Tasks in English workbooks

An analysis of task types in workbooks for the English subject in the ninth grade

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English workbooks and the syllabus.

An analysis of task types and their correlation to the core content in the syllabus for English in the ninth grade

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Abstract

The study aimed to find out and compare what skills and task-types that could be found in two workbooks for the ninth grade in English as a second language in Sweden. The research was conducted using a quantitative content and text analysis in order to compare two workbooks and categorize their tasks into production and interaction skills and task-types. The workbooks were chosen as they were the latest editions at the time. The study showed that both workbooks prioritized production and interaction skills. Both had a low focus on speaking skills but *Sparks 9* had more integrated skills in tasks. *Wings 9* had a major focus on writing skills and grammar. Both workbooks focused on comparing, problem solving, listing and sorting and ordering task-types. Task-types such as creative tasks and sharing personal experience were low in both workbooks but *Sparks 9* had a better overall spread of all task-types in general. The understanding that tasks incorporate much more than simply goals to achieve could potentially be used in a practical teaching environment by adapting tasks to fit students´ different needs.

Keywords

Tasks, task-types, skills, workbooks, English as a second language

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1. Introduction

Language teaching has a very long history and by the beginning of the twentieth century it had become an active area of innovation and educational debate. The demand for English speakers after World War II with its mass immigration and the internalization of education in the 1950s and more recently, globalization, the spread of the English language across the world and the rise of the Internet has kept the world of English learning constantly evolving. Political changes in Europe in the in the sixteenth century led to English as a language gaining ground. Latin held that position prior to that, and with its decline it took on a new function. As the study of Latin had mainly been conducted through rhetoric and grammar structure, that became the basis for the modelling of foreign English studies. By the nineteenth century this approach was the set standard in teaching foreign languages. It was conducted through a series of set rules and sentences with memorization and translation as the aim (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 4-5). The lack of thorough methodological structures in the early days of foreign language teaching led to an era filled with ever changing views on how to approach foreign language teaching (p. 17).

The Swedish syllabus is based in the Common European Framework which is based on communicative competence. As construction of teaching materials is dependent on the syllabus, the study of teaching material stays relevant as new material is designed continuously. The dependency that teaching materials have to the syllabus is mainly due to the students´ need to have set goals that can be attained through the material used to reach the set criteria (Skolverket, 2018, p. 40). Tasks and task-types in workbooks and the skills they teach are important to examine as they should help develop the set skills and goals. A further look into the subject showed a lack of research in workbooks and the tasks used in English education in Sweden. Many studies focus on the textbooks, their pedagogical functions and how to design them such as (Selander, 2008; Marsden, 2001; Peacock and Cleghorn, 2004). In other words, there are still many aspects of English tasks and task-types in workbooks used in Swedish schools that remain to be investigated. This study aims to bridge that gap by answering the following questions.

1.1. Aim and research questions

The aim of this study is to analyse and compare writing, speaking and discussion tasks in two English as a second language workbooks and attempt to categorize them into production and interaction skills and task-types. This is approached with the following research questions:

- What does the skill distribution in production and interaction tasks in Sparks 9 and Wings 9 look like?
- Which task types can be found in the Sparks 9 and Wings 9 workbooks?

2. Background

This section will introduce topics that are connected to the two research questions. A brief introduction on teaching material and its history in Sweden is at the beginning. This is followed by a brief summary of relevant teaching methods and approaches. A section on definitions of tasks and task-types can be found as well. There is also a section on previous studies concerning tasks and task-types. Lastly an excerpt from the Swedish syllabus for developing students´ skills in writing, speaking and discussing in English for the 9th grade in Sweden will be presented.

2.1. Theoretical background

Teaching material

The concept of *teaching materials* (Swedish: läromedel) is both broad and hard to define. The term goes under many names such as *teaching materials*, *teaching tools*, *instructional tools* and *instructional material* (Ton Nu and Murray, 2020; Pan and Chen, 2020; Murray, 1965; Keyes and Puzio and Jimenéz, 2014; Harmon, 1982). The Swedish state officially changed the term *teaching book* (Swedish: lärobok) into *teaching material* (Swedish: läromedel) in 1975 and defined it as the material that conveys the syllabus content (SOU, 1975, p. 216). The term further expanded to include the *teaching materials* that students and teachers agree to use for the students to reach the set criteria in a subject (SOU, 1992, p.170). Ammert (2011) defines instructional material as *läroböcker men också om facklitteratur, skönlitteratur, AV material, artefakter och till och med fordon och djur*[1] (p. 17). With the removal of governmental control of instructional materials in 1991 it became imperative for teachers to assess materials and their correlation to the syllabus but also their pedagogical design (p.17).

Since the term instructional materials encapsulates such a wide range of tools to aid in teaching, a problem arises in the analysis of instructional materials. A default method of analysis would yield vague and incomplete results when used on instructional materials not suited for it (p. 18). Therefore, a wide range of analysis methods are needed in order to select the right one for a specific *teaching material* (p.18). Selander (2003) makes a clearer definition of instructional materials in order to draw a line between material used to teach and *teaching material*, meaning; any material can be used to teach a subject. If you would like to work with Shakespeare, for example, using both film and text, you could add questions and have a discussion in class. The material would be able to convey parts of a language, incite critical thinking and other pedagogic sequences (p. 221). Selander (2003) further mentions that according to SIL (The governmental institute for teaching material), the definition did not include for example workbooks and factual books, aiding materials such as lexicons, vocabulary lists and diverse materials such as syllabuses, films, soundbites, pictures and computer programs (p.219). The criticism of a too wide of a definition of *teaching materials* leads to a new term in Swedish: “Pedagogiska texter” or *pedagogical* or *educational texts* in which instructional material is a

[1] *Author´s translation: teaching books but also non-fiction, fiction books, audio visual material, artefacts and even vehicles and animals.*

sub term. The previously excluded materials are now included under the new definition (p. 222). The starting point for how the English subject should be taught are the regulatory documents such as the curriculum and syllabus. Factors such as preconditions at the schools also play a role. The teaching books used in English language education are used as tools to make the regulatory documents tangible. Most teaching books nowadays are organized into themes because of the importance placed on instructional materials being well designed (Lundahl, 2019, p. 175). Richards & Rodgers (2014) further add that the function of instructional material is dependent on the specified objectives and content of the syllabus because it defines elements of the target language and set goals for language learning in term of listening, reading, speaking and writing (p.34). Furthermore, the content and goals change in a syllabus depends on what teaching method is used. For example, instructional materials place less emphasis on grammar and more weight is instead placed on interpreting, exchanging information and negotiating meaning within functional and communicative methods of teaching (p. 34-35). If such an emphasis is placed on the materials and tasks used in English language education, a need to examine their inner structure arises.

2.2. Teaching methods and approaches

One connection between the communicative language approach and the syllabus for teaching English and modern languages in Sweden is the Council of Europe. The labor immigration that occurred in Europe led to the understanding that language teaching, which was focused on form at the time, was mostly leading to control over grammatical rules but inadequate in teaching individuals how to use a language (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 83-84). The Council of Europe had an interest in developing common ground in language teaching across Europe (Council of Europe, 2001, p.2) Language learning was divided into levels and the view and definition on communication was expanded upon. Communication had previously been mainly based on a cognitive perspective but was now to include factors such as psychological, affective and social to give a more complete definition of communication (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 83-84). It should be noted that the *4 skills*, which are: reading, listening (reception) and writing and speaking (production and interaction) are divided a little differently in the Common European Framework of Reference. Oral production and interaction is divided into speaking and discussing, or more accurately: oral production and oral interaction (Council of Europe, 2001, p.26). The Swedish syllabus for the English subject uses the same divide (Skolverket, 2018, p. 37). Although the Common European Framework of Reference of which the Swedish syllabus is extracted from is communicative in approach, it is considered a competency-based communicative approach (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 168). Communicative competences can be divided into four categories: grammatical, sociolinguistic, discourse and strategic competence (p. 89). Sheils (1988) expands this model by stating that this approach is learner-centered with a foundation in motivating individuals´ interests to build on their experiences and knowledge. The goal is to arouse students´ interest by focusing on relevant themes and attainable, realistic tasks (p. 1). The purpose of communicative language teaching is effective communication through development of the abilities to use the actual language. The approach focuses on reality-based communication with less emphasis on grammar**.** (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 95).

Within the field of second language teaching, one teaching method has attracted significant attention, namely task-based language teaching (TBLT). The attention of the method on process-focused syllabi and designing *communicative tasks* in order to strengthen students´ real language use has its roots in

the communicative language teaching method that emerged in the early 1980s. Emphasis is placed on students´ communicative skills and have since then been studied and used as a tool for data gathering (Hismanoglu & Hismanoglu, 2011, p.46). Shehadeh (2005) explains that studies have examined *tasks* through different perspectives. The main perspectives are interaction, output, cognitive and socio-cultural (p. 21). Lundahl (2019) argues that even though *tasks* can be part of multiple teaching dimensions, engagement and social relations cannot be created through tasks (p. 187). The social aspect is a pre-requisite to cognitive skill development thus making language the tool for negotiating and communicating. Sociocultural theory defines the learning process through interaction and action in relation to our surroundings. The actions we make and how we make them defines what we learn, how we learn it and process it. A student will base their actions and thought processes on experience and motivation that is completely individual. How students´ perceive any activity or task will differ accordingly (p. 187).

According to the interaction hypothesis, the importance of negotiating meaning is stressed. It leads to opportunities to supply comprehensible input and produce modified output which is an important factor in language development (Shehadeh, 2005, p.21). Long (1983b,1996, as cited in Shehadeh 2005, p.21) argues for the importance of exchanging information to give students feedback that in their level of comprehension (input) through the process of negotiation and modification to a more understandable interaction (output). The process also draws attention to the language´s linguistic form as the students´ produce in the language. Which is also needed in order to supply students´ with new vocabulary or structure to further strengthen their language development (p. 21).

Language skills are an essential part of communication and development. Hinkel (2006) examines production and interaction skills in tasks and concludes that the four skills are hard to separate from each other. Writing is usually integrated with reading and grammar, for example (p. 125). Hinkel (2006) also identifies four themes concerning the *4 skills*, of which two are relevant in this study: *the significance of both bottom-up and top-down skills…and the teaching of multiple integrated skills in context* (p. 110). Bottom-up meaning *focus on form* skills and top-down meaning *focus on meaning skills*. In the case of *writing* proficiency for example, a student will first need to develop a foundation in spelling, vocabulary, grammar and syntax before being able to move on to more complex tasks such as emotive or personal production and interaction that focus on meaning (Hinkel, 2006, p. 125). As for *integrated skills*, in order to for example have a conversation a student would need to be able to comprehend and speak at the same time. The argument being that skills are not separated in real communication (p.113). Bygate (2018) stresses the significance of *task repetition* as it not a repetition of linguistic aspects, but a repetition of *a given configuration of purposes* (p. 2). This means that language can trigger different cognitive skill processes when a student faces tasks of similar structure (p. 2).

Tasks and task-types

Willis (2005) explains that tasks can be defined in multiple ways but constricts the definition within the studies conducted within specific research. *Tasks* are mainly focused on exchange and understanding meaning and not on form. Students are given goals and purposes along with the *tasks* in order to know what achievement the goal is supposed to lead to. The tasks can involve more than one *skill* at a time and their outcome can be shared with other students (p.3). The *tasks* have real communication as a purpose for the interaction and not grammar and patterns, that is not to say that *focus on form* is completely excluded when found necessary (p.3). Willis (2005) makes a distinction between activities that focus on practising pre-specified forms or functions in language (these are not

considered tasks) and activities that focus on expression and exchange or meaning (p.4). Shehadeh (2005) agrees and offers a more defined term: *an activity, that has a non-linguistic goal, with a clear outcome and that uses any or all of the four language skills in its accomplishment by conveying meaning in a way that reflects real-world language use* (p. 19). Nunan (1989) also concurs that *tasks* involve communicative language use and that the focus is on *meaning* and not *form* and that tasks are pieces of work in the classroom that involve students´ comprehension, manipulation, production or interaction (p.10).

Skehan (2003) differs in opinion regarding tasks and focus on form and places more emphasis on its importance. According to him, simply giving communication opportunities may not be enough to assure language development for students. They may need more focus on form as well in order to not just learn about a language but know how to use it (p. 393). Ellis (2003, as cited in Parmar 2019, p. 3) divides tasks into *focused* and *unfocused*, where *unfocused* tasks´ purpose is to advance a student's comprehension and production in communication, whereas *focused* tasks draw the attention to linguistic aspects and *form* (p. 3). Ellis (2020) also instructs on the importance of task construction as more complex tasks involve abstractions, very little visual aid and high density of information. These factors are important to consider before task implementation (p. 17-18).

Long (2015) divides *tasks* into two categories: *tasks* that are based in *real world tasks*, mainly conducted through a needs analysis to outline what an individual needs to be able to achieve in a language. The activities range from complex to the more mundane, with the language use being optional (p.6). The second definition is *pedagogic tasks*. These are more complex and are actual activities and materials used in a teaching and learning environment (p. 6). Richards & Roberts (2014) apply even more characteristics to *pedagogical* and *real-world* tasks such as if a *task* involves complex or simple cognitive processing or if a task has multiple outcomes or one (p.187).

Willis (1998, as cited in Willis & Edwards, 2005) attempts to classify *tasks* into *task-types* based on cognitive processes such as *listing tasks; ordering and sorting tasks; comparing tasks; problem solving tasks; sharing personal experience; and creative tasks* (p. 4). Pica, Kanagy & Falodun (1993 as cited in Richards & Rodgers 2014, p.186) have a different view when categorizing task-types, namely by the type of interaction that occurs as a result of completing a specific task. They are divided into five task types: Jigsaw, information gap, problems-solving, decision-making, and opinion exchange (p.186). This study will be using Skehan´s (2003) definition of tasks and Willis (1998) categorization of task-types.

Previous studies

The following two studies do not explicitly investigate what task-types and skills that are involved in workbooks for English teaching in Sweden, as there was very little previous research to be found in those areas. The studies do however investigate effect of tasks and task-types in a teaching environment and display the outcomes.

Park (2021) investigated real time task interactions in English as a foreign language setting (p.1-2). This was conducted in a secondary school setting with students that had low level proficiency in English in South Korea. The reasoning behind the study, was to improve our understanding of what learning opportunities different task-types can create. Previous research had indicated that *structured* tasks involved more meaning negotiation and more fluency production while *unstructured* tasks showed unpredictable and divergent results. The implication being that specific task design was linked

to students´ focus on task completion and not negotiation and that by modifying tasks design one could shift the students´ focus (p. 2-3).

Hidalgo & Garcia Mayo (2019) investigated the effect of oral interaction in younger students´ written production. More accurately, the study researched task repetition and the students´ attention shift from *meaning* to *form* as they completed collaborative writing tasks. This was done by examining the oral exchanges of 20 students as they wrote collaborative texts. This was done three times over a period of three weeks. The students were first divided into 2 groups. One group did the exact same task three times. The second group did the same task-type, but the content was different every time. This was done in order to document the effect of task repetition, the students´ attention to *form*, *meanin*g and language related episodes (p. 566)

Method and material

The main data sources used in Park´s (2021) study was video recordings of after school EFL classes done in three middle schools in South Korea. All the recordings were transcribed. There were 28 participants in total. The tasks consisted of 5 different tasks with varying degrees of structure. The definition of structured vs unstructured tasks used in the study was whether a task had a clear solution and a concrete answer (structured) or not (unstructured). There were two unstructured tasks and three structured tasks. The students were paired in two, or three by their own choice (p. 8).

The main data sources for Hidalgo & Garcia Mayo (2019) were two groups of 20 students between the ages of 11-12 who were in their 6^{th} year or primary school in Spain. The students had a high proficiency in English. The school follows a content and language integrated learning program. (p. 570). The study was conducted in a controlled setting with a pair of students and researcher outside of the classroom. This was done with audio and video recorded and later transcribed and processed into a decoding scheme (p. 571).

Results

Park´s (2021) study concluded that the students prioritized task completion over task goals in both *structured* and *unstructured tasks*. The students were not inclined to elaborate or negotiate during discussions in *unstructured tasks*. This meant that minimal negotiation was used, and the discussions did not resemble real conversation (p. 9). The students with a majority opinion would force the rest in the group to shift stance so that the task could be completed. This was the main reason for the issue. As willingness to exchange opinions is a key element in problem solving (p.12). The *structured tasks* showed the same patterns, as task completion was the students´ main goal, and showed minimal negotiation processes. The *structured tasks* were designed with one possible answer and that in turn emphasized the students´ priority in task completion as it was treated like a test to be completed. The students turned competitive and tried to be the first to finish the task (p.13).

Hidalgo & Garcia Mayo´s (2019) study showed that the students in both categories mainly focused on *form* (67 percent) over *meaning* (30 percent) in general. In the group that repeated the same task, focus on both form and meaning decreased with each repetition. The students that repeated the same task, but with different content showed a slight increase in *meaning* and then decreased with each repetition. *Focus on form* and *language related episodes* increased and then stabilized with each repetition (p. 573). The conclusion was that writing components in tasks, trigger focus on *form* (p. 580). A combination of oral and written components gave students´ opportunities to work on both focus on *form* and developing new knowledge. In order to increase the focus on *meaning*, the suggestion was to include more challenging vocabulary in tasks (p.581).

2.3. Curriculum and syllabus

This section will provide an overview of the appropriate syllabus references. The following excerpt is from the syllabus for the English subject in the ninth grade in interaction and production skills. They are divided into writing, speaking, and discussing in the Swedish syllabus (Skolverket 2018, p. 37).

The first half of the text used are different types of communicative skills in producing and interacting in the English subject in the ninth grade.

> • Different ways of working on one's own production and interaction to vary, clarify, specify and adapt them for different purposes.
>
> • Oral and written narratives, descriptions and instructions.
>
> • Conversations, discussions and argumentation. (p.37).

The second half of the paragraph contains communicative skill strategies and phenomena:

> • Language strategies to understand and be understood when language skills are lacking, such as reformulations, questions and explanations.
>
> • Language strategies to contribute to and actively participate in conversations by taking the initiative in interaction, giving confirmation, putting follow-up questions, taking the initiative to raise new issues and also concluding conversations.
>
> • Language phenomena to clarify, vary and enrich communication such as pronunciation, intonation and fixed language expressions, grammatical structures and sentence structures. (p. 37).

3. Method

The chosen method used to answer this study´s research questions is mainly a comparative text and content analysis with a quantitative approach (Stukát, 2011, p. 60). That is not to say that there are not elements of qualitative methodology in this study. A text analysis can also be a document analysis or a content analysis depending on the material used. Within the educational sciences, studies often include studying texts and documents found in the educational domain, such as syllabuses and *teaching material*s (Stukát (2011, p.41). Other methods were considered before the choice of method was selected, such as interviews, surveys and observations. These qualitative methods were rejected as they were not appropriate considering the material and research questions. The validity of a study is based on the measuring instrument in which it uses (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 163).

The text and content method of analysis is appropriate for this study because it examines the content in workbooks, focusing on tasks and task-types. A text analysis is usually classified as a qualitative approach since it usually focuses on deeper theoretical examination and a content analysis is more focused with studying a text with a quantitative approach. (Stukát, 2011, p. 60-61).

All methods, quantitative and qualitative, have their advantages and weaknesses, but a combination of methods might help minimize the weaknesses. The selection of method is often a strategical choice in answer to what method suits the study best. (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 76). Another reason is that this study would in many cases benefit from a methods triangulation as it uses several source materials which can result in a deeper and multifaceted view of the studied subject (Stukát, 2011, p.131-132).

3.1. Selection

The selected material was as previously mentioned, two workbooks and the production and interaction tasks (writing, speaking, and discussing) that they contained. The reasons for the selection of texts were:

1. They were both the most recent editions to the series in which they each belong to. If a study is to be conducted with the intent to review a small quantity of material, the logical choice is to compile data from relevant and recent sources (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 13).

2. The physical bookstore in which they were bought was the only one in the city in which learning material in the English subject for the 9th grades could be found. The bookstore had 3 different workbooks by two different publishers. To ensure a more reliable sample one workbook from each publishing house was selected (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 183-184).

3. The selected materials were: the Wings 9 workbook (Kellerman & Hagrot, 2018) and the Sparks 9 workbook (Taylor, 2018). If a selection is to be made, the obvious choice is to maintain an objective angle and compare relevant material from different sources to avoid unintentionally tilting the results but also for the samples to be considered representative of workbooks (Stukát, 2011, p. 63).

4. The Sparks 9 and Wings 9 workbooks are used in schools in Sweden, and both are published by big publishing houses. No research could be found on the subject as to what publishers or specific materials are mostly used in Swedish schools and would be representative in general. The selection was partly based of my personal anecdotal evidence. (Stukát, 2011, p. 64). I have used Wings (less recent versions) in my time as a student all through middle school but also years later as a student teacher and substitute teacher in schools in two major cities. As for Sparks, I have used it while teaching, but less recent versions were used at those schools. The workbooks were already being used in those schools and were not chosen by myself at the time.

5. The time and scope constraint placed upon this study made it unreasonable to choose more than two workbooks as they collectively have over 400 tasks. The choices had to be made and this study was conducted as objective as it possibly could have been regarding the choice of material and quantity to collect data from, within the set timeframe (Stukát, 2011, p. 62- 63).

3.2. Material

Sparks 9 overall design was divided into four themes: *Passions*, *On the move*, *News* and *Footprints*. In every theme the tasks were divided into 8 different types of tasks with different main focuses. The different types were explicitly stated in the workbook. The pattern was the same in all four themes: reading, vocabulary, writing, listening, oral production, oral interaction and production, grammar and digital literacy.

There were also two pages dedicated to *extra tasks* that could be found at the end pages of a theme. These tasks were for the student´s that had finished a chapter and wanted extra tasks. The tasks were written with very brief instructions and a page referral to the accompanying textbook for more information. An example of an extra task from *Sparks* can be found in appendix 1.

Sparks 9 also included a page early in the workbook with 7 specific aims that a student would work with in the workbook: collaborating, creating, communicating, finding and evaluating information,

problem solving and critical thinking. The last ten pages in the workbook consisted of a checklist for evaluation of the four skills, digital literacy and an instructional manual for different text types.

The *Wings 9* workbook was also divided into four themes: *Love*, *Crime and punishment*, *Life and death*, and *English around the world*. Every theme divided the tasks into 6 different categories with a set pattern: words and phrases, reading, listening, speaking, writing and grammar. The different categories were explicitly stated in the workbook. There were no *extra tasks* in this workbook. Both the listening and speaking categories included *explicit* strategical paragraphs on how to prepare, look for before and include before doing certain tasks.

The words and phrases section in every theme included both examples and information on the specific definitions related to the tasks. The grammar sections also included examples and information on the grammatical rules that were applicable for the tasks.

The last portion of the *Wings 9* workbook included a section with three main subsections. The first subsection contained information on the American and British money, weights, lengths, temperature. The was also information about the English alphabet and how to write letters with different degrees of formality. The second subsection contained grammatical rules, a list of irregular verbs and a list of words on how to count things depending on different situations. The last subsection was an informative guiding manual on how to write different types of texts, ranging from everything between news articles to application letters.

3.3. Procedure

The beginning of this study started with searching for workbooks that could be examined in order to define task skills and task-types. A visit to a major bookstore chain in Sweden was done in order to find two workbooks that could be used for this purpose. After selecting two workbooks, emails were sent to both publishing houses in order to receive consent on using their books in this study. I received replies with consent and consequently purchased the selected workbooks. An example of the permission requests sent to the publishing houses via email can be found in appendix 2.

The next step was to read through both workbooks in order to get an overview of their structural design. Choosing and structuring framework to use as decoding scheme came after. The choice was Willis (1998) task-type categorization. Designing an excel file that included a marker for every task-type and skill categories was the next logical step as documentation of data is necessary (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 181). The tasks were then read through carefully to process the information in every task before selecting appropriate markers to tag every task with. This was first written by hand next to every task in both books. The markers that were written down in the books for every task were later inserted into an excel file. Only the tasks that were categorized as production and interaction were used in this study, but all tasks were examined and logged into the excel file. The compiled data was divided into appropriate divisions based on the research questions in this study (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 14). The findings were then presented in the result section of this study.

3.4. Processing and methods of analysis

After deciding on what workbooks to use, the next step was to devise a decoding scheme to answer the questions; how were the task skills categorized? What task-types could be found? This meant that every task would need to be:

1. Categorized into writing, speaking and discussing skills.

2. Decoded into appropriate task-types.

The workbooks had either named them after one of the four skills or included a reference guide regarding the main skill of every task based on the headline above each task. So those were later used to double check the the validity of any results regarding what skill a task fell under but also the reliability of the chosen framework when measuring the data (Stukát, 2011, p. 133).

As previously mentioned, this is a quantitative comparative text and content analysis which means that the instruments (the constructed framework) needed to be suitable in order to measure efficiently and ensure validity (Stukát, 2011, p. 74). The developed framework was given a test run before approved for this study. As the results were yielded usable results, the framework was kept for the duration of the research stage. Research on previous work regarding task-type framework led to a choice between different works by different researchers. The choice was settled on Willis (1998) categorization of task-types. The task-types are based on Willis (1998) and the descriptions of them are based on Parmar (2019, p. 22). See table 1 for further information on what the task- type framework contained.

Task-type	***Abbreviation***	***Task-type description***
Listing	*List*	Making lists according to task criteria, brainstorming, activating personal knowledge and experiences. Often involves factfinding, surveys and library searches.
Comparing (matching)	*Comp*	Involves three processes: matching to defined or specific points, relating them and finding similarities and differences.
Problem solving	*Prob solve*	Encourages individuals intellectual and reasoning capabilities to arrive to a solution to a given problem.
Sharing personal experience	*Share pers*	Individuals are engaged in talking about themselves and sharing personal experiences
Creative tasks	*Create*	Projects (can be in groups) in which students create their own imaginative product, such as short stories, art, videos, magazines. Will often involve a combination of other task-types ex. Listing, ordering, comparing, problem solving
Ordering and sorting	*Sort*	4 processes: ranking items in logical or chronological order, sequencing them based on set criteria, grouping them, and classifying item into appropriate categories.[2]

Table 1. Framework for task-types and definitions used in this study

[2] *Task-types by Willis (1998, as cited in Richards and Rodgers, p.186, 2014) and descriptions based on Parmar (2019, p. 22).*

The reasons behind settling on this framework were twofold. The first reason was that the task-types had better descriptions and that they could more easily be discerned by both the writer and the reader of this study. The second reason was that other framework had merged different task-types into single definitions, meaning it would have been more difficult to discern what the task involved unless more markers were added into the decoding scheme. Other framework considered for this study included cognitive processes, focused on defining what constitutes as a task and task-types based on type of interaction that occur (Pica, Kanagy and Faludun, 1993; Cooper, 1998; Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001).

Holme & Solvang (1997) mention that a model of analysis should be as simple as possible in order to better present the phenomenon a study is examining (p. 34). Maintaining a clearer but smaller decoding scheme would also help keep subjective decisions to a minimum. This is important because of the understanding that all research is limited regarding objectivity and complete absence of values (p. 33).

An earlier version of this study included research questions concerning, reception skills (reading and listening) in tasks and the correlation between tasks and content of communication and the core content for production and interaction in the syllabus for English in the 9th grade. They were removed from the study for several reasons. Studying reception tasks (reading and listening) by examining workbooks would have led to problems because the reception tasks always referred to the accompanying textbook for more information. This would ultimately have been too time consuming and outside of the study's´ scope as the focus was workbooks and not textbooks. The research question regarding correlation to the syllabus was initially included and examined but was removed in the final version of this study as it proved to be too extensive to fit within the set parameters of this study (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 37).

All tasks in both Sparks 9 and Wings 9 that were defined as listening, reading or extra tasks were not analyzed in this study. They will however be shown in table 2 to give an overall view of the workbooks and their intended task design. Listening or reading tasks were defined as such by examining all parts of a task and the workbooks´ internal information. The tasks that were considered as listening or reading tasks were either those consisting solely of listening or reading skills, or tasks with listening or reading as the main focus skill. The extra tasks had very little information in them and referred to the textbooks for further information. The reasons for not categorizing them according to the research questions was to minimize the variables that might unintentionally influence the results (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 290-291).

This was also done to prevent tilting the results in a direction contradictory to the designed skill division of the workbooks. The skill ratio would have shifted from the intended division of all skills in the workbooks to a subjective division based solely on the researchers´ opinion of what production and interaction skills the listening, reading and extra tasks involved. This could have led to a misrepresentation of the skill ratio and task-type ratio. This was done to ensure the results´ validity (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 166-167).

3.5. Ethical considerations

There are a few ethical aspects that were brought under consideration during this study. The first aspect relates to the importance of not having a relation to the publishers, publishing houses or individuals working with them in any capacity (Vetenskapsrådet, 2017, p. 52). Secondly, a study

conducted without payment from the publishing houses makes it possible to secure an unpartisan and independent manner (p. 69). Conducting the study, while being transparent about where the origin of the source material was another consideration. Making sure to reference the previous research that was used to build the foundation for this study was also an important aspect of this study (p. 65). The use of commercial products in a study could lead to consequences for the publishing house. This was considered while conducting the study (p. 25). Ethical considerations such as permission from teachers, students, or information to study participants and anonymization of records were not pertinent for this study.

The publishers and their legal rights concerning their property was also considered. An email was sent to both publishers with the request to display one task from their workbooks in this study in order to show an example of what it could look like. Permission was granted from both publishing houses. Another consideration was the fact that the pictures in the task-books did not always belong to the publishers, and so caution was used concerning pictures from the task-books before using them (SFS 1960:729).

4. Results

4.1. Description of material

This section begins with a brief summary of both workbooks to demonstrate the overall design of each workbook and show the division of task skills. The chapter will be structured according to the two research questions of the study. The first part presents the production and interaction skills found in the workbooks. The second shows the findings concerning task-types in both workbooks. Each subsection also includes the grammar and vocabulary tasks found in the two workbooks. The workbooks will from this point on be referred to as *Sparks* and *Wings* respectively, in the text.

4.2. Production and Interaction skills

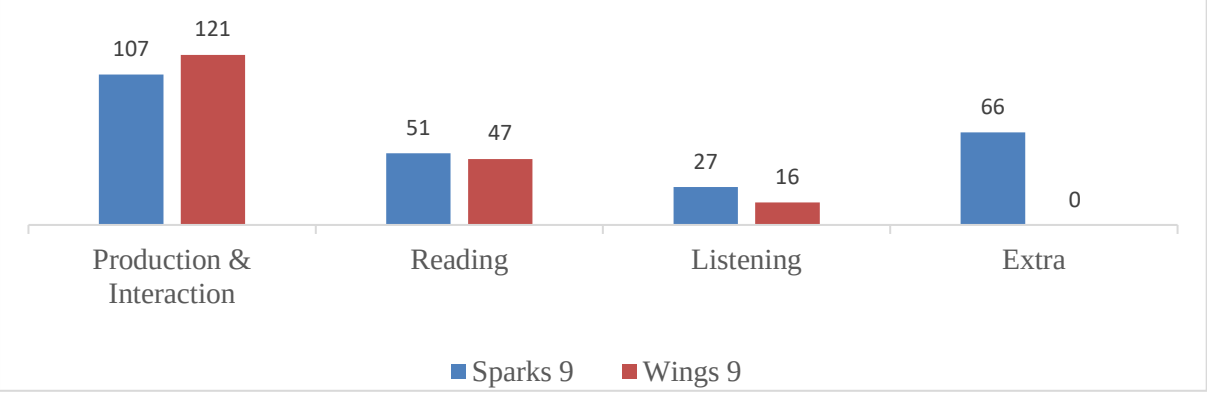

Table 2. Comparison and categorization of all tasks found in Sparks 9 and Wings 9

Table 2 has divided every single task found in both workbooks into 4 different categories. The first one, production and interaction (writing, speaking, discussing) contains the tasks that the rest of this chapter will focus on. The rest of the categories are simply there for transparency and to provide the reader with a view of the tasks that were not used to answer the research questions in this study. The tasks that were not used in this study are: reading, listening and extra tasks. These tasks were not used because the study´s focus was production and interaction tasks. They are however shown in this first table to give the reader a complete picture of all the tasks found in each workbook.

Production and interaction tasks in both workbooks show a difference in skill divide as *Sparks* had 107 tasks and *Wings* had 121 tasks. This category was the largest out of all categories and suggest that the focus skills in both workbooks are production and interaction skills. The amount in both workbooks also suggests that *Wings* focuses more on production and interaction skills than *Sparks*.

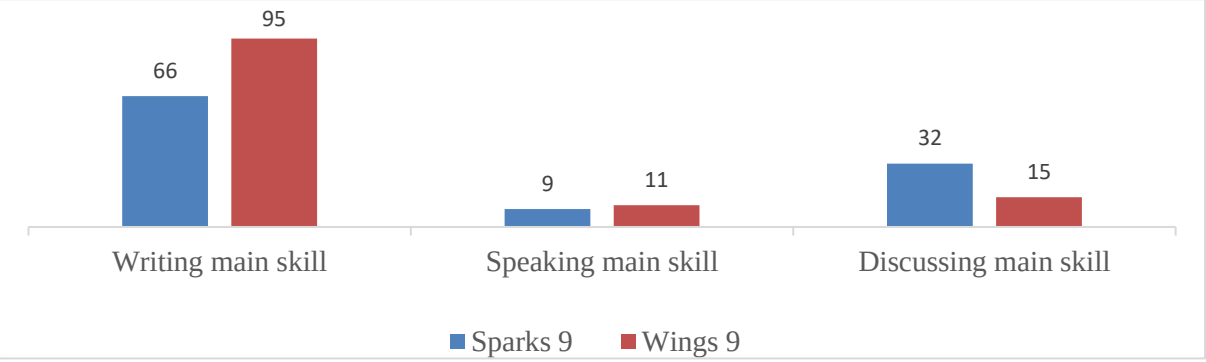

Table 3. Main skill in tasks found in Sparks 9 and Wings 9

Table 3 presents the main skill in the production and interaction tasks. Since tasks could have one or multiple skills embedded, this table will present the main skill found in each task and how many of each category that was found. *Sparks* had 66 tasks with *writing* as a main skill, which is lower than *Wings* with 95 tasks. *Speaking* as a main skill was low on both sides with 9 in *Sparks* and 11 in *Wings*. As for *discussing* as a main skill *Sparks* had more than double the amount with 32 in that category and *Wings* had only 15. An example of a *discussion* task from *Sparks* can be found in appendix 1.

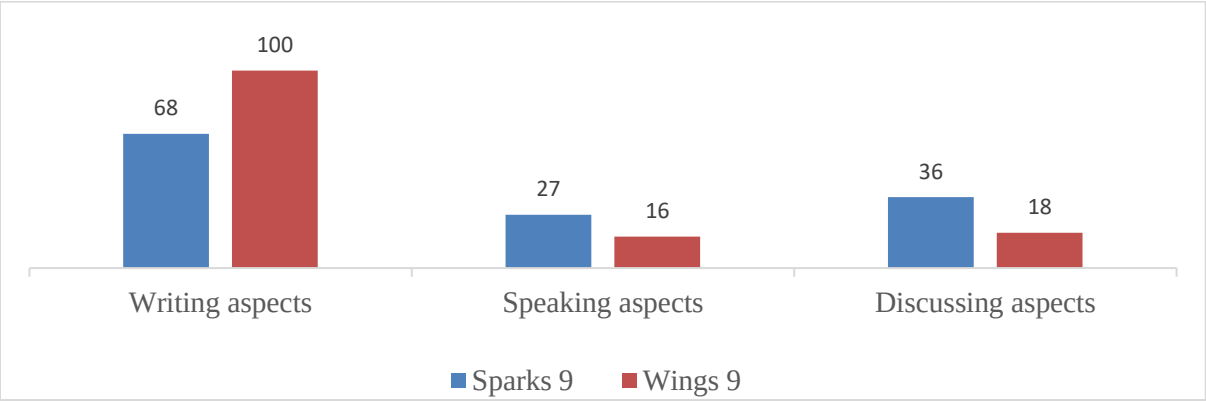

Table 4. Comparative view of skill aspects in production and interaction tasks

Table 4 displays the production and interaction tasks within both workbooks and divides them into three categories. The previous table showed that *Sparks* had 107 production and interaction tasks and *Wings* had 121 production and interaction tasks. The categories in this table show how many tasks in each workbook contained elements of *writing*, *speaking* and *discussing*. This means that the tasks could include other skills, but this table simply shows how many tasks involved *writing*, *speaking* or *discussing* skills. For further information on the amount of production and interaction skills each task contained see table 5. *Sparks* had 68 tasks with elements of *writing* in them. *Wings* had 100 tasks with aspects of *writing* in them. This shows a significant difference with *Wings* including 32 more tasks that involved *writing*. An example of a *writing* task from *Wings* can be found in appendix 1.

Speaking skills shows the opposite results as *Sparks* had 27 tasks that involved *speaking* and *Wings* only had 16, which is a difference of 11 tasks which contained *speaking* aspects. As for *discussion* aspects in both workbooks there was a clear difference found here as well. *Sparks* had 36 and *Wings* had 18, which is a 50-percetile difference in tasks that contained elements of *discussion*.

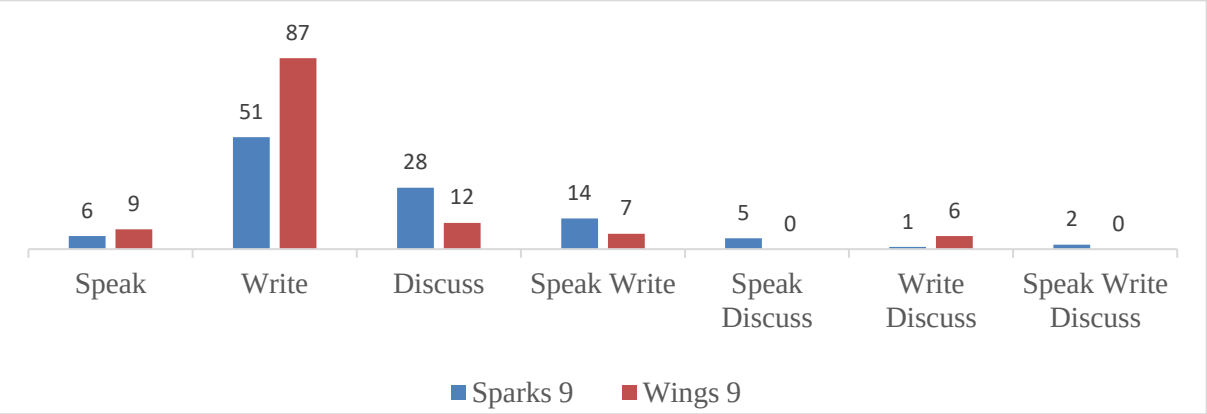

Table 5. Comparison of the distribution of writing, speaking and discussing in tasks

Table 5 shows every *production and interaction task* found in both workbooks and what skills were included in each task. The categories in the table range from a single skill up to 3 skills. *Speaking only* tasks were few in both workbooks with 6 found in *Sparks* and 9 found in *Wings*. *Writing only* tasks show a clearer divide with *Sparks* having 51 tasks and *Wings* showing 87 tasks. This is a 40 percent difference in writing only tasks. *Discussion* tasks show a clear difference as well. *Sparks* has 28 tasks which is more than double the amount compared to *Wings* with 12 tasks. The combination of *speaking and writing* tasks show the same difference with *Sparks* having 14 such tasks and *Wings* having half that amount with 7 tasks showing that combination. An interesting find is the category of *speaking and discussing* with 5 such tasks found in *Sparks* but none in *Wings*. The combination of *writing and discussing* is almost the opposite with only 1 such combination found in *Sparks* and 6 found in *Wings*. The triple combination category with *writing, speaking and discussing* were very few with only 2 found in *Sparks* and none in *Wings*.

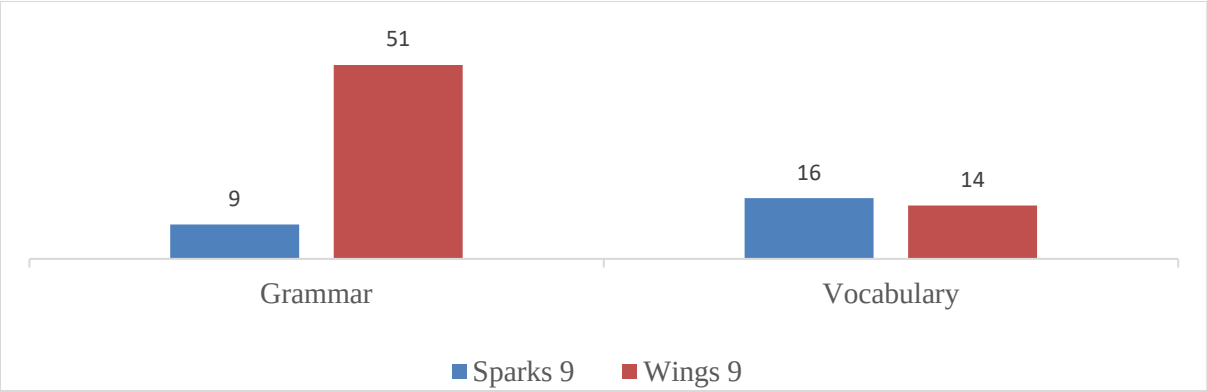

Table 6. comparing grammar and vocabulary distribution in workbooks

Table 6 displays an overview of the amount of *grammar* and *vocabulary* tasks in both workbooks. *Spark*s had only 9 *grammar* tasks which is a very low amount compared to *Wings* with 51 *grammar* tasks. This is a difference of 42 tasks. The amount of *vocabulary* tasks found in both workbooks is more compatible with *Sparks* having 16 tasks and *Wings* having 14 tasks. The *grammar* and *vocabulary* tasks will be further dissected in later tables.

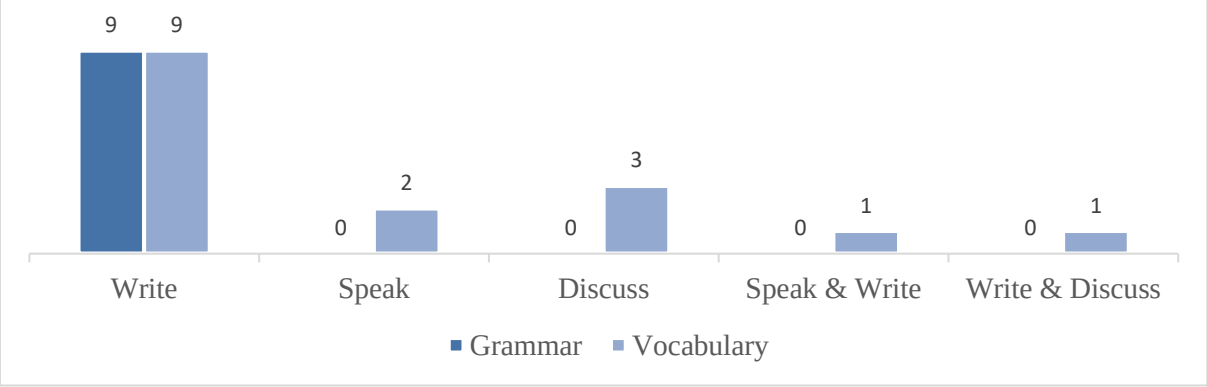

Table 7. Skill distribution in grammar and vocabulary tasks in Sparks 9

Table 7 shows the production and interaction skills involved in the *grammar* and *vocabulary* tasks found in *Sparks*. All 9 *grammar* tasks found in *Sparks* were *writing only* tasks. The *vocabulary* tasks were more evenly distributed with 2 *speaking only* tasks, 3 *discussing only* tasks. There was only 1 *speaking and writing* task and 1 *writing and discussing* task.

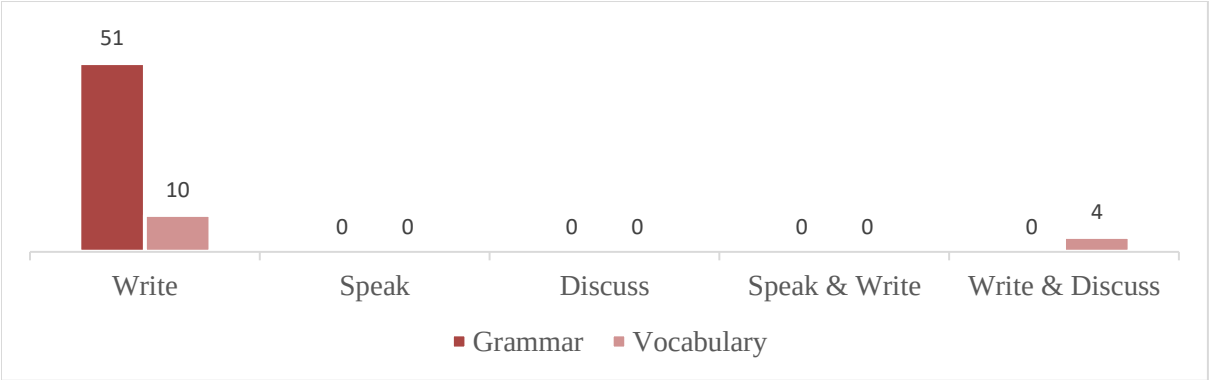

Table 8. Skill distribution in grammar and vocabulary tasks in Wings 9

Table 8 displays the production and interaction skills found in the *grammar* and *vocabulary* tasks found in *Wings*. There is a clear difference that can be seen when comparing with the previous table. While *Sparks* had less *grammar* tasks, it had both more *vocabulary* tasks and tasks that included other skills than *writing*. *Wings* has 51 *grammar* tasks in total and all those tasks were *writing only* tasks. The *vocabulary* tasks were divided into two categories only, with 10 of them being *writing only* and 4 were *writing and discussing* tasks.

Summary

The number of total tasks in both workbooks was similar. The results show that both workbooks focused on production and interaction tasks as it was the largest category in both workbooks. *Wings* had an 8 percent higher amount of production and interaction tasks, while *Sparks* had higher amounts of tasks in reception (reading, listening skills). This meant that *Sparks* had a more equal divide between the *4 skills* when it came to tasks and *Wings* had a more prominent focus on production and interaction skills. Both workbooks focused mainly on *writing* skills. Both workbooks had a low focus on speaking skills. *Wings* had a substantially larger amount of *grammar* tasks compared to *Sparks*. Both workbooks had a low number of tasks that included all 3 production and interaction skills.

4.3. Task-types in production and interaction

This section presents the found task-types in both workbooks. The tables display each workbook separately in two categories. The first is task-types in each workbook and the second is task-types in grammar and vocabulary tasks in each workbook. This was done in order to display the substantial amount of data and categories in a comprehensible way.

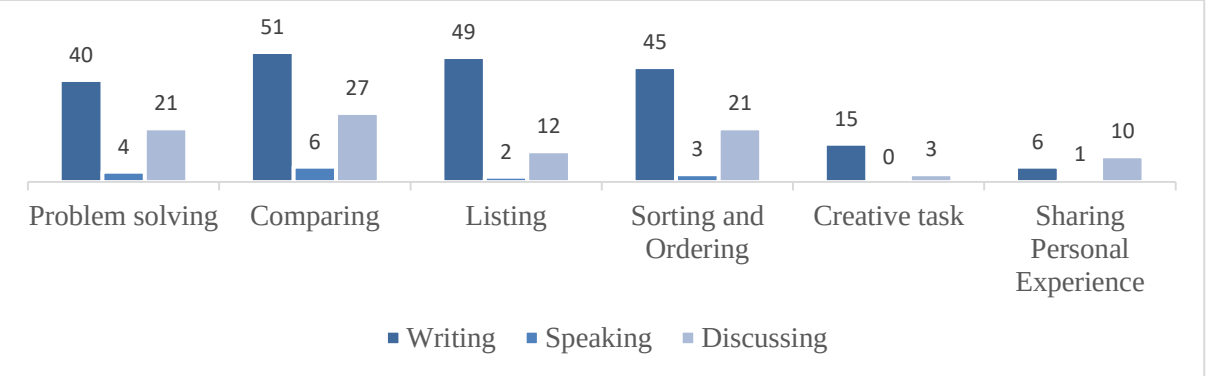

Table 9. Distribution of task-types in Sparks 9

Table 9 displays the *task-types* found in tasks in which the tasks have a main skill in either *writing*, *speaking* or *discussing* in *Sparks*. *Problem- solving* was found in 40 writing tasks, 4 *speaking* tasks and 21 *discussion* tasks. *Comparing* was found 51 times in *writing* tasks, only 6 times in *speaking* tasks and 27 times in *discussion* tasks. *Listing task-types* were also ample in *writing* tasks but lesser so in *speaking* tasks with only 6 and a more moderate amount in *discussion* tasks with 12 found. *Sorting and ordering* was also high in *writing* tasks and again low in *speaking* tasks with 3 only and a moderate amount in *discussion* tasks with 21. *Creative tasks* were lower with 15 in *writing* tasks, none in *speaking* and only 3 in *discussion* tasks. *Sharing personal experience* was also on the lower side with only 6 in *writing* and 1 in *speaking*, the highest amount found was in *discussion* tasks with 10 tasks.

The most common formations of *task-types* found in *writing* was *comparing + listing +sorting and ordering* with 45 times and *comparing + listing + problem-solving + listing* with 40 times. The most common formation of *task-types* in *speaking* was *comparing + problems solving* with 4 times and *comparing + problem solving + sorting and ordering* with 3 times.

The most common formation of *task-types* in *discussing* tasks was *comparing + problem solving + sorting and ordering* with 21 times and *comparing + problem solving + sorting and ordering + listing* with 12 times.

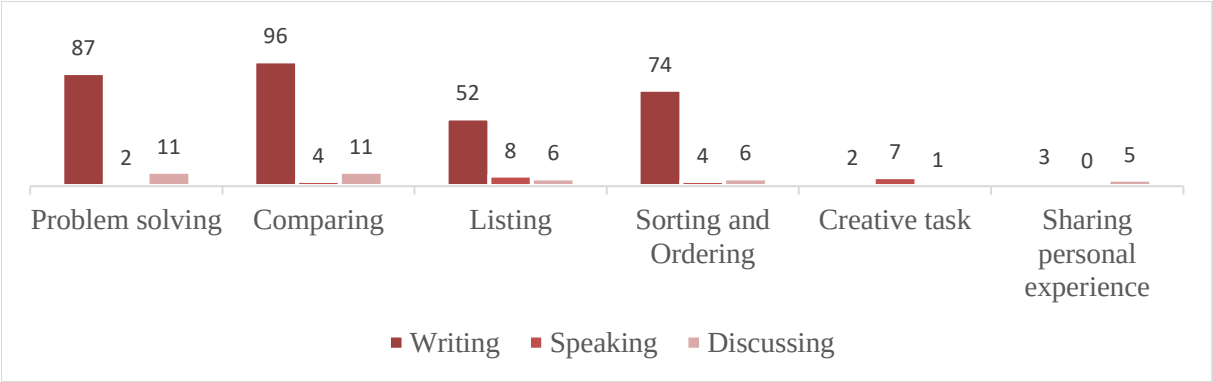

Table 10. Distribution of task-types in Wings 9

Table 10 displays the *task-types* found in tasks in which the tasks have a main skill in either *writing*, *speaking* or *discussing* in *Wings*. *Problem solving* yielded 87 instances in *writing* while *speaking* only had two instances and *discussion* had 11 occurrences. *Comparing* was in similar ratio as the previous *task-type* with 96 in *writing*, but 4 only in *speaking* and 11 in *discussing*. *Listing* was a little lower overall with 52 found in *writing*, and only 8 in *speaking* and 6 in *discussing*. *Sorting and ordering* had 74 in *writing*, only 4 in *speaking* and 6 in *discussing*. *Creative tasks* were very low compared to the rest with only 1 in *writing* and 7 in *speaking*, in discussing a total of 5 were found. *Sharing personal experience* was also low in writing with only 3 and none in *speaking*. Meanwhile there were 5 in *discussing*.

The most common *task-type* formations found in *writing* were *comparing + problem solving + sorting and ordering* which were found 74 times and *comparing + problem solving + listing+ sorting and ordering* which were found 52 times.

The most common *task-type* formations found in *speaking* were *comparing + creative task* which were found 7 times and *comparing +listing+ sorting and ordering + creative task* which were found 4 times. The most common *task-type* formations found in *discussing* were *comparing + problem solving* with 11 times and *comparing + problem solving + listing + sorting and ordering* with 6 times.

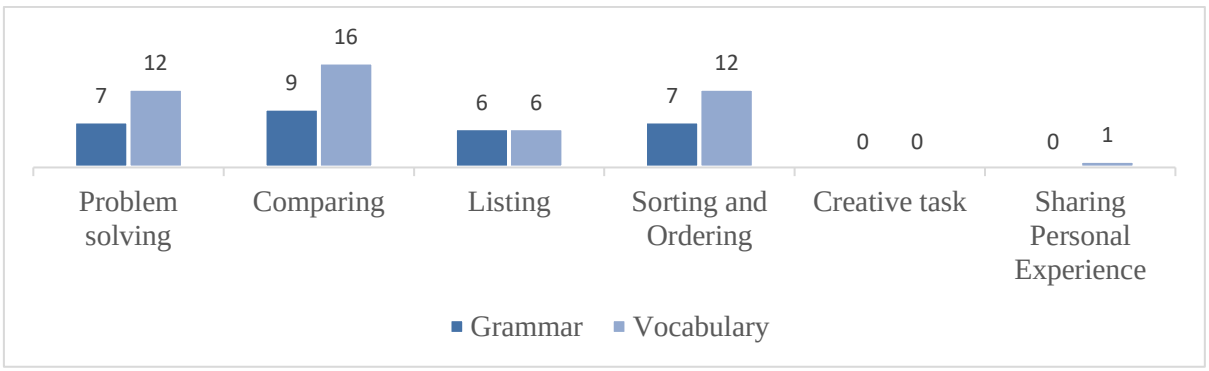

Table 11. Distribution of task-types in grammar and vocabulary tasks in Sparks 9

Table 11 displays the *grammar* and *vocabulary* tasks and what task-types they belong to in *Sparks*. The reader should note that the total amount of *grammar* task found in *Sparks* is 9 and 16 in *vocabulary* (see table 6).

Problem solving had 7 in *grammar* but almost double that amount in *vocabulary* with 12. *Comparing* had only nine in *grammar* compared to 16 in *vocabulary*. *Listing* had an equal amount in both *grammar* and *vocabulary* with 6 instances. *Sorting and ordering* had 7 in *grammar* and 12 in *vocabulary*. There were no *creative tasks* in either category. Only 1 in *sharing personal experience* was found and it belonged in *vocabulary*.

The most common task-type formations in *grammar* were *comparing +sorting and ordering + problem solving* with 7 times and *comparing + sorting and ordering +problem solving + listing* with 6 times. The most common *task- type* formations in *vocabulary* were *comparing + sorting + problem solving* with 12 times and *comparing + sorting and ordering + problem solving + listing* with 6 times.

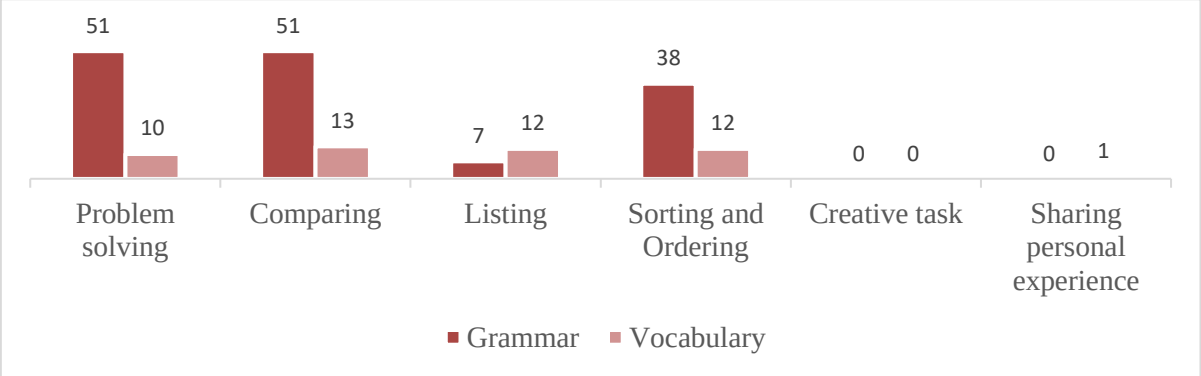

Table 12. Distribution task-types in grammar and vocabulary tasks in Wings 9

Table 12 shows the *grammar* and *vocabulary* tasks found, and what task-types they belong to in *Wings*. The reader should notice that the total amount of *grammar* tasks found in *Wings* is 51 and 14 in vocabulary (see table 6). *Problem solving* had 51 occurrences in *grammar* which means that every single *grammar* task in *Wings* had *problem solving*. In *vocabulary*, there were 10 instances found which is more than half of all the *vocabulary* tasks found in the workbook. *Comparing* yielded 51 instances as well in *grammar* and almost all *vocabulary* tasks with 13 times. *Listing* had only 7 in *grammar* and 12 in *vocabulary*. *Sorting and ordering* is on the high end as well with 38 in *grammar* and 12 in *vocabulary*. *Creative tasks* were not found in *Wings grammar* and *vocabulary* tasks either and like *Sparks* there was only one *sharing personal experience* found, which belonged in *vocabulary*.

The most common *task-type* formations in *grammar* were *comparing + problem solving* with 51 times and *comparing + problem solving + sorting and ordering* with 38 times. The most common task-type formations in vocabulary were *comparing + sorting and ordering +listing* with 12 times and *comparing + sorting and ordering + listing + problem solving* with 10 times. The most common task-types in general in *grammar* were *comparing* with 51 times, *problem solving* with 51 times as well and *sorting and ordering* with 38 times. The most common *task- types* in general in *vocabulary* were *comparing* with 13 times, *sorting and ordering* with 12 times and *listing* with 12 times as well.

Summary

Problem solving, *comparing*, *sorting* and *ordering* and *listing task-types* were found in almost all production and interaction tasks. *Sparks* had a more even spread across all *task-types* when divided into *writing*, *speaking* and *discussing*. *Sparks* also had the highest ratios of *discussion* tasks in all six task-types. *Wings* had most of its tasks in the *writing* categories of task-types: *problem solving*, *comparing*, *sorting* and *ordering* and *listing*. There was almost no *creative tas*k or *sharing personal experience* task-types found in either workbook, but *Sparks* had a higher ratio in comparison to *Wings* in those categories.

5. Discussion

This section is divided into two parts in order to answer the research questions. The first section discusses the skills found in the production and interaction tasks in both workbooks. The second section discusses the task-types found and what production and interaction skills they correlated to from both workbooks. Both sections are also discussed in relation to relevant literature and earlier research. There will also be a brief section discussing methods used, implications for teaching and learning and future research at the end of this chapter.

5.1. Production and interaction skills

Writing skills

Both workbooks had their main focus on *writing* skills in tasks, but *Wings* had a much larger ratio in all categories that included *writing* skills (see tables 3-5). It must be mentioned that half of the writing tasks in Wings were *grammar* tasks. This shifts the perspective to focus on form and task repetition. Hinkel (2006) mentions a need for a foundation in spelling, vocabulary, grammar and syntax for writing proficiency (p. 125). Which is then expanded on by task repetition of tasks that have similar structure, that then can trigger the cognitive skills further (Bygate, 2018, p.2). This would also be in line with Skehan´s (2003) opinion on the importance of focus on form in tasks (p.393). The rest of the *writing* tasks in both workbooks could perhaps be because *writing* skills are necessary in order to gain a more rounded communicative competence through task repetition.

The number of *vocabulary* tasks were low in both workbooks but that might not indicate anything other than the fact that the accompanying textbooks already focus on that aspect.

Discussion skills

Discussion skills made up the tasks with the second highest amount in both workbooks, but Sparks had a slightly higher ratio in most of the categories. That includes tasks with discussion aspects, *discussion only* and *discussion as a main skill*. The reasoning behind a high ratio of *discussion* tasks could possibly be the importance of negotiating meaning since discussion is a form of negotiation. There need to be opportunities in order to supply input and produce modified output (Shehadeh, 2005, p. 21). The exchange of information and modification supplies both a more understandable interaction and development in language competences (Long, 1983, 1996, as cited in Shehadeh, 2005, p. 21).

Speaking skills

Both workbooks had *speaking* as the lowest production and interaction skill found. The workbooks however, differed in some respects. *Wings* had a higher ratio in *speaking only* tasks and speaking as a *main skill* in tasks (see tables 3, 5). *Sparks* on the other hand had higher ratios in tasks with *speaking aspects* in them (see table 4). This suggests that *Wings* had less production and interaction skill integration. This is interesting as it contrasts with Hinkel´s (2006) argument that skill integration occurs in real communication (p.113). This is, in turn is linked to the focus of communicative approaches being reality-based communication (Richards & Rodgers. 2014, p. 95).

Tasks that combined *speaking and writing* had the highest ratio of all tasks that had a production and interaction skill *combination*. This was true for both workbooks. This meant that other combinations were lower by a substantial rate. A possible factor could be what Hidalgo & Garcia Mayo (2019) mention: that tasks that have both an oral and written component create opportunities to work on both focus on *form* and developing new knowledge (p.581).

5.2. Task-types

Most of all tasks in *writing*, *speaking* and *discussing* in both workbooks had *comparing*, *problem solving*, *listing*, and *sorting and ordering* task-types (compare table 3 with 9-10). This is an interesting find for several reasons. If we compare Hidalgo & Garcia Mayo´s (2019) study with this one, we might find a possible implication. In Hidalgo & Garcia Mayo's study (2019) students that did the same task-type but with different content had better results in language related episodes (p. 573). A repetition of task-types in tasks could be beneficial for language learning. As to how deliberate the task designs are in the workbooks, there is no evidence available to draw a proper conclusion from.

Another possible reason for these findings is a correlation to high cognitive skill processes in the tasks. This finding could be related to simple or complex processing, meaning, the more complex tasks are the more cognitive processing is needed (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p.187). This would translate into more *task-types* in a task, as they are formed after cognitive skills (Willis, 1998, as cited in Willis & Edwards, 2005, p. 4). Lest we forget that practice is key in order to achieve automatic processes of skill learning (Richards & Rodgers, 2014, p. 26-27). Park (2021) mentions that task design is important since it indicates that *structured* tasks involved more meaning negotiation and more fluency production (p.3). Ellis (2020) also places importance of task construction as more complex tasks involve abstractions (p. 17-18). There is a case to be argued for the large amount of *comparing*, *problem solving*, *listing*, and *sorting and ordering* task-types. If we use the definition of *structured* vs. *unstructured* tasks from Park´s (2021) study which was whether a task had a clear solution and a concrete answer (structured) or not (unstructured) (p.8). We might see the reason for the low amount of the remaining *task-types*, namely *creative tasks* and *sharing personal experience* in both workbooks. It would make sense that these task-types are more focused on *meaning* and do not usually have a clear solution. This would then feasibly mean that the tasks in both workbooks were mostly *structured* and involved many cognitive processes. Another reason for the low number of *creative tasks* and *sharing personal experience* is possibly the syllabus, as there is no mention of either *creativity* or *sharing personal experience* in the core content for production and interaction. The knowledge requirements for the higher grades for 9th grade English do however mention *personal experience* once, but not *creativity* (Skolverket, 2018, p. 37, 40). If a workbook is set after the standards of the syllabus as stated in (SOU, 1975, p. 216), there could be a correlation to low ratios of certain *task-types* if they are not required when designing tasks in teaching material.

As for task-types in *grammar* and *vocabulary* tasks the same pattern as above followed as: *comparing*, *sorting and ordering*, *problem solving*, and *listing* were again the most common *task-types* in *grammar* and *vocabulary* tasks. The reasoning behind these similarities would be in concurrence with the reasons stated for production and interaction tasks in general. There were no *creative tasks* found, and only 1 *sharing personal experience* task in each workbook. Ultimately it makes sense that they would be low in *grammar* and *vocabulary*, as the tasks focus are on *form* (bottom-up skills) and not *meaning* (Hinkel, 2006, p.125).

Method discussion

The quantitative method was mostly suited for the study however the matter of dividing tasks into skills landed in part, on the researcher. There will always be questions connected to the validity and reliability of scientific studies when decisions based on subjective opinion are made (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 290-291). The understanding that human subjectivity can still happen even when the need to keep objectivity at the forefront is recognized (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 164). The second issue was that the research questions proved to be too extensive to fit the scope and time constraint (Stukát, 2011, p. 62-63). This study originally had a third research question concerning the correlation between tasks in workbooks and the syllabus concerning production and interaction. It was removed as it proved to be far too extensive to include in the study (Holme & Solvang, 1997, p. 37). The results found in this study needed more space to be thoroughly examined by a comparative lens. As such, the suggestion would be to either conduct a larger scaled study or to conduct a study with a narrower focus of *tasks*, *task-types* and *skills*, if this study is to be replicated.

Implications for teaching and learning

Tasks involve more than just goals to achieve in an educational environment. The awareness of the importance of task construction and design could potentially be of great help to both teachers and students as one could implement task adaptation and workbook selectivity to cater to specific needs with a more defined focus. It could possibly also lead to realization of a possible absence of certain task-types which in turn might be beneficial, if only to answer the question, are there task-types that are more beneficial than other types.

Future research

In communicative language approaches there is not often an explicit focus on form, and yet a third of the core content in the syllabus for production and interaction contains a focus on linguistic strategies and phenomena. As such, comparative research on syllabus correlation to task design would be interesting for future research. Another aspect to consider for the future is the small number of task-types consisting of creative tasks and sharing personal experience. Case studies with students' responses and results to certain task-types could be beneficial for both students and teachers but also for those in the field of task-design. Lastly, the proportionally low focus in the workbooks on speaking skills overall indicates an issue that might need more attention. Can tasks that are done with little or no assistance from the teacher, help develop oral communication skills at a reasonable level?

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Appendix 1

An example of an extra task from the Sparks 9 workbook

An example of a discussion task from the Sparks 9 workbook

SPEAK OUT: WHICH JOB?

The travel agent mentioned a number of holidays and that will require people. Discuss the following jobs with your classmates.

1. What kind of work would be required?
2. Rank them according to how much you would like to do them.

- Safari camp manager in Kenya: Looking after tourists staying in huts just outside the national park.
- Hotel receptionist in Kenya: Working in a 4-star hotel on the Kenyan coast.
- Ornithologist in Kenya: Studying storks and other migratory birds and protecting their habitat.
- Music festival organiser in South Africa: Organising concerts for both locals and tourists.
- Shark and whale boat captain in South Africa: Taking tourists for boat rides to see great white sharks and whales off the coast of South Africa.
- Hot air balloon pilot in Tanzania: Flying tourists over migrating wildebeest in the Serengeti National Park.

An example of a writing task from the Wings 9 workbook

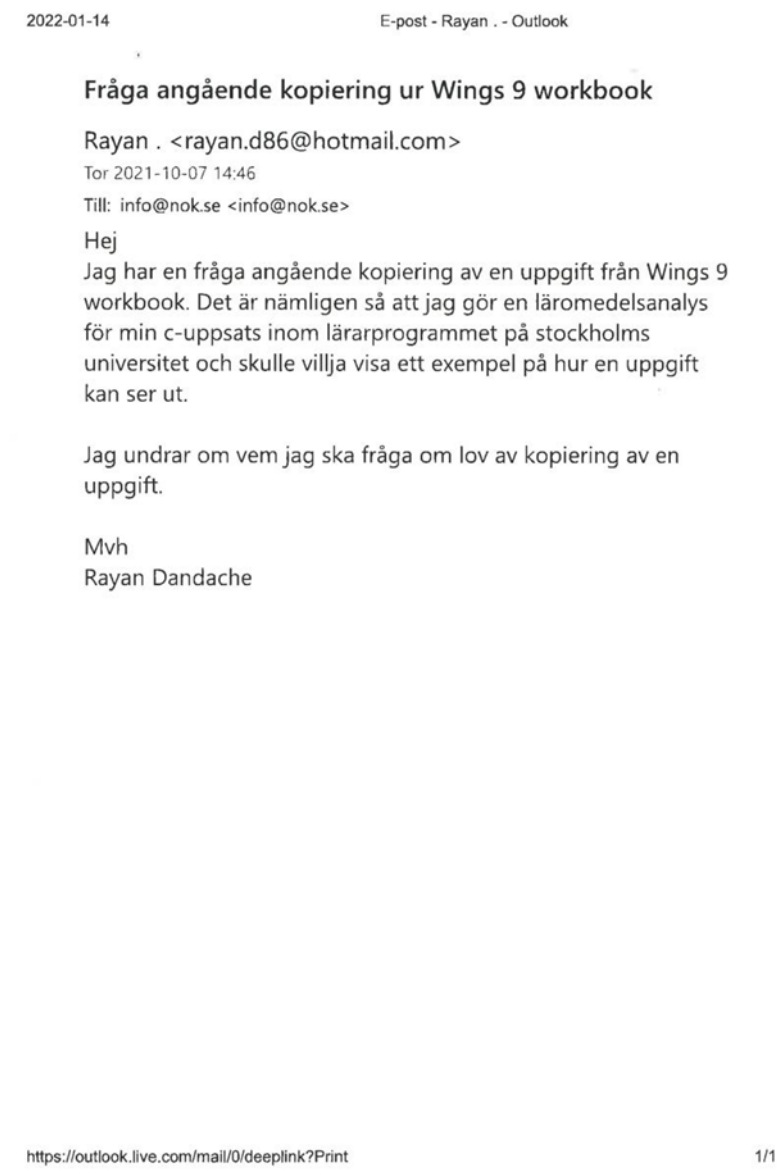
32 A project

Work alone or in pairs or small groups. If you work in pairs or in a group, each person can concentrate on one part of the project. You can choose between these topics. Research your topic thoroughly and present your work as an essay or as a feature article.

- The United Nations (history and purpose)
- The end of the British Empire (1945–1997, colonies and timeline)
- Nigeria (20th century history and culture)
- Kenya (Religion and the school system)
- Syria (Bahsar al-Assad and his time as President of Syria)
- Rwanda (Volcanoes National Park)

Appendix 2

An example of the permission request sent per email to the publishing houses



2022-01-14 E-post - Rayan . - Outlook

Fråga angående kopiering ur Wings 9 workbook

Rayan . <rayan.d86@hotmail.com>
Tor 2021-10-07 14:46
Till: info@nok.se <info@nok.se>

Hej
Jag har en fråga angående kopiering av en uppgift från Wings 9 workbook. Det är nämligen så att jag gör en läromedelsanalys för min c-uppsats inom lärarprogrammet på stockholms universitet och skulle villja visa ett exempel på hur en uppgift kan ser ut.

Jag undrar om vem jag ska fråga om lov av kopiering av en uppgift.

Mvh
Rayan Dandache

https://outlook.live.com/mail/0/deeplink?Print 1/1

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