Teachers’ perspectives towards English as an Additional Language students

A qualitative study of teachers from international schools in Stockholm and Helsinki

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Abstract

Global mobility is steadily increasing as an effect of globalisation, and many people have moved away from their own country. At the same time, the number of temporary migrant school-age children is also increasing as a result of families moving internationally for careers. The number of English-medium international schools has been growing drastically in recent years. Meanwhile, research about international schools has also increased. However, there is little research about students who are English as an additional language (EAL) students in international schools.

This study examines classroom teachers’ attitudes toward EAL students in international schools in Stockholm and Helsinki. Specifically, the research reveals how teachers think EAL students are effectively supported in the classroom, and what teachers think about their own capacity to support EAL students. Through semi-structured interviews data was collected from teachers from the two international schools about their beliefs. These teachers explained their feelings about teaching EAL students in their classrooms, with non-EAL students, how they teach EAL students, and how they collaborate with EAL specialist teachers in order to support EAL students. Additionally, teachers’ self-efficacy and perceived challenges to supporting students were revealed through the interviews. The findings demonstrate that most of the teachers think that they cannot support EAL students efficiently without EAL teachers’ support.

Keywords: English as an Additional Language (EAL), International schools, teachers’ beliefs, self-efficacy, Stockholm, Helsinki
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Abbreviations

D & E  Exploring and Discovery
DP      Diploma Programme
EAL     English as an Additional language
ELL     English language learners
ESL     English as a Second language
FML     Functionally Multi-Lingual
IB      International Baccalaureate
IGCSE  International General Certificate of Secondary Education
IPC International Primary Curriculum
LEP Limited English proficient
MYP Middle Years Programme
PYP Primary Years Programme
TCK Third Culture Kids
UN United Nations
UNESCO United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization
ZDP Zone of Proximal Development

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Chapter 1

1.1 Introduction

The level of global mobility has steadily grown for many groups, and in turn the number of International Schools has increased as well. According to the United Nations (2016), migrants can be defined as “persons living in a country other than where they were born.” The number of international migrants was 244 million in 2015 (includes almost 20 million refugees) which increased by 41 percent since 2000 (UN, 2016). The number of International Schools was 50 in 1964 (Jonietz and Harries, 1991, p. ix), 1,000 in 1989 and 5,200 in 2009 (Brummitt 2009 in Hayden in 2012, p. 61). The types of students in international schools have also changed. In the past, mostly children from families who work at multinational companies and local children who had lived abroad enrolled in international schools. However, because of globalisation, even if the country’s first or official language is not English, local elites often choose an English-medium international school for their children’s education (Carder 2007, p. 380).

According to Murphy (2003, p. 26), parents hope their children learn English, and they also hope that children will obtain some knowledge of how the world works by learning in an international environment. Additionally, if the family is moving from country to country constantly, they want to somehow provide continuity in education for their children, and thus they enrol them in similar international schools in every country.

Murphy (2003, p. 26) stated, “the children most potentially disadvantaged in this school are the non-native speakers of English” because they might have limited ability in English compared to students who are native speakers of English. Therefore, international schools usually have English language support for non-native speakers of English (Carder 2007, p. 383).

Although the amount of research about international schools has increased recently, there are still a limited number of studies about students in international schools who are non-native English speakers (Murphy, 2003, p.35). Carder (2006, p. 106) also stated that there are a number of studies concerned with the area of second language acquisition, specifically in national systems, since there is a growing mix of languages and cultures in public schools as a result of global migration. However, not many studies focus on international schools. Although these previous studies, which were conducted in the public domain, have relevance and credibility, they do not quite address the learning environment of second language learners in international schools (Murphy, 2003, p. 35).
There are several ways to improve the learning environment for second language learners in international schools, such as modifying school structures or school curriculum (Murphy, 2003, p. 36). Additionally, Murphy (2003, p. 38) stated that classroom research is an effective tool to improve the learning environment, such as examining what teachers know about second language learning students.

Therefore, the focus of this research is teachers’ attitudes towards language learning students in mainstream classrooms; specifically, how teachers support language learning students in a mainstream classroom, such as what types of teaching strategies they use and how they interact with language learning students. Additionally, teachers’ perceived capacity and ways they think they can support English as an additional language (EAL) students is identified. Teachers’ beliefs and self-efficacy theories are utilized in order to find out teachers’ attitudes.

In this research, two international schools were chosen to research. One international school is located in Stockholm, Sweden; another school is located in Helsinki, Finland. Both of the schools are English-medium international schools. In this research, international school teachers who teach both EAL students and non-EAL students in mainstream classrooms are the focus.

Additionally, mainstream classrooms in international schools are defined in this research as classes where students who are native English speakers and non-native English speakers are studying together in the classroom, regardless of their English proficiency. Additionally, some students speak English only at school, since the official language in Sweden and Finland is not English. Therefore, some of the students in the international schools have limited contact with English.

1.2 Aims and objectives

The aim of this research is to gain a deeper understanding of how teachers approach classes and support students when the language of instruction is English, but some students do not speak English as first language, such as in international schools. In other words, EAL students and non-EAL students are learning together. There are three objectives for the research.

1) To categorise different approaches preferred by teachers to support EAL students.  
2) To identify teachers’ intentions in choosing specific teaching strategies.  
3) To critically analyse teachers’ perceptions about their capacity of supporting students.
The research questions are:
1. How do teachers think support for EAL students is most effective?
2. To what extent do teachers think they can support EAL students?

1.3 Significance

Global mobility is steadily increasing as an effect of globalisation, and many people have moved away from their own country. At the same time, the number of temporary migrant school-age children is also increasing as a result of families moving internationally for careers (Hayde 2012, p. 60). Hayden and Thompson (2008, p. 20) stated that the number of international schools have increased gradually in recent years.

Particularly, the number of the English-medium international schools has increased. At English-medium international schools, many non-native English students attend, and the number of them is increasing (Hayden, 2006). Therefore, English language support for them is expected in these international schools (Hayden 2012, p. 60).

Most international schools have an English language support system for EAL students. However, there are still concerns and diverse opinions about effective ways to support EAL students in international schools (Hayden 2006, p. 60). Sean (2006, in Hayden 2006, p.62) asserted that “The training of mainstream teachers in second language learning and cultural issues and in the strategies necessary to give EAL students access to the mainstream curriculum” is vital to support EAL students effectively. Therefore, this research will focus on what teachers consider effective ways to support EAL students.

Additionally, one of the United Nation’s Sustainable Development Goals, goal 4 is to “Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning,” and one of the targets is “By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and Goal-4 effective learning outcomes” (n.d.). Therefore, education for EAL students also needs to be inclusive and the quality of the education needs to match the EAL students’ needs.

Furthermore, as Murphy (2003) and Carder (2006) stated, there has not been much attention paid by researchers to EAL students specifically in international schools. Therefore, this research could contribute by adding to the limited field of study of students in international schools.
1.4 Limitations

In this paper, the main focus is teachers who teach in multilingual mainstream classrooms, and their management of language learners in mainstream classrooms. Therefore, EAL teachers’, students’ and parents’ perspectives may be mentioned, but not focused on in-depth. It also should be clear here that this research will not focus on how teachers teach a second language or English for language acquisition, but rather how they support students who learn in a second-language medium.

Additionally, this research is qualitative research; thus, generalisation is not an intention of the research. However, the number of multilingual classrooms is increasing everywhere, and some of the findings of this research may be seen in public schools and international schools in other countries.

This research is based on interviews with teachers, and as such teachers’ answers might not reflect actual classroom practice. In order to compare with actual practice, classroom observations and further interviews would be required, and thus it remains to be researched in the future. In this research, comparing school curriculum is not a focus, and thus the school curriculum is not going to be examined.

Chapter 2
Contextual backgrounds
2.1 International school

In this section, the context of international schools in general will be explained. International Schools were originally established for children of employees from “multinational organisation, diplomats and aid workers” who work outside of their home country (Hayden and Thompson, 1998, P.551).

There are varieties of organisational styles in international schools. However, there are two main types of “International schools” developed more than other types (Leggate and Thompson 1997, p. 269). One is national schools for students who are not in their country. Those schools are following national curriculum of their home country. For example, American schools, British schools, Canadian schools, French schools, and Japanese schools offer national curriculum of their respective countries for expats living abroad (Hayden 2012). Others provide education for more “culturally diverse students,” and usually those schools do not follow a national curriculum, but international programmes such as International Primary curriculum (IPC), International General Certificate of Secondary Education (IGCSE) or International Baccalaureate (IB) (Hayden and Thompson, 1998, p.551). “International schools are nearly all private and they depend on student numbers to balance the budget, hence they have become increasingly market-driven” (Bunnell, 2005, in Carder 2007, p. 379).

Although most of the international schools choose subjects in order to meet the host country’s or local needs, combined with standards to meet “international recognition or accreditation”, schools have autonomy to innovate, and have many opportunities to develop their schools (Leggate and Thompson 1997, p. 269). Leggate and Thompson (1997) pointed that this type of school managements may cause a “lack of stability”, mostly due to “the rapid turnover in students and staff,” and school principals (p. 269). Hayden and Thompson (1998, p. 552) also pointed out that teachers in International schools move to different schools quite often. They conducted a research about nearly 230 teachers in International schools. They stated that more than 40 percent of teachers had taught in more than five schools during their career.

Not only teachers, but also school principals, frequently move to different schools within short time periods (Leggate and Thompson 1997). School members, such as principals, teachers, students and parents, move to other cities or countries very often due to growing international mobility. Sears (1998, p. 5) mentioned that “one-third of the children in a class may be new in September”. It is also normal that many students join in and leave classes anytime during the middle of the school year, rather than between
grades. For example, number of students from Korea and Japan regularly join international schools around April, “two-thirds of the way through the school year”, since these countries’ school year ends at the end of March (Sears 1998, p. 15). In this way, it is normal that students who have low English proficiency join a class towards end of the school year. Under such conditions, more careful school planning is required (Leggate and Thompson 1997).

The majority of students in International schools move from country to country within two or three year intervals. Thus, they spend their childhood in many different countries (Hayden 2012, p. 60). However, there are not only students who are moving globally in international schools, but also there are number of students from the host country. Due to “the globalized job market”, wealthy families are hoping their child can be employed by an “internationally competitive organization”, and thus they prefer that their child’s education is internationally-focused, with English as the medium of instruction (Hayden 2012, p. 63). Additionally, those students whose mother tongue is not English will have an advantage in the future by speaking fluent English and obtaining “internationally recognized school-leaving qualifications” such as the IB Diploma (Hayden 2012, p. 63). As mentioned earlier, most international schools are private schools, and thus parents need to pay tuition fees.

Resnik (2008, p. 151) stated that international schools may “enable the culture and social reproduction of the middle class, thus contributing to the reproduction of social structure”. Furthermore, she extended her argument that international schools may promote an “educational gap between social groups, leading to a more segregated and less mobile society” (p. 151). Bunnell (2006, p. 165) also stated that most of the international schools’ educational characteristics are based on Western norms. He stated that the educational model used in international schools could benefit by being more culturally inclusive of other parts of the world.

However, Resnik (2008, p. 151) also argued that students in these schools learn how to behave in multicultural situations naturally, and also become familiar with “international social norms”, which may be important for them to work internationally in the future. Most international schools’ language of instruction is English. English has been used as a globally dominant language and many parents believed that fluent English ability is the key of the future success (Hayden 2012, p. 64).

2.2 Students in International Schools
In this section, the population of students in international schools will be explained.

According to Hayden (2012, p. 65), students in International schools are divided into three categories. The first group is the “Third Culture Kid”, or “global nomads”. The second group is returners. The third is local students. Third Culture Kids (TCK) was defined as:

Although they have grown up in foreign countries they are not integral parts of those countries. When they come to their country of citizenship (some for the first time), [such children] do not feel at home because they do not know the lingo or expectations of others – especially those of their own age. Where they feel most like themselves is in that international culture, the third culture, which is created, shared and carried by persons who are relating societies, or sections thereof to each other (Useem 1976, p. 103-105 in Hayden 2012 p. 65).

According to Hayden (2012), global nomads is a more recent term than TCK. Shaetti (1993 in Langford 1998) explained global nomads as:

Individuals of any age or nationality who have spent a significant part of their developmental year living in one or more countries outside of their passport country because of their parent’s occupation. Global Nomads are members of a world-wide community of persons who share a unique cultural heritage. While developing some sense of belonging to both their host culture(s) and passport culture(s), they do not have a sense of total ownership in any. Elements from each culture and from the experience of international mobility are blended, creating a commonality with others of similar experience. Global Nomads of all ages and nationalities typically share similar responses to the benefits and challenges of a childhood abroad (Shaetti 1993 in Langford 1998, p. 30).

The returners, categorised as the second group of students in international schools, used to be global nomads, but then have returned to their own country. However, they do not attend the local schools because of linguistic reasons or other issues (Hayden 2012). Moving from school to school constantly may lead to “dislocations in the continuity of children’s education and interrupt the flow of their learning” (Sears 1998, p. 16). Sears (1998, p.16) asserted that international schools tend to have the same
curriculum, such as IB, IPC and IGCSE. However, if students move between an international school to a public school, they may not receive a continuous education, which could have an effect on their development or learning.

The third group, local students in international schools, is the most recent trend. These are students from host country families, who attend international schools instead of schools offering the national curriculum. Those students could attend local schools, but choose to attend international schools. Some researchers believe that these students from the host country who attend international schools represent elite or privileged background students of the host country. On the other hand, situations and motivations of every student are different, and thus it is hard to generalise student backgrounds (Hayden 2012, p. 66).

Additionally, Kusama-Powell (2004) stated that international schools teachers face challenges to teach students who are multilingual on the surface but cannot manage and explain complex thoughts (Kusama-Powell, 1992 in Kusama-Powell 2004, p. 158). This kind of student is referred to as Functionally Multi-Lingual (FML) (Kusama-Powell 2004, p. 158). The characteristics of FML students are that they:

- are bilingual or multilingual at surface levels of conversation
- have not established competence in a single language
- experience difficulty with verbal cognitive development
- have difficulty developing abstract concepts and engaging in higher order thinking; and often demonstrate other issues with learning, including organizational problems or difficulties in learning to read, with written expression, or with mathematics.

( Kusama-Powell 2004, p. 164)

These FML students are often able to communicate in a few different languages, but their language level is only on the surface level, and thus sometimes they cannot explain complex reasons. This affects their learning as well, for example when they learn “concepts at an abstract level, especially when ideas are verbally mediated or presented” (Kusma-powell, 2004, p. 160). Sometimes schools or teachers do not recognise them as language learning students and they are not given specific additional language instruction. FML students are more likely noticed in upper-secondary or middle school when higher levels of learning are expected. One of the reasons that some students become FML is due to subtract bilingual education rather than gradually shifting learning in mother tongue to learning in English. In this research, FML is not main focus but some teachers
might give some comments about them.

2.3 EAL students in International schools

Moving between English-medium international schools is not a complicated process for third culture kids (TCKs) who are native English speakers or already fluent in English. However, in English-medium international schools, the number of non-native English speaking students is increasing (Hayden 2012, p. 69). In this section, how second language learners are taught in international schools will be explained.

Though second language could refer to any additional language learned after mother tongue, and foreign language may be defined as a "language being learned outside of a region where it is spoken" (Bardovi-Harlig 2010, p. 244), the context of English-medium international schools represents a specific concept of language learning. In this research, second language learning is defined specifically as learning “the language for non-native speakers of the school language” (Toshi 1987 in Carder 2007, p. 384). In English-medium schools, English is learned as a second language by non-native English speaking students. Specifically, the students who are low in English proficiency are learning English as second language.

Teachers expect these students to reach a certain level of English proficiency, so that students are able to learn in the mainstream classroom without specialist support (Sears 2015, p. 130). Therefore, these students, whose mother tongue is not English and those that have a low English proficiency, need to receive special support and are categorised as English language learning students.

Many schools use different term for English language learning students, such as ESL (English as a Second Language), EAL (English as an Additional Language), LEP (limited English proficient) and English language learners (ELL) (Cummins & Davison 2007, p. xxi). However, in this research, EAL is used, referring to those students who need extra language support due to their low English proficiency. Both international schools chosen for this research use EAL for English language learning students. Other terms that appear in text or comments are used interchangeably with EAL.

EAL students take English support inside or outside of regular classes to learn and improve their English. The classes where EAL students learn English outside of their mainstream classes are defined as EAL classes in this research. Specialist teachers who specifically teach EAL students, both inside and outside of regular classes, are called EAL teachers.
Students who are studying at English-medium international schools need English for two reasons (Sears 1998, p. 42). One is informal, such as talking with friends. The other reason is academic, or that language skills are necessary to have “success in the mainstream academic programme” (Sears 1998, p. 42). Sears (1998) stated that students tend to improve social language skills, such as English for communicating with their friends, quickly compared to academic language skills.

Carder (2007) strongly believed that “ESL (EAL) provision requires the institutionalization of the program on an equal footing with other departments in the school” (p. 383). Otherwise, EAL teachers are often treated as “shadows of the timetable”, such as teaching English to EAL students while other students are learning foreign languages. EAL students are then often seen simply as students who need “language support” (Carder 2007, p. 383). EAL teachers often feel they are not proper teachers. Carder (2007) stated that often EAL beginner students’ parents need to pay additional fees, and they are treated as a “remedial endeavour.”

Murphy (1990, p. 9 in Carder 2007, p. 381) identified some typical mainstream classroom teachers’ attitudes towards EAL students. Mainstream classroom teachers expressed that they feel pressure when limited English proficiency students are in a mainstream classroom. Therefore, they feel a strong EAL programme could remove their pressure and also allow the mainstream class to proceed at normal speed (Murphy 1990, p. 9 in Carder 2007, p. 381).

Carder (2007) pointed out that the typical problem of EAL programmes in international Schools is that an English teacher teaches EAL classes. English teachers are not qualified to teach English as an additional language, and may not be familiar with bilingualism. Therefore, most of the time, these teachers categorise EAL students as “slow learners” or students “who need helping out with their English” (p. 383).

In some international schools, the EAL students take EAL classes as a “pull-out programme.” Mixed-level, and sometimes mixed-age, small groups of EAL students meet outside of the mainstream classrooms, while other students take classes in other subjects (Sears 1998, p.53). Also, some international schools offer “push-in support”. This support is where EAL students stay in the mainstream classroom and study with EAL teachers according to EAL students’ needs and requirements of the curriculum. This happens within the same classes as other students, with homeroom or subject teachers. Many international schools use a combination of pull-out and classroom support (Sears 1998, p. 53). However, there is a current trend to reduce “pull-out classes for ESL (EAL) students” and increase promotion of team-teaching. Carder (2007, p.384) stated that in order to introduce push-in or team-teaching at school, organising the timetable and schedule of
It usually requires at least five years to achieve a second language level equal to that of native speakers. Therefore, solid and strong EAL programmes are required in International schools. Additionally, classroom teachers and other subject teachers should have “comprehensive knowledge of issues relating to second language acquisition and bilingualism” (Carder 2007, p. 388).

Murphy (2003, p. 30) asserted that efficient support for developing students’ mother tongue is essential to support acquiring a second language, and important for cognitive development in the target language. UNESCO (2003, p. 15) defined mother tongue as “the language(s) that one has learnt first; the language(s) one knows best and the language(s) one uses most”. Additionally, mother tongue sometimes could be referred to as a “primary “or “first language” (UNESCO 2003, p. 15). English-medium international schools should have mother tongue curriculum for each student. Although ignoring students’ mother tongue education may cause problems, it may be challenging to provide each student with mother tongue instructions when the student population is comprised of a variety of different mother tongue languages (Carder 2007, p. 381).

Additionally, parents tend to care more about English, rather than their mother tongue (Carder 2007, p. 381). Cummins (2000, p. 39) also stated that strong relationship between second language and mother tongue is important to provide a “conceptual foundation” for literacy skills in second language. Therefore, it is important that parents and teachers understand the importance of mother tongue instruction as well as EAL.

It is hard to improve EAL programmes in international schools, since parents of EAL students tend not to have confidence in their own English skills. Thus, they do not feel comfortable raising problems to the school. Additionally, EAL teachers often do not have a strong position in their school (Carder 2007, p. 384). However, it is important that all teachers and administrators acknowledge the learning process of EAL students, as well as understand cultural awareness.

Assessing students in English-medium international schools might be complicated, especially when students are not native English speaking students. Murphy (2003, p.33) stated that a teacher in an international school took notes about students’ progress in terms of “participation, interests, ability to get along with classmates, fine and gross motor skills, among many other observable factors and carefully notes the child’s progress in literacy and numeracy the milestones for which are well documented”. It might be difficult to assess these criteria mentioned above depending on a student’s
language use. If they are a native English-speaking student, these areas might be assessed fully, but to a lesser extent for non-native English-speaking students. Murphy (2003) stated that when EAL students are not well behaved, this may indicate a lack of success to some extent, but at the same time, when EAL students are quiet and well behaved, it does not mean that the students are necessarily doing well (p. 33). He added that a lack of participation does not directly indicate a lack of interest in classroom activities, and reluctance to make friends does not mean a lack of social skills. These behaviours tend to connect to a lack of English ability or cultural differences, but they should be assessed with “linguistic markers” (p.33).

Murphy (2003. 35) pointed out that EAL students tend to be judged on how quickly they learn English, how well they learn in other subjects and how well they have adapted to cultural changes. When some students fail to fit in these criteria, they might be categorised as still “settling” to new culture and language, but teachers tend to not consider alternative reasons. When an EAL student has difficulties in reading, writing and/or arithmetic, it is hard to diagnosis that the student has learning difficulties, or if this is a learning a second language issue. Additionally, if an EAL student has learning difficulties, it takes extra time to address their learning in a second language.

Chapter 3
Theoretical frameworks

3.1 Optimizing learning conditions

Kusama-Powell (2004, p.165) pointed out four strategies to teach EAL students and FMLs in mainstream classrooms. He also stated that those features are very similar
with differentiating all students effectively in the classroom: 1) Knowing your students, 2) knowing your curriculum, 3) developing a repertoire of strategies, 4) developing the skills for collaboration (Kusama-Powell, 2004, p. 165). These four features will be explained in following section.

3.1.1 Knowing your students

“No two students are alike, and each comes to us with individual histories, experiences, knowledge, strengths and resources as learners, thinking styles (Sternberg, 1997), intelligences (Gardner, 1983) and learning preferences” (Dunn and Dunn, 1993 in Kusama-Powell 2004, in 165). Students’ individual differences take one of the key roles in the learning process, especially when learning in a second or third language (August and Hakuta, 1997 in Kusama-Powell 2004, in 165).

Garcia and Sylvan (2011) also affirmed the importance of recognising individual students’ differences and “teaching individuals within multilingual classrooms” (p. 386). Their research was based on the idea of “singularities in pluralities” (p. 386). Garcia and Sylvan (2011) argued that instead of focusing on teaching one particular type of student, teachers should be aware of students’ backgrounds, language situation, such as if the student is monolingual, bilingual or multilingual, and also what language they use outside of the school (p. 386).

Kusama-Powell (2004, p. 165) stated that teachers need to collect students’ data, which the school has, such as student files, and observe students carefully in terms of language use. Additionally, understanding of students’ cultural differences and what language they speak outside of school is essential information for teachers. He explained this by using an example of Korean students in an international school. Teachers in international schools mention that Korean students do not usually take part in classroom discussion. In Korea, there is a tradition of “Confucianism and emphasis on respect for authority,” and thus students tend not to challenge teachers. On the other hand, Western education tends to value discussion and challenging of ideas (Borden, 2003 in Kusama-Powell 2004, p. 166). Students’ cultural backgrounds affect their individual attitudes, such as their “way of thinking, feeling, believing and valuing” (Gee, 1998: 143; Pransky and Bailey, 2002 in Kusama-Powell 2004, p. 166). In order to avoid mismatches in teaching practice, teachers need to develop an understanding of their students (Kusama-Powell 2004, p. 165).

Sears (1998, p.22) also stated the importance of knowing students’ culture. Some students who are new to an international school’s environment may feel uncomfortable with the distance and relationship with teachers in the school, due to cultural differences,
especially if they are from “Africa, East Asia, the Indian sub-continent and the Middle East (with the exception of Israel) and in many parts of Europe” (Sears 1998, p. 22). In these countries, student-teacher relationships are regarded differently than they might be in international schools. Additionally, some of the students coming from a different school system may not be familiar with classroom discussions or talking about their learning in the class. That could be, for example, because in their previous school, they only spoke when a teacher asked questions directly to the students. It is necessary for teachers to find out what EAL students’ previous school experiences were. By doing so, they can understand what EAL students might find familiar or unfamiliar in their new environment, apart from language (Sears 1998, p. 23).

Additionally, knowledge of students’ cultural and language backgrounds enable teachers to find out and match specific learning styles to certain students, and may find similarities between those who share the same cultural group. Rao (2002 in Kusama-Powell 2004, p. 166) mentioned that there is data to suggest that a number of students from East Asian countries prefer to be taught by teacher-centred pedagogy. Kusama-Powell (2004, p. 166) stated that this sort of cultural stereotype should not be used to generalise an entire region or population, however, and it is important to be aware of students’ learning styles which are influenced by their cultural background to avoid mismatches in learning practices.

3.1.2 Knowing your curriculum

Language develops following an expected pattern (Kusama-Powell, 2004, p. 166). Cummins (2000, p. 36) stated that not only EAL teachers, but also the whole school staff should support EAL students’ education. Therefore, all teachers should know and understand this developing pattern in order to know which stage the EAL students are in when teaching. In this case, teachers can assess the progress specifically and are able to give alternative challenging tasks to students in order to reach the next stage (Kusama-Powell, 2004, p. 166).

Additionally, teachers should be aware that EAL students’ speaking proficiency in English does not mean that they achieved proficiency in all areas of the curriculum (Kusama-Powell, 2004, p. 166). EAL students are allowed to exit separate EAL classes after they achieve a certain level, at which time they then join mainstream classrooms, which require a higher level of English than an EAL support class. At the same time, learning content also gradually becomes more complex; in this case, the students who just exited EAL cannot achieve the expected achievement level without the continued support of specialists (Thomas and Collier, 1997 in Kusama-Powell 2004, p. 167). Cummins
stated that a number of studies have shown that immigrant students can develop conversational proficiency in their host country’s language quickly if they are exposed to the language often. However, academic language proficiency in their host country’s language takes at least five years to catch up to native language students. However, it often takes more than five years (Collier, 1987; Cummins, 1981b; Hakuta et al., 2000; Klesmer, 1994 in Cummins 2000, p. 34). In this case, mainstream classroom teachers who teach EAL students should know that although students may have exited EAL classes, they still need language support.

Kusama-Powell (2004, p.167) also pointed out that teachers should be aware of language use, such as “vocabulary, duration, pace, intonation and nonverbal gestures” when they teach EAL students in a mainstream classroom. Specifically, when teachers use “abstract and figurative language,” it would be better to use simpler vocabulary and paraphrases sentences, which EAL students can understand more easily. However, a number of teachers think students do not need simple expression, but rather that EAL students “need elaborated language with multiple-access points for understanding, and they need opportunities for open-ended, invitational questions”, a notion Kusama-Powell refuted as misinformed (2004, p. 167).

Carder (2007, p. 388) stated that not only classroom teachers, but also administrators, should take professional development courses about the second language acquisition process, as well as cultural awareness.

Clair (1995) conducted research about mainstream teachers’ beliefs towards EAL students in the US. Some teachers stated that they prefer receiving materials in order to support EAL students and support from inside their school, rather than attending workshops regarding EAL students’ support (p. 191). This is because some of the teachers think their skills and knowledge is enough to support EAL students. Additionally, one teacher mentioned that she has enough experience to instruct EAL students in the mainstream classroom, which is why she thinks attending workshops regarding EAL is useless (Clair 1995, p. 191). Clair (1995, p. 192) stated that teachers tend to demand quick fixes, such as materials and curriculum ideas. She questioned this quick fix tendency, because she does not think this idea will solve complex educational problems.

Clair (1995) stated that mainstream teachers need to understand EAL students’ language acquisition, but they also need to change “their beliefs, values and attitudes towards ESL (EAL) students” (p.193). A few teachers stated that “good teaching is good teaching” (Clair 1995, p. 193). In other words, some teachers think that if they use good teaching strategies and skills, they do not need to think about whether they teach EAL or non-EAL students. Clair stated that this attitude denies “the usefulness of specialised

Additionally, she also stated, “it fails to acknowledge the complexities of the social and academic integration of EAL students in mainstream classroom settings” (Penfield, 1987 in Clair 1995, p. 193). However, Clair stated that long-term EAL workshops and professional developments will not change teachers’ beliefs drastically (Clair 1995, p. 193). Therefore, she affirmed that ongoing EAL professional development is needed, in which mainstream teachers are involved in ongoing reflection of themselves regarding EAL support. Mainstream teachers should also meet to discuss their current problems and ask other teachers for advice (Clair 1995, p. 194). In this case, teachers take responsibility for their professional development and communicate with other teachers, expressing and sharing their opinions and experience.

3.1.3 Developing a repertoire of strategies

According to Alexander, “Teaching, in any setting, is the act of using method X to enable students to learn Y” (2009, p. 928). He stated that “method” is comprised of four different aspects, which are “tasks, activities, interactions and judgements” (p, 929).

A wide range of teaching strategies and methods let teachers better match EAL students’ needs to the curriculum’s achievement points. In this case, a teacher can scaffold when they teach, which ensures that “learning is appropriately pitched to the child’s current level of performance” (Kusama-Powell 2004, p. 167). In other words, students are kept in the “zone of proximal development” (ZDP), a notion explained by Vygotsky. Scaffolding can be defined as a temporary learning process that supports students to complete a task that is somewhat challenging and tough for them to solve by themselves (Gibbons 2002, p.10). Teachers examine a task and break it down into smaller levelled tasks, which match the students’ abilities. In this case, students are able to learn step-by-step (Veronica & Morcom 2016, p. 82). Gibbons (2002) stated that scaffolding is not the same as just helping students, but rather that a “teacher helps a learner know how to do something, so that the learner will later be able to complete a similar task alone” (Gibbons, 2002, p. 10). Hansson (2012) explained Vygotsky’s theory of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZDP) as “the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86 in Hansson 2012, p. 104).
Hansson (2012) conducted research concerning “the complexity of relations between mathematics teaching and learning in multilingual classrooms” in Sweden (p. 103). He used ZPD theory as a basis for his research. His findings were that student outcomes in mathematics improved when teachers took responsibility of creating an active learning environment and friendly learning support for students. However, when classes were multilingual, and more second language learners were in the class, teachers tended not to take responsibility to make an environment which is more active and supportive of those students (p. 119).

Hansson (2012) highlighted the significance of scaffolding in mathematics classes for all students, and specifically for second language learners. For Second language learners’, it is necessary that teacher support is not only for mathematic skills, but also second language skills. In this case, even when students are learning mathematics, teacher support for second language learners takes a key role in student learning.

Additionally, creating and giving group work learning and “activities-based lessons” enable EAL students to use more academic language in different situations (Kusama-Powell, 2004, p. 168). For instance, Alison and Rehm (2007) stated that “peer tutoring” is one effective teaching strategy. Peer tutoring is pairing students who have better English proficiency with EAL students, so they can teach each other (Kline, 1995 in Alison and Rehm 2007, p. 16).

Additionally, Garcia and Sylvan (2011, p.389) stated that a “translanguaging” strategy is used efficiently at the International High School in the US, where many of the new comer immigrant students have poor English proficiency. In this school, students use bilingual dictionaries and discuss with each other using different languages in small groups. Students are allowed to speak and read any language, but they have to write and give presentations in English. Teachers work around the classroom and assist students when they need help, instead of talking in front of the class. Teachers only speak in English, so students need to translate what they say to new students who cannot understand English.

3.1.4 Developing the skills for collaboration

Kusama-Powell (2004, p. 168) stated that “Collaboration takes place when teachers share responsibility and decision-making towards a common goal, in this case working together to help each student succeed in school” (Powell, 2000).

When teachers collaborate, they can “use each other as professional resources,” especially when they design lessons, and it can also reduce teachers’ frustration and anxiety, which they might face while teaching EAL students in the mainstream classroom.
(Kusama-Powell 2004, p. 168). However, many teachers cannot find time to collaborate each other due to busy teaching schedules (Carder 2007).

Carder (2007) stated that content-based EAL curriculum such as “ESL (EAL) History, ESL (EAL) Geography, ESL (EAL) English” and wide range of team teaching strategies between mainstream and EAL teachers (Davison 2006; Hurt & Davison 2005 in Carder 2007, p. 381) mostly produce better results rather than teaching only English as a pull-out programme, which may result in “isolation from academic subject matter” (Chamot & O’Malley 1986 in Carder 2007, p. 381). In international schools, this type of content-based EAL lessons can make connections with the mainstream programme to a certain degree. Additionally, for very low language proficiency students, EAL classes use a parallel programme to the mainstream, teaching the same content, but offering lessons with simpler language, which EAL students can understand. However, large numbers of teachers need to participate and collaborate, and the number of students in the classroom should be smaller in order to introduce this type of curriculum. Thus, this type of teaching tends to be high cost (Carder 2007 p. 381).

3.2 Teachers beliefs

It is likely that students may struggle to learn in culturally and linguistically diverse classes, when teachers and students do not share the same learning experiences, language, culture and when teachers do not have appropriate skills and knowledge to support the wide range of students in one class (Gracia & Ortiz 1988, p. 6). These differences lead to teachers mismatching their teaching style to students’ learning styles. Additionally, teachers may misjudge students’ different cultural behaviours as offensive, which could result in a challenging learning environment (Gracia & Ortiz 1988, p. 6).

Teachers’ cultural perspectives influence their expectations of student performance, which in turn informs their practice in the classroom (Brophy, 1985; Spradley & McCurdy, 1984 in Cabello & Burstein 1995, p. 286). Additionally, if teachers have negative beliefs or low expectations towards students, that influences classroom strategies and management, and it might influence students’ attitudes and performance (Brophy 1985, Kuykendall, 1992 in Cabello & Burstein 1995, p. 286). Cabello & Burstein (1995, p. 286) stated that it is hard to change one’s beliefs – not only for teachers, but also students (Gusky 1986, in Cabello & Burstein 1995 p. 286). Nespor (1987, p. 317) stated that “people’s “beliefs” are important influences on the ways they conceptualize tasks and learn from experience”.

Teachers’ beliefs and attitudes of EAL students likely influence students’
learning (Youngs & Youngs, 2001, p. 68). Moreover, teachers tend to expect that few EAL students can use Standard English (Byrnes, Kiger, & Manning, 1997; Williams & Naremore, 1974; Williams, Whitehead, & Miller, 1972 in Youngs & Youngs 2001, p. 68). There must be a reason why many mainstream teachers may feel it is difficult to teach EAL students, and that there is a lack of welcoming attitude for EAL students in mainstream classrooms, which may affect learning negatively (Youngs & Youngs 2001, p. 68).

Mainstream teachers may feel it is difficult to teach EAL students because, in terms of the impact of EAL students’ inclusion in the mainstream classroom learning environment, teachers are concerned about the possibility that EAL students slow the class progression through the curriculum, or that their inclusion could result in inequities in educational opportunities for all students (Platt, Harper, & Mendoza, 2003; Reeves, 2004; Schmidt, 2000 in Preeves 2006, p. 132).

Youngs and Youngs (2001) made “a general model of predictors,” which were able to explain “mainstream teachers' attitudes toward ESL (EAL) students” (p. 99). This framework can examine why and what can affect mainstream teacher’s positive or negative attitudes toward EAL students. This framework contains six categories of “possible predictors,” which were suggested clearly or implicitly by previous EAL related research: “The mainstream teacher's (a) general educational experiences, (b) specific EAL training, (c) personal contact with diverse cultures, (d) prior contact with EAL students, (e) demographic characteristics and (f) personality” (Youngs and Youngs 2001, pp. 99-100). According to previous studies, general educational experiences of teachers influence their responses to issues related with cultural and language diversity in mainstream classrooms (Youngs and Youngs 2001, p. 100). For example, what they studied at university might affect their reaction to EAL students. According to Youngs and Youngs (2001) two types of subjects in teacher training may affect attitudes towards EAL students: 1) a subject which “provides direct exposure to cultural differences” and, 2) a subject which “stimulates a more abstract understanding of the nature of culture itself” (p. 100). Furthermore, a number of researchers (Avery & Walker, 1993; Diaz, 1992; Harris, 1996; Lynch, 1992; Sowers-Hoag & Sandau-Beckler, 1996; Wurzel in Youngs and Youngs 2001, p. 100) stated that in order to teach and deal with students and parents from different cultural backgrounds, teachers and school staff must have a solid awareness of cultural differences. These types of knowledge can be obtained from courses such as “multicultural education, anthropology” and “foreign languages” (Youngs and Youngs 2001, p. 100).

Moreover, if teachers are aware of social issues, they may have more positive
attitude towards EAL students. This knowledge can be obtained from social science courses (Youngs and Youngs 2001, p. 100). Teachers’ beliefs regarding EAL students might also be influenced by individual teachers’ own teaching experiences and general background.

Youngs and Youngs (2001) also stated that when teachers have contact with diverse cultures, they are more likely to have positive attitudes towards EAL students. This is because the teachers who have more contact with multicultural experiences themselves tend to inspire an “awareness of cultural differences” in their classes (Youngs and Youngs 2001, p. 102).

Youngs and Youngs (2001, p. 102) predicted that when teachers have experience with EAL students, they have more positive attitudes towards these students than teachers who do not have prior contact with EAL students.

Yoon (2008) researched teachers’ beliefs and actions regarding English language learners based on positioning theory. Yoon (2008, p. 516) asserted that how teachers position themselves could be the main factor influencing teachers’ reactions to EAL students in the mainstream classroom. For example, a teacher who positioned herself as “a teacher for all students” was more inclusive for EAL students in a mainstream classroom. On the other hand, when other teachers positioned themselves for “regular education students or for single subjects,” they did not plan classes so that more EAL students could participate actively. They also tended to think EAL teachers should take care of EAL students’ education, rather than the mainstream teachers. Therefore, the latter teachers limited their support for EAL students (Yoon 2008, p. 516). Yoon (2008, p. 516) stated that although some studies showed few links between teachers’ beliefs and teaching practice, her research proved that there is a strong connection between “belief and practice” where EAL students are concerned.

Thus, it is essential to examine teachers’ beliefs, which every teacher hold, to understand how they understand their responsibility towards EAL students through classroom instruction.

Clendenin and Connelly (1987) intended to distinguish between beliefs and knowledge, but stated that a "bewildering array of terms" exist to talk about these concepts (p. 487 in Pajares 1992, p. 309). According to them, knowledge and beliefs are difficult to define, and may appear in the form of “teachers' teaching criteria, principles of practice, personal construct/theories/epistemologies, beliefs, perspectives, teachers' conceptions, personal knowledge, practical knowledge” (p. 490 in Pajares 1992, p. 309).

Pajares (1992, p. 309) stated that “it was difficult to pinpoint where knowledge ended and belief began”. Lewis (1990 in Pajares 1992, p. 313) argued that because people
have beliefs, they choose what they want to learn and what they value in their learning, and then obtain knowledge. The concept of knowledge is closer to truth rather than belief, and is more measurable (Pajares 1992, p. 310). Some researchers argue that knowledge is more effective in order to teach in the classroom rather than beliefs, and beliefs are what teachers say outside of the classroom (Pajares 1992, p. 312). Pajares (1992, p. 313) stated that the most common definitions of belief and knowledge are “Belief is based on evaluation and judgment; knowledge is based on objective fact”. He also asserted that it is hard to observe people’s beliefs because people tend not to embody their own beliefs clearly through actions. Therefore, educational researchers often infer what people say in order to observe people’s beliefs (Pajares 1992, p. 314).

3.3 The belief system

Due to the complication to define beliefs and knowledge, in this paper, Nespor’s (1987) belief system will be introduced. Nespor (1987) suggested the need of a “belief system” that functions as a theoretical grounded framework for “systematic and comparative investigation” (p. 317). In this section, four features in beliefs will be explained in order to distinguish knowledge and beliefs: “existential presumption,” “alternatively”, “affective and evaluative loading”, and “episodic structure” (Nespor 1987, p. 318).

Table 1 Nespor’s belief system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Features</th>
<th>Beliefs</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Existential presumption</td>
<td>“The reification of transitory, ambiguous, conditional or abstract characteristics into stable, well-defined, absolute and concrete entities “(Nespor 1987, p. 318).</td>
<td>N.A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alternatively</td>
<td>“beliefs serve as means of defining goals and tasks” (Nespor 1987, p. 319)</td>
<td>“knowledge systems come into play where goals and the paths to their attainment are well-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective and evaluative aspects</td>
<td>“Feelings, moods, and subjective evaluations based on personal preferences seem to operate more” (Nespor, 1987, p. 319). It can influence how teachers value the teaching content and methods of teaching.</td>
<td>“Knowledge of a domain differs from feelings about a domain” (Pajares 1992, p.309).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Episodic storage</td>
<td>Beliefs reside in episodic memory (Pajares 1992). These are personal events, experiences and memories.</td>
<td>Stored semantically (Nespor 1987).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2.1 Existential presumption

“Belief systems frequently contain propositions or assumptions about the existence or nonexistence of entities” (Nespor 1987, p. 318). He explained this by using two mathematics teachers. Both of them had strong beliefs about “student 'ability', 'maturity', and 'laziness'”. These terms are ambiguous and cannot be explained simply and clearly, but for these teachers were “labels for entities thought to be embodied by the students” (Nespor 1987, p. 318). For example, one of the mathematics teachers, Mr Ralston, had beliefs that “learning mathematics was primarily a function of practice and drilling” and that if students fail to learn, that is because the students were too “lazy” to do practice and drilling. Nespor (1987, p. 318) stated that “The reification of transitory, ambiguous, conditional or abstract characteristics into stable, well-defined, absolute and concrete entities is important because such entities tend to be seen as immutable-as beyond the teacher's control and influence.” Therefore, Mr. Ralston highlighted on letting students sit down individually and work individually as well. Mr. Ralston also stated that in order to make students more learn, he forces students to learn as well. (Nespor, 197, p. 318).

3.2.2 Alternatively

“Beliefs often include representations of 'alternative worlds' or 'alternative realities'” (Abelson 1979 in Nespor 1987, p. 318). Some teachers tried to have classroom
practices that they have experienced themselves, or have solid knowledge of. For instance, Nespor (1987, p. 318) used an example of an English teacher. Her ideal classroom model is what she wished to have when she was a student, described as “friendly and fun.” She tried to direct her classroom as “friendly and fun,” but her classroom never achieved it. This type of belief can take an important role in the classroom. Although the English teacher often finished class halfway through her lesson plan, students were more relaxed and they had initiative in the classroom. These aspects of learning were more vital for her rather than covering all the lessons (Nespor 1987, p. 319).

In this sense, “alternative” means to conceptualise of person’s ideal situation alternative from reality. Additionally, this notion leads to the idea that “beliefs serve as means of defining goals and tasks.” Teachers can picture their ideal lessons as a goal by depends on their beliefs, On the other hand, knowledge can leads the teachers and students to the goals. (Nespor 1987, p. 319).

3.2.3 Affective and evaluative aspects

Nespor (1987, p. 319) stated that beliefs contain more affective and evaluative components rather than knowledge, such as “feelings, moods, and subjective evaluations based on personal preferences” (Nespor 1987, p. 319). Affective and evaluative components tend to operate separately from the cognition linked with knowledge. He stated that “knowledge of a domain can be conceptually distinguished from feelings about that domain” (Nespor 1987, p. 391). Therefore, how teachers value content of the course influence their way of teaching the content. Pajares (1992, p. 310) pointed that this set of affect and evaluation can define how passionately teacher will develop a classroom activity and how they will develop it.

3.2.4 Episodic storage

Knowledge information is usually stored semantically; beliefs exist in episodic memory with “material derived from personal experience or from cultural or institutional sources of knowledge transmission” (Nespor 1987, p. 320). Episodic memory is made through “personal experiences, episodes or events,” while knowledge information, which is stored semantically, is constructed by logical elements and organization “in terms of semantic lists” (Nespor 1987, p. 320).

Previous experiences or events often influence beliefs of a person, or can colour their understanding following new events (Nespor 1987, p. 320). In this case, teachers’ experiences, which they obtain earlier in their careers, take an important role in their present teaching practices. Additionally, not only their experience of being a teacher, but
also of being students, can affect their present teaching practices (Nespor 1987, p. 320). For example, for the English teacher mentioned earlier, her vivid experience of wising to have a “fun” and “friendly” class as a student influenced her classroom practices as a teacher. Nespor (1987, p. 320) stated that “crucial experience or some particularly influential teacher produces a richly detailed episodic memory which later serves the student as an inspiration and a template for his or her own teaching practices” and these can be obtained from teacher preparation courses, previous teachers, books and media as well (Pajares, 1992, p. 311).

3.4 Self-efficacy

Along with theory on teachers’ beliefs, this research draws partly on self-efficacy theory in order to examine how teachers think they are able to support EAL students. Self-efficacy theory is defined as “individuals’ belief in their capacity to successfully carry out given tasks” (Thomson & Nietfeld 2016, p. 361). It also refers to “a teacher's generalized expectancy concerning the ability of teachers to influence students, as well as the teacher's beliefs concerning his or her own ability to perform certain professional tasks” (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Bandura, 1977; Gibson & Dembo, 1984 in Kagan, 1992, p. 67).

A teacher’s choice of classroom activities, engagement in the task and effort for teaching preparation are affected significantly by that teacher’s self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977 in Thomson & Nietfeld 2016, p. 361). When self-efficacy is high, people tend to improve their problem solving skills by increasing levels of “effort and persistence” (Bandura, 1993; Skaalvik, & Skaalvik, 2007, 2010 in Thomson & Nietfeld 2016, p. 361). According to Thomason and Nietfeld, research about teacher beliefs suggested that together with a teacher’s subject knowledge and “instructional belief”, his or her self-efficacy beliefs could be the key factor of the teacher’s interaction in the classroom (Hill, Rowan, & Ball, 2005; Pop et al., 2010; Sharp et al., 2011 in Thomason and Nietfeld 2016, p. 361).

Teachers’ self-efficacy is related to some specific classroom behaviours, such as practice of tending to praise students rather than criticise them, and “to persevere with low achievers; to be task oriented, enthusiastic, and accepting of student opinion; and to raise students' levels of achievement in reading and mathematics (AsMon & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984 in Kagan 1992, p. 67). Teachers can accept their responsibility for students’ success or failure especially when they think they can assist student and improve students’ performance (Kagan 1992, p. 67). Self-efficacy theory enables the
Chapter 4
Methodology

In this chapter, the research methodology of this study will be explained. For the purpose of investigating teacher beliefs in multilingual classrooms, the researcher employs qualitative research strategies and semi-structured interviews. In the following section, the research strategy and design, research methods, sampling of participants, analytical framework, ethical consideration and quality of research will be presented.

4.1 Research strategy

The focus of this research is to examine teachers’ beliefs towards EAL students in mainstream classrooms in international schools. Therefore, the research seeks in-depth
understanding rather than generalisation of the research topic through collecting quantitative data. Additionally, the researcher’s aim is to understand the case through the views of the research participants and in their own words. For this reason, the researcher applied a qualitative research strategy.

In order to shape and develop the finding of the research, it is necessary to consider the epistemological and the ontological perspectives. The epistemology concerns “the question of what is (or should be) regarded as acceptable knowledge in a discipline” (Bryman 2012, p. 27). The ontology is concerned with “the nature of social entities” (Bryman 2012, p. 32). Additionally, Bryman stated that “ontological assumptions and commitments will feed into the ways in which research questions are formulated and research carried out”. In this research, interpretivism will be applied as an epistemological consideration. Interpretivism, defines that the researcher “grasp the subjective meaning of social action” (Bryman 2012, p. 712). International school teachers’ beliefs about EAL students will be gathered in this research. Additionally, the constructionism ontological orientation will apply to this research. Constructionism “considers the way in which social reality is an ongoing accomplishment of social actors rather than something external to them and that totally constrains them” (Bryman 2012, p. 34). Therefore, participant teachers express their own feelings in their own words, which is an important factor for this research in order to understand their point of view towards EAL students in mainstream classroom. In order to make in-depth understanding of the cases, qualitative research and an inductive approach will be applied as well, in which “the theory is outcome of research” (Bryman 2012, p. 19).

4.2 Research design

A research design provides a framework in order to collect and analyse data (Bryman 2012, p. 46). The research design for this research uses multiple-case studies. Yin (2009, p. 24) stated that multiple-case studies tend to be more solid than a single-case study. However, the use of the term multiple-case study in this research does not imply that the intention is to draw direct comparison between the two cases. Rather, the researcher focused on teachers’ perceptions in these two schools, in different locations, and discussed their experiences. Bryman (2012, p. 68) stated that the case study can be applied to both qualitative methods and quantitative methods, but the former more commonly uses this approach. Yin (2009, p. 4) stated that case studies enable researchers to “contribute to our knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and
related phenomena”. Additionally, Yin (2009, p.4) stated that when the research questions pursue to explain current circumstance and events, such as “how” or “why” questions, case studies are more likely to be relevant. One of the research questions of this research is: How do teachers think support for EAL students is most effective? Bryman (2012, p. 67) stated that a case study often focuses on a particular location and the “emphasis tends to be upon an intensive examination of the setting”. In this instance, the case study is located in two schools in two locations; hence the use of the term multiple-case study. Case studies tend to be concerned with explaining the unique features of the case, which differs from other research methods (Bryman 2012, p. 69). The interviews for this research took place in Stockholm and Helsinki, which represent two case studies as parts of a single research.

The aim of the case study is not to generalise the findings to represent a certain population, or to “expand and generalize theories (Yin, 2009, p. 15).

Three dimensions of the Bray and Thomas cube are applied for analysing in comparative education: 1) geographical and locational groups, 2) non locational demographic groups and 3) aspects of education and society (Bray, Adamson & Mason 2014). This cube was created to enable to researches “to achieve multifaceted and holistic analyses of educational phenomena” (Bray, Adamson & Mason 2014, p.10). In this research, 1) international schools in Stockholm and Helsinki represent the locational aspect, 2) international school teachers are the non locational demographic group, and 3) teachers’ beliefs and attitudes towards EAL students are identified as the aspect of education that is the focus of the study.

![Figure 1 The Bray & Thomas cube: A frame work for Comparative Education Analysis (Bray & Thomas 1995, p. 475 in Bray & Mason 2014, p. 9)](image-url)
4.3 Research methods

4.3.1 Semi-structured interview

Semi-structured interviews were applied to investigate teachers’ beliefs towards EAL students in the mainstream at international schools. According to Bryman (2012, p. 473), it is important to obtain “perceptions of interviewees” in specific areas in which the researcher is seeking. The semi-structured interviews allowed for natural dialogues with participant teachers, and enabled participant teachers to provide deep and thoughtful answers. For this research, obtaining participants’ unique opinions and beliefs towards EAL students was important. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were chosen. Interviews were conducted with primary and secondary teachers who teach at international schools.

Bryman (2012, p. 482) stated that “Qualitative researchers are frequently interested not only in what people say but also in the way that they say it”. For this reason, it is important to capture what participants mentioned and how during the interview, and thus all interviews were recorded and transcribed in order to analyse.

The aim of the interview is obtaining teachers’ beliefs towards EAL students in mainstream classrooms. Teachers may not be aware of their own beliefs; additionally, they may not usually express their beliefs to others. Thus, some teachers do not know how to explain their beliefs (Cooney, 1985; Thompson, 1984 in Kagan 1992, p. 66). Kagan (1992) suggested avoiding direct questioning, such as, "What is your philosophy of teaching?” because it is not an effective way of drawing out beliefs (Kagan, 1992, p. 66). In this research, participant teachers were asked questions regarding their general educational backgrounds, prior contact with EAL students, teaching strategies, knowledge of EAL students and questions related to self-efficacy. In the interviews, teachers’ perspectives towards EAL students were uncovered.

The interviews were initially scheduled to be held at the end of February 2017 in Stockholm. However, due to teachers’ schedule, the interviews were conducted in March and at the beginning of April in Stockholm and Helsinki.

The interviews were conducted at the participants’ respective schools, at which time they were informed by the researcher about the research topics. Before the interview, the researcher asked permission to record the interview, and also went through the ethical considerations. All the interviews were recorded using the researcher’s mobile phone’s recording application. It was important to record the interviews for re-listening and transcribing for later analysis. Furthermore, it is important to capture what participants
said exactly, including tone of voice, in order to analyse their opinions.

The interviews ranged from about 10 minutes to 90 minutes. The briefness of some interviews was due to busy teaching schedules of some teachers. The researcher sent emails and asked a few follow-up questions to the participant teachers after the initial interviews.

Although the official language of Sweden and Finland is not English, the interviews were conducted in English since the majority of the participants are from English speaking countries, or speak at a natural level, and the schools’ instruction language is English.

The participants were asked the same questions and a few different follow up questions, because the intention of the interviews was to obtain data which enables comparisons between teachers.

4.3.2 Research instrument

The interviews were conducted following an interview guide which was made by the researcher beforehand. In order to obtain teachers’ beliefs towards EAL students in mainstream classrooms, 29 questions were prepared as interview guide. There were questions about the teacher’s general education background, their teaching experience; teaching strategies, how they think about having EAL students, training regarding EAL students and how teachers think about their capacity to support EAL students were included. Additionally follow-up questions were asked during the interview time.

The interview guide was designed based on previous research such as Reeves (2004), Kusama-Powell (2004), Kagan (1992), Yoon (2008), Clair (1995) and Youngs and Youngs (2001). Specifically, Reeves’s (2004) interview guide was useful to construct questions aiming to find out how teachers think about EAL students.

The interview guide is attached as an Appendix A to this thesis. In order to make sure the interview guide could capture what the researcher was looking for, it was tested beforehand and then the finalised version was used. Since semi-structured interviews are more flexible than structured interviews, some questions were skipped or changed according to the participant’s answer, and there was some variation in the actual interviews.
4.4 Selecting of context

4.4.1 School context

Two different international schools were chosen as sites for teachers to be investigated about their approaches towards EAL students. The two schools are an international school in Stockholm and one in Helsinki.

The choice of two schools was in order to get a more holistic view of teachers’ beliefs towards EAL students in mainstream classrooms, rather than a limited perspective of only one school. Additionally, the choice of English-medium international schools was important, to allow the researcher to conduct interviews. Despite these two Nordic countries’ population’s high proficiency of English, some teachers might feel uncomfortable answering questions in English, as the researcher cannot conduct interviews in Swedish nor Finnish. Furthermore, initially, classroom observations were planned, in order to capture how teachers actually teach EAL students and non-EAL students in the same classroom. Since the researcher is not able to conduct the observations in neither Swedish nor Finnish, English-medium schools were chosen. However, time constraints did not allow for classroom observation.

It is important to note that these two schools are following the International Baccalaureate (IB) Middle Years Programme (MYP) curriculum for secondary classes Grade 6 to 10. For Grade 11 to 12 the both schools are following the IB Diploma programme (DP). For primary school curriculum, the school in Stockholm uses the International Primary Curriculum (IPC), and the school in Helsinki uses the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP). Comparing teachers who are working in the same curriculum could add to data comparability. It is described in this chart below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School</th>
<th>Primary school</th>
<th>Secondary school</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The international school in Stockholm</td>
<td>The International Primary Curriculum (Grade 1-5)</td>
<td>International Baccalaureate Middle Years Programme (Grade 6-10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme (Grade 11-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The international school in</td>
<td>International Baccalaureate</td>
<td>International Baccalaureate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2  School curriculum of the international school in Stockholm and Helsinki
It is also important to note that, in order to maintain anonymity, the name of the international schools will not be mentioned in this research. More detailed information about these two schools will be explained in section 5.1.

4.4.2 Selection of participants

Purposive sampling was employed for this research to select participants. According to Bryman (2012, p. 418), the intention of purposive sampling is to “sample cases/participants in a strategic way,” and thus selected samples are related to the research questions. For this reason, three criteria were established in order to select participants. The criteria of selecting teachers were teachers 1) working at the selected international schools, 2) not EAL teachers or assistant teachers, and 3) teach in the mainstream classroom, or not teaching to pull-out small groups.

The researcher contacted teachers by e-mail to request participation in the interviews in Stockholm and Helsinki. One of the participant teachers in Helsinki is an assistant principal who left teaching two years ago. Although it was not planned to interview school leaders, the opportunity to interview this participant emerged from a suggestion by another teacher in Helsinki. It could add a wider perspective to this research, and thus her interview was also conducted using the same question guide used with other teachers.

The size of the sample should not be too large, nor too small to develop theory and find deep analysis with the collected data (Onwuegbuzie and Collins 2007, p. 289 in Bryman 2014, p. 425). Two international schools were chosen as sites to interview teachers, both in Nordic countries. These two international schools are located in the capitals of Sweden and Finland. Three teachers were interviewed from each school. In order to maintain anonymity of participant teachers, alternative names have been given and used throughout in this research. Teachers’ detailed educational background will be explained in section 6.1.1 and section 6.2.1. However, the name of the country where teachers studied or worked may reduce anonymity. Therefore, some names of these countries will not be specified.
Detailed information of the participants will be given in following section, but a brief outline is listed below. Two primary school teachers and one secondary school teacher from Stockholm, and two secondary school teachers and one assistant principal from Helsinki were interviewed. All of the teachers are certified.

Primary teachers from the international school in Stockholm are classroom teachers. Therefore, they teach classes in English, Mathematics, and Exploring and Discovery (E&D), an interdisciplinary, theme-based subject specific to the IPC Curriculum (Fieldwork Education, n.d.). During E&D, students learn science, geography and social studies. These teachers meet students every day and during most of the school hours, students are with classroom teachers. On the other hand, secondary school teachers from both international schools teach specific subjects. They meet students during the time which ranges from 3 times per week.

At the international school in Stockholm, in the Grade 2 class, there are 20 students and one of them is EAL student. In Grade 4 in the same school, there are 21 students and 4 of them are EAL students. There are assistant teachers for primary classes in the international school in Stockholm, who sometimes come into the classroom and support the classroom teacher, but they are not always in the classroom. Additionally, the assistant teacher’s job is not only to support EAL students, but also other students.

The secondary teacher from the international school in Stockholm’s teaches Grade 6 and Grade 7. There are three Grade 6 classes and three Grade 7 classes. He teaches all of the Grade 6 and Grade 7 classes. He teaches every class 3 times a week and has 15 to 22 students in each class. There are 3 to 5 EAL students in each class. However, the specific number of each class’s students and EAL students was not given in the interview.

The international school in Helsinki seems to have slightly smaller class sizes than the international school in Stockholm. One of the secondary school teachers in the international school in Helsinki teaches Grade 8 English, and there are 12 students, 4 of them are EAL students. This teacher also teaches Grade 8 Humanities, and there are 12 students, 3 of them EAL students. This teacher teaches each classes three times a week. She also teaches Grade 11 and 12 three times a week each. However, in Grade 11 and 12 classes, there are no EAL students because students need to take an admission exam when they enter school, which depends on their English ability.

Other secondary teacher from the international school in Helsinki teaches Grade 6 to Grade 9 Humanities. She did not give specific numbers of students in her classes. However, in Grade 6 there are 3 EAL students, in Grade 7 there is 1 EAL student, in Grade 8 there are 3 EAL students and there no EAL students in Grade 9. She also teaches
each class three times a week.

**Table 3 Teachers' information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>School location</th>
<th>Teaching class</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Teaching experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Pettersson</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>22 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Kosteridou</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>30 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Smith</td>
<td>Stockholm</td>
<td>Grade 6 and 7 Design programme</td>
<td>The US</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Grade 6 Classroom Advisor</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Hayvonen</td>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>Upper school assistant principal</td>
<td>Finland</td>
<td>17 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Vallejos</td>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>Grade 8, English, Humanities, Grade 11,12 Phycology</td>
<td>El Salvador</td>
<td>6 years</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Green</td>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>Grade 6 to 9 Humanities</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>8 years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.5 Data analysis

The collected data from the semi-structured interviews were transcribed and analysed applying thematic analysis. Bryman (2012, p. 578) stated that thematic analysis is not an approach like grounded theory or critical discourse, but which “has been outlined in terms of a distinctive cluster of techniques”. However, thematic analysis can have a structured framework, which supports the “construct and index of central themes and subthemes” (Bryman 2012, p. 579). The themes and subthemes are repetitive topics in the transcribed text that are applied to the analysis. Therefore, through reading and rereading of the transcripts until the themes and subthemes emerge is required.

In this research, when the researcher was looking for themes, repetition, metaphors which the participants used, transitions which participants used to shift the topic, similarities and differences, and missing data which the participants did not answer were focused on as Ray and Bernard (2003 in Bryman 2012, p. 580) recommended. However, the themes must be related to the research questions and the research focus. In other words, many participant teachers may repeat a similar topic, but if these are not relevant to the research focus, they may not constitute a theme.
The research objectives, questions and relevant theoretical and contextual information from the literature review build up the basic framework of this research. The data analysed in this research was collected by semi-structured interviews with six teachers who are working at international schools. These collected data were analysed following a thematic analysis framework. In order to conduct this analytical approach, the researcher reads and rereads the transcription of the interview thoroughly and identifies topics in the text. These topics form the themes and subthemes of the analysis.

4.6 Criteria of trustworthiness

Lincoln and Guba (1985 and 1994 in Bryman 2012 p. 390) proposed alternative criteria in to assess qualitative research, termed “Trustworthiness”. It is often used in qualitative research instead of the concepts more relatively for quantitative research such as reliability, replication and validity (Bryman 2012, p. 390). Trustworthiness is built up by four different criteria: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Bryman 2012 p.390). This section will explain how the researcher intended to cover the criteria of trustworthiness in this research.

4.6.1 Credibility

Bryman (2012, p. 3919) stated that the establishment of the credibility of findings is related to both confirming that the researcher is following good practices and submitting the findings of the research to the social world. It is also mentioned as “respondent validation.” Respondent validation is finding that “the researcher’s findings and impressions are congruent with the views of those on whom the research was conducted and to seek out areas in which there is a lack of correspondence and the reasons for it” (Bryman 2012 p.391). Therefore, all the teachers who participated for interviews was given the findings and asked to confirm.

4.6.2 Transferability

This research is qualitative, and therefore the intention is not to generalise the findings. According to Bryman (2012, pp. 390, 392) qualitative research tends to require intensive research of a small group, or sharing certain features of individuals. For qualitative research, depth is required rather than breadth. Therefore, findings of qualitative research tend to focus on “the contextual uniqueness and significance of the aspect of the social world being studied” (Bryman 2012, p. 392). Therefore, instead of
seeking to generalise the findings, the researcher will focus on unique and deeper information from a small group of teachers who teach EAL students in the mainstream classroom in international schools. This caters to “thick descriptions,” which allow others to judge whether it is transferable or not. In order to make this decision, rich details are required.

4.6.3 Dependability
Dependability is presenting the process of documenting and recording the research to the readers. According to Bryman (2012, p. 392), in order to convey the research process to readers, it is required to keep records of all stages of the process. For this research, the research process of participants, interview transcripts and data analysis and problem formulation will be kept and accessible if readers request to confirm them. Details of the process of carrying out the research are also included in detail in the methodology chapter of this paper.

4.6.4 Confirmability
Confirmability establishes that the researcher is able to show that the research was conducted in good faith, and that the researcher has not explicitly allowed personal beliefs or theoretical preferences to influence the conduct of the research (Bryman, 2012). In order to do that the process of the research is clearly explained in this research.

4.7 Ethical Consideration

Ethical considerations have been taken seriously to protect all teachers who participated in this research. According to Bryman (2012, p.135) there are four main ethical considerations such as “whether there is harm to participants,” “whether there is lack of informed consent,” “whether there is an invasion of privacy,” and “whether deception is involved”.

The researcher informed the purpose of the study and asked for permission of recording the interview beforehand to all of the participant teachers. Furthermore, the researcher informed participants that their names and interview data would be kept confidential. The name of participants and schools will be replaced with alternative names, and thus their actual names will not be recognised.

Bryman (2012, p.138) also noted the importance of “lack of informed consent” in ethics, which deems necessary giving information as to the aim of the research and
how it will be conducted fully to the participants before the research has begun. In this research, the researcher provided written research information for all participants detailing the researcher’s information, aim of the study, interview procedure, privacy and contact information of the researcher.

Chapter 5

Context of the schools and teachers

In this chapter, the international school in Stockholm and Helsinki’s context will be explained. In the following section, detail information of participant teachers will be explained as well.

5.1 The international school in Stockholm and Helsinki

The international school in Stockholm has classes from Kindergarten to Grade 12 and there are more than 570 students representing 64 nationalities (The international
school in Stockholm, 2017). The international school in Helsinki has classes from Kindergarten to Grade 12, with more than 360 students and 40 nationalities (The international school in Helsinki, 2017).

Both schools’ educational programme follows International Baccalaureate (IB) guidelines, though the international school in Stockholm utilizes the International Primary Curriculum in primary grades. The language of instruction in both schools is English. Both schools start in the middle of August and finish in the middle of June. Grade K to Grade 5 follows the programme of the International Primary Curriculum (IPC) in the school in Stockholm, and the IB Primary Years Programme (PYP) in Helsinki. The IB Middle Years Programme (MYP) is used in both schools for Grade 6 to Grade 10. For Grade 11 and 12, the IB Diploma Programme (DP) is chosen for school curriculum. Both schools teach French, Spanish and Swedish or Finnish as a foreign language, or as a mother tongue for the host country’s students. However, EAL students go to EAL class when non-EAL students are taking foreign language classes.

The international school in Stockholm provides pull-out EAL support for EAL students. Therefore, EAL students go to EAL class during English classes and while non-EAL students are learning second languages (The international school in Stockholm, 2017). On the other hand, the international school in Helsinki provides push-in EAL support for EAL students. Therefore, EAL students study with non-EAL students most of the time, though EAL students also have special EAL classes while non-EAL students take second language classes at the same time (The international school in Helsinki, 2017).

Mother tongue classes are available for students as an afterschool club in both schools. However, certain number of students needs to enrol in order to offer mother tongue course and if school can find the teacher as well. For example, if there are five Japanese students who want to attend mother tongue course at the school’s after school club, the school need to find the mother tongue teacher as well. In order to take mother tongue classes, parents need to pay extra fees. Additionally, most of the schools in Sweden and Finland are free admission schools (Forsberg & Lundgren 2010, p. 187). However these international schools are private schools, and thus parents need to pay tuition fees.

Both of the schools mentioned that they try to maintain small class sizes. The website of the international school in Stockholm stated that the teacher to student ratio of 1: 6 was observed throughout the whole school (The international school in Stockholm, 2017). The specific teacher to student ratio was not mentioned in the website of the international school in Helsinki, but they also emphasised the small class sizes (The international school in Helsinki, 2017).

It is important to note that in both of the international schools, if students want
to join the school from Grade 11 or 12, they need to take an English proficiency test, since the IB DP requirements demand a high proficiency of English. Therefore, if their English proficiency is low, they cannot enrol in the school. For this reason, there are no EAL students in Grade 11 and 12 in either of the international schools.  

5.2 Interviewees

The data was collected from two primary classroom teachers and one secondary subject teacher in the International school in Stockholm, and two secondary subject teachers and one secondary assistant principal in the International school in Helsinki. The primary school teachers from the international school in Stockholm are homeroom classroom teachers. Therefore, they meet their students, including EAL students, every day. One secondary school teacher from the international school in Stockholm is a Grade 6 classroom advisor and subject teacher. As an advisor, he meets students and parents more regularly than other subject teachers. On the other hand, teachers from secondary school are not classroom teachers, so they do not meet the same students, including EAL students every day.

Additionally, there are no EAL students in Grade 11 and 12, and thus the interview to the teacher who teaches Grade 8, 11 and 12, and the assistant principal are focused on her Grade 8 class and before the Diploma programme. They all have experience living in different countries. Some of them went to school outside of their country and most of them have experience of teaching outside of their countries.

The aim of the selecting the sample was to gather a variation of data, such as different years of experiences, nationalities, student ages taught, education system and countries of the teachers. A total of 6 teachers were interviewed and all interviews were recorded. These recorded interviews were transcribed for the analysis of the data.

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1 The researcher has used the websites of these international schools to gather information. However, the researcher does not refer to them in order to keep the names of the schools confidential.
Chapter 6

Research findings

The data and the findings of the research will be explained in this chapter. The researcher collected data by conducting semi-structured interviews and then analysed through applying thematic analysis. The main themes that emerged from the analysis of the collected data are the following:

- teachers’ general education background
- what teachers think about effective ways to support EAL students
- challenges in teaching EAL students in mainstream classrooms
- how teachers describe who should support EAL students
- how teachers describe their capacity to support EAL students

The analysis of the data and findings are structured according to the research objectives and questions. The findings of two schools will be presented separately. Findings of the international school in Stockholm will be presented first, followed by the school in Helsinki.
6.1 Findings of the international school in Stockholm

In this section, the findings of the international school in Stockholm will be presented. First, teachers’ general educational background will be explained, followed by the ways teachers think teaching EAL students can be done effectively, challenges to teaching EAL students, teachers’ opinions about who should teach EAL students and teachers’ self-efficacy in teaching EAL students.

6.1.1 Teachers general educational background

Through the interviews 1) Teachers’ general educational background, 2) prior experience with EAL students and 3) personal contact with diverse culture were emerged. This graph shows the teachers’ educational backgrounds. In order to read the graph more easily, the researcher put colour in the chart, but this does not signify dividing teachers according to their educational background. As mentioned in section 4.4.2, some names of the countries where teachers have studied or worked are not mentioned in the chart below, to maintain anonymity.

Table 4 Teachers' general educational background, Stockholm

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Place of primary school</th>
<th>Place of Secondary school</th>
<th>Place of University</th>
<th>Major</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Pettersson</td>
<td>Southern Europe/ British school</td>
<td>Sweden/ Swedish school</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Teaching degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 4</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ms. Kosteridou</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Australia</td>
<td>Modern Greek</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grade 6 &amp; 7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr. Smith</td>
<td>The US</td>
<td>The US</td>
<td>The US</td>
<td>Visual Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Teaching degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher’s general educational background

All the participants were asked where they studied when they were younger and where and what they studied at university.

Grade 4 teacher Ms. Kosteridou learned Modern Greek at the university and taught this subject at the beginning of her teaching career. She stated that she is “interested in language” many times throughout the interview. Additionally, Ms. Kosteridou stated
that her first language was Greek before she joined school, and she was an EAL student. Therefore, if an EAL student is made fun of for their English ability, she said she will quickly “jump on” the situation and say “we all make mistakes,” because she knows how the student feels.

**Prior experience with EAL students**

The three teachers in the international school in Stockholm have prior experience with EAL students. These teachers have used their experience teaching EAL students to build their strategies and teaching practices. Grade 2 teacher Ms. Pettersson stated she uses several teaching strategies which she learned through her experience.

Ms. Pettersson stated that she has taught for many years in classrooms with many students from diverse backgrounds. She discovered certain learning patterns of students who are from certain countries. For example, students who are from India are good at completing a given task articulately but they do not like creative tasks. Therefore, she tries to sit down with them and encourage their creativity by discussing ideas. On the other hand, Swedish students tend to be good at creative tasks, but not good at memorising multiplication, because they find it boring. She mentions that of course there are students who do not fit these learning patterns, but it is useful for her to classify students to a certain extent.

**Personal contact with diverse culture**

The three teachers from the international school in Stockholm have had contact with different cultures throughout their education and careers. Secondary Grade 6 and 7 design teacher Mr. Smith grew up in the United States and moved to Sweden 13 years ago. He did not move out his home country before that, but is now fluent in Swedish and took education courses in Swedish. He also taught for 3 years in a Swedish public school, before he joined the current international school. He has the experience of living in two countries and teaching in a foreign country.

On the other hand, Grade 2 teacher Ms. Pettersson has had several experiences of living and teaching abroad. She grew up in southern Europe and went to a British school there until age 16, then moved back to Sweden, where her family was originally from. She went to University in Sweden and taught in a few different countries, including a different country in Europe, South America, and Sweden. While she was teaching at an American school in South America, she had the opportunity to study in a master’s course. She is fluent in these countries’ languages. She seems interested in teaching students from many diverse cultural backgrounds. She stated that regardless of being EAL or non-EAL,
these students bring different cultures into the classroom and the atmosphere is more open-minded towards other cultures.

6.1.2 Effective ways to support EAL students in terms of teachers’ views

Throughout the interviews, teachers expressed their thoughts on what they perceived to be the most effective ways of supporting EAL students in mainstream classrooms at the international school in Stockholm. They explained this from four different dimensions 1) School EAL policy, 2) perceived capacity to support EAL students, 3) teaching strategies and 4) teachers’ collaboration with EAL specialists.

**School EAL policy**

As mentioned in section 5.1, the international school in Stockholm has emphasis on “pull-out” support. Three of the teachers agreed with that type of support. They state that students can learn more in smaller groups and more intensive classes. They think it is an effective way to support EAL students, because some EAL students have a much lower proficiency compared to other students in the classroom, which makes it difficult for them to keep up. These EAL students can learn according to their needs in smaller groups. Additionally, sometimes the classroom teacher cannot support EAL students during the class because other students also need support from the teacher.

**Ms. Pettersson:** I prefer not to have them (EAL students) in my class all day long. That is not because I don’t like them. That is because they get better lessons going to their EAL lessons. But rest of the day, I think we manage quite well and I don’t think they need to be in this little bubble all the time.

Both the primary teachers thought that some combination of push-in and pull-out support is necessary, because it is important for EAL students to interact with and hear non-EAL students speaking English. Additionally, making friends, not only within their EAL group, but also with non-EAL students, is important as a tool to improve their English proficiency. In the interviews, teachers mentioned that interaction between EAL and non-EAL students allows students develop their English proficiency, while also developing social skills and international mindedness.

Secondary design teacher Mr. Smith was unsure what kind of EAL support the school provides. The researcher asked him, explaining some different styles of EAL
support; he stated that he thinks his school provides pull-out support. He agrees with the school’s current EAL support, but at the same time he stated that EAL and non-EAL students cannot have the same experiences if the school has pull-out support. Therefore, students may treat each other differently and EAL students may feel a bit excluded. Mr. Smith also stated that he has never had an EAL teacher with him in his classroom. Therefore, he would like to see how it would be different if an EAL teacher were to sit with EAL students in his class.

**Perceived capacity to support EAL students**

In the interviews, teachers expressed what they think they can do in the classroom in order to support EAL students. It is connecting to one of the research questions that how do teachers think support for EAL students is most effective? Through the research, two themes emerged: 1) providing a comfortable learning environment 2) being aware of students’ individual differences.

Secondary design teacher Mr. Smith tried not to ask questions to EAL students in the classroom.

**Mr. Smith:** I don’t call them (EAL students) out if they are EAL students. Not normally, unless if they are comfortable with it.

This, he stated, is because EAL students are usually quiet during the class, especially when the class is having a discussion. He assumed that it is because EAL students are generally too shy, not comfortable speaking English, or insecure in their language ability. Therefore, he waits until EAL students feel more comfortable in expressing their opinions in front of the class.

Ms. Pettersson also mentioned that students should “feel comfortable”, however her approach seems a bit different to Mr. Smith’s.

**Ms. Pettersson:** My first goal is make them heel happy, secure, safe, and that they like coming here. If they are not happy, they not going to learn.

Ms. Pettersson speaks 5 different languages, so she often speaks these languages if students want to speak to her in their mother tongue. She thinks students can learn much quicker and will be much happier when they communicate comfortably with their teacher. Mr. Pettersson stated that students feel unhappy if they do not understand what is
happening around them. Especially at an early age, students stop listening if they feel unhappy. Therefore, she emphasised that students use their own language if they want. Sometimes, she sent Finnish students to the lunch room, as one of the lunch workers can speak Finnish. It could be seen that she is supporting EAL students positively.

The three teachers stated that it is useful to know students’ English ability and how long they have been learning in English. They stated that the school provides files regarding students’ information. Teachers are allowed to check it whenever they need it.

Ms. Kosteridou thinks being aware of students’ individual differences is important in order to teach students who are at different language proficiency levels and of different cultural backgrounds. She emphasised the importance of knowing students including their English level. Firstly, when the teacher knows a student’s English level, that teacher can predict what the source of the student’s limitations is and understand what their challenges are. In that case, teachers can prepare for supporting students according to their needs. Ms. Kosteridou thinks challenges are important for student learning, rather than accommodating students with something they can easily accomplish.

Secondly, Ms. Kosteridou states that students’ different cultural backgrounds play a huge role in the classroom. One of the EAL students, who is from China, was quiet right after she joined the school. Ms. Kosteridou thought she was extremely shy, and also needed some time to get used to the new environment. Also, she guessed that maybe the student’s quietness stemmed from a cultural difference of how to act in the classroom. Moreover, since working in international schools, she realised that even students from English-speaking countries or an English-speaking family take time to fit in to the class because of the changes for the students of a new country, a different school system and/or new friends.

Ms. Kosteridou stated that most of the students in her class, regardless of being categorized as EAL or not, students are still in the process of learning. She also states that she doesn’t necessarily find problems in learning for EAL students; she thinks they just need extra support due to their lack of English proficiency.

Ms. Pettersson also thinks that getting to know students is important, regardless of being EAL or non-EAL students, since she thinks that the more you know about students, the more they learn. Therefore, these two primary school teachers try to talk to students and get to know them during lunch time and recess time, in addition to during the course of classes.

**Teaching strategies**

All three teachers at the international school in Stockholm have a repertoire of
several teaching strategies. In general, the teachers do not stick with only one teaching strategy, but try a few different methods, according to the aim of their teaching and student tasks.

In the interviews, teachers mentioned at least five distinct teaching strategies, which they use in their classrooms. All teachers mention (1) Modifying the tasks, (2) Modifying the criteria, (3) Breaking down and simplifying tasks, (4) Using images, (5) Showing examples. Two teachers use (6) Google translate, (7) Parents. One teacher mentioned (8) small group discussion.

The most common strategy among the teachers is (1) Modifying the tasks.

When EAL students have difficulties explaining their opinion in writing, Mr. Smith asks them to attach photographs or diagrams. He stated that by doing this, EAL students can express their thoughts more clearly, and communicate better with the reader of the essay. If an EAL student is not good at explaining his or her thoughts using photographs or diagrams, Mr. Smith may interview the student regarding the assignment. He used what EAL students explained in the interview as a piece of evidence that EAL students actually understand the task. When teaching to a mixture of language ability students, the teacher cannot teach without modifying the tasks according to the level of students.

Another strategy is (2) Modifying the criteria for assessing EAL students. In this approach, teachers tend to reduce the workload of the EAL students according to their English proficiency. For example, if non-EAL students need to write 1000 words of text for an essay, EAL students may need to write only 400 words, but the content and other criteria are kept the same for all students, such as the requirements to write an introduction, contents, show a clear discussion, and draw conclusions.

Mr. Smith: There is no way EAL students get, we have grading scale between 0 and 8. It’s very relay that EAL students can reach the level 8 in written tasks. Because they cannot write to level of profession English speaker or writer.

Therefore Mr. Smith modified the criteria for EAL students. However, Mr. Smith thinks that although he modifies the criteria, it should be the similar for all the students.

Mr. Smith: I think we should modify (tasks), but technically they have to reach the same…they are graded with the same
standards for everyone else.

Two primary teachers also stated they modify the criteria but they did not explain how they do and giving examples apart from reducing the number of words in the written tasks.

When teachers giving too much information to the students, they can have trouble understanding what they need to do and may feel overwhelmed with a large workload. Therefore, all of the teachers try to (3) break down and simplify tasks. For example, students are given tasks in small pieces or steps, rather than all at once. It is important for teachers to give clear steps each time they introduce new tasks, for all students. Ms. Kosteridou stated that when she breaks down tasks, she tries to set realistic goals for students, which students can easily achieve. This helps to make students feel successful. She thinks that giving confidence to students is important, especially for EAL students, who may feel like they are always struggling.

(4) Using images and (5) showing examples are also common strategies that teachers use regularly. Teachers often show examples when students cannot understand what they need to do during the lesson. For example, teachers may show examples of completed student work and ask EAL students, or all students, to follow the same structure.

The two primary teachers in the international school in Stockholm often let EAL students to use (6) Google translate when the teachers are busy and cannot give enough support to the EAL students. However, both teachers admitted that this is a somewhat unsuccessful strategy, because Google translate does not always translate properly, and the teachers prefer interaction between students and other students or between students and the teacher. Therefore, they often ask other students in the class who can speak the EAL student’s mother tongue to translate when EAL students cannot understand a task.

Two teachers mentioned that they sometimes ask (7) parents to support students’ learning at home. One of the teachers often asks EAL students’ parents to translate what they are going to study in next lesson, and talk about the tasks at home with their child before they will study those topics and tasks in the class. For example, when the class began a unit about where people live, the teacher gave classroom worksheets to EAL parents beforehand and asked them to translate some of the materials into their own language and discuss the topics at home. In this case, students can more easily follow or understand what they are doing in the classroom, as it is introduced at home. However, Mr. Smith stated that due to the EAL parents’ language ability, sometimes he cannot communicate with the parents as well. In that case, teacher cannot rely on this strategy. Additionally, some parents may not supportive than other parents as well because they
are working and no time for supporting their children’s learning at home.

Additionally, instead of introducing a topic or task with a whole class discussion straight away, Mr. Smith lets students have a (8) small group discussion first. In the small group, EAL students feel more comfortable, and they are more likely to join the discussion and give their opinions. After the small group discussion, some of the students in the small group explain what they discussed to the whole class. Mr. Smith states that by doing this, EAL students feel they are part of the class. Although he tries to encourage EAL students to express their opinions in small group work, they rarely speak out and sometimes do not say a single word in front of the whole class.

Ms. Pettersson stated that there is no single strategy that can solve everything. She stated that teachers need to adapt their strategies according to the tasks and students. She also stated that she often gives completely different tasks to EAL students during mathematics or E&D classes, because she thinks it is difficult for students to work in those subjects if they do not know English. These three teachers shared the same opinion that it is hard to let EAL and non-EAL students do the same tasks, due to the students’ lack of language proficiency. However, they all try to include EAL students in the mainstream classroom by combining various teaching strategies.

**Teachers’ collaboration with EAL specialists**

Through the interviews, it became clear that classroom teachers are often communicating with EAL specialist teachers. The three teachers from the international school in Stockholm all mentioned that they communicate with EAL teachers regularly. Two types of communication with EAL teachers appeared, (1) asking for support and (2) exchanging general information.

Teachers categorised as (1) asking EAL teachers for support tend to refer issues to the EAL teachers whenever EAL students cannot solve a problem. In general they think EAL teachers know the best solutions for supporting EAL students. Additionally, Mr. Smith shares Google documents with EAL teachers whenever he makes classroom worksheets, and the EAL teachers check whether the grammar and vocabulary are appropriate for the EAL students’ current level or not. For example, when he used the word “weakness” in the worksheets, an EAL teacher commented that this vocabulary is still difficult for EAL students so he made the change to “bad”. They often give him feedback like this, which he thinks is very useful.

Ms. Pettersson stated that she often talks to EAL teachers regarding the class lessons and the EAL students in her class. For example, she asks the EAL teachers to put certain vocabulary on the EAL vocabulary lists, and also asks EAL teachers to read
through worksheets. Ms. Pettersson thinks that EAL teachers know EAL students’ ability more than her because the EAL teacher teaches EAL students more than she does.

Ms. Pettersson: I don’t think we would be able to do (teach EAL students) that if we didn’t have the EAL teacher helping us.

It seems that Ms. Pettersson asks EAL teachers, in their EAL classes, to cover what the mainstream classroom students are doing, quite often. On the other hand, the teacher who are categorised as (2) exchanging general information often communicate with EAL teachers, but what they talk about is more basic information, such as communicating that EAL students need extra time to complete a certain task in the class, so the student will be a bit late for EAL class.

Additionally, the school tries to encourage collaboration between what students learn in the mainstream classroom and what is done in specialists’ classes. It is part of the school curriculum that mainstream classrooms and other classes share the same themes. For example, if Grade 2 students’ theme is about where they live, they will study this topic in English, E&D, art, music, Swedish and EAL class. Therefore, Ms. Kosteridou often talks about these themes and what they are doing in the class to EAL teachers. It seems like she collaborate with EAL teachers because of the school curriculum is collaborative. It is because that when the researcher asked Ms. Kosteridou why she collaborates with EAL teachers, she explained it is the school curriculum and following the same themes. Ms. Kosteridou stated that there are always connections between mainstream classes and the EAL classroom, so EAL students will not be missing out. The three teachers communicate with EAL teachers daily.

6.1.3 Challenges of teaching EAL students in mainstream classrooms

Although teachers explained how they think support for EAL students during the interviews. Teachers also expressed various challenges of teaching EAL students in mainstream classrooms. However, a common challenge among the three teachers from the international school in Stockholm was a range of language ability in the classroom. All three teachers mentioned that it is challenging to teach EAL students in the mainstream classroom. Other challenges, which teachers mentioned are time management, resources and encouraging EAL students. These challenges, which teachers mentioned, will be presented one by one in this section.

**Range of language ability in the classroom**
In a mainstream classroom, there are native English speakers, non-native English speakers that speak fluent English, non-English speakers that recently exited from EAL classes needing some help, and EAL students. Among the EAL students there is a wide range of proficiency in English, such as students who have zero English proficiency to students who will soon exit EAL classes. All of these students study together in the mainstream classroom. According to the interviews, the class size in the primary school is between 20 and 21 students, and in the secondary school is from 15 to 22 students. Secondary teacher Mr. Smith stated that:

Mr. Smith: Some students maybe understand more than they express, some don’t understand. They don’t make connections easily. Some speak well and write well. It’s a range of ability so it’s difficult.

He stated that students’ English proficiency varies; depending on where these EAL students come from, how long they have been speaking English and how much support they can get from parents at home. He stated that sometimes EAL students’ parents do not speak English, and thus they cannot help students with tasks at home. Additionally, when parents have a low English proficiency, he cannot communicate with parents when EAL students have problems.

Ms. Kosteridou and Ms. Pettersson stated that differentiating the classroom tasks is challenging. Ms. Kosteridou stated that she needs to know students’ language levels and what they can do in their own language as well. In order to know that, she needs to look into the student’s file, which school provides. Ms. Kosteridou stated that although it is challenging to differentiate in class, she wants to support EAL students in order to work towards success.

Ms. Kosteridou: Because you want them to succeed, so, you don’t want them to be put off as well. So, it depends on the child, and what level they are and you just have to adjust as much as possible for their needs.

Ms. Kosteridou also stated that it is challenging for one of her EAL students to both study English and learn everything in English.

Ms. Kosteridou: This year, there is one student, a girl from China. She knew no English when she
came. So, even if she is going to get support, it’s only one hour a day. So, I have to have her all the other time. That was very challenging for her.

Additionally, the two primary school teachers mentioned that the learning style of EAL students is different according to where they studied before. Some EAL students are very quiet and wait until the teacher asks EAL students directly if they have any problems. On the other hand, other EAL students are not shy. The teachers think this might depend on students’ personalities, but also on their previous school’s education system or learning culture. They also stated that it is hard to distinguish between when EAL students cannot solve problem, if they just cannot understand the problem because of English, or they just do not get the question or have learning disabilities.

**Time management**

Mr. Smith emphasised lack of time resources as a challenge throughout the interview. He mentioned several teaching strategies what he uses in his classroom, but he thinks he cannot support EAL students effectively.

Mr. Smith: Unfortunately, I don’t have the resources – time resources, too. Because, if I wanted to do it, I can meet with students after school, during the breaks more often and help them or sit with them. But, I have grading, marking to do, I have got parents, planning, meetings and work all the time. So, I never have… I never stop working. I am always working… I could do more, but I don’t feel like I have time.

He stated that he needs to modify classroom tasks, but sometimes he cannot because he is too busy with other work.

Mr. Smith: There was so much to do and in a day so it’s difficult because you know what you need to do and you know how you should work to help EAL students, but at the same time there is so much preparing
Mr. Smith recently attended a professional development meeting regarding support for EAL students in mainstream classroom. He learned useful strategies, which he wants to try, but he has not tried yet because he is too busy. Mr. Smith seemed somewhat frustrated because he noticed that when he modified tasks for EAL students and planned well, those students always get better results. However, he cannot do this all the time due to the lack of time and a heavy workload.

Ms. Kosteridou and Ms. Pettersson spend more time with their students throughout the day; on the other hand, Mr. Smith sees every class only 3 times a week. He only knows students’ very basic information, which the school provides, because he is too busy and has no time to talk to students and get to know them well.

**Encouraging EAL students**

Mr. Smith stated that encouraging EAL students is important and he always try to encourage them, but admitted that it is challenging. Mr. Smith wants to encourage EAL students to participate in classroom discussions, because they are always quiet and do not say anything during class. As was mentioned previously in section 6.1.2, he tries to make small group discussions to introduce a topic, in which EAL students might feel more comfortable sharing their opinions. However, EAL students still do not talk in front of the class or when larger discussions occur. He thinks EAL students might feel that people are criticising their speaking, because some students can be quite rude. He thinks that although most of the students are nice, if the EAL students have been made fun of for their English by other students even once, they may develop feelings of insecurity and become more hesitant to speak.

Mr. Smith: I think it’s important to show EAL students that they are not stupid because they don’t understand the language.

Therefore, when Mr. Smith gives grades to EAL students, he tries to write detailed feedback as much as possible, rather than only giving them a number.

Mr. Smith thinks confidence is one important factor for improving language. One of his EAL students, from Japan, has been here for three years. Considering that, Mr. Smith thinks her speaking could be better. She is usually quiet and looks unsure. Moreover, she does not participate in the classroom discussions. She used to struggle in design programme assessments, but when Mr. Smith found out that she likes taking photos and
asked her to use photos to explain her thoughts, she worked very hard and achieved the highest possible grade. After that she, regularly tried to talk to him and progressed considerably. According to Mr. Smith, she still does not speak in the whole class discussions, but he thinks she has improved a lot. Therefore, he thinks encouraging EAL students can be challenging, but it is important for them.

**Lack of Resources**

Mr. Smith stated that he does not get enough support from EAL teachers.

Mr. Smith: Unfortunately, I teach design. Design doesn’t have high status at the school. So EAL teachers – they have a lot of pressure from the school to help the students with Math, English, Humanities and Science. Those are the priorities, so if students don’t have understanding in those, then design, PE and art – those take the lowest priorities.

EAL teachers need to support high-priority subjects rather than the design programme. Thus, Mr. Smith cannot have a meeting with EAL teachers to discuss his EAL students specifically in design class. He usually talks to EAL teachers in the hallway or coffee room quickly to solve problems regarding EAL students. However, Mr. Smith thinks these quick conversations are not enough to support EAL students effectively in his classes. He would like more advice from EAL teachers, but there is no time to discuss issues with them.

6.1.4 Who should support EAL students?

One of the research questions is to what extent teachers think they can support EAL students’ learning? The researcher asked the participant teachers their opinions about who should support EAL students’ learning. Two different types of answers appeared (1) support from all of the teachers and (2) support from the EAL teacher and the classroom teacher.

**Support from all of the teachers**

Secondary teacher Mr. Smith thinks every teacher should support EAL students’ learning.
Mr. Smith: We need to reach out to all students regardless of language ability.

However, when the researcher asked Mr. Smith, whether he thinks he can support EAL students efficiently, he answered

Mr. Smith: No, not really. I don't think I have that. I don't have the time.

Although Mr. Smith thinks every teacher should support EAL students, he thinks he cannot support EAL students efficiently.

Grade 2 teacher Ms. Pettersson also thinks every teacher should support EAL students’ learning. However, she also thinks that EAL teachers and the classroom teacher have the main responsibility.

Ms. Pettersson: In a lovely sweet world, every teacher. There are music teachers, there are PE teachers, all of us together. Obviously the EAL teacher and classroom teacher maybe have the main responsibility for them, but we are all part of it.

She connected this responsibility to the example given earlier, when the lunch worker helped the EAL student from Finland, and she felt the lunch worker’s support was definitely helpful for the student.

Although these two teachers think that every teacher should support EAL students, they have not attended much training for teaching EAL students, and they have somewhat passive attitudes towards training for EAL students. They attend the training if it is mandatory. When the researcher asked Ms. Pettersson why she does not attend the training regularly? She answered:

Ms. Pettersson: I’m not an EAL teacher.

This is reflected in other statement, that “they (EAL students) are only in my class” or her description of non-EAL students as “normal students” at first, and later correcting, “I mean the other children”. Additionally, when the researcher asked about her previous teaching experiences with EAL students in mainstream classrooms, she stated that she did this only in South America. On the other hands, the other two teachers answered that they have had many experiences teaching EAL students in mainstream classrooms, including in the current school. Moreover, sometimes when the researcher asked about
her opinion about having EAL students in her class, she changed the topic to the school support system of EAL students, rather than her own opinion.

**Support from an EAL teacher and classroom teacher**

Grade 4 teacher Ms. Kostedoriou thinks the EAL teacher and the classroom teacher should equally support EAL students’ learning. She has been attending EAL teaching training, such as workshops and professional developments, since she was teaching in Australia several years ago. She stated that it is important to keep up with the trends in EAL support and update her knowledge regarding EAL support, so she always attends training regarding EAL support, as much as possible. Additionally, she tries what she learns at training sessions in the classroom quite often.

6.2. Findings of the international school in Helsinki

In this section, the findings of the international school in Helsinki will be presented. The organisation of this section is the same as the findings of Stockholm. First, teachers’ general educational background will be explained, followed by the ways teachers think teaching EAL students can be done effectively, challenges to teaching EAL students, teachers’ opinions about who should teach EAL students and teachers’ self-efficacy in teaching EAL students.

6.2.1 Teachers general education background

In this section, as it was explained in the findings of the international school in Stockholm, 1) Teachers’ general educational experiences, 2) prior experience with EAL students and 3) personal contact with diverse culture will be examine. This graph shows teachers educational background. As mentioned in section 4.4.2, and section 6.1.1, some names of the countries where teachers have studied or worked were not mentioned in the chart below, to maintain anonymity.

*Table 5 Teachers' general education background, Helsinki*

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
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<th>Place of Secondary school</th>
<th>Place of University</th>
<th>Major</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Vallejos</td>
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<td>French as a second language</td>
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**Teachers’ general educational experiences**

The assistant principle Ms. Hayvönen and Secondary Humanity teacher Ms. Green learned teaching French as a second language stated that they can use their knowledge of second language acquisition when they support EAL students.

Ms. Green: I understand how people learn language from the teacher’s point of view because I can teach French. And general person that learning languages I can emphasise that how student do that.

When Ms. Green studied Humanities at university in Canada, her course was French immersion course. Therefore she took courses in French with French first language speakers. She thinks her knowledge of how to people develop second language and her experience of learning in second language can be useful when she teaches. Ms. Green stated she can modify the tasks and EAL students drawing her experience.

Secondary Grade 8, 11 and 12 teacher Ms. Vallejos studied Anthropology at university and took teaching course in Australia. When she was studying in Australia, she took training regarding with EAL teaching is called “teaching EAL in mainstream”. Ms. Vallejos stated that it was a nine-week course and she needed to attend a class two hours once a week. She stated that the training was useful because she learned some strategies and build up knowledge of how to teach EAL students in mainstream class. She stated that this is the only training which she took regarding EAL teaching.

Ms. Vallejos studied at several countries’ international schools when she was younger. She mentioned that these experiences have influenced how see students
including EAL students because that is how she was grown up. Additionally, she is willingly to have new and different perspective usually. For example, she thinks EAL students bring different perspective and it is important for international mindedness.

Ms. Vallejos: For example, in my humanities class there are quite few EAL kids, they all come from different perspective which is good for humanities and they all speak different languages. And they are actually perfect example of I think what international schools about and that you want everybody eventually speak the same language. So that you can communicate better and essentially in an international school wants to promote international mindedness. So understanding of different perspective through one language.

Ms. Vallejos stated that she likes working at international schools because that is where she grown up and she feel more comfortable in the international environment.

Prior experience with EAL students

The three teachers have experience of teaching EAL students in mainstream classrooms. Ms. Hayvönen stated that according to her experience of supporting EAL students with push-in support, she noticed that not every student develop their second language ability at the same way, therefore she emphasis on checking their progress carefully and not evaluate students’ progress in a short term but more longer term.

Additionally, all of them believe that EAL students can exit EAL and join mainstream classroom eventually since they have seen many EAL students’ success and learning in mainstream classroom.

Personal contact with diverse culture

Three of the teachers from the international school in Helsinki have contact with diverse culture. Ms. Green has teaching experience in Europe and Africa. However she did not mention how it influences her teaching. Ms. Hayvönen stated that her personal life is also international because she has international marriage. Therefore she wanted work at the international environment work place. Ms. Vallejos moved between many
countries due to her parents’ jobs, study and teaching.

6.2.2 Effective ways to support EAL students in terms of teachers view

Similar to the participants from the international school in Stockholm, teachers at the international school in Helsinki, throughout the interviews, expressed ways they considered as effective to support EAL students in the mainstream classroom. They explained these strategies in four dimensions 1) School EAL policy, 2) perceived capacity to support EAL students, 3) teaching strategies and 4) teachers’ collaboration with EAL specialists. The aim of this section is going to find out how teachers think support for EAL students is most effective.

**School EAL policy**

As mentioned in section 5.1, the international school in Helsinki emphasises “push-in” EAL support. The three teachers strongly agreed with this push-in support. An EAL teacher usually sits with EAL students in class, and the EAL teacher can explain directly to EAL students what the subject teacher says and give extra language support. Ms. Vallejos stated that even if students joined in the middle of the year, with low English proficiency, the student stayed in the mainstream class with the support of an EAL teacher. Sometimes EAL teachers pull out EAL students to other classrooms and give them a different lesson, but it is more common that they stay in the same classroom and do the same tasks.

When non-EAL students are taking French, Spanish or Finnish classes, EAL students go to an extra EAL class and study with EAL teachers. Ms. Green stated that she agrees with push-in support, because she thinks EAL students feel like they are part of the classroom and are actually part of the class with other students. She stated that she likes the inclusive support. Ms. Hayvönen also stated that

Ms. Hayvönen: You learn best in the interaction with others and in the context of the particular subject.

That is why she encourages push-in support. EAL students learn English and the contents of the subject at the same time, with other students in the same class. Ms. Hayvönen understands that some students prefer pull-out support and learning quietly with special attention, but still thinks push-in support can support EAL students more effectively.

Additionally, Ms. Vallejos mentioned that she likes having an EAL teacher in
her class because she can get another perspective from an EAL teacher. She stated that an EAL teacher often gives her ideas and advice regarding supporting EAL students and differentiating in her classes.

It is important to note that the international school in Helsinki has push-in support for the secondary school. However, the researcher had no chance to interview primary school teachers, and thus it is not clear that what kind of EAL support their primary school offers.

Perceived capacity to support EAL students

Through the interviews, three different themes emerged regarding what teachers think they can do in the classroom for EAL students, 1) being aware of students’ individual differences, 2) learning together and 3) Encouraging.

Like the international school in Stockholm, two of the teachers think recognising students’ individual differences are essential in order to support EAL students. They explained that every student has different needs and challenges, including language needs. Therefore, the teacher should not categorise EAL students as one homogenous group and other students as another. Assistant principal Ms. Hayvonen emphasised that every child is different, regardless of being EAL or non-EAL.

Ms. Hayvonen: It is so important that first of all you get to know students as individuals, that you don’t label them primarily as EAL students. Not like that, because all the students have their own needs and you need to have a certain understanding, not only about language needs, but also other learning needs… and also, I need to stop planning for whole classes. I was planning for individuals – and it can work better.

Therefore, Ms. Hayvonen emphasised having regular meeting with EAL students regarding their progress and challenges as necessary for their learning. Moreover, discussing with students is necessary to deal with the new challenges. She stated that positive and motivating support is necessary for EAL students, and to always involve EAL students in discussions about their learning. Through having meetings regularly, teachers can recognise students’ individual needs.

Two teachers stated that EAL students and non-EAL students are able to learn
from each other in the classroom. Ms. Green stated that the school’s atmosphere is collaborative, and therefore students in the class often help out EAL students, which she thinks is important.

Ms. Vallejos echoed Ms. Green’s comment that EAL students and non-EAL students can learn from each other. For example, when students work in pairs, teachers make EAL students and non-EAL students work together. In this case, EAL students can ask questions to non-EAL students. Additionally, non-EAL students need to think how they can explain certain things or vocabulary without using the same words and easy way. Ms. Vallejos stated that it is important for non-EAL students to be challenged by EAL students, because by doing so non-EAL students do not feel that they are better than EAL students.

Lastly, one teacher mentioned that encouragement is necessary to support EAL students. Ms. Vallejos noticed increased progress of EAL students that always participate during class. Therefore, she tries to encourage them to participate, for example by asking easy questions according to their level of English proficiency. Especially when EAL students say something during the lesson in front of the class, regardless of their English or mistakes, she praises them in front of other students. It is because she thinks it is brave for them to share their opinions in front of the whole class, even when they are still learning the language. Furthermore, to be praised in front of their peers makes them more confident.

All of the teachers in the international school in Helsinki mentioned and recognised that without sufficient support for EAL students from the school and EAL specialist teachers, they cannot support EAL students in mainstream classrooms along with non-EAL students, although they think EAL students add diversity to the classroom, which is a benefit for all students.

**Teaching strategies**

The teachers mentioned five different teaching strategies. All three teachers mentioned that they (1) Modify tasks and (2) Modify criteria. Two teachers stated that they (3) break down the task, and one teacher mentioned using (4) Google translate and (5) Showing examples.

The most common teaching strategies between the three teachers, used when they teach EAL students in mainstream classroom is (1) **Modify tasks**. Ms. Green stated that she always modifies the task according to the student’s English level, or makes up alternative tasks for EAL students. Ms. Vallejos explained how she modifies a task in her English class. In English class, all students need to read Shakespeare. However, EAL
students read a simple English version of text, and non-EAL students read an old English version of text. They are still reading the same book, and discussing the contents, but depending on their level of English, they read different styles and levels of the text. She stated that the aim of reading Shakespeare is not practicing old English but understanding and the context. Therefore, she chooses different types of texts or books for different English levels.

Ms. Vallejos often \(\textbf{(5) shows examples}\) to all of her classes. For example, if she wants the students to try writing a diary entry, there is always a model and students need to copy the structure of the model. She also uses \(\textbf{(3) breaking down the task}\) for diary writing. For example, the first step might be to fill in a blank box with vocabulary and common phrases, followed by copying an example, and then eventually creating their own diary. She uses this process for both EAL and non-EAL students together. However, her expectation of the outcome is different. She \(\textbf{(2) modifies the criteria}\). For example, she asks non-EAL students to produce their own diary entry. On the other hand, for EAL students, copying and filling in the blank box is enough. She stated that EAL students and non-EAL students often work on the same activity, which might be modified using different assessment criteria. Ms. Vallejos got this notion at the beginning of her teaching career from her supervisor.

Additionally, she lets EAL students use \(\textbf{(4) Google translate}\), because she wants them to focus on the content, rather than one word that they do not understand. Also, she understands that EAL students are frustrated because they cannot express themselves easily in English. Thus, if Google translate can solve the problem, she does not mind letting them use it.

She uses several teaching strategies in order to complete one task, from introducing until assessing students.

Ms. Hayvönen emphasised \(\textbf{(3) breaking down the tasks}\). She stated that giving clear and simple steps to the students is necessary in a mixed-level class. She stated that she noticed the importance of giving clear steps from her own experiences of unsuccessful classroom management. When she gave tasks without giving enough steps, because she thought every student could easily solve the task, some students could not complete the problem. Therefore, she always tries to communicate to all of the students and give each step clearly.

Ms. Hayvönen stated that she also \(\textbf{(1) modify tasks for EAL students}\). She stated that if EAL students need to work on the same tasks as non-EAL students, it is unfair to EAL students. Additionally she stated that she does not expect EAL students to do the same tasks but she wants them to complete the task according to their skills. For
example, Ms. Hayvönen asks EAL students how they want to complete their tasks and give them choices. First, she tells EAL students and non-EAL students that they will write an essay with 1000 words. If EAL students say that is too hard, she gives them other options, such as making a short film interviewing people, or taking an oral assessment. It is important for all of the students to work on a project within the theme.

Ms. Vallejos stated that at the beginning, when EAL students speak and understand only a little English, the assessment might be completely different from rest of the class.

Ms. Vallejos: EAL students never do the same assessment as everybody else. So, they are completely modified. That always works well.

However, they still participate in the classroom activities and they are still learning together with other students, but are assessed differently. However, gradually, she makes their assessment more similar to the rest of the class. For English class, she sometimes uses a Language acquisition criteria rather than language for literature criteria.

Ms. Vallejos: It’s unfair to grade them(EAL students) using a literature rubric, which is for native speakers, which asks for some analyzing, sympathizing and evaluating, and they are not at that stage yet. So it would be unfair if me to go “Oh, you did get a zero in analysis,” but they are not able to analyze. So it’s unfair for me to do that I think.

Ms. Vallejos thinks it is unfair for her to assess EAL students with the same criteria as other students, because EAL students’ English level is not high enough yet, and she thinks their focus should be on developing their English proficiency first, not analysing the context.

These two teachers modify the criteria because the goals they have for EAL student learning is different from what they expect from non-EAL students, such as progress in English proficiency, rather than analysing text. On the other hand, the aim is sometimes analysing the text, rather than learning different types of English, such as old English. Therefore, they feel assessing EAL students and non-EAL students by the same criteria are unfair.
**Teachers’ collaboration with EAL specialists**

Collaborating with EAL teachers also one of the important factor to provide better learning environment for EAL students. The international school in Helsinki emphasises push-in support. Therefore, there are usually EAL teachers in mainstream classrooms with EAL students. Three different reasons why teachers communicate and collaborate with EAL teachers were found through the interviews among the three teachers: (1) learning in small groups inside the class, (2) giving advice and (3) switching the teaching role.

Ms. Vallejos stated that she usually divides the class into small groups, and EAL students often study with the EAL teacher, but learn the same topics as other students. Additionally, if the EAL students could not complete the task during the class time, they can continue working in EAL class. In this case, the EAL teacher already knows the subject teacher’s aim of the task, and thus it is much easier for EAL teachers to follow. However, Ms. Vallejos sometimes gives tasks in which EAL and non-EAL students are participating together. In this case, she lets EAL students sit with their friends or next to the non-EAL students. She noticed that EAL students learn quite a lot from their friends by communicating in English. This research is focusing on mainstream classroom teachers, but it may be interesting to research how EAL students feel if they always sit with EAL teachers in a small group inside the mainstream classroom. They may feel that they are excluded from the others.

The EAL teachers often give other teachers advice regarding the support of EAL students, such as how to modify work. For example, EAL teachers may comment that a specific task is too difficult for the current level of EAL students, and recommend changes to the task. Sometimes, Ms. Vallejos made one task sheet and the EAL teacher modified it according to the EAL students’ needs.

Ms. Vallejos: Because she (EAL teacher) knows about more about EAL strategies than I do. I learn from her a lot.

Ms. Hayvönen also stated that she does not know how to support EAL students sometimes; in that case she asks EAL teachers for advice. For instance, she asks how to support EAL students’ active thinking. Additionally, when teachers have a meeting, EAL teachers are always there and share strategies, which classroom teachers can try in the mainstream classroom, or give feedback to the teachers. Ms. Hayvönen stated that the school is very small, and thus teachers know each other well and talk easily. Additionally,
EAL teachers often have in-school professional development for teaching EAL students and share their knowledge.

Finally, Ms. Vallejos sometimes asked the EAL teacher to teach the whole class, and in this case, she can check the progress of EAL students while the EAL teacher is teaching the whole class. She thinks it is very useful to switch roles sometimes in order to know the EAL students’ progress and their needs.

6.2.3 Challenges of teaching EAL students in mainstream classrooms

All of the teachers mentioned time management is one of the challenges they face teaching EAL students in a mainstream classroom, including preparation and during teaching. Other challenges that appeared throughout the interviews were teaching grammar and encouraging EAL students.

Time management inside and outside of the class

In order to teach a range of language proficiency students in one class, the three teachers all stated that they modify tasks and assessment criteria. However, preparation for classes takes time because they have to modify all tasks. Ms. Green stated that although she can easily modify lessons and make task sheets according to EAL students’ levels, it can also be challenging because it takes time. Ms. Vallejos also stated that preparation for teaching takes time, since she needs to modify everything. Ms. Vallejos mentioned that due to the mixture of student levels studying in the same class, time management is difficult during class time as well.

Ms. Vallejos: I think difficulty of having a mixture of EAL and native sometimes affect the pace of the class.

For example, at times she takes time to explain certain things to the whole class, but some students get the idea quickly and try to move on. On the other hand, EAL students may not have grasped the idea yet, and need more time to understand it. Therefore, sometimes she makes groups in the class according to their level and explains things to them separately. As mentioned in section 6.2.2, EAL students are usually in small groups with an EAL teacher.

EAL students’ and non-EAL students’ learning pace is often not the same. It seems difficult to manage different paces in one class.

Teaching grammar
Ms. Vallejos mentioned a specific challenge is teaching grammar to non-EAL and EAL students in English class. In English class, students are usually studying the concepts of texts. However, sometimes they need to work on skills, such as capitalisation, punctuation, and making paragraphs; this is especially important before they start writing an essay. Non-EAL students already have basic knowledge of these skills, but sometimes EAL students need to work on it for first time. It is difficult to work on more complex concepts without the basic knowledge. Thus, she needs to spend quite a lot of time to explain these in the class.

Ms. Vallejos: It’s kind of hard to start up from the basic skills with EAL students because you are sometimes… and you talking about concepts rather than skills (writing and grammar).

However, it is hard for EAL students to complete the task since they are still learning how to read and how to write simple sentences. Therefore Ms. Vallejos emphasized the modifying tasks for EAL students.

**Encouraging EAL students**

Ms. Hayvönen stated that in order to encourage EAL students’ learning, teachers and the school communicate with EAL students and working together on their progress. However, she noticed that classroom activities offer limited opportunities for them to speak and learn English. Therefore, she recommends that EAL students join after school clubs, especially sports clubs. For example, they need to speak English while they are playing football or baseball. Therefore, EAL students will want to communicate with teammates and they will practice English actively.

However, not all students like playing sports and may not want to join an afterschool club. In this case, she recommends going into the city and trying to talk to shopkeepers. Even if students cannot speak Finnish, most Finnish people can speak English. Therefore, students can communicate with them in English. EAL students will realise they can communicate with others in English and make connections with real life. That develops the EAL students’ confidence to speak English and encourages their learning.

Ms. Vallejos: They (EAL students) listen very well, they understand everything mainly or they understand quickly. Even that I had a kid
who came in – not in this school, but in my previous school – very low English. But, he understands very quickly, but speaking to him, he was very shy and so I think the first thing they need to do is speaking.

Ms. Vallejos thinks speaking is the most important skill for EAL students, but she thinks generally second language learners struggle with it. Therefore, she tries to involve EAL students in classroom activities. Additionally, she tries not to let the students who come from the same country sit together, because they may speak in their own language. She does not mind if that happens sometimes and they are discussing what they are learning. However, if that happens too much, she lets them sit separately and asks them to speak English.

Ms. Vallejos also believes that all students will be confident in speaking eventually, because of her experience. During her first year of teaching, the majority of the students were EAL students. She noticed that when she left the school, after 4, 5 years, they were all in the mainstream classroom and preparing for the IB diploma programme.

6.2.4 Who should support EAL students?

The researcher asked the participants who should support EAL students’ learning. In order to answer one of the research questions; to what extent teachers think they can support EAL students learning? The three teachers in the international school in Helsinki stated that every teacher should support EAL students’ learning.

Ms. Green: First of all, myself as a classroom teacher, but also support of parents is very important. And support of our language department in our school, EAL teachers. I think communication between us is very important.

Ms. Green stated that many people have a responsibility for EAL students’ learning, but if they do not communicate properly between them, they cannot support EAL students effectively. Ms. Vallejos stated that sometimes the science teacher and the math teacher tell her that she has to teach in a certain way, because she is the English teacher.

Ms. Vallejos: It’s not my responsibility only as an English teacher to help them be better
English speakers and writers. I think science teachers also have to understand how cater to, or the math teachers also understand how to cater to EAL students. It’s not my or the EAL teachers’ problem.

She believes that repeating in other classes what students learn in English class multiple times is important, such as writing sentences and making presentations. However, she is not sure how much the science teacher is concerned about EAL students’ learning and their difference in ability. She noticed that EAL students are frustrated when they go to science class.

Ms. Vallejos: They (EAL students) don’t understand what is happening in science...

It is because the vocabulary of science is difficult for EAL students that they seem to have trouble. It seems that Ms. Vallejos could not communicate with the science teacher about EAL students and share their problems, or perhaps the science teacher thinks that other teachers or the students themselves should be responsible for learning issues. However, this is based solely on Ms. Vallejos’s comments, and could not be confirmed through an interview with the science teacher.

Ms. Hayvonen also emphasised the importance of collaboration between teachers. Even though a teacher is not a language teacher, they have to teach the language of the subject, even to those who are fluent in English, and even more importantly to those who are not fluent. She stated that EAL students will not progress if there is no collaboration in teaching and sharing of responsibility.

It is important to note that none of the teachers from the interviews are taking training for teaching EAL students regularly. Only Ms. Vallejos had taken training for teaching EAL students before, because it was a part of her teaching course. Other teachers only took training when EAL teachers in the school provided workshops. Teachers more likely have passive attitudes towards obtaining specific and recent knowledge of supporting EAL students. Ms. Green and Ms. Hayvonen are both certified French language teachers. Therefore, they think they know how students acquire a second language. Additionally, Ms. Hayvonen stated that she think she can improve her supporting skills more but now with school’s system, she thinks she can support EAL students effectively now.

The researcher also asked Ms. Vallejos whether she thinks she can support EAL students effectively. She stated that:
Ms. Vallejos: By myself probably not but with the push-in support, pull-out support and different types of assessment then I think yes.

Ms. Vallejos think she can support EAL students with collaborate with EAL teachers and then getting advices from the EAL teachers.

Chapter 7
Discussion of the findings

The research findings are connected to the research questions and the concepts of teacher’s beliefs and self-efficacy theories. Additionally, findings are tied to previous research in this discussion.

7.1 How do teachers think support for EAL students is most effective?

Teachers’ beliefs theories will be drawn on in order to answer one of the research questions, “How do teachers think support for EAL students is most effective?”

The key findings regarding this question were:

- Most of the participant teachers from both schools think that without EAL teachers’ support, they cannot teach EAL students.
- Teachers’ educational backgrounds seem to influence teachers’ attitudes toward EAL students.
- It seems that teachers decide how to support EAL students according to their beliefs and thoughts.
- Most of the participant teachers from both schools do not attend training for EAL
students. They tend to rely on their experiences.

According to the findings, all the teachers from the both international schools in Stockholm and Helsinki think EAL support system from the school is necessary and can have a huge impact on EAL students’ learning. The teachers who have less support from EAL specialist teachers seem to struggle a bit with how to support EAL students. As Murphy (1990 in Carder 2007, p. 381) explained, classroom teachers tend to feel pressure to teach EAL students in the classroom because there is a range of language proficiency in the classroom. Therefore, teachers demand strong EAL support in order to remove their pressure and reduce lesson with normal speed.

In fact, most of the teachers from both schools stated that without EAL teachers’ support, they cannot support EAL students effectively in their classes. Whether it is push-in or pull-out support, the EAL teachers’ support is immensely significant for the EAL students’ learning, because EAL teachers acknowledge second language development and second language acquisition. Moreover, the EAL teachers’ support seems to help alleviate classroom teachers’ pressures. However, it seems like they all agreed with their current school’s EAL support, but it is likely that the school provides support without consulting teachers’ opinions; therefore, they may be following school policy without thinking deeply of other options.

Collaborating with the EAL teachers in order to support EAL students effectively was also one of the common findings from both schools. Kusama-Powell (2004) and Carder (2007) stated that mainstream teachers and EAL teachers need to collaborate in terms of supporting EAL students. According to the findings, most of the teachers collaborate to some extent with EAL teachers. Kusama-Powell (2004) stated that collaborating with EAL teachers can reduce mainstream teachers’ frustration in terms of teaching EAL students in mainstream classroom. From the findings of the research, the teacher more gets support from the EAL teachers seems comfortable and confidence teaching EAL students in the mainstream classroom. On the other hand, the teacher who gets less support seems struggled.

Kusama-Powell (2004) stated that subject teachers and the EAL teachers can use each other’s knowledge, especially when they collaborate to design lessons. Unfortunately, through the interviews, findings did not indicate that teachers were designing lessons in collaboration with EAL teachers. These teachers’ reasons for communicating with EAL teachers could be divided into two reasons. One reason is asking for in-class support and extra support for EAL students in EAL classes. Teachers usually give tasks to the EAL teachers, which EAL students could not complete in the
classroom. Otherwise, teachers give extra vocabulary lists to EAL teachers, which EAL students need to work on in order to follow what other students are doing in the mainstream classroom.

On the other hand, another reason for communication is sharing information and helping integrate the EAL students’ learning. For example, a mainstream classroom teacher and the EAL teacher may share the learning units and the themes between the mainstream classroom and EAL classes.

However, Carder (2007) stated many teachers cannot collaborate due to a lack of time. One of the teachers stated that he wants to collaborate with EAL teachers. However, he cannot get enough EAL teacher support due to the lack of time, and also stated that EAL teachers are busy supporting higher priority subjects.

Kusama-Powell (2007) stated that knowing your students is one important way to support EAL students in the classroom. Most of the teachers seem to know their students, including EAL students. This is especially true for primary teachers, since they spend most of the school day with students. Through the findings, the teachers who know more about their students feel more comfortable to communicate with students. Sears (1998) also stated that teachers need to know students’ backgrounds, culture and previous education system, in order to not misunderstood students’ behaviour. One of the teachers who had been struggling to include EAL students in classroom discussions seems to know very little about students’ different backgrounds, such as their previous schools’ environments and their learning experiences. He does not know what kind of education the EAL students previously had, including if the EAL students were allowed to speak up during the lesson without teachers’ permission, or in what kind of culture the EAL students had grown up.

One interesting finding was that, as Youngs and Youngs (2003) stated, the teachers who have studied something regarding language or anthropology may have more interests and an open attitude for students’ different language and cultural backgrounds. Moreover, the teacher who used to be an EAL student seems more passionate to support EAL students, rather than other teachers. It may be that her vivid memories of being an EAL student create her beliefs and that reflect her teaching attitudes towards EAL students (Nespor 1987).

One of the teachers who studied and taught in a few different countries reflected on learning perspectives specific to certain nationality groups of students, and seems to use these ideas to support her classroom practices. Kusama-Powell (2004) stated that identifying cultural patterns of certain groups of students from certain countries can support understanding students’ cultural backgrounds and avoid mismatching in learning.
practices. However, it could be seen that there is also a risk of stereotyping students when teachers do this. It seems that, as Youngs and Youngs (2003) stated, the teacher who has had contact with diverse cultures is more aware of different cultures, and that may influence his or her approach to support EAL students.

Through the findings, most of the teachers regularly use several teaching strategies in the class, depending on the tasks and students’ English level. Kusama-Powell (2004) stated that having repertories of teaching strategies may help EAL students’ learning in the class.

Teachers seem evaluate their teaching content based on how they think and feel at the time about the tasks and strategies they have chosen and EAL students’ ability. This could indicate that teachers decide teaching strategies based on their beliefs, which is categorised as the “Affective and evaluative aspect” (Nespor 1987).

This evaluation influences their methods of teaching the content. This is because beliefs are made up of more subjective evaluation on personal preferences, rather than knowledge. For example, the teachers in Helsinki repeatedly explained that it would be “unfair” to assess EAL students with the same criteria or on the same tasks with other students, because the teachers think the task would be too difficult for the EAL students. Therefore, they modify the task or change the criteria.

One of the teachers from the Stockholm school thinks EAL students cannot obtain a passing grade because of their low English proficiency. Therefore, the teacher modifies tasks and criteria. The teacher thinks it is necessary, because this teacher thinks EAL students cannot write as good as non-EAL students. Additionally, the same teacher assumes EAL students are still insecure with their level of English. Therefore, this teacher does not ask questions to EAL students during the class. This teacher seems to decide how to support EAL students according to his thoughts and beliefs.

All the participant teachers think it is too hard for EAL students to learn the same things as non-EAL students, which is why they scaffold and differentiate tasks. For example, teachers break down the tasks and give instructions step by step, according to the students’ ability levels. That could be identified as Vygotsky’s ZDP, and scaffolding tasks by giving little pieces of tasks according to the students’ levels.

Some of the teachers think interactions between students are important and that students can learn from each other. Therefore, as Alison and Rehem (2007) stated, they use peer tutoring. Additionally, one teacher thinks providing a comfortable learning environment is important for students. Thus, the teacher uses something similar with what Garcia and Sylvan (2011) recommended: translanguaging. It may indicate that teachers’ beliefs reflect how they choose the way they teach in the classrooms.
Additionally, Pajares (1992) stated that this set of “affective and evaluation” strategies may express how passionately a teacher develops their classroom practices. For example, one of the teachers attends training for EAL often, because the teacher thinks it is important to keep up to date with recent trends in EAL support. This teacher evaluates the training as important and useful and then uses it for her actual class, depending on the EAL students’ ability.

On the other hand, it appears that other teachers evaluate training for EAL as useless. Therefore, these teachers do not attend these trainings often. Clair (1995) stated that teachers tend to think training regarding EAL students is useless because they already have experience and know quite a lot of strategies for teaching EAL students, and rather these teachers tend to demand quick fixes for supporting EAL students from the school. A few of the teachers stated that they know how to cater to EAL students because they have experience.

Moreover, one of the teachers stated that she does not attend training because she is not an EAL teacher. She may regard herself only as a teacher for “regular education students,” as Yoon (2008) stated. Therefore, she might think supporting EAL students is mainly the EAL teachers’ role. It could be predicted that teachers’ beliefs may also affect teachers’ attitudes towards obtaining knowledge for supporting EAL students.

One of the teachers seemed also to evaluate teaching EAL students as mainly a job for EAL teachers. This teacher thinks modifying the tasks takes too much time. Therefore, although the teacher knows it would be better for the EAL students, the teacher does not prepare for them sometimes. The teacher appears to put high priority for grading and attending meetings, and low priority for preparing lessons for EAL students. Affective and evaluative aspects of beliefs seem to influence how teachers prepare their lessons as well.

Teachers described having EAL students in their class as “hard work” and “challenging,” but also “important.” Nespor (1987) stated that teachers tend to create “labels for entities thought to be embodied by the students” in order to explain ambiguous terms. Nespor (1987) termed these types of beliefs as “existential presumption”.

These teachers who described having EAL students in their class as hard work or challenging find difficulties in the wide range of language abilities in a class. Some students learn much quicker than EAL students, and teachers need to spend more time to explain things to EAL students. Therefore, teachers need to modify and prepare for their lessons according to the students’ language levels. It takes time to prepare lessons for several different levels in a single class. That is why teachers stated that it is hard work and challenging.

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Additionally, one teacher who teaches an EAL student who is from China that came to class with no English ability, described supporting the student as challenging. The teacher cannot sit with this EAL student who is from China all the time, because there are other students in the class. Furthermore, EAL support is pull-out at the school, and the support for EAL students, including this EAL student from China, inside the classroom is limited. However, the teacher strongly desires that students are successful, including all EAL students, regardless of their English proficiency. Therefore, this teacher supports them as much as possible. That is why the teacher explained teaching EAL students in her class as challenging.

Another teacher described having EAL students in mainstream classroom as important, due to the learning opportunities that a diverse classroom provides. Students can learn from each other. Additionally, EAL students add different perspectives to her class. The teacher believes having EAL students in the class and learning together is the ideal learning environment for an international school. This teacher’s own educational background and her experience of learning in international schools may be an influence on her viewpoint. Her experience may affect this teacher’s beliefs and her ideal image of a learning environment.

Murphy (2003) stated that mother tongue is important to support EAL students’ learning. Every teacher, from both schools, recognised the importance of mother tongue ability for students who speak languages other than English at home. They stated this was important regardless of being EAL or non-EAL students. Teachers think it is important for students to maintain their mother tongue ability, because students who have solid mother tongue can learn and understand quickly. Additionally, mother tongue is connected to their identity. However, they seem uninformed about the mother tongue classes, which schools provide as afterschool clubs.

Through analysing the findings, many teachers think that EAL teachers’ support is essential to support EAL students. All of the teachers stated that they cannot support EAL students without EAL teachers’ support. Carder (2007) stated that it is because mainstream teachers are feeling pressure when lower English proficiency students are in the mainstream classroom, in that it may affect their teaching pace, they might be looking for quick fix to support EAL students. Therefore, mainstream teachers may demand strong EAL support from their school. Additionally, it seems that teachers’ beliefs reflect how teachers teach and prepare lessons for EAL students. In particular, how teachers choose their teaching strategies and modify tasks and assessing criteria are influenced by underlying beliefs. It seems that these teachers’ beliefs were created by how they feel, think and through experiences and memories.
7.2 To what extent do teachers think they can support EAL students?

Self-efficacy theory enabled to the researcher to answer this research question. Self-efficacy theory was chosen to examine teachers and their individual capacity to successfully support EAL students, through how teachers choose classroom activities, support students to complete the given the tasks, and in teachers’ effort in teaching preparation (Bandura 1997, in Thomason & Niethfeld 2016, p. 361).

The key findings regarding the second research question were:

- Five teachers out of six think they are capable of supporting EAL students’ learning, with EAL teachers’ support.
- One teacher thinks he cannot support EAL students efficiently due to lack of time and lack of EAL teachers’ support.
- All of the participant teachers acknowledged praising students often and trying to encourage students as important strategies.
- All of the participant teachers have positive expectations for EAL students.

From the findings, five teachers out of six think they are capable to support EAL students’ learning effectively, with an EAL teacher’s support, or adequate resources, such as technology and textbooks. Those teachers, who have high self-efficacy, tend to spend time for preparing lessons, for example by modifying the learning activities and tasks. Additionally, one of the high self-efficacy teachers is attending training regarding EAL students regularly in order to update her knowledge. However, regardless of attending or not attending training for EAL students, teachers tend to use similar teaching strategies.

Other high self-efficacy teachers collaborate with EAL teachers often, and sometimes the classroom teacher asks EAL teachers to teach the whole class so the class teacher can check the EAL students’ ability and progress. It could be predicted that this teacher is taking responsibility for students’ progress. Furthermore, when EAL students were not progressing as the school expected, one of the teachers stated that she tried to find out the reasons. Kagan (1992) stated that when teachers think they can support students’ performance, they take more responsibility for students’ success, as well as failure.

All of the teachers recognised EAL students’ progress. Most thought progress
was because of the support from EAL teachers, and collaboration with classroom and subject teachers. The combination of the support inside and outside the classroom supports EAL students’ learning. However, all of the teachers admitted that without EAL teachers’ support, the class teachers could not support EAL students as much as they do now.

On the other hand, one of the teachers from the school in Stockholm thinks he is not capable to support EAL students effectively. This is because of a lack of time, lack of support from EAL teachers and heavy workload. Therefore, this teacher cannot spend much time for preparation and training for EAL students. Low self-efficacy teachers seem unconfident to talk about how to support EAL students and to know about their students much. Additionally, how the school gives status to the teachers’ subject might affect their self-efficacy. The low self-efficacy teacher in Stockholm thinks his subject does not hold a high status in the school. Therefore, there is little support from EAL teachers. Comparing class size and teaching hours between the two international schools, the international school in Stockholm’s class size is bigger than the other. Additionally, secondary teachers’ teaching hours in the international school in Stockholm are longer than teaching hours in Helsinki. This may influence how the teachers feel about their capacity to support EAL students.

However, in this research, finding a link between the class size and teaching hours, and how teachers think about their capacity, were not included in the research aims. Therefore, the link cannot be confirmed. More research for this area seems necessary to determine the link.

The low self-efficacy teacher also noticed EAL students’ progress, and recognised that the students progressed when he paid more attention to them. However, this teacher still has low self-efficacy. Perhaps because he knows that he cannot devote much time for preparing lessons for EAL students.

High self-efficacy teachers think they are more capable to support EAL students’ learning with EAL teachers’ support. On the other hand, low self-efficacy teacher think he cannot support EAL students efficiently due to lack of time, lack of the EAL teacher’s support.

Kagan (1992, p.67 in AsMon & Webb, 1986; Gibson & Dembo, 1984) stated that there are common classroom behaviours among high self-efficacy teachers. That is, they praise students and support students positively. However, both high self-efficacy teachers and a low self-efficacy teacher that participated in this research described praising students often and trying to encourage students. Differences with regards to praise and encouragement were not found through analysing the findings.
Another common attitude among these teachers, regardless of high or low self-efficacy, is that they all believe that EAL students can improve eventually. This might be influenced by their Episodic storage (Nespor 1987). Episodic storage is the teachers’ vivid memories or experiences, which may create their beliefs. All of the teachers recognised and have seen EAL students’ progress. Therefore, they think EAL students are able to leave EAL class one day and join mainstream classrooms. It seems that regardless of their length of teaching experience, all teachers in this research think EAL students can improve their English proficiency. Youngs and Youngs (2003) predicted that when teachers have previous experience of teaching EAL students, they will develop more positive attitudes towards EAL students. From the findings, all of the teachers have experience of having EAL students in their classroom and they all have positive attitudes towards EAL students. Additionally, length of the teaching experience of EAL students in mainstream classroom may not affect their attitudes towards EAL students. It is because that from the findings, it seems that the teachers who have taught 30 years and 6 years have the most positive beliefs towards EAL students.

According to the analysis, the teachers who collaborate and have more support from EAL teachers tend to think they can support EAL students effectively. On the other hand, the teacher who has less support from EAL teachers is more likely think he cannot support EAL students effectively. Therefore, support from the EAL teachers may indicate an influence on teachers’ self-efficacy to support EAL students effectively.

7.3 Methodological reflections

Through the interviews with the teachers who work at the international schools in Stockholm and Helsinki, the researcher could gain insight on teachers’ thoughts and experiences with regards to EAL students. Due to the small number of the participants, these findings will not represent all teachers’ thoughts and experiences. However, the depth of the interviews provides valuable insight.

Although the researcher aimed to examine how teachers think they teach EAL students, how teachers actually behave in the classroom and interact with EAL students remained unclear. This is because the main limitation of this research is that the researcher could not observe classrooms. Therefore, the findings could not prove that what the teachers say, they are actually doing in the classroom. Additionally, how they actually collaborate with EAL teachers and prepare their lessons is unknown apart from their comments. Further research and observation is required to establish how teachers actually teach students.
Chapter 8
Summary and Conclusion

The number of international schools is increasing; in particular, the number of English-medium international schools is growing drastically. The population of students who are learning at international schools is diverse, from native English speaking students to non-native English speaking students, students from the host country and students who are global nomads. For students who are native English speakers, they face fewer problems learning in English at international schools. However, learning at international schools in English is challenging for students who have low English proficiency. Although most international schools provide EAL support for these students, EAL students learn for most of their days inside the mainstream classroom, with non-EAL students, and are taught by classroom teachers who are not EAL specialists.

The aim of this research was to find out how mainstream teachers teach EAL students in their classrooms alongside non-EAL students. Teachers from two international schools were chosen to interview, from one international school in Stockholm and one international school in Helsinki. The research questions were: 1) How do teachers think support for EAL students is most effective? and 2) To what extent do teachers think they can support EAL students? In order to answer the questions, the researcher categorised different approaches preferred by teachers to support EAL students in their classroom. The researcher also tried to identify what kind of teaching strategies teachers use in the classroom in order to support EAL students. Additionally, the researcher tried to find out what teachers think their capacity is to support EAL students.

This research has shown that most of the participant teachers seem to think that EAL teachers’ support plays a huge part in supporting EAL students. Additionally, teachers generally use several teaching strategies according to the EAL students’ English ability and learning needs. It seems that when teachers choose how they support EAL
students, such as choosing learning content, teaching strategies and assessment criteria, their beliefs towards EAL students’ abilities are an influence. For instance, if teachers think students cannot do a certain task with non-EAL students, they modify the task for the EAL students. Some of the beliefs were developed through their educational background, how they feel, think and the experiences and memories they have. For example, the teacher who used to be an EAL student seems more passionate to support EAL students than other teachers.

Through analysing the findings, most of the teachers think they are capable to support EAL students efficiently, with the EAL teachers’ support. Most of the teachers have high self-efficacy in terms of supporting EAL students. These teachers tend to communicate and collaborate with EAL teachers often. Therefore, they are confident to support EAL students. However, among the high self-efficacy teachers, only one teacher attends training for EAL students regularly. It appears that since the teacher has high self-efficacy, she wants to improve her teaching skills and update her knowledge regarding EAL students.

One of the participant teachers thinks he cannot support EAL students efficiently. This teacher feels he has less support from EAL teachers, since his subject has a lower status than English, Science, Humanities and Mathematics. Moreover, he stated that he is too busy and cannot prepare lessons for EAL students.

However, common characteristics were found between high and low self-efficacy teachers. First, they tend to praise students often and try to encourage EAL students. Second, they seem to have positive expectations for EAL students, such as the belief that EAL students can improve their English proficiency and have success in their learning. It could indicate that their experience of having EAL students and seeing the students’ progress may influence their attitudes towards EAL students.

However, the researcher had no chance to observe actual classroom practice. Therefore, it is difficult to confirm that their comments actually reflect their practice. This remains for further long-term research with classroom observation. Additionally, the link between class size and teaching hours, and how teachers describe their teaching capacity is unknown.

Lastly, from the researcher’s point of view, in order to support EAL students efficiently in international schools, every teacher should have the appropriate training to teach EAL students, regardless of their specific teaching subjects. Although communication and collaboration between classroom and EAL teachers is important, and has a huge impact on EAL students’ learning, when a classroom teacher has adequate knowledge for supporting EAL students, he or she does not need to constantly rely on
EAL teachers’ support. Additionally, when both homeroom and EAL teachers have adequate knowledge about supporting EAL students, their support will be more effective and useful.

References


Carder, M. (2006). Bilingualism in International Baccalaureate programmes, with


Appendix A

Interview guide

1. Teacher’s background
   1.1 Which country are you from?
   1.2 Where did you study?
   1.3 How long have you been teaching? And where did you teach before?
   1.4 What did you study in University?
   1.5 Do you have a formal teacher education?
   1.6 Why did you start teaching at an international school?

2. General background
   2.1 What subject and grade do you teach?
   2.2 How many students in your class?
   2.3 How many EALs students and which countries they are from?
   2.4 How many hours do you teach them in a week?
   2.5 Have you ever taught EAL students in mainstream classrooms before? Not an EAL classroom.
   2.6 How many languages can you speak?
   2.7 Do you use any other languages in the class?
      When do you use it?
      How does it affecting teaching?

3. Support for EAL students
   3.1 Does your school have pull-out or push-in support for ESL students?
      What is your opinion about it? (school’s current language policy )
   3.2 What is it like to have EAL students in your class?
   3.3 What techniques or strategies have been successful in your experience with EAL students?
   3.4 What techniques have been unsuccessful?/
3.5 What are the challenges of including EAL students in your classes?
3.6 What are the benefits of including EAL students in your classes?
3.7 Are there any mother tongue classes? (school’s current language policy)
   Does it include during school hour or after school?
   Or with in school day or activities outside of the school?
   Do you think EAL students need to take these classes or focus on English learning?
3.8 What is most important for EAL students to learn?
3.9 How do you support EAL students when they cannot solve problems?
3.10 How much do you know about EAL students’ background?
   Or other mainstream students?
   Do you have any activity or time to know students background?
   What language do they speak at home? What is their culture?
   (knowing about your students)
3.11 Do you collaborate with EAL teachers? Or discuss something about EAL Students? (Teachers collaboration)

4 Self-Efficacy
4.1 Do you think you can support EAL students effectively? (self-efficacy)
   Why do you think so? And how?
4.2 Have you noticed any change over the year in EALs' performance or understanding? Can you give examples?
4.3 Tell me about the training you have received for working with EAL students.
   If not why you did not take these trainings?
4.4 When do you praise EAL students?
4.5 What do you expect EAL students to learn when they leave primary school?
   Is it different from mainstream students?
   How will this help them? What is your role in getting them there?