Enhet
Kommunikation och varumärke

Styrande dokument   1(7)
Datum   Dnr
2024-03-04   LTU-640-2023
Process
11.1 Verksamhet och
förvaltningsjuridik

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Language policy for Luleå University of Technology*

*The English translation has been generated using an automatic translation service. In case of any discrepancy or discussion regarding translated governing documents, the Swedish original text shall always prevail.

Styrande dokument   2(7)

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1.   Introduction

Language and its usage play a crucial role in our efforts to fulfill the university's long-term vision of creating global societal benefit. We aim to provide both employees and students, regardless of their language background, with the opportunity to participate in relevant aspects of the university's quality work and to be informed about the university's activities. Through purposeful language use, we promote our shared goal of contributing to global societal improvements. It is important to be aware that different situations may require different language skills and that there may be information that is not always available in multiple languages. The purpose of this policy is to provide guidance and advice related to the university's language use.

2.   Overall objectives

Luleå University of Technology is a Swedish authority and, under the Language Act (SFS 2009:600), has a special responsibility for the accessibility, usage, and development of the Swedish language within the university's areas of operation. Swedish is the main language, and in the university's public activities, language should be clear, simple, and understandable.

Luleå University of Technology is also an international environment and prioritises internationalisation. This means that the university has operations and collaborations, research and education, conducted in languages other than Swedish, primarily English. The university should be a welcoming environment, and non-Swedish-speaking employees and students should be given good opportunities to participate in the university's activities. This means that communication in certain contexts needs to occur in languages other than Swedish.

The overall objectives for the university's language and its usage are plain language and parallel lingualism.

Plain language means that official texts from the university should have language that is clear, simple, and understandable. Clear language entails using official recommendations, such as the Swedish Academy's word list, Swedish writing rules, and Government writing rules. Simple language means avoiding complex sentence structures, outdated expressions, abbreviations, technical terms that the recipient does not understand, and avoiding providing incomplete information. Understandable language means carefully choosing what information the text should contain, in what order the material should be presented, how the text should be divided into paragraphs, and how headings should be formulated. Plain language also means adapting the language to the recipient's needs.

Parallel-lingualism means that Swedish and English are the primary languages for communication and documentation at the university. The choice of language should be

based on appropriateness and context. Parallel lingualism makes communication more inclusive and promotes a welcoming culture for international employees and students.

3.   Undergraduate and postgraduate education

3.1 Educational programs

Before deciding on language usage in an educational program, several factors need to be considered. These factors include, but are not limited to:

1. **Content and target audience of the education:** The language of an education should align with the nature and content of the subject as well as the expected language proficiency of the students. Programs that have Swedish as the language of instruction may include courses and course components taught in English.

2. **International orientation:** Programs targeting international students use English as the language of instruction.

3. **Consideration of external and societal factors:** The university should consider the demands of the job market and societal diversity when deciding which language(s) to use in education. Decisions regarding language choices should be based on an analysis of the language required to meet industry or labour market needs and how language can support and include different societal groups and diversity.

4. **Pedagogical quality:** The language of instruction should support high-quality learning and pedagogical effectiveness.

5. **International collaboration:** English is used as the language of instruction if the educational program is part of international collaborations, exchange programs, or has specific international dimensions.

3.2 Courses

Decision-making regarding the language of instruction for an individual course, either standalone or as part of a program, should be based on a careful analysis of several factors. These factors include, but are not limited to:

1. **Course subject matter:** The language should be well-suited to the subject matter and objectives of the course to support students' understanding and learning.

2. **Students' language proficiency:** The anticipated language background and

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competence of students should be taken into consideration. The language used in the course must not pose an unnecessary barrier to learning.

3. **International audience:** Courses intended to attract international students or with a clear international focus use English as the language of instruction.

4. **Pedagogical quality:** The language of instruction should promote high-quality learning and pedagogical effectiveness.

5. **Course's international context:** English is used as the language of instruction if the course is part of international collaborations, exchange programs, or has specific international dimensions.

3.3 Course literature

The university encourages the use of materials, including course literature and other teaching resources, in both Swedish and English in courses conducted in Swedish. This provides students with good opportunities to develop their academic language skills in both languages. The selection of course literature is based on what is most appropriate for the course's goals and implementation, not on whether the literature is available in Swedish or English.

In courses conducted in English, course literature is typically only available in English. However, there may be reasons to consider integrating Swedish technical terminology into certain aspects of English courses to benefit both students with knowledge of Swedish and international students aiming to establish themselves in Sweden.

3.4 Quality work

The university's systematic quality work in education is primarily conducted and documented in Swedish. However, students in programmes not conducted in Swedish are welcomed and encouraged to express their opinions and feedback in either Swedish or English, depending on their language preference. International students are also offered the opportunity to respond to course evaluations in English. For programmes conducted in English, it is possible to conduct programme councils in English, and minutes from these meetings can be written in English. For courses conducted in Swedish, the teacher has the option to choose whether the course development report should be written in Swedish or English. However, the course development report for courses conducted in English should be written in English. Additionally, internal self-assessments included in the periodic evaluations of educational programmes by faculty boards can be written in English, and verbal feedback dialogues can be conducted in English if desired. It is important to note that summaries of the results from the systematic quality work in education are documented in Swedish in most cases. If non-Swedish-speaking students wish to receive information about the quality work at the undergraduate and graduate levels, the university strives to provide explanations in English. This gives students the opportunity to exercise their

influence over education and understand how their efforts affect the university's quality work.

4.   Research and research education

4.1 Courses at the research level

The university's policy is that courses at the research level should primarily be conducted in English. However, the university acknowledges that in certain specific subjects or contexts, there may be strong reasons to offer courses in languages other than English.

4.2 Research communication

In accordance with the Higher Education Act (Chapter 1, Section 6), researchers and research groups have the right to freely choose the language for scientific publications and artistic productions. The exception is dissertations, which according to the university's guidelines are always written in Swedish or English.

4.3 Quality work

The university's systematic quality work in research and doctoral education is primarily conducted and documented in Swedish. However, the university welcomes and encourages doctoral students and researchers to express their opinions and feedback in both Swedish and English, depending on their language preference. Doctoral students also have the opportunity to respond to course evaluations in English, and their individual study plans can be written in English. Additionally, internal self-assessments included in the periodic evaluations of research subjects by faculty boards can be written in English, and verbal dialogues can be conducted in English if desired. It is important to note that summaries of the results from the systematic quality work in research and doctoral education are documented in Swedish in most cases. If non-Swedish-speaking staff members wish to receive information about the quality work regarding research subjects and doctoral education, the university strives to provide explanations in English.

5.   Government language and administration

The university's operations are governed by several administrative laws and regulations. According to the Language Act, the official language of authorities is Swedish. This means that all official decisions are written in Swedish, and everyone has the right to communicate with the university in Swedish, with the university being able to respond in Swedish. Additionally, through this language policy, the university aims to promote parallel-lingualism and plain language. At Luleå University of Technology, Swedish and English are the main operational languages.

5.1 Rules, guidelines and policies

Rules, guidelines, and policy documents should be written in Swedish and always translated into English. An automatic translation service should typically be used for the translation of rules, guidelines, and policy documents. However, governing documents of significant relevance to students and staff, containing specific technical terms and legal terminology, such as work regulations, employment regulations, admission regulations, export control, research misconduct, and other deviations from good research practice, should be professionally translated or reviewed by a subject matter expert after an automatic translation service has been used. It is crucial that the translation of specialized terms and legal concepts is accurate. The translated documents should clearly indicate if the translation has been done by an automatic translation service. The Swedish original text always takes precedence in case of any discussions regarding translated governing documents. The English translation of rules, guidelines, and policies should be published shortly after the Swedish version is published on the web.

5.2 Meetings

The university aims for all employees and students, regardless of their language background, to have the opportunity to actively participate on equal terms in meetings to which they have been invited. This means that meeting organizers should consider holding the meeting in English if there are invitees who do not have sufficient knowledge of Swedish to participate on equal terms, for example, during planning days, strategy days, and collegium meetings.

Meetings in decision-making and advisory bodies should, as a general rule, be conducted in Swedish. Elected members and representatives in decision-making and advisory bodies are expected to have an understanding of Swedish and be able to access materials written and presented in Swedish. However, this does not prevent meeting participants from using other languages as long as everyone attending the meeting understands what is being said.

5.3 Information material

The university's website should be available in both Swedish and English. Any translation of texts intended for publication on the web is done after an assessment of relevance and context.

Central information material of a permanent nature concerning the legal protection, safety, and working environment of employees and students should be available in both Swedish and English.

The university adopts British English as the standard on the website, in guidelines, and in general information material.