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**Teachers' Beliefs on Collaborative Learning for
Primary EFL Students**

Lärares syn på kollaborativt lärande för unga EFL-elever

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Abstract

In the Swedish educational system, collaborative learning is emphasized as a pedagogical tool to encourage students language acquisition. Collaborative learning entails students acquiring new knowledge by working together towards a common goal, which simultaneously enhances their language skills. However, the implementation of the method in the primary EFL classroom presents challenges. This study explores some Swedish teachers' beliefs on collaborative learning in the young EFL classroom, focusing on its use for language development. Furthermore, the study aims to investigate the benefits and challenges teachers are faced with when working with collaborative tasks. In this qualitative study, three English teachers in grades 4-6 participated. The data collection is based on semi-structured interviews with the teachers. The findings indicate that all the teachers recognised collaborative learning as beneficial for language development, social interaction and student engagement. The method provided students with peer support and opportunities to actively use English as the target language. However, the results also indicate challenges with the method, revealing a gap between the theoretical and practical implementation. For example, time management, group dynamics and managing equal participation proved to be an issue whilst managing collaborative tasks. The results emphasize the importance of scaffolding and meticulous planning by the teachers to effectively implement collaborative learning in the classroom.

Keywords: collaborative learning, teacher beliefs, EFL (English as a foreign language), scaffolding, primary education

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1. Introduction

The focus on collaborative learning aligns closely with current pedagogical trends in Sweden, where the curriculum encourages active student participation and interaction to foster deeper learning. By fostering peer-to-peer discussions and shared problem-solving, collaborative learning not only contributes to language development but also builds critical social skills. In light of the Curriculum's (Skolverket, 2022) emphasis on communicative competence, this study offers an opportunity to bridge theoretical frameworks with real-world classroom practices.

Despite its recognized benefits, collaborative learning poses practical challenges for teachers. Factors such as time management, group dynamics, and classroom size may impact the successful implementation of such methods. Understanding teachers' perspectives on these challenges is essential for creating strategies that support both educators and students in EFL settings.

Previous research on collaborative learning highlights its potential to enhance language acquisition through social interaction, as supported by Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory. According to this theory, language learning is a social process where interaction with peers facilitates cognitive development and scaffolding opportunities. While studies often emphasize the students' perspective, research focused on teachers' perceptions and implementation of collaborative learning remains limited.

The integration of collaborative learning within English as a Foreign Language (EFL) education has gained increasing attention in Swedish primary schools. This pedagogical approach emphasizes student interaction, peer-assisted learning, and cooperative problem-solving, aligning with national curriculum goals that stress communicative competence (Skolverket, 2022). However, despite the theoretical and practical support for collaborative learning, teachers often face challenges in implementing these strategies effectively.

A growing body of research suggests that collaborative learning can foster engagement and language acquisition (Gibbons, 2015; Lundahl, 2022). However, studies also indicate a gap in understanding how teachers perceive and manage these practices within the constraints of classroom environments (Azkarai & Kopinska, 2020). This gap refers to the limited research

on teachers' perspectives and practical experiences. This study addresses this gap by exploring Swedish primary school teachers' beliefs about collaborative learning in the EFL classroom, their experiences in implementing such strategies, and the perceived benefits and challenges they encounter.

By investigating teachers' perspectives, this study provides valuable insights into how collaborative learning aligns with educational policies and practical classroom realities. Understanding these perspectives is crucial for enhancing teacher training, refining pedagogical strategies, and ensuring that collaborative learning methods are effectively integrated into language education. In doing so, this study contributes to both academic discourse and practical educational advancements, offering recommendations for improving collaborative learning implementation in Swedish schools.

From a practical perspective, the Swedish curriculum for English instruction underscores the importance of communication, interaction, and cultural understanding. These goals are inherently aligned with collaborative learning methods, which create authentic opportunities for students to practice language in meaningful contexts. However, teachers' views on how effectively these methods contribute to language acquisition, particularly in the EFL context, remain underexplored. This study aims to address this gap by providing insights into teachers' beliefs and practices.

Furthermore, addressing this topic has significant implications for teacher education and professional development. By understanding teachers' experiences and challenges, this study can inform better training practices and support systems for educators, ensuring that collaborative learning methods are implemented effectively.

2. Aim and Research Questions

The aim of this qualitative study is to investigate some primary school teachers' perspectives and beliefs regarding the implementation of collaborative learning approaches within the EFL classroom. This study seeks to explore not only their general attitudes towards the practical application of collaborative learning methods but also how they perceive its overall effectiveness in contributing to young primary school learners' language development. By gaining insight into teachers' beliefs, the study aims to provide a deeper understanding of how collaborative learning is implemented in real classroom settings in Sweden, and the challenges educators may face in incorporating this method into their teaching practices.

To address this aim, the following research questions guide the study:

1. How do some primary teachers view collaborative learning for purposes of language development?
2. What benefits and challenges do they see in using collaborative learning in the English classroom?

3. Background

In this section the background of the study will be unpacked. By presenting the background we aim to provide already established knowledge regarding our research topic. Furthermore, it provides reliability and clarity when analyzing the results of the study. We firstly present relevant terminology of the study. Secondly, we look into theories about language development, as this is relevant to the focus of this study. Thereafter, we look at how collaborative learning is presented in the syllabus for English. Lastly, we present previous research on the topic of collaborative learning, which identifies benefits and challenges with the method.

3.1 Terminology

Relevant to the aim of this study are two key terms: collaborative learning, scaffolding and teachers' beliefs. These will continuously be used throughout the study.

Collaborative learning is a pedagogical approach that emphasizes group work and peer interaction to achieve shared learning objectives. According to Lundahl (2022), such approaches foster authentic communication and active engagement, which are essential for language development in the EFL classroom. Through structured collaborative tasks such as group discussions, role-playing, and project-based learning, students are encouraged to use the target language in meaningful contexts. This not only enhances their communicative competence but also contributes to increased confidence and fluency.

Gibbons (2015) expands on the role of collaboration in language acquisition by emphasizing *scaffolding*—the structured support that enables students to engage in increasingly complex linguistic tasks. Scaffolding, as a key concept in second language pedagogy, involves strategies such as *modeling*, *guided interaction*, and *responsive feedback*, all of which allow students to move from assisted to independent language use (Gibbons, 2015). This aligns with the Swedish national curriculum, which underscores the importance of interaction and communicative competence in English education (Skolverket, 2022). The Swedish curriculum explicitly encourages teachers to design learning environments where students can develop their language skills through meaningful and socially interactive experiences (Skolverket, 2022).

Furthermore, research suggests that scaffolding within a collaborative learning framework helps reduce language anxiety and increases student motivation (Gibbons, 2015; Lundahl, 2022). *Scaffolding* refers to the temporary support provided by teachers or peers to help students accomplish tasks they would not be able to complete independently. According to Gibbons (2015), "scaffolding is a way of providing support to learners as they develop new skills, gradually removing the support as learners become more proficient" (p. 16). This structured support allows students to engage more confidently in collaborative learning, reinforcing their ability to use the target language in meaningful ways. By providing structured peer interaction and opportunities for *negotiation of meaning*, collaborative learning allows students to develop linguistic confidence while being supported by both their peers and teachers.

However, while the theoretical and curricular frameworks advocate for collaborative approaches, the extent to which teachers implement these strategies effectively in practice remains an open question. Therefore, this study seeks to investigate how primary school teachers perceive and apply collaborative learning methods in the EFL classroom and how these align with the objectives outlined in the Swedish Curriculum. According to the Swedish curriculum (2022), English instruction should provide students with opportunities to "Express themselves and interact with others in speech and writing" (p. 43), and develop their ability to "Adapt language to different purposes, listeners or readers, and contexts" (p. 44). These objectives emphasize the role of interaction and meaningful communication in language learning, reinforcing the importance of peer collaboration as a key component of English education in Sweden.

Beliefs can be defined as an individual's understanding of the world, formed from previous experiences and that are believed to be true by the individual (Richardson, 2003). As a teacher, some of these understandings are shared professional values presented in the curriculum. However, Lundahl (2022) states that every teacher comes with individual experiences and backgrounds that shape them as teachers, so-called *teachers' beliefs*. Richardson (2003) describes how teacher candidates come into teaching programs with an already conducted view of teaching, which affects their learning process before it even starts. Secondly, he explains how the use of individual beliefs to interpret information during teacher candidates' studying process consequently sets ground for future teaching. How they

then implement teaching practices in the classroom is thereby impacted by their own experiences and beliefs. Whilst pedagogical movements and teaching practices continuously infiltrate the occupation, it is these beliefs that control the teachers' pedagogical decisions (Lundahl, 2022). Strong beliefs can therefore be cause for teachers being resistant or viewing new methods as negative, as it means change. Consequently, How collaborative learning, which is considered a newer method, is perceived by teachers can be the effect of one's beliefs.

Research on early EFL teachers in Thailand showed how teachers' beliefs affected their teaching style, as preconceived thoughts from their teacher education presented in their early teaching (Ulla, 2024). Through interviews with teachers, awareness was shown of how their early teaching style was influenced by their teaching programs. One interviewee explained how they initially came into teaching with an authoritarian teacher style, which is what was preached during their university education. However, through actively participating in programs about teaching and foreign language teaching, many of the individual beliefs were altered and newer teaching styles were accepted. This correlates with Lundahl's (2022) statement over the importance of awareness of one's individual beliefs within teaching and how they impact their decisions, especially with ongoing changes happening with teaching and the syllabus over time.

3.2 Theories about language learning

Relevant for our study is the *sociocultural theory*. According to this theory, language used within interactions is seen as a significant tool in the mastering of knowledge. By communicating with others, learners gain new knowledge while simultaneously learning how to put prior knowledge into words (Lundahl, 2022). The founder behind the theory, Vygotsky, views communication as a critical tool for learning and understanding the world (Lungren et al, 2017). Sociocultural theory thereby comes from communication being viewed as a social act, which puts importance on the social sphere within learning processes. Although the theory favors spoken language as a form of communication, it does not exclude other communication forms such as reading and writing (Lundahl, 2022).

Sociocultural theory has a clear influence on many of the current pedagogical movements. Methods used for today's teaching often include language as a tool for processing

information and gaining understanding. This is usually done by students working together, which engages them in exchanging information as well as scaffolding each other's learning. For example, collaborative learning is based on a great extent of communication between students and their trading of information, which is crucial to gain new knowledge (Jensen, 2012).

The impact the sociocultural theory has on the Swedish curriculum can be seen within the first sentence of the syllabus for English, which states that language is a tool for both thinking, communication and learning. Furthermore, the syllabus states that one of the aims of the subject is to: “Help pupils develop knowledge of the English language and of the areas and contexts in which English is used” (Skolverket, 2022, p. 43). This shows further connection with sociocultural theory, as communicating with others includes meeting with different contexts and cultures (Lundgren et al, 2017).

3.3 Collaborative learning in the syllabus for English

Collaborative learning is an essential component of language development and is explicitly encouraged within the Lgr22 (Skolverket, 2022). The syllabus for English in years 4–6 places a strong emphasis on communicative competence, active student participation, and the use of English in meaningful and interactive contexts. The curriculum highlights the importance of collaboration as a tool for language development, fostering students' ability to communicate effectively through various speaking and interaction activities.

Lundahl (2022) underlines the importance of speaking and interacting in the English classroom, emphasizing that language learning is a social activity where students develop their communicative abilities through meaningful dialogue. This aligns with Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, which states that language development occurs in interactive settings where learners engage in scaffolded communication. The curriculum supports this approach by encouraging teachers to design activities where students work together, solve problems, and express themselves in English.

Speaking and Interaction in the Curriculum

The Swedish curriculum underlines that students should develop their ability to use English in both spoken and written form, with an emphasis on understanding and making themselves understood in different communicative situations (Skolverket, 2022). This is particularly evident in the syllabus's knowledge requirements, which stress: 1) The ability to interact in conversations and discussions; 2) The ability to express thoughts, opinions, and experiences; and 3) The ability to use strategies for understanding and making oneself understood (Skolverket, 2022).

To meet these objectives, the syllabus encourages the use of collaborative learning strategies, such as: 1) Group discussions: Engaging students in structured discussions where they can negotiate meaning and practice speaking in a supportive environment; 2) Role-playing and simulations: Allowing students to immerse themselves in real-life scenarios, which facilitates spontaneous language use; and 3) Project-based learning: Encouraging students to work together on assignments that require critical thinking and communication in English (Skolverket, 2022).

Lundahl (2022) emphasizes that these collaborative tasks promote authentic language use and create opportunities for students to practice fluency while receiving feedback from both peers and teachers. Moreover, these activities help reduce foreign language anxiety by shifting the focus from teacher-led instruction to peer interaction, making students more comfortable using English in different contexts (Gibbons, 2015; Lundahl, 2022).

Collaborative Learning as a Pedagogical Tool in the Curriculum

The curriculum not only encourages collaborative learning but also frames it as a pedagogical tool that can support differentiated instruction. Given the diverse language abilities within a typical classroom, collaborative methods enable students to learn from one another through peer scaffolding. More proficient students can help their peers while reinforcing their own language skills, thus creating a mutually beneficial learning environment.

Additionally, collaborative learning aligns with the broader goals of the Swedish education system, which emphasize student-centered and inclusive teaching approaches. By integrating collaboration into English lessons, teachers create a space where all students can contribute, experiment with language, and build confidence in their communicative abilities.

Challenges in the Curriculum

Despite the clear benefits outlined in both research and the curriculum, the implementation of collaborative learning can present challenges. Teachers may face difficulties in managing group dynamics, ensuring equal participation, and structuring tasks effectively to avoid cooperative rather than collaborative work (Azkarai & Kopinska, 2020). While the two concepts are similar and include group work, collaborative learning entails an interaction filled with sharing opinions and knowledge in order to fulfill a shared task (Jensen, 2012). Thus, collaboration means students having a shared goal and working together towards it. Jensen (2012) explains how cooperative work does not include a shared goal. Instead it works as an aid in the process of individually gaining knowledge. For example, this might be writing a text individually with the support of a peer's comments. However, the curriculum provides a flexible framework that allows educators to tailor collaborative methods to their specific classroom needs, ensuring that students receive the necessary support to engage in meaningful language learning experiences (Skolverket, 2022).

Ultimately, collaborative learning is deeply embedded in the syllabus (Skolverket, 2022) for English and aligns with contemporary language acquisition theories. This method supports communicative competence, reduces language anxiety, and fosters engagement in the EFL classroom. While its implementation requires careful planning and structured support, collaboration remains a key strategy for enhancing students' language development. By actively incorporating collaborative activities into English lessons, teachers can create dynamic, interactive learning environments where students not only acquire language skills but also develop confidence and motivation. This study will further explore how teachers perceive and apply collaborative learning in practice, contributing to a deeper understanding of its role in primary English education (SNE, 2022).

3.4 Previous research

In our search for previous research focused on young EFL students, we found results showing how collaborative methods positively impact students' motivation and language acquisition. Yet, it was also discovered that many studies identify weaknesses with collaborative learning methods. Therefore, to present these two sides, the following section is divided into two parts. Firstly, we will look at the benefits of working collaboratively, as recognised by previous research. Secondly, we will present the challenges some studies found with collaborative work.

While conducting the search for previous research, umbrella terms such as collaborative methods, collaborative tasks, English as a foreign language and primary school are used. Linking words related to these were also added and used during the search. The chosen studies were peer reviewed and published after the year 2010, as these are the most relevant. Studies where English was used as a first language were excluded as these are not relevant to the view of English in Sweden, where it is a foreign language. An issue we ran into was the limited research that has been conducted on the age group we are researching, year 4-6. This stresses the importance of our study investigating how the method works for upper primary students. Because of the lack of studies on year 4-6 students, older age groups were used if the findings of the study were relevant to the subject of benefits and challenges of collaborative learning methods.

3.4.1 Benefits According to Previous Research

According to Lundahl (2022) students' learning is heavily affected by how they view themselves. Therefore, motivation is one of the things considered to have the biggest impact on second language learners. However, student motivation is hard to grasp as it can easily vary due to factors such as classroom environment and task worked on (Kopinska & Azkarai, 2020). Kopinska and Azkarai (2020) found that young EFL students' overall motivation and task motivation increased over the course of a school year where they continuously worked with collaborative tasks. Additionally, students reported feeling less anxious while participating in the collaborative tasks, which further supports the benefits of collaborative learning approaches. Similarly, Nilsson (2019) emphasizes the benefits of collaborative learning in a study investigating foreign language anxiety in young Swedish students. One of

the factors behind the anxiety was engaging in full class conversations, as many students were critical of their own speaking abilities. Nilsson's (2019) interviews with young students revealed that collaborative work was favoured to alleviate the anxiety, and small group engagements were heavily favoured.

Further showing the benefits of collaborative learning is Kouhsarian and colleagues' (2023) experiment, where they divided Iranian students in two groups, where one group received traditional teaching and the other worked with collaborative tasks. Similar to the previously mentioned research, findings showed that the students participating in collaborative tasks had an incline in motivation. Furthermore, they also showed development in language acquisition by scoring higher than the traditional group on grammar tests both groups performed.

3.4.2 Challenges According to Previous Research

While empirical research tends to stress the benefits of collaborative pedagogy, this approach also entails challenges. One example is another study conducted by Azkarai and Kopinska (2020) that showed little to no correlation between collaborative work and motivation. During their investigation on young EFL learners' interaction and engagement during a collaborative writing task, motivation for said task was factored into the end result of the study. Azkarai and Kopinska (2020) stated that they could not see any correlation between the students' level of engagement and their task motivation. During their reflection about the result, they touched on the possibility that the result could be a factor of the execution of the collaborative writing task. While reviewing the students' performance, they could conclude that much of the work qualified as cooperative instead of collaborative. With a result showing the majority of the students participating in cooperative work, no conclusion regarding collaborative methods could be made. During the conclusion the authors pondered over what factors were affecting the result, with a faulty task presentation and execution being the most likely one (Azkarai & Kopinska, 2020). Furthermore, it was stated how the working pairs could also factor into the end result of the study.

This is confirmed by Yang and colleagues (2023) who investigated the connection between collaborative learning and foreign language anxiety while working on a digital task. Their results show that the collaborative task did not have any effect on the anxiety level compared to the students working individually. However, the collaborative groups scored better on the

task, notably groups consisting of low-anxiety and medium-anxiety students (Yang et al., 2023). Therefore, although the benefit shown of collaborative tasks, the study affirms the importance and challenge of group constellations while working with collaborative methods.

4. Method

In this section, we outline the methodology used in our study, detailing the research design, data collection, and analysis processes. The study employs a qualitative research approach to explore some teachers' perspectives on collaborative learning and its impact on language acquisition in the EFL classroom. This approach is chosen to allow an in-depth understanding of teachers' beliefs, challenges, and preferences regarding collaborative learning (Alvehus, 2023).

The methodological framework of this study ensures that the research questions are addressed through a structured yet flexible approach. By using semi-structured interviews, we aim to gather rich, descriptive data that reflects the participants' real-world experiences. This approach facilitates a deeper understanding of the role of collaborative learning in language acquisition while allowing for follow-up questions that further develop the discussion.

By structuring the methodology in this way, we aim to provide a clear and transparent account of how the study was conducted, ensuring its credibility and trustworthiness. The following sections account for the methodology behind our study: first, we describe the participants included; secondly, we explain the choice of method chosen for this study; next is the detailed procedure of the data collection process, followed by how the data gained will be prepared for analysis in our results section; lastly, we present the ethical considerations followed while conducting the study.

4.1 Participants

The interviewees participating in our project consists of three English teachers, from two different schools. The schools are both located in the south of Sweden. School 1, where three of the interviewees work, is located in an urban area with circa 950 students. School 2 is located in a smaller suburban area and has around 500 students. As we are following the principles for conducting research by The Swedish Research Council (2024), the participants will remain anonymous. Therefore, they will be referred to by the use of pseudonyms Teacher A, B, and C. Table 1 below includes the participants work experience and what subjects they teach, as well as the date of conducted interviews.

Table 1

Teachers who participated in the interviews

Teacher	Work experience	Subjects	Grades they teach English in	Date of interview
Teacher A	3 years	Social studies, English	4th, 5th and 6th graders	05 February 2025
Teacher B	1 years	Mathematics, Swedish, English	4th, 5th and 6th graders	06 February 2025
Teacher C	15 years	English	4th, 5th and 6th graders	03 March 2025

4.1.2 Selection Process

As the aim of our study is to investigate opinions from primary school teachers, the included interviewees are year 4-6 English teachers. When designing the study, we reached out to teachers working at four different schools to see interest in participating. The teachers contacted were actively teaching the English subject, which is relevant for our study. Three teachers from two different schools showed interest in the subject after first contact and agreed to participate in the interviews. As time constraints affected the number of interviews, we still attempted to ensure that varied information would come from the interviews. By reaching out to teachers whose schools are located in two different cities, we aim to avoid getting a homogeneous sample. A heterogeneous sample, which the different locations might result in, will provide a broader result and ability for comparison in the analysis (Alvehus, 2023). Hjerm and colleagues (2022) remarks that when choosing participants for the interviews, certain criteria will have to be fulfilled in order for the end result to be relevant for one's study. Although the selection was partly based on convenience, the participants all fulfilled the criteria of actively implementing collaborative learning. Furthermore, an extensive result might be attained by the participants having varied work experience, as this could affect beliefs on the research subject.

4.2 Choice of method

This study adopts a qualitative research approach, as its aim is to explore teachers' perspectives on collaborative learning and its impact on language acquisition in the EFL classroom. A qualitative approach is particularly suitable for this study because it focuses on interpreting subjective experiences rather than measuring numerical data (Bryman, 2018). By investigating teachers' views, this research seeks to provide in-depth insights into their beliefs, experiences, and challenges related to collaborative learning.

To collect empirical data, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three English teachers. This method was chosen because it allows for both structured questioning—ensuring key themes are covered—and open-ended responses, enabling participants to elaborate on their experiences. Alvehus (2023) states that semi-structured interviews provide the flexibility needed to explore participants' perspectives while maintaining a degree of comparability between responses. The interview guide was developed around three central themes: (1) education and work experience; (2) views on collaborative learning; (3) observed effects on students, including both benefits and challenges (see Appendix B). The flexibility of the interview process allowed for the adaptation of follow-up questions based on the participants' responses, ensuring that the discussions remained relevant and meaningful.

4.3 Procedure

The data collection process consisted of three semi-structured interviews, all conducted in February 2025. The interviews with two of the teachers were conducted in English. This was done to avoid misinterpretation happening while translating from Swedish to English. However, the third interview was conducted in Swedish, as requested by the participant. According to the interviewee, conducting the interview in Swedish enabled more comfortable and fluent expression, which could, in retrospect, have benefited the earlier interviews. Although neither of the other teachers expressed an issue with conducting the interview in English, it could have interfered with the flow of conversation. The majority of interviews were conducted in person at the respective schools, while one over Teams for logistical reasons. Each interview lasted between 15 and 30 minutes. Participants were informed about the study's purpose beforehand and signed an informed consent form in accordance with

ethical guidelines (Vetenskapsrådet, 2024). To maintain neutrality, we followed a pre-prepared script, ensuring consistency across the interviews whilst allowing flexibility for follow-up questions. The interviews were recorded and later transcribed verbatim. Notes were also taken to capture non-verbal cues such as tone and facial expressions. Although, these notes were taken discreetly and sparingly to avoid the flow of conversation. To conclude the interviews a brief summary about the topics discussed was presented and an opportunity to add comments were given.

4.4 Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using thematic analysis, following Braun and Clarke's (2019) methodology. Thematic analysis was chosen because it allows for the identification of patterns and key themes across different data sources while remaining flexible enough to accommodate variations in responses. The analysis was conducted in the following steps:

1. **Familiarization with the data:** The transcribed interviews and focus group discussions were read multiple times to develop an initial understanding of the content.
2. **Initial coding:** Key phrases, recurring words, and notable patterns were highlighted. Each piece of relevant data was assigned a code representing a particular theme or idea.
3. **Grouping codes into themes:** Similar codes were clustered together into broader themes related to collaborative learning, such as frequency of use, teacher perceptions, and student engagement.
4. **Review and refinement:** The themes were refined and compared against existing literature, including theories of scaffolding and sociocultural learning theory, as well as Swedish curriculum guidelines.
5. **Interpretation:** The final themes were synthesized to address the research questions, linking findings back to theoretical frameworks and previous research.

Three major themes emerged from the analysis:

1. **Implementation and frequency of collaborative learning:** The extent to which teachers integrate collaborative learning in their instruction and the factors influencing its use.

2. **Perceived benefits of collaborative learning for language acquisition:** The ways in which collaborative learning enhances student engagement, confidence, and peer support in language learning.
3. **Challenges and limitations of collaborative learning:** Difficulties faced by teachers, including ensuring equal participation, maintaining English as the target language, and managing group dynamics.

In conclusion, the thematic analysis revealed that while teachers recognize the benefits of collaborative learning in promoting student engagement and language acquisition, they also encounter challenges in its implementation. These insights contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how collaborative learning is practiced in Swedish EFL classrooms and provide a foundation for future research and pedagogical development.

4.5 Ethical Considerations

When conducting this study, the *Swedish Research Council (2024)* outlined ethical guidelines that were followed to establish ethical integrity, and ensure safety of the participants and the study's future usage. The first principle that was adhered to was informed consent. This means that the participants need detailed information about the study's purpose, methods, and their rights before agreeing to participate. This was done after first contact through email, to see interest of the fitting potential participants, by sending a second email which included a consent form (See Appendix A) informing them about the study's purpose, what the interview procedure looked like and how the information received would be stored. The second principle is anonymity and confidentiality, which implies that any of the participants identifying details will be kept anonymous. By giving the participants pseudonyms this concept is followed. In the consent form, information about their right to withdraw from the study at any time was given, which follows the third principle. And lastly, the fourth principle is data security, which entails that our audio recordings and transcripts will be securely stored and only accessible to the researchers. By following these ethical guidelines, the study ensures participant protection and academic credibility.

5. Results and Discussion

The purpose of this study is to explore a group of primary school teachers' perspectives on collaborative learning and its role in language acquisition within the Swedish EFL classroom. Specifically, the study seeks to investigate how these teachers view collaborative learning as a method for supporting language development, as well as the benefits and challenges they associate with its use in English instruction.

To address these aims, semi-structured interviews were conducted with three primary school teachers, referred to in this study as Teacher A, B, and C. The findings from these interviews have been analyzed thematically and are presented through three overarching themes that emerged during the analysis: the implementation and frequency of collaborative learning, the perceived benefits of such methods for language development, and the challenges and limitations involved in their use.

Each of these themes is discussed in relation to relevant previous research, language learning theories, and the Swedish national curriculum (Skolverket, 2022). The discussion also highlights both commonalities and differences in the teachers' perspectives, providing a nuanced view of how collaborative learning is approached in practice.

5.1 Implementation of Collaborative Learning

Teachers' use of collaborative learning varied significantly, with some incorporating it in every lesson, while others implemented it more selectively based on classroom dynamics and lesson objectives. Teacher A noted that collaborative tasks encourage active participation, particularly among students who were otherwise reluctant to speak in English. However, Teacher B emphasized that group activities required clear structures to prevent dominant students from taking over discussions. Similar to this Teacher C recalled usually avoiding collaborative tasks, as students unwillingness to participate in pair tasks was an issue in some groups.

Furthermore, Teacher C reported how they see the trend of collaborative learning fading, and how this is the main reason behind their reluctance to use the method in the classroom. The teacher noted the method being presented in the school they work at as a highly favourable method, as well as during university. This made Teacher C perceive it as an exceptional

method to implement in the classroom. However, Teacher C described finding difficulties when using collaborative methods in class. For example, students usually grew tired of repeatedly working together with others, amongst other things. Furthermore, Teacher C described how upon hearing other teachers' and students' perception of the method, their beliefs about collaborative work changed, and they now use it more sparingly:

I was on fire about how good it was, but after hearing others talk about it I became a bit doubtful, when you see it from a different perspective. I switched sides a bit. But yeah, there are still some activities I use.

This correlates with Richardson (2003) who explained how teachers come into the occupation with preconceived beliefs. These beliefs come from both personal experiences, but also from what is being taught in the teacher programs. This is supported by Ulla's (2024) study, where teachers stated how their teaching style out of university was highly affected by their teaching program. Based on previous studies, one could assume that Teacher C's positive thoughts regarding the subject of collaborative learning could stem from the teacher program she attended. Since then, Teacher C's use of collaborative learning in the classroom, as well as discussing the method with other colleagues have altered their beliefs about the movement.

Additionally, the teachers demonstrated varying levels of engagement with collaborative learning, influenced by factors such as subject matter, student behavior, and classroom management constraints. While some teachers integrated collaborative activities frequently, others adopted a more cautious approach, emphasizing the need for structured implementation. These findings align with Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which underscores the importance of guided interaction in language development. However, teachers also highlighted the necessity of scaffolding to ensure that students can navigate collaborative tasks effectively.

Teachers' Use of Collaborative Learning

Teacher A and Teacher B both reported using collaborative learning regularly, incorporating at least one collaborative activity per lesson. While their approaches differed in terms of preferred methods, they shared a common belief in the benefits of collaboration. Teacher A stated "I strongly support collaborative learning, as I believe students gain a deeper

understanding when they work together. It not only helps them feel more confident in their learning, but also makes the process more enjoyable.” For Teacher A, these activities often involved creative, hands-on tasks such as drawing, visual representations, and twin reading, not limited to just English lessons but extending to subjects like social studies and Swedish. Teacher A further emphasized that “These types of activities are often the ones students remember the most because they engage both their creativity and their learning.”

On the other hand, Teacher B also made use of collaborative learning frequently but leaned more toward structured, discussion-based methods. Teacher B explained: “I do it a lot, and the university has also propped it on us since the beginning, so I use it a lot and not just during English lessons, but when I teach social studies... I use it a lot as well and even in Swedish.” This method included activities like mini whiteboards, think-pair-share, and group discussions modeled on national test formats.

Both Teacher A and Teacher B’s frequent use of collaborative learning aligns with Lundahl’s (2022) assertion that peer interaction is crucial for engagement and language acquisition. It also supports the goals of Lgr22, which emphasizes communicative competence and promotes student-centered learning, as well as real-life communication skills (Skolverket, 2022). By integrating such activities regularly, they are fostering the development of skills necessary for active participation and communication in a variety of contexts.

However, Teacher C’s experience diverged from the others. Teacher C reported incorporating collaborative tasks only occasionally over several weeks, struggling to differentiate between collaborative and cooperative tasks. Teacher C frequently mentioned using cooperative tasks but expressed difficulty recognizing when group activities truly qualified as collaborative. This issue is consistent with findings from Azkarai and Kopinska (2020), who point to challenges in distinguishing between collaborative and cooperative classroom activities. Their study revealed that students may engage in cooperative work instead of collaborative work, despite the two being similar in nature but differing in terms of the level of student participation. Teacher C’s inability to separate these two types of tasks may influence how collaborative learning is applied and understood in their classroom, potentially impacting student engagement and the overall effectiveness of the approach.

In conclusion, while Teacher A and Teacher B consistently use collaborative learning methods and see its positive effects on student engagement and learning, Teacher C’s struggle

with differentiating between collaborative and cooperative tasks may limit their ability to fully embrace the method. The variation in how teachers understand and implement collaborative learning reflects broader challenges in ensuring its successful integration into diverse classroom settings.

Choice of Collaborative Methods

When selecting collaborative methods, all interviewed teachers emphasized the importance of adapting their approach based on the specific class, individual students, and overall classroom dynamics. Furthermore, the subject matter and the nature of the lesson play a crucial role in determining the most effective method. The teachers consistently highlighted that these factors vary depending on students' age, lesson type, and subject. According to them, more open-ended subjects, such as social studies, tend to foster broader discussions and facilitate student participation, as they allow for more flexible and exploratory engagement. In contrast, subjects like English and mathematics often induce higher levels of pressure and insecurity among students, potentially hindering active participation. Despite these challenges, all teachers expressed strong support for collaborative learning, viewing it as a valuable pedagogical approach that not only enhances academic engagement but also prepares students for future societal and professional interactions.

Teacher A and Teacher B both emphasized that not all subjects lend themselves equally well to collaborative learning. Teacher A stated that subjects as social studies are naturally suited for discussion, whereas math requires more individual problem-solving before group collaboration can be effective. Teacher B mentioned that student behavior and class discipline influence whether collaborative learning can be successfully implemented. She noted that year 4 students required more structure and responsibility to work collaboratively while year 6 was easier to engage in the collaborative activities. This differentiation reflects Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural theory, which suggests that learning occurs within a Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD)—students need structured scaffolding to transition from independent to collaborative work. It also aligns with Gibbons' (2015) argument that scaffolding is key to effective peer collaboration in language learning. The importance of scaffolding is mirrored in Teacher C's thoughts, who favoured ending the collaborative tasks in a full class

conversation. Teacher C states this provides a form of scaffolding for the whole class, allowing the students to partake in other groups' knowledge.

5.2 Perceived Benefits of Collaborative Learning

In the interviews, the participants relayed what they perceive to be benefits with using collaborative learning in the EFL classroom. The two main benefits were how the method allows students to practice using the language, which promotes confidence, and how working collaboratively together allows scaffolding in the form of peer support.

Increased Language Practice and Confidence

Teacher A and B agreed that collaborative learning significantly enhances language learning, particularly in speaking and listening. Additionally, all three participants emphasized that when students work in groups, they have more opportunities to practice English, receive peer feedback, and build confidence in using the language. Teacher A stated that students learn better when interacting with peers, as they can clarify misunderstandings and support each other in using the target language. Teacher C supported this view by noting that when a student can help and correct a peer's speech: "They both learn, as one evolves their pronunciation while the other uses their skills to correct the other".

Teacher B mentions a potential drawback of collaborative learning, stating:

They don't have the ability to find strategies to come around when they find an obstacle in their language development, so if they can't say a word or say what they mean, they switch to Swedish. So that's the like backside of collaborative learning since they're in groups and they know each other in Swedish. It's the easy way out often. And I can't be there every time to like up, up, up.

This statement underscores that while collaborative learning fosters communication, it does not always encourage students to take responsibility for their own language development. Instead, students may rely on their native language as a shortcut rather than actively working through linguistic challenges. However, despite this limitation, the presence of the teacher remains crucial in guiding students toward greater engagement in their own learning process.

By providing support and maintaining an active role in scaffolding students' learning, the teacher helps create a classroom environment that minimizes anxiety and reduces pressure.

This perspective aligns with the results from Nilsson's (2019) study Input Hypothesis, which emphasizes that language acquisition is most effective in low-anxiety settings where learners receive comprehensible input. Collaborative learning contributes to such an environment by lowering stress levels and allowing students to rely on peer interactions, ultimately facilitating language acquisition in a more natural and supportive manner.

Peer Support as a Form of Scaffolding

All the interviewees highlighted peer support as an important factor in language development. Teacher B and C both explained how when students interact, they can: 1) correct each other's mistakes in a non-judgemental way; 2) explain new vocabulary and structures in a more student-friendly manner; and 3) take risks in using English without fear of immediate correction from the teacher. This strongly aligns with Gibbons' (2015) scaffolding model, which states that collaboration helps learners bridge the gap between what they can do independently and what they can achieve with support.

Teacher C explains the work behind creating working groups in order for this to happen: "I use a method where you divide the kids in the categories 1,2,3 and 4. Number 1 are the weak students and 4 are the strong students". Teacher C suggests that splitting the students into categories of similar academic levels ensures optimal peer support is made possible. Teacher C further explains how "1 and 2's can work together, and 3 and 4's. Never 1 and 4. The gap is too big." When discussing how big the groups should be for optimal scaffolding, Teacher B and C both expressed how pair work is highly favourable. Teacher B further explained how although groups of two work great, as a teacher you still need to support the students and give formative feedback. Although the students motivate each other, Teacher B states how there needs to be frequent feedback as the students are still quite young and might stray from the topic.

Teacher A agreed with the other two participants' views on peer support as scaffolding, and said it can work, but many variables can affect this. Lack of student engagement, being in a bad mood or group dynamics were some of the examples given by Teacher A as to why peer

support as scaffolding does not always work. Careful consideration of who to pair the students with is needed from the teacher, and Teacher A further suggested how pairing students up in familiar groups is highly favourable to avoid one student carrying the workload.

5.3 Percieved Challenges of Collaborative Learning

The findings from the interviews indicate three primary challenges associated with collaborative learning: (1) maintaining English as the spoken language during tasks, (2) difficulties assessing the students and ensuring equal participation among students, and (3) overcoming students' reluctance to engage in collaborative tasks. These challenges suggest that while collaborative learning can create a more interactive and supportive learning environment, it requires careful implementation to maximize its benefits. By integrating strategies such as structured group roles, formative assessment, and teacher-guided scaffolding, educators can foster both individual accountability and collective engagement.

Difficulties in Maintaining English as the Target Language

One of the primary challenges identified by all three teachers in the study is students' tendency to revert to Swedish when they encounter linguistic difficulties. Teacher A noted that the language used by dominant students often sets the tone for the rest of the group, stating that if a group leader speaks Swedish, others are likely to follow. This observation is reinforced by Teacher C, who emphasized that "it is easy for dominant students to take over" and that larger groups increase the likelihood of this occurring.

Teacher B further illustrated this issue by describing their own classroom experience:

Yeah, because they know sometimes I sneak up behind them without telling them I'm there. So I sneak up behind the couch and I was like, 'You can speak English.' So yeah, they do. But we've started, since I'm their new English teacher, we started with, I haven't been that hard on them. So I'm like, 'Okay, whatever you can answer in Swedish.' I just want the backside of these sixth graders is that they are very shy. They don't want to speak.

Teacher B highlights how students' reluctance to speak English is often rooted in shyness, particularly among quieter students who may feel overshadowed by their more outspoken peers. This issue was also recognized by Teacher C, who pointed out that group dynamics contribute to students' tendency to switch back to Swedish. Additionally, Teacher C suggested that younger students may struggle with collaborative learning unless they have been gradually introduced to it from an early stage, stating, "I think they are too young for this method, unless they have been fostered into it from a young age."

All three teachers acknowledged that one of the biggest challenges in collaborative learning is students reverting to Swedish when facing linguistic difficulties. Teacher A observed that students taking the role as group leaders have a strong influence on language use. For example, if a group leader speaks Swedish, others will follow. Teacher C amplifies this observation by stating, "It is easy for dominant students to take over". Teacher C further mentioned that the bigger the groups the more likely it was for a group leader to take place. Teacher B and C made similar claims about the topic of target language, which stated that students naturally switch to Swedish when they struggle to express themselves in English. Shyness because of group dynamics was noticed by Teacher C as a factor for students to revert back to Swedish. Continuing on the topic of why students may stray from using the target language, Teacher C stated, "I think they are too young for this method, unless they have been fostered into it from a young age".

This finding aligns with previous research on code-switching in EFL classrooms, which suggests that students frequently switch between their native language and English when encountering difficulties (Lundahl, 2022). While some degree of code-switching is natural, excessive use of Swedish may limit students' ability to internalize English structures. Furthermore, the findings support data in Nilsson's (2019) study, where students expressed who they worked with on tasks to be a considerable factor in their use of the target language.

Assessment and Ensuring Equal Participation

Collaborative learning presents both opportunities and challenges in the classroom, particularly when it comes to assessment and student participation. Teacher A emphasizes the difficulty of accurately assessing individual students in a group setting, stating that:

It's very important that you actually can see and you know how to assess, so you assess them correctly. If they always do it in groups, then you will not be sure of what the individual can do.

This highlights a key concern in collaborative learning: while students may feel more relaxed and engaged in group discussions, it becomes challenging for teachers to evaluate their individual abilities. However, Teacher A also acknowledges that observing students in group settings can provide valuable insights into their skills, as they may demonstrate a higher level of proficiency when not under direct scrutiny. This aligns with Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory, which emphasizes the role of social interaction in cognitive development. When students work together, they engage in meaningful dialogue that enhances their learning, but for assessment purposes, teachers must find a balance between group-based and individual evaluation methods.

In addition to assessment challenges, ensuring equal participation is another significant issue. Teacher B points out that:

Because usually it's the person who's the most driven that starts, and then you don't always have time for the quiet person to speak because then the time's up.

This reflects the common issue of dominant students taking the lead while quieter students remain passive. According to Lundahl (2022), effective cooperative learning requires structured roles and accountability to ensure equitable participation. Without clear strategies in place, less confident students may withdraw, limiting their learning opportunities.

Equal participation turned out to be one of the key challenges identified by the teachers. Teacher A states that, "I try to circulate around the classroom during group activities to monitor their progress and offer guidance when needed," highlighting the importance of active observation to maintain balance within the group. Teacher B recognized the issue of dominant students taking over, stating, "The person who's the most driven starts, and then you don't always have time for the quiet person to speak because then the time's up." This reflects how time constraints and group dynamics can limit quieter students' chances to participate. Teacher C also addressed this concern, saying, "When they work in groups of two it is usually an equal workload," but noting that larger groups increase the risk of dominance by more confident students.

To counteract these challenges, both Teacher A and Teacher B use structured methods to encourage equal participation. Teacher A noted, "I have students share their group work with the class which holds them accountable and gives them a chance to reflect on their collaborative experience," while Teacher B implemented randomized speaking orders, explaining, "The person with the longest hair starts," to ensure diverse participation. Teacher C also suggested that younger students may struggle with collaborative learning unless they have been "fostered into it from a young age," indicating that prior experience with group work affects how equally students engage.

These strategies align with Gibbons' (2015) argument that structured roles within collaborative learning help balance participation and create equitable learning experiences for all students.

Teacher A acknowledged that group-based assessment can make it difficult to evaluate individual progress. To address this both teacher A and B use structured participation techniques. For example Teacher B mentions randomized speaking orders (e.g., "The student with the longest hair starts"), and Teacher A lifts up the importance of peer feedback and accountability strategies. This aligns with, as mentioned before, Gibbons' (2015) who argue that structured roles within collaborative learning help balance participation and create equitable learning experiences.

Unwillingness to participate

Teacher C reported a third challenge with collaborative learning methods, which was the student's unwillingness to participate in group work. While contemplating why this occurred, Teacher C suggested it can be caused by academically weaker students who might not understand the task, or students who are not task oriented and lack interest in the assignment. As Teacher C reported frequent use of full class communications in their lessons, the unwillingness to communicate could be connected to conclusions made in Nilsson's (2019) study, where anxiety related to speaking in front of the whole class hindered students from participating. Looking at it from Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, these students might not possess the prior knowledge needed in order to participate in the trading of knowledge (Lundahl, 2022). As Lundgren and colleagues (2017) state, language is the main tool used for learning according to sociocultural theory. If students lack the language skills to express

themselves, the main tool for learning is useless to both receive or share knowledge, and puts the students in a position where they are unable to participate (Lungren et al, 2017).

Adding to that thought, Teacher C suggested how students reluctant to participate might partly be about “it not being one's own work”, meaning students' disapproval of the fact that they are not fully responsible and in control of the assignment. Although, age and grades did not appear to be a factor when asked. It was a pattern seen throughout all three grades Teacher C teaches. Suggested by Teacher C was that it might have been different a couple of years ago, as they saw possessiveness of one's work as a newer phenomenon, present in the later years.

To support this, both Teacher A and Teacher B emphasize the importance of preparatory work before implementing collaborative assignments. They both acknowledge that such tasks can be time-consuming and require meticulous planning to ensure that the intended learning objectives are met. A key aspect of their preparation involves structuring student groups in advance to create a dynamic that fosters effective collaboration. By carefully selecting group compositions, they aim to maximize student engagement and participation.

Teacher B, a newly graduated teacher, reflects on the initial challenges of adapting to the classroom environment and understanding the students. She explains that it took time to familiarize herself with the classroom dynamics and student relationships. Once she gained this understanding, collaborative tasks became her preferred instructional method. However, she also emphasizes that despite becoming more comfortable with these assignments, they still demand careful consideration and strategic planning to be successful.

This highlights a crucial aspect of collaborative learning—its effectiveness is not solely dependent on the activity itself but also on the teacher's ability to create the right conditions for meaningful interaction. Properly structured group work enhances student engagement and supports both social and academic development, aligning with the principles outlined in Lgr22, which stress the importance of communicative competence and active participation in learning (Skolverket, 2022).

5.4 Aligning Findings with the Swedish Curriculum

The findings from these interviews strongly align with the curricular goals outlined in Lgr22 (Skolverket, 2022). The teachers highlighted communicative competence by emphasizing peer interaction and student responsibility as essential components of language development. Regarding student-centered learning, both Teacher A and Teacher B favored interactive and engaging tasks over traditional teacher-led instruction. Teacher C supported this approach but also preferred to conclude collaborative tasks with a full-class discussion, ensuring that all students could engage with and reflect on the group's work.

In terms of scaffolding and differentiation, Teachers A and B recognized that some students require more structure than others to fully benefit from collaborative learning. Teacher C emphasized the importance of additional classroom resources to support and scaffold group activities effectively.

However, the findings also highlight challenges not explicitly addressed in Lgr22, such as ensuring English use and maintaining equal participation. These findings suggest that while collaborative learning is widely encouraged, its effectiveness depends on classroom conditions and teacher strategies. Additionally, the findings show the difficulty of confidentially stating whether collaborative work benefits the goals presented in the curriculum, as the teachers faced some hardship keeping up with the students progress during the collaborative tasks (Skolverket, 2022).

5.5 Summary of Key Findings

The interviews revealed differences in how frequently collaborative learning was implemented across schools. Teachers A and B reported using the method regularly, while Teacher C, working at a different school, applied it more occasionally. Despite this, all three teachers emphasized the importance of adapting collaborative strategies to suit different subjects and classroom contexts. According to the participants, collaborative learning supports the development of speaking and listening skills, reduces language anxiety, and encourages peer-assisted learning. However, they also identified challenges such as maintaining English as the target language, assessing group work, and ensuring equal participation. While the findings align with the goals of Lgr22, they also point to the need for structured scaffolding to enhance the effectiveness of collaborative learning.

6. Conclusion

This study is set out to investigate some teachers' beliefs regarding collaborative learning in the EFL classroom. The data from the interviews suggests that collaborative learning comes with many strengths, such as providing the students with peer support as a form of scaffolding. Furthermore, the teachers believed collaborative learning allowed a more relaxed environment to practise language use and build confidence.

However, the participants' view on how often the method should be applied varied. While two of the teachers included collaborative tasks frequently, one of the participants expressed doubt in using the method too much. This stemmed from issues arising when applying the method in the classroom, as well as hearing other colleagues' views about collaborative learning being overrated. The teacher still viewed collaborative learning as a good method in practice, suggesting that the positive view stems from their teacher education rather than prior usage. In addition, all three teachers expressed challenges with applying the method in practice. Although collaborative learning entails an opportunity for students to practise their language skills, the use of Swedish instead of English appeared to be an issue for all participants. This further caused an issue identifying what language skills or knowledge the students obtained from the collaborative tasks. Other challenges can all be linked to the topic of participation, as all interviewees expressed issues with equal participation, unwillingness to participate, and assessing students' progress. This appeared to be caused by contextual factors, which was countered by the teachers carefully planning the task structure and consideration of the group dynamics.

While conducting the study we were met with limitations, which for us mainly included time constraints. The limited time available to complete the paper affected the data collection process, as more time could have been resorted in finding more suitable participants. A larger number of interviews could in its turn have provided more answers and a further nuanced result. Another limitation could have been conducting two of the interviews in English. Although the interviews conducted in English resulted in no risk for misinterpretation while translating, the one in Swedish allowed more free speech. As all the teachers have Swedish as their first language, this could have been the case for those as well. Additionally, more nuanced answers could have been provided during the interview, and the risk of the

participants misinterpreting the questions would have been minimal.

For further research, a study complementing the teachers' beliefs would be beneficial. As time constraints affected the number of interviews in this study, simply conducting more interviews would be valuable. Furthermore, a mixed method approach where a quantitative overview of a larger group of teachers' beliefs could be seen and compared to the qualitative interviews. This might result in the recognition of more extensive patterns. Another example could be including students' perspective through focus groups. Students' perspectives would bring an interesting aspect of how students perceive collaborative learning approaches. From our results, one of the participants stated how the age group might be too young for the collaborative method. Thus it would be significant to conduct a study investigating what age group collaborative learning is the most suitable for.

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Appendix A



Datum

På lärarutbildningen vid Malmö universitet skriver studenterna ett examensarbete på avancerad nivå. I detta arbete ingår att göra en egen vetenskaplig studie, utifrån en fråga som kommit att engagera studenterna under utbildningens gång. Till studien samlas ofta material in vid skolor, i form av t.ex. intervjuer och observationer. Examensarbetet motsvarar 15 högskolepoäng, och utförs under totalt 10 veckor. När examensarbetet blivit godkänt publiceras det i [DiVA](#), Digitala Vetenskapliga Arkivet. Det är Malmö universitets plattform för registrering och visning av publikationer som produceras av universitetets forskare, lärare och studenter.

Samtycke till medverkan i studentprojekt

Våra namn är Maria Amini och Helin Bicen och har precis påbörjat sista terminen på vår utbildning till grundskollärare för årskurs 4–6 på Malmö universitet, med engelska som första ämne. Vi kontaktar dig som engelskalärare för årskurs 4–6 eftersom vi precis påbörjat vårt examensarbete om kollaborativt lärande i engelskundervisningen, där vi fokuserar på lärares syn på metoden och hur det kopplas till språkutveckling. Därmed behöver vi engelsklärares deltagande för att kunna genomföra studien. Om du har möjlighet och väljer att delta kommer vi, eller någon av oss, komma ut under vecka 6–7 och intervjua dig angående dina upplevelser och åsikter om kollaborativt lärande kopplat till engelskundervisningen. Intervjun kommer ta ungefär 30–60 minuter av din tid.

Under intervjun kommer vi via ljudinspelning dokumentera det du säger samt ta anteckningar. Det du säger kommer att behandlas konfidentiellt och ingen annan förutom vi som undersökningsledare och eventuellt vår handledare från universitetet kommer ha tillgång till din intervjudata. Allt insamlat material och personuppgifter lagras oåtkomligt på Malmö universitets server under arbetet, samt dessa samtyckesblanketter. Allt detta material kommer förstöras när examensarbetet blivit godkänt. Utöver detta följs studien av Vetenskapsrådets forskningsetiska principer ([God forskningssed 2017](#)), vilket innebär att allt kommer vara helt anonymt. Under inga omständigheter kommer kommuner, skolor eller lärare som har deltagit nämnas vid namn i arbetet eller identifieras på annat sätt. Att delta i studien är frivilligt och du kan dra dig ur studien när som helst om du skulle ångra ditt deltagande av någon anledning.

Har du frågor om arbetet så är det bara att kontakta någon av oss (kontaktdetaljer nedan).

Tack på förhand.

Med vänlig hälsning

Maria Amini och Helin Bicen

Appendix B

Theme	Question	Follow up question
Education and work	<p>How long have you worked as a teacher at a compulsory school?</p> <p>How long have you taught English as a subject?</p>	Education and University
Views and opinions on collaborative learning and the link to learners language acquisition	<p>What is your general view on collaborative learning approaches?</p> <p>How often do you implement collaborative learning strategies in the classroom?</p> <p>What type of collaborative activities do you prefer/see as most useful/meaningful?</p>	<p>What affects how much of the lessons include collaborative learning?</p> <p>What are the benefits of this/these activities compared to others?</p>
Collaborative learnings affect on students language acquisition	<p>According to you, how does the method affect students' language learning?</p> <p>How do you think collaborative methods help students reach the knowledge requirements in the steering documents?</p> <p>How can you assure that the students are doing collaborative work?</p>	<p>What language skills?</p> <p>Is it difficult assessing how the collaborative learning approaches actually affect the students language or is it highly noticeable?</p> <p>Are the work equal?</p> <p>Do the students use the target language during these activities?</p>

Questionnaire for teacher interviews.