

# **Metaphorical comprehension in grade 8 English language learners from one town in Norway**

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## Abstract

This investigation lies in the field of linguistics, more specifically the theory of second language acquisition. Most areas of research executed in metaphorical comprehension in the English language either focus on young children, college learners or adults. As a result there is little research done that focus in the area of English language learners at lower secondary level. Previous research in Norway has placed focus on metaphorical comprehension of “foreign” language learners in the Norwegian language targeting immigrants from different minority ethnic groups.

The aim of this investigation is to determine to which extent English language learners in Norway understand the metaphorical expressions they encounter in their English textbooks. The theoretical background for this investigation is Lakoff’s Conceptual Metaphor Theory and findings from previous research which indicate the existence of factors that influence metaphorical comprehension among language learners. Based on these assumptions the factors chosen to explore were linguistic structures, Norwegian correspondent expressions, the role of semantic transparency, and the presence of literal distracters as alternatives. The research methodology chosen is a hypothetical deductive approach based on quantitative method. The design is a multiple choice exercise based on the linguistic metaphors found in English textbooks from grade eight and the correct answers given by the 230 respondents who participated in the investigation. The following hypothesis was formulated:

H: Metaphorical expressions in English with complicated structures that are opaque and non-decomposable will be more difficult for English language learners to understand.

The results confirm the hypothesis. The findings indicate English language learners understand metaphorical expressions that are used most frequently, have identical or very similar Norwegian correspondents, have simple structures and are decomposable. The presence of literal distracters impedes metaphorical comprehension only when respondents are unsure of the metaphorical meaning. When respondents do not understand an expression this most likely occurs due to factors other than the presence of a literal distracter.

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## Norsk sammendrag

Denne studien hører innunder den forskningsdisiplinen som kalles for andrespråksforskning. De fleste undersøkelser utført innen metaforisk forståelse i engelsk, fokuserer enten på barn, høyskolestudenter eller voksne. Som et resultat av dette, er det lite informasjon innen feltet på elever i ungdomsskolen. Tidligere forskning i Norge har lagt fokus på utenlandske minoritesgrupper.

Målet med denne forskningen er å kartlegge til hvilken grad norske ungdomsskoleelever forstår de metaforiske uttrykkene som står i lærebøkene deres. Forstår elevene metaforene som står i engelskbøkene sine? (Hvilke faktorer påvirker metaforisk forståelse?) Den teoretiske bakgrunnen er basert på metaforsynet til Lakoff og tidligere forskning utført innen feltet av metaforforståelse for barn. Tidligere forskning viser at det er noen faktorer som påvirker forståelse av metaforer. Med utgangspunkt i dette har jeg valgt faktorer som frasestruktur, norske korrespondente uttrykk, gjennomsiktighetsgrad og bruk av den bokstavelige betydningen blant svaralternativene.

Metodologien som er brukt er hypotetiskdeduktiv metode basert på kvantitativ undersøkelse. Fremgangsmåten som har valgt er en flervalgsoppgave som består av metaforiske uttrykk fra elevens tekstbøker i engelsk for 8. trinn og de svarene som 230 ungdomsskoleelever har gitt er lagt til grunn. Hypotesen er formulert slik:

H: Metaforiske uttrykk i engelsk med kompleks struktur, som ikke er gjennomsiktig og ikke kan brytes ned vil være vanskeligere å forstå for andrespråkslever.

Resultatet bekrefter hypotesen. Forskningen viser at andrespråkslever i engelsk forstår de mest vanlige metaforiske uttrykkene, de som har identisk eller tilnærmet like norske korrespondente uttrykk, og de som er gjennomsiktige og kan brytes ned. I tillegg så viser forskningen at svaralternativer som tar i bruk den bokstavelige betydningen av et uttrykk ikke forstyrrer/påvirker metaforisk forståelse. Det er bare når eleven er usikker på det metaforiske uttrykket at det forstyrrer/påvirker. I de tilfeller hvor eleven ikke kjenner til uttrykket forstyrrer/påvirker ikke det alternativet som tar i bruk den bokstavelige betydningen.

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## Preface

Surviving this thesis has been a major challenge. Before embarking on this journey I had no previous experience in academic writing. It has been a slow process but the end is in sight. To begin with, I would like to thank all the teachers in the Masters program ‘Culture and Language teaching’, 2006-2008. These teachers have provided me with the foundation needed to embark on this project. First, I would like to thank Anne-Line for guiding me in the right direction during the pilot study. Second, I would like to thank Thomas for his help with linguistic structures during the pilot study. I would also like to thank my adviser Susan not only for sharing her knowledge of metaphor but also for sharing her valuable time with me. In addition, I would also like to thank Elin for not only providing me with an increasing awareness of the importance of objectivity but having also indirectly taught me how to write. A special thanks to Gerd for her advice concerning quantitative analysis and to Bjarte Rom for his assistance with chi square analysis.

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# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Motivation

My initial reason for wanting to study basic metaphor is that native speakers of a language use metaphorical expressions every day without realizing it. Use of metaphor is so common, unconscious and automatic that it goes typically unnoticed. I was under the impression that metaphor is a special type of complex language “riddled” with symbolism and hidden meaning, characteristic of poetic language alone, and had never thought about it as ordinary language.

It is suggested that to understand metaphorical expressions in English, foreign language learners are dependent upon previous knowledge and experience as well as a certain level of ability to use the foreign language (Littlemore & Low, 2006, p.5). Previous knowledge refers to the concepts and experiences that learners bring to the task. Lakoff would disagree and maintain that metaphor and thinking are intertwined, inseparable and so basic that all human beings think the same way at a fundamental level and therefore have the capacity to understand metaphor. It would seem that the same abilities that enable one to communicate in one’s native language may be applied and transferred to help one communicate in a foreign language. It is through a conscious awareness of what metaphor is that learners may become fluent in the English language. Without direct and explicit instruction in metaphorical language, learners may not be able to recognize the presence of non-literal language in oral or written text. This study begins as a means to acquire a better understanding of what metaphor is, how it is processed and works as well as which role it plays in our lives. Another motivation is to acquire knowledge which is useful to help foreign language learners better understand and use the English language more efficiently through metaphorical comprehension.

According to Lakoff (1989) basic metaphor is common throughout cultures, therefore it is most likely common throughout all cultures that think and experience life in the same way. In contrast Deignan (2003) claims many metaphorical expressions vary across languages. Both points are valid. Basic metaphor is universal because of embodiment, however, due to different historical backgrounds there may exist particular expressions specific to only one culture that

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may not have a correspondent in another culture. Furthermore not all metaphorical expressions translate identically into other languages. A speaker of many languages will reply that although the same expression may translate into another language into different words, the meaning of the expression will often be the same. This premise refers to basic metaphors that are universal. Littlemore & Low (2006) suggest “learners require a high degree of cultural awareness to understand the extended meanings given by a specific culture to different entities, characteristics, actions, events, places or institutions” (2006, p.91). How important is cultural awareness for foreign language learners in Norway? Are there significant variations between Norwegian, British and/or American cultures to merit a high degree of cultural awareness?

## 1.2 Background

“To succeed in a world where English is used for international interpersonal communication it is necessary to master the English language”. The English Knowledge Promotion of 2006 emphasizes communicative skills and cultural awareness for better communication, understanding and respect between people with different cultural backgrounds. Moreover, to develop cultural awareness requires skills in using vocabulary; idiomatic structures and cultural expressions as a language learning device (see Appendix 1). Learners need to master a vocabulary that covers everyday situations and understand those spoken and written texts where metaphorical expressions occur. It is of particular importance that learners recognize when metaphorical comprehension is required otherwise the “message” provided in the text is overlooked. A cultural expression may be defined as an expression that is culturally specific as for example *I stitched him up like a kipper*. This expression means “to trick someone” and is culturally specific to British culture. To achieve the objectives of any curriculum, one is dependent upon textbooks with specific authentic texts adapted to the level of instruction. Textbooks provide the foundation for the national curriculum, the tool teachers need to focus on the purpose of the curriculum and give an indication of what learners have been exposed to at different levels. As readers progress through the grades, they must meet the demands of a more complex and subtle literature in which more evolved figures of speech begin to appear with increasing frequency. Therefore writers and publishers have a responsibility to ensure textbooks

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are error free, because otherwise the purpose is defeated. For example, in one textbook taken from authentic text the translation for *to rub someone out* is given as “to erase or delete someone”. The actual meaning of the expression is “to murder someone”. When textbooks have mistakes in translating the meaning of words or expressions then learners may acquire incorrect information. Likewise, it is of equal importance that teachers have a general competence in metaphor to help learners acquire a degree of metaphorical competence. Incidental metaphorical instruction through textbooks is not sufficient to develop learners’ that are fluent in the English language.

To gather data for this investigation it is necessary to read the textbooks published for the English Knowledge Promotion of 2006 to determine which linguistic expressions found in the authentic texts provided have the potential to be metaphor. I chose grade eight at lower secondary level as respondents for my research. The curriculum places emphasis on vocabulary, idiomatic structures and cultural expressions therefore it is these areas which are to be explored.

An idiom is an expression composed of a string of two or more words for which meaning is not derived of the individual words comprising the string; (Swinney & Cutler, 1979, p. 523) and the individual words contribute little or nothing to the meaning (Kövecses, 2002, p. 199). This “intended” meaning comes from our general experiential knowledge of the world around us which is embodied in our conceptual system. Idioms are often difficult to identify because they have a variety of different linguistic structures which may include, metaphors (e.g. *hit the road*), pairs of words (e.g. *on and off*), idioms with it (e.g. *live it up*), simile (e.g. *to be like cheese on pizza*), and others (see 2.5). Metaphor operates at the level of thinking where we use the knowledge acquired from bodily experience to talk or write about abstract ideas.

In spoken or written language we can only identify a stretch of language that has the potential to be metaphor. This stretch of language is known as linguistic metaphor. Metaphorical ideas may be expressed linguistically in different ways and are seen to be a matter of thought not merely language where we partially structure one experience in terms of another. Metaphor therefore, may be defined as a conceptual mapping of one conventional concrete image, onto another conventional abstract image and this association activates the conceptual metaphor (see 2.3). Because our thoughts can be expressed in different ways, an awareness of these concepts is essential for communicative skills to enable better communication among foreign language

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learners.

Lakoff (1989) suggests that metaphors are so common they go unnoticed and are a primary tool used for making sense our world and ourselves. As a result metaphor is an important part of our normal everyday thought and language. When a native speaker fails to notice metaphor because they are so common how can it be expected that a foreign language learner recognize metaphorical expressions when little focus is placed on them in the text? Lakoff (1993) suggests that bodily experience is universal and most likely results in basic level metaphors that are widely shared by people in different places. If this is the true then understanding basic level metaphor may not necessarily be dependent upon a degree of cultural awareness and should be understood by everyone. Although some expressions may contain cultural references, those expressions that are universal should be easy for us to understand because their meaning is embodied in our conceptual system.

Learners may require assistance to develop the necessary schema to interpret metaphorical language. Comprehension of metaphorical language is a process that is acquired and developed over time, and enables learners to move away from the literal and into the more complex interpretations of metaphorical language (Gibbs, 1991; Levorato & Cacciari, 1995; Nippold, 1998, 2000). Said metaphorical comprehension is influenced by a learner's schema, meaning previous knowledge and experience. This schema involves not only knowledge of the world and its conventions, but also knowledge about various text structures and knowledge of subject matter (Vosniadou, 1987; McNeil, 1987; Adams & Bruce, 1982; Palmer & Brooks, 2004; Gibbs & Gerrig, 1989). Factors such as a degree of familiarity of cultural values and beliefs that form the context of a metaphorical phrase and the ability to recognize metaphor may play an important role in the interpretation of metaphorical language. In terms of metaphor capacity, older children may have available more automatically accessible contextualized meanings for metaphor and more experience to recognize when metaphorical interpretations are required (Cameron, 1996, p.58). Taking these factors into consideration, I chose the eighth grade of the lower secondary school for my informants because at this level their ability to find meaning in metaphor may be more developed and they have fewer limitations than younger learners (see 2.6).



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### 1.3 The Purpose of the investigation

The purpose of this investigation is to first discover the extent to which English language learners in Norway understand the metaphorical expressions they encounter in their English textbooks, and then explore which factors may influence metaphorical comprehension. Several factors may possibly influence the degree of difficulty of metaphorical expressions. Some factors to be explored are linguistic structure, degree of semantic transparency, presence of Norwegian correspondent expressions and literal distracters. Linguistic structure refers to the form or word class type of expressions such as multi-word verbs, nominal phrases or adjective phrases. Emphasis however is placed on multi-word verbs and remaining expressions are classified as OTHER types of structure. It also refers to the meaning type, either idiomatic or metaphorical. Both idiomatic and metaphorical expressions involve obscure meanings. To avoid confusion, for the purpose of this investigation these types are referred to as *metaphorical meaning* and *metaphorical expressions* respectively.

Semantic transparency is expressed in three different degrees: transparent, semi-transparent and opaque. These categories indicate the degree by which an expression may be broken down into smaller parts to help understand its meaning. A literal distracter is employed when one alternative has the literal meaning as an incorrect option, which may draw attention away from the correct metaphorical alternative. Special attention is placed on which consequence if any use of literal distracters may have on metaphorical comprehension.

The research methodology chosen is a hypothetical deductive approach based on quantitative method. From a Positivist point of view this methodology may be considered the most objective and reliable method because the researcher can study a phenomenon from a distance without getting involved. In addition, this type of method is structured with little flexibility and cannot be altered after the fact. Through quantitative data collection it is possible to acquire a vast amount of data from many respondents and gives the possibility to draw conclusions about what is typical for the object of study. The object of study, in this case, is metaphorical comprehension among eighth grade learners. Data collection (as well as analysis and reporting) is aimed at uncovering an emic perspective. In other words, this study focuses on research perspectives and interpretations of learner results. This method is employed to obtain a

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representative set of empirical data in which to measure the different variables with precision through numbers. With the aid of statistical analysis it is possible to investigate “relationships” between the phenomena that may occur (see 3.5). Not only does it give certain and documented knowledge, but statistical significance can be achieved if the data has representative samples (Johannessen, Tufte, & Kristoffersen, 2005, pp. 311-315). Another motivation is to be able to test several theories such as the Lakoff theory of the universality of metaphor, the theory related to the complexity of linguistic input, and metaphorical interference through the use of literal distracters as alternatives.

My position is that basic metaphor is universal as many expressions have correspondents in other languages and as a result with the assistance of language transference these basic metaphors are easy to understand. Furthermore because basic metaphor is universal situational context plays an insignificant role in metaphorical comprehension. Finally literal distracters only impede metaphorical comprehension when one does not know the metaphorical meaning of an expression.

The objective is to interpret the typical level of metaphorical competence that exists among eighth graders in lower secondary school and to explore which factors may influence metaphorical comprehension. The data to be collected is from a multiple choice exercise based on the linguistic metaphors found in English textbooks from grade eight and the answers given by the 230 respondents who participated in this investigation. The accumulated set of data is to be presented as descriptive and inferential statistics to provide the reader with a general and specific indication of the results, followed by a chi square analysis which determines whether the variations found in the data is of significance or due only to chance (see 3.5).

## **1.4 Field of study**

This investigation lies in the field of linguistics, more specifically the theory of second language acquisition. A well accepted theory of Stephen Krashen has had a large impact on all areas of second language research and teaching since the 1980's. Of Krashen's five main theories, the acquisition learning hypothesis is the most fundamental and the best known. He makes a distinction between two processes in language learning; conscious learning and unconscious

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learning. The acquisition of language is a subconscious process similar to the process children go through when acquiring their first language. It requires interaction in the target language in the form of natural language through communication. If second language learning is similar to first language learning then in the same way that children automatically acquire a mastery of metaphor, so too should learners of a second language be able to understand metaphor in the second language through transfer of linguistic knowledge. The theory of acquisition promotes a natural approach where learner exposure to comprehensible second language input will work without pedagogical stimulation. The interest of cognitive linguistics with the study of metaphor is to reveal the conceptual process that builds language. The key to language acquisition may lie with metaphor. Metaphor may be used as a linguistic clue to how the mind structures meaning and the cognitive processes that are central to our capacity to make creative responses to new situations (Holme, 2004, pp. 120-123).

Most areas of research executed in metaphorical comprehension in the English language either focus on young children, college learners or adults. As a result there is little research done that focus in the area of English language learners at lower secondary level. Previous research in Norway has placed focus on metaphorical comprehension of foreign language learners in the Norwegian language targeting immigrants from different minority ethnic groups. A study similar to this investigation was conducted by Anne Golden (2005) on learners in grade ten from different minority backgrounds. It placed focus on metaphorical comprehension in the Norwegian language based on metaphor in social studies textbooks. The factors investigated were frequency, situational context and minority background.

## **1.5 Research question**

An investigation is administered to eighth graders at lower secondary level to explore which factors influence metaphorical comprehension. Although learners from language backgrounds other than Norwegian participate in the investigation, little focus is placed on this aspect because there are so few of them. Such “foreign” learners are distributed among several language groups and are less than 10 % of the total investigation. What I want to discover with this investigation is the following:

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- To which extent do English language learners in Norway understand the metaphorical expressions they encounter in their textbooks?

To be able to answer this question I will explore the following factors:

- Linguistic structure (multi-word verb vs. other types)
- The role of semantic transparency
- The influence of Norwegian correspondent expressions in metaphorical comprehension
- The influence of literal distracters in metaphorical comprehension

I also ask the following subsidiary questions:

- Are there any metaphorical expressions that stand apart as being easier than others?
- Are there any metaphorical expressions that stand apart as being more difficult than others?
- If some metaphorical expressions are easier than others, are there any common elements they share such as linguistic structure, degree of semantic transparency or the existence of Norwegian correspondent expressions?
- If some metaphorical expressions are more difficult than others, are there any common elements they share such as linguistic structure, degree of semantic transparency or the existence of Norwegian correspondent expressions?
- To which extent do literal distracters influence metaphorical comprehension?

To be able to answer these questions I have formulated the following hypothesis:

H: Metaphorical expressions in English that do not have Norwegian correspondent expressions, with complicated structures that are opaque and non-decomposable will be more difficult for English language learners to understand.

The null hypothesis may be formulated like this:

H0: Metaphorical expressions in English that have Norwegian correspondent expressions, with simple structures that are opaque and non-decomposable will not be more difficult for English language learners to understand.

## 1.6 Procedure

To be able to answer the questions presented in section 1.5 and to test the hypothesis, an investigation is conducted with focus on metaphorical comprehension in the English language.

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The investigation is based on 230 informants that attend the eighth grade of lower secondary school. A questionnaire is composed consisting of ten vocabulary words to test knowledge of the basic meaning of target words and fifty linguistic expressions found in English textbooks for grade eight. This investigation involves two areas of study. The first area explores how respondents score in vocabulary and metaphorical comprehension. The second area first concentrates on the particular vocabulary words and types of metaphorical expressions learners understand and then explores the factors which might have influenced this comprehension. The accumulated data is presented in descriptive statistics to present attained scores and how respondents compare. It is then presented in inferential statistics to show the results of the respondents for particular vocabulary words and metaphorical expressions. To determine whether the numbers observed are significant or only due to chance, a chi square analysis is administered to all set of observations (see 3.5).

A description of the informants is given in section 3.4.2. To enable a comparison between informants, the investigation total of 230 respondents is distributed into six smaller groups. The selection of vocabulary words meant to test knowledge of the basic meaning of target words found in the metaphorical expressions is presented in section 3.4.3. To give an indication of whether or not a certain item is recognized as being a part of the learner's vocabulary, several words are chosen to determine if learners can find the right definition in a multiple choice task. The words chosen to test knowledge of basic meaning are words that contribute independently to the overall metaphorical meaning of the expression and are operationally referred to as *target words* to prevent confusion. Basic meaning refers to the literal sense of a given word as it is found in the dictionary. The metaphorical expressions chosen for the investigation are presented in section 3.4.4. The metaphorical expressions are classified according to linguistic structure (i.e. multi-word verb and OTHER types of expressions), degree of transparency (i.e. transparent, semi-transparent and opaque) and use of literal distracters. As a multiple alternative questionnaire is chosen for my design, the metaphorical word or words are to some degree contextualized.

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## 1.7 Chapter overview

This thesis is divided into five chapters. The first introduces the motivation, background and objectives for this investigation. Chapter two presents the cognitive linguistic theory based on George Lakoff et.al, as background to base the investigation on. It includes a review of relevant literature, definition of terms and relevant studies conducted.

In chapter three method, material and procedure used to conduct the investigation are presented along with a brief introduction and discussion of the pilot study used to test the design. In addition it includes a description of the respondents who participate in the investigation, the selection of metaphorical expressions and the factors to be explored. Finally the method used to process the accumulated raw data is introduced and explained.

Chapter four presents a description of the data accumulated and is divided into three sections. The first section discusses briefly the atypical groups gathered from the information from the learner profile. The second section introduces the accumulated data in descriptive statistics, while the third section presents the inferential statistics.

Chapter five analyzes and interprets the findings, linking together with the theory presented in chapter two.

Chapter six first summarizes the findings of the investigation then discusses conclusions which may be drawn on the basis of these findings.

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## **2. Background as basis for metaphor**

This chapter presents two themes. The first is metaphor and the second is factors that may influence metaphorical comprehension among English language learners. Section 2.1 presents a brief presentation of perspectives on metaphor and second language acquisition. Section 2.2 presents a brief presentation of previous perspectives on metaphor and the theoretical basis for this investigation. Section 2.3 defines metaphor and describes the distinction between conceptual metaphor and metaphorical linguistic expressions. Section 2.4 presents the motivation and basis for metaphor together with the contributing factors that motivate cultural variations, and finally the motivation for idioms and metaphorical expressions. Section 2.5 presents the conflicting perspectives regarding definition and categorization of idioms and multi-word verbs.

Furthermore it presents the definition and procedure for categorization of the degrees of semantic transparency and finally the operational definitions for terms. Section 2.6 presents other factors that may affect metaphorical comprehension based on previous studies. The factors presented are context, complexity of linguistic input, literal distracters, and perspectives relating to the choice of method for presentation of metaphorical expressions.

### **2.1 Metaphor and second language acquisition**

The objective of the present school curriculum for English indicates that in order to develop cultural awareness emphasis is to be placed on using vocabulary, idiomatic structures and cultural expressions as a language learning device. The aim of this study is twofold 1) to examine the extent to which English language learners understand the metaphorical expressions in their English textbooks, and 2) to examine the relationship that exists between metaphorical comprehension and some factors believed to influence learner comprehension. Theoretically, this investigation lies in the field of second language acquisition. The key to language acquisition may lie with metaphor, and may be seen as the linguistic clue as to how the mind structures meaning, and the cognitive processes that are central to our capacity to make creative responses to new situations (Holme, 2004, pp. 120-123). There are conflicting views concerning the

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acquisition and use of metaphor. Previous studies indicate researchers have different interpretations on how metaphor is acquired. One view suggests metaphor is creative language that exists mainly in literature and as such is not acquired by children until their “preteens”. The other view is that metaphor is a basic process in language that is universal and as such children are able to produce metaphor at an early age. These conflicting views on the nature of metaphor result in conflicting views as to the acquisition of metaphor. Previous studies by Billow (1981) and Leondar (1975) found that preschool children spontaneously produce metaphor while Gardner et al. (1978) believe that even though children produce metaphor they do not have the metaphoric capacity until around the age of 10 to 12 years, they suggest that a child first learns literal meanings and only later begins to comprehend and use metaphor. In contrast, Palermo and associates (1986) did a series of experiments with children from 3 to 10 years old and concluded that when given a task appropriate for their age children do comprehend metaphorical relations. In another study done by Palermo involving the retelling of stories; metaphorical vs. literal versions of the same story, children had little difficulty with metaphor and he concluded that it is unlikely children learn only literal meanings first. Furthermore, he suggests that as children acquire the meaning of a word they are ready to extend that word to metaphorical usage (Hatch and Brown, 1995, pp.99-101). If children at an early age have the ability to understand metaphor in their native language it should follow that they transfer this knowledge to second language acquisition.

## 2.2 Previous perspectives on metaphor

From the time of Aristotle, metaphor had been viewed as a secondary type of language built on literal speech which was considered to be the true nature of language. Since the 1970s, cognitive linguists have become convinced that metaphor is central to thought and a central aspect of language. They believe that metaphor is processed as quickly as literal language and just as automatically. Metaphors, while generally literally false, are difficult to label as such.

There are many different theories on metaphor, but what most approaches have in common is the idea that metaphor involves two concepts or conceptual domains. The *target* or topic is what is being spoken or written about, and the *source* or vehicle is the entity which is



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used metaphorically to speak or write about the target. The *source* is distinct from the *target* and its use influences how the *target* is understood. What separate the different theories from each other are which aspects of metaphor they emphasize and their proposal for how metaphor works.

For this investigation I will be using Conceptual Metaphor Theory, or Cognitive Metaphor Theory as it is sometimes called, which summarizes the view of metaphor that has dominated the field since the 1980s. It became widely known in 1980 with the publication of Metaphors We Live By written by Lakoff and Johnson. This theory is based on the premise that metaphor operates at the level of thinking where we use the knowledge acquired from our bodily experience to talk or write about abstract ideas. The source domain usually consists of *concrete* entities, attributes, processes and relationships that are related semantically and believed to be stored in the mind in organized groups similar to lexical sets, and are expressed in language through related words or expressions. The target domain tends to be *abstract* and takes its structure from the source domain through conceptual metaphor; it is lexicalized using words or expressions from the source domain. These words or expressions are referred to as linguistic metaphors or metaphorical expressions to distinguish them from conceptual metaphor (The Open University, Deignan).

## 2.3 Metaphor defined

Metaphor in a broad sense involves understanding one conceptual domain through the use of another conceptual domain. According to Kövecses (2002) the knowledge we acquire from our bodily experience is stored in structures of experiential domains. These domains of experience are used to define other basic experiences such as love, time or argument. Conceptualized experiences are often defined in terms of other basic experiential domains such as journeys, money or war.

We understand one domain in terms of another by superimposing a set of systematic correspondences from two different semantic fields between the two separate domains. A *semantic field* is an area of meaning that is based on our human perception and then categorized and subcategorized into a set of interrelated vocabulary items or clusters of lexical items that share some nuclear concept or feature. For example a semantic field of apes may include i.e.

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mimicry, vocal sounds, bananas, to hang in trees, or excitable and so on. The conceptual correspondences are often referred to as *mappings*. The domain that we map our conceptual knowledge from is called the *source* domain. Conceptual knowledge is transferred in the form of words or metaphorical linguistic expressions from the more concrete literal *source* domain *B* onto the abstract *target* domain *A* (Kövecses, 2002, pp.2-4). *Metaphor* may be defined as a mapping of concepts between different source and target domains from two different semantic fields where the abstract concept is mapped onto the target while the more concrete or physical domain is mapped as the source. The difference between conceptual metaphor and metaphorical linguistic expressions may be explained in the following way. Metaphorical linguistic expressions are words or linguistic expressions that come from the language of the more concrete conceptual domain *B*. The expressions we use to talk about *time* that come from the domain of *money* are linguistic metaphorical expressions (e.g. they *spent* their *time* taking in the sights). The underlying conceptual metaphor, TIME IS A CONSUMABLE COMMODITY becomes apparent. Conceptual metaphors typically use a more abstract concept as a target and a more concrete or physical concept as their source.

When we know a conceptual metaphor, we use linguistic expressions that reflect and show its nature in such a way that we do not go against the mappings that are typically fixed for a linguistic community. The metaphorical process goes from the more concrete to the more abstract but not the other way around, this is referred to as *unidirectionality*. The linguistic expressions we use must comply with the long established mappings or correspondences between the source and the target, therefore not just any element of *B* can be mapped onto any element *A* (Kövecses, 2002, pp.4-9). There has to be a real or perceived similarity between the two entities highlighted by the two linguistic expressions and between the meaning of the two linguistic expressions. If the two entities are not similar in some respect then we cannot use them metaphorically to talk about the other.

Conceptual metaphors are grounded in a reciprocal or mutual relation within our experience which can be experiential co-occurrence or experiential similarity. For example much of human behavior seems to be understood in terms of animal behavior, an example being *to go ape over* and the Norwegian correspondent *å gå helt bananas*, meaning “to become very excited”. This expression is an example of metaphor grounded in experiential similarity.

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## 2.4 Motivation and basis for metaphor

The cognitive linguistic view is that motivation for the selection of the *source* domain depends on human factors that represent nonobjective, non-literal, and non-preexisting similarities between the *source* and a *target* domain and is grounded in experience. This objective preexisting similarity is based on a variety of human experiences and may be perceptual, biological or cultural. The most common similarities include *correlations in experience, perceived structural similarity, and source being the root of the target* (Lakoff, 1980, p.155).

Correlation in experience occurs when two events are closely related and occur regularly and repeatedly in human experience. For example, the metaphor TIME IS A MOVING OBJECT is based on the correlation between an object moving toward us and the time it takes to get to us (e.g. to *look forward* to). The concept of perceived structural similarity is that we perceive similarities between the structure of one domain and another domain. These preconceived structural similarities most likely are promoted by basic ideas that we have for example about the mind in THE MIND IS A CONTAINER and IDEAS ARE OBJECTS. We receive ideas from outside of the mind and ideas go into the mind (e.g. to be *out of one's mind*, to *change someone's mind*, and to *refresh someone's memory*). In some cases, the motivation for metaphor can stem from an experiential basis (i.e. our experience) that is provided by a situation where the *source* was the origin, or the *root* of the target. This type of experiential basis can originate from a biological or cultural root. When the *source* stems from a biological *root* of the target it results in the formation of a conceptual metaphor. An example of the biological root is the mother-child relationship which provides the motivation to some metaphors for love. Kövecses provides *he is close to his grandmother* as an example. The source represents properties of such biologically determined states and events as the early mother-child relationship, which results in the notion of love as being based on image schematic properties as link, unity and closeness. When the source stems from a cultural root of the target, it results also in the formation of a conceptual metaphor. An example is the ARGUMENT IS WAR Metaphor which may be explained in the following way. The notion of war (i.e. *good and natural*), is the source domain for the target concept of argument. This would explain how the verbal institution of argument may have evolved historically from the physical domain of fighting (e.g. *to fight the good fight*) (Kövecses, 2002,

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pp. 67-76). While children may understand the concept of war, they may not be aware of the historical context where the metaphorical meaning of *to fight the good fight* stems from. In other words learners may lack the associated knowledge to be able to interpret its meaning.

The motivation or basis for metaphor can come from a variety of different factors such as, seeing correlations in experience and perceived structural similarities that originate either from human biological evolution or cultural history, and these result in metaphors that have cultural variations. This motivation for metaphor provides the background to explain how cultural variations may arise. Kövecses' suggests that individual variations may also stem from one's profession or one's personal history and that these individual experiences could explain how new metaphors are formed. A farmer, fisherman or doctor may employ metaphors that reflect their different professions (Kövecses, 2002, pp.189-195). For example a culture that relies on fishing for a living would have more metaphorical expressions based on fishing than a culture that depends on farming. Furthermore, in some cases an experiential basis is embedded in a linguistic community, such as through a culture or in its historical context which creates a common shared meaning (Johnson, 1987, p.190). Research conducted by Boer & Demecheleer (2001) found the English use more idioms of hats and shipping than other cultures. This variation is based on the British historical background as a seafaring nation and a tradition where it has always been common to wear hats. Another example is the French having more idioms based on food with a long tradition to attach more importance to food than do the British. The physical environment or landscape influences the language in the lexis a culture uses to express conceptual metaphor. Dirven (1994), for instance analyzed the source domain used in Dutch compared to those used in Afrikaans. There are more references to wild animals in Afrikaans than in Dutch due to the vast amount of wild animals found in South Africa. In the description of nature the Dutch use more images that reflect the natural setting of the Low Countries than any other Northern European country (Littlemore & Low, 2006, pp. 92-98).

Lakoff (1987) provides motivation for idioms when he suggests they are based on metaphorical mappings of information between two domains that have common structure. Conventional images play not only a central role in natural language but also in the formation of new idioms and the understanding of old ones. The many idioms associated with conventional images are coined by Lakoff as *image-able* idioms. For example *to keep someone at arm's length*

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is to physically keep someone from getting to close. This image and the knowledge the image is associated with provide us with a link to the meaning and is motivated most likely by this conventional image. Motivation for idioms is explained as:

the relationship between A and B is motivated just in case there is an independent link L, such that A-L-B *fit together*. L *makes sense* of the relationship between A and B (Lakoff, 1987, p. 448).

The reason idioms make sense is that there are independent existing elements from the conceptual system that link it to its meaning. The literal meaning of the idiom has to fit the conventional image. The two metaphors map the literal image, the image and the associated knowledge into the meaning of the idiom. L (i.e. conventional image + associated knowledge + two metaphors) links A (i.e. idiom) to B (i.e. its meaning). This hypothesis explains not only motivation but also why there are such images and what forms idioms may or may not take. In addition, this same motivation explains the motivation for multi-word verbs that are non literal and to some degree idiomatic (Lakoff, 1987, pp. 447-449). Moon provides motivation for idioms by suggesting that an idiom schema refers to a small part of folk experience that is often a prototypical event, and as such are realizations of cultural stereotypes where images are given, are constrained by contextual ideology. An example of a prototypical event is bullfighting (Moon, 1997, p. 165). Furthermore, Deignan suggests metaphorical expressions are a “cultural reliquary” and that many *transparent* metaphorical expressions elude knowledge that is still shared as part of a culture heritage but no longer experienced (Deignan, 2003, p. 270). If one may assume that every aspect of human experience is filtered through one’s culture then English language learners require a degree of cultural awareness especially if transparent idioms are also grounded in culture. At the same time, this raises questions as to the universality of metaphor as suggested by Lakoff. Gibbs also has doubts about universality claiming that body experience is not necessarily interpreted in the same way by everyone.

One cannot talk about, or study, cognition apart from our specific embodied interactions with the cultural world, (and this includes the physical world, which is not separable from the cultural world in the important sense that what we see as meaningful in the physical world is highly constrained by our cultural beliefs and values). (Gibbs, 1999, p. 153).

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## 2.5 Metaphorical expressions and semantic transparency

The area of focus for this study is comprehension of metaphorical expressions. English textbooks for grade eight provide learners with a vast selection of multi-word verbs and idiomatic structures as a learning device for metaphorical comprehension. Idioms and multi-word verbs share as a common feature the fact that their meaning often cannot be predicted from the individual basic meanings of the words that form them. While idioms often have a conventionalized meaning, the specificity of meaning for multi-word verbs cannot be predicted from the individual meaning of the compositional verb and particle or preposition. As such, multi-word verbs appear to be idioms of a highly restricted type and can have more than one meaning. For example *to look up* may mean, “to look up information”, “to look up an old friend” or “to look up and see” (Holme, 2004, pp. 155-156). Bolinger (1971) considers the multi-word verb to be the “most prolific source” of new words in English. Simultaneously, native speakers have an intuitive understanding of the meaning and use of particles that allows them to “create almost at will” new multi-word verb combinations. Prepositions appear to be the susceptible to misunderstanding by second language learners because they are frequently used metaphorically (Lindstromberg, 1991, 1998). Learners are not always equipped with a knowledge of the number of related but distinct meanings or senses of words, which may be one reason why multi-word verbs cause difficulty. Definition and classification of multi-word verbs presents difficulty when sources disagree on a precise definition, and little research has been undertaken to determine frequency of particular multi-word verbs, therefore arbitrary lists of the most common multi-word verbs vary among researchers (Darwin & Gray, 1999, pp. 67-69). Quirk et al. (1985) defines multi-word verbs in two parts, 1) syntactic: a verb which is followed by a morphologically invariable particle which functions with the verb as a single grammatical unit and 2) the meaning of the combination cannot be predicted from the meaning of the verb and particle in isolation and therefore functions as a single lexical unit. The lexical unity is noted in the verb proper’s inability to carry the same meaning when the particle has been deleted or replaced. A multi-word verb is operationally defined as a verb + particle combination that functions as a single verb with both parts giving meaning to form a new lexical item. Some examples are *bring about*, *take on*, and *give up*.

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Not all multi-word verbs are metaphorical in nature. It is possible to divide multi-word verbs into three semantic categories which according to Murcia & Freeman (1999) are literal, idiomatic and aspectual. Literal multi-word verbs have constituents that appear to retain much of their meaning. For example, in *take down the picture*, the meanings of *take* and *down* are recoverable. In idiomatic multi-word verbs, the basic meaning seems to be lost. For example the idiomatic meaning of *to make up*, cannot be derived from the usual meaning of “make” and “up”. Aspectual multi-word verbs are more transparent in meaning than idiomatic phrasal verbs, but not as transparent as literal multi-word verbs. While the verb proper in aspectual multi-word verbs can be understood literally, the particle contributes meanings, not readily understood, about the verbs aspect. For example, *up* in *He ate up all his food before leaving the table* signals that the action is complete (Darwin & Gray, 1999, p. 65).

An idiom is a conventional expression whose overall meaning often cannot be predicted from the meaning of its constituent parts (Kövecses, & Szabo, 1996). For example, the idiomatic meaning of *to hit the books* cannot be derived from the meanings of “hit” and “books”. Idioms differ from other “figurative” expressions, such as similes and metaphors in that they have conventionalized meanings. A native speaker will automatically know that *to hit the books* means “to start your homework”, whereas, one has to deduce one’s own meaning from *to be like cheese on pizza* (simile) or *to gather steam* (metaphor). For the purpose of this study an idiom is operationally defined as an expression composed of a string of two or more words for which meaning is not derived of the individual words comprising the string; and the individual words contribute little or nothing to the meaning. The distinction between idiom and metaphor is not always easy to determine because many idioms are “dead” or “frozen” metaphors (Gibbs, 1992) and are figurative expressions which have acquired conventionalized meanings. For example, *to be dead as a doornail* could be understood through knowledge of its conventionalized meaning. It is suggested many idioms are compositional where through a process of decomposition, the meaning of their parts *contribute* independently to their overall metaphorical meaning (Gibbs, Nayak, & Cutting, 1989, p. 576). Nunberg (1978) proposed that idioms may vary with respect to compositionality, the way in which the literal meanings of their word constituents contribute or do not contribute to their overall idiomatic interpretation. Nunberg et al. (1994) indicate parts of idioms are associated with parts of the idiomatic meaning, and that this relationship is semantic in

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nature. Furthermore, parts of many idioms have meaning that correlates with the syntactic variability of idioms. When the degree of analyzability of an idiom depends on the salience of the individual parts of the expression, the exact degree of analyzability will vary from one person to the next. An idiom may be viewed as decomposable if some of its parts have meanings, that either literal or figurative, contribute independently to the expressions overall figurative interpretation (Gibbs, Nayak, & Cutting, 1989, p. 577). Finally, there are no established procedures to determine whether a given idiom is semantically decomposable or not. Degree of semantic decomposability will be dependent upon the intuition of a particular person to determine for himself, and what may be normally decomposable for one person may be abnormally decomposable for someone else (Gibbs, Nayak, & Cutting, 1989, p. 578).

It may be difficult to establish which role semantic transparency plays in metaphorical comprehension because of there are so many metaphorical expressions that have Norwegian correspondents. Most likely an identical correspondent expression will be transparent for the foreign language learner regardless of its degree of semantic transparency. In addition, there are no textbook definitions that define the degree of semantic transparency. The determination of semantic transparency is an arbitrary and intuitive decision, and results in variations that differ among individuals. It is traditionally divided into three categories which are 1) transparent, 2) semi-transparent, and 3) opaque. To determine the degree of semantic transparency the factors taken into consideration are decomposability, familiarity and literality. Decomposability refers to the degree to which the individual word meanings contribute to the metaphorical interpretation. In contrast, non-decomposability refers to expressions for which word meanings do not contribute to the metaphorical interpretation. Familiarity is operationally defined as the subjective frequency with which learners may encounter an expression in its written or spoken form regardless of their familiarity with its actual meaning. Literality refers an expressions potential for literal interpretation that is totally predictable from the meaning of its parts (Libben & Titone, 2008). For example *to break up with someone* has a well formed literal meaning while, *to bawl bloody murder* only has a meaningful metaphorical interpretation. An expression may be categorized as transparent when individual words have literal relation to their metaphorical referent. For instance, expressions that may be categorized as transparent are (e.g. *to stick to something, to break the rules, to be without a scrap of courage, to spend time, to be glued to the*



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*television and others*). Those expressions whose individual components have some metaphorical relation to their figurative referent are categorized as semi-transparent. For instance, examples of a semi-transparent expression are (*to fall in a crumpled heap, to be in a ragged state, to gather steam, chain of reasoning, to heave a deep sigh, and others*). The expressions categorized as opaque are those which are considered to be non-decomposable. That is, those expressions for which individual word meanings do not contribute to the metaphorical interpretation as, for instance, *to stitch someone up like a kipper* (Gibbs et.al, 1989, p. 580).

## 2.6 Other factors that may affect comprehension

There are a number of other factors that are thought to influence metaphorical comprehension among children. These factors may influence comprehension for second language learners, especially since their knowledge of the foreign language is more limited than knowledge of their native language. In those cases where a Norwegian correspondent exists for a metaphorical expression it is expected learners may transfer linguistic knowledge from their native language to English. Research by Irujo (1986) found that second language learners of English, use knowledge from their first language in Spanish, to interpret idioms in second language comprehension. Her results indicate 1) idioms which transfer identically are the easiest for Spanish learners to comprehend, 2) similar idioms are understood almost as well as identical idioms, but seem to cause the most interference; 3) different idioms are most difficult to understand but show least interference and finally 4) idioms comprehended are those used most frequently that are transparent with simple vocabulary and structure (1986, p. 287).

There is an indication that other factors may play a significant role in metaphorical comprehension among children. The factors which are explored in this research are 1) context, 2) the complexity of the linguistic input and 3) literal distracters. Context may refer to 1) the common beliefs and knowledge held by speakers and listeners which makes recovery of metaphoric meaning possible and /or 2) the situation in which the metaphorical expression is presented. Findings indicate (Vosniadou, et.al, 1984; Vosniadou, 1984, 1987, 1989) the way the metaphorical expression is presented determines the degree of difficulty and possibly children rely more on surrounding context than adults do because of their limited linguistic knowledge.

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The surrounding context provides the necessary clues to facilitate metaphorical comprehension and is only possible when the type of context provided is consistent with the implied metaphorical meaning. Experiments conducted by Vosniadou indicate surrounding context dramatically affects metaphorical comprehension (Vosniadou, 1987, p. 5).

If context plays an important role in the comprehension of literal uses of language, it does even more so in the comprehension of nonliteral uses of language. In the latter instance, contextual information is often indispensable to help the reader or listener establish the connection between what is said and what is meant” (Vosniadou, 1984, p.878).

There are, however, conflicting views as to the role context plays in metaphorical comprehension. Many scholars argue that the presence of context makes metaphorical comprehension no different from understanding literal language (Gibbs & Gerrig, 1989, p. 155). Winner indicates that comprehension tasks without context reveal the kind of similarities that children generate on their own in contrast to the kind of similarities they recognize when metaphorical expressions are presented in context (Winner, 1988, p. 44). These findings are based on studies for smaller children. This investigation focuses on respondents that are older and therefore have an ostensibly higher degree of metaphorical competence. Their conceptual experience is more developed which suggests that surrounding context plays a less significant role than it does for younger children. The metaphorical expressions presented in this investigation have minimal context because this study focuses on the extent to which learners understand expressions, rather than their deductive abilities. This type of context measures the learners’ present level of linguistic knowledge and a vast majority of the expressions have Norwegian correspondents. The complexity of the linguistic input may influence metaphorical comprehension. The linguistic input refers to the expression’s form or structure. Metaphorical expressions have a variety of different structures such as idioms (e.g. *to hit the road*), multi-word verbs (e.g. *to rub out*), similes (e.g. *to be like cheese on pizza*), linguistic metaphors (e.g. *to blazes with that*), compound words (e.g. *aboveboard*) and others. It is suggested idioms are often difficult to identify because they do not have a set linguistic structure, and often are fixed expressions. For example, *to hit the road* is an idiom that is fixed as it does not occur in any other variation. Multi-word verbs are the type of linguistic structure learners’ encounter most often in their textbooks. Learners may find these difficult as their structure involves a pattern where the

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verb dominates and the same verb can be attached to different prepositions with multiple related meanings that determine the metaphorical meaning (e.g. *make it*, *make up*, *make out*, and *make over*). Words with multiple meanings are more lexically ambiguous for English language learners. Not only must a learner be familiar with the literal meaning of the vocabulary used but also understand the concepts the words denote, as well as be aware of the multiplicity of meaning that can form the basis of the metaphorical expression. Idioms consist of different structures and conflicting perspectives relating to idioms makes classification difficult. Therefore for this investigation they are referred to as *metaphorical expressions* rather than classified as idiomatic expressions (see 2.5).

Previous research in the area of metaphorical comprehension among children suggests that comprehension follows acquisition of domain distinctions. Basic level categories are some of the first distinctions made and as a result are often the easiest to understand. It is suggested that the areas that cause most difficulties in metaphorical comprehension among children are contextual and conceptual factors. These difficulties may be attributed to not recognizing when metaphorical comprehension is required, deficient conceptual knowledge (particularly vehicle knowledge and relational knowledge), incorrect selection of relations and attributes to transfer from source to target domains, and gaps in knowledge (Cameron, 2003, pp.148-150).

The domain type children most likely acquire early would be that of animals (e.g. *to not give a hoot*, *to be hooked on*, *to fly into a rage*, *to get off the hook*, *to go ape over*, *to stitch someone up like a kipper*, *screech to a halt*, and *to squeal down the house*) and should therefore be the type of basic metaphor easiest to comprehend. As their conceptual knowledge increases then common conceptual metaphor that relate to time should become easier (e.g. *to spend time*, *to run out of time*, *to measure time*, *to have spare time*, *to not have much time for*, and *the whole time*) reflect the conceptual metaphor TIME IS A RESOURCE or TIME IS A CONSUMABLE COMMODITY. These expressions have to do with the concept of money and economic transactions with time as their target and money as the source domain. Those concepts that deal with death would be perhaps among the last domains to acquire (e.g. *dead easy to talk to*, *dead as a doornail*, *a down to earth person*, *to rub out someone*, and *to slip away*).

Learner comprehension may be influenced by the use of literal distracters in the multiple choice exercise. A literal distractor is when one alternative answer employs the basic meaning

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among the alternatives. The use of literal distracters may draw learner attention away from the correct metaphorical alternative. The questionnaire for this investigation contains fifteen expressions where literal distracters are employed. The following study raises questions about the effects literal distracters may have on learner comprehension. Vosniadou conducted a study on children where she used literal toy referents for metaphorical words and manipulated the linguistic form of sentences. The study involved six year olds and the task employed six short stories that included either a metaphor or a simile. Half of the children acted out stories with toy referents for the words used metaphorically whereas the other half did not have such literal distracters. Four groups of participants received four different treatment combinations. A) Metaphors with literal distracters, B) Similes with literal distracters, C) Metaphors without literal distracters, and D) Similes without literal distracters. The results showed that for six year old children the presence of literal distracters had a negative effect on metaphorical comprehension but less on simile comprehension (Vosniadou, 1987, p. 8).

In consideration of the factors that may influence metaphorical comprehension and the general limitations of the English language learner the method for presentation of metaphorical expressions may also be a factor to influence English learner execution. The English language learner may find it easier to recognize the meaning of an expression rather than produce the meaning himself. Winner, Engel and Gardner (1980) found that children do better on multiple choice exercises. Their findings demonstrate a greater understanding of metaphor in both multiple choice and role play exercises than when they must produce language themselves. A multiple choice exercise will place fewer linguistic demands on learners (Honeck et al., 1978, Nippold et al., 1984, Ortony et al., 1978, Winner et al., 1980, Vosniadou & Ortony, 1986).

Although the ability to paraphrase and expand metaphor is worth investigating, paraphrase and explanation may not be valid indices of metaphoric comprehension. They require the ability to reflect on one's comprehension and therefore impose cognitive demands in addition to those required for comprehension alone (Brown, 1980, Flavell, 1981). Thus while appropriate paraphrases and explanations certainly suggest successful comprehension, inadequate paraphrases and explanations cannot be taken as evidence of comprehension failure (Vosniadou, 1984, p. 1589).

It is possible a receptive exercise may activate the learners' passive *receptive vocabulary*, which Haycroft (1978) defines as "words that the student recognizes and understands when they occur

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in context, but which he cannot produce correctly”. Investigations carried out by Crow and Quigley (1985) suggest that learners may know basic meaning of words well enough to understand what they read yet not be able to produce them on their own. Acquisition is a process and learners find themselves at different levels of this process at any given time (Hatch and Brown, 1995 p. 370-371).

To sum up, this chapter has introduced the theory of CMT which underlies the present study as well as defined some key concepts and terms. These include source and target, semantic field, mappings, unidirectionality, and the working definition for metaphor as used in the present study. It has also introduced the different perspectives on the motivation for metaphor, idioms and multi-word verbs. The theory and conflicting perspectives on determining the role semantic transparency may have in metaphorical comprehension is introduced based on previous findings from Gibbs (1998). In addition, the dilemma one faces in classification of metaphorical expressions according to degree of semantic transparency is presented with some key terms. These include operational definitions for multi-word verb, idiom, decomposability, familiarity and literality. Those other factors that may affect metaphorical comprehension have been introduced according to indications determined by previous studies undertaken by Vosniadou. These include the role of context for children and how it relates to metaphorical comprehension, the complexity of linguistic input, and the effects literal distractors have when used as an alternative to measure metaphorical comprehension. Finally, given the general limitations second language learners may have perspectives on the form for presentation of metaphor is introduced together with relevant theory.

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## 3. Methods and Materials

The aim of this study is to measure metaphorical comprehension through quantitative analysis. This approach involves data collection through numbers that require processing into statistics for interpretation. The analyses of the statistics reflect my own understanding and interpretation of the data. The instrument chosen for data collection is a standardized questionnaire based on metaphorical comprehension. It is chosen because previous theory predicts this type of exercise places fewer linguistic demands on learners, possibly activates a learner's passive receptive vocabulary and learners demonstrate a better understanding of metaphor when they do not have to paraphrase (see 2.6). The advantages of using a standardized questionnaire is that it is possible see similarities and variations in the data from the responses; it is possible to collect a large amount of data in a short time and it provides the opportunity to generalize the results of the population. It is also practical, easy to construct, administer and mark. A multiple choice exercise also meets criteria for reliability. The results will be consistent among learners and prevent controversy about rating responses because the questions and possible answers are "fixed". This type of exercise also meets criteria for validity as it measures metaphorical comprehension, the influence of literal distracters and linguistic structure (Johannessen et al., 2005, pp. 221-234). However, the role of semantic transparency may not be measured with any validity as its analysis is based on subjective assumptions (see 2.5).

### 3.1 Multiple choice exercise

The multiple choice exercise chosen for this investigation has four alternatives; respondents are instructed to underline the alternative they think best describes the word or expression presented. To provide the learners with a situational context, would allow learners to deduce the meaning of the expression, rather than explore the extent to which they understand the metaphorical expressions they encounter in their English textbooks. For this reason, the metaphorical expressions are presented with minimal context to determine the extent context plays a role in

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metaphorical comprehension. In some instances, an expression may have multiple meanings as for example *to slip away* or the alternatives presented may be similar to each other increasing the level of difficulty. Therefore learners will have to choose from the selection of alternatives which meaning is required.

Specifically, the following examples were first presented to the learners and explained by the teacher.

1. To be ***the talk of the town*** means:
  - a. people gossip about you
  - b. people hate you
  - c. people do not like you
  - d. people like you
2. To feel ***a cold coming on*** means
  - a. winter is close
  - b. snow is in the air
  - c. something bad is going to happen to you
  - d. you feel sick
3. To be ***tidy*** means:
  - a. you are messy
  - b. you are neat
  - c. you are early
  - d. you are late

The word or expression tested is in bold cursive font together with the correct underlined alternative. The questionnaire has sixty multiple choice items where fifty items measure metaphorical comprehension and ten items measure the basic meaning or literal sense of target words (see 1.6).

### 3.1.1 English textbooks and procedure

The metaphorical expressions are chosen from four different series of English textbooks designed to meet the standards of the Knowledge Promotion of 2006. The series of textbooks are for the

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eighth grade of the lower secondary level among which include: Voices in Time 1 (2007) published from Damm, Searching8 (2006) from Gyldendahl, New Flight 1 (2006) from Cappelen, and Key 8 English (2006) from Aschehougs.

To determine which linguistic metaphors to use for this investigation, each textbook was read and those expressions which have the potential to be interpreted metaphorically were added to a list. To decide whether a word in the expression is metaphorical in meaning one must establish the contextual meaning from its usage in the sentence then compare it to the basic meaning found in the dictionary (see 1.6). The resource used to determine the basic meaning of the metaphorical word is the Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners (Rundell and Fox 2007). This dictionary was chosen because it is based on a fairly recent, well balanced corpus of 220 million words which makes it suitable for identifying metaphor in text. Corpus based dictionaries are a useful tool for metaphor identification on a linguistic level instead of relying on intuition. The use of a dictionary serves as a norm of reference which makes identifying linguistic metaphor more reliable and consistent. The limitation to using this dictionary is that it does not distinguish phrasal verbs (one lexical unit) from prepositional verbs (two lexical units).

### 3.2 Metaphorical expressions and common domains

The linguistic expressions are broadly sorted into common source domains using Lakoff's Master Metaphor List (1994). In some cases classification is difficult as some expressions do not contain words that make it easy to trace them back to their source domain. Some common source domains include the human body, animals, machines and tools, games and sport, money and economic transactions, movement and direction, and the target domains of emotion, morality, thought, time, life and death, events and actions. There are several expressions that may be categorized into a few different domains.

Several metaphors employ source domains that have to do with animals. Much of human behavior seems to be metaphorically understood in terms of animal behavior as is suggested by the following examples; *to not give a **hoot***, *to be **hooked** on*, *to **fly** into a rage*, *to get **off the hook***, *to go **ape** over*, *to stitch someone up like a **kipper***, ***screech** to a halt*, and *to **squeal** down*



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*the house*. Here we have a group of linguistic metaphor that fit together as they all have human beings as their target and animals as their source domain. A number of expressions have to do with time. Many deal with the concept of money and economic transactions where TIME IS A RESOURCE or A CONSUMABLE COMMODITY as is suggested by the following examples; *to spend time, to run out of time, to measure time, to have spare time, to not have much time for, and the whole time*. These are a grouping of conceptual metaphors that fit together in that they all have time as their target and money as the source domain.

The last set of expressions deal with death. According to Lakoff, “DEATH is a specific-level schema instance of the generic-level schema EVENT. The event shape is one in which an entity, over time reaches a final state, after which it no longer exists”. The event of death can be understood in terms of a variety of actions. Many of these metaphorical expressions are difficult to categorize such as *dead easy to talk to, dead as a doornail, a down to earth person, to rub out someone, and to slip away*. The concept of death may be difficult for learners of this age group to fully comprehend.

Many expressions are not assorted according to domain but involve image schemas that result from our interactions with the world. Most of these expressions are multi-word verbs and have to do with spatial orientations such as: up-down, in-out, front-back, on-off, deep-shallow, in-out, center-periphery such as *to stick up, to stand out, to close in on, to come off, to break away, to mention some*.

### 3.2.1 Linguistic structure

The type of linguistic structure learners’ encounter with most frequency in their textbooks is multi-word verbs. It is suggested most foreign language learners find this word class type difficult because they look similar and often have more than one meaning (e.g. *come along, come off, come up with, break up break away, hang together, hang up, and hang out*). Many of the expressions chosen for this investigation are multi-word verbs. A multi-word verb can for example consist of verb+ preposition (e.g. *to stick to*), verb+ adverb (e.g. *to figure out*), or verb+ adverb followed by a preposition (e.g. *to stick up for*). They are often idiomatic in form and metaphorical in meaning. Not all idioms are metaphoric and not all metaphors are idiomatic (e.g.

*on one's own*) is neither a multi-word verb nor a metaphor but an idiom. However, some expressions can be both metaphoric and idiomatic (e.g. *work not fit for me*) and yet not a multi-word verb. Furthermore, some expressions can be classified as a multi-word verb, an idiom and a metaphor (e.g. *to be up to speed and to stitch someone up like a kipper*).

It is not always easy to categorize an expression as some expressions may fit into two categories. A total of ninety expressions were chosen to test metaphorical comprehension. The expressions are divided in two main groups: 1) multi-word verb and 2) OTHER. Figure 1 presents the multi-word verbs while Figure 2 presents the metaphorical expressions categorized as OTHER.

Multi-word verbs					
arrive at	come up with	give away	make up	show off	take over
break away	cool down	go over	plow into	show up	turn around
break up	fed up with	hang together	put up with	slip away	turn out
close down	figure out	hooked on	rub out	stand out	wear out
close in on	fly into	lead up to	rule out	stick to	work out
come along	get across	live off of	run off	stick up for	
come off	get off	look forward to	run out of	stitch up	

Figure 1MWW expressions

Figure 1 presents forty expressions categorized as multi-word verbs. Several verbs are repeated but have different prepositions which cause the meaning to change. It is possible learners find these types of expressions difficult because not only do they look similar to each other, but the same expression may have multiple meanings. For example: *to rub out* may mean “to erase or delete something” or it may mean “to kill someone” depending on the context. The expressions classified as OTHER are presented in Figure 2.

be thrown upon myself	squeal the house down to be hooked on	spend time	in love	out of place
a dream come true	dead as a doornail	in a hurry	make yourself at home	
heave a deep sigh	fight the good fight	whole time	out of one's mind	
dead easy to talk to	have spare time	measure time	gather steam	
like cheese on pizza	take for granted	drift around	hit the road	
screech to a halt	not have much time for	make it	above board	
have a fit	not give a hoot	on one's own	change someone's mind	
without a scrap of courage	can't stand school	break the rules	bawl bloody murder	
in a ragged state	down to earth person	hit the books	up to speed	

in a crumpled heap	rhythm grabs hold of you	glued to the tv	bound to change
work not fit for me	refresh one's memory	on an off	close at hand
let the matter drop	at a loss for words	blazes with that	chain of reasoning
break a promise			

Figure 2 OTHER expressions

Figure 2 presents fifty expressions categorized as OTHER. All expressions found in the textbooks mentioned in 3.1.1 are presented. Some expressions such as (e.g. *to be at a loss for words*, *to be out of one's mind*, *to be up to speed*, *to be out of place*, *to be thrown upon myself*, and others) fall into several categories and it was a judgment call to include them as OTHER expressions because their structures may be more complicated for respondents. These expressions consist of the verb, *to be* followed by a preposition and are operationally classified as OTHER rather than MWVs. In those cases where a pattern may emerge, the compositional verb and preposition will be acknowledged.

### 3.2.2 Degree of semantic transparency

The degree of semantic transparency may possibly influence the way learners understand metaphorical expressions. Categorization into degrees of semantic transparency is based on the intuitive judgment of this researcher. It may be difficult to measure the degree of semantic transparency with any validity as categorization will most likely vary among individual learners. What may be transparent for one learner may appear semi-transparent for another learner. The criteria used to determine the degree of semantic transparency is presented and discussed in section 2.5. Expressions categorized as transparent are presented in Figure 3.

break up	figure out	in a hurry	spend time	on and off
stick to	on one's own	go ape over	turn out	in love
live off of	out of place	slip away	fly into a rage	measure time
close at hand	turn around	come along	come up with	have a fit
hang together with	change someone's mind	a dream come true	get the meaning across	without a scrap of courage
drift around	arrive at the truth	make yourself at home	screech to a halt	make up one's mind
stand out	out of one's mind	if things work out	look forward to	plow into

give away	make it	run off	rule out	rub out
take over	to come off	off the hook	break away	break the rules
at a loss for words	can't stand school	have spare time	refresh one's memory	be hooked on
run out of time	break a promise	close down	show off	cool down
wear out	whole time	glued to the t.v.		

Figure 3 Transparent expressions

Figure 3 presents fifty-eight expressions categorized as transparent. The common characteristic these expressions share is that individual words have literal relations to their figurative referents. It is also probable learners may encounter these expressions often in their textbooks, which give this expressions a degree of familiarity. These suggested transparent expressions consist of both multi-word verb and OTHER types of metaphorical expressions. The metaphorical expressions categorized as semi-transparent are presented in Figure 4.

chain of reasoning	take for granted	hit the road
in a ragged state	fall in a crumpled heap	lead up to something
close in on	thrown upon myself	show up
put up with	to squeal the house down	stick up for
gather steam	down to earth person	dead as a doornail
hit the books	not give a hoot	dead easy to talk to
heave a deep sigh	work not fit for me	fed up with
rhythm grabs hold of us	to be like cheese on pizza	bound to change
bawl bloody murder	not have much time for	let the matter drop

Figure 4 Semi-transparent expressions

The twenty-six expressions presented in Figure 4 are operationally categorized as semi-transparent. The common characteristic these expressions share is that individual components have some metaphorical relation to their figurative referent. Metaphorical expressions consisting of *not* are considered to be semi-transparent because its presence may add to its level of difficulty. Expressions such as *to hit the books*, *to hit the road*, *dead as a doornail*, *dead easy to talk to*, and *down to earth person* are categorized semi-transparent rather than opaque because of familiarity (see 2.5). Figure 5 presents the expressions categorized as opaque.

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to be up to speed	to be above board	to stitch someone up like a kipper
to fight the good fight	to blaze with that	

Figure 5 Opaque expressions.

The expressions presented in Figure 5 are operationally categorized as opaque as it is suggested they are non-decomposable, with individual word meanings that do not contribute to the metaphorical meaning. It is also suggested these expressions are frozen semantic units and as such these phrases are more lexicalized, like long words.

To sum up, the metaphorical expressions selected from the English textbooks have been categorized according to degree of semantic transparency based on my subjective judgment. The presence of Norwegian correspondents may however influence the validity of these categories.

### 3.3 A pilot study

An investigation of this size merits a pilot study to test the logistics and gather information in order to improve the quality and validity of the project. It was thought a pilot study will reveal any deficiencies or problems that might exist. In the long run, pilot studies are also thought to save time and effort.

#### 3.3.1 Data collection, method and execution

The first step was to visit a local school and inquire whether a pilot study on metaphorical comprehension would be possible. Next, enquiries were sent home to 52 parents asking for permission following the Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste AS (NSD's) guidelines (see Appendix 2). The investigation was entirely voluntary and respondents had the option of withdrawing at any time. The pilot study was administered to forty-one respondents in March 2008. Eleven respondents were drop outs, six boys were absent from school playing ice hockey and five girls were sick. The final numbers show that 79% of the learners from one class participated in the pilot study.

The design chosen was a multiple choice exercise consisting of forty metaphorical expressions. The multiple choice exercise was posted on the school's website to enable respondents to answer online (see Appendix 3). This method was chosen for reasons stipulated in

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the introduction (see 3.) The only drawback was that it was not possible to make the investigation anonymous, but the results remained secure as I was the only one with access to them. It was my top priority to protect learner anonymity from the start. Upon completion learners were presented with a profile. The objective was to anticipate which useful information was needed to draw conclusions from the results. The profile included questions that ask about native background and English language ability. Background information included name, age, and gender, age when English instruction begins, other languages spoken at home, and finally native background of English teachers to date (see Appendix 4). The pilot study revealed several flaws in the procedure and design. First, there were not enough computers to accommodate all learners simultaneously therefore an investigation of any magnitude must be administered differently. Second, even though the school's database provided tools for evaluation, it did not correct the questionnaires and it was difficult to study the results. Finally, the study was not anonymous. These flaws convinced me that the multiple choice exercise must be reproduced on paper, integrated the learner profiles, and labeled with number codes to assure anonymity. The learner profile was revised through the exclusion of the learners' assessment of English ability because it is subjective and therefore not necessarily accurate. The questionnaire was revised to include vocabulary items to test knowledge of the literal meaning of target words (see 1.6).

### 3.3.2 Respondents

Learner profiles revealed that the respondents were between ages thirteen to fourteen. The gender of the forty-one respondents was almost equally divided with twenty-one female and twenty male respondents. Thirty-nine respondents began English instruction at age five to six and only two began at a later age. Of forty-one respondents' total, seven (17 %) were of foreign descent. No respondents have had instruction from a native English speaker. Ten respondents claimed their ability in English to be above average, twenty-two average and nine below average. Foreign languages spoken at home included Spanish, Baluchin, Kurdish, Somali, Persian and Arabic. The percentage of foreign learners was seven of forty-one (17 %). It is not possible to generalize about this "foreign" group because their language backgrounds are so varied. Something that might be true for a Spanish speaker may not be true for a Persian speaker. Any

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results only indicate an area for further research. These same respondents also participated later in the full study.

### 3.3.3 Metaphorical expressions chosen for pilot study

Forty metaphorical expressions chosen for the pilot study (see Appendix 3) come from the group of expressions introduced in 3.2.1. Twenty-one expressions are multi-word verbs and nineteen have other types of linguistic structure.

The results show respondents find the following multi-word verbs appear to be easiest as the majority of respondents choose the correct metaphorical meaning: *to run out of*, *to stick up for*, *to turn around*, *to come up with*, *to come along*, *to take over*, *to drift around*, *to figure out*, *to break up*, *to cool down*, *to fly into* and *to be hooked on*. Multi-word verbs such as *to slip away*, *to stand out*, *to close in on*, *to give away*, *to close down*, *to come off*, *to break away*, *to take for*, *to run off*, *to show up* and *to turn out* appear to present most difficulty as most respondents did not choose the correct metaphorical meaning.

Expressions categorized as OTHER types reveal the following results. Metaphorical expressions such as *on one's own*, *on and off*, *to hit the books*, *to stick to*, *to not give a hoot* and *to be like cheeses on pizza* appear to be easiest for respondents as they choose the correct metaphorical meaning. Simultaneously, OTHER metaphorical expressions such as *screech to a halt*, *to measure time*, *to be dead as a doornail*, *to be in love*, *to not have much time for*, *the whole time*, *the squeal down the house* and *to have spare time* appear to present more difficulty for respondents (see Appendix 5).

Respondents appear to have difficulty with the concepts of LOVE and TIME (e.g. *to have spare time*, *the whole time*). It appears that the linguistic structures that present most difficulty for respondents are multi-word verbs such as *to give away something* meaning “betray a secret”, *to close in on* meaning “to surround”, *to be up to speed* meaning “to have the latest information”. Only 19% of all respondents understand their meaning. These results may indicate the areas of difficulty for English language learners in Norway, and may also be used to corroborate the existence of patterns of difficulty revealed in the investigation.

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### 3.4 The Investigation

To discover the typical level of metaphorical comprehension among eighth grade learners in Norway, a quantitative investigation is conducted using respondents from one town, to be able to generalize about eighth graders in general. In a quantitative study there is a certain terminology that must be defined and employed. The term *population* refers to the collection of respondents that the research question applies to. The population for this investigation is English language learners from one town in Norway, which attend grade eight at lower secondary level.

To investigate this area of research a *sample* is drawn from the population. The sample refers to the respondents from one town who participate in this investigation, which will provide a representative selection, to give an indication as to the characteristics of the population. To determine whether or not the sample is representative, it is necessary to know how large the *brute sample* is to establish the percentage of respondents who participate. In this case, the amount of eighth grade learners, at the time of this investigation is three hundred eleven or the brute sample. Two-hundred and thirty learners participate in the investigation indicating that 74% of the population composes the *net sample*. This term refers to the actual amount of participants in the investigation. Furthermore, as this investigation was optional eighty-one respondents chose not to participate indicating the non-response or *drop-out* rate is 26%. However, five questionnaires (2%) were eliminated from the investigation because they were incomplete. It is most likely the respondents missed a page unintentionally, as the questionnaire was printed on both sides to conserve paper.

The *units of analysis* to be investigated are the respondents who participate, and the metaphorical expressions. To be able to classify or measure results it is necessary to study the *variables* that may influence metaphorical comprehension. A variable, in this case, is a specific characteristic that is used to measure metaphorical comprehension. From the learner profile it is possible to determine whether or not *independent variables* such as language background, age when English instruction began, or English instruction from a native English speaker are factors to be considered when evaluating metaphorical comprehension. The independent variables were excluded from the investigation as their numbers were too small to measure with any degree of validity. The metaphorical expressions are units of analysis because it is metaphorical



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comprehension that is being measured in this investigation. The *dependent variables* are the factor to be explored such as degree of semantic transparency, linguistic structure, context, or use of literal distracters. A variable must also have *values* or dimensions as variables are not constant. In this case, the values are the results obtained which will vary among respondents. To determine the typical level of metaphorical comprehension a *univariate analysis* is employed is to obtain an overview of the distribution of respondents for each variable investigated. This term refers to an analysis of how respondents result and distribute among the values of one variable (Johannessen et al., 2005, pp. 205-219).

### 3.4.1 Data collection and execution

The investigation followed the same procedure as the pilot study. The material was collected from three local schools during August 2008 with a total of six classes who participated. The respondents were ninth-grade learners and included same respondents involved in the pilot study during the spring of 2008. The English teachers were responsible for the execution. It was a major priority to protect learner anonymity. I never met the respondents and do not know their identity.

The design was a revised multiple choice exercise which included a learner profile and was labeled with a coded reference number. There were three examples to clarify procedure before starting the questionnaire. The exercise set consisted of sixty multiple choice exercises with ten items that test the literal meanings of target words and fifty items that test metaphorical comprehension (see Appendix 6). The results from these multiple choice exercises form the basis of this investigation.

### 3.4.2 Respondents and the learner profile

Student profiles reveal twenty-three (10%) respondents are of foreign descent. Of these twenty-three learners, fourteen respondents (61%) have two foreign parents and 9(39%) had a mixed background with one Norwegian parent and one foreign parent. Because the percentage of foreign students is so low little emphasis is placed on their results as a separate group.

Of the two hundred twenty-five respondents two hundred seventeen (96%) indicated that

their English instruction began between the ages of five and six. Only six respondents (3%) began English instruction earlier and two (1%) began later. Of two hundred twenty-five respondents only six (3%) had been taught English by a native English speaker. These numbers indicate there is a great deal of homogeneity among learners when the majority of respondents 1) 90% are of Norwegian descent, 2) 96% first began English instruction between the ages of five and six, and 3) 97% and receive instruction from a teacher whose native language is Norwegian. Respondents of “foreign” background compose a mixed group from many different countries. There are seldom more than three learners that come from a given country for this reason they are categorized according to language group. For example, Vietnamese and Chinese are grouped together under Oriental languages. An exception is the Albanian language which is distinct from other European languages and therefore grouped alone. African languages are grouped together. Respondents classified by language group are presented in Figure 6.

Language group	Country/language	# of students	Total # students	% of the entire group
Albanian	Albanian	1	1	4.3%
African	Gambian	2	6	26.1%
	Swahili	3		
	Somali	1		
Iranian	Persian	2	8	34.8 %
	Kurdish	2		
	Baldachin	1		
	Arabic	3		
Oriental	Chinese	1	2	8.7%
	Vietnamese	1		
Romance	Romanian	1	2	8.7%
	Spanish	1		
Slavic	Bulgarian	1	4	17.4%
	Croatian	1		
	Serbian	1		
	Slovenian/Russian	1		
<b>Total # students</b>		<b>23</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>100%</b>

Figure 6 Native language distributions

The learner profile reveals atypical groups that lack sufficient size to provide any conclusive results and therefore these groups are only briefly discussed in this investigation. Focus is thus placed on respondents without consideration to information received from the learner profile such as native background, age when English instruction first begins or English instruction from a native English speaking teacher. These variables only indicate possible areas for further

investigation. Instead the investigation treats all respondents alike with attention placed on metaphorical comprehension without attempting to analyze variables obtained from the learner profile.

### 3.4.3 Target words and their basic meanings

The results of the pilot study raise questions about whether metaphorical comprehension is influenced by knowledge of the literal meaning of target words in the metaphorical expressions. A target word refers to a word whose meaning either literal or metaphorical contributes independently to the overall metaphorical meaning of the expression (see 1.6). Some of the vocabulary words may be new or difficult for respondents. Those vocabulary words assumed to be difficult are incorporated into a multiple choice exercise to determine whether learners know their literal meaning. This may provide an opportunity to compare knowledge of the literal meaning of target words against their corresponding metaphorical expressions. Upon reflection, it is possible more target words should have been included. The item number refers to its location in the exercise. The target words which were tested in context are presented in Figure 7.

Item #	target words
1.	The child started <b>bawling</b> . To bawl means to:
2.	To <b>plow</b> a field means to:
3.	If you <b>crumple</b> a piece of paper, then you:
4.	The child wore ragged clothes. <b>ragged</b> means:
5.	A <b>scrap</b> of paper is:
6.	A <b>sigh</b> is:
7.	The <b>blaze</b> was out of control. a blaze is:
8.	A <b>kipper</b> is:
9.	<b>Heave</b> in the anchor! To heave means to:
10.	There was a <b>heap</b> of toys in the corner... a heap is:

Figure 7 Target words

### 3.4.4 The metaphorical expressions for the investigation

Only metaphorical expressions not used in the pilot study were chosen for the investigation to prevent repetition, since one group of respondents from the pilot study also participate in the investigation. The selection chosen is presented and categorized in Figure 8 according to linguistic structure of multi-word verb. The justification for categorizing expressions is presented in section 3.2.1. The item number refers to the actual number of the expression from the test.

Item #	Multi-word verb	Item #	Multi-word verb
20	fed up with	23	live off of
18	lead up to	11	arrive at the truth
16	make up one's mind	22	look forward to
50	rub someone out	26	plow into
53	wear out	24	hang together with
55	rule out	34	go ape over
19	work out	52	get the meaning across
14	put up with	58	show off
25	get off	46	stitch up

Figure 8 Multi-word verbs

Figure 8 presents eighteen linguistic structures categorized as multi-word verb used in the investigation. The linguistic structures classified as OTHER are presented in Figure 9. Item numbers refer the location of the metaphorical expression on the multiple choice exercise.

Item #	OTHER	Item #	OTHER	Item #	OTHER
13	out of place	59	can't stand school	43	refresh one's memory
41	out of one's mind	29	in a ragged state	15	change someone's mind
12	break the rules	60	at a loss for words	28	fall in a crumpled heap
57	break a promise	31	gather steam	49	heave a deep sigh
17	make it	45	above board	51	rhythm grabs hold of you
40	spend time	56	let the matter drop	37	without a scrap of courage
21	have a fit	32	hit the road	33	dead easy to talk to
47	close at hand	42	glued to the television	35	a dream come true
39	bound to change	27	bawl bloody murder	36	chain of reasoning
30	to be thrown upon myself	44	blazes with that	38	a down to earth person
		48	make yourself at home	54	to fight the good fight

Figure 9 OTHER expressions

Figure 9 presents thirty-two linguistic structures classified as OTHER used in the investigation. These linguistic structures are prepositional phrases, nominal phrases, adjectival phrases and verb phrases and are considered to be more complicated structures for respondents.

### 3.4.5 Metaphorical expressions and literal distracters

The multiple choice exercise has several metaphorical expressions where the literal meaning of the expression is provided among the alternatives (see 2.6). Figure 10 presents the metaphorical expressions that have both literal and metaphorical meanings among the alternatives. The results of these findings follow in 4.3.8.

Item #	Metaphorical expressions	Metaphorical meaning	Literal distracter
13	To be <i>out of place</i> means to:	be different	be outside
17	To <i>make</i> it means to:	succeed	create something
19	If things <i>work out</i> somehow means:	have a happy ending	do exercise
20	To be <i>fed up with</i> means :	had enough	eat too much
21	To have <i>a fit</i> means to:	be very angry	try on clothes
22	To <i>look forward to</i> something means:	feel excited about something in the future	look directly in front of you
26	To <i>plow into</i> someone means to:	hit against someone	run over someone with a plow
27	To <i>bawl bloody murder</i> means to:	cry very loud	kill lots of people
28	To be <i>in a ragged state</i> means to:	look a mess	wear old and torn clothing
30	To be <i>thrown upon myself</i> means to:	be left alone	be tossed aside
34	To <i>go ape over</i> means to:	become very excited	act like a monkey
42	If you are <i>glued</i> to the television then you are:	really interested in tv	stuck to the tv
44	To <i>blazes</i> with that means:	I don't care!	Throw it on the fire!
50	To <i>rub someone out</i> means to:	kill someone	erase or delete someone
53	To <i>wear out</i> your own clothing means to:	become worn from use	wear something inside out

Figure 10 Literal distracters and metaphor

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### 3.5 Raw data and processing of results

To facilitate a comparison of which differences may exist between respondents in their level of metaphorical comprehension, respondents from each school were divided into two groups as follows: School 1 is indicated by group C1 and G1, School 2 is indicated by A2 and B2 and finally School 3 is indicated by D3 and E3. The sample from the population consists of two hundred twenty-five respondents and is indicated as *Investigation total*. The questionnaires were corrected and the results tabulated into table form 1) according to alternative chosen by each respondent, and 2) according to correct and incorrect responses. The items left unanswered were considered to be incorrect. This data was first processed into descriptive data using attained scores to calculate mean, standard deviation, median, mode, high and low scores. Such measurements form the basis of any quantitative analysis and are used to describe the basic generalized features of the data. This data is used to compare how the different groups relate to each other. The *mean* presents the central tendency or average score attained by each group. The *standard deviation* presents the degree to which respondents differ in their results. The *median* the score found at the exact middle of each group's results. Finally the *mode* refers to the most frequent occurring score. The mean score attained by the Investigation total is used to establish the *benchmark* to evaluate comprehension. The data is then calculated into inferential statistics to indicate 1) how respondents perform on particular vocabulary words where knowledge of literal meaning is evaluated, and 2) how respondents perform on particular metaphorical expressions. The results are presented in observed numbers and percentages which allow us to more easily discern patterns in the data. The result of each individual finding is subjected to a goodness to fit test to determine if any of the variations in the results are significant. In linguistics the test most commonly used to compare variations in the sets of data and their relationship to each other is the Pearson's chi-square. It is used as an approximate test of the probability of the observed frequencies observed if the  $H_0$  were true. In other words the chi-square operates by comparing the actual observed frequencies in each cell in the table to the frequencies we would expect to observe if there was no relationship at all between the two variables in the populations from which the sample is drawn. The chi-square compares what actually happened to what hypothetically would have happened if all other things were equal (basically the null hypothesis).

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If our actual results are sufficiently different from the predicted null hypothesis results, we can reject the null hypothesis and claim that a statistically significant relationship exists between our variables. The null hypothesis states that any differences or variation between the samples is due to chance. The alternative hypothesis indicates that any differences in the variations of the data are not due to chance and therefore significant.

This calculation provides the chi-square number, degrees of freedom and a p-value for each result. The degrees of freedom describe the number of variables in the calculation that are free to vary. The equation is  $x-1$ . For example if we measure two sets of variables the degree of freedom would be 1 whereas if we measure 6 sets of variables the degree of freedom would be 5. The p-value is the number that indicates whether the findings are highly significant, significant or due to chance. Those p-values under 5% indicate significance so the decision is to reject the  $H_0$  hypothesis. When p-values are greater than 5%, the decision is not to reject the  $H_0$  hypothesis. In this investigation the  $H_0$  indicates that the data presented is a correct and that there is no difference between the samples of the population. As a result, the data may be used to generalize about the population, which are the eighth grade English learners at lower secondary level in Norway (Schmuller, 2005).

To sum up, this chapter has presented and justified the choice of methodology, material used and procedure followed to select metaphorical expressions for testing metaphorical comprehension. The metaphorical expressions have been sorted according to common domains where possible. In addition, the metaphorical expressions have been categorized according to linguistic structure and degree of semantic transparency. The introduction and justification of a pilot study to test logistics has been presented together with the method for data collection and execution, the respondents who participated, and a brief summary of the preliminary findings. The terminology used in a quantitative investigation was presented and defined. Such terms include population, sample, drop-out rate, units of analysis, variables both dependent and independent, values and univariate analysis. Next, the investigation was presented, which included the revised method for data collection and execution, the respondents, the selection of vocabulary words used to test knowledge of literal meanings, the selection of metaphorical expressions used to test metaphorical comprehension, and those metaphorical expressions that

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employ literal distracters. Finally the method to be used process the raw data accumulated was introduced and explained.



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## 4. Data acquired and group distribution

This chapter presents a description of the set of accumulated data acquired during the process of this investigation. Information from the learner profile revealed atypical groups that lack sufficient size to provide any conclusive results. Therefore these groups are only briefly presented. Only the data considered of primary interest to this investigation is presented in detail. The raw data is compressed into statistics to discover how learners score in comparison to each other on the investigation total and which literal meanings of isolated vocabulary words and metaphorical meaning of expressions are most difficult. The results are divided according to vocabulary or metaphor instead of one total score that encompasses both. This is done because it is metaphorical expressions that are this investigation's focus. Vocabulary is included in the questionnaire to determine to which degree this knowledge influences metaphorical comprehension (see 1.6, & 3.4.3.). All statistics are rounded out to the nearest whole number whenever possible to make the results more easily accessible to the reader.

This chapter is divided into three sections. Section 4.1 introduces and explains the atypical group peripheral to this investigation. The descriptive statistics for this group, based on native language distribution, is introduced to compare results between Norwegian and foreign respondents. Section 4.2 presents the descriptive statistics that reveal the attained scores to show how respondents relate to each other (see 3.5). Section 4.3 the inferential statistics that show how respondents result on particular vocabulary words and then compares the vocabulary words to the corresponding metaphorical expressions. A comparison of the fine tuned results which shows the actual variables discovered is presented after each category presented such as vocabulary, comparison of vocabulary to corresponding metaphorical expressions, multi-word verbs, and OTHER types of structures.

The metaphorical expressions categorized according to linguistic structure are presented and classified in ranking order that show which expressions are easier and/or more difficult for

respondents. The last set of results indicates the influence the presence of literal distracters has on metaphorical comprehension.

## 4.1 Atypical groups

The learner profile reveals that there is a great deal of homogeneity among learners when the majority of respondents are 1) of Norwegian descent, 2) first began English instruction between the ages of five and six and 3) received English instruction from a teacher whose native language is Norwegian ( see 3.4.2). This data indicates that the majority of respondents have the same point of origin. The atypical group of interest consists of respondents of “foreign” background. There are sixteen different languages represented in the foreign language group. There is seldom more than one learner from each language which in itself makes it difficult to compare this group with any degree of validity. The composition of these learners is presented in section 3.4.2.

The distribution according to native language reveals two hundred and two respondents 90% have Norwegian as their native language (NOR), while twenty three respondents 10% mention another foreign language (FOR). These results are presented to determine whether the two groups have a degree of homogeneity or whether there exist significant differences between them. The results of learner scores according to native language is presented in a table to facilitate comparison between (NOR) and (FOR) respondents.

Table 1 Native language results

Test type	Groups	# of respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	Median	Mode
Vocabulary	(NOR)	202	4.9	1.9	5	5
	(FOR)	23	4.4	2.1	4	5
Metaphor	(NOR)	202	24	8.1	23	19,25
	(FOR)	23	23.8	7.9	24	28

The results in Table 1 show that in vocabulary comprehension the foreign learners score lower than Norwegian learners with 44% compared to 49%. Even though both groups have five as their most frequent occurring score, the (FOR) learners have four as their median score. Although (FOR) learners score lower in vocabulary comprehension this result may be insignificant. It

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would only take one learners' score to tip the balance in either direction as the group consists of only twenty-three respondents. In metaphorical comprehension the mean indicates both groups appear to be at the same level of comprehension with averages comparing between 24% and 23.8%. Although the numbers show variations in modal scores and mean scores, this may also be considered insignificant as it would only take one learner from (FOR) to alter this phenomenon.

It is the conclusion that for this investigation it is irrelevant to make further reference to (FOR) or (NOR) as individual groups for inspection for the following reasons: 1) groups appear to have comparable knowledge in metaphorical comprehension, 2) there are too few (FOR) learners which makes them difficult to compare to (NOR) learners (intragroup analysis), and 3) (FOR) learners have widely varied native languages which makes it difficult to compare them to each other (intergroup analysis). The atypical groups from the learner profile have been presented and discussed briefly. Although respondents have different points of origin (independent variables) the atypical groups consist of so few learners that it is not possible to measure any impact from their results. Therefore the results are only analyzed according to dependent variables such as knowledge of literal meaning, linguistic structure, semantic transparency and the presence of literal distracters.

## **4.2 Descriptive statistics**

This section presents a univariate analysis to show the distribution of observations according to variable. In this case the variables are vocabulary and metaphorical comprehension. These variables are analyzed through statistical measurements such as mean, standard deviation, median, mode, high and low scores. This is done to determine which variations may occur in the observations. Furthermore, these results will give an indication of the typical level of vocabulary and metaphorical comprehension for this population. Group distribution is presented in section 3.5.

## 4.2.1 Vocabulary results

To discover which variations may occur, the vocabulary results are presented by groups and Investigation total to see individual differences as well as total results. The vocabulary results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Vocabulary in descriptive statistics

Vocabulary Results								
School	Groups	# of respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	Median	Mode	High Score	Low Score
1	C1	45	4.6	1.96	4	5	9	0
1	G1	36	4.5	2.10	4	3	9	0
2	A2	24	4.8	1.76	4.5	4	9	2
2	B2	36	4.8	2.15	5	4	9	1
3	D3	44	5.5	1.56	5	5	9	2
3	E3	40	4.8	1.59	5	5	8	1
All	Investigation Total	225	4.9	1.88	5	5	9	0

The numbers presented in Table 2 show the range in the observations obtained. With the exception of Group E3, all groups have respondents who score nine of ten words correctly. Simultaneously, only respondents from School 1 have a low score of zero. School 1 composed of groups C1 and G1 score lowest in vocabulary comprehension with averages ranging between 45 and 46%. School 3 scores highest with groups whose averages range between 55 and 48%. When respondents are evaluated together as indicated by Investigation total the mean score stabilizes at 4.9 or 49%. This number is used as the *benchmark* to evaluate comprehension of literal meaning when vocabulary comprehension is measured. While the table shows variations in all numbers observed, in reality, the differences between groups are minimal as all groups score between four and five words correct. In retrospect perhaps a more accurate indication would have been possible if the questionnaire had been administered differently. For example a questionnaire based on fifty vocabulary words to test knowledge of literal meaning with their corresponding metaphorical expressions might provide more conclusive data.

## 4.2.2 Metaphor results

To discover which variations may occur, the metaphor results are presented by groups and Investigation total to see individual as well as total results. The distribution according to Investigation total and groups is presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Metaphor in descriptive statistics

Metaphor results								
School	Groups	# of respondents	Mean	Standard deviation	Median	Mode	High score	Low Score
1	C1	45	23	8.0	21	21	43	10
1	G1	36	22	8.0	21.5	25	41	10
2	A2	24	24	8.27	23	14	38	11
2	B2	36	25	7.15	25	25	37	8
3	D3	44	24	7.94	24	24,34	40	7
3	E3	40	25	7.57	23	19	42	13
All	Investigation Total	225	24	7.80	23	21	43	7

The numbers presented in Table 3 show the range in the observations obtained. The observed high scores vary among all groups. Group C1 scores highest with forty-three followed by Group E3 with forty-two of fifty metaphorical expressions. The highest low score (thirteen) observed is in Group E3 while the lowest score (seven) observed is in Group D3. While Group G1 has a high score of forty-one it also has the lowest mean (twenty-two). The variations observed show respondents appear to be at different levels of learner competence. School 1 continues to attain lower results than the remaining schools as their mean is 46 and 42% respectively. From these numbers one may conclude that School 1 lies slightly below the other two schools in metaphorical comprehension. The Investigation total in Table 3 indicates that when respondents are evaluated together the mean score stabilizes at 24 or 48%. This number is used as the *benchmark* to evaluate metaphorical comprehension when metaphorical comprehension is measured. These descriptive statistics have presented the generalized data accumulated from the vocabulary and metaphor section of the questionnaire. The numbers presented in Tables 2 and 3 show there are variations in the observations for both vocabulary and metaphorical comprehension, which may indicate that as language acquisition is a process learners find themselves at different levels of this process at any given time. It may also give a general

indication as to what the typical level of vocabulary and metaphorical comprehension is for this population.

### 4.3 Inferential statistics

This section presents the inferential statistics that show specifically how respondents result on particular vocabulary words and particular metaphorical expressions. The results are presented in observed numbers and percentages which allow us to more easily discern patterns in the data and to show how many respondents answered each item correctly. Numbers and percentages are compared by Investigation total and groups. The aim is to explore if knowledge of the basic meaning of a word influences metaphorical comprehension. The results are presented in the following order 1) particular vocabulary words, 2) corresponding metaphorical expressions, 3) variables of expressions with one target word, and 4) variables of expressions with multiple target words. In the following section “understand” means more than 49% of the respondents got the vocabulary word correct, which is the percentage established by the *benchmark* for vocabulary (see 4.2.1). Only a description of the results is presented, the analysis and discussion for this section is presented in chapter 5.

#### 4.3.1 Results of particular vocabulary words

The numbers and percentages for Investigation totals and groups are presented in Table 4. The items shaded in gray indicate the words the respondents did not understand.

Table 4 Results of target words

Vocabulary	C1	G1	A2	B2	D3	E3	Invest. total
to bawl	29 <b>64%</b>	23 <b>64%</b>	15 <b>63%</b>	23 <b>64%</b>	29 <b>66%</b>	29 <b>73%</b>	148 <b>66%</b>
to plow	11 <b>24%</b>	7 <b>19%</b>	6 <b>25%</b>	9 <b>24%</b>	10 <b>23%</b>	6 <b>15%</b>	49 <b>22%</b>
to crumple	15 <b>33%</b>	19 <b>53%</b>	13 <b>54%</b>	22 <b>61%</b>	25 <b>57%</b>	23 <b>58%</b>	117 <b>52%</b>
ragged	30 <b>67%</b>	24 <b>67%</b>	18 <b>75%</b>	25 <b>69%</b>	37 <b>84%</b>	31 <b>78%</b>	165 <b>73%</b>
a scrap	23 <b>51%</b>	17 <b>47%</b>	10 <b>42%</b>	23 <b>64%</b>	20 <b>46%</b>	17 <b>43%</b>	110 <b>49%</b>

a sigh	13 29%	14 39%	5 21%	8 22%	14 32%	16 40%	70 31%
a blaze	23 51%	21 58%	14 58%	23 64%	35 80%	31 78%	147 65%
kipper	23 51%	14 39%	12 50%	10 28%	24 55%	12 30%	95 42%
to heave	24 53%	14 39%	11 46%	17 47%	26 59%	16 40%	108 37%
a heap	15 33%	10 28%	12 50%	12 33%	24 55%	11 28%	84 37%

Table 4 indicates the easiest terms are *to bawl*, *ragged*, and *a blaze* as all groups “understand” their meanings. In contrast all groups have difficulty with *to plow* and *a sigh*. One possible explanation is *to plow into someone* encountered in the textbook uses the American spelling rather than the British spelling *plough*. If respondents have learned *to plough* rather than *to plow* this may provide a possible explanation for this result. Nonetheless in the textbook *Voices in Time 1* (2007) published by Damm the vocabulary section encountered in the back of the book gives meanings for both variations of the word. While the quick reference to vocabulary in the story presents only the American spelling and translates as *å pløye inn i hverandre*. For these reasons it is difficult to determine exactly why this word presents difficulty for respondents. There are distinct variations between which words respondents experience as difficult, such as *to crumple*, *a scrap*, *kipper*, *to heave*, and *a heap*. For example with the exception of Group C1 all groups understand *to crumple*. Only groups C1 and B4 understand the meaning of *scrap*. Groups such as C1, A2 and D3 alone understand the meaning of *kipper*. Similar results show the meaning of *heave* is understood by groups C1 and D3. Finally the meaning of the word *heap* has only groups A2 and D3 who understand its meaning.

To determine whether the actual observed frequencies for each vocabulary word is to be expected a chi-square analysis is employed and indicates the following results: *to bawl*  $\chi^2 = 0.37$  (df= 3),  $p = 0.9962$ ; *to plow*  $\chi^2 = 2.05$  (df=3),  $p = 0.8417$ ; *ragged*  $\chi^2 = 2.63$  (df=3),  $p = 0.7571$ ; *scrap*  $\chi^2 = 2.93$  (df=3),  $p = 0.7100$ ; *a sigh*  $\chi^2 = 3.09$  (df=3),  $p = 0.6868$ ; *to crumple*  $\chi^2 = 4.46$  (df=3),  $p = 0.4846$ ; *to heave*  $\chi^2 = 4.57$  (df=3),  $p = 0.4709$ ; *a blaze*  $\chi^2 = 5.04$  (df=3),  $p = 0.4110$ , *kipper*  $\chi^2 = 8.38$  (df=3),  $p = 0.1363$  and *a heap*  $\chi^2 = 9.55$  (df=3),  $p = 0.0888$ . As these results are all greater than 5%, we cannot reject the null hypothesis. Therefore, these results are representative of the population tested and may be used to generalize about said population. Although there are variations in the

way respondents know the literal meanings of vocabulary words, the results are a true indication of the typical level vocabulary competence for grade eight learners in this one town.

### 4.3.2 Results of vocabulary with corresponding expressions

To compare vocabulary knowledge against metaphorical comprehension, the selected metaphorical expressions that contain vocabulary words tested are presented in Table 5. The words in bold font indicate the vocabulary words tested. The aim is to explore if knowledge of the basic meaning of target words influence metaphorical comprehension. In this section, to “understand” means that more than 48% of respondents got the expression correct (see 4.2.2). The group does not understand an expression if fewer than 48% answered it correctly. The set of accumulated data is presented in Table 5.

Table 5 Metaphorical expressions and target words

metaphorical expression	C1	G1	A2	B2	D3	E3	Invest. Total
to <b>bawl</b> bloody murder	6 13%	10 28%	4 17%	8 22%	8 18%	12 30%	48 21%
to <b>plow</b> into someone	21 47%	21 58%	12 50%	22 61%	26 59%	23 58%	125 56%
in a <b>crumpled heap</b>	23 51%	26 72%	10 42%	22 61%	28 64%	24 60%	133 59%
in a <b>ragged</b> state	23 51%	8 22%	10 42%	14 39%	19 43%	15 38%	89 40%
without a <b>scrap</b> of courage	21 47%	18 50%	11 46%	20 56%	29 66%	23 58%	122 54%
<b>heave</b> a deep <b>sigh</b>	29 65%	18 50%	11 46%	25 69%	27 61%	21 53%	131 58%
to <b>blazes</b> with that	17 38%	11 31%	15 63%	19 53%	20 46%	13 33%	95 42%
to stitch up like a <b>kipper</b>	26 58%	16 44%	13 54%	18 50%	21 48%	24 60%	118 52%

Table 5 indicates that *to bawl bloody murder* is the expression which appears to present most difficulty to all groups, as percentages observed are the lowest of any expression tested in this selection. Simultaneously, all groups appear to understand the term *to bawl*.

The table shows that Group C1 appears to have most difficulty with the expression *to*



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*plow into someone* averaging 47%, just below the established benchmark. In contrast the term *to plow* attains percentages ranging from 25 to 15%. It was suggested the spelling may have caused confusion (see 4.3.1). In contrast only Group C1 appears to understand *in a ragged state* with 51%, while the other groups range from 43 to 22%. The term *ragged* appears to present the least difficulty of all words tested as its results range from 84 to 64%.

Only Groups' C1 and A2 appear to have difficulty with, *without a scrap of courage*, whereas four of six groups appear to have difficulty with the term *scrap*. The numbers show the actual difference between the amount of learners, who got both the term and expression correct, are from one to three respondents. The largest variations occur in Groups D3 and E3. In Group D3, twenty respondents appear to understand the term while twenty-nine appear to understand the expression. Similar results occur in Group E3 with seventeen respondents who appear to understand the term while twenty-three appear to understand the expression.

While the results for *to blazes with that* range from 63 to 31%, the results for the term *blaze* range from 51 to 80%. Groups A2 and B2 have the most learners who appear to understand this expression. Group A2 scores 63% on *to blazes with that* and 58% on the term *blaze*, while Group B2 scores 53% on the expression and 64% on the term *blaze*.

The final expression with one target word is *to stitch someone up like a kipper*. Group G1 appears to have most difficulty with 44%, while other groups range from 60 to 48%. With the exception of Group D3 all groups score higher on the expression than on the term *kipper*. Groups B2 and E3 score almost 50% higher on *to stitch someone up like a kipper* than on the term *kipper*.

Two metaphorical expressions contain multiple target words. The first expression *in a crumpled heap* appears to be understood by all groups with the exception of A2, which attains 44%, compared to percentages ranging from 72 % to 51% by remaining groups.

The vocabulary results show that with the exception of Group C1 all groups know the basic meaning of *to crumple*. Simultaneously only groups A2 and D3 know the basic meaning of the key word *heap*.

The final expression *to heave a deep sigh* appears to present most difficulty to Group A2 which attains 46%. Only groups C1 and D3 know the basic meaning of the word *heave*. Simultaneously all groups have difficulty with the term *sigh* with results that range from 40 to

21%. In both expressions, *to fall in a crumpled heap* and *to heave a deep sigh*, only one of the multiple target words appears to present difficulty.

In five of seven cases such as *to plow into*, *in a crumpled heap*, *without a scrap of courage*, *to heave a deep sigh*, and *to stitch someone up like a kipper* respondents appear to have difficulty with the literal meaning of one or both terms and still appear to understand the corresponding expression. For the two remaining expressions, *to be in a ragged state* and *to blazes with that*, respondents appear to recognize the literal meaning of the target word but appear to have difficulty with the corresponding metaphorical expression. These results may give an indication as to the role vocabulary comprehension has on metaphorical comprehension. These findings indicate that knowledge of the basic meaning of target words does not necessarily play a significant role in metaphorical comprehension (see 5.4 & 6.3).

### 4.3.3 Variables of expressions with one target word

To determine whether there are any hidden patterns in the data, the results are further mined according to individual responses. To make the results more easily accessible to the reader each expression is presented in individual tables. Expressions with one target word are presented first as their design is simple. In this section “to know” means respondents answered the item correctly. .

Table 6

presents the variables which indicate the results for the expression *to bawl bloody murder*.

Table 6 to bawl bloody murder

expression	Variables	C1	G1	A2	B2	D3	E3	Invest. Total
to bawl bloody murder	+word +exp	4	8	3	6	5	9	35 <b>15.6%</b>
	-word +exp	2	2	1	2	3	3	13 <b>5.8%</b>
	+word - exp	25	15	12	17	24	20	113 <b>50.2%</b>
	- word -exp	14	11	8	11	12	8	64 <b>28.4%</b>
total respondents		45	36	24	36	44	40	225

Table 6 presents the variables that show how well each group know the literal meaning of *to bawl* and its corresponding metaphorical expression *to bawl bloody murder*. General results from Tables 4 and 5 show one hundred and forty-eight respondents know *to bawl* while forty-eight respondents know *to bawl bloody murder*. The fine-tuned results reveal thirteen respondents who do not know the term *to bawl* know the corresponding expression (i.e. “-word, + exp” in the table) while thirty-five respondents know the term and corresponding expression (i.e.”+word, +exp”). Although one hundred thirteen respondents know the term *to bawl*, they do not know the corresponding expression (i.e. “+word, -exp”). For thirteen out of two hundred and twenty-five respondents lack of knowledge of literal meaning does not hinder metaphorical comprehension (i.e. “-word, + exp”) . This breakdown therefore reveals relationships that are obscure by the presentation of the generalized results in Table 4 and Table 5. To determine whether the relationship between the variables in .

Table 6 are significant or due to chance a chi square analysis is employed using a 2x2 table. The chi-square analysis produces the following results for *to bawl bloody murder*;  $\chi^2 = 1.42$  (df=1), p=0.2331. The p-value for the expression *to bawl bloody murder* is greater than 5% therefore one cannot reject the null hypothesis. Any differences or variations in the frequencies of the variables are due to chance. The way respondents know the literal meaning of *bawl* compared to the way they know the expression *to bawl bloody murder* is what hypothetically would happen if all other things were equal (the null hypothesis)(see 3.5).

Table 7 presents the variables which indicate the fine-tuned results for the expression *to plow into*. General results from Table 4 and Table 5 reveal this expression is different from *to bawl bloody murder*. Few respondents know the literal meaning of *to plow* while the majority knows the expression.

Table 7 to plow into

expression	Variables	C1	G1	A2	B2	D3	E3	Invest Total
to plow into	+word +exp	6	6	4	4	4	5	28 <b>12.4%</b>
	-word +exp	15	15	8	18	22	18	97 <b>43.1%</b>
	+word	4	2	2	4	6	1	21 <b>9.3%</b>

	-exp							
	-word	20	13	10	10	12	16	79 <b>35.1%</b>
	-exp							
total respondents		45	36	24	36	44	40	225

Table 7 presents the variables that show how well groups actually know the literal meaning of *to plow* and its corresponding expression *to plow into*. The generalized results presented in Table 4 and Table 5 show forty-nine respondents know the term *to plow* while one hundred twenty-five know the expression *to plow into*. The actual findings show ninety-seven respondents who do not know the term *to plow* know the corresponding expression *to plow into*. The chi-square analysis produces the following result for *to plow into*.  $\chi^2 = 0.064$  (df=1),  $p=0.8002$ . The p-value for the expression *to plow into* is greater than 5% therefore one cannot reject the null hypothesis. Any differences or variations in the frequencies are due to chance.

Table 8 presents the variables which indicate the results for *in a ragged state*. The generalized results from Tables 4 and 5 indicate this expression is similar to the first expression presented *to bawl bloody murder*. Most respondents know the literal meaning of *ragged* while a minority of the respondents knows the corresponding expression.

Table 8 in a ragged state

expression	Variables	C1	G1	A2	B2	D3	E3	Invest Total
in a ragged state	+word +exp	13	6	7	11	17	12	66 <b>29.3%</b>
	-word +exp	10	2	3	3	2	3	23 <b>10.3%</b>
	+word -exp	17	18	11	14	20	19	99 <b>44%</b>
	-word -exp	5	10	3	8	5	6	37 <b>16.4%</b>
total respondents		45	36	24	36	44	40	225

Table 8 presents the variables that show how well each group know the literal meaning of *ragged* and its corresponding expression *in a ragged state*. Results from Table 4 and Table 5 show one hundred sixty-five respondents know the term *ragged* while eighty-nine respondents know the expression *in a ragged state*. Even though respondents know the term *ragged* they do not know the corresponding expression. The chi-square analysis produces the following result for

*in a ragged state*.  $\chi^2 = 0.05$  (df=1),  $p=0.8209$ . The p-value for the expression *in a ragged state* is greater than 5% therefore one cannot reject the null hypothesis. Any differences or variations between samples are due to chance.

Table 9 presents the variables which indicate the results for the expression *without a scrap of courage*. Results from Table 4 and Table 5 show there is a near balance in the results for knowledge of literal meaning and corresponding expression.

Table 9 without a scrap of courage

expression	Variables	C1	G1	A2	B2	D3	E3	Invest Total
without a scrap of courage	+word +exp	10	9	5	12	13	8	62 <b>27.6%</b>
	-word +exp	11	9	6	8	16	15	60 <b>26.7%</b>
	+word -exp	13	8	5	11	7	6	48 <b>21.3%</b>
	-word -exp	11	10	8	5	8	11	55 <b>24.4%</b>
total respondents		45	36	24	36	44	40	225

Table 9 presents the variables that show how well each group know the literal meaning of *scrap* and its corresponding expression *without a scrap of courage*. The generalized results from

Table 4 and Table 5 show one hundred ten respondents know the term *scrap* while one hundred twenty-two respondents know the corresponding metaphorical expression. Sixty respondents who do not know the term *scrap* still know the corresponding expression. The chi-square analysis produces the following result for *without a scrap of courage*.  $\chi^2 = 0.397$  (df=1),  $p=0.5282$ . The p-value for the expression *without a scrap of courage* is greater than 5% therefore one cannot reject the null hypothesis. Any differences or variations in the frequencies are due to chance.

ing expression. Table 10 presents the variables which indicate the results for the expression *to blazes with that!* The generalized results from Table 4 and

Table 5 show a majority of respondents know the literal meaning of *blaze* while a minority of respondents knows the corresponding expression. Table 10 to blazes with that

expression	Variables	C1	G1	A2	B2	D3	E3	Invest Total
to bl az	+word +exp	9	4	8	13	17	10	62 <b>27.6%</b>

	-word +exp	8	7	7	6	3	3	33	<b>14.7%</b>
	+word -exp	13	17	6	10	18	21	85	<b>37.8%</b>
	-word -exp	15	8	3	7	6	6	45	<b>20%</b>
total respondents		45	36	24	36	44	40	225	

ing expression. Table 10 presents the variables that show how well each group knows the literal meaning of *blaze* and its corresponding metaphorical expression *to blazes with that!* The generalized results from Table 4 and Table 5 show one hundred forty-seven respondents know the literal meaning of *blaze* while ninety-five know the corresponding expression. The chi-square analysis produces the following result for *to blazes with that!*  $\chi^2 = 0.000357$  (df=1), p=0.9849. The p-value for the expression *to blazes with that!* is greater than 5% therefore one cannot reject the null hypothesis. Any differences or variations between frequencies are due to chance.

The final expression with one target word is *to stitch someone up like a kipper*. Table 11 presents the variables which indicate the results for the expression *to stitch someone up like a kipper*. The generalized results from Table 4 and Table 5 show most respondents know the expression while fewer know the basic meaning of the word *kipper*.

Table 11 to stitch someone up like a kipper

expression	variables	C1	G1	A2	B2	D3	E3	Invest Total	
to stitch someone up like a kipper	+word +exp	14	6	7	4	12	8	51	<b>22.7%</b>
	-word +exp	12	10	6	14	9	16	67	<b>29.8%</b>
	+word -exp	9	8	5	6	12	4	44	<b>19.6%</b>
	-word -exp	10	12	6	12	11	12	63	<b>28%</b>
total respondents		45	36	24	36	44	40	225	

Table 11 presents the variables that show how well each group knows the literal meaning of *kipper* and its corresponding expression *to stitch someone up like a kipper*. The generalized results from Table 4 and Table 5 show ninety-five respondents know the literal meaning of *kipper* while one hundred eighteen respondents know the corresponding metaphorical expression.

The chi-square analysis produces the following result for *to stitch someone up like a kipper*.  $\chi^2 = 0.587$  (df=1),  $p=0.4432$ . The p-value for the expression *to stitch someone up like a kipper* is greater than 5% therefore one cannot reject the null hypothesis. Any differences or variations in the frequencies are due to chance.

The chi-square analysis indicates all p-values to be over 5% therefore the  $H_0$  hypothesis is a correct description of the results based on the sample and may be used to generalize about the population (see 3.5). As a result, we may conclude that for these metaphorical expressions knowledge of basic meaning does not necessarily play a significant role in metaphorical comprehension. Many respondents are able to interpret the metaphorical meaning of an expression while unsure of the literal meaning of target words. Furthermore, even when respondents know the literal meanings of target words this does not guarantee that learners comprehend the metaphorical meaning. For this reason we may also conclude that metaphorical comprehension may be dependent upon other factors such as for example the presence of Norwegian correspondent expressions.

#### 4.3.4 Variables of expressions with multiple target words

This section shows how respondents score when multiple target words occur in the same expression. Table 12 presents the variables which indicate the results for the expression *to fall in a crumpled heap*.

Table 12 to fall in a crumpled heap

expression	variables	C1	G1	A2	B2	D3	E3	Invest Total	
to fall in a crumpled	+crumple -exp	8	5	7	9	10	8	47	<b>20.9%</b>
	+crumple +exp	7	13	6	13	15	15	69	<b>30.7%</b>
	-crumple +exp	16	13	4	9	13	9	64	<b>28.4%</b>
	-crumple -exp	14	5	7	5	6	8	45	<b>20%</b>
	Total	45	36	24	36	44	40	225	
heap	+heap -exp	5	2	8	4	11	5	35	<b>15.6%</b>
	+heap	10	8	4	8	13	6	49	<b>84%</b>

	+exp								
	-heap	13	18	6	14	15	18	84	<b>37.3%</b>
	+exp								
	-heap	17	8	6	10	5	11	57	<b>25.3%</b>
	-exp								
	Total	45	36	24	36	44	40	225	
<hr/>									
	both words	3	6	2	6	5	5	27	<b>12%</b>
	+exp								
	both words	2	0	4	4	7	2	19	<b>8.4%</b>
	-exp								
	no words	9	10	2	7	5	8	41	<b>18.2%</b>
	+exp								
	no words	11	3	3	5	2	5	29	<b>12.9%</b>
	-exp								
	knows 1 word	11	10	5	9	18	11	64	<b>28.4%</b>
	+exp								
	knows 1 word	9	7	8	5	7	9	45	<b>20%</b>
	-exp								
	Total	45	36	24	36	44	40	225	

Table 12 presents the variables that show how well each group knows the literal meaning of *crumple* and *heap* together with its corresponding expression *to fall in a crumpled heap*. The generalized results from Table 4 and Table 5 show one hundred seventeen respondents know the term *crumple*. Eighty-four respondents know the term *heap* while one hundred thirty-three respondents know the corresponding expression *to fall in a crumpled heap*.

The fine-tuned findings reveal sixty-four respondents who do not know the term *crumple* know the corresponding expression (i.e. “-word, + exp”) in Table 12. Sixty-nine respondents know both the term *crumple* and corresponding expression (i.e. “+word, + exp”). In contrast, eighty-four respondents who do not know the term *heap* know the corresponding expression (i.e. “-word, +exp”). Only forty-nine respondents know both literal meaning and corresponding expression (i.e. “+word, + exp”). When the variables for the two terms *crumple* and *heap* are analyzed together, forty-one respondents who do not know either term still know the corresponding expression (i.e. “no words, + exp”). Only twenty-seven respondents know both terms and the corresponding expression (i.e. “both words, + exp”). Finally sixty-four respondents know only one term and still know the corresponding expression (i.e. “knows one word, + exp). To determine whether the relationship of the variables in Table 12 are significant or due to



random chance a chi-square analysis is employed using a 2x7 table. The chi-square analysis produces the following results *to fall in a crumpled heap*.  $\chi^2 = 0.03$  (df =3), p=0.9985. The p-value for the expression *to fall in a crumpled heap* is greater than 5%, therefore one cannot reject the null hypothesis. Any differences or variation in the frequencies are due to chance. How respondents know the literal meanings of the terms *crumple* and or *heap* compared to the way they know the expression *to fall in a crumpled heap* are the results we may expect if all other things are true.

Table 13 to heave a deep sigh

presents the variables which indicate the results for the expression *to heave a deep sigh*.

Table 13 to heave a deep sigh

expression	Variables	C1	G1	A2	B2	D3	E3	Invest Total	
to heave a deep sigh	+sigh -exp	6	4	2	2	6	7	27	<b>12%</b>
	+sigh +exp	7	9	3	6	8	9	42	<b>18.7%</b>
	-sigh +exp	22	9	8	19	19	12	89	<b>39.6%</b>
	-sigh -exp	10	14	11	9	11	12	67	<b>29.8%</b>
	Total	45	36	24	36	44	40	225	
	+heave -exp	4	5	4	5	7	5	30	<b>13.3%</b>
	+heave +exp	20	9	7	12	19	11	78	<b>34.7%</b>
	-heave +exp	9	9	4	13	8	10	53	<b>23.6%</b>
	-heave -exp	12	13	9	6	10	14	64	<b>28.4%</b>
	Total	45	36	24	36	44	40	225	
	both words +exp	4	4	3	5	5	5	26	<b>11.6%</b>
	both words -exp	2	2	0	0	3	2	9	<b>4%</b>
	no words +exp	6	4	4	12	5	6	37	<b>16.4%</b>
	no words -exp	8	11	7	4	7	9	46	<b>20.4%</b>

	-exp								
	knows 1 word	19	10	4	8	17	10	68	<b>30.2%</b>
	+exp								
	knows 1 word	6	5	6	7	7	8	39	<b>17.3%</b>
	-exp								
	Total	45	36	24	36	44	40	225	

Table 13 to heave a deep sigh

presents the variables that show how well each group knows the literal meaning of both *sigh* and *heave* together with its corresponding expression *to heave a deep sigh*. The generalized results from Table 4 and Table 5 show seventy respondents know the term *sigh* while one hundred eight know the term *heave*. One hundred thirty-one respondents know the corresponding metaphorical expression *to heave a deep sigh*.

The chi-square analysis produces the following results for *to heave a deep sigh*.  $\chi^2 = 17.72$  (df=3),  $p=0.0005$ . The p-value for *to heave a deep sigh* is less than 5% therefore we may reject the null hypothesis. The differences and variations in the values are not due to chance and are therefore significant. There is difference as to how respondents know the basic meaning of *heave* and/or *sigh* compared to the way they know the expression *to heave a deep sigh*. Since there is a difference in the variables for this expression one may not use this expression to generalize about the relationship between knowledge of basic meaning and metaphorical comprehension (see 3.5). The chi-square analysis shows that for all items presented on the questionnaire where either one term or multiple terms are presented with their corresponding expressions, seven of eight items, show no statistical variations in the values observed. The results give an indication that knowledge of basic meaning may play a lesser significant role in metaphorical comprehension than other factors explored.

#### 4.3.5 Results of particular metaphorical expressions

This section presents the results that indicate how respondents score on particular metaphorical expressions where knowledge of basic meaning is assumed. The aim is to 1) explore metaphorical comprehension of expressions with different linguistic structures, 2) to determine if some types of structures stand apart as being easier than others, 3) to determine if some types of structures stand apart as being more difficult than others, and 4) to explore the role degree of

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semantic transparency may play in metaphorical comprehension.

The results are divided into two parts according to linguistic structure. The first part presents metaphorical expressions classified as multi-word verbs while the second part presents expressions classified as OTHER (see section 3.2.1). The general statistics from Table 3 indicate the *benchmark* for metaphorical expressions is 48%. In the following sections “understand” means more than 48% of the respondents chose the correct metaphorical meaning for the particular expression.

The expressions are presented in ranking order, from easiest to most difficult, to make the results more easily discernable to the reader and to separate those expressions that stand apart as being easier from those that stand apart as being most difficult. The degree of semantic transparency is indicated by the letter “T” for transparent, “S” for semi-transparent, and “O” for opaque, and is presented next to the item number in all tables that present the results for multi-word verbs and OTHER types of structures.

First, a general description of how different groups result is presented, followed by a synopsis of which expressions are easiest and/or the hardest determined by the percentages presented in the Investigation totals. This is done to facilitate an overview. To rank expressions according to each individual group would cause confusion as variations in metaphorical comprehension produce different results. For example *to plow into* presents difficulty to only one group therefore the percentages established by the Investigation totals presents a uniformed result.

#### 4.3.6 Results for multi-word verbs

There are eighteen expressions classified as multi-word verb. To indicate which metaphorical expressions respondents had most difficulty with, the results that fall under the 48% benchmark are shaded gray. The results for multi-word verbs are presented in .

Table 13.

Table 13 Multi-word verb results

Item #	MWV	C 1	G 1	A 2	B 2	D 3	E 3	Invest. Totals
24 T	hang together with	39 <b>87%</b>	27 <b>75%</b>	24 <b>100%</b>	33 <b>92%</b>	40 <b>91%</b>	37 <b>93%</b>	200 <b>89%</b>

22 T	look forward to	28 <b>62%</b>	26 <b>72%</b>	20 <b>83%</b>	30 <b>83%</b>	34 <b>77%</b>	29 <b>73%</b>	167 <b>74%</b>
16 T	make up	27 <b>60%</b>	25 <b>69%</b>	16 <b>67%</b>	23 <b>64%</b>	30 <b>68%</b>	23 <b>58%</b>	144 <b>64%</b>
26 T	plow into	21 <b>47%</b>	21 <b>58%</b>	12 <b>50%</b>	22 <b>61%</b>	26 <b>59%</b>	23 <b>58%</b>	125 <b>57%</b>
25 T	get off	23 <b>51%</b>	15 <b>42%</b>	21 <b>88%</b>	21 <b>58%</b>	25 <b>57%</b>	21 <b>53%</b>	126 <b>56%</b>
52 T	get across	24 <b>53%</b>	20 <b>56%</b>	14 <b>58%</b>	21 <b>58%</b>	21 <b>48%</b>	23 <b>58%</b>	123 <b>55%</b>
34 T	go ape over	18 <b>40%</b>	19 <b>53%</b>	12 <b>50%</b>	22 <b>61%</b>	26 <b>59%</b>	23 <b>58%</b>	120 <b>53%</b>
11 T	arrive at	22 <b>49%</b>	16 <b>44%</b>	11 <b>46%</b>	16 <b>44%</b>	25 <b>57%</b>	23 <b>58%</b>	113 <b>50%</b>
46 O	stitch up	26 <b>58%</b>	16 <b>44%</b>	13 <b>54%</b>	18 <b>50%</b>	21 <b>48%</b>	24 <b>60%</b>	118 <b>52%</b>
58 T	show off	24 <b>53%</b>	16 <b>44%</b>	11 <b>46%</b>	19 <b>53%</b>	21 <b>48%</b>	21 <b>53%</b>	112 <b>50%</b>
23 T	live off of	20 <b>44%</b>	14 <b>39%</b>	9 <b>38%</b>	16 <b>44%</b>	24 <b>55%</b>	25 <b>63%</b>	108 <b>48%</b>
20 S	fed up with	15 <b>33%</b>	16 <b>44%</b>	10 <b>42%</b>	13 <b>36%</b>	23 <b>52%</b>	13 <b>33%</b>	90 <b>40%</b>
19 T	work out	18 <b>40%</b>	8 <b>22%</b>	6 <b>25%</b>	12 <b>33%</b>	11 <b>25%</b>	12 <b>30%</b>	67 <b>30%</b>
18 S	lead up to	11 <b>24%</b>	6 <b>17%</b>	4 <b>17%</b>	14 <b>39%</b>	13 <b>30%</b>	17 <b>43%</b>	65 <b>29%</b>
53 T	wear out	14 <b>31%</b>	9 <b>25%</b>	5 <b>21%</b>	11 <b>31%</b>	10 <b>23%</b>	12 <b>30%</b>	61 <b>27%</b>
14 S	put up with	17 <b>38%</b>	3 <b>8%</b>	5 <b>21%</b>	12 <b>33%</b>	10 <b>23%</b>	12 <b>30%</b>	59 <b>26%</b>
50 T	rub out	11 <b>24%</b>	10 <b>28%</b>	7 <b>29%</b>	9 <b>25%</b>	10 <b>23%</b>	6 <b>15%</b>	53 <b>24%</b>
55 T	rule out	9 <b>20%</b>	4 <b>11%</b>	0	4 <b>11%</b>	7 <b>16%</b>	7 <b>18%</b>	31 <b>14%</b>

Table 13 shows Group A2 has both highest and lowest score on any multi-word verb. The expression *to hang together with* is the easiest of all multi-word verbs with averages that range from 75-100%. In contrast, *to rule out* appears to present the most difficulty for all groups as percentages range from 0 to 20%. Groups G1 appears to have most difficulty with multi-word verbs when twelve of sixteen expressions are under the established benchmark. At the same time Group D3 appears to have least difficulty with this type of expression with only six of eighteen

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expressions as difficult. The results in Table 14 indicate most respondents find expressions such as *to hang together with*, *to look forward to*, *to make up one's mind*, *to get the meaning across*, *to plow into*, *to go ape over*, *to show off*, *to arrive at the truth* and *to live off of* to be easiest. One possible explanation for these results is that there are Norwegian correspondents for several of these expressions such as *å henge sammen med noen*, *å se fram til*, *å gjør opp formeningen*, *å få meningen forstått*, *å pløye intil noen*, *å gå helt bananas*, *å komme fram til sannheten*, *å leve av noe*. Another common element these expressions share is that with the exception of *to stitch someone up like a kipper*, all of these expressions are categorized as transparent.

In contrast, most respondents find expressions such as *to be fed up with*, *if things work out somehow*, *to lead up to something*, *to wear out your own clothing*, *to put up with*, *to rub someone out* and *to rule out someone or something* to be more difficult. The common elements these expressions share is that they do not have Norwegian correspondent expressions and while most expressions are categorized as transparent, some are also categorized as semi-transparent.

Those metaphorical expressions that consist of verb + preposition *out*, as in *work out*, *wear out*, *rub out* and *rule out* range among the expressions respondents encounter as most difficult. In addition expressions with verb + prepositions *up* and *with* when they occur together in the same expression as in *fed up with* and *put up with*. Furthermore even though there is only one expression that consists of verb + preposition *up* + *to* (i.e. *to lead up to something*) respondents also appear to have difficulty with this pattern. In contrast verb + preposition *up* (i.e. *to stitch someone up like a kipper*) present difficulty only to Group G1.

The chi square analysis produces the following results: *hang together*-  $\chi^2=1.84$  (df=5), p= 0.8707, *look forward to*-  $\chi^2=2.59$  (df=5) p= 0.7614, *make up*-  $\chi^2=2.007$  (df=5), p= 0.8480, *plow into*-  $\chi^2=1.75$  (df=5), p= 0.8824, *to get off the hook* -  $\chi^2=6.63$  (df=5), p= 0.2488, *to get the meaning across* -  $\chi^2=0.24$  (df=5), p= 0.9985, *go ape over*-  $\chi^2=2.99$  (df=5), p= 0.7014, *arrive at*-  $\chi^2=1.84$  (df=5), p= 0.8729, *to stitch someone up like a kipper*-  $\chi^2=0.77$  (df=5), p= 0.9785, *show off*-  $\chi^2=0.55$  (df=5), p= 0.9898, *live off of*-  $\chi^2=3.29$  (df=5), p= 0.6538, *fed up with*-  $\chi^2=5.09$  (df=5), p= 0.4043, *work out*-  $\chi^2=2.76$ (df=5), p= 0.7356, *lead up to*-  $\chi^2=6.28$  (df=5), p=0.279, *wear out*-  $\chi^2=0.89$  (df=5), p= 0.9704, *put up with*-  $\chi^2=7.68$  (df=5), p= 0.1743, *rub out*-  $\chi^2=2.51$  (df=5), p= 0.7744, *rule out*  $\chi^2=5.49$ (df=5), p= 0.3590. These results show the p-value for all multi-word verb expressions is greater than 5% therefore we cannot reject the null hypothesis.

Any differences or variations in the values are due only to chance. There is no statistical connection between the different groups and number of correct answers. As a result we may use these findings to generalize about this population and surmise that the presence of Norwegian correspondent expressions appears to influence metaphorical comprehension.

### 4.3.7 Results of expressions classified as OTHER

There are thirty two expressions classified as OTHER. The results are divided into two tables. The first table presents the metaphorical expressions most respondents appear find to be easiest. The second table presents the metaphorical expressions that most respondents find to be most difficult. Those metaphorical expressions, which particular groups appear to have most difficulty with and fall under the benchmark, are shaded gray. The results of OTHER expressions the majority of respondents had least difficulty with are presented in

Table 14.

Table 14 easier OTHER expressions

Item #	OTHER Expressions	C 1	G1	A 2.	B 2	D 3	E 4	Invest. Totals
12 T	break the rules	40 <b>89%</b>	27 <b>68%</b>	21 <b>88%</b>	33 <b>92%</b>	41 <b>93%</b>	37 <b>93%</b>	199 <b>88%</b>
43 T	refresh one's memory	30 <b>67%</b>	27 <b>68%</b>	20 <b>83%</b>	30 <b>83%</b>	37 <b>84%</b>	30 <b>75%</b>	174 <b>77%</b>
32 S	hit the road	38 <b>84%</b>	24 <b>67%</b>	19 <b>79%</b>	28 <b>78%</b>	37 <b>84%</b>	28 <b>70%</b>	174 <b>77%</b>
40 T	spend time	34 <b>76%</b>	23 <b>64%</b>	18 <b>75%</b>	29 <b>81%</b>	36 <b>82%</b>	31 <b>78%</b>	171 <b>76%</b>
35 T	dream come true	28 <b>62%</b>	22 <b>61%</b>	17 <b>47%</b>	29 <b>81%</b>	28 <b>64%</b>	34 <b>85%</b>	158 <b>70%</b>
57 T	break a promise	32 <b>71%</b>	18 <b>50%</b>	13 <b>54%</b>	28 <b>78%</b>	35 <b>80%</b>	31 <b>78%</b>	157 <b>70%</b>
59 T	can't stand school	30 <b>67%</b>	20 <b>56%</b>	16 <b>67%</b>	22 <b>61%</b>	29 <b>66%</b>	31 <b>78%</b>	148 <b>66%</b>
48 T	make yourself at home	28 <b>62%</b>	21 <b>58%</b>	18 <b>75%</b>	28 <b>78%</b>	22 <b>50%</b>	29 <b>73%</b>	146 <b>65%</b>
15 T	change someone's mind	30 <b>67%</b>	21 <b>58%</b>	13 <b>54%</b>	23 <b>64%</b>	27 <b>61%</b>	26 <b>65%</b>	140 <b>62%</b>
60 T	at a loss for words	34 <b>76%</b>	21 <b>58%</b>	14 <b>58%</b>	18 <b>50%</b>	26 <b>59%</b>	26 <b>65%</b>	139 <b>62%</b>
28	in a crumpled	23	26	10	22	28	24	133

S	heap	51%	72%	42%	61%	64%	60%	59%
49	heave a deep sigh	29	18	11	25	27	21	131
S		64%	50%	46%	69%	61%	53%	58%
37	without a scrap of courage	21	18	11	20	29	23	122
T		47%	50%	46%	56%	66%	58%	54%
30	thrown upon myself	22	17	16	18	23	23	119
S		49%	47%	67%	50%	52%	58%	53%
33	dead easy to talk to	20	20	13	18	15	24	110
S		44%	56%	54%	50%	34%	60%	49%
51	rhythm grabs hold of you	16	17	11	20	23	23	110
S		36%	47%	46%	56%	52%	58%	49%

Table 14 presents the expressions with other types of linguistic structures that the majority of respondents find to be easier. The Investigation total indicates all expressions are above the established benchmark, however, some individual groups fall below the benchmark for particular expressions. The results indicate only Group A2 falls below the benchmark with the expressions *to fall in a crumpled heap* and *to heave a deep sigh*. Both Groups C1 and A2 appear to have difficulty with *to be without a scrap of courage*. Simultaneously Groups C1 and D3 appear to have difficulty with *to be dead easy to talk to*. Finally Groups C1, G1 and A2 appear to have difficulty with *if the rhythm grabs hold of you*.

Several of these expressions have Norwegian correspondents such as *å bryte reglene, å oppfiske minne, å bruke tiden, drømmer som kommer til virkeligheten, å bryte et løfte, skole lei, føle deg som hjemme, å forandre mening, å gå i falle gruve, å trekke pusten dypt, slapp av kroken, uten et snev av mot* and *rytmen griper deg*. The expression *to hit the road* does not have Norwegian correspondent. It was discovered that there were two distractors with the correct metaphorical alternative so it was necessary to reevaluate the scores for this expression. For this reason both alternatives are considered to be correct, and therefore this particular expression may not be discussed with any reliability. It appears that the presence of Norwegian correspondent expressions may play a significant role in metaphorical comprehension as respondents encounter expressions with correspondents to be the easiest to interpret. While many of these expressions are categorized as transparent some are categorized as semi-transparent. Furthermore, it may be difficult to measure which role degree of semantic transparency plays in metaphorical comprehension as so many expressions have Norwegian correspondents.

The chi square analysis produces the following results: *to break the rules*- $\chi^2=1.76$  (df=5),

$p = 0.8800$ , to refresh one's memory-  $\chi^2 = 2.63$  (df=5),  $p = 0.7563$ , to hit the road -  $\chi^2 = 3.09$  (df=5),  $p = 0.689$ , to spend time-  $\chi^2 = 2.00$  (df=5),  $p = 0.8481$ , a dream come true-  $\chi^2 = 1.69$  (df=5),  $p = 0.8893$ , to break a promise -  $\chi^2 = 5.00$  (df=5),  $p = 0.4157$ , to make yourself at home -  $\chi^2 = 2.19$  (df=5),  $p = 0.8212$ , you can't stand school -  $\chi^2 = 1.12$  (df=5),  $p = 0.9522$ , to change someone's mind -  $\chi^2 = 0.74$  (df=5),  $p = 0.9804$ , to fall in a crumpled heap -  $\chi^2 = 3.75$  (df=5),  $p = 0.5857$ , to heave a deep sigh -  $\chi^2 = 3.55$  (df=5),  $p = 0.6154$ , to be without a scrap of courage  $\chi^2 = 3.41$  (df=5),  $p = 0.6369$ , to be dead easy to talk to-  $\chi^2 = 2.00$  (df=5),  $p = 0.8485$ , and the rhythm grabs hold of you -  $\chi^2 = 2.73$  (df=5),  $p = 0.7400$ , at a loss-  $\chi^2 = 2.42$  (df=5),  $p = 0.7877$ . These results show the p-value for these OTHER expressions is greater than 5% therefore we cannot reject the null hypothesis. These findings may be used to generalize about the population.

The results of the expressions categorized as OTHER which most respondents had difficulty with are presented in Table 15.

Table 15 most difficult OTHER expressions

Item #	OTHER Expressions	C 1	G1	A 2.	B 2	D 3	E 4	Invest. Totals
56 S	let the matter drop	19 42%	13 36%	14 58%	19 53%	20 45%	20 50%	105 47%
17 T	make it	18 40%	20 56%	7 29%	13 36%	23 52%	20 50%	101 45%
41 T	out of one's mind	21 47%	18 50%	8 33%	14 39%	19 43%	21 53%	101 45%
44 O	blazes with that	17 38%	11 31%	15 63%	19 52%	20 45%	13 33%	95 42%
13 T	out of place	15 33%	16 44%	12 35%	17 47%	16 36%	15 38%	91 40%
29 S	in a ragged state	23 51%	8 22%	10 42%	14 39%	19 43%	15 38%	89 40%
38 S	down to earth	18 40%	17 47%	8 33%	14 39%	19 43%	13 33%	89 40%
31 S	gather steam	16 36%	14 39%	9 38%	15 42%	19 43%	13 33%	86 38%
36 S	chain of reasoning	16 36%	14 39%	10 42%	13 36%	14 32%	15 38%	82 36%
42 T	glued to the t.v.	19 42%	13 36%	9 38%	10 28%	13 30%	13 33%	77 34%
54 O	fight the good fight	16 36%	9 25%	7 29%	16 44%	15 34%	13 33%	76 34%
39 S	bound to change	11 24%	12 33%	5 21%	13 36%	18 41%	11 28%	70 31%



47 T	be close at hand	9 20%	13 36%	10 42%	13 36%	8 18%	11 28%	64 28%
45 O	be above board	11 24%	7 19%	5 21%	10 28%	10 23%	13 33%	56 25%
27 S	bawl bloody murder	6 13%	10 28%	4 16%	7 19%	8 18%	13 30%	47 21%
21 T	have a fit	10 22%	4 11%	5 21%	6 16%	5 11%	5 13%	35 16%

Table 15 presents the expressions with other types of linguistic structure that the majority of respondents find to be most difficult. The Investigation total indicates that all the expressions are below the established benchmark. Some individual groups are above the benchmark for particular expressions. The exceptions are Groups A2 and B2 with the majority of respondents who appear to understand the expression *to let the matter drop* and *to blazes with that*. Simultaneously Groups G1, D3 and E3 have a majority of respondents who appear to understand *to make it*. Finally only group G1 appears to understand *to be in a ragged state*. All of the remaining expressions are found to be difficult for all groups. A few of these expressions have Norwegian correspondents such as *la saken ligge, å greie det, ut av syne, lurvete, jordnær person, limt til tv'n*. Those Norwegian correspondents that translate similar such as *la saken ligge, ut av syne, å greie det, and lurvete* may have caused language interference (see 2.6).

The chi square produces the following results: *to let the matter drop*  $-\chi^2=2.14$  (df=5),  $p= 0.8284$ , *to make it*  $-\chi^2=4.51$  (df=5),  $p= 0.4782$ , *to blazes with that*  $-\chi^2=6.90$  (df=5),  $p= 0.2277$ , *in a ragged state*  $-\chi^2=5.25$  (df=5),  $p= 0.3855$ , *a down to earth person*  $-\chi^2=2.52$  (df=5),  $p= 0.7721$ , *to gather steam*  $-\chi^2=1.97$  (df=5),  $p= 0.8532$ , *a chain of reasoning*  $-\chi^2=0.33$  (df=5),  $p= 0.9968$ , *to be glued to the television*  $\chi^2=1.70$  (df=5),  $p= 0.8879$ , *to fight the good fight*  $-\chi^2=2.62$  (df=5),  $p= 0.7576$ , *bound to change*  $-\chi^2=4.81$  (df=5),  $p= 0.4391$ , *to be close at hand*  $-\chi^2=5.27$  (df=5),  $p= 0.3829$ , *to be aboveboard*  $-\chi^2=1.09$ (df=5),  $p= 0.9545$ , *to bawl bloody murder*  $-\chi^2=3.16$  (df=5),  $p= 0.6750$ , and *to have a fit*  $-\chi^2=2.93$  (df=5),  $p= 0.7094$ . These results show the p-value is greater than 5% therefore we cannot reject the null hypothesis. As we may use these results to generalize about the population we may surmise that the presence of similar Norwegian correspondent expressions may sometimes result in language interference.

### 4.3.8 Literal distracters

Several expressions employ the use of literal distracters to test the theory presented by Vosniadou (see 2.6). The expressions are presented in table form with the results that show the number of respondents who chose each alternative with the percentages. To determine if the presence of literal distracters influences metaphorical comprehension it is necessary to determine how many respondents choose neither the literal nor the metaphorical alternative. The fine tuned results are presented in Table 17.

Table 17 literal distracters

item #	Expression	Type	total # respondents
13	to be <i>out of place</i> mean to:		
	a) be different	metaphorical	92 40.9%
	b) be outside c) choose neither	literal	63 28% 70 31.1%
17	to <i>make it</i> means to:		
	a) succeed	metaphorical	101 44.9%
	b) create something c) choose neither	literal	99 44% 25 11%
19	if things <i>work out somehow</i> it means:		
	a) to do exercise	literal	31 13.9%
	b) to have a happy ending c) choose neither	metaphorical	66 29.3% 128 56.8%
20	to be <i>fed up with</i> means to:		
	a) eat too much	literal	80 35.6%
	b) had enough c) choose neither	metaphorical	91 40.4% 54 24%
21	to <i>have a fit</i> means to:		
	a) be healthy	literal	91 40.4%
	b) be very angry c) choose neither	metaphorical	33 14.7% 124 55.1%
22	to <i>look forward to something</i> means to:		
	a) feel excited about something in the future	metaphorical	167 74.2%
	b) look directly in front of you c) choose neither	literal	23 10.2% 35 15.5%
26	to <i>plow into</i> someone		
	a) run over someone with a plow	literal	39 17.3%
	b) hit against someone c) choose neither	metaphorical	127 56.4% 59 26.2%
27	to <i>bawl bloody murder</i> means to:		
	a) kill lots of people b) cry very loud	literal metaphorical	131 58.2% 45 20%

	c) choose neither		49	21.7%
28	to <i>be in a ragged state</i> means to:			
	a) worn old and torn clothing	literal	60	26.7%
	b) look a mess	metaphorical	90	40%
	c) choose neither		75	33.3%
30	to <i>be thrown upon myself</i> means to:			
	a) be left alone	metaphorical	118	52.4%
	b) be tossed aside	literal	48	21.3%
	c) choose neither		59	26.2%
34	to <i>go ape over</i> means to:			
	a) act like a monkey	literal	48	21.7%
	b) become very excited	metaphorical	120	53.3%
	c) choose neither		57	25.3%
42	if you are <i>glued</i> to the television			
	a) stuck to the television	literal	115	51.1%
	b) really interested in television	metaphorical	77	34.2%
	c) choose neither		33	14.6%
44	to <i>blazes with that</i> means:			
	a) I don't care!	metaphorical	94	41.7%
	b) I hope it burns!	literal	36	16%
	c) choose neither		95	42.2%
50	to <i>rub someone out</i> means to:			
	a) kill someone	metaphorical	53	23.6%
	b) erase or delete a picture of someone	literal	69	30.7%
	c) choose neither		103	45.7%
53	to <i>wear out</i> your own clothing means to:			
	a) wear something inside out	literal	59	26.2%
	b) become worn from use	metaphorical	60	26.7%
	c) choose neither		106	47.1%

The results presented in Table 17 indicate that for three expressions (e.g. *to have a fit*, *to bawl bloody murder* and *to be glued to the television*) more respondents chose the literal over the metaphorical meaning. In four cases (e.g. *to make it*, *to be fed up with*, *to rub someone out* and *to wear out your own clothing*) respondents choose both alternatives almost equally. Finally in eight cases (e.g. *to be out of place*, *if things work out somehow*, *to look forward to*, *to plow into*, *to be in a ragged state*, *to be thrown upon myself*, *to go ape over* and *to blazes with that*) more respondents chose the metaphorical over the literal meaning. When the other alternatives are included in the analysis the indication is that the presence of literal distracters interferes in only three of fifteen expressions. For the expressions *to make it*, *bawl bloody murder* and *glued to the t.v.*, the majority of respondents chose the literal meaning over all other alternatives. In contrast,

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for the remaining expressions the majority of respondents chose other alternatives rather than the literal distracter. From these results one may surmise that in some cases literal distracters interfere with metaphorical comprehension, however, this appears to be the exception rather than the rule. The three exceptions have different features which makes analysis difficult. For example, *to make it* has a similar Norwegian correspondent, *to bawl bloody murder* has no Norwegian correspondent, but *glued to the t.v.* has an identical Norwegian correspondent.

To sum up, this chapter has briefly discussed the atypical group's peripheral to this investigation based on information provided in the learner profiles. It has shown that although learners appear to have different points of origin they are in fact a homogeneous group. The descriptive statistics were presented in observed numbers and percentages which compare not only individual group performance but also the performance based on the entire population. These results indicated the typical level for vocabulary and metaphorical comprehension for the population of English language learners in eighth grade in this one town.

The inferential statistics were presented which indicate the results observed on particular vocabulary words and metaphorical expressions. Through a comparison of target words to their corresponding expressions it was established that knowledge of basic meaning does not necessarily play a significant role in metaphorical comprehension. Respondents are able to interpret metaphorical expressions while unsure of the literal senses of words. It was observed that the presence of Norwegian correspondent expressions may play a significant role in metaphorical comprehension. This hypothesis is substantiated by the results that demonstrate respondents find expressions that have identical Norwegian correspondents to be among the easiest to interpret. Consequently, respondents find those expressions which do not have Norwegian correspondent to be among the most difficult to interpret. The presence of Norwegian correspondents may also influence the role semantic transparency has on metaphorical comprehension. Semantic transparency most likely influences metaphorical comprehension in those cases where there are no Norwegian correspondent expressions. A comparison between the different types of linguistic structures revealed that respondents have difficulty with certain patterns of multi-word verbs which were (e.g. verb + preposition *out*, verb + preposition *up* + *with* when they occur together, and verb + preposition *up* + *to*).

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Finally, the findings for literal distracters have indicated that their presence as alternatives do not always interfere with metaphorical comprehension and may possibly be the exception rather than the rule. However, it is possible that literal distracters may interfere more for particular respondents than for others depending upon their individual level of metaphorical competence.

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## 5. Analysis and interpretation of the findings

This chapter presents an analysis of the findings together with an interpretation which ties the links together with the theory presented in chapter two. The aim of this investigation was to explore to which extent English language learners in Norway understand the metaphorical expressions they encounter in their English textbooks. Findings from previous research indicate that there are several factors that influence metaphorical comprehension among foreign language learners. Based on these findings, several factors were chosen to explore the extent by which they may influence metaphorical comprehension among English language learners in Norway. The factors chosen include different types of linguistic structures, the presence of Norwegian correspondent expressions, the role of semantic transparency and the presence of literal distracters as alternatives. Therefore the following hypothesis was formulated:

H: Metaphorical expressions in English that do not have Norwegian correspondent expressions, with complicated structures that are non-decomposable or opaque will be more difficult for foreign language learners.

The design used was a multiple choice exercise that included vocabulary words to test literal meaning and linguistic expressions to test metaphorical comprehension. The learners were instructed to choose among the four alternatives, that alternative which best described the word or metaphorical expression. As this investigation attempts to measure learner comprehension it was presumed that a correct alternative indicated understanding while an incorrect alternative indicated difficulty.

### 5.1 The findings

The respondents consist of 74% of learners attending eighth grade at lower secondary level from one town in Norway. Although learners were a heterogeneous group consisting of different language backgrounds, a comparison between learners indicated them to be homogeneous when 1) the majority of respondents were of Norwegian descent, 2) began English instruction at the

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same age, 3) received English instruction from a teacher whose native language was Norwegian and 4) there were too few “foreign” learners from so many different language roots, which made intergroup and intragroup analysis difficult. This indicates that learners have the same point of origin.

A chi-square analysis was performed on all the statistical results obtained and indicated that with only one exception there were no differences between the findings and as a result may be used to generalize about the population. The only exception was for the expression *to heave a deep sigh* which produced significant results. The fine tuned results indicated the numbers observed for this particular expression produced significant variations in the way respondents knew the vocabulary terms compared to the way they understood the expression. A possible explanation for these results most likely occurs because of the existence of a Norwegian correspondent expression. Although respondents have difficulty with the basic meaning of one term they are able to use knowledge from their first language to interpret the metaphorical meaning of the expression.

The statistics presented in chapter 4 indicated that there are differences among groups for some of the words and expressions as learners appear to be at different levels of language competence. The investigation total provided an indication of the areas of difficulty for the *majority* of respondents. For this reason, the discussion refers to the Investigation total rather than the results of individual groups. The established benchmark was 48% which indicated that most learners understand approximately half of the metaphorical expressions presented on the questionnaire. Based on the results obtained from the questionnaires the metaphorical expressions were sorted according to linguistic structures, from highest to lowest ranking scores, to more easily discern the results. These results indicated respondents have most difficulty with certain reoccurring multi-word verb patterns. In contrast, respondents appear to have least difficulty with metaphorical expressions that have identical Norwegian correspondent expressions. To simplify the discussion an overview of the metaphorical expressions are presented together with their common elements in table format. The areas shaded gray indicate those expressions that lie below the established benchmark, and the bold font indicates those expressions that employ the use of a literal distracter. For example in column three, the expression *to rub out* is among the most difficult of expressions for respondents, it employs the

use of a literal distracter among its alternatives, and is categorized as a multi-word verb that is considered to be transparent. The overview of the results is presented in Table 18.

Table 18 an overview of results with all factors explored

Expression	Degree	%	Expression	Degree	%	Expression	Degree	%
hang together with (MWV)	T	89%	<b>look forward to (MWV)</b>	T	<b>74%</b>	spend time (OTHER)	T	76%
make up one's mind (MWV)	T	64%	at a loss for words (OTHER)	T	62%	<b>plow into (MWV)</b>	T	<b>57%</b>
make yourself at home (OTHER)	T	65%	without a scrap of courage (OTHER)	T	54%	<b>rub out (MWV)</b>	T	<b>24%</b>
change someone mind (OTHER)	T	62%	arrive at the truth (MWV)	T	50%	<b>rule out (MWV)</b>	T	<b>14%</b>
show off (MWV)	T	50%	live off of (MWV)	T	48%	<b>work out (MWV)</b>	T	<b>30%</b>
break a promise (OTHER)	T	70%	can't stand school (OTHER)	T	66%	<b>wear out (MWV)</b>	T	<b>27%</b>
break the rules (OTHER)	T	88%	dream come true (OTHER)	T	70%	<b>make it (OTHER)</b>	T	<b>45%</b>
close at hand (OTHER)	T	<b>28%</b>	<b>go ape over (MWV)</b>	T	53%	out of mind (OTHER)	T	45%
<b>have a fit (OTHER)</b>	T	<b>16%</b>	refresh one's memory (OTHER)	T	77%	<b>out of place (OTHER)</b>	T	<b>40%</b>
get the meaning across (MWV)	T	55%	get off the hook (MWV)	T	56%	put up with (MWV)	S	26%
<b>be thrown upon myself (OTHER)</b>	S	53%	<b>bawl bloody murder (OTHER)</b>	S	<b>21%</b>	<b>fed up with (MWV)</b>	S	<b>40%</b>
heave a deep sigh (OTHER)	S	58%	dead easy to talk to (OTHER)	S	49%	gather steam (OTHER)	S	38%
rhythm grabs hold of (OTHER)	S	49%	let the matter drop (OTHER)	S	47%	lead up to (MWV)	S	29%
<b>in a ragged state (OTHER)</b>	S	<b>40%</b>	down to earth person (OTHER)	S	40%	hit the road (OTHER)	S	77%
chain of reasoning (OTHER)	S	36%	bound to change (OTHER)	S	31%	above board (OTHER)	O	25%
stitch up like a kipper (MWV)	O	52%	fight the good fight (OTHER)	O	34%	<b>blazes with that (OTHER)</b>	O	<b>42%</b>
in a crumpled heap (OTHR)	S	59%	<b>glued to the television (OTHER)</b>	T	<b>34%</b>			



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## 5.2 Easier expressions

Table 18 presents the metaphorical expressions categorized according to linguistic structure, presence of literal distracters, and degree of semantic transparency. The percentages presented are based on the investigation total rather than individual group percentages. These results indicate that respondents appear to understand the metaphorical meaning for different types of linguistic structures, and expressions categorized with different degrees of semantic transparency. The categorization of semantic transparency is subjective and may vary from one individual to another. For this reason it may be difficult to establish which role semantic transparency actually plays without an in-depth analysis based on each particular respondent.

Of the twenty seven expressions found to be least difficult, seven are categorized as multi-word verbs (e.g. *hang together with*, *make up one's mind*, *show off*, *get the meaning across*, *stitch someone up like a kipper*, *look forward to*, *arrive at the truth*, *live off of*, *go ape over*, *get off the hook*, and *plow into*), and sixteen are categorized as other types of structures (e.g. *make yourself at home*, *change someone's mind*, *break a promise*, *break the rules*, *thrown upon myself*, *heave a deep sigh*, *rhythm grabs hold of you*, *in a crumpled heap*, *at a loss for words*, *without a scrap of courage*, *can't stand school*, *a dream come true*, *refresh someone's memory*, *dead easy to talk to*, *spend time* and *hit the road*) with different degrees of semantic transparency.

The majority of these expressions are decomposable with individual word meanings that contribute to the metaphorical interpretation and/or have the potential for literal translation. For example, while respondents appear unsure of the meaning of the term *scrap* it is still possible to interpret the meaning of the expression *without a scrap of courage*, or “to be without courage”. The only expression found to be easiest which is non-decomposable is *to stitch someone up like a kipper*. Most likely this expression has been encountered previously, and has been acquired into the mental lexicon of some of the respondents. This logic is based on the results presented in Table 11, which indicated that while 22.7% of respondents knew both word and expression 29.8% knew the expression but not the word. Among the expressions respondents scored highest on were four that employed the use of literal distracters. In these four cases, respondents chose the metaphorical over the literal meaning. It appears that the presence of literal distracters does not necessarily influence metaphorical comprehension when learners know a given expression. In

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addition, many of the expressions which learners find to be easiest also have identical or similar Norwegian correspondents (e.g. *å henge sammen med noen, å se fram til, å gjør opp formeningen, å pløye inntil noen, å gå helt bananas, å komme fram til sannheten, å leve av noe, å bryte reglene, å oppfriske minne, å bruke tiden, drømmer som kommer til virkeligheten, å bryte et løfte, skole lei, føl deg som hjemme, slapp av kroken, gå i falle gruve, å trekke pusten dypt, uten et snev av mot, rytmen griper deg, å forandre mening, and å få meningen forstått*).

Findings from Irujo indicate second language learners of English, use knowledge from their first language (Spanish) to interpret idioms in second language comprehension. Her findings also indicate that idioms that transfer similar are understood almost as well as idioms that transfer identically, but may cause language interference. Those idioms that transfer different are among the most difficult to understand, but cause least language interference. For the respondents in her study, the idioms understood were those which were transparent, used most frequently, had simple vocabulary, and simple structures (1986, p. 287).

The results from this investigation produce similar findings. The presence of correspondent metaphorical expressions in the native language appears to influence metaphorical comprehension in the second language. Furthermore, this may explain how respondents are able to interpret a metaphorical expression without knowledge the literal or basic senses of certain component words. In those cases where a Norwegian correspondent exists, the type of linguistic structure or degree of semantic transparency seems to play a lesser role in metaphorical comprehension. The presence of so many identical Norwegian correspondent expressions may be explained by Lakoff's theory (1989) that all human beings think the same way at a fundamental level, and that basic metaphor is common throughout cultures that think and experience life in the same way. Simultaneously, similar correspondents may be explained by Deignan theory (2003) that metaphorical expressions may vary among languages. In those cases where there is no Norwegian correspondent, a degree of cultural awareness may be necessary as suggested by Littlemore (2006) that learners require a high degree of cultural awareness to understand extended meanings. One example is the expression *to stitch someone up like a kipper*. Many respondents did not understand this expression, most likely because it belongs to the British culture. A degree of cultural awareness might lower the level of difficulty of this expression. The learners that understood this expression have most likely have acquired it into the

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mental lexicon having previously learned it.

The findings from this investigation indicate that for this population in most cases the easier metaphorical expressions share these common elements 1) have identical Norwegian correspondent expressions, 2) are either decomposable or have potential for literal interpretation, 3) have a degree of familiarity and are most likely encountered with frequency, 4) have simple vocabulary, 5) have simple but varied structures, and as a result 6) literal distracters do not appear to influence metaphorical comprehension.

### 5.3 Most difficult expressions

There are twenty three metaphorical expressions which presented difficulty to learners. Of these expressions, seven are categorized as multi-word verbs (e.g. *to rub out*, *to rule out*, *to work out*, *to wear out*, *to put up with*, *fed up with* and *lead up to*), and sixteen are categorized as other types of linguistic structures (e.g. *close at hand*, *have a fit*, *in a ragged state*, *bawl bloody murder*, *let the matter drop*, *down to earth person*, *bound to change*, *fight the good fight*, *glued to the t.v.*, *make it*, *out of one's mind*, *out of place*, *gather steam*, *above board*, and *to blazes with that*).

These metaphorical expressions share some common factors. Many expressions are non-decomposable where the individual words do not contribute to the metaphorical meaning (e.g. *to be above board*, *to blazes with that*, *to fight the good fight*). While the expressions *to be out of one's mind*, *to be out of place* and *to be close at hand* are decomposable it is possible respondents have not made the connection between the Norwegian correspondent expressions. In addition, the multi-word verb expressions in this category look confusingly similar which may have influenced metaphorical comprehension. This may be substantiated by the findings that revealed respondents have difficulty with certain reoccurring multi-word verb patterns (see 5.3.1).

Previous research indicates that the complexity of the linguistic input may influence metaphorical comprehension. Several of these expressions have alternatives that are very similar to each other, which may have increased their level of difficulty. For example *if you are bound to change*, presents respondents with alternatives such as (e.g. “you are tied to change”, “you are never going to change”, you are most likely to change”, and “you are certain to change”). This type of alternative may place a stronger demand on the learners ability to distinguish between the

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different meanings in order choose the correct answer.

Vosniadou (1984) suggests the presence of literal distracters influence metaphorical comprehension, with the result that learners choose the literal meaning rather than the metaphorical meaning. Eleven of these expressions employed the use of literal distracters among the alternatives. For the multi-word verb expressions that employed literal distracters, respondents chose almost equally between the literal and metaphorical meanings for *to rub out*, *to wear out*, and *fed up with*. The exception was for the expression *to work out* where 29.3% of the respondents chose the metaphorical meaning 13.9% chose the literal meaning, and 56.8% chose neither. The fine tuned results for *to rub someone out* indicate that 45.7% of the respondents chose neither the literal nor the metaphorical meaning. In this particular case it is possible the result may be attributed to textbook error and compounded by the presence of the literal distracter (see 1.2). The fine tuned results for *to wear out your own clothing* indicate 47.1% of the respondents chose other alternatives over the literal or metaphorical meaning. For the expression *fed up with*, 24% of the respondents chose other alternatives over the literal and metaphorical meaning. All of the expressions mentioned above have alternatives that are very similar to each other which may have increased the level of difficulty (see Appendix 7). Furthermore, this similarity in alternatives may have caused confusion and may possibly explain why the literal distracters' did not cause interference. These results indicate that the presence of literal distracters does not always influence metaphorical comprehension. Metaphorical comprehension is influenced by other factors such as the complexity of the linguistic input as seen when similar distracters are presented as alternatives. Furthermore, multi-word verb structures also are an area of difficulty for metaphorical comprehension.

Lindstromberg (1991, 1998) suggests that prepositions are an area of difficulty for English language learners because they are frequently used metaphorically. The findings from this investigation have indicated that learners have difficulty with the basic senses of particular words. Since respondents appear to be unfamiliar with the number of related but distinct meanings or senses of words, this may further explain why multi-word verbs appear to cause difficulty for interpretation. In addition, Holme (2004) suggests that while idioms often have a conventionalized meaning, the specificity of meaning for multi-word verbs cannot be predicted. When expressions may have multiple meanings and do not have Norwegian correspondents then

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respondents have difficulty interpreting which metaphorical meaning is required.

Some linguistic structures categorized as OTHER which presented most difficulty to respondents also employed the use of literal distracters. For the expressions *to have a fit*, *to bawl bloody murder*, and *to be glued to the t.v.*, in these cases, the majority of respondents chose the literal meaning. The fine tuned results indicate that for the expression *to have a fit*, 55.1% of the respondents chose other alternatives, therefore the presence of a literal distracter was not the reason respondents have difficulty with this expression. This expression was the most difficulty of all the metaphorical expressions for respondents to understand. It is possible this difficulty may be attributed to either the absence of a Norwegian correspondent expression or if one does exist then it translates differently.

For the expressions *to bawl bloody murder* and *to be glued to the tv*, the literal distracter did appear to interfere with metaphorical comprehension, as results show a low percentage of respondents chose other alternatives. The expression *to bawl bloody murder* is an example of an expression that varies among languages. In American English it is commonly used as *to scream bloody murder*. This further indicates that respondents require the cultural awareness to link the two expressions to the same meaning. The expression *to be glued to the t.v.* translates identically but it is questionable as to whether it is commonly used to express this concept in the Norwegian language.

The fine tuned results for the expressions *in a ragged state*, *out of place* and *to blazes with that*, indicate that in all three cases more respondents chose other alternatives rather than the literal distracter. The only one of these expressions that has a Norwegian correspondent is *in a ragged state*. However, it is questionable if *lurvete* is a metaphorical or literal correspondent. It is possible that as the Norwegian correspondent is only similar which may have caused language interference as is indicated by Irujo's findings. The final expression that employed the use of a literal distracter is *to make it*. The respondents chose equally between the metaphorical and literal meaning for the expression and only 11% of the respondents chose other alternatives. This indicates that the literal distracter may be the reason respondents had difficulty, and/or the presence of a similar Norwegian correspondent *å greie det*, may have caused language interference.

The fine tuned results revealed that the expressions where the presence of a literal

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distracter did cause interference for metaphorical comprehension were for *to make it, bawl bloody murder* and *glued to the tv*. Literal distracters may often cause interference among younger children but there is little indication that it has caused interference in this investigation (see 2.6). Although respondents have chosen literal distracters in some cases, it has been more the exception rather than the rule. Based on these results, there is insufficient evidence to suggest that the presence of literal distracters alone cause interference for metaphorical comprehension at this level of language competence.

With the exception of *glued to the t.v.*, the presence of an identical Norwegian correspondent appeared to positively influence metaphorical comprehension. Moreover, the presence of similar Norwegian correspondents caused language interference only in certain cases.

Vosniadou (1984) suggests children rely more on context than adults do which may be true, however learners at this level appear to be less dependent on situational context than smaller children. The expressions were presented with minimal context which impeded their ability to deduce the meaning which a situational context provides. Their ability to interpret metaphorical expressions most likely occurs because learners share the common beliefs and knowledge of both American and British culture, which makes recovery of metaphorical meaning possible. In addition, many of the expressions have Norwegian correspondents which may have also influenced metaphorical comprehension. To provide the type of context consistent with the metaphorical meaning does not measure metaphorical comprehension, only the learner's ability to use logic and infer meaning from the clues provided (Gibbs, & Gerrig, 1989; Winner, 1998).

The presence of Norwegian correspondents may also influence the degree of semantic transparency. Those expressions that are acquired into the mental lexicon in Norwegian may be easier to decompose than those that do not have a correspondent. While the degree of semantic transparency may influence metaphorical comprehension, eventually even expressions categorized as opaque will become transparent to a learner, once the meaning of an expression has been learned and acquired. The degree of decomposability will depend on the intuition of a particular person to determine for himself, and what may be decomposable for one person may be abnormally decomposable for someone else (Gibbs, Nayak, & Cutting, 1989, p. 578).

The findings from this investigation have indicated that the metaphorical expressions respondents find to be most difficult, share these common elements 1) the absence of Norwegian

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correspondent expressions, 2) are either abnormally decomposable or non-decomposable, 3) have certain structures such as reoccurring multi-word verb patterns, 4) the level of difficulty was increased by the presence of similar alternatives, and in some cases 5) compounded by the presence of literal distracters.

### 5.3.1 Patterns of difficulty

The analysis of linguistic structures indicated respondents are able to recognize the metaphorical meanings of all types of structures. However, there appear to be certain patterns that learners have more difficulty with. To determine whether these findings were conclusive, the findings from the pilot study were consulted to observe if the same patterns also occurred and resulted in difficulty for those respondents. When the results from the investigation and pilot study were compared, the findings indicated that the patterns respondents appear to have most difficulty with are 1) verb + preposition *out* as in *to be +out of mind*, *to be +out of place*, *if things work out somehow*, *to wear out* your own clothing, *to rub someone out*, *to rule out* someone or something, *to stand out*, and *to turn out*. 2) verb + prepositions *up* and (*with*), when they occur together in the same expression as in *to be up to speed*, *to come up with*, *to be +fed up with* someone, and *to put up with* someone. 3) verb + preposition *off* as in *to run off*, *to come off*, *to show off*, and *to live off of.*, and 4) verb + preposition *away* as in *to give away*, *to break away*, and *to slip away*.

The pilot study presented respondents with similar expressions where these same patterns occurred. Pattern 1) produced similar results in two of three cases with only 29.3% of respondents that understood the metaphorical meaning of *to turn out somehow*, and simultaneously only 39% understood the metaphorical meaning of *to stand out somehow*. The only exception was for the expression *to figure out something* where 53.7% of the respondents understood its metaphorical meaning. Pattern 2) had only one expression that fit this category, *to come up with* was recognized by 78% of the respondents. When all the verbs that occurred with the preposition *up*, from both the pilot study and the investigation were included (e.g. *to show up*, *to make up one's mind*, *to break up*, *to lead up to* and *to be up to speed*) then the results indicated that respondents had difficulty with three of these five expressions.

Although respondents scored 85.4% on *to break up*, and 64% on *to make up one's mind* scores declined for the expressions *to show up* which scored 31.7%, *to lead up to* 29% ,and *to be*

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*up to speed* 17.1%. In these cases it is possible that the degree of semantic transparency has influenced metaphorical comprehension. The expressions *to break up* and *to make up one's mind* are basic metaphor and as a result easier to decompose. It is also possible that polysemy was a factor that influenced metaphorical comprehension as certain expressions may have multiple meanings. For example *to show up* could mean “to expose or reveal someone” or “to arrive somewhere”. In contrast *to break up* has a conventionalized meaning, “to separate”, and comprehension may be explained by familiarity and literality (see 2.5). In other words, the verb *to break* can be interpreted literally and contribute to the overall metaphorical meaning or respondents may be familiar with this expression.

Many linguistic structures classified as OTHER were understood by respondents. The findings from the investigation and pilot study indicated respondents have difficulty with *have constructions*. For example respondents do not “understand” *to have a fit*, *to have spare time*, and *to not have much time for someone*. Respondents were presented with three similes (e.g. *to be like cheese on pizza*, *to stitch someone up like a kipper*, *to be as dead as a doornail*) and only *to be dead as a doornail* was not understood. Expressions such as *close at hand*, *to close in on* and *to close down* also presented difficulty for respondents, which may possibly be attributed to the homograph “close” as the reason for confusion. Most likely, respondents confused the two meanings of these words and were unable to differentiate between these two words. Six expressions were presented that begin with *if* such as *if things work out somehow*, *if you are bound to change*, *if you are glued to the tv*, *if the rhythm grabs hold of you*, *if you say to fight the good fight* and *if you say you can't stand school*. Results indicated 66% understood *if you say you can't stand school* and 48.9% understood *if the rhythm grabs hold of you*. Both expressions have similar Norwegian correspondents. The remaining expressions scored from 34 to 29%, which may indicate that this particular type of structure is more difficult for respondents to interpret particularly as most do not have correspondent expressions.

Cameron (2003) indicates that metaphorical comprehension follows the acquisition of domain distinctions. The domains children are most likely to acquire first would be that of animals. The pilot study and this investigation presented respondents with expressions that may be categorized in this domain such as (e.g. *to be hooked on*, *to fly into a rage*, *to not give a hoot*, *to get off the hook*, *to be hooked on*, *to fly into a rage*, *to go ape over*, *to stitch someone up like a*



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*kipper*, *to screech to a halt* and *to squeal the house down*). The results indicated that with the exception of the expression *to screech to a halt*, all of these expressions scored over 50% which may be substantiated by Cameron's findings. Metaphorical expressions from this domain are easier for learners to understand.

Other conceptual domains presented had to do with the concept of time such as the expression *to spend time*, which 76% of all respondents understood. The pilot study included the following expressions which are presented together with the percentages observed, such as *to measure time* 26.8%, *to have spare time* 46.3%, *the whole time* 29.3%, *to run out of time* 58.5% and *to not have much time for* 12.2%. These findings may indicate that although the concept of time may be considered a universal experiential domain in some cases respondents have difficulty understanding this concept. Whether the difficulty may be attributed to the type of linguistic structure that occurs or to the absence of a Norwegian correspondent is difficult to determine. The expression *the whole time* translates as *hele tiden*, yet respondents were unable to choose "continuously" as its metaphorical meaning. Similar results were observed with the expression *to measure time*, which translates as *å måle tiden*. Respondents chose evenly among all four alternatives which may indicate that they do not understand the concept of time as easily as they understand concepts from the domain of animals.

Respondents also had difficulty with the expressions that have to do with the concept of death such as *dead easy to talk to*, *dead as a doornail*, *a down to earth person*, *to rub someone out*, and *to slip away*. The findings reveal that the only expression respondents appear to understand is *dead easy to talk to* with 48.9% of respondents who are able to interpret the metaphorical meaning. This is the only expression in this category that translates into Norwegian (i.e. *dødslett å snakke med*).

This investigation has exposed the existence of certain patterns that appear to present difficulty and therefore influence metaphorical comprehension among the English language learners that participated. In many instances, the presence of Norwegian correspondent expressions influences metaphorical comprehension. Respondents understand expressions from the domain of animals but have difficulty with the concept of time and the concept of death.

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## 5.4 Basic meaning

On the basis of what has been tested the generalized results indicated learners understood some metaphorical expressions without knowledge of the basic meaning of target words. These expressions are *to plow into*, *in a crumpled heap*, *without a scrap of courage*, *to heave a deep sigh* and *to stitch someone up like a kipper*. The numbers from the fine tuned results indicated 41.3% of the respondents chose the correct metaphorical meaning of *to plow into*, regardless of confusion concerning the literal sense of the target word *plow*. An explanation for this confusion was attributed to the different spelling that exists between British and American English. For the expression *without a scrap of courage* 26.7% chose the correct metaphorical meaning while unsure of the literal sense of *scrap*, however this expression has the potential for literal interpretation without the term *scrap*. Finally, for the expression *to stitch someone up like a kipper* 29.8% chose the correct metaphorical meaning while unsure of the literal sense of *kipper*.

In contrast, some target words were understood but not the metaphorical expression such as *to bawl bloody murder*, *to blaze with that* and *to be in a ragged state*. The numbers indicated 50.2% of the respondents did not choose the correct metaphorical meaning for the expression *to bawl bloody murder* even though they understood the literal sense of *bawl*. For the expression *to blaze with that*, 37.8% did not choose the correct metaphorical meaning even though they understand the literal sense of *blaze*. Finally for the expression *to be in a ragged state*, 44% did not choose the correct metaphorical meaning even though they understood the literal sense of *ragged*.

These results indicate that metaphorical comprehension is influenced by factors other than just knowledge of basic meaning. While knowledge of basic meaning may influence interpretation of the metaphorical meaning of an expression it does not guarantee metaphorical comprehension. Metaphorical comprehension involves more than just knowledge of basic meanings. For example while the Norwegian correspondent *lurvete* may have caused language interference in *to be in a ragged state*, in many cases the presence of Norwegian correspondents provide a clue to metaphorical meaning. This is substantiated with the expressions *to blaze with that* and *to bawl bloody murder* which have no counterparts and as a result present difficulty for respondents. Furthermore, the degree of difficulty of these expressions is possibly further

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compounded by abnormal decomposability and the presence of literal distracters.

The findings for multiple target words further substantiate the conclusion that metaphorical comprehension involves more than just knowledge of basic meaning. The two metaphorical expressions that consisted of more than one target tested for vocabulary comprehension are *to fall in a crumpled heap* and *to heave a deep sigh* (see Table 12).

For the expression *to fall in a crumpled heap*, the numbers indicated 28.4% of the respondents chose the correct metaphorical meaning while unsure of the literal sense of *crumple*. Simultaneously 37.3% chose the correct metaphorical meaning of the same expression while unsure of the literal sense of *heap*. In addition, 18.2% of the respondents chose the correct metaphorical meaning of *to fall in a crumple heap* while unsure of the literal sense of both *crumple* and *heap*. Only 8.4% of the respondents who understood the literal sense of both *crumple* and *heap* did not choose the correct metaphorical meaning for *to fall in a crumpled heap*.

For the expression *to heave a deep sigh*, the numbers indicated 23.6% of the respondents chose the correct metaphorical meaning while unsure of the literal sense of *heave*. Simultaneously 39.6% chose the correct metaphorical meaning of the same expression when unsure of the literal sense of *sigh*. Finally, 16.4% of the respondents chose the correct metaphorical meaning of *to heave a deep sigh* while unsure of the literal sense of both *heave* and *sigh*. Only 4% of the respondents who understood the literal sense of both *heave* and *sigh* did not choose the correct metaphorical meaning for *to heave a deep sigh*. Both expressions have similar Norwegian correspondents which may have influenced metaphorical comprehension and may explain why metaphorical comprehension is possible without knowledge of basic meaning.

On the other hand, these results may possibly be explained through theory presented by Haycroft (1978) and studies carried by Crow and Quigly (1985) who suggest that learners may know the basic meaning of words well enough to understand what they read without being able to produce them on their own. It is possible learners are not able to pick the correct definition of a word yet still manage to infer its meaning from the individual meanings of other component words.

The findings from the ten words tested in this investigation may indicate that in some cases knowledge of basic meaning is not always a factor that influences metaphorical comprehension. The presence of an identical Norwegian correspondent influences

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comprehension without knowledge of basic meaning because the expression has most likely been acquired in the mental lexicon of the native language. If an expression is non-decomposable, meaning that the constituent words do not contribute to its meaning, then knowledge of basic meaning may play an insignificant role. However, for multi-word verbs limited knowledge of the number of related but distinct meanings or senses of words often impedes metaphorical comprehension, and in these cases knowledge of basic meaning may play a significant role.

To sum up, this chapter has presented an analysis of the findings for this investigation and an interpretation which ties the links together with the theory presented in chapter two.

Although respondents have the same point of origin, they find themselves at different levels of language acquisition.

An overview of the results has been presented, in table form that sums up all the factors explored. The expressions respondents found to be easiest have been presented along with the common elements that they share. Simultaneously, the expressions respondents found to be most difficult have been presented along with the common elements that they share. The indications concerning the role knowledge of basic meaning, the presence of literal distracters, and the role semantic transparency play in metaphorical comprehension have been presented and discussed. It is the conclusion that the research question has been answered and the hypothesis confirmed.

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## 6. Findings and implications

The findings indicate English language learners appear to be homogeneous as the majority have the same starting point, but find themselves at different levels of language acquisition which explains the variations in the data. In the area of metaphorical comprehension the findings from this investigation concur with the findings from Irujo (1986).

- Metaphorical expressions that transfer identically are easiest for respondents to understand.
- Metaphorical expressions that transfer similar are understood almost as well, but in some cases, present difficulty.
- Metaphorical expressions that do not have Norwegian correspondents are most difficult to understand.

Based on the findings from this investigation the following hypotheses are drawn:

- Metaphorical expressions that have identical or similar Norwegian correspondent expressions are easier for English language learners because they are able to transfer knowledge from their native language which helps them understand metaphorical expressions in English. For these types of expressions factors such as linguistic structure, knowledge of basic meaning, or degree of semantic transparency play a lesser significant role in metaphorical comprehension.
- Metaphorical expressions that do not have Norwegian correspondent expressions are more difficult for English language learners because they are unable to transfer knowledge from their native language and are thus not provided with a clue to the metaphorical meaning in English. For these types of expressions factors such as linguistic structure, knowledge of basic meaning, or degree of semantic transparency play a significant role in metaphorical comprehension.
- The role factors such as linguistic structure, knowledge of basic meaning, and degree of semantic transparency plays in metaphorical comprehension may be measured by degree of influence.

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## 6.1 Some expressions are easier than others

The results of this investigation indicated that Norwegian correspondent expressions influence metaphorical comprehension. In those cases where there is an identical Norwegian correspondent expression the majority of learners appear to have understood the metaphorical expression in English. Generally speaking, the presence of a Norwegian correspondent expression influences metaphorical comprehension in the sense that other factors are less likely to interfere with comprehension. When an expression has been acquired into the mental lexicon then factors such as knowledge of basic meaning, linguistic structure, the degree of semantic transparency, the presence of similar distracters, or literal distracters seemed to cause less interference for metaphorical comprehension. The exception was for the expression *to be glued to the t.v.* Although this expression transfers identically it appeared the literal distracter interfered with metaphorical comprehension. It is possible that while this expression transfers identical it is not commonly used in the Norwegian language. Furthermore, it is these particular types of expressions that were among the easiest for learners to understand (e.g. *to hang together with, to look forward to, to plow into, to break the rules, to refresh one's memory, a dream come true, to break a promise, off the hook, without a scrap of courage, rhythm grabs hold of you, to change someone's mind, and to get the meaning across*) that occur with identical Norwegian correspondents (e.g. *å henge sammen med noen, å se fram til, å gjør opp formeningen, å pløye inntil noen, å bryte reglene, å oppfriske minne, drømmer som kommer til virkeligheten, å bryte et løfte, slapp av kroken, uten et snev av mot, rytmen griper deg, å forandre mening, and å få mening forstått*).

In those cases where there is only a similar Norwegian correspondent expression learners appear to have understood the metaphorical expressions almost as well as the identical correspondents, however, in some cases there was evidence of language interference. For instance, expressions such as (e.g. *to make up one's mind, to go ape over, to arrive at the truth, to live off of, to spend time, can't stand school, to make yourself at home, in a ragged state, to make it, to heave a deep sigh, to be out of one's mind, a down to earth person, to let the matter drop, to show off, to be close at hand, and to fall in a crumpled heap*) transfer similar (e.g. *å gjør opp formeningen, å gå helt bananas, å komme fram til sannheten, å leve av noe, å bruke tid, skole lei,*

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*føl deg som hjemme, lurvete, å greie det, å trekke pusten dypt, ut av synet, jordnær, la saken ligge, å vise seg frem, i nærheten, and å gå i falle gruve*). The expressions where there appeared to be evidence of language interference were (e.g. *to be out of one's mind, to let the matter drop, to make it, to be in a ragged state, a down to earth person, and to be close at hand*).

These findings may have implications for metaphorical comprehension among English language learners in Norway. If learners are made aware of the fact that certain metaphorical expressions in English have identical Norwegian counterparts, then this may improve reading comprehension. In addition, it may also facilitate the learning of these expressions and help learners to acquire them into the mental lexicon in the second language. It is possible that this would most likely help learners to produce these expressions in both oral and written form correctly, and thereby make learners more fluent in English. It is a common problem that foreign language learners fail to produce expressions authentically, and often translate an expression from the native language into the target language. This substitution of other words makes the expression sound funny or different. For example *to show off*, might be reproduced as “to show him forward”.

For those expressions that have similar Norwegian correspondents, by placing emphasis on the differences between the wordings in the two languages (native and target) may help learners acquire these expressions into the mental lexicon at a faster rate, because they notice how the forms vary. For those metaphorical expressions that are distinct from each other, through decomposition of their constituent parts in both languages, learners may develop an awareness that facilitates a better understanding of the expression.

Conclusion: Metaphorical expressions that have identical and/or similar Norwegian correspondent expressions are easier for English language learners because they are provided with a clue to facilitate metaphorical comprehension. As a result other factors such as linguistic structure, degree of semantic transparency, knowledge of basic meaning, and literal distracters seem to cause less language interference for metaphorical comprehension than expressions without correspondents.

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## 6.2 Some expressions are more difficult than others

The findings indicated metaphorical expressions which do not have Norwegian correspondents are among the most difficult for learners to understand such as (e.g. *to gather steam*, *to fight the good fight*, *to hit the road*, *bound to change*, *above board*, *to blaze with that*, *to bawl bloody murder*, *to have a fit*, *to be out of place*, *to be fed up with someone*, *if things work out somehow*, *to wear your clothes out*, *to put up with someone*, *to rub someone out*, and *to rule out something*).

These expressions most likely caused difficulty because they are encountered with less frequency and therefore unfamiliar. Moreover, respondents must interpret their meanings without any clues as to their meanings. For this reason factors such as linguistic structure, knowledge of basic meaning, and degree of semantic transparency influence metaphorical comprehension to a greater degree than for expressions that have a Norwegian correspondent. The complexity of the linguistic input or level of difficulty will most likely increase when these types of expressions have either similar alternatives or the presence of literal distracters. For example the expression *to fight the good fight*, is non-decomposable or opaque, and has similar alternatives such as (e.g. “*to fight for a noble cause*”, “*to fight for your honor*”, “*to fight until someone gets killed*” and “*to fight until you lose the battle*”). The results show 34% of the respondents chose the correct metaphorical meaning. Another example is *to rub someone out*. This expression presents difficulty to respondents most likely because it employs the use of a literal distracter, and in addition has alternatives that are similar to one another such as (e.g. “*give someone a massage*”, “*tickle someone*”, “*kill someone*”, and “*to erase or delete someone*”). The results show 24% of the respondents chose the correct metaphorical meaning. Although this expression is categorized as transparent, this type of structure presents difficulty for English language learners as it is a multi-word verb. The findings indicated respondents have difficulty with multi-word verbs that employ the use of the following prepositions (e.g. *out*, *out + of*, and *up + with*).

For metaphorical expressions that do not have a Norwegian counterpart, greater emphasis needs to be placed on these types of expressions. To explain the figurative meaning to respondents may increase their ability to better understand their metaphorical meanings and perhaps learn them easier. In these cases, a degree of cultural awareness may be required. The absence of a correspondent expression in both languages may indicate a cultural difference.



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Consequently it is the conclusion that metaphorical competence may be achieved when emphasis is placed on raising learner awareness. Expressions that are decomposable require less instruction than those that are non-decomposable.

Conclusion: Metaphorical expressions that do not have Norwegian correspondents are more difficult for English language learners because they are not provided with a clue as to which metaphorical meaning the expression may have. As a result factors such as linguistic structure, knowledge of basic meaning, and degree of semantic transparency play a greater role in metaphorical comprehension.

### 6.3 Basic meaning

This investigation explored knowledge of basic meaning, by testing learner competence of the literal sense of ten vocabulary words. While the findings of this investigation may be inconclusive as only a few words were tested they may give an indication that many respondents have difficulty in this area. Consequently, the findings for metaphorical comprehension indicate that the role knowledge of basic meaning plays may be measured in terms of degrees of influence. In most cases, knowledge of basic meaning plays a lesser significant role when metaphorical expressions have identical or similar Norwegian correspondents. The rationale for this hypothesis is that respondents have most likely acquired these expressions into the mental lexicon, and they appear to interpret the metaphorical meaning through retrieval from the native language without decomposing the string. While the processing of metaphorical expressions is peripheral to this investigation, some researchers believe that expressions may be stored as chunks or long words in the mental lexicon. As a result learners do not try to decompose an expression but retrieve the meaning as a whole part (Libben & Titone, 2008). This would explain how respondents are able to interpret metaphorical expressions while unsure of the literal senses of certain words. There are several examples from this investigation that may substantiate this hypothesis. For example the expression *to hang together with* was the easiest expression as 89% of the respondents chose the correct metaphorical meaning. If one assumes that the identical Norwegian correspondent *å henge sammen med* has been acquired into the mental lexicon, then respondents may be able to retrieve the metaphorical meaning without the need to decompose

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this string. Another example is the metaphorical expression *to spend time* which is basic metaphor. This expression transfers similar with the Norwegian correspondent *å bruke tiden*, but translates into English as “to use time”. A total of 76% of the respondents chose the correct metaphorical meaning therefore it is suggested respondents have retrieved the metaphorical meaning as a chunk from their native language.

In those cases where a metaphorical expression is non-decomposable and individual words do not contribute to the metaphorical meaning of the expression, knowledge of basic meaning seems to play only a minor role. The basis for this hypothesis is that for these types of expressions the individual words are used metaphorically, and as a result the literal senses of words do not contribute to the metaphorical meaning. An example is the expression *to stitch someone up like a kipper* which means “to trick someone”. The terms *stitch* and *kipper* contribute nothing to the metaphorical meaning which in this case indicates that knowledge of the literal sense of these words does not influence interpretation. This type of expression must be learned as a chunk or long string. This is further substantiated by the results which indicated that 52% of the respondents were able to interpret the metaphorical meaning when 42% did not know the basic meaning of *kipper* (see Tables 4 & 5).

Knowledge of basic meaning plays a significant role for those expressions which do not have a Norwegian correspondent that are either transparent or semi-transparent. The basis for this hypothesis is that for these particular types of expressions either the literal meaning contribute to the overall metaphorical meaning or the basic meaning of component words makes the expression decomposable. Holme (2004) provides a prime example of an expression that can have more than one meaning with *to look up* as in “to look up and see”, “to look up information”, and “to look up an old friend”. In this case, the different meanings of “look” and “up” contribute to different metaphorical interpretations. Two expressions which presented difficulty for respondents were *to rule out* and *to rub out*. For expressions that consist of multi-word verb strings, knowledge of the related but distinctive senses of verbs and prepositions seem to play a significant role. Multi-word verb expressions may in many cases look confusingly similar with one verb that collocates with various different prepositions such as (e.g. *to come along, to come off, to come up with, to come together, to come down, to come over, to come around, to come into*). For these types of expressions knowledge of basic meaning may therefore

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plays a significant role. These findings may have implications for metaphorical comprehension among English language learners in Norway. Consequently learners most likely need further instruction to be aware of the related but different meanings verbs and prepositions can have to be able to decompose metaphorical expressions and differentiate between the related meanings.

Conclusion: The influence knowledge of basic meaning has on metaphorical comprehension may be measured by degree of influence. It plays a significant role for certain multi-word verb expressions than may have more than one meaning. For those expressions that have a conventionalized meaning, it plays a lesser role because these expressions must be learned as a string.

### **6.3 Conclusions and implications**

The findings from this study indicated that the same ability respondents have to interpret metaphor in Norwegian may be applied and transferred to help them understand metaphorical expressions in English. This hypothesis is substantiated by the suggestion that to understand metaphorical expressions in English learners are dependent upon previous knowledge and experience as well as a certain level of ability to use the foreign language (Littlemore & Low, 2006). This investigation provided evidence that learners are more easily able to interpret metaphorical expressions that have Norwegian correspondent expressions. Furthermore their areas of difficulty lie precisely with their present level of ability to use the English language as was indicated for example by the gap in their knowledge in the area of vocabulary comprehension. Previous findings from Irujo (1986) indicate that the presence of correspondents in the native language help Spanish language learners understand metaphorical expressions in the target language which for her respondents is English. Learners that participated in this investigation had least difficulty with those expressions which had identical Norwegian correspondent expressions.

Deignan (2003) suggests metaphorical expressions may vary among languages. The findings from this study are supported by this theory as it has revealed many metaphorical expressions in English which have Norwegian correspondents that transfer similar and/or other metaphorical expressions that do not have Norwegian correspondents. This substantiates that

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theory that learners may require a degree of cultural awareness to be able to understand the extended meanings given by a specific culture as previously suggested (Littlemore & Low, 2006). Further evidence for this theory may be found in multi-word verb expressions that do not have Norwegian correspondent expressions. For example *to stitch someone up like a kipper* is difficult to understand without previous knowledge of British culture. The multi-word verb expression *to rub someone out* does not have a Norwegian correspondent and presented difficulty to respondents, most likely because they lack the cultural awareness needed to interpret its meaning. The same justification may explain why respondents had difficulty with the expressions *to be fed up with*, *to rule out*, and *to put up with*, among others. Idiomatic structures that have a conventionalized meaning may also require a degree of cultural awareness to interpret the metaphorical meaning particularly when they have no correspondent expressions in the native language. Examples are *to hit the road*, *to hit the books*, *to be dead as a doornail*, *to bawl bloody murder*, *to squeal down the house* or *to screech to a halt*.

The findings have also indicated that learners have difficulty with particular multi-word verbs that look similar or that have multiple meanings. Learners require instruction in the related but distinct meanings of certain verbs and prepositions to be able to better understand multi-word verb expressions. The implication is that for reading comprehension this may prove to be an area of difficulty. It is possible that without direct and implicit instruction in metaphorical language, learners are not able to recognize the presence of non-literal language in written or oral text. As a result incidental instruction through textbooks may not be enough to develop learners that are fluent in English. Foreign language learners need a conscious awareness of the similarities and differences between their native language and the English language in order to become fluent.

In conclusion if teachers place a greater emphasis on the metaphorical language found in the textbooks and take advantage of Norwegian correspondent expressions to emphasize the similarities between the two languages, then learners may acquire a better knowledge of the English language.

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## 6.4 Further Investigation

During the course of this research several areas for further investigation have presented themselves. As this study is quantitative it measures different variables with precision through numbers and gives documented knowledge. However it fails to go into depth and explain why certain results exist therefore qualitative research in particular areas could uncover explanations that provide a clearer indication concerning metaphorical comprehension. This investigation failed to acquire a sufficient amount of foreign respondents to compare their results to the Norwegian counterpart. A possible area for further research is to determine whether learners of “foreign” background understand metaphor differently or have more difficulty than Norwegian learners.

Another area of interest is language transfer. A qualitative study that investigates specifically how language learners use knowledge from their first language to interpret metaphorical expressions in the second language may provide more knowledge in this area. The existence of identical and similar Norwegian correspondents may provide the key to better understand metaphorical comprehension among learners in Norway.

An in depth study that investigates knowledge of basic meaning in corresponding metaphor may reveal more precise information as to the role basic meaning plays in metaphorical comprehension.

The area of multi-word verbs merits investigation. To which extent do learners in Norway understand the multiple related meanings prepositions may have in metaphorical extension? Are learners aware of all the extended meanings or only the most basic ones?

There has been little research done in Norway that pertains to metaphorical comprehension in English as a second language. Therefore there is a definite need for research into these areas to fill in the void of information and to be able to compare learners in Norway to learners in other countries.

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# Appendices

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## APPENDIX 1: English subject curriculum

The English language is used everywhere. When we meet people from other countries, in Norway or abroad, we need English for communication. English is used in films, literature, songs, sports, business, products, trades and entertainment, and through these channels many English words and expressions have found their way into our own language. When we want information on something of private or professional interest, we often search for it in English. Moreover, English is increasingly used in education and working life, in Norway and abroad.

To succeed in a world where English is used for international interpersonal communication, it is necessary to master the English language. Thus we need to develop our vocabulary and our skills in using the systems of the English language; its phonology, grammar and text structuring. We need these skills to listen, speak, read and write, and to adapt our language to an ever increasing number of topics, areas of interest and communication situations. We must be able to distinguish between spoken and written styles and informal and formal styles. Moreover, when using the language in communication, we must also be able to take cultural norms and conventions into consideration.

When we are aware of the strategies we use to learn a foreign language, and the strategies that help us to understand and be understood, the acquisition of knowledge and skills will be easier and more meaningful. It is also important for each of us to establish our own goals for learning, to determine how these can be satisfied and to assess the way we use the language. Learning English may also give us better insight into our native language and other languages we know, thus becoming an important element in our personal development and making a significant contribution to our communicative abilities.

In addition to learning the English language, this subject will also contribute insight into the way we live and how others live, and their views on life, values and cultures. Learning about the English-speaking world will provide a good basis for understanding the world around us and how English developed into a world language. Literature in English, from nursery rhymes to Shakespeare's sonnets, may instil a lifelong joy of reading and provide a deeper understanding of oneself and others. English texts, films, music and other art forms may also inspire the pupil's own artistic expression and creativity in many genres and media.

Thus English as a school subject is both a tool and a way of gaining knowledge and personal insight. It will enable the pupils to communicate with others on personal, social, literary and interdisciplinary topics. It will give insight into how individuals think and live in the English-speaking world. Communicative skills and cultural insight can promote greater interaction, understanding and respect between people with different cultural backgrounds. In this way linguistic and cultural competence contributes to the all-round personal development and fosters democratic commitment and a better understanding of responsible citizen.

The subject has been structured into main areas with competence aims. These main subject areas supplement each other and must be considered together.

English has competence aims after the second, fourth, seventh and tenth years in primary and lower secondary school and after the first year in the programmes for general studies (Vg1) or after the second year of vocational education programmes (Vg2)

The main area language learning focuses on knowledge about the language, language usage and insight into one's own language learning. Being able to assess one's own language use, define one's own needs and select strategies and ways of working are requirements for attaining this. The main focus is on seeing what is involved in learning a new

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language and seeing relationships between English, one's native language and other languages.

The main area of communication focuses on using the English language to communicate. Communication is achieved through listening, reading, writing, prepared oral production and spontaneous oral interaction, including the use of appropriate communication strategies. It also includes participation in various social arenas, where it is important to train to master an increasing number of genres and forms of expression. Good communication requires knowledge and skills in using vocabulary and idiomatic structures, pronunciation, intonation, spelling, grammar and syntax of sentences and texts.

New media and the development of a linguistic repertoire across subjects and topics are an important part of this main area. Knowing how to be polite and taking social conventions into consideration in any number of linguistic situations are also important skills to master. This goes hand in hand with adapting the language to the recipient and the situation, including distinguishing between formal and informal, written and spoken registers.

The main area culture, society and literature focuses on cultural understanding in a broad sense. It is based on the English-speaking world and covers key topics connected to social issues, literature and other cultural expressions. This main area also focuses on developing knowledge about English as a world language with many areas of use. Working with various types of texts and other cultural expressions is important for developing linguistic skills and understanding how others live, and their cultures and views on life. Reading literature may also help to instil the joy of reading in pupils and provide the basis for personal growth, maturity and creativity.

Basic skills are integrated in the competence objectives where they contribute to the development of competence in the subject, while also being part of this competence. In the subject of English, the basic skills are understood as follows:

*Being able to express oneself in writing and orally* in English is a key part of developing English linguistic competence and is a common thread throughout the competence objectives at all levels. These skills are important tools in working on understanding and using English in increasingly varied and demanding contexts across cultures and subject fields. Having oral skills means being able to both listen and speak.

*Being able to read* English is part of the practical language competence and means being able to read and understand, to explore and reflect upon increasingly more demanding texts and thus gain insight across cultures and disciplines. Developing reading skills in English also improves general reading skills.

*The aims are that the pupil shall be able to*

- identify and use various situations to expand their own English-language skills
- give examples of various ways of learning English words and expressions
- identify some linguistic similarities and differences between English and the native language
- use the basic terms from grammar and text structuring
- describe their own work in learning English
- use digital and other aids in their own language learning

*The aims are that the pupil shall be able to*

- master a vocabulary that covers everyday situations
- use basic rules and patterns for pronunciation, intonation, spelling, grammar and various sentence structures
- express himself/herself in writing and orally to obtain help in understanding and being understood
- understand various oral and written presentations on self-selected topics
- participate in conversations on everyday situations
- use polite expressions and other phrases that are appropriate for the situation and suitable in various contexts

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- express an opinion on various topics
  - use listening, speaking, reading and writing strategies that are suitable for the purpose
  - give brief spoken and written presentations on a topic • read and understand texts of varying lengths and in various genres
  - write texts that narrate, describe or give messages
  - talk about currency, measures and weights
  - use digital tools to find information and to prepare texts

*The aims are that the pupil shall be able to*

- talk about some persons, places and events in English-speaking countries
- compare the way people live and socialise in various cultures in English-speaking countries and in Norway, including the Sami culture
- read and talk about English-language literature for children and young people from various media and genres, including prose and poetry
- compare characters and content in a selection of children's books written in English
- express his/her own reactions to film, pictures and music • express himself/herself creatively, inspired by English literature from various genres and media

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## Appendix 2: Enquiry

Forespørsel om å delta i forskningsundersøkelse: Understanding Metaphor

Jeg er hovedfagstudent i engelsk ved Høgskolen i Hedmark, og holder nå på med den avsluttende hovedoppgaven. Temaet for oppgavene er forståelse av metaforiske uttrykk fra lærebøker i engelsk hos elever med forskjellig bakgrunn i ungdomsskolen. Det jeg vil undersøke og prøve å få svar på er: Er det noen systematiske forskjeller mellom forskjellig elevgrupper når det gjelder forståelsen av metaforiske uttrykk, og er det noen systematiske forskjeller mellom de uttrykkene elevene forstår og de uttrykkene de ikke forstår?

Jeg vil gi eleven et referansenummer å forholde seg til. Eleven vil få en flervalgsoppgave. Alle spørsmålene har fire svar alternativer og elevene skal krysse av for det alternativet de mener gir riktig forklaring på uttrykket som blir presentert.

Det er frivillig å være med og eleven har mulighet til å trekke seg når som helst underveis uten å måtte begrunne dette nærmere. Opplysningene vil bli behandlet konfidensielt, ingen enkeltpersoner vil kunne kjenne seg igjen i den ferdig oppgaven. Opplysningene anonymiseres og slettes når oppgaven er ferdig innen utgangen av 2008.

Prøve eksempel som undersøkelsen er basert på

1. To be *the talk of the town* means:
  - a. People gossip about you
  - b. People hate you
  - c. People do not know you
  - d. People like youriktig svar: a

Dersom du har lyst å være med på undersøkelsen, er det fint om du skriver under på samtykkeerklæringen og leverer den tilbake til læreren din. Hvis det er noe du lurer på kan du ringe meg på 95784711, eller send e-post til: vhmeissner@hotmail.com. Du kan også kontakte min veileder Susan Møl ved Høgskolen i Hedmark på 47 29 01 56

Studien er meldt til Personombudet for forskning, Norsk samfunnsvitenskapelig datatjeneste A/S.

Valerie Heidi Meissner, Vognveien 83, 2316 Hamar

Jeg har mottatt informasjon om studien av metafor i ungdomsskolen og jeg ønsker å delta.

Signatur \_\_\_\_\_

Eleven navn \_\_\_\_\_

Skole \_\_\_\_\_

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## APPENDIX 3: Pilot study

Learner number \_\_\_\_\_

1. To *stick up for*...means to:
  - keep from moving
  - **defend or support**
  - put something somewhere
  - be elected
2. To *stick to*... something means to:
  - **keep on trying**
  - criticize someone
  - stab
  - become fixed in a place
3. To *stand out*...means to:
  - be situated
  - rise
  - watch someone work
  - **be very noticeable**
4. To *show up* someone...means to:
  - **display**
  - attract attention
  - expose or reveal
  - go to the theater
5. To *take over* means to:
  - **take control**
  - occur or happen
  - cheat
  - be successful
6. To *turn around*...means to:
  - become sour
  - **arrange again**
  - take a short walk
  - be after someone
7. To *turn out* somehow...means to:
  - arrive at just the right time
  - avoid something
  - go off somewhere
  - **end in a certain way**
8. To *run out of time*...means to:
  - move swiftly
  - travel away somewhere
  - **not have any left**
  - keep on going

- 
9. To *give away* something...means to:
- **betray a secret**
  - allow something to happen
  - make a donation
  - stretch or bend
10. To *figure out* something...means:
- to exercise
  - **to solve**
  - a number
  - a form
11. To *run off* ...means to:
- stop the engine
  - jog
  - talk too much
  - **leave quickly**
12. *On and off*...means:
- aboard
  - never
  - **sometimes**
  - always
13. *On one's own*...means:
- **alone**
  - trapped
  - in a crowd
  - controlled
14. To *close in on* someone...means to:
- be near by
  - be nearly correct
  - be able to keep a secret
  - **surround**
15. To *come along*... with something means to:
- arrive
  - happen
  - **make progress**
  - start doing
16. To *come off* ...means to:
- arrive and leave
  - **fall apart**
  - wear a disguise
  - happen
17. To *come up with*...means:
- **to think of a plan**
  - climb a ladder
  - visit a friend

- 
- become popular
18. To ***break up***...means:
- have lunch
  - escape
  - **end a relationship**
  - interrupt
19. To ***break away***...means to:
- end a fever
  - make a hole
  - stop for rest
  - **escape**
20. To ***hit the books***...means:
- to strike with force
  - **to start your homework**
  - to become very angry
  - to become lazy
21. To ***drift around***...means to:
- **wander without direction**
  - move slowly
  - fly a kite
  - float in the air
22. To ***measure time***...means:
- to arrive at the correct time
  - **to determine how long something takes**
  - to arrive earlier than necessary
  - if a clock keeps the correct time
23. To ***be like cheese on pizza***...means to.
- remain in a place a long time
  - be noticeable
  - be very warm
  - **stick closely to someone**
24. To ***be up to speed***...means to:
- **have the latest information**
  - be very fast
  - be a slow thinker
  - be involved in a difficult situation
25. ***Work not fit for me***...means:
- to be unemployed
  - the job is too difficult
  - the job is not suitable
  - you are too young
26. ***To squeal the house down***...means to:
- be very quiet and not attract attention
  - be very funny and not attract attention



- 
- laugh very much
  - **scream very loud to attract attention**
27. *To screech to a halt...* means to:
- stop screaming
  - **stop very sudden**
  - cry because your leg hurts when you walk
  - cry very much
28. *To be in a hurry...* means:
- to have little time
  - suddenly
  - to be very tired
  - to take your time
29. *To be in love...* means to:
- like someone very much
  - enjoy something very much
  - become friends
  - **be strongly attracted to someone**
30. To be *dead as a doornail...* means to:
- to be almost dead
  - to be dying
  - to look dead
  - **to be no longer living**
31. *To close down...* means to:
- be within each
  - not listen to other opinions
  - be on the floor
  - **stop doing business**
32. *To cool down...* means to:
- be cold
  - **become calm**
  - wear light clothing
  - be angry
33. *To fly into a rage...* means to:
- **become very angry all of a sudden**
  - be in an airplane
  - have wings
  - drive very fast
34. *To slip away...* means to:
- polish something
  - fall down
  - **leave secretly**
  - say goodbye and leave
35. *To have spare time...* means:
- to have less time than you need

- 
- to not be affected by time
  - to usually arrive at the correct time
  - **to have plenty of time**
36. *To take for granted...* means:
- to admit that something is true
  - **to suppose something to be true without question**
  - to allow someone to do what they want
  - to receive a scholarship
37. *To have not much time for...* means:
- **to dislike someone**
  - to be very busy
  - to keep from becoming bored
  - to be carefree
38. *To not give a hoot...* means:
- sound like an owl
  - **not care**
  - to make a short sound when you laugh
  - to care a lot
39. *To be hooked on...* means:
- to catch a fish
  - to prepare a computer for use
  - **to be addicted to something**
  - to hang, fasten or attach with a hook
40. *The whole time...* means:
- something that happened already
  - something that happens seldom
  - during your free time
  - **continuously**

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## APPENDIX 4: Learner profile-pilot study

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Surname \_\_\_\_\_

Female \_\_\_\_\_ Male \_\_\_\_\_ Age \_\_\_\_\_

Your native language \_\_\_\_\_

Your father's native language \_\_\_\_\_

Your mother's native language \_\_\_\_\_

Language(s) spoken at home \_\_\_\_\_

Age at which you started to learn English \_\_\_\_\_

Please estimate your ability to speak, understand, and write English, by putting an x in the boxes below

	Above average	Average	Below Average
Speaking			
understanding			
Reading			
Writing			

Age at which you started to learn Norwegian \_\_\_\_\_

Please estimate your ability to speak, understand and write Norwegian , by putting an x in the boxes below

	Above average	Average	Below average
speaking			
understanding			
Reading			
Writing			

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Do you speak any other language(s) besides English and Norwegian?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

Which language? \_\_\_\_\_

If the answer is yes, then estimate your ability in that language by putting an x in the boxes below.

	Above average	Average	Below average
Speaking			
understanding			
Reading			
Writing			

## APPENDIX 5: Pilot study results

	Undersøkelse	METAPHOR QUESTIONAIRE I
	Dato	11.04.2008
	Tidsfrist	
	Antall svar	41
	Antall brukere med tilgang til undersøkelsen	0
1	To stick up for someone..... means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 1.93 Standardavvik: 0.56
	A.) keep someone from moving	19.5 %
	<b>B.) defend or support someone</b>	68.3 %
	C.) put something somewhere	12.2 %
	D.) be elected	0.0 %
2	To stick to something....means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 1.90 Standardavvik: 1.21
	<b>A.) keep on trying</b>	58.5 %
	B.) criticise someone	12.2 %
	C.) stab	9.8 %
	D.) become fixed in a place	19.5 %
3	To stand out somehow ....means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.71 Standardavvik: 1.27
	A.) be situated	31.7 %
	B.) rise	4.9 %
	C.) watch someone work	24.4 %
	<b>D.) be very noticeable</b>	39.0 %
4	To show up ....means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.27 Standardavvik: 0.77
	A.) display	14.6 %
	B.) attract attention	46.3 %
	<b>C.) expose or reveal</b>	31.7 %
	D.) go to the theater	4.9 %
	Ikke besvart	2.4 %
5	To take over...means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 1.51 Standardavvik: 0.89
	<b>A.) assume control</b>	68.3 %
	B.) occur or happen	19.5 %
	C.) cheat	4.9 %
	D.) be successful	7.3 %
6	To turn around a situation .....means to	Gjennomsnitt: 2.05

		Standardavvik: 0.82
	A.) become sour	22.0 %
	<b>B.) arrange again</b>	61.0 %
	C.) take a short walk	7.3 %
	D.) be after someone	9.8 %
7	To turn out somehow...means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.61 Standardavvik: 1.17
	A.) arrive at just the right time	26.8 %
	B.) avoid something	14.6 %
	C.) go off somewhere	29.3 %
	<b>D.) end in a certain way</b>	29.3 %
8	To run out of time... means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.55 Standardavvik: 0.80
	A.) move swiftly	14.6 %
	B.) travel away somewhere	19.5 %
	<b>C.) not have any left</b>	58.5 %
	D.) keep on going	4.9 %
	Ikke besvart	2.4 %
9	To give away something...means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.49 Standardavvik: 0.86
	<b>A.) betray a secret</b>	19.5 %
	B.) allow something to happen	17.1 %
	C.) make a donation	58.5 %
	D.) stretch or bend	4.9 %
10	To figure out something .... means:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.07 Standardavvik: 0.87
	A.) to exercise	24.4 %
	<b>B.) to solve</b>	53.7 %
	C.) a number	12.2 %
	D.) a form	9.8 %
11	To run off...means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.83 Standardavvik: 1.25
	A.) stop the engine	24.4 %
	B.) jog	14.6 %
	C.) talk too much	14.6 %
	<b>D.) leave quickly</b>	46.3 %
12	On and off.... means :	Gjennomsnitt: 2.88 Standardavvik: 0.78
	A.) aboard	9.8 %
	B.) never	7.3 %
	<b>C.) sometimes</b>	65.9 %

	D.) always	14.6 %
	Ikke besvart	2.4 %
13	On one's own....means :	Gjennomsnitt: 1.95 Standardavvik: 1.14
	<b>A.) to be alone</b>	53.7 %
	B.) to be trapped	7.3 %
	C.) to be in a crowd	24.4 %
	D.) to be controlled	12.2 %
	Ikke besvart	2.4 %
14	To close in on...means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 1.80 Standardavvik: 0.94
	A.) be near by	48.8 %
	B.) be nearly correct	29.3 %
	C.) be able to keep a secret	14.6 %
	<b>D.) surround</b>	7.3 %
15	To come along on a project... means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 3.05 Standardavvik: 0.82
	A.) arrive	9.8 %
	B.) happen	2.4 %
	<b>C.) make progress</b>	61.0 %
	D.) start doing	26.8 %
16	To come off somehow....means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 1.88 Standardavvik: 0.83
	A.) arrive and leave	36.6 %
	<b>B.) fall apart</b>	43.9 %
	C.) wear a disguise	14.6 %
	D.) happen	4.9 %
17	To come up with means :	Gjennomsnitt: 1.39 Standardavvik: 0.79
	<b>A.) think of a plan</b>	78.0 %
	B.) to climb a ladder	7.3 %
	C.) to visit a friend	12.2 %
	D.) to become popular	2.4 %
18	To break up.... means:	Gjennomsnitt: 3.00 Standardavvik: 0.38
	A.) to have lunch	0.0 %
	B.) to escape	7.3 %
	<b>C.) to end a relationship</b>	85.4 %
	D.) to interrupt	7.3 %
19	To break away .....means:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.88 Standardavvik: 1.19

	A.) to end a fever	22.0 %
	B.) to make a hole	12.2 %
	C.) to stop for a rest	22.0 %
	<b>D.) to escape</b>	43.9 %
20	To hit the books... means :	Gjennomsnitt: 2.29 Standardavvik: 0.74
	A.) to strike with force	12.2 %
	<b>B.) to start your homework</b>	51.2 %
	C.) to become very angry	31.7 %
	D.) to become lazy	4.9 %
21	To drift around ....means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 1.77 Standardavvik: 1.08
	<b>A.) wander without direction</b>	56.1 %
	B.) move slowly	22.0 %
	C.) fly a kite	4.9 %
	D.) float in the air	14.6 %
	Ikke besvart	2.4 %
22	To measure time... means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.54 Standardavvik: 1.08
	A.) arrive at the right time	22.0 %
	<b>B.) determine how long something takes</b>	26.8 %
	C.) arrive earlier than necessary	26.8 %
	D.) see if a clock keeps correct time	24.4 %
23	To be like cheese on pizza ....means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 3.17 Standardavvik: 1.06
	A.) stay for a long time	12.2 %
	B.) be noticeable	12.2 %
	C.) be very warm	22.0 %
	<b>D.) stick closely to someone</b>	53.7 %
24	To be up to speed....means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.17 Standardavvik: 0.76
	<b>A.) have the latest information</b>	17.1 %
	B.) be very fast	53.7 %
	C.) be a fast thinker	24.4 %
	D.) be involved in a difficult situation	4.9 %
25	Work not fit for me..... means :	Gjennomsnitt: 2.39 Standardavvik: 0.88
	A.) to be unemployed	14.6 %
	B.) the job is too difficult	43.9 %
	<b>C.) the job is not suitable</b>	29.3 %
	D.) to be too young	12.2 %



26	To squeal the house down...means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.73 Standardavvik: 1.17
	A.) be very quiet and not attract attention	22.0 %
	B.) be very funny and attract attention	19.5 %
	C.) laugh very much	22.0 %
	<b>D.) scream very loud to attract attention</b>	36.6 %
27	To screech to a halt ....means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.50 Standardavvik: 1.07
	A.) stop screaming	17.1 %
	<b>B.) stop very sudden</b>	41.5 %
	C.) cry because your leg hurts when you walk	12.2 %
	D.) cry very much	26.8 %
	Ikke besvart	2.4 %
28	To be in a hurry means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 1.48 Standardavvik: 0.89
	<b>A.) have little time</b>	73.2 %
	B.) to do something suddenly	7.3 %
	C.) be very tired	12.2 %
	D.) take your time	4.9 %
	Ikke besvart	2.4 %
29	To be in love means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 1.95 Standardavvik: 1.29
	A.) like someone very much	61.0 %
	B.) enjoy something very much	7.3 %
	C.) become friends	7.3 %
	<b>D.) be strongly attracted to someone</b>	24.4 %
30	To be dead as a doornail ...means :	Gjennomsnitt: 2.73 Standardavvik: 0.96
	A.) to be almost dead	14.6 %
	B.) to be dying	19.5 %
	C.) to look dead	43.9 %
	<b>D.) to be no longer living</b>	22.0 %
31	To close down.....means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.75 Standardavvik: 1.20
	A.) be within reach	19.5 %
	B.) not listen to other opinions	26.8 %
	C.) be on the floor	9.8 %
	<b>D.) stop doing business</b>	41.5 %
	Ikke besvart	2.4 %

32	To cool down....means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.27 Standardavvik: 0.73
	A.) be cold	7.3 %
	<b>B.) become calm</b>	68.3 %
	C.) wear light clothing	14.6 %
	D.) be angry	9.8 %
33	To fly into a rage ..... means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.00 Standardavvik: 1.19
	<b>A) become very angry suddenly</b>	51.2 %
	B.) be in an airplane in a storm	17.1 %
	C.) to have wings	12.2 %
	D.) drive very fast	19.5 %
34	To slip away means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.56 Standardavvik: 0.86
	A.) polish something	9.8 %
	B.) fall down	39.0 %
	<b>C.) leave secretly</b>	36.6 %
	D.) say goodbye and leave	14.6 %
35	To have spare time.... means:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.95 Standardavvik: 1.16
	A.) to have less time than you need	17.1 %
	B.) to not be affected by time	17.1 %
	C.) to usually arrive at the correct time	17.1 %
	<b>D.) to have plenty of time</b>	46.3 %
	Ikke besvart	2.4 %
36	To take for granted.... means:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.55 Standardavvik: 0.89
	A.) to admit that something is true	12.2 %
	<b>B.) to suppose something to be true without question</b>	34.1 %
	C.) to allow someone to do what they want	36.6 %
	D.) receive a scholarship	14.6 %
	Ikke besvart	2.4 %
37	To have not much time for someone means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.17 Standardavvik: 0.73
	<b>A.) dislike someone</b>	12.2 %
	B.) be very busy	65.9 %
	C.) keep from being bored	14.6 %
	D.) be carefree	7.3 %
38	To not give a hoot...means to:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.26 Standardavvik: 0.74

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	A.) sound like an owl	9.8 %
	<b>B.) not care</b>	58.5 %
	C.) make a funny sound when you laugh	19.5 %
	D.) care a lot	7.3 %
	Ikke besvart	4.9 %
39	To be hooked on....means:	Gjennomsnitt: 2.93 Standardavvik: 0.81
	A.) to catch a fish	7.3 %
	B.) prepare a computer for use	14.6 %
	<b>C.) to be addicted to something</b>	56.1 %
	D.) to hang, attach or fasten with a hook	22.0 %
40	The whole time means :	Gjennomsnitt: 2.71 Standardavvik: 1.09
	A.) something that happened already	19.5 %
	B.) something that happens seldom	19.5 %
	C.) during your free time	31.7 %
	<b>D.) continuously</b>	29.3 %

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## APPENDIX 6: Questionnaire

Referanse nummer \_\_\_\_\_

### Del I. Personlige opplysninger

1. Hva er du?
  - A. gutt
  - B. jente
2. Hvilket morsmål har ditt far?
3. Hvilket morsmål har ditt mor?
4. Hvilket morsmål har du?
5. Hvilket språk snakker dere hjemme?
6. På hvilket alder begynte du å lære engelsk?
7. Har du noen gang hatt en engelsk lærer som hadde engelsk som morsmål språk?

### Prøve eksempel

1. To be ***the talk of the town*** means:
  - a. people gossip about you
  - b. people hate you
  - c. people do not like you
  - d. people like you
2. To feel ***a cold coming on*** means:
  - a. winter is close
  - b. snow is in the air
  - c. something bad is about to happen
  - d. you feel sick
3. To be ***tidy*** means:
  - a. you are messy
  - b. you are neat
  - c. you are early
  - d. you are late

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Del II. Strek under den svar som du synes passer best.

1. The child started bawling. To **bawl** means to:
  - a. cry or shout loudly
  - b. sing or hum
  - c. laugh
  - d. kick
2. To plow a field. To **plow** means to:
  - a. water
  - b. cut the grass
  - c. turn the soil
  - d. plant seed
3. If you **crumple** a piece of paper ,then you:
  - a. rip it
  - b. fold it
  - c. crush it
  - d. write on it
4. The children wore ragged clothes. **ragged** means :
  - a. torn and dirty
  - b. clean and spotless
  - c. neat
  - d. new
5. A **scrap** of paper is:
  - a. a dirty piece of paper
  - b. a big piece of paper
  - c. small a piece of paper
  - d. a clean piece of paper
6. A **sigh** is:
  - a. a laugh
  - b. a sharp short sound
  - c. a cough
  - d. a long soft sound
7. The blaze was out of control. **a blaze** is:
  - a. a wide river
  - b. a large fire
  - c. an avalanche
  - d. a mudslide

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8. A **kipper** is a :
- a. fish
  - b. fruit
  - c. bird
  - d. baby
9. Heave in the anchor! To **heave** means to:
- a. remove
  - b. lift or pull with effort
  - c. lower
  - d. take apart or separate
10. There was a heap of toys in the corner... a **heap** is:
- a. a tidy pile
  - b. a box
  - c. an untidy pile
  - d. a basket
11. To **arrive at the truth** means to:
- a. discover the truth
  - b. investigate the truth
  - c. look at the truth
  - d. hide the truth
12. To **break the rules** means to:
- a. fool around
  - b. do something not allowed
  - c. escape
  - d. spoil something
13. To be **out of place** means to:
- a. lose something
  - b. leave a place
  - c. be outside
  - d. be different
14. To **put up with** means to:
- a. accept someone unpleasant in a patient way
  - b. lift something higher
  - c. stand up to someone
  - d. let something happen
15. To **change someone's mind** means to:
- a. think the same way
  - b. think differently
  - c. act without thinking
  - d. spend too much time thinking

- 
16. To **make up one's mind** means to:
- a. decide what to do
  - b. be confused
  - c. think too much
  - d. think too little
17. To **make it** means to:
- a. to succeed
  - b. create something
  - c. pretend
  - d. tell a lie
18. To **lead up to** something means:
- a. to get real close
  - b. to be in first place
  - c. cause someone to do something
  - d. prepare the way for something
19. If things **work out somehow** means :
- a. to do exercise
  - b. to have a happy ending
  - c. to work very hard
  - d. to let something happen on its own
20. To be **fed up with** means you:
- a. eat too much
  - b. had enough
  - c. eat too little
  - d. feel satisfied
21. To **have a fit** means to:
- a. try on clothes
  - b. be healthy
  - c. be able to do something well
  - d. be very angry
22. To **look forward to something** means to:
- a. feel excited about something in the future
  - b. look directly in front of you
  - c. worry about the future
  - d. look for something
23. To **live off of** someone means to:
- a. be alive and not dead
  - b. get pocket money from someone
  - c. earn a living from someone
  - d. be adopted

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24. To **hang together with someone** means to:

- a. be together with someone
- b. depend on someone
- c. be tied down
- d. to swing freely

25. To get **off the hook** means to:

- a. get out of trouble
- b. do something bad
- c. be out of place
- d. be crazy

26. To **plow into** someone means to:

- a. run over someone with a plow
- b. hit against someone
- c. fall down
- d. prepare the soil for planting

27. To **bawl bloody murder** means to:

- a. get a nose bleed
- b. hurt yourself
- c. kill lots of people
- d. cry very loud

28. To **fall in a crumpled heap** means to.

- a. faint
- b. collapse
- c. trip
- d. die

29. To be **in a ragged state** means to:

- a. wear old and torn clothing
- b. look a mess
- c. be upset
- d. be rude

30. To be **thrown upon myself** means to:

- a. be left alone
- b. be hit by someone
- c. be knocked down
- d. be tossed aside

31. To **gather steam** means to:

- a. get foggy
- b. blow up
- c. get ready
- d. produce steam



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32. To **hit the road** means to:
- a. have an accident b. start on a journey
  - c. continue on a journey
  - d. get going
33. To be **dead easy** to talk to means to:
- a. very easy
  - b. interesting
  - c. boring
  - d. not easy
34. To **go ape over** means to:
- a. act like a monkey
  - b. jump up and down
  - c. climb trees
  - d. become very excited
35. **A dream come true** is :
- a. a wish that is unlikely to happen
  - b. something you didn't expect to happen
  - c. something that could never happen
  - d. a wish that has become reality
36. **Chain of reasoning** is:
- a. an unbroken thought
  - b. a logical thought process\_
  - c. a stupid thought
  - d. a silly thought
37. To be **without a scrap of courage** means to:
- a. be brave sometimes
  - b. not be brave at all
  - c. be a little bit brave
  - d. be very brave
38. To be **a down to earth person** means to:
- a. be strange
  - b. be curious
  - c. be practical
  - d. be shy
39. If **you are bound to change** this means :
- a. you are tied to change
  - b. you are never going to change
  - c. you are most likely to change
  - d. you are certain to change

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40. To **spend time** means to:
- a. to waste time
  - b. to use time
  - c. to sell time
  - d. to buy time
41. To be **out of one's mind** means to:
- a. be asleep
  - b. act silly or crazy
  - c. be awkward or unwelcome
  - d. be worried
42. If you are **glued to** the television then you are:
- a. going to buy a new television
  - b. stuck to the television
  - c. really interested in television
  - d. daydreaming in front of the television
43. To **refresh one's memory** means to:
- a. help someone remember something
  - b. know something
  - c. have a healthy mind
  - d. be forgetful
44. To **blazes with that** means :
- a. I hope it burns up!
  - b. Throw it on the fire!
  - c. Mark the path!
  - d. I don't care!
45. To be **above board** means to be:
- a. completely honest and fair
  - b. more important
  - c. proud
  - d. afraid
46. To **stitch someone up like a kipper** means:
- a. to tie someone up
  - b. to trick someone
  - c. to get stitches at the hospital
  - d. to sew a dress
47. To be **close at hand** means to:
- a. be within reach
  - b. be nearly correct
  - c. be generous
  - d. selfish

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48. To **make yourself at home** means to:
- a. be comfortable and relaxed
  - b. move in
  - c. be a guest
  - d. search a person's home
49. To **heave a deep sigh** means to:
- a. sing softly
  - b. let out a deep breath
  - c. to cough
  - d. to whisper
50. To **rub someone out** means to:
- a. give someone a massage
  - b. tickle someone
  - c. kill someone
  - d. erase or delete a picture of someone
51. If **The rhythm grabs hold of us**, that means that it:
- a. bores us
  - b. confuses us
  - c. scares us
  - d. fascinates us
52. To **get the meaning across** means to:
- a. know everything
  - b. define a new word
  - c. make something clear to someone
  - d. give someone the answers
53. To **wear out** your own clothing means to:
- a. wear something inside out
  - b. make someone very tired
  - c. become worn from use
  - d. wear something until it fits better
54. If you say **to fight the good fight** it means:
- a. to fight a noble cause
  - b. to fight for your honor
  - c. to fight until someone gets killed
  - d. to fight until you lose the battle
55. To **rule out** someone or something means to:
- a. think that something is not possible
  - b. boss someone around
  - c. make a decision
  - d. explain the rules

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56. To **let the matter drop** means to :
- a. not get upset
  - b. hide details
  - c. ignore a problem
  - d. show no emotion
57. To **break a promise** means to:
- a. remove a problem
  - b. not do what you said you would do
  - c. hurt someone's feelings
  - d. end a friendship
58. To **show off** means to:
- a. lead someone somewhere
  - b. do something to attract attention
  - c. give instructions to someone
  - d. prove that something is true
59. If you say that **you can't stand school** it means that:
- a. you like school
  - b. you think school is okay
  - c. you don't like school
  - d. you don't care about school
60. To be **at a loss for words** means to:
- a. be sad
  - b. forget something
  - c. not know what to say
  - d. be rude

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## APPENDIX 7: Questionnaire results

81	SCHOOL 1		
60	SCHOOL 2		
84	SCHOOL 3		
225	TOTAL POPULATION		
	VOCABULARY SECTION	Distribution	%
1.	The child started bawling. To <i>bawl</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) cry or shout loudly</b>	147	65,33 %
	b.) sing or hum	24	10,66 %
	c.) laugh	41	18,22 %
	d.) kick	11	4,88 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
2.	To plow a field. To <i>plow</i> means to:		
	a.) water	18	8,00 %
	b.) cut the grass	79	35,11 %
	<b>c.) turn the soil</b>	49	21,77 %
	d.) plant seed	76	33,77 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
3.	If you <i>crumple</i> a piece of paper, then you:		
	a.) rip it	31	13,77 %
	b.) fold it	68	30,22 %
	<b>c.) crush it</b>	116	51,55 %
	d.) write on it	9	4,00 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %
4.	The children wore ragged clothes. <i>ragged</i> means:		
	<b>a.) torn and dirty</b>	164	72,88 %
	b.) clean and spotless	29	12,88 %
	c.) neat	19	8,44 %
	d.) new	12	5,33 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %
5.	A <i>scrap</i> of paper is:		
	a.) a dirty piece of paper	80	35,55 %
	b.) a big piece of paper	18	8,00 %
	<b>c.) a small piece of paper</b>	108	48,00 %
	d.) a clean piece of paper	17	7,55 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %

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6.	A <i>sigh</i> is:		
	a.) a laugh	28	12,44 %
	b.) a sharp short sound	86	38,22 %
	c.) a cough	37	16,44 %
	<b>d.) a long soft sound</b>	69	30,66 %
	Unanswered	5	2,22 %
7.	The blaze was out of control. A <i>blaze</i> is:		
	a.) a wide river	33	14,66 %
	<b>b.) a large fire</b>	147	65,33 %
	c.) an avalanche	33	14,66 %
	d.) a mudslide	9	4,00 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
8.	A <i>kipper</i> is a:		
	<b>a.) fish</b>	94	41,77 %
	b.) fruit	33	14,66 %
	c.) bird	80	35,55 %
	d.) baby	13	5,77 %
	Unanswered	5	2,22 %
9.	Heave in the anchor! To <i>heave</i> means to:		
	a.) remove	42	18,66 %
	<b>b.) lift or pull with effort</b>	108	48 %
	c.) lower	38	16,88 %
	d.) take apart or separate	34	15,11 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
10.	There was a heap of toys in the corner... A <i>heap</i> is:		
	a.) a tidy pile	29	12,9 %
	b.) a box	69	30,66 %
	<b>c.) an untidy pile</b>	84	37,3 %
	d.) a basket	39	17,3 %
	Unanswered	4	1,77 %

#### METAPHOR SECTION

11.	To <i>arrive at the truth</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) discover the truth</b>	114	50,66 %
	b.) investigate the truth	40	17,77 %
	c.) look at the truth	43	19,11 %
	d.) hide the truth	23	10,2 %
	Unanswered	5	2,22 %

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12.	To <i>break the rules</i> means to:		
	a.) fool around	12	5,33 %
	<b>b.) do something not allowed</b>	200	88,88 %
	c.) escape	3	1,33 %
	d.) spoil something	9	4,00 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
13.	To be <i>out of place</i> means to:		
	a.) lose something	9	4,00 %
	b.) leave a place	58	25,77 %
	c.) be outside	63	28,00 %
	<b>d.) be different</b>	92	40,88 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
14.	To <i>put up with</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) accept someone in an unpleasant way</b>	59	26,22 %
	b.) lift something higher	28	12,44 %
	c.) stand up to someone	105	46,66 %
	d.) let something happen	30	13,33 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
15.	To <i>change someone's mind</i> means to:		
	a.) think the same way	49	21,77 %
	<b>b.) think differently</b>	139	61,77 %
	c.) act without thinking	24	10,66 %
	d.) spend too much time thinking	10	4,44 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
16.	To <i>make up one's mind</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) decide what to do</b>	144	64 %
	b.) be confused	40	17,77 %
	c.) think too much	25	11,11 %
	d.) think too little	14	6,22 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
17.	To <i>make it</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) succeed</b>	101	44,88 %
	b.) create something	99	44,00 %
	c.) pretend	14	6,22 %
	d.) tell a lie	9	4,00 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %

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18.	To <i>lead up to</i> something means:		
	a.) to get real close	47	20,88 %
	b.) to be in first place	48	21,33 %
	c.) cause someone to do something	63	28,00 %
	<b>d.) prepare the way for something</b>	67	30 %
	Unanswered	0	
19.	If things <i>work out somehow</i> it means:		
	a.) to do exercise	31	13,77 %
	<b>b.) to have a happy ending</b>	66	29,33 %
	c.) to work very hard	61	27,11 %
	d.) to let something happen on its own	65	28,88 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
20.	To be <i>fed up with</i> means to:		
	a.) eat too much	80	35,55 %
	<b>b.) had enough</b>	91	40 %
	c.) eat too little	16	7,11 %
	d.) feel satisfied	36	16,00 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
21.	To <i>have a fit</i> means to:		
	a.) try on clothes	50	22,22 %
	b.) be healthy	91	40 %
	c.) be able to do something well	51	21 %
	<b>d.) be very angry</b>	33	14,66 %
	Unanswered	0	
22.	To <i>look forward to something</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) feel excited about something in the future</b>	167	74,22 %
	b.) look directly in front of you	23	10 %
	c.) worry about the future	17	7,55 %
	d.) look for something	17	7,55 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %
23.	To <i>live off of</i> someone means to:		
	a.) be alive and not dead	53	23,55 %
	b.) get pocket money from someone	26	11,55 %
	<b>c.) earn a living from someone</b>	108	48 %
	d.) be adopted	38	16,9 %
	Unanswered	0	



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24.	To <i>hang together with someone</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) be together with someone</b>	199	88,44 %
	b.) depend on someone	13	5,77 %
	c.) be tied down	5	2,22 %
	d.) swing feely	8	3,55 %
	Unanswered	0	
25.	To get <i>off the hook</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) get out of trouble</b>	126	56,00 %
	b.) do something bad	22	10 %
	c.) be out of place	31	13,77 %
	d.) be crazy	45	20 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %
26.	To <i>plow into</i> someone means to:		
	a.) run over someone with a plow	39	17,33 %
	<b>b.) hit against someone</b>	127	55,44 %
	c.) fall down	30	13 %
	d.) prepare the soil for planting	28	12,44 %
		1	0,44 %
27.	To <i>bawl bloody murder</i> means to:		
	a.) get a nose bleed	26	11,55 %
	b.) hurt yourself	21	9,33 %
	c.) kill lots of people	131	58,22 %
	<b>d.) cry very loud</b>	45	20,00 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
28.	To <i>fall in a crumpled heap</i> means to:		
	a.) faint	35	15,55 %
	<b>b.) collapse</b>	135	60 %
	c.) trip	28	12,44 %
	d.) die	25	11,11 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
29.	To be <i>in a ragged state</i> means to:		
	a.) wear old and torn clothing	60	26,66 %
	<b>b.) look a mess</b>	90	40 %
	c.) be upset	43	19,11 %
	d.) be rude	30	13 %
	Unanswered	2	1,77 %

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30.	To be <i>thrown upon myself</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) be left alone</b>	118	52,44 %
	b.) be hit by someone	29	12,88
	c.) be knocked down by someone	29	12,88 %
	d.) be tossed aside	48	21,33 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %
31.	To <i>gather steam</i> means to:		
	a.) get foggy	32	14,22 %
	b.) blow up	38	16,88 %
	<b>c.) get ready</b>	86	38,22 %
	d.) produce steam	64	28,44 %
	Unanswered	5	2,22 %
32.	To <i>hit the road</i> means to:		
	a.) have an accident	29	12,88 %
	b.) start on a journey	97	43,11 %
	c.) continue on a journey	19	8,44 %
	<b>d.) get going</b>	77	34,22 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
33.	To be <i>dead easy</i> to talk to means to be:		
	<b>a.) very easy</b>	110	48,88 %
	b.) interesting	17	7,50 %
	c.) boring	61	27,11 %
	d.) not easy	37	16,44 %
	Unanswered	0	
34.	To <i>go ape over</i> means to:		
	a.) act like a monkey	49	21,77 %
	b.) jump up and down	30	13,33 %
	c.) climb trees	27	12,00 %
	<b>d.) become very excited</b>	119	52,80 %
	Unanswered	0	
35.	<i>A dream come true</i> is:		
	a.) a wish that is unlikely to happen	25	11,11 %
	b.) something you didn't expect to happen	26	11,55 %
	c.) something that could never happen	15	6,66 %
	<b>d.) a wish that has become reality</b>	159	70,66 %
	Unanswered	0	

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36.	<i>Chain of reasoning</i> is:		
	a.) an unbroken thought	63	28,00 %
	<b>b.) a logical thought process</b>	81	36,00 %
	c.) a stupid thought	41	18,22 %
	d.) a silly thought	37	16,44 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
37.	To be <i>without a scrap of courage</i> means to:		
	a.) be brave sometimes	34	15,11 %
	<b>b.) not be brave at all</b>	122	54,22 %
	c.) be a little brave	39	17 %
	d.) be very brave	28	12,44 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
38.	To be <i>a down to earth person</i> means to:		
	a.) be strange	49	21,77 %
	b.) be curious	41	18,77 %
	<b>c.) be practical</b>	90	40,00 %
	d.) be shy	44	19,55 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %
39.	If <i>you are bound to change</i> this means:		
	a.) you are tied to change	46	20,44 %
	b.) you are never going to change	43	19,11 %
	c.) you are most likely to change	64	28,44 %
	<b>d.) you are certain to change</b>	69	31 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
40.	To <i>spend time</i> means to:		
	a.) waste time	26	11,55 %
	<b>b.) use time</b>	171	76,00 %
	c.) sell time	11	4,88 %
	d.) buy time	14	6,20 %
	Unanswered	3	1 %
41.	To be <i>out of one's mind</i> means to:		
	a.) be asleep	23	10 %
	<b>b.) act silly or crazy</b>	104	46,22 %
	c.) be awkward or unwelcome	61	27,11 %
	d.) be worried	36	16,00 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %

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42.	If you are <i>glued</i> to the television then you are:		
	a.) going to buy a new television	14	6,20 %
	b.) stuck to the television	115	51,11 %
	<b>c.) really interested in television</b>	77	34,22 %
	d.) daydreaming in front of the television	17	7,55 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
43.	To <i>refresh one's memory</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) help someone remember something</b>	177	78 %
	b.) know something	21	9,33 %
	c.) have a healthy mind	21	9,33 %
	d.) be forgetful	7	3 %
	Unanswered	4	0,44 %
44.	To <i>blazes with that</i> means:		
	a.) I hope it burns!	36	16,00 %
	b.) Throw it on the fire!	6	2,66 %
	c.) Mark the path!	32	14,22 %
	<b>d.) I don't care!</b>	94	41,77 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
45.	To be <i>above board</i> means to be:		
	<b>a.) completely honest and fair</b>	57	25,33 %
	b.) more important	78	34,66 %
	c.) proud	60	26,66 %
	d.) afraid	28	12,44 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
46.	To <i>stitch someone up like a kipper</i> means:		
	a.) to tie someone up	53	23,55 %
	<b>b.) to trick someone</b>	117	52,00 %
	c.) to get stitches at the hospital	31	13,77 %
	d.) to sew a dress	21	9,33 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
47.	To be <i>close at hand</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) be within reach</b>	64	28,44 %
	b.) be nearly correct	82	36,44 %
	c.) be generous	44	19,55 %
	d.) selfish	34	15,11 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %

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48.	To <i>make yourself at home</i> means to:		
	<b>a.) be comfortable and relaxed</b>	156	69,33 %
	b.) move in	21	9,33 %
	c.) be a guest	25	11,11 %
	d.) search a person's home	22	9,77 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %
49.	To <i>heave a deep sigh</i> means to:		
	a.) sing softly	39	17 %
	<b>b.) let out a deep breath</b>	132	58,66 %
	c.) to cough	32	14,22 %
	d.) to whisper	22	9,77 %
	Unanswered	0	
50.	To <i>rub someone out</i> means to:		
	a.) give someone a massage	43	19,11 %
	b.) tickle someone	60	26,66 %
	<b>c.) kill someone</b>	53	23,6 %
	d.) erase or delete a picture of someone	69	30,66 %
	Unanswered	0	
51.	If <i>the rhythm grabs hold of us</i> , means that it:		
	a.) bores us	23	10,2 %
	b.) confuses us	56	24,88 %
	c.) scares us	34	15,11 %
	<b>d.) fascinates us</b>	110	48,88 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
52.	To <i>get the meaning across</i> means to:		
	a.) know everything	22	9,77 %
	b.) define a new word	37	16,44 %
	<b>c.) make something clear to someone</b>	123	54,66 %
	d.) give someone the answers	43	19,11 %
	Unanswered	0	
53.	To <i>wear out</i> your own clothing means to:		
	a.) wear something inside out	59	26,22 %
	b.) make someone very tired	18	80,00 %
	<b>c.) become worn from use</b>	60	26,66 %
	d.) wear something until it fits better	88	39,11 %
	Unanswered	0	

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54.	If you say <i>to fight the good fight</i> it means:		
	<b>a.) to fight a noble cause</b>	76	34 %
	b.) to fight for your honor	91	40 %
	c.) to fight until someone gets killed	27	12,00 %
	d.) to fight until you lose the battle	31	13,77 %
	Unanswered	0	
55.	To <i>rule out</i> someone or something means to:		
	<b>a.) think that something is not possible</b>	30	13,33 %
	b.) boss someone around	91	40,44 %
	c.) make a decision	51	22,66 %
	d.) explain the rules	51	22,66 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
56.	To <i>let the matter drop</i> means to:		
	a.) not get upset	46	20,4 %
	b.) hide the details	47	20,88 %
	<b>c.) ignore a problem</b>	104	46,22 %
	d.) show no emotion	25	11,11 %
	Unanswered	3	1,33 %
57.	To <i>break a promise</i> means to:		
	a.) remove a problem	20	8,88 %
	<b>b.) not do what you said you would do</b>	158	70,22 %
	c.) hurt someone's feelings	36	16,00 %
	d.) end a relationship	9	4,00 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
58.	To <i>show off</i> means to:		
	a.) lead someone somewhere	33	14,66 %
	<b>b.) do something to attract attention</b>	112	49,77 %
	c.) give instructions to someone	30	13,33 %
	d.) prove that something is true	48	21,33 %
	Unanswered	2	0,88 %
59.	If you say that <i>you can't stand school</i> it means that:		
	a.) you like school	14	6,22 %
	b.) you think school is okay	15	6,66 %
	<b>c.) you don't like school</b>	148	65,77 %
	d.) you don't care about school	47	20,88 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %

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60.	To be <i>at a loss for words</i> means to:		
	a.) be sad	22	9,77 %
	b.) forget something	47	20,88 %
	<b>c.) not know what to say</b>	139	61,77 %
	d.) be rude	16	7,11 %
	Unanswered	1	0,44 %