Are metaphors worth teaching?
A study about the relation between the use of metaphors in L2 writing and high grades in the National test of English for year 9 in the compulsory education in Sweden.

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1. Introduction

Metaphors are pervasive; they are a part of who we are because they structure our thoughts and language. Moreover, metaphors help us understand and perceive the world. Since they allow a speaker to express the way they perceive the world, metaphors constitute a core part of language, they are a way to understand and learn things (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The ability of a person to use metaphors in language production is called ‘metaphoric competence’. This competence has proven to be an important factor in the quality of text-production (Littlemore & Low, 2006). As students learn a second language, knowledge about metaphors and how they are used also becomes an important part of their learning path. Metaphors are said to be the last items a learner masters in a second language (Golden, 2012). Additionally, the use of metaphors helps the learner to express complex and abstract ideas (MacArthur, 2010). Metaphors are more widely used in writing than in conversation (Steen, 2010), still, the writing competence and the use of metaphors in English as a foreign language (EFL) has not been a specific learning target in the syllabus for the compulsory education in Sweden. With 20 years of experience as a teacher, I have not encountered any special approach designed to teach metaphors and develop their use in discourse. Nonetheless, there has been a long tradition of assessing language competence in Sweden with national tests. The fact that the tests are kept and archived for at least six years in schools all over the country provides many opportunities for further study. For instance, to examine the extent to which students obtaining the highest grades use metaphors in comparison to students who get the lowest grades and see whether there is a difference in the metaphoric competence among students and explore the educational implications in the EFL classroom.

1.1 Aim

The aim of this project is to determine how metaphoric competence in English of Swedish 9-graders and their success of the written part of the National Test are related, and to draw insights based on this for classroom practice. The research questions that motivate this exploratory study are:

1. To what extent are students obtaining grade A in the test using metaphors compared with students obtaining grade E?

2. Is there a relation between metaphorical competence and the students’ grade in written production?

3. What educational insights can be drawn of these findings for the EFL classroom?
1.2 Outline of essay

Firstly, the paper covers the theoretical background of different basic concepts like the definition of metaphor both from a traditional and a cognitive-linguistic perspective; ‘Metaphoric Competence’ and its relation to writing competence; and, finally a description and background of the national test of English for year 9 (part C Writing), how the test is applied and assessed. The main sources of information about the assessment process are the National Assessment Project (NAFS) at the University of Gothenburg (Göteborgs Universitet, 2019a) and the National Agency of Education in Sweden (Skolverket, 2011). Secondly, the materials and method for the study are presented along with the corresponding results. Finally, educational implications according to the findings are discussed and some pedagogical ideas about how to teach the use of metaphors in the EFL classroom are presented.

2. Theoretical Background

The present essay is concerned with the use of metaphors in EFL writing, consequently, research on the elements that are involved in the production and identification of metaphors in L2 writing is presented. In the first place, the definitions of the conceptual elements used in this study such as metaphors, cognitive linguistics and metaphoric competence, are considered. Secondly, the national tests in English in Sweden are explained, emphasizing how they are used to assess students’ written production.

2.1 What are metaphors?

According to the OALD (2019), the word metaphor origins from the Latin words metaphora, metapherein, and its original meaning is ‘to transfer’.

It is a word or phrase used to describe somebody or something else, in a way that is different from its normal use, in order to show that the two things have the same qualities and to make the description powerful, for example: she has a heart of stone. (OALD, 2019)

Historically, the ancient philosophers in Greece have studied and defined metaphors in poetics and in discourse. Aristotle’s definition of metaphor is: “the application of one thing of a name belonging to another” (Aristotle, 350BC). The Aristotelian view of metaphor constitutes thus a form of comparison or substitution and the usage of metaphors in poetics and rhetoric is seen as something that is opposed to literal language. Literal language is considered the default mode of expression where one can find every definition and metaphors substitute elements from the literal language (Nacey, 2013). In rhetoric, according to Aristotle, metaphors can be used to persuade by comparison (Vega-Moreno, 2007) while in poetics, metaphors are conceived as detachable

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1 L2 stands for a second language or foreign language.
ornamental elements where they constitute a decorative aspect of the language. By contrast, in the Platonist tradition, the metaphor is considered to be an inseparable part of language as a whole, where the language is a living organism. This view sets precedents to the late divide between semantics and pragmatics (Nacey, 2013).

However, this classical Platonian and Aristotelian view of metaphors as rhetorical and poetical devices of language differs with recent psycholinguistic approaches where the definition has shifted from being a mere linguistic element to a cognitive approach (Vega-Moreno, 2007). Since the 1980s, a growing body of research has focused on the fact that metaphors are conceptual rather than linguistic in nature, for example, the Conceptual Metaphor Theory (CMT) as developed by Lakoff and Johnson (1980). According to cognitive linguists like Lakoff and Johnson (1980) and Gibbs (1999), metaphors are constantly present in our daily lives. In contrast to the previously mentioned traditional Platonic-Aristotelian view of metaphors as mere linguistic and rhetoric elements, CMT claims that metaphors are not only a part of our language but are present in thoughts and conducts. In addition, according to CMT, metaphors are intrinsic to our conceptual system and the way the world is understood. Consequently, metaphors are not only a stylistic way to express ideas, but a way of thinking about things, they help us reflect on our experiences, and constitute powerful cognitive tools aiding us to conceptualize the world. Metaphors do not only connect two isolated items, they connect categories and cognitive models (Ungerer & Schmid, 2006). Moreover, in CMT, metaphors involve more than a simple matter or pragmatics: “A prototypical metaphor helps us understand abstract concepts in terms of something concrete” (Nacey, 2013, p. 4). For example, a prototypical metaphor helps describe abstract emotions like ‘grief’ as a ‘forest of sorrow’ (Nacey, 2013). Moreover, MacArthur (MacArthur & Oncins-Martínez, 2012, p. 1) states that metaphors are “the human drive to see or understand one thing in terms of another”. The shift occurs in the sense that metaphors are no longer part of the speech where the speaker compares two things, but a way to understand and learn things. MacArthur underlines that even though metaphors are common to all human beings, the fact that there are diverse and variable ways to use metaphors and that this variation is the result of different cultural contexts must be acknowledged. Certain written genres and registers display a much greater density of metaphor use than others. Metaphors are, for example, more frequently used in academic discourse than in fiction (MacArthur & Oncins-Martínez, 2012).

What are then the elements that constitute a metaphor? Aitchison (2012) states that in the first place, the items in a metaphor must not be too similar, the items compared should not share characteristics, because the purpose of a metaphor is to compare two things that are very different from one another. In order to comply with this first consideration, the elements must come from different semantic fields. Secondly, although the elements belong to different semantic fields, they need to share some major characteristic(s). Aitchison also mentions that this formula may indeed not work in poetry, since the poet “may intentionally have included several layers of interpretation” (Aitchison, 2012, p. 186). Within the different expressions that are conceived as metaphors, there are different kinds. Nacey (2013) states that there are two kinds of metaphors in CMT; conventional and dead. The distinction between conventional and dead metaphors lies in the
degree of dependency of the metaphorical sense upon a literal sense. If there is no longer any understood dependency between the literal and metaphorical meanings, the word or expression in question is a dead metaphor (Nacey, 2013). Finally, it is important to state that metaphors are normally based on conventional topics like body parts, animals or computers. They go beyond the comparison of two words, they require frames.

Strictly, for CMT a metaphor is a connection between two semantic areas at the level of thought, a metaphor is the mapping between a source domain and a target domain, where metaphors are pervasive, they reflect our experience and they are also culturally filtered (Golden, 2012, p. 139). The domains consist of linked entities, attributes, processes and relationships. The elements in a domain are lexicalized, that is, expressed in language, through words and expressions (Deignan, 2010). Linguistic metaphors are the written or spoken realization of the conceptual metaphor (Deignan, Gabrys & Solska, 1997) and take account of the specific words being used. In other words, the characteristics of the expression, which can be morphological, syntactic or collocational (Littlemore & Low, 2006). In addition, the mapping scope in a metaphor is a set of constraints regulating which correspondences are eligible for mapping from a source concept onto a chosen target concept (Ungerer & Schmid, 2006, pp. 119-120). The mapping scope in a metaphor has three major components:

a) **Image schemas**: Which are firmly grounded in our bodily experiences. Metaphor in use is embodied, in the sense that speaking or writing, listening or reading, are much more than mental processes; our bodies participate and interpret, eyes and head move, skin reacts and responds (Cameron, 2010).

b) **Basic correlations**: For example, cause-effect; action-change; purpose-goal; presence-existence

c) **Culture-dependent evaluations**: Refers to the regional perception of a concept, what it means for example to be “rich” or “poor” in a certain context. “Metaphors in discourse can tell us something about how people are thinking, can indicate socio-cultural conventions that people are tied into or that they may be rejecting, and can reveal something of speakers’ emotions, attitudes and values” (Cameron, 2010, p. 7). Table 1 presents typical target concepts and typical source concepts used in metaphors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Typical target concepts</th>
<th>Typical source concepts</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life</td>
<td>Journey</td>
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<tr>
<td>Death</td>
<td>Departure</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lifetime</td>
<td>Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Money</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Love</td>
<td>War, valuable object</td>
</tr>
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</table>
To illustrate a metaphor from the CMT approach, the conceptual metaphor: \+\textit{TIME IS MONEY}\+ can be considered. This metaphor has a three-element system:

1. **Target concept**: Tenor, the explained element, in this case: ‘time’
2. **Source concept**: The vehicle or explaining element. In this case: ‘money’
3. **Mapping scope**: In the case of the metaphor \+\textit{TIME IS MONEY}\+, the target concept ‘time’ is something abstract and difficult to understand, while the source concept ‘money’ is something more tangible and concrete. ‘Time’ is conceived as something valuable, a resource to approach goals, while ‘money’ is a tangible element, the coins and pieces of paper used to pay things (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). The metaphor \+\textit{TIME IS MONEY}\+ allows the following linguistic metaphors: spend time wisely, save time, make time, invest time (Nacey, 2013). People normally get paid by the hour, week or month. The relation between the amount of work and the time spent is culturally well accepted; time is considered a valuable commodity, consequently, time is something that can be made, spent, saved or invested (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 10). A different mapping scope for time can be \+\textit{TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT}\+ where the moving object has an orientation, in the case of ‘time’ in English, moving forward means that the future moves toward us, this concept allows expressions like: ‘The time will come when’ or ‘when Tuesday comes’. As future moves toward us in time, other expressions like: ‘I can’t face the future’ or ‘the face of things to come’ can be expressed because ‘time’ receives a front-back orientation in the motion (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980, p. 43).

To sum up, metaphors from a CMT perspective help us understand and learn things, they are expressed in language. The ability to use metaphors in discourse is called metaphoric competence. This term and the implications they have for student’s written production is explained in the following chapter.

### 2.3 Metaphoric Competence

The concept ‘metaphoric competence’ (MC) is relatively new and no consensus has really been reached on how to define it. The acquisition of language begins at a very early age and so does the understanding and production of metaphors. Littlemore (2010) explains in a study about the display between metaphoric competence in L1\(^2\) and L2, that even though the ability to understand and produce metaphors develops early in life, older children are more able to explain and produce metaphors. Learning a language is a complex phenomenon, understanding and being able to use metaphorical expressions and metaphors occur late in the learning process (Golden, 2012, p. 135).

Many authors have tried to define MC. MacArthur has conducted research about how learners used MC at university level. She considers that “Having metaphoric competence means that language learners can express complex and abstract ideas” (MacArthur, 2010, p. 161).

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\(^2\) L1: stands for the first language spoken, in this case English.
(1988) discusses in his paper “On teaching metaphor” the pervasiveness and centrality of metaphor and argues that students need to develop MC through awareness of metaphor and strategies for comprehending and creating metaphors. Moreover, Littlemore (2001) states in a study about MC and communicative language ability, that MC is individual, and depends on the individual’s habitual way of perceiving, organizing and processing information. In her definition of MC, Littlemore (2001) explains that MC consists of four components: a) originality of metaphor production, b) fluency of metaphoric interpretation, c) the ability to find meaning in metaphor and d) speed in finding meaning in metaphor (Nacey, 2013). Additionally, Nacey explains in her book “Metaphors in learners English” that MC is the number of skills related to metaphor which native speakers are expected to possess to be considered as competent users of their language (Nacey, 2013). Conclusively it may be stated that MC is the ability to work effectively with metaphors in all aspects of a language, where individuals apply their capacity of understanding an entity by referring to another entity that seems unrelated (Littlemore & Low, 2006, p. 269).

2.3.1 Metaphoric Competence in L2

The use of metaphors and their ubiquity in language make it essential for L2 students to acquire MC. Littlemore and Low (2006) conclude that MC is present in every area of the communicative competence, and that MC plays an important role because it contributes to grammatical, textual, illocutionary, sociolinguistic and strategic competences (Littlemore & Low, 2006). Unfortunately, the ability of second language learners to use metaphors is often not seen as a core learning target (MacArthur, 2010). It is, for example, absent from the guidelines in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe, 2001), which are widely recognized and constitute a base for national language syllabi, curricula, teacher training and text book development in European countries. CEFR also influences teaching methods and means of assessment (Nacey, 2013, p. 37). Everything that is included in the CEFR and, more importantly, what is excluded has consequences for what is taught in Europe. There is, according to Nacey (2013), a degradation and an inadequate conceptualization of metaphor in the CEFR where the concept of metaphor is based on classical views of the trope as nothing more than a figure of speech rather than a matter of thought and communication. This circumstance makes it important to focus on metaphors because, according to Littlemore (2010), the ability to use and understand metaphors in a second language can certainly contribute substantially to target language proficiency.

A large body of linguistic research evidence (Bromberek-Dyzman & Ewert, 2010; Danesi, 1995- Deignan, 2005; Littlemore & Low, 2006; Low, 1988; MacArthur, 2010, 2016; Nacey, 2013), indicates that even proficient language learners have difficulty interpreting figurative meanings in the L2, and that MC interacts between L1 and L3. Figurative language has been noted to cause special difficulties for L2 learners in culture and context-related areas of pragma-linguistic and socio-pragmatic acquisition, comprehension and production. L2 students seem to lay behind
their L1 peers in using some metaphorical types. In addition, L2 students believe that metaphorical expressions are difficult both to use appropriately and to understand (Golden, 2012). Littlemore and Low (2006) distinguish some possible causes of foreign language learners’ difficulties with figurative language. Foreign language users may not know the conventions governing the usage of figurative language, and they may lack cultural connotations that need to be activated in order to grasp the figurative meaning.

Furthermore, different languages do not necessarily share the same conceptual metaphors (Deignan, Gabryś & Solska, 1997). It might not apparent to L2 students that their world knowledge is structured in terms of their L1, according to CMT. This information can be relevant for L2 students in order to avoid transfer effects that may provoke problems in communication (MacArthur, 2010, p. 167). Gutiérrez-Pérez (2018) has presented an educational proposal for students of English at university based on four components of metaphorical competence introduced by Littlemore (2001). Teaching idiomatic expressions in relation to conceptual metaphors can facilitate vocabulary acquisition and its long-term retention (Gutiérrez-Pérez, 2018). An example of how to teach conceptual metaphors like $\textit{TIME IS MONEY}$ has been developed by Clanfield (2002) (see Appendix 4).

Additionally, Littlemore explains that learners who have a well-developed L1 metaphoric competence are likely to display the same tendency in L2. Nevertheless, MC must not be seen as a homogeneous trait. “Rather, it is to some extent, a multifaceted entity, and a student can, for example, be good at finding the meaning in a metaphor quickly, but not good at producing multiple interpretations” (Littlemore, 2010, p. 307). How and to what extent students produce MC in written production in the national test in English for grade 9 in Sweden is the aim of this study, consequently, the implications of metaphorical competence in writing are explained next, as well as some previous research on the topic.

### 2.3.2 Metaphoric Competence in writing

Previous research has found that foreign language learners probably need to understand metaphor more often than they will produce it. Steen and colleagues report that metaphor depends upon register, the scale of formality in writing and speaking. In their findings, metaphors are used to a much higher extent in writing than in conversation. Academic texts have the highest proportion of metaphor density (17.5%), followed by news (15.5%) and fiction (10.9%). Consequently, metaphor density in a text is register-dependent (Steen, 2010).

More recently, MacArthur has also studied metaphoric competence in written production in the EFL classroom and argues that the usage of metaphors will depend largely on the resources that learners have at their disposal to explore metaphor, the tasks that they carry out and the quality of feedback they receive. Moreover, in writing, metaphor is deployed in response to communication demands. The type of writing task that is assigned will have an influence on the need for metaphorical language. Abstract topics create a communicative pressure that will most likely result in increased density of metaphorical language (MacArthur, 2010).
The development of MC in written production plays a significant role in learners’ ability to produce and formulate their thoughts more precisely in their target language. In 2014, Littlemore, Krennmayr, Turner and Turner examined metaphor use at different levels in 200 EFL essays from students in Greece and Germany and measured the amount and distribution of metaphor used in their writing across the CEFR (levels A1 to C2; Council of Europe, 2001). The results show that at lower levels, most of the metaphoric elements are closed-class “consisting mainly of prepositions, but at B2 level and beyond, the majority of the metaphoric items are open-class” (Littlemore, Krennmayr, Turner & Turner, 2014, p. 117). Learners at the B1 level, which in Sweden corresponds to “steg 4”, the course studied in year 9 of the compulsory education, started to use significantly more metaphoric expressions. “They start to use metaphor to present their own personal perspective and to highlight the fact that they are providing their own point of view” (Littlemore, Krennmayr, Turner & Turner, 2014, pp. 131-132). According to the previous mentioned researchers, the metaphorical density increases steadily across levels although they also found that students tend to make more errors when using metaphors than other kind of language. The results of the study suggest that metaphors could usefully be focused in the learning process. Based on their findings, the group proposed a set of descriptors involving metaphor use for each level in the CEFR. For the A2 and B1 levels the descriptors are as follows:

A2: Learners should be able to make accurate use of a limited range of metaphorical prepositions.
B1: In addition to the above, learners should be able to use a limited number of conventional metaphors, with appropriate phraseology to present their own perspective. They should also be able to make limited use of personification metaphors. They may be starting to use a small number of metaphor clusters. (Littlemore, Krennmayr, Turner & Turner, 2014, p. 142)

To sum up, metaphorical production in EFL, according to previous research, suggests that at the B1 level, which corresponds to the last year of instruction in the compulsory education in Sweden, the metaphorical competence begins to increase. Similar to the study referred to above, the present study focuses on samples from essay production in the national test of English.

2.4 The Swedish National Assessment

In Sweden, the National Agency for Education defines the national curriculum for the compulsory education (Skolverket, 2011). The compulsory education includes nine years of instruction for students aged 6-15 years old. The objectives and core content in the curriculum are defined nationally as are the ‘knowledge requirements’ for years 3, 6 and 9. There are also individual

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Metaphoric density is the result of dividing the total lexical units by the number of metaphorical units and then multiply the result by 100.
A complete list with all the descriptors is found in Appendix 1.
sylab for every subject, but detailed content, materials and methods are decided locally in every school and may vary from teacher to teacher. The evaluation of every student is the teachers’ responsibility. To their help, the National Agency for Education has created a system of national assessment to support and advise teachers in different spheres of assessment concerning diagnosing, planning and grading (Erickson, 2007). As from 1 January 2018, the results of the national assessments materials are to be taken into special consideration when grading the students. In 2022 the digitalization of the assessment system will be completed, and the grading of the tests will be more centralized. There are tests in different subjects for grades 3, 6 and 9 in the compulsory education. The national tests in English are mandatory and are to be applied on the same day and from this year at the same exact time 9.00 AM. Different universities are commissioned by the National Agency for Education for test development and research. The University of Gothenburg is responsible for the development of the tests in foreign languages: English, French, German and Spanish.

2.4.1 National Test in English

The Swedish national syllabi in foreign languages are based on the CEFR. The syllabi integrate four important areas: production, reception, interaction and intercultural competence. Production refers to the oral and written expression of the language and reception to listening and reading comprehension. Interaction includes the ability to communicate with others in written or oral environments, and intercultural competence involves knowledge about countries where English is spoken as well as their culture (Erickson, 2007). The test in English is produced entirely in the NAFS-department of the University of Gothenburg. The standards are set in collaboration with groups of experienced teachers. The test in English is a ‘proficiency test’ where the students’ global communicative competence is tested. Extensive teacher guidelines and materials are provided together with examples and grading specifications. The test has three parts: A-oral test; B-reception: Listening and Reading and the C-part is Writing, which is the focus of this essay. The tests do not cover all the elements in the syllabus since they are considered advisory and supplementary materials. The tests in English have a secrecy of six years which means that the contents and results may not be published without authorization from the National Agency for Education because some of the materials may be reused in future tests.

2.4.2 The C part: Writing

The C-part in grade 9 is held on a specific date every year, it normally includes one topic, sometimes two, for the students to write about. The task helps the teachers assess the students’ written production according to the knowledge and performance objectives in the syllabus. The Students get 80 minutes to write about their chosen topic and then the tests are anonymized and graded. See Appendix 2 for an example task.
Since 2018, the tests are written digitally and that has provided more opportunities to anonymize the tests before grading. When the tests have been applied, it is up to each school to find the most equitable, equivalent and practical way to assess the tests. The C-part requires much more assessment time than part A and B (Arvidsson, Asp & Brorsson, 2018). To their help, teachers are provided with sample texts for each grade level. Each sample text has comments that relate the content to the knowledge requirements in the subject. Appendix 3 includes the knowledge requirements for written production in year 9 for the grades E, C and A. ‘A’ is the highest grade and ‘E’ the lowest. There are in total five grades (E, D, C, B, A). Since there are no criteria for grades D and B, grade D means that the knowledge requirements for grade ‘E’ and most of ‘C’ are satisfied, grade B means that the knowledge requirements for grade ‘C’ are satisfied and most of ‘A’ as well.

The teachers are also provided with a grading chart with ‘assessment factors’ in order to guide the overall analysis and grading of the essays. These factors include clarity, language scope, variation, coherence, structure, purpose adaptation, communication strategies, language flow, vocabulary, grammar, spelling and punctuation (Göteborgs Universitet, 2019b). The essays studied for metaphoric content in this study where graded according to the previous mentioned assessment factors.

3. Materials and Methods

The materials for the present study are twenty essays of the national test in English for year 9 from 2013. The texts have been provided by a compulsory school in a middle-sized town of 45,000 inhabitants in southern Sweden. From the total of essays written in 2013 obtaining grades E and A, 20 were randomly selected without considering the students’ gender or class in the school: ten essays with grade E, the lowest passing grade according to the knowledge requirements in the syllabus, and ten with grade A, the highest. For the grading procedure of these essays in 2013, the school assigned two teachers to read and evaluate the texts. These teachers had not previously taught the students they graded. In this study, every text was analyzed using the Metaphoric identification procedure (MIP) created by the Pragglejaz researchers (2007) and described below.

3.1 Metaphor identification procedure - MIP

It has been generally acknowledged that identifying metaphor in data is a difficult task because it is notoriously subjective and the analysis has to rely on intuition when the researcher has to determine the essence of literalness and what figurative meaning really is (Chapetón-Castro & Verdaguer-Clavera, 2012, pp. 150-151). In 2007, the Pragglejaz group published an article entitled “MIP: A method for identifying metaphorical used words in discourse”, the process described in the article provides a framework for reliable metaphor identification, which quickly became accepted amongst metaphor researchers (Nacey, 2013).
3.1.1 The procedure

For the analysis, each text was transcribed from the original and then analyzed using the following steps of the MIP:

1. Read the entire text-discourse to establish a general understanding of the meaning.
2. Determine the lexical units in the text-discourse. A lexical unit is normally a word but there are exceptions, for example, proper names, and those cases where the meaning of an expression cannot be arrived at via the composition of the meaning of the parts (e.g., phrases like *let alone*, and phrasal verbs). The norms followed to establish every lexical unit are explained below the procedure.
3. For each lexical unit:
   a) Establish the meaning in context, contextual meaning, considering what comes before the unit and after.
   b) Determine if it has a more basic contemporary meaning in other contexts than the one in the given context. A basic contemporary meaning tends to be more concrete, what they evoke is easier to imagine; related to bodily action; more precise, historically older. Basic meanings are not necessarily the most frequent meanings of the lexical unit.
   c) If the lexical unit has a more basic current-contemporary meaning in other contexts than the given context, decide whether the contextual meaning contrasts with the basic meaning but can be understood in comparison with it.
4. If yes, mark the lexical unit as metaphorical (Pragglejaz Group, 2007).

The texts were analyzed and divided in lexical units following the MIP-method. *The Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners* (2019) was used for the definition of the units. According to the Pragglejaz-group, the Macmillan Dictionary is adequate for language analysis due to its corpus of 220 million words, which is relatively recent and provides a description of current English (Pragglejaz Group, 2007). Every lexical unit consists of a dictionary entry. Collocations and phrasal verbs were also considered as single lexical units. Judging the metaphoricity of the lexical units relies on the researchers’ subjective judgement. Consequently, consultating external sources like dictionaries is crucial in the process to establish the meanings. As a secondary source for the analysis in this paper, the *Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary* (2019) was also consulted. In this case study, the aim was to mark as metaphorical every lexical unit with an active metaphorical basis in the sense of there being a widespread, knowable, comparison, between that word’s contextual and basic meanings (Pragglejaz Group, 2007, p. 30).

To aid the metaphoricity judgement of the lexical units, some norms were followed:

**Multiwords:** When a multiword unit can be semantically decomposed, then every word was considered as a lexical unit, otherwise the multiword item was considered as a lexical unit.

**Polywords:** expressions like ‘of course’, ‘let alone’, were also treated as lexical units.

**Phrasal verbs:** They consist of a verb followed by a particle that is normally an adverbial, some are even followed by two particles. In this study, phrasal verbs were treated as single lexical units.
**Classical idioms:** Due to its composition, every word in an idiom was considered a lexical unit in the analysis.

**Collocations:** Fixed collocations such as ‘can’t help’ ‘make a living’ ‘take a break’ are decomposable and therefore every word was considered as a single lexical unit.

**Word class:** It is easier to establish basic meaning for content words like nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs than grammatical words like prepositions and conjunctions. For this study, the Pragglejaz criteria were followed:

a) **Verbs** are considered with their basic physical meaning, though delexicalized verbs like _make_, _have_, _get_, _take_, and _do_ pose special difficulties. To establish the metaphoricity of the verbs the most concrete and physical meaning of the verb is used as the basic meaning:

*Make:* To create and produce somethings by working.

*Have:* Used in descriptions and for talking about possession, relationships or the state that someone or something is in.

*Get:* to obtain, receive, or be given something.

*Take:* to move something or someone from one place to another.

*Do:* perform an action, activity, or job.

*Give:* to put something in someone’s hand, or to pass something to someone.

b) **Prepositions:** It is easier to establish the meaning of prototypical prepositions that designate spatial relations such as, _in_, _on_, _into_, _at_. However, the prepositions _with_, _for_ and _of_ were not considered in this study as metaphorical, because their basic definition is difficult to establish.

c) **Conjunctions, pronouns, auxiliaries:** In this study, no instances of these word classes were marked as metaphorically used (Pragglejaz Group, 2007).

d) **Contractions:** All contractions were divided in their constitutive parts in this study, for example, _isn't_ = _is_/ _not_.

**Mistakes:** No instances with grammar or spelling mistakes were considered as metaphorical.

The following examples taken from the corpus illustrate the application of the MIP. Once the text was read and the lexical units were established according to the MIP, every entry was considered. The metaphorical units are underlined.

_A teacher should get good payment for all the work they put down in and after school. It is a joke if people don’t see how much hard work a teacher does for the children to get a good grade._

(Text 13)

**Put**

Meaning in context (MIC): to work.

Contemporary meaning in another context (CMA): to move something to a particular position, especially using your hands.

**Down**

MIC: do.

CMA: Moving towards a lower place or position.
In
MIC: during a period of time.
CMA: Inside a container.

School
MIC: A school day, the number of hours spent in the school.
CMA: A place where children go to be taught.

Joke
MIC: Something as being ridiculous.
CMA: Something you say or do that is intended to make people laugh.

See
MIC: Realize.
CMA: To notice someone or something using your eyes.

Hard
MIC: Difficult to do.
CMA: Stiff, firm and not easy to break.

The population of the country is soon touching the barrier of 12 million people which is six times more than Athens. (Text 4)

Touching (touch)
MIC: To reach an amount.
CMA: To put your hand or part of your body on someone or something.

Barrier
MIC: A number limit, or level that is considered to be difficult to get past.
CMA: A bar or gate that stops people or vehicles.

During the 20th century Sweden managed to not be involved in the world wars resulting in a wealthy country not torn apart by wars, shaping the Sweden of today. (Text 7)

Sweden:
MIC: Personification of the country: Sweden.
CMA: A country.

Torn (tear)
MIC: Damaged.
CMA: To pull something so that it separates into pieces or gets a hole in it.

Apart:
MIC: Destroyed or affected by wars.
CMA: Broken or divided into many pieces.

Shaping
MIC: Influencing the way the country turned out.
CMA: To form something in a particular way.
Our weather is pretty cold at times. But when the **sun decides** to come out **in** the spring/summer it can get pretty warm. (Text 19)

**At**
MIC: in a certain period of time.
CMA: In a particular place.

**Sun:**
MIC: Personification.
CMA: The star in the sky that provides light and warm to the Earth.

**Decides:**
MIC: sunny without clouds in the sky.
CMA: To make a choice about what you are going to do.

**In:**
MIC: during a period of time.
CMA: Inside a container.

*Sweden seems like a shy country when it comes to politics.* (Text 18)

**Sweden:**
MIC: Personification of the country: Sweden.
CMA: A country.

**Shy:**
MIC: Unwilling to make a stand in politics.
CMA: Nervous or embarrassed in the company of other people.

### 3.2 Ethical issues

The twenty texts used for this study were retrieved with the authorization of the principal in a public school located in a middle size town in southern Sweden. National tests in public schools in Sweden have public access (*allmän handling*) which means that anyone can ask permission to access the documents. In this study, no personal data other than gender was collected. During this study the data was analyzed purely from an objective perspective in regard to metaphorical density. No additional or unnecessary information was collected or revealed in the text examples in this study.

### 4. Results

The present project seeks to determine how metaphoric competence in English of Swedish 9-graders and their success of the written part of the National Test are related. The project focuses on metaphorical density. In total, 7703 lexical units were analyzed, and 649 were marked as metaphorical. In order to establish the metaphorical density in the essays, every text was transcribed and then divided into lexical units according to the rules described before. Subsequently, the MIP was applied to mark metaphorical lexical units. To quantify the metaphorical density in each text,
the total number of metaphorical units (MU) were divided by the total number of lexical units in each text and the result was multiplied by 100. Tables 2-3 below present the results.

Table 2: Metaphoric density in essays with the grade E.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total number of lexical units</th>
<th>Metaphorical lexical units</th>
<th>Metaphoric density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>247</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>4.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>313</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>7.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>283</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>4.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>385</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>4.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>239</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>420</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>4.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>517</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>AVERAGE</strong></td>
<td><strong>18</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.67</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Metaphoric density in essays with the grade A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nr.</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Total number of lexical units</th>
<th>Metaphorical lexical units</th>
<th>Metaphoric density</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>13.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>440</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8.18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>593</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>10.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>408</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>10.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>7.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>491</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>9.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>347</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>12.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>11.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>512</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>11.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>490</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>11.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>AVERAGE</strong></td>
<td><strong>46.9</strong></td>
<td><strong>10.55</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Research question 1: To what extent are students obtaining grade A in the test using metaphors compared with students obtaining grade E?

On average, “E” texts obtained a metaphoric density of 5.67 units, and the “A” texts a metaphoric density of 10.55 units, the difference between them is 4.88 units. Although there is an apparent
difference, the size of the sample consists of 20 texts, which requires a statistical significance test. To find statistical significance between the text samples, a Mann Whitney U-test was applied. Statistical significance has to do with the size of the sample and “with the probability that a mistake has been made when inferring that the results found in a sample reflect some truth about the target population” (Perry, 2011, p. 175). In this case, the results cannot be directly related to the target population, hence the results cannot be generalized or compared with other samples. Nevertheless, the Mann Whitney U-test can determine whether the differences in metaphoric density between the “A” texts and the “E” texts are statistically significant at p < .05.

In the following calculation the state alpha is (ά ≤ .05), the null hypothesis (H0) is that there is no difference in the ranks of the two grades, and the (H1) hypothesis is that there is a difference between the grades if the derivation value, z= -1.96 or greater than 1.96. The formula used is:

\[ z = \frac{U-\frac{n_A n_B}{2}}{\sqrt{\frac{n_A n_B (n_A+n_B+1)}{12}}} \]

In the formula, the average values, nA =10 and nB = 10. The U-value is 3.5. The critical value of U at p < .05 is 23. Therefore, the result is significant at p < .05. The z-score is -3.47727. The p-value is .0005 which is < .05. The result let us reject the null hypothesis (H0). The difference in metaphorical density between the “E” texts and the “A” texts is to be considered statistically significant. Students who obtained grade A are using more metaphorical units than the students that obtained grade E in this sample.

According to the CEFR descriptors for metaphor use proposed by Littlemore, Krennmayr, Turner and Turner (2014), grade 9 students should be able to use a limited range of metaphorical prepositions in text production. From the results, it is clear that a majority of the MU are prepositions, especially in the texts with the grade “E”. For example, in text 1: 10 out of 12 MU are prepositions, the preposition in is used seven times; in text 5: 8 out of 12 MU are prepositons, preposition in is used in all instances.

In addition to the above, at the B1 level (grade 9) learners should be able to use a limited number of metaphors with appropriate phraseology to present their own perspective. For example, in text 14 the student tries to explain what he would do in order improve the economy of Greece: “…but if I could I would try to remove all the money that Greece has rented to start from the beginning again. That would raise every one’s salary…”, the student is using the terms remove, rented and raise metaphorically to support his idea in the essay. In text 17, the student writes about Swedish students and uses metaphorical units to support his idea: “To me it seems like some are missing that spark to make Sweden and the world better places”. Moreover, at this level some learners begin to use a small number of metaphor clusters, the clusters are groups of metaphorical units within sequences of 20-25 words (Littlemore, Krennmayr, Turner & Turner, 2014). Some examples of clusters are to be found in text 11: “This is what makes this country so great. It truly is the land of the free”; and in text 20: “One of the things I think Sweden needs to improve is how the court decides sentences for criminals. As it is today, they are far too mild”.

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Furthermore, another frequent type of MU in the texts was “Sweden” as a personification in combination with transitive verbs like *get*, *have* and *need*. At the B1 level, according to the CEFR descriptors of metaphor use, learners should be able to make limited use of personification metaphors. An example of personification can be found in text 8: “*But Sweden has many positive things*”, and in text 2: “…*Sweden has just dived down in the tables for which country that’s best*”. Both examples show how the students personify the country by giving it attributes that people have. To “*dive*” is normally an action only a living creature can perform, the CMA is “to jump into water with your head first and with your arms stretched out in front of you” (*Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*, 2019).

**Research question 2: Is there a relation between metaphorical competence and the students’ grade in written production?**

There is a correlation between the grades and metaphoric density in most of the texts (see Tables 2 and 3 above). The metaphoric density average is higher in the “A” texts compared with the “E” texts, and there is a statistically significant difference between these two samples. Nevertheless, some “E” texts match the same metaphoric density as the “A” texts. Further analysis of these texts reveal that they present higher standards in the knowledge requirements and objective standards for grade 9 (see Appendix 3), specially text 8 where the student is expressing ideas in a varied and coherent way. In the text, the student expresses himself understandably and, consequently the grade for this text should have been higher than an “E”. Similarly, texts 12 and 15 present lower standards according to the knowledge requirements in the syllabus for the grade A. Text 12, for example, lacks clearness and coherence, specially at the end of the essay. It is clear that the purpose of adaptation and the language scope in texts 12, and 15 have a lower quality than the expected of an “A” text. These differences suggest that the amount of MU in this sample is a marker for the linguistic standard of a text.

**5. Discussion and pedagogical implications for the EFL classroom**

The use of the MIP was an appropriate and effective method for this study. The MIP allows a clear strategy to extract the metaphoric units in a text. The procedure is easy to use though time consuming. During the procedure, it became clear that many general spatial prepositions and verbs appeared frequently in the texts. Lists of the main verbs and prepositions with their corresponding contemporary meaning in another context helped to increase the pace of the analysis. Electronical versions of the dictionaries used have also been time savers during the implementation of the MIP. Nevertheless, the limitations of this study reside in the scale and procedure of the analysis. There is a wide range of subjectivity when using a manual procedure of metaphor identification. The size of the sample and the regional characteristics of the population make it difficult to transfer and generalize the results of this research. Notwithstanding the previous limitations, the results may be taken into consideration as suggestions or base-guidelines for further studies in the same field of investigation.
The results show a statistically significant difference between the metaphoric density of the “A” texts and the “E” texts. The students obtaining higher grades also use a higher number of metaphorical units. In this sample, there is a correlation between the grade of a text and the metaphoric density. The types of MU in the results, coincide with the types found by Littlemore, Krennmayr, Turner & Turner (2014) in their study. Most of the MU are prepositions, personifications, and only in the “A” texts are we able to find some examples of open metaphors and metaphoric clusters.

To achieve reliability in the grading process of the written part in the national test is difficult (Olsson, 2018), since there is always subjectivity involved. In 2012, the Swedish Schools Inspectorate presented the result of a three-year study where they reassessed 5422 essays from 77 Swedish schools. The results showed that 21% of the texts were assigned a higher grade than the standards they presented and that 17% were assigned a lower grade (Skolinspektionen, 2012). Similarly, in the sample analyzed in this project (20 texts) there were some essays where the grade did not correspond to the quality established by the knowledge requirements in the syllabus, these texts had different metaphoric density values that did not correspond to the grade they were given. As mentioned before, these results suggest the importance of analyzing MU in a text when it is being assessed along with consideration to the type of task assigned. Since metaphor is deployed in response to communication demands, it is also important to consider the kind of response that is expected in a text. The task in the national test of English demands from students to explain, analyze and discuss a certain topic. These activities demand metaphoric competence from students to express complex and abstract ideas. Consequently, the students writing texts with a high metaphoric density are likely to obtain better results and higher grades.

**What educational insights can be drawn of these findings for the EFL classroom?**

It has taken a long time for metaphor to be considered a significant part of the pedagogical practice. *Metaphors we live by* (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) is the milestone that introduced metaphor awareness in language learning. Metaphor as a way of thinking about language use is new for most learners and teachers; it constitutes an interesting and flexible concept. Metaphors are not something that is correct or incorrect, and do not have hard and fast rules as grammar. Moreover, metaphors can be successful or not in communication. “Metaphor is thus the foreign language learners’ best ally in the quest for greater expressive powers” (MacArthur, 2010, p. 159). Metaphor awareness and knowledge will help students communicate complex ideas in an appropriate, though not conventional ways. As an example, in the texts, students used personification to be able to express their thoughts and ideas about their country, in this way, they pursued a more academical discourse in the task.

Metaphor awareness through discussion and comparison of metaphors will help learners produce and understand metaphors appropriately (Deignan, Gabrys & Solska, 1997). Since it is not apparent to L2 students that their world knowledge is structured in terms of their L1, learners should be made aware of the systematic conceptual mappings underlying many linguistic expressions. They can also be presented with examples of the most typical source and target concepts in metaphors. Students who work actively with these concepts stand a better chance of
successfully interpreting and remembering newly encountered expressions. Moreover, realization of systematic motivation leads to a deeper understanding of language and instills confidence in learners who realize they are not necessarily at the mercy of randomness. MacArthur suggests that ‘user friendly’ metalanguage in the classroom should be used in the same ways as we use syntax (2010, as cited in Nacey, 2013).

In second language learning, learning about words and what they mean is not the same as being able to use them. “Control over metaphor is one of the essential tools for empowering learners to cope successfully with native speakers” (Littlemore & Low, 2006, p. 290). Learners can become familiar with different types of metaphor at different ages. As this study has pointed out, prepositions were widely used in the sample texts. Students may benefit if they are taught the core sense of words like spatial prepositions: in, on, at, in the learning process, those same words that they may later encounter with a metaphorical sense in a different context or that they will be able to use in essays. Additionally, if teachers introduce a metalanguage of metaphors in the EFL classroom and explain the usage of personification, for example, when writing about their country, then students may benefit from that when they are presented with tasks like the national tests of English, because they will understand how to express themselves in a more complex and abstract way.

Finally, teachers can explore and create materials around different conceptual metaphors to facilitate vocabulary acquisition and its long-term retention as Mc Arthur suggests in her research (MacArthur, Metaphorical competence in EFL, 2010). The example in Appendix 4 illustrates how teachers can approach and use metaphors in the learning process (Clanfield, 2002). In a similar way, students at lower levels may start to know about conceptual metaphors, what they are and how it is possible to generate idioms out of them. Understanding metaphor and fostering the ability to use metaphor creatively in writing will enhance learners’ communicative competence and help them achieve a higher performance through the development of texts like the national test in English for grade 9.

6. Concluding words

The present study hopes to offer an initial exploration of the implications of metaphoric competence in L2 writing in the Swedish educational context. As has been pointed out, metaphors from a cognitive perspective, are a core part of our daily lives. Moreover, they are a reflection of our thoughts and cognition, and an important part of every student learning path towards mastering a second language. The development of metaphoric competence, which includes the ability to understand and produce metaphors, can contribute substantially to second language proficiency. It is a teacher’s duty to provide students with effective and long-lasting opportunities to learn the target language and to explain the conceptual meanings of metaphors, including terms like frames, semantic areas and domains.

Mastering a language should include the development of metaphorical competence. This development can start early in the L2 language education with knowledge about metaphors from
the CMT point of view, as a matter of thought and communication, its ubiquity, and the bodily foundations of metaphorical language. At the CEFR A2 level (grades 7-8), prepositions and personification should be present learning objectives in the EFL classroom. Later on, at the B1 level, metaphor usage to support ideas must be introduced to support the learners’ language learning.

The development of a metaphorical competence in writing needs to be acknowledged due to the connection between the quality of a text and its metaphorical density. If learners are to develop a more proficient written language, their text production should reflect metaphoric competence. Enhancing students’ knowledge of metaphors to express complex and abstract ideas and to support their arguments will result in texts with a higher quality and higher-grade results in the national tests of English.
References

Bromberek-Dyzman, K., & Ewert, A. (2010). Figurative competence is better developed in L1 than L2, or is it? In L. Sicola & M. Putz (Eds.), *Cognitive processing in second language acquisition* (pp. 317-334). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.


Appendix 1: CEFR descriptors for metaphorical use.

A2: Learners should be able to make accurate use of a limited range of metaphorical prepositions.

B1: In addition to the above, learners should be able to use a limited number of conventional metaphors, with appropriate phraseology to present their own perspective. They should also be able to make limited use of personification metaphors. They may be starting to use a small number of metaphor clusters.

B2. In addition to the above, learners should be able to make use of a limited number of conventional and creative open-class metaphors. They should be able to use metaphors for evaluative and discourse organizing purposes. They should be starting to use personification metaphors more extensively. Metaphorical clusters are more in evidence at this level. Some are coherent, whereas others contain mixed metaphors.

C1 In addition to the above, learners should be able to make use of direct, indirect, and personifications metaphors in cluster with appropriate phraseology, for persuasive or rhetorical effect, to write emotively about topics that they feel strongly about, to show relationships between their ideas and to reinforce their evaluations. They may also use metaphor to create dramatic contrasts.

C2 In addition to the above, learners should be able to use metaphors with consistent appropriate phraseology and collocations, use non-conventional creative collocations, and make creative use of direct metaphor to present their evaluations. They should be able to produce a high number of semi-coherent clusters, possibly containing mixed metaphors and peripherical response. They may use personification metaphors as part of extended analogies and in combination with metonymy, and they may be able to convey sarcasm through metaphor and metonymy.

(Littlemore, Krennmayr, Turner & Turner, 2014, p. 142)
Appendix 2: Example task

A Letter to CONNECT

The International Youth Camp CONNECT wants to bring together young people from different parts of the world and encourage respect for other people’s views.

Are you between 14 and 18? Do you think international understanding is important? Would you like to spend three weeks together with young people from all over the world?

Then write a letter to
Amanda Parks and Josef Azizi
CONNECT coordinators
inctcamp@connect.ch

The following points could be included:

**Introduce** yourself briefly.

**Explain** why you want to join the camp and why you think this would be a good experience.

**Suggest** different activities for the camp weeks—indoors/outdoors, days/evenings, etc. Why would they be meaningful? How can you help out?

**Suggest** an issue that you would like to discuss and learn more about at the camp. Explain why.

**Describe** what a camp like this might lead to in the future—for the people who take part and in a wider perspective.
Appendix 3: Knowledge requirements for written production in English year 9.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>E</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>A</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>In written production in various genres, pupils can express themselves simply, understandably and relatively coherently.</strong></td>
<td><strong>In written production in various genres, pupils can express themselves in relatively varied ways, relatively clearly and relatively coherently. Pupils express themselves also with some ease and to some extent adapted to purpose, recipient and situation.</strong></td>
<td><strong>In written production, pupils can express themselves in relatively varied ways, clearly and coherently. Pupils express themselves with ease and some adaptation to purpose, recipient and situation.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>To clarify and vary their communication, pupils can work on and make simple improvements to their communications.</strong></td>
<td><strong>To clarify and vary their communication, pupils can work on and make well-grounded improvements to their own communications.</strong></td>
<td><strong>To clarify and vary their communication, pupils can work on and make well-grounded improvements to their own communications.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In written interaction in different contexts, pupils can express themselves simply and understandably and also to some extent adapted to purpose, recipient and situation.</strong></td>
<td><strong>In written interaction in different contexts, pupils can express themselves clearly and with some ease and with some adaptation to purpose, recipient and situation.</strong></td>
<td><strong>In written interaction in different contexts, pupils can express themselves clearly and with ease, and also with some adaptation to purpose, recipient and situation.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>In addition, pupils can choose and apply basically functional strategies which to some extent solve problems and improve their interaction.</strong></td>
<td><strong>In addition, pupils can choose and use functional strategies to solve problems and improve their interaction.</strong></td>
<td><strong>In addition, pupils can choose and apply well-functioning strategies to solve problems and improve their interaction and take it forward in a constructive way.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Skolverket, 2011, pp. 34-41)
Appendix 4: Lesson: Time is money  

TIME IS MONEY

1. Time Proverbs

Match the two halves of the proverbs.

Time flies... saves nine.
The early bird... what you can do today.
Never put off to tomorrow... gets the worm.
A stitch in time... when you're having fun.

2. Time Survey.

Work with a partner. Ask and answer the questions.

$ How many hours do you sleep every night?
$ How much time do you have for holidays every year?
$ How much time do you spend with your family every day?
$ Do you ever feel like you are wasting your time at home?
$ Do you make the most profitable use out of your free time?
$ How many hours do you work a week?
$ If you run out of time to finish something at work (school), do you take it home?
$ What time do you begin/end work (school) every day?
$ Is there a time clock where you work? Are your hours accounted for?
$ How much time do you use for lunch?

3. Time is Money

In English, **time is like money**, or like something that you **buy and use**. Look at the following expressions:

- We need to **buy** some more time for our assignment.
- I **can't afford** to spend any more time on this!
- It was **worth** waiting for!
- This is **wasting** my precious time!

*Can you find any expressions in exercises 1 and 2 above that use the same metaphor?*

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