, to work for a company with a strong social responsibility record, are all concerns that we increasingly hear when recruiting talent.”

Procter & Gamble has already adapted its recruitment efforts and what it offers to meet the needs of Generation Y. Instead of just promising higher salaries, this international company is highlighting the opportunity for flexible hours, the chance to work from home, the offer of up to a year of family leave to look after children or elderly parents, and the promise of regular three-month sabbaticals. Similar packages are being offered by companies across Britain.

In his open-plan office in the centre of Aberdeen, Simon Chinn, 25, a senior consultant at a recruitment agency, rushed between meetings last week. He admitted that one thing that attracted him to the firm, Horpe Molloy Recruitment, was the fact that it was “a good company to work for”, a job that made him feel good about the company’s work in Aberdeen that has a very attractive benefits package,” he gave as an example. “There is a good pension, gym membership in the office, opportunities for travel and sabbaticals. People can...
Appendix 2b. Comprehension Questions (2/2)

Understanding the text – choose All the text

1. What does Ailsa McNeil say about her own generation?
   a) They want a lot of money.
   b) They want a good job with reasonable pay.
   c) They do not want to work at all.
   d) They want to have fun as well.

2. What is said about earlier generations?
   a) They lived to work.
   b) They were focused on earning money.
   c) They had no jobs.
   d) They worked very hard.

3. What are generation Y’s priorities when it comes to choosing a job?
   a) Free time.
   b) Salary.
   c) Fulfilment.
   d) Status.
Appendix 3. Questionnaire PART A

PART A)

Instructions: Read each statement (1-11) and indicate how you thought during the test. Circle a number between 1-5.

1.) Never
2.) Sometimes
3.) Often
4.) Usually
5.) Always

1. I underlined the main ideas during the test. 1 2 3 4 5
2. I translated the reading text into my first language (for example Swedish) 1 2 3 4 5
3. I tried to understand the text regardless of my vocabulary knowledge. 1 2 3 4 5
4. I read the questions several times to better understand them. 1 2 3 4 5
5. I used my prior knowledge to help understand the reading test. 1 2 3 4 5
6. I tried to identify easy and difficult test components. 1 2 3 4 5
7. I was aware of what and how I was doing in the test. 1 2 3 4 5
8. I checked my own performance and progress while completing the test. 1 2 3 4 5
9. I attempted to identify main points of the given reading texts. 1 2 3 4 5
10. I was aware of how much the test remained to be completed. 1 2 3 4 5
11. I was aware of my ongoing thinking process when answering to questions. 1 2 3 4 5
Appendix 4. Questionnaire PART B (1/3).

PART B)

Instructions: Choose the option that suits your opinion and motivate your answer.

1.) Reading is an important skill in learning English.

☐ Strongly agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly Disagree

Please motivate your answer:


2.) I generally find it easy to understand a text in English.

☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly disagree

Please motivate your answer:


3.) My understanding of a text in English depends on the topic.

☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly disagree

Please motivate your answer:


Appendix 4. Questionnaire PART B (2/3).

4.) When I read a story, I usually get the main point.
☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly disagree
Please motive your answer:

5.) It usually helps me to reread a passage if I struggle with it.
☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly disagree
Please motive your answer:

6.) Reading on my spare time helps me to understand reading better in school.
☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly disagree
Please motive your answer:
Appendix 4. Questionnaire PART B (3/3).

7.) In my opinion, you should always stop whenever you notice a new word in the text.

☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly disagree

Please motivate your answer:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

8.) When I read about a topic in English it helps me to use my previous knowledge about that topic.

☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly disagree

Please motivate your answer:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

9.) Reading allow me to learn new words.

☐ Strongly Agree  ☐ Agree  ☐ Neutral  ☐ Disagree  ☐ Strongly disagree

Please motivate your answer:

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Appendix 5. Questionnaire PART C

PART C)

Gender?
☐ Male       ☐ Female       ☐ Not Listed

☐ Prefer not to answer

I am currently studying:
☐ English 5       ☐ English 6       ☐ English 7

In an average week, what sort of texts do you read apart from textbooks in school? (Tick anything that applies to you)
☐ Fiction books       ☐ Non-fiction books       ☐ Newspapers/articles
☐ Magazine       ☐ Other: ________________________________

In an average week, how much time do you spend reading on your spare time from the sources you mentioned?
☐ Less than 1 hour
☐ 3.5-7 hours
☐ 8-14 hours
☐ 15-21 hours
☐ More than 21 hours a week

Thank you!