Abstract

Borgström, Eric, eric.borgstrom@oru.se, Ph.D Student, Dept. of Swedish Language, School of Humanities, Education and Social Sciences, Örebro University, Sweden: “Writing tests: On norms and text structure in Swedish national writing tests in upper secondary school”. Språk och stil 20, 2010, pp. 132–164.

The focus of this article is the national writing tests administered in Swedish upper secondary schools. One important role of these tests is to serve as an interpretation and concretization of the curriculum. The aim of this article is therefore to examine the textual consequences of the test situation. The article takes a critical stance towards the test construction. The instructions say that when assessing the pupils’ writing abilities, the teacher is to judge to what extent the pupils’ texts could function in the fictitious situation and genre specified in the writing task. I argue that the pupils’ texts should be understood as actions situated in a test context. Through an analysis of linear and hierarchical global text structure in pupils’ texts, I show how the writing task regularizes what is historically institutionalized as a good text in the test situation: namely the expository essay.

Keywords: school writing, writing assessment, writing ability, genre, text structure, Swedish.