“Once upon a time there was a boy named Carl”

A study on the effects of scaffolding on the performance of students with reading and writing difficulties

En studie om effekterna av stödstrukturer för elever med läs- och skrivsvårigheter

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Abstract
The aim of this study is to investigate what difficulties Swedish students with reading and writing difficulties may encounter when they write texts in English. A teaching experiment was done to see whether scaffolding, a process where the teacher shows the overall structure of e.g. a text, can help students with reading and writing difficulties improve their writing in English. Ten students in the 7th grade participated in the study, as well as four English teachers in a secondary school in Sweden. The students who participated were asked to write two texts in English. Before writing the first text, the students were told that they were going to write a fairy tale, but they were not given any other guidelines. Prior to writing the second text, two lessons of scaffolding were conducted. Then the texts were compared to see if the students had improved their ability to write in English in regards of content, spelling and genre-specific vocabulary. The results of the study show that students with reading and writing difficulties will indeed benefit from scaffolding when writing texts in English.

Keywords: English teaching, scaffolding, students with reading and writing difficulties, writing in English

Sammanfattning på svenska

Nyckelord: engelskundervisning, stödstrukturer, elever med läs- och skrivsvårigheter, skriva på engelska
1. Introduction

Teaching English as a second language is difficult. However, learning English as a second language can be even more difficult and every student is different and has different needs. In the current curriculum for the Swedish school system the importance of working with texts is even more emphasized than in the previous curriculum (Börjesson, 2012). In the Swedish Curriculum for the compulsory school, preschool class and the recreation centre 2011, published by the Swedish National Agency for Education, SNAE (Skolverket), it is stated that students should be given opportunities to develop skills in communication (Skolverket, 2011). Moreover, students should be able to understand written and spoken English, as well as being able to use English on their own. Furthermore, the teaching of English should give students the tools to develop their abilities to, for instance:

- express themselves and communicate in spoken language as well as in written language,
- use language strategies to understand and make themselves understood in English, and
- adapt the language for different purposes, recipients and contexts (Skolverket, 2011).

Using this passage in the curriculum as a point of departure, the focus of this study will be on writing proficiency. A special interest will be taken in students with reading and writing difficulties, because it has been noticed that many students are comfortable reading and listening to English and to some extent even speaking English. However, when it comes to writing, many students have difficulties, not only because of insufficient language, but also because they do not know how to structure a text (af Sandeberg, 2015:21). It seems that proficiency in writing is harder to acquire for the students than e.g. talking, and according to Larsson Lindberg (lecture, 2013), writing is far more difficult than reading and it is hard for teachers to help students develop this proficiency. Therefore, more research is needed on this subject.

Previous studies, such as Mason, Harris and Graham (2011) and Gibbons (2014), argue that the methods scaffolding and Self-Regulated Strategy Development (SRSD) may improve writing. Both methods are used by teachers of English with the intention of helping students develop their texts by giving the students tools for writing and enough pre-knowledge for the students to become aware of the structure of texts. However, there are no concrete examples in which ways, and to what extent, in regards of the grades, the students’ writing improves. Therefore, this study aims to investigate students’ texts to see if the texts do improve, and if
so, in what ways, and if the students will get higher grades on their written production using a method informed by scaffolding.

1.1 Aims and research questions

The aim of this study is twofold: firstly, to analyze students’ texts to see if the students, with the help of scaffolding, can develop their writing skill and get higher grades on their assignments; and secondly, through a questionnaire investigate how English teachers work with students with reading and writing difficulties for them to develop their English. What do teachers do in the classroom to help the students when it comes to writing texts in English? The students’ texts and the teachers’ answers on the questionnaire will be the primary material used in this study. To achieve the aim, several questions have been formulated that this study will try to answer:

- What difficulties do Swedish secondary school students with reading and writing difficulties seem to encounter when writing texts in English in regards of content, spelling and genre-specific vocabulary?
- Can students develop their writing using a method informed by scaffolding and thereby improve their texts?
- How do English teachers in secondary school adapt their teaching to facilitate writing for students with reading and writing difficulties?
- What difficulties can the teachers see regarding adapting the teaching to students with reading and writing difficulties?

2. Background

This section gives an overview of previous research relevant to this study. In Section 2.1, a definition of the term reading and writing difficulties is given, and in Section 2.2, two methods used for developing the writing skill are introduced, Self-Regulated Strategy Development for Students with Writing Difficulties (SRSD) and scaffolding.

2.1 Theoretical background

A distinction can be made between learning English as a second language (L2) and learning English as a foreign language. A second language (L2) is a language that is spoken in the surrounding community. Yule (2010:187) gives the example that a Japanese student learning English in Japan is learning the language as a foreign language, as the language learned is not
spoken in the surrounding community. If that same Japanese student was to learn English in an English class in an English-speaking country, then this student would be learning English as a second language. Although Swedish students of English do not have the language in their surrounding community per se, English surrounds them all the time through, for example, TV commercials, radio and in music (Skolverket, 2011). The term second language learning is used to describe both situations, but in this study, the term second language acquisition will be used to describe students learning English in Sweden.

Moreover, Yule (2010:187) discusses the difference between learning a second language and acquiring a second language. He says that the term learning a second language is more focused on knowledge about the language. Acquiring a second language, on the other hand, focuses more on the ability to use the language in a natural, communicative, situation. As much as any teacher would like to think that their students acquire English in class, this might not be the case. Since most students in secondary school have reached, or will reach, puberty, the students have already passed the critical period, a period for acquiring a language that lasts from birth until puberty.

During childhood, there is a period when the human brain is most ready to receive input and learn a particular language. This is sometimes called the "sensitive period" for language acquisition, but it is more generally known as the critical period. (Yule, 2010:165)

Yule (2010) claims that if a language is not acquired during this period, it will be almost impossible to learn a language as well as one’s first language later. With this in mind, second language acquisition is even more difficult. Furthermore, Yule defines the term writing as follows: “We can define writing as the symbolic representation of language through the use of graphic signs” (Yule, 2010:212).

On the subject second language learning in the classroom, Lightbown and Spada (2006) write that “The best way to learn new vocabulary is through reading” (Lightbown & Spada, 2006:188). Gibbons (2014) also emphasizes the importance of reading when it comes to learning a new language. This is of importance to the present study, because, in order for the students to be able to produce language on their own through writing, it seems as if they must have been exposed to the language e.g. through reading.

2.1.1 Defining reading and writing difficulties

When working with students in secondary school, many teachers notice that the difficulties in writing that one pupil is experiencing can differ very much from the difficulties of another student. Dyslexia is also called reading and writing difficulties. The term reading and writing difficulties will be used as an umbrella term in this study to refer to both reading and
writing difficulties as well as dyslexia. Furthermore, af Sandeberg (2015) states that to facilitate for students with reading and writing difficulties, it is important for them firstly, to build a large vocabulary and learn how to communicate orally, and secondly, to build up their writing in English from scratch and step by step.

There can be various reasons for reading and writing difficulties. In the Swedish classrooms of today, teachers meet students who experience difficulties acquiring English for different reasons. Some may have a different origin and a native language that is not Swedish which could make the acquisition of English more difficult. Another student may have undiscovered disabilities. af Sandeberg (2015) states that often several of these factors might interact and make it hard to acquire a language. When it comes to writing, students who have difficulties acquiring English might focus on concrete words. They tend to leave out words such as prepositions and linking words for connecting the text. Therefore, af Sandeberg (2015:17) says, it is of importance to teach students how to decode the text for them to learn the sound of the words, which will help them to improve their spelling (af Sandeberg, 2015:17).

Methods of working with students with reading and writing difficulties in English may differ from teacher to teacher, but many teachers can probably relate to giving the students with reading and writing difficulties less homework with, for example, fewer words as af Sandeberg (2015:9) points out. As a result, these students will have a poorer vocabulary than other students in the class, which will eventually make it even harder for them to keep up with the other students (af Sandeberg, 2015:9). af Sandeberg (2015) also states that getting the right help learning English is crucial for these students’ future, because failing English could mean that the students do not have the opportunity to continue with higher studies (2015:9).

### 2.2 Methods for developing writing

As mentioned in the introduction, several studies show that students with reading and writing difficulties benefit from more structured teaching. af Sandeberg (2015:11), e.g., writes about the importance of teaching students how to connect language sounds to letters through oral communication. af Sandeberg (2015:38) also presents a list of necessities for students with reading and writing difficulties:

- Start from scratch teaching the most basic features of the language
- Change task before the student gets tired
- Give the student milestones which will make the student feel successful, and
- Provide positive expectations from the teacher

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1 My translation.
Two specific methods that easily lend themselves to af Sandeberg’s criteria and that have been noted to be successful when it comes to working with students with reading and writing difficulties are *Self-Regulated Strategy Development for Students with Writing Difficulties* (SRSD) and *scaffolding*, presented in Sections 2.2.1 and 2.2.2, respectively.

### 2.2.1 Self-Regulated Strategy Development for Students with Writing Difficulties (SRSD)

The first method is called *Self-Regulated Strategy Development for Students with Writing Difficulties* (SRSD). Research has shown that students with reading and writing difficulties can benefit from SRSD. According to Mason, Harris & Graham (2011), SRSD improves what and how students write and SRSD has been deemed effective for students with learning disabilities. This is how SRSD is explained:

The purpose of SRSD is to explicitly teach students strategies for accomplishing writing tasks as well as procedures for regulating these strategies. In addition, SRSD is intended to increase students’ knowledge about the writing process and form positive attitudes about writing and their writing capabilities. (Mason et al., 2011:21-25)

Through six stages, the SRSD is used with students who have reading and writing difficulties. In the first two steps, the teacher and the students investigate criteria of good writing, discuss the students’ current performance, and discuss strategies the students use on assignments. In the third step, the teacher provides a model for how to use the specific writing strategy, using self-instructions. Then, in the fourth step, the students personalize the strategy by creating their own self-instructions which they memorize to be able to use the writing strategy and the self-instructions to complete a writing assignment with assistance from the teacher. In the last stage, the students use the writing strategy independently (Weinstock, 2016).

According to Larsson Lindberg (lecture, 2013), writing is far more difficult than reading. Also, students with reading and writing difficulties benefit from having a scaffold, which shows the students a pattern for how the text should be written. Similarly, Gibbons (2009:174-175) advocates that students need to be shown what they are going to do. She also states that experts perform many tasks without thinking about how to perform them. Teachers are the experts trying to teach the students writing, and it is important to demonstrate and let the students observe before they try to perform a task on their own. This is called *modeling* (Gibbons, 2009:174-175).
2.2.2 Scaffolding

The second method is called scaffolding. Gibbons (2014) has written a great deal about this strategy, which does not differ significantly from SRSD. In the *Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, one definition of scaffolding is “a set of poles and boards that are built into a structure for workers to stand on when they are working on the outside of a building” (*Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English*, 2016). If applying this definition of writing metaphorically to students with reading and writing difficulties, it could mean that with the help of scaffolding, teachers give their students the tools to develop their writing.

The method of scaffolding consists of similar steps as given in SRSD (see Section 2.2.1). Teachers working with scaffolding need to give the students all the information they can possibly need for a specific writing task. The purpose of the first phase is to build up a base of knowledge through, for example, mind-maps, posters, or diagrams. Next, the teacher models the task that the student eventually is going to perform, which means that the teacher chooses a text similar to the one that the student is later going to write and explains the writing process. Subsequently, the teacher reads the text and shows it to the students. According to Gibbons (2014:129) it is crucial to show the overall structure of the text and talk about what words are important in the specific context. Then, when the student has a clear perception of what characterizes the text, he or she is ready to start writing.

The actual writing process is divided into two phases, according to Gibbons (2014:135-139). Firstly, the intention is that the students get to use the knowledge given in the first step and write a text together in a group. This gives the whole group an opportunity to discuss the structure of the text, the main purpose being to see if the students can use the knowledge gained when working with the scaffold to create a text on their own.

In the second phase of the writing process, the students should be ready to construct a text independently. Gibbons (2014:139) points out that, at this stage, it is important to encourage the students in their writing process.

In summary, regardless of which of the two models a teacher chooses, it is important both to give students background knowledge and to have a discussion with the students about his or her current performance. Further, it is of importance that the teacher models the use of the specific writing strategy, before letting the students practice the strategy in two ways: first, together with a partner; and then, independently.
3. Methods and material

The aim of this study is to investigate students’ texts to see if their written texts can improve if they use a method influenced by scaffolding. It is also of interest to see how English teachers in secondary school adapt their teaching to facilitate writing for students with reading and writing difficulties and what difficulties the teachers can notice regarding adapting the teaching to students with reading and writing difficulties. Therefore, this study is divided into two parts: in the first part, the students will write two texts which will be graded and compared; the second part is based on a questionnaire distributed to four English teachers.

3.1 Participants

The participants in this study were students and teachers from a secondary school in Sweden. The students were all in the 7th grade and had been studying English in school for about five years. They were all in the same class and had the same English teacher. In this class there were 25 students and most of them were born in Sweden and had Swedish as their first language. A couple of them were from other countries or used another language than Swedish at home.

Before starting the teaching experiment, information about the study was posted on the class’s website (see Appendix 1).² In the text it was explained that the students were going to write texts as a part of a study that aimed to develop student writing. There were no objections to participating in this teaching experiment.

In Table 1, an overview of the class is presented. It shows how many students there were in the class and how many of the students in the class wrote the texts. It also shows the number of texts that displayed characteristics of those consistent with reading and writing difficulties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of students in the class</th>
<th>Number of students who wrote the first text</th>
<th>Number of students who wrote the second text</th>
<th>Texts that showed characteristics of those consistent with reading and writing difficulties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² The students and their parents have access to this website, which is used to post information that concerns the class.
In order to compare the texts written by students with reading and writing difficulties, a random selection of five students whose texts did not show characteristics of those typical of texts by students with reading and writing difficulties were also assessed, graded and analyzed as part of this study. The students who only participated in one of the two steps of this study were removed from the teaching experiment, since it was important to be able to compare two texts by the same student. Table 2 gives details about the five students whose texts showed characteristics of those consistent with reading and writing difficulties.

**Table 2.** The students with reading and writing difficulties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informant</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Native language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S5</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 gives details about the group of students whose texts showed no characteristics of those consistent with reading and writing difficulties.

**Table 3.** The students without reading and writing difficulties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informant</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Native language</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S6</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S7</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S9</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S10</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A questionnaire was sent to ten secondary school English teachers. It was a convenience sample as these ten teachers worked at the same school as the students who participated in this study. Out of these ten teachers, four teachers answered the questionnaire. Table 4 is a survey of the participants in part 2 of the study.
Table 4. The teachers who answered the questionnaire.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Informant</th>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Native language</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>English, French and Swedish teacher, years 7-9</td>
<td>20 + years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>English and Swedish teacher, years 7-9</td>
<td>20 + years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T3</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>English and Spanish teacher, years 7-9</td>
<td>10 + years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T4</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Swedish</td>
<td>English and Swedish teacher, years 7-9</td>
<td>5 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The teachers in this study all taught English in years 7-9, but none of them taught the class in which the students who participated in this study belonged to. The mother tongue of the teachers is Swedish and most of them have long teaching experience and have worked at this school for many years.

3.2 The teaching experiment

In the first part of this study, the students were assigned to write a story in English, more specifically, a fairy tale. Before the lesson, the students were told that they were going to write a fairy tale, but they were not given any other guidelines to follow. The students had one lesson, 45 minutes, at their disposal and at the end of the lesson, all students had to hand in their texts. After the lesson, the students showed a positive reaction. They liked to write a text in English.

The purpose of this exercise was to obtain a text that could be compared to a second text, which the students wrote after the scaffolding instructions to see if the students’ writing improved after being provided with a model. The assessment of the texts took into account coherence, vocabulary, grammar and spelling. The texts were also graded by the English teachers at the secondary school during the teachers’ conferences.

In the next step of the study, the students were given information about fairy tales. To build up a base of knowledge regarding fairy tales, the students discussed in groups of four what a fairy tale is. They were given a couple of questions that they were supposed to try to answer together:

- What is a fairy tale?
- What kind of creatures often occur in fairy tales?
What kind of vocabulary is used in a fairy tale?

In the groups, the students shared their knowledge about this genre with each other. When they had discussed in groups for about 15 minutes, the whole class reunited and the groups explained what they had come up with. On the whiteboard, a mind-map was made with all the information the students gave, e.g., that a fairy tale is a story which happened a long time ago and often starts with the words *once upon a time*. The students also said that a fairy tale is often about a prince and a princess, as well as about creatures such as fairies, talking animals and trolls.

In the next lesson, the teacher modeled the task that the students were going to do, i.e., writing a fairy tale. The teacher chose a text similar to the one that the students were later going to write and showed on the whiteboard how to write a fairy tale in English. The teacher pointed out that in this type of text, it is important to have a clear beginning and middle as well as a distinct end of the story. The teacher also pointed out that it is important to use the proper vocabulary associated with fairy tales. The examples that the students came up with in their groups were used. Gibbons (2014) states that during this stage, it is crucial that the teacher shows the overall structure of the text and talks about what words are common in the specific context. Eventually, when the students have a clear perception of what characterizes the text, they are ready to start writing.

The actual writing process was divided into two phases which were given one lesson each. During the first lesson, the intention was to let the students use the vocabulary they now had about fairy tales and write a text together in a group. They worked in the same groups of four as they did in the previous step. This task gave the whole group the opportunity to discuss the structure of the text. They also got to help each other with the knowledge they had about fairy tales.

In the second phase of the writing process the students should be ready to construct a text independently. At this stage, the students ought to have been given enough support to be able to write a text on their own. In the present study, the teacher read the beginnings of three fairy tales aloud (see Appendix 2). The students’ task was to choose one of the beginnings and continue the story, i.e. write a middle and an end to the fairy tale. The time given to the writing of the second text was the same as for the first text, i.e. 45 minutes. Also during this stage, the students had one lesson to write their story. The students’ reactions to writing the second text were less positive because they did not want to choose a beginning to continue. These second texts were also assessed and graded so that they could be compared to the first text.
3.3 Grading

When grading the texts, a matrix was used based on the Curriculum for the compulsory school, preschool class and the leisure-time centre 2011 and the English syllabus (see Appendix 7). The teachers at this school co-assessed and graded both texts during the teachers’ conference. The texts were divided equally between the ten English teachers. Texts which caused uncertainty regarding grade were discussed in order to agree on a specific grade.

If a text is simple, coherent and possible to understand for an English-speaking person, the grade on the text is an E. If the text is more developed and contains for example descriptions of thoughts and feelings, then the text is on a C-level. For a text to be graded an A, it is important that the student has used a genre-specific vocabulary and that the spelling errors as well as the grammatical errors are kept to a minimum.

3.4 The teacher questionnaire

In addition to the analysis of the students’ texts, it was of interest to get views and opinions from English teachers. Therefore, a questionnaire was sent out to the ten teachers at the school with the purpose of finding out how they work with students with reading and writing difficulties. The questionnaire and the teachers’ answers were in Swedish in the hope that the teachers would find it easier to answer the questions.

The questionnaire contained three questions (see Appendix 8), based on the research questions of this study. The following questions were sent to the teachers:

- What difficulties do you think students with reading and writing difficulties seem to encounter when writing texts in English?
- How do you adapt your teaching with the intention of facilitating for students with reading and writing difficulties?
- What difficulties can you see regarding adapting your teaching to students with reading and writing difficulties?3

The teachers were given a week to answer the questionnaire and four teachers sent back their answers via e-mail. All answers are shown in Appendix 9.

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3 My translation.
3.4 Delimitations

The purpose of this study was to investigate students with reading and writing difficulties and see if their ability to write would improve with the help of scaffolding. Ideal for this study would have been if more students had participated. However, given the time frame for this project this one class was conveniently available.

It can also be difficult to determine if the language and vocabulary in the students’ texts have improved, since the students were not given time to increase their vocabulary or time to work with grammar. This study was conducted during a period of two weeks, which means that the participating students’ proficiency was probably about the same on the two occasions. Also, student four (S4) wrote his text on a computer, which makes it hard to eliminate the fact that he might have used a translation software or spellchecker on the computer. This was taken into consideration when analyzing the texts written by S4.

Furthermore, it would have been advantageous for the study if more teachers had participated in the study, and perhaps more of the teachers would have chosen to participate if they had been given more time to answer the questionnaire. However, as can be seen in Table 4 in Section 3.1, there is a wide range of teachers, both regarding the number of years in the profession, as well as when it comes to gender and age.

4. Results and analysis

This section presents the results of the present study. Section 4.1 presents the analysis of the texts written by students with reading and writing difficulties. In Section 4.2, the analysis of the texts written by students without reading and writing difficulties is presented, and Section 4.3 summarizes the results of the teacher questionnaire.

4.1 Overview of the texts by students S1-S5

Table 5 shows the grades on the two texts written by students S1-S5. There are also comments on why these grades were awarded. Grades in bold illustrate a higher grade on the second text compared to the grade on the first text.
Table 5: Overview of the grades on the texts written by students with reading and writing difficulties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Grade on the first text</th>
<th>Grade on the second text</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S1</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Both the first and the second text are difficult to understand for an English-speaking person due to the fact that the student uses Swedish words when the vocabulary is insufficient. Neither of the texts are fairy tales.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>The first text contains a lot of Swedish words which would make it difficult to understand for an English-speaking person. In the second text there are almost no Swedish words.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S3</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>Both texts contain grammatical errors but the student uses English. Therefore, the texts should be possible to understand for an English-speaking person.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>The first text is simple. It does not follow the guidelines of a traditional fairy tale but the student uses fairly correct grammar as well as a good vocabulary. In the second text the student shows that he has understood what a fairy tale is and is able to use that knowledge in his own production.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>The first text is short and does not have a clear beginning, middle and end. It also contains a lot of careless spelling mistakes. The second text has not improved when it comes to spelling, but this text follows the structure of a fairy tale.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As shown in Table 5, three of the five students raised their grades on the second text compared to the grade on their first text. In section 4.1.1, a more thorough analysis of the texts written by students with reading and writing difficulties is presented.

4.1.1 Analysis of the first set of texts by students S1-S5

The analysis showed that the first set of texts written by students S1-S5 differ considerably from one another regarding structure and content. The students had interpreted the instructions very differently. Student number one (S1) wrote a presentation of a person named Bengt and wrote about his family and interests. The text does not show any of the characteristics of a fairy tale nor does it have a distinct end. The student appears not to have knowledge of what a fairy tale is, and thus cannot use in his own production. The language and vocabulary is insufficient and he uses Swedish words whenever his English vocabulary is insufficient. Many of the words are intelligible despite being misspelled, because the written words resemble oral language, for example, the spellings may and ai for the English words my and I. The grade on this text is an F.
The second student’s (S2) text has the structure of a fairy tale. The student uses expressions used in fairy tales such as *it was a long time ago*, which gives this text a clear beginning as well as shows that the student has the pre-knowledge that a fairy tale often takes place a long time ago. The middle of the text starts with the words *after a week...*; this gives the story a clear middle. However, the end of the text could have been clearer. The vocabulary and grammar is functional, but the student uses Swedish whenever the English vocabulary is lacking and therefore, the grade on this text is an F.

Student number three (S3) wrote a text with the structure of a fairy tale. Her text is coherent in the way that it has a beginning, a middle and an end. The spelling is often phonetic, but the text is written entirely in English which, even though there are spelling mistakes, makes it possible for an English-speaking person to understand it. The grade on this text is an E.

Student number four (S4) wrote a text on a subject which indicates that he has an interest in computers and youtubers. Words used in the text such as *subscribers* and *PewDiePie* strengthen this assumption. The text is not a fairy tale in the traditional sense, but it is coherent and genre-specific vocabulary is used. This shows that the student has knowledge of fairy tales and is able to use this knowledge in his own production. The vocabulary is good and the grammar is functional. However, this student has written his text on a computer and it is hard to exclude the possibility that he may have used a translation software or spellchecker on the computer. The grade on this text is an E.

The grade on the text written by the fifth student (S5) is an F. The text is very short and it is hard to understand what he wants to say in such a short text. The text has inadequate spelling and grammar. S5 tries to use genre-specific vocabulary, e.g. *a long time ago*, but it is not enough to award a passing grade on this text.

To sum up, all the students S1-S5 knew that a fairy tale is a story about a about a fictitious creature. However, some of them did not quite show their ability to write a fairy tale of their own. Most of the students used Swedish words when their English vocabulary proved to be insufficient, which makes the texts written by S1 and S2, for instance, almost impossible to understand for someone who does not speak Swedish. Since the instructions given to the students before writing this text were very sparse, they used the knowledge they already had of what a fairy tale is to write their story. This could be the reason why a couple of the students based their texts on their own interests rather than writing about more genre-specific characters. In many of the texts the spelling errors are more destructive to the text than the grammatical errors.
4.1.2 Analysis of the second set of texts by students S1-S5

Before writing the second text, several lessons influenced by the method of scaffolding were conducted (see Section 3.1). Similar to the first text that S1 wrote, the second text shows that the student does not understand what a fairy tale is (see Appendix 4). Once again, the student wrote a presentation of himself. His text contains a lot of spelling errors and the spelling is phonemic. To convey his ideas, the student uses Swedish when his English is insufficient. The result of this strategy, inevitably, is that a native English-speaking person will not be able to understand the text. Also, the spelling of some words makes them homonyms (such as hay for hi or hey and may for my). They mean something other than what was intended, and this contributes to making the text difficult to understand. Therefore, the grade on this text is an F.

The second text by S2 is coherent. It is written entirely in English and, even though the text contains grammatical errors and misspellings, it would be understandable to an English-speaking person. The grade on this student’s second text is an E.

The second text by S3 is very similar to her first text in the sense that it has the structure of a fairy-tale. She used the genre-specific vocabulary gained during the scaffolding process, i.e., But one dey... and magick. The text is coherent with a beginning, a middle part and an end. However, the spelling errors can at times be destructive and perhaps even make the text difficult to understand to an English-speaking person. The grade on this text is an E.

Similar to the first text written by S4, the second text has a good vocabulary and good grammar. This text was also written on a computer and therefore, the possibility that S4 may have used spellchecker or translation software remains. However, the structure is very good and the text is a fairy tale. S4 shows that he has learnt some new genre-specific vocabulary related to fairy tales such as ...and lived happy in all days. The grade on this student’s second text is a C.

The second text written by S5 is much better than his first. The student has learned how to write a fairy tale and is able to write one on his own. Neither the spelling nor the grammar has improved noticeably, but because of the length of the text it is possible to see that the English would be understandable to an English-speaking person. Therefore, this text is given an E.

In summary, three out of these five students, S2, S4 and S5, got a higher grade on their second text than on their first text, i.e. most of the students wrote better texts, and
demonstrated an understanding of the genre of fairy tales. The second set of texts is more coherent, has a greater occurrence of genre-specific vocabulary, and fewer Swedish words overall than the first set of texts. However, the language is not noticeably better in any of the texts. Neither the spelling nor the grammar has improved in the texts.

**4.2 Overview of the texts by students S6-S10**

In Table 6, an overview of the grades on the texts written by students without reading and writing difficulties is presented. There is also a comment on the grades. The bold letters are meant to illustrate a grade which is higher on the second text compared to the grade on the first text.

**Table 6.** Overview of the grades on the text written by students without reading and writing difficulties.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Grade on the first text</th>
<th>Grade on the second text</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S6</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>Both texts are coherent and contain detailed descriptions of the characters and the surroundings. The student shows that he masters the language which is grammatically correct.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S7</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>The first text is fairly simple. It has a good structure but the text contains careless spelling mistakes and grammatical errors. The text can be understood by an English-speaking person. The second text contains fewer spelling mistakes and S7 uses a genre-specific vocabulary as well as a varied vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S8</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>The first text is coherent and contains descriptions of the characters and of the surroundings. There are some careless spelling mistakes and grammatical errors. There are grammatical errors in the second text as well but they do not interfere with the understanding of the text as much as in the first text. In the second text, genre-specific vocabulary is used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S9</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>The first text is simple and to some extent understandable to an English-speaking person. However, i.e. the use of he’s instead of his is destructive for the comprehension of the text. This spelling error is not found in the second text, which makes that text better and easier to understand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S10</td>
<td>E</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>The first text contains grammatical errors in the past tense but it is simple and understandable to an English-speaking person. The second text also has some grammar mistakes, but compared with the first text, this text is more developed when it comes to structure. The text contains genre-specific vocabulary.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As shown in Table 6, four out of the five students without reading and writing difficulties raised their grades. The second text by S6 was given the same grade as on the first text, an A. In section 4.2.1, a more detailed analysis of the texts written by students without reading and writing difficulties is given.

4.2.1 Analysis of the first set of texts by students S6-S10

Although the texts written by this group are very different from one another when it comes to content, language and structure, they have one thing in common, namely that all the texts are fairy tales in the sense that they are stories about something that happened once upon a time.

The first text written by student number six (S6) is coherent and contains detailed descriptions and genre-specific vocabulary such as There once was a hero... The text is grammatically correct and the grade on this text is an A.

Student seven (S7) wrote a text which contains careless spelling mistakes and grammatical errors. S7 changes the spelling of the word chain saw every time it is used but, at one point he uses the correct spelling. The reason for why he misspelled this word four times out of five is impossible to know. It could indicate that he was just being careless when he wrote his first text, perhaps he felt that he was in a stressful situation or maybe he did not check the spelling before handing in his first text. The grade on this text is an E.

Student eight’s (S8) text is understandable to an English-speaking person and contains descriptions of the characters as well as of the surroundings. The text contains words such as prince and they lived happily at all time which demonstrates that S8 is familiar with the vocabulary used in fairy tales. The grade on this text is a C.

The first text written by Student nine (S9) is understandable to an English-speaking person. However, the use of he’s instead of his is quite destructive. The grade on the text is an E.

The text written by Student 10 (S10) is quite meager. The text contains grammatical errors such as comed and putted which show that S10 has difficulties with the past tense of irregular verbs. Furthermore, the text lacks descriptions of both characters as well as surroundings. The grade on this text is an E.

In summary, all students in this group handed in complete first texts with a, besides the beginning, a middle and an end. All texts have a beginning that starts with a genre-specific
expression. The texts also have a clear middle and a distinct ending which give all the texts the structure of a fairy tale.

4.2.2 Analysis of the second set of texts by students S6-S10

The analysis of the second texts written by students S6-S10 show that four out of five students (S7-S10) raised their grade by at least two grades. Both texts written by S6 was graded an A. Similar to his first text, the second text shows that the student masters the English language and is able to write a coherent, grammatically correct and descriptive text.

What differs between the first and second text written by S7 is the genre-specific vocabulary which has improved. For example, the second text is about a fairy who grants the main character three wishes. The fairy tale ends with the sentence ...and they lived happily ever after. The text is grammatically correct but S7 could have developed the plot even more by adding descriptions. Therefore, the text is graded a C.

The second text by S8 is graded an A. Even though there are a couple of grammatical errors, e.g. teached, they do not interfere with the understanding of the text. The text contains genre-specific vocabulary and there are descriptions, mainly of the characters.

The use of he's where it should be his is used one time in the second text written by S9. Since there are fewer of this kind of mistake, the text is easier to understand. The text contains descriptions. However, the grammatical errors, such as thinked, makes the grade on the text a C.

S10 has written a more descriptive second text compared to the first text. Even though S10 continued to make similar mistakes such as leaving out words, e.g. I going to tell my mother about this, the second text is more developed when it comes to the structure of the text. S10 uses genre-specific vocabulary and whereas the first text was short and lacking descriptions, the second text contains descriptions of surroundings as well as of the main character’s thoughts and feelings. The grade on this text is an A.

Many of the students S6-S10 improved their writing when it comes to genre-specific vocabulary. The spelling in the second text was better in some cases, but the grammar did not improve. Although the teaching experiment was conducted in order to help students with reading and writing difficulties develop their writing, the improvement in writing was even greater for students with no such difficulties, which shows that this is a method that can profitably be used in all classrooms with all groups of students.
4.3 The teacher questionnaire

As a complement to the students’ texts, a questionnaire was answered by four secondary school teachers with the purpose of investigating how they work with students with reading and writing difficulties. The teachers answered the questionnaire in Swedish (see Appendix 5) and their answers have been summarized in English below.

1. **What difficulties do you think students with reading and writing difficulties encounter when writing texts in English?**

According to all teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4) participating in the questionnaire, difficulties with spelling, vocabulary and presenting a text in the proper form for a certain genre are common for all students with reading and writing difficulties. Yet another conclusion amongst the teachers seems to be that the students with reading and writing difficulties struggle harder with their considerably shorter texts. This process tends to drain them of energy and also cause low self-esteem since the finished product often is not as good as the results of the students without reading and writing difficulties.

Teachers T2 and T4 emphasize that the students with reading and writing difficulties have a mind-set convincing them that they are not as good writers as others and therefore tend to hesitate in doing their best.

2. **How do you adapt your teaching in order facilitate for students with reading and writing difficulties?**

All the teachers believe that the students with reading and writing difficulties need help in order to produce a text in English. The teachers gave different examples of methods used to adapt the teaching with the intention of facilitating writing for these students. T1 wrote that the students with reading and writing difficulties need extra time to do a writing assignment, and both T1 and T2 wrote that support in the form of pictures can be helpful for these students.

T3 replied that he tends to use scaffolding. This means that he gives the students the beginning of the text, creates mind-maps together with them and suggests useful words. He usually starts a writing project by modeling how a text could be written. T4 wrote that to facilitate for the students with reading and writing difficulties, he gives the students a clear scaffold of how the text is supposed to be. He also wrote that all students benefit from this, not only the students with reading and writing difficulties.
3. What difficulties do you experience when adapting your teaching to students with reading and writing difficulties?

The teachers agreed that when it comes to adapting their teaching to students with reading and writing difficulties, time is the biggest obstacle. T1 wrote that she has difficulties finding time to prepare the material needed as well as finding the time to give enough support to all students during the lessons and to give them feedback. T2 wrote that she finds it difficult to give all the students the support they need. T3, who wrote that he tends to use scaffolding, also wrote that even though the students seem to appreciate scaffolding, it takes more time to prepare the lessons. However, he also wrote that the advantage with scaffolding is that the students are more independent during the lessons, and they do not need as much help during the writing process. T4 believes that it is important to have tasks where all students can perform at their individual level and their own ability. The tasks must be challenging to all students, not only to those with reading and writing difficulties.

In summary, according to the teachers, students with reading and writing difficulties tend to struggle with genre-specific vocabulary and general grammar when it comes to writing English texts. The teachers wrote that it is difficult to find time to prepare their lessons so that they will benefit all students. However, they suggested one solution. Construct assignments which can be adapted, i.e., constructed in a way which makes it possible for all students to perform at their individual level regardless of their difficulties.

5. Discussion

The analysis of the students’ texts shows that all students benefit from scaffolding. The students who participated in the study showed through two texts that their ability to write a fairy tale improved with the help of the method influenced by scaffolding. Three of the five students with reading and writing difficulties raised their grade on the second text compared to the grade on their first text. Since this study spanned only two weeks, the students’ grammar and vocabulary did not improve noticeably. However, the genre-specific vocabulary did improve. It is mostly shown in the texts written by S6-S10, but S4 and S5 also improved their genre-specific vocabulary. It is possible to see that the students who participated in the study learned the structure of fairy tales and could write a fairy tale on their own. The second texts show that the method of scaffolding helped the majority of students write more coherent texts.
The texts show that the students with reading and writing difficulties struggled more with vocabulary than the others. The strategy to use Swedish when their vocabulary was insufficient was at first quite surprising, but since all the students with reading and writing difficulties used this strategy, it shows that it is of extreme importance to work with vocabulary and not give students with reading and writing difficulties less homework and fewer words to learn, which af Sandeberg (2015) stated as a problem. It is problematic that the students used Swedish words, because the outcome of using Swedish words in an English text is that an English-speaking person will not be able to understand the text.

As af Sandeberg (2015) says, it is of importance to teach students how to decode a text for them to learn the sound of the words which in turn will help them to spell correctly in English (2015:17). As seen in the results, many of the students have difficulties when it comes to spelling. When some of the words are spelled incorrectly, such as hay and may, they get a different meaning which contributes to making the text even more difficult to understand.

On writing the first text, the students’ reaction was very positive. Most of the students expressed that they liked to write texts in English when they could decide what they wanted to write about. They also expressed that it was fun to write a fairy tale. However, their perception of what a fairy tale is varied greatly. S1 wrote a presentation of a person and did not show in the texts that he knew what a fairy tale is. The first texts written by S6-S10, on the other hand, all showed that the students had a perception of what a fairy tale is and used a genre-specific vocabulary from the beginning. It is difficult to know why the teaching experiment showed this result. Perhaps the students with reading and writing difficulties focused more on the words and the writing than on the content of their texts. For students S1-S5, the scaffolding process might have had a greater importance when it comes to highlighting the structure of a specific genre.

The reaction from the students on writing the second text was different. The students expressed that it was not as much fun to write a text when they had to adapt their story to a beginning which was pre-determined. What is interesting about the students’ reaction is that, even though the students felt that it was more enjoyable writing the first text, their results, both when it comes to genre-specific vocabulary and coherence, were better on the second text. Perhaps this can be explained by the fact that students benefit from getting a clear structure of the task as well as working step by step towards producing a text on their own in line with Gibbons (2014).
In the questionnaire the teachers answered that they had experienced that many of the students with reading and writing difficulties find it particularly difficult to write. A couple of the teachers wrote that the effort it takes for these students to find the right spelling of a word is at the expense of the content in the text. This is noticeable in a couple of the first texts, i.e., S5 wrote a short first text but a longer second text. It seems possible that scaffolding helped this student become more confident in writing a text in English.

The teachers all mentioned that adapting the teaching to students with reading and writing difficulties takes time both when it comes to preparing the lessons as well as having time for all students during the lessons, regardless of their difficulties. However, as T3 wrote, “the gain of scaffolding is that the students are more independent during the lessons. They do not need as much help during the writing process.” This is advantageous for the teacher, who will have time to help more students. Scaffolding is also positive for the students who will hopefully get to feel that they can write on their own, which in turn will help raise their confidence when it comes to writing in English. Also, it is of importance to look past the issue of not having enough time, since English is a very important subject in the Swedish school. It is crucial that all students get the right help learning English because, as af Sandeberg (2015) stated, the result of failing English could be that students do not have the opportunity to continue to higher studies.

This study might have produced different results if more than ten students and four teachers had participated. However, the results of this study correspond to the results of Gibbons (2014) and af Sandeberg (2015). According to af Sandeberg (2015), students who have difficulties acquiring English might focus more on concrete words and they tend to leave out words such as prepositions and words for connecting the text. However, after analyzing the texts written by students S1-S5, it was also obvious that the students with reading and writing difficulties often used their native language, in this case Swedish, when their English vocabulary was insufficient.

6. Conclusion

The present study was based on an analysis of texts written by ten students in secondary school, five of whom displayed characteristics typical of texts written by students with reading and writing difficulties and five of whom displayed no such characteristics. A questionnaire was answered by four teachers working in the same secondary school in Sweden.
Most of the students with reading and writing difficulties used Swedish in their English texts whenever their English vocabulary was insufficient. They also lacked genre-specific vocabulary used in fairy tales. The coherence in their first texts was poorer compared to the structure in the second text since these texts had no clear beginning, middle and end. With the method of scaffolding the students’ texts improved. The texts were, to a greater extent, written in English. The students used genre-specific vocabulary and the texts were more coherent. Most of the students who participated in the teaching experiment raised their grades which demonstrates that all students benefit from scaffolding, not only the students with reading and writing difficulties.

The teachers who participated in the study all had experience of working with students with reading and writing difficulties, and they all mentioned that these students tend to put much more of their energy and focus on spelling rather than on the content of their texts. The teachers also wrote that these students often have low self-esteem when it comes to writing in English. This is shown in a reluctance towards writing and the result of this is short texts even if the students are given extra time to produce a text in English.

This study has shown that when it comes to genre-specific vocabulary and coherence, students can develop their writing in a short period of time, but not when it comes to grammar and general vocabulary. It has also been confirmed that it is possible for students with reading and writing difficulties to get a higher grade on their written production with the help of a method influenced by scaffolding.

In conclusion, both the results on the students’ text as well as the teachers’ responses show that students with reading and writing difficulties can benefit from scaffolding. Therefore, the present study could be of interest to teachers working with students who struggle with writing in English. Since the students’ texts as well as the teachers’ responses indicated that spelling is difficult and exhausting for these students, a topic for further research could be to investigate how to develop the spelling of students with reading and writing difficulties. Perhaps it would be possible to conduct a similar study to this, but over a longer period in order to notice if it is possible that scaffolding can have an impact on the spelling.
References


Hej,

Jag håller på att skriva en uppsats som handlar om pedagogik och som syftar till att utveckla elevernas förmåga att skriva på engelska.


Om du inte vill att ditt barns texter ska användas i min undersökning, vänligen kontakta mig via mejl XXXXXXX@karlstad.se senast 10/11.

Med Vänliga Hälsningar

Elin Boström

Appendix 1 Information about the study
Appendix 2 The assignment given to the students before writing the second text

Writing a Fairy Tale

Choose one of the stories and continue the story as you like!

1. Once there was a young girl named Eliza. She was the daughter of a king and so she never had to work. She became very lazy. She had her servants do everything for her. "I am so thirsty, and my glass is on the table. Please get it for me." she called. Immediately a servant picked the glass up from the table next to Eliza and held it up to her lips until Eliza was no longer thirsty. Suddenly one day something terrible happened...

2. A very long time ago in a village, a young orphan girl lived with her aunt. The aunt spoilt her own children but was very mean to the little girl. She made her work from sunrise to sunset gathering wood, cooking and looking after the turkeys. One morning the girl...

3. A long time ago, a young man called Crow lived in a small village. His parents had died many years before and he had no one to care for him. He lived in a small lodge made from bark and branches. His hair was always a tangled mess, and his clothes were old. One day a very rich man came to the village...
Appendix 3 The first texts written by the students S1-S5

Student 1
Hello my name is Bengt and am 44 yrs old. I like drive Volvo 740 and do som bocnaut´s. my Volvo har 699hk and he do 0-100 + 3 sekend. I pimp my volv in 3 yrs and I likit weri gud. It is very låg and dhe hood is rostig, and have bass låda it is dabble 15 tam its wary god and dhat do 400 dl sois wary hai. I hav a girlfren hes name is berit hi is 43 yrs old. dha record I have vitt may Volvo is 340 m por aver. dat vas vrily fast. I have a job I am car mekaniker I like it I hav job der in 16 yrs. Volvo in may hart. May först car I hav vas Volvo 240 tha has 200 hpaver and I was 12 yrs old ven I bay that from may Grampa so I ha in hela mitt liv. Volvo ly

Grade: F

Student 2
It was one time long ago a boy, and his name was Levis Swedlong. The year was 1982 and hi was 14 years old. He was the schools kändaste boy. And every girl was in love wit him. But not every girl, everyone förutom one girl named Kate McCally. She was the schools biggest tönt. But Levis codent live with that she hated him. So one time he tried to be whit her and speek but she ville inte det. So Levis diden´t know what he should do to get Kate to like him. But all hes friends just thinked he was stupied and keep saying “who will ever want Kate to like them?!” But Levis diden know why he cered so mutch but he did. And he will get Kate to like him. He tried and tride somutch.
After a week Levis and Kate äntligen talked whit varandra, and Levis saw somthing speciall whit her. And Kate thinked same about Levis. Levis started to be whit Kate more often but all hes “frinds” started to bully him. But he dide´nt cere because he gillade faktiskt Kate. Belive it or not, but one day Kate come to Levis and sad.

- Levis, I dont think I like you.

Levis dident let her spek klart before he runned away, Kate runed after him and sad waint he stopped upp. She said let me talk to punkt.

- Levis, I don’t think i like you, I love you!

Then Levis begined to laf I know it every ones love me then he go back to his friends. But Kate she didn’t go to school for 2 weeks. Then she changed school.
The end.
Grade: F
**Student 3**

It was a litel dog. His name was Pluto. Pluto liv on the stre. He hav liv one the stre ole his laife. Pluto was a lonely dog but hi was a rellly relly gud dog. One day cam a boy he came ther pluto live. Wen Pluto se the boy so was hi so heppy beco he fink the boy was a gud boy but hi isent. He boy loky on Pluto

- Waw thet´s dog is so ugly an stupet. See the boy.
- Yes so ugly. Se his frend

Pluto her wat the boys see end he bil so dep. It´s relly cold soo hi go under a tre. Its wormer ther. Pluto sliping but he heer something. Thet is a garl hi is graging (gråter) Pluto go to the garl som siting and graging. Pluto legger in the garls kne and the garl stuping grang. She is so heppy nowe. The garl lucking on Pluto.

- You don’t hav a halsband say the garl.
- If you don’t have a halsband you don’t hav a famely but you have a famely nowe. Sey the garl.

The garl and Pluto go home to the garl en the are heppy fore ever.

End.
Grade: E

**Student 4**

One time there were a man called Sture he had a YouTube channel with the name “Sture Gaming”. he had 3 subscribers, His dad, His mom, And a random person. For a weird reason he got like 10 dislikes on every video. He had a bad computer with Windows XP, When he recorded a video he use his phone camera to record the computer screen. One day when he were going to bed he opened his phone and watched at a weird YouTuber called “PewDiePie” in one of his videos Sture watched that night pewdiepie said:

* I’me going to make a “Make a video with me” giveaway!
* The only thing you need to do is comment down below why you want to make a video with me!

Sture worked with his comment in 2h then it were done!

Sture’s comment:
And then he felt to sleep.
The next day he woke up and turned his phone on. It saw that his comment has got one comment and it were PewDiePie
Sture walked to the position and there he were PewDiePie. That day were the last time someone has saw him.
Some people thinks pewdiepie uses Sture to make better videos and get more subscribers!

Grade: E

**Student 5**
A long time a go. A rabbit go out to finde his friend. But ven he go out in the forest he don´t finde his friend but a big haus in the midle of the forest. The hause vas made of candy. And ven the rabbit go in the haus he heare a voys up stares and he go up stares ther he finde his brother behind his brother sitting a man.they sittning behind a fier plaiis.

Grade: F
Appendix 4 The second texts written by the students S1-S5

Student 1
Hay ma name is colin i am 13 yers old an ai am mobbad. I vas that in may first class on skhol in 7. I don’t like that class so mutch so i switch till a ader. thats vas a beder class for I have mor frends der in. I vas autfryst. So I vant swich to a ader class. I thingk that was bader to mi men. No that bildings mor and mor and mor. My frend help me wen I will hav help so many frend wos der wen I dont hav dat purfekt. I dot no ho I gana sy that for. I will don’t sej to may ticher for I dot now ho das koming a bild dos do I am skerd.

2 yrs old leyter
hay agen naw a am not mobbad bekus may frends help me so hard at d som mobing stap and latt mi was i fred so I am happy for att may. Help me wen I was sad and nothing was gud.

Grade: F

Student 2
The ritch man knocked on his old brown door. Crow was suppriised that someone was out there. It have NEVER was a person who who knoked on hes door befor. Crow walked slowly troho the hall and opend the door slowly.

- Who are you? asked crow.
- Iam Nate sad the ritch man. Im going to buy this house.
- What?! You can´t do that!!! sad crow whit the cry in hes eyes.

The ritch man looked in the hall and sad yes I can.

- But pleas I don’t ha a place to live then because my perents is dead and I don’t have a famely. Sad crow and the tears was falling down on hes chijs.

The ritch man who called Nate asked to get inside to talk whit Crow. They sitted on Crows bed because he didnt had a sofa. Nate asked if Crow dident kno him. Supprised Crow sad no, who are you?

- I am King Nate the king of greatbrittian.

Crow feeld stupid when Nate sad that, how codent he know thar hi is the king?!
Nate keept taking and he said that he wold adopte Crow and he cold live whit Nate on the palace if he wanted.
Crow small body was full of happiness.

- Yes ofcorse I want to he sad.
20 years later
Here I was in Sweden. To know if I would get Nobellpriset. My heart was beating and I just heard they say “The winner is Crow”.
Who would ever think that little orphan and poor Crow would win the Nobelpris? No one. Remember that everything is impossible.
The end.

Grade: E

Student 3
Suddenly one day something terrible happened… when Eliza came home so was her servants not der and Eliza was hungry. So shie gong run and run in the big hous and hi don’t find her any wer. Nowe shi are skerd ho ska do the fod to her noew. She go too she’s fader.
- Wer is my servants dady say Eliza
- Them are sparkade bute the new servants coming in a hour. Say Elizas dady.

And shis dad hawe rayt after a houre so the new serwents and shi loke loke like a witch think Eliza. But shi dont think more on thet becus shi was a relly relly gud servents the farst two weks but sen samting hepend wit the servants she was more aggli for everey day. But one dey she was so engry on the little garl so she go done to the källare and do magick wit Elizas fode. But wen the servents go upp from the kellare so meting she Eliza.
- Wat do you doing wit may fod in the källare say Eliza.
- Nafing anser the servents but wery angry Eliza was wery skerd to shis servents so she gonging to shis dad and tell hi watsp goning on.

Shi’s dad so angry on the servents so she get to lev the hose and the contry forewer and if shie com back to the hose so skulle Elizas dad kill the servengs. But the serveng com never ever bak to the hose.

Grade: E

Student 4
3… Crow walked to the place the rich man were. The rich man said that he needs a new slave that can help him with daily things. The slave will be paid very well. he started a compiticion so he can get the best slave. In the compiticion will it be 3 moments: Cleaning, Food and Helping. Crow wanted to be in the compiticion so he trained well in 2 weeks. When the rich man went back to have the compiticion, Crow were ready. The first moment were Cleaning, They were taken to a dirty room. They had one hour to clean the room the best they can,
Crow are not so good at cleaning. But then he cleaned the room he were realy fast and were the first man to be done.

In the next part he needed to make food. They were send to a kitchen with ingredients, He looked at the ingredients and thant that he wolth make cooked stake with potatos. When he were done the rich man tasted the food and that it tasted good. In the last bit Crow needed to find things and give them him. The first thing he needed were a toothbrush and crow got it fast. The second thing he needed were a glass of water. He got it well and fast. When he were done he walked outside and saw that he were the first person to be done.

One day later the rich man said the winner, and it were Crow. Crow were very happy about it.

He got paid well and lived happy in all days.

Grade: C

**Student 5**

One day a very rich man come to the village. The rich man had an big coat and had nice shoes, a big hat and a golden ring. He has a big black beard and had big hands. Crow go in to him wen he gowing to his house and the rich man stod here chaut

- Vatt are you doing!
- Sorry ses crow and run away.

It was cold and he had nothing to eat. Sow he go out in the forrest to find food to diner. He find a appel tree in the midel of the forrest. He go to the trea and tried to pick a appel but he was to short. So he climed up in the trea and he finde a gold appel and eatit he fell in ti a big sleape a long time wen he vakna (?) so was he in a big haus. And siting whit a table whit food and he start to eat evrything he seen. Wen a man come in tell the room he stop eating and lock at the man the man was the rich man from the village. He ask me if I was hangry and I answer yes i´m very hanger. And the man ses vell you live whit me. I answer yes I well. And they live togewer in a long time.

Grade: E
Appendix 5 The first texts written by the students S6-S10

Student 6
There once was a hero named Ragnar The Red who came ridin to Whiterun from ole Rorikstead. He cme slashin steel and braggin’ about the gold he had made. Then the brave shield-maiden Lydia who said “you came slashing and drink all our mead, I think it’s high time you lay down and bleed.” Then came more slashing of steel and Ragnar The Red was boastfull no more, because his ugly red head rolled around on the floor. The brave lass Lydia then said “if you come slashing and drink all our mead, look at Ragnar The Red and think again.”

After that the shield-maid Lydia became the housecarl of the mighty Jarl Balgruuf the Greater of Whiterun until the Dragonborn came. Jarl Balgruuf asked why he is here. The Dragonborn said “there was a dragon attack in Helgen, no survivors. You need to send guards to Riverwood at once!” The mighty Jarl of Whiterun then said to his housecarl Lydia and the Dragonborn “send some reinforcement to Riverwood and take some guards to Helgen to kill that dragon.

They took 10 of their best guards and went to Helgen. They saw the dragon and had a big battle. When they were finished they were heroes and celebrated 10 days straight. Then the Dragonborn was promoted to steward of Whiterund hold and landowner of Rorikstead and Riverwood. Lydia was also promoted to landowner to Helgen and some farms outside the walls.

The End!

Grade: A

Student 7
Once upon a time there was a boy named Carl. He lived in a big red house out from the city. He had a big famely three sisters and one brother. One night carl heard something coming from the woods. He stod up in his room and lookt out the window but he didnt se anything. The day after he told his brother that he had heard someting in the forest. And his brother told him a story abut a man whit a chinsaw walking arund the woods killing peapole who deard to enter. But ofcorse didint belive in his brothers story. Then the next night the sounds became louder and closer so Carl was realy scared the third night. In the middle of the the third night he heard a bang. He loked down and saw the chansawman breaking their door down. The man walkt in to the house and first he killed carls three sisters. Then he went to his parents room and killed them too. He culd hear the chansaw man walking to his room so he jumpt out the window and started running towards the woods the man was slow because
he was carrying a heavy chain saw. The boy hear a big crak and thought the chainsaw killer was coming but he saw that it was the bother he remembered that he left him in the house when he ran out in the forest and now the man was getting closer and closer until he was right behind them and his brother slipt and so did he. They both got killd and the families bodies were newer found.

Grade: E

Student 8
It was a country far far away. In the country it only lived wiches and it was called the “Wichland”. Everybody were evil and hated eachother. In the forest it lived a family, a mom, dad and two sisters. One of the sisters was different than everyone else, she was kind and pretty. Her name was Ella and she had long brown hair and her eyes was oceanblue. Because of her kindness she was bullied of her bigsister and mom. Ella was forced to clean up at home, wash their clothes and much more. They were screaming at her every day.

In another country at the same time it lived a royal family in a castle. The prince had decided to go to every land in the world to visit all the people. The prince name was Alfredo and he had deep brown eyes and brown hair. Alfredo was handsome and was very nice. When he came to Wichland he met Ella in the forest. She was grabbing berrys then she saw the prince. They had love with the first look at eachother ad decided to get married. Ellas family became so angry when they heard of them. Ella and Alfredo decided to escape to his homecountry and they lived happy at all time.

The end.

Grade: C

Student 9
Once time it was a little boy from India. He lived in a big family, it was two big sisters, and he’s parents. The little boy called Swimi because he swim every day after the school have end. Swimi liked to be in the water with friends and play. But he also liked to swim in the lake behind he’s house. One day after the school asked he’s friend if he want to swim across a river and Swimi wants that. So they took their bathpants and walked to the river called Kanpur.

- Let’s go jump, said he’s friend.
- Yes, let’s go, said Swimi.

He’s friend Jaraki jumped first but he landed wrong so Jaraki foot be broked. The foot hurts very much so he can’t swim. The river strong so Jaraki went with the river.

- Help me Swimi, screamed he.
- I coming!

Swimi run beside Jaraki and took a little tree. He strecht out the little tree to Jaraki and grabed it so he come up from the river. Jaraki was saved and they were very happy.

- We said not to our parents about that said they and walked home again.

Happy end!

Grade: E

Student 10

One’s upone time it was a little lady called “the candy lady” she love her candy and her favorite candy was skittles. Her favorite day on the week was Saturday because she can eat more candy tho. One time when she eat to lot of candy on a Monday she’s been out looked of the house. She has nothing to do so she sat under a three. When she puted her arm on the three it sounds like “click” and she falls down. She was screeming until she’s land. She landed on a fluffy candy. She has comed to a candy paradise. Now she are the most lucky girl in the world and now she can eat so much candy as she wants.

Grade: E
Appendix 6 The second texts written by the students S6-S10

Student 6

3. He was tall, had nice steel plated armor, a carriage with two horses, many servants and best of all, he had many gold coins that Crow could steal. Crow was eavesdropping when he heard one of the servants say to the man:

- Master, what should we do with these gold and iron ingots?
- Put them in the chest in the back of the carriage, the rich man said.
- Gold and iron ingots, said Crow quietly to himself, now I have the chance to be rich!

Crow took the biggest cloth rag he could find and waited for the servant so put the gold and iron ingots in the chest. When she was done Crow ran as fast as he could and put all the ingots in the cloth rag and ran to his lodge. He counted the ingots and there were 5 gold and 3 iron ingots. Then he heard a knock. He opened his door and there was the rich man and two guards.

- Do you, by any chance, have 5 gold and some iron ingots in here? The man said.
- No, I don’t, Crow said.
- Why are you lying?
- Because I’m poor and I need the money.
- If you need money you can give me my ingots and follow me to the city and I can show you how to trade and barter.

10 years later Crow was in a small village with his caravan of traders when he saw a young boy that looked poor. He said the words the rich man told him 10 years earlier.

- If you need money, you can follow me and my caravan and I can show you how to barter.

The little kid looked up to him with a big grin on his face and followed him. That kid became one of the richest men in the world.

The end

Grade: A
**Student 7**

3. One day a very rich man came to the village. He told Crow that there was oil under the village and he wanted to dig for the oil. But first Crow believed that the idea was good. So he agreed with the man digging but only if he got 30 percent of the money. Than later in the night a fairy came in to his lodge and the fairy told him not to let the man dig for oil because it will ruin the village. So the next day Crow did what the fairy told him to do so when the man came to dig Crow scared him away so that he didn't come back and he got granted three wishes. The first wish he had was to get some new clothes and his second wish was a big house. The third wish was someone to take care of him and so the next day his parents knockt on the door and they lived happy ever after.

Grade: C

**Student 8**

2. One morning Olivia decided to run away from her evil aunt. When Olivia ran her feeling was amazing and she felt happy and free. When she came to the forest she slowed down. When she had walked a little bit she heard voices. Olivia became happy and walked to the voices. She had no idea what was waiting there and got very surprised when she saw what it was. Three dwarves were standing and argumented about something and when they saw Olivia they became speechless about her beauty and long brown hair. One of the dwarves introduced all of them and their names were Magicboy, Lodii and Florty. Olivia wanted to live with the dwarves because she had nowhere to sleep, but Lodii said that she couldn't. Magicboy told Olivia that all of the dwarves have to agree about all decisions. After about 30 minutes of argumenting between Lodii and Magicboy they decided that Olivia could stay. Olivia became very good friends with the dwarves and they also taught her how to hunt animals in the forest.

In the village the evil aunt wanted Olivia back to do all the heavy jobs in the big house. So she started to search for her in the forest and found her with the dwarves. Olivia ran for her life, but the aunt used her dangerous magic to stop her. She sent bloodthirsty wolves after her and ruled them with her brain. The dwarves tried to help Olivia, but her magic was too powerful. The aunt had a weakness. Without her necklace in gold she had nothing, no power and no life. Olivia had always thought that it was something with her necklace, so she took up a small stone and threwed the hardest she could and hit the necklace. The golden colour on the necklace switched to red and then it exploded. The aunt screamed and suddenly she was only ash.

Olivia and the dwarves could finally breath out. The next day decided Olivia to move back to the village and she said goodbye to the kind dwarves. Then she came back to the village all of
the people had heard about Olivias experience. Everyone already hated the aunt so much and Olivia became a hero all over the country.
The end.

Grade: A

Student 9

3. One day a very rich man came to the village and knocking on the door. Crow been very nervous when he heard the voice, because he lived in a forest. The man asked outside the front door:
   - Is someone there?
   - I'm coming, said Crow.

Crow opened the door and saw a tall man with a black costume and a hat.
   - Hello! I have gone away from my car, I can't find it. Said the tall man.
   - Why do you leave your car, asked Crow.
   - I looking after a big eagle in the forest when I should go back to my car I couldn't find it.

Crow said to the tall man that he can sleep in the lodge. The tall man thanked him.
They played cards and drunked milk, they have very fun together. But Crow thought that the tall man was a little creepy because when he laughed his eyes changed colour to red.
It has been dark outside and Crow cooking food. He don't know where the tall man was. When Crow has done the food came the tall man back.
   - Where were you? asked Crow.
   - I just find a big knife outside and stick it down under the hat.

They eat the food but Crow discovered that the tall man nose was very big and he eating very weird. The tall man speaking a lot and he said to Crow that's he worked with makes knifes.
After a long dinner they wanted to sleep. Crow show where the tall man will to sleep.
The man sleeped now but Crow couldn't. he thinked if the man was a killer because he makes knifes. After two hours could Crow sleep to. Crow woken up and heard a voice, he looked out throw the window and saw a clown with red eyes and a big knife in the left hands. The clown laughed and run to the door but Crow was faster so he could locked it.
   - I'm gonna kill you! screamed the clown. Crow was very scared so he looked after the tall man if he also heard the clown.
But Crow couldn’t find him, the Clown tried to destroy the door but it’s not worked. Crow saw the clown was very long and than he saw it was the tall man. Crow take a foodknife and jumped out from a window behind the house and than he smash the clown in he’s face. The clown run away from Crow and the lodge. Crow jumped in again and looking if the tall man has forgot something. He looking under the bed and found a bag with very much money. Crow was very happy because now he can buy a very nice house in the town. It still dark outside, he felt tired so he go to the bed again. After 30 seconds sleeped he again. So Crow is not poor man longer. And than Crow lived happy in all he’s days.

Grade: C

**Student 10**

2. One morning when the girl ate breakfast she heard a sound “dunk, dunk, dunk”. The girl didn’t care about it and continued to ate her breakfast. Some minutes later she heard the sound again. But this time it was a little bit louder “dunk, dunk, dunk”. She thought about it but she couldn’t understand what it was. She went to the window but she couldn’t see anyting.

- What are you doing! Her cousin shouted. “You have not time to look out of the window. You have to clean my room.”

The girl been sad but she finished her breakfast and hurried up to cousins room. It was in a mess. She started to clean but then she heard the sound again. Quickly she ran to the window. First she couldn’t see any strange things. But then she saw behind the big oak.

- What are you doing! Why are you looking out of the window again? You haven’t cleaned my room yet. I going to tell my mother about this.

The girl cleaned and cleaned but she couldn’t stop thinking about what she saw behind the oak. What was it? Her aunt came into the rrom.

- I heard from my daughter tha you are lazy. That means you have to work until 10 o’clock this evening, she said.

The girl wasn’t surprised it was the same thing every day. She missed her mother and father. Her aunt left the room and the girl ran to the window again. Now she saw what it was. It was a big air balloon. The air balloon started flying to the window there the girl stood. It sounds “dunk, dunk, dunk” as it flying. The air balloon stopped by the window. The girl looked closer at the balloon. In the basket under the balloon it was two frogs. They held a sign it said “jump in and kiss us”. The girl had nothing to loose. So she open the window and jumped into the basket. She kissed the two frogs and suddenly the two frogs became her mother and father.
She thought they were dead but instead they had been encanted by a witch. They flew away with the air balloon and lived happily ever after.

Grade: A
Appendix 7 Matrix for assessing the texts


Appendix 8 The teacher questionnaire

Elever med läs- och skrivsvårigheter och deras förmåga att skriva på engelska

Hej på er! Som flera av er säkert redan vet så håller jag på med min c-uppsats i engelska. Syftet med min uppsats är att undersöka elever med läs- och skrivsvårigheter och deras förmåga att skriva texter på engelska. Jag är tacksam om ni kan ta er tid att svara på 3 frågor. Deltagandet är frivilligt och helt anonyt!

1. Vilka svårigheter kan du se att elever med läs- och skrivsvårigheter tycks stöta på när de skriver texter (på engelska)?

2. Hur anpassar du din undervisning med avsikt att den ska gynna eleverna med läs- och skrivsvårigheter?


Skicka
Appendix 9 Answers from the teachers on the questionnaire

The informants for these interviews are Teacher 1 (T1), Teacher 2 (T2), Teacher 3 (T3) and Teacher 4 (T4)

1. Vilka svårigheter kan du se att elever med läs- och skrivsvårigheter tycks stöta på när de skriver texter (på engelska)?

T1: Stavningen, ordföljden, ordförrådet samt att kunna hitta olika lösningar om man kör fast är några av de problem som elever med läs- och skrivsvårigheter kan stöta på. Jag tycker att många av de här eleverna lämnar in bra engelska texter överlag men jag vet att de också har arbetat väldigt hårt. Så, behovet av extra tid är också något elever med läs- och skrivsvårigheter behöver även om just det inte syns på det färdigskrivna arbetet.

T2: De har ofta lågt självförtroende och är övertygade om att de inte kan. De fokuserar på att de inte kan stava, att de inte kan ordet, att de inte kan…. Detta gör att de presterar korta texter fast de kanske egentligen kan mer. De själva är det största hindret på något sätt.

T3: Svårigheter att komma igång, att finna ord och att struktura sina texter.


2. Hur anpassar du din undervisning med avsikt att den ska gynna eleverna med läs- och skrivsvårigheter?

T1: Extra tid, tillgång till dator eller iPad, munftliga genomgångar, anpassade och avgränsade arbetsuppgifter, möjlighet att lyssna på engelska mm. Olika former av riktat stöd helt enkelt eftersom behovet kan se så olika ut från elev till elev.

T2: Jag försöker att vara noga med bildstöd, genomgångar och att prata mycket runt texterna innan vi jobbar med dem. Det också viktigt att ta sig tid att läsa enskilt eller i mindre grupp med dessa elever för att bygga självförtroende och få dem att fokusera på det de klarar. Visa att de kan!


T1: Att få den tid jag behöver för att kunna ta fram bra material, att stöta eleverna under lektionstid samt att följa upp deras arbete. Många följer en egen individuell planering och gör inte alltid samma sak som den stora massan. Samtidigt har de rätt till likvärdig feedback och planering som alla andra även om de arbetar med något annat... Kort sagt, tid!

T2: Det svåraste är att hitta tid till att ge dem och alla andra undervisning på adekvat nivå som utvecklar var och en och får dem att känna att de klarar av innehållet och uppgiften. Att fånga en motvillig tonåring är inte alltid lätt, men man får tänka till på innehållet så att man väcker intresset hos dem.

T3: Alla uppskattar att ta hjälp av stödstrukturer. Däremot kräver det mer av mig som lärare ifråga om förarbete. Fördelen är att eleverna blir mer självgående medan lektionen pågår. De utgår från stödstrukturer och behöver inte be om så mycket hjälp under skrivandet, vilket inte känns så utpekande för eleverna.