



UNDERSTANDING CULTURE THROUGH EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Multicultural exercises for the 2007 SOTE Summer School

Rebekah Rousi

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JYVÄSKYLÄ UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES

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Abstract <p>This development project report discusses the process of collaborating with a team from the Social Health and Social Studies (SOTE) at the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences to formulate and implement the Summer School 2007 on Family Health Promotion – Culture and Well-Being. The Summer School will host approximately 60-70 Nursing, Social Work and Physiotherapy students from Finland, Poland, Austria, Denmark, Sweden, the Netherlands and China.</p> <p>Pedagogical emphasis is placed on the development of multicultural activities which are designed to make students aware of both circumstances they will face in their professional lives when encountering patients and when interacting with colleagues from countries other than their own. The exercises are also designed to assist the students' understanding of the multicultural circumstances they face as a part of the International Summer School.</p> <p>Concepts such as culture, multiculturalism, multicultural education and critical pedagogy are discussed. This is followed by an outline and discussion of the planning of the Summer School exercises. As a means of gaining empirical insight into what types of intercultural communication and multicultural awareness activities are available, and how participants have responded to these activities I collected and analysed four in-depth surveys in detail. The results I gained from these surveys highlight that people respond most effectively to activities where participants have the opportunity to experience the emotions and sensations of the 'other'. People also respond well to activities in which their own perspective is mirrored back to them, allowing them to critically evaluate their own reactions and views on specific circumstances. Further, learning styles need to be considered in regards to activities which have the potential to alienate participants such as overt drama/theatre activities. The development project report concludes by summarising thoughts and findings which have arisen through the Summer School collaboration and pedagogical research. Ideas regarding possible outcomes and potential problems of the Summer School exercises are shared. Subsequently the conclusion is left open for the official Summer School Report which will be written following the conclusion of the Summer School in September, 2007.</p>		
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1 Introduction

Culture is public because “meaning is,” and systems of meanings are what produce culture, they are the collective property of a particular people. When “we,” either as researchers or simply as human beings, do not understand the beliefs or actions of persons from a foreign culture, we are acknowledging our “lack of familiarity with the imaginative universe within which their acts are signs.”

(Geertz, 1973, 12-13)

1.1 Development Project Background

This development project concerns a cooperative effort between me, an artist and arts and cultural researcher and the School of Health and Social Studies (SOTE), at the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences (JAMK). The project began in December 2006 and will end in September 2007. The idea behind the development project is to collaborate on the planning and execution of the 5th International Summer School (2007), which focuses on the topic “Family Health Promotion – Culture and Well-Being”. As SOTE is specialised in health and social service education I was asked to contribute to the planning through my expertise in cultural studies.

The tasks I perform in this process include assisting in the programming process, suggesting descriptive and appropriate titles and themes in English and contacting perspective presenters. I am also assisting in the organisation of the social events and my key role as a cultural specialist is to organise warm-up and educational exercises to take place at regular intervals during the week. My first reaction to participating in such a project was to interject in the pedagogical process (the flow of the summer school) with many arts-based exercises. The reason for this reaction is due to my interest in arts education. During my career I would like to develop arts-based techniques which will aid in the learning of other subjects such as maths, science, languages etc. However, quite soon into the process of planning my activities for this project, in conjunction with learning more about the attendants of the Summer School and the presentation themes, I

realised that multicultural-based activities combined with a ‘light’¹ drama approach would be effective.

These multicultural-based activities have stemmed from the Summer School’s themes which include: Health and well-being of minority groups with the focus of the Roma population in Romania and Finland; Well-being of immigrants and refugees in Utrecht and Jyväskylä; Finnish elderly population Mälardalen, Sweden; High quality elderly care in Denmark; Old age in China; and children’s health, well-being and healing in Finland. Therefore, the cultural side of the Summer School is focused towards the social and community based definition of culture, rather than the arts-based definition. In addition to a multicultural list of themes, the participants and organisers of the Summer School have originated from all over Europe including China. This means that the activities I am developing are relevant for both inter-Summer School relations as well as to future professional situations the students will find themselves in while working in the health and social work fields.

1.2 Jyväskylä University of Applied Science’s International Strategies

In accordance with the Bologna Declaration that was implemented in Finland in August 2005, Finland universities and other educational institutes have taken active steps towards internationalisation through increasing accessibility and comparability of educational programmes (Ministry of Education, 2005). With the introduction of the ECTS system creating a standardised grading system throughout European participating countries and implementation of the Diploma Supplement, to enable easy reading of qualifications (Ministry of Education, 2003), giant structural steps have taken place to encourage international mobility. On a more pedagogical and humanistic specific level the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences (JAMK) has publicised and internalised strategies to encourage international cooperation.

Great emphasis is placed on international networking in terms of increasing international cooperation, making JAMK more internationally known on a student level, and in terms of broadening knowledge resources (Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences, 2007b). The aim of JAMK’s international strategy is to strengthen the institution’s competitive edge through encouraging regional and international

¹ In this instance ‘light’ drama refers to role plays and interactive activities. It is still a form of art-based pedagogical techniques, however it shifts the focus away from a material ‘product’ outcome (such as drawings or sculptures) and more towards an interactive and ‘intangible’ focus on process and emotions.

involvement in working life. International activities are also targeted towards: “strengthening the appeal and vitality of the region” (Central Finland and Finland in general); increasing “international research and development activities”; furthering the “internationalisation of studies and students”; and enhancing staff skills (Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences, 2004).

The Summer School programme fits neatly into these institutional strategies as a component of SOTE international professional competencies, and the research and development network. This is what makes the Summer School and all the pedagogical development that is a part of it so crucial for the progression of JAMK’s international relations. The project report gives detail about the Summer School, its history and processes of international education from Chapter 2 to Chapter 4.

1.3 Report Structure

The structure of this report is designed to first establish the context of my development project through introducing the reader to the Summer School, which is done in Chapter 2. In Chapter 2 I also introduce the reader briefly to David Kolb’s concept of Experiential Learning as this has provided a key pedagogical basis for all of the Summer School exercises, including a major collaboratively planned observational exercise that I am developing with Irmeli Katainen. Chapter 3 of the report begins by outlining concepts of multiculturalism and international education. The focus of this section is to make the reader aware of issues that the students face while learning within a multicultural environment, in addition to what they will experience when entering working life. The section on ‘culture, health and social care’ draws on the origins of the Summer School theme. This section discusses previous research addressed in Cecil G Helman’s (1998) book *Culture, Health and Illness* (3rd Edition) and highlights the relevance of cultural emphasis in the current arena of health and social care. The section of ‘International education for culture and well-being’ specifically focuses on current educational methods and initiatives which operate on a similar level to the Summer School Project. Further, considering the multicultural background of students it will serve as an introduction to how the students of this international Summer School are being included in the planning process. Chapter 3 also discusses how the multicultural issues considered in the development of the Summer School are linked to my own

multicultural background and the way that the development project fits in with my professional field of art and background in cultural studies and drama therapy.

Chapter 4 centres on the pedagogical methods that will be employed throughout the duration of the Summer School. This chapter explains the research collection and development process that I am undertaking during the planning stages of the Summer School. The methods and exercises that are used at the Summer School are described and reasons are given for the selection of these exercises. As this report is varied to other development projects in that it will be submitted before the implementation, I have gone to lengths to collect empirical experience and other material related to the exercises. Thus, Chapter 5 discusses the developmental process in reference to a workshop held at JAMK April 10th, 2007, where I implemented some of the Summer School exercises. Following this, four detailed surveys of fellow teaching students' past experiences are carefully analysed and summarised. These surveys are used to gather information about the students' personal experiences and opinions towards certain exercises and experiences. In addition, I am using the results as an indicator of aspects to consider when implementing my own exercises.

In the conclusion I seek to summarise the project to this point and discuss my findings and observations. As a second reporting process will be carried out in September 2007 I will take the opportunity at this stage to speculate some of the possibilities that may eventuate during the course of the Summer School.

2 School for Health and Social Studies Summer School

2.1 Introduction to the Summer School

The Summer School 2007, “Family Health Promotion – Culture and Well-being” is the fifth of its kind and the third to be held here in Jyväskylä. It is a cooperative effort between mainly the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences in Finland, Poznan University in Poland and Nordplus (a new participant). Other European universities from the Netherlands, Austria, Sweden and Denmark are also regular participants. This year presents the first in which members of the Chinese professional health care and academic community will be participating. The aim of the Summer School is to provide an opportunity for staff, researchers and undergraduate students in the fields of social and health care to gather and share ideas on the latest issues, developments and research topics in the field of social and health care. The school provides an international platform for comparison, analysis, problem-solving and networking. It is one of many efforts that the Finnish education system is making to contribute to the strengthening of a globally based learning community.

The duration of the Summer School is one week (September 10th-14th) in which the programme combines presentations from academic staff, health care and social work professionals and students. There is one day allocated specifically for field trips for Bachelor students and professional development for academic staff and Masters students. The field trips will allow the Bachelor students insight into the workings of Finnish health care, elderly care and rehabilitation institutions through guided tours and organised activities. The professional development session for academic staff and Masters students will offer the participants presentations on the challenges in health and social care management, as well as presentations by practitioners in fields of social and health care. This session will also be used to approach issues of the current situation for skilled workforce and will give an overview of current research and development activities. Between the days there will be a range of evening activities such as the Get Together Party and the Jyväskylä City Reception, and a Closing Activities Session. It is my responsibility, in addition to the between session activities, to organise activities for the Get Together Party and Closing Activities Session that will assist the participants’ networking process and create an inviting, easy-going atmosphere.

2.2 History of the Summer School

The first Summer School was organised in Jyväskylä in 2002 as a cooperative discussion forum. The Summer School project began as an international pedagogical research and development strategy. As a result of a bi-lateral agreement between the University of Poznan in Poland and JAMK, a range of joint projects were proposed. Stemming from an international ‘brainstorming’ process, several concrete output modes were decided upon, which included intensive courses, research and development publications, conferences and seminars. Further, as a means of bridging national boundaries and long distances, in addition to incorporating new technology, a form of e-learning module was included in the outcomes. Regional service providers in Poznan and Jyväskylä were listed to indicate the types of parties that would be effected by and would affect considerations made towards multi-professional educational factors as well as issues which influence working life. The services listed included local parishes, support staff and carers, schools, kindergartens, peer support services, social and health care institutions and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). Organisers of the international strategy also developed the idea of an online, yet locally-oriented Web-based Learning and Information Centre for local health and social care services.

At the heart of the international brainstorming models [Figure 1] are two matters, firstly “Elderly in need of home care” and secondly “Families with disabled children”. Surrounding these matters are four distinct categories: Health promotion (enhancing functional capacity and prevention of social exclusion); Family support and empowerment; Development of assessment methods; and Development of concrete exercises. Presumably, this is the starting point for the lay-out of the web-based support services, but this has also provided an effective map for the way that the Summer School Project is being carried out. Therefore, the aim of the project is to address the promotion of family well-being in the Poznan and Jyväskylä areas during 2007. The aim of the Summer School is to focus on aging populations and children who are in danger of displacement and exclusion. The project is advertised, conducted and reported in English. Informational material for the Summer School 2007 is available in both English and Finnish.

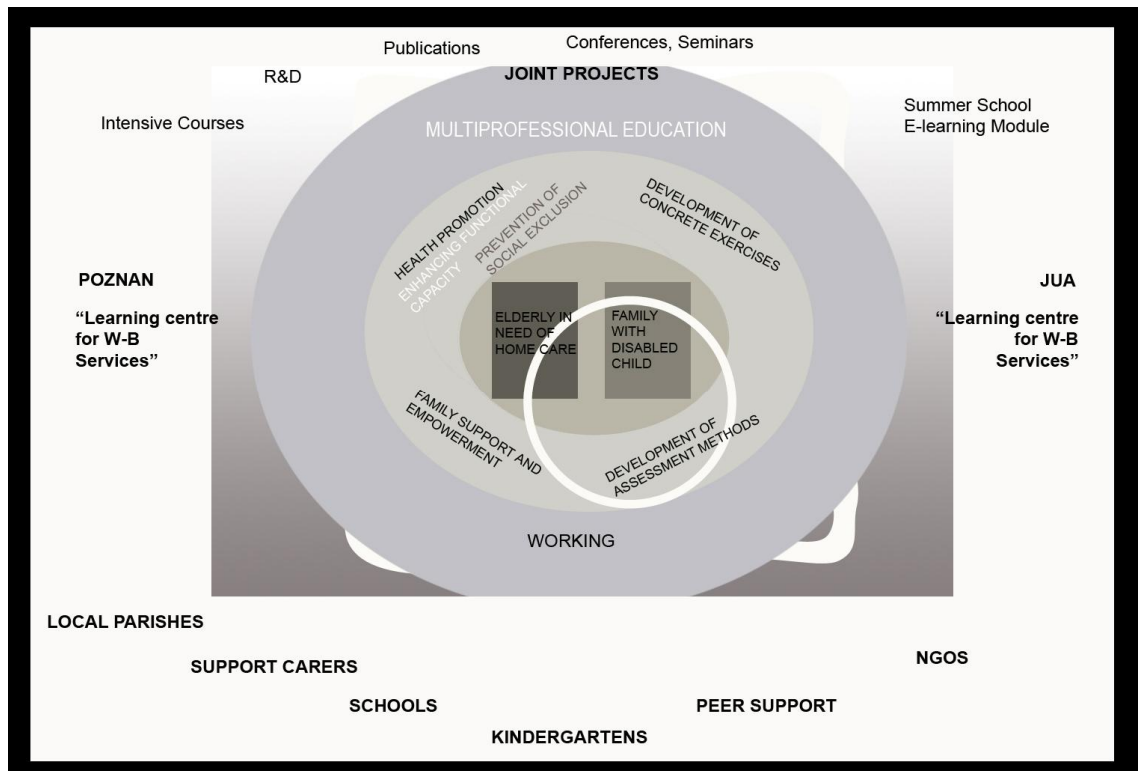


Fig. 1 International Project Brainstorming

2.3 Summer School’s Pedagogical Strategies

While the format of the Summer School is orientated towards a conference style format of presentations, seminars and workshops, the project planning staff have been constantly mindful of pedagogical processes. David Kolb’s (1984) Experiential Learning Theory model (ELT) is the grounding for our selection of daily planning, exercise methods and assignment modes. Remaining conscious of the ELT model we are trying to “touch all bases” (Businessballs.com, 2003-2006) through formulating a learning system which incorporates Kolb’s (1984) two, four stage cycles:

Cycle One

- 1 Concrete experience (CE)
- 2 Reflective observation (RO)
- 3 Abstract conceptualisation (AC)
- 4 Active experimentation (AE)

Cycle two represents the ways in which elements of these cycles can be combined to assist in catering for different learning styles.

Cycle Two

- 1 Diverging (CE/RO)
- 2 Assimilating (AC/RO)
- 3 Converging (AC/AE)
- 4 Accommodating (CE/AE)

For example, during the greater part of the Summer School where the students are expected to attend presentations they are asked to keep a reflective learning log. This type of learning process corresponds with Kolb's Cycle Two's Assimilating, whereby Abstract Conceptualisation (theory) is combined with Reflective Observation (learning log). Through implementing the multicultural oriented exercises during the breaks in between presentations we are corresponding with the Accommodating stage of Cycle two, whereby Concrete Experience (the experience of working with students and staff from other cultures) and Active Experimentation (trying out scenarios and creating narratives) are designed to establish first person responses to subject matter. The city observation exercise can be seen as the Diverging stage of Cycle Two, as students are encouraged to view an actual, functioning environment (something that health and safety inspectors do on a daily basis) and they are also asked to reflect and critique these spaces. Finally, the implementation of the second part of the city observation project, the online learning and discussion forum can possibly be seen as a convergence of all of the stages of Cycle One. I say this in regards to the fact that due to the blended-learning² characteristic of this project, students are given the opportunity to theorise their observations of active experimentation and concrete experience online.

² I use the term "blended-learning" referring to the process of combining online methods with face-to-face pedagogical methods. Thus, there is a blending of educational experiences through traditional and contemporary technologies. For more information on blended-learning please see: <http://www.learningcircuits.org/2002/aug2002/valiathan.html>

3 Multiculturalism, international education and the arts

3.1 Multiculturalism and international education

In order to begin the discussion on multiculturalism (multi = many, culturalism), a concept of culture must first be attained. As discussed in the introduction, the version of culture that this report concentrates on is, not just the practice of the arts (dance, music, visual arts etc.), but the all encompassing form of culture. The form of culture in question was defined in 1871 by E B Taylor as the “complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man [sic.] as a member of society” (cited in Helman, 1998, 2). Another definition of culture that applies to the development project context is that of the “[s]ystems of shared ideas, systems of concepts and rules and meanings that underlie and are expressed in the ways that human beings live” (ibid., 2). In this sense, cultures affect the world views of individuals and how these individuals react to certain situations.

To deepen our understanding of culture, when considering it in the context of pedagogical development, Jenks (1993) might be viewed for his four models of culture. These are: 1) that culture is a cerebral and cognitive category that is a part of an individual’s mental state; 2) that culture is an embodied and collective category (as repeatedly discussed in this report) which impacts the intellectual and moral development of a society; 3) that culture is a descriptive category encompassing a collective body and referring to esoteric symbolism and production of a society; and 4) that culture is a social category including the entire way of life of a collective (cited in Hall & Toll, 1999, 1).

Often cultural groups are defined in terms of national boundaries i.e. Finns, Swedes, Australians, yet, culture may also include gender, sexuality, socio-economic status etc. In the Summer School project culture may be defined in terms of nation and minority groups (much emphasis is placed on Roma communities in Europe), but also age groups are taken into consideration (children and the elderly). With this in mind, ‘multi-culturalism’ refers to many cultures in the same context.

Despite the repetitive jargon that current policy papers and academic texts describe in terms of an increasingly globalised society created by communication

technologies such as the internet, it must be said that globalisation and internationalisation are not new concepts. In fact, long before the European Enlightenment and throughout the history of human beings, immigration has been a compulsory component of our existence. Whether it was for seasonal food cycles, trading or breeding purposes, communities comprising various languages, traditions and beliefs have constantly been crossing paths, interacting and merging. Possibly what has been relatively recent within European-based cultures after the age of modernity is the acknowledgement of relative cultural systems and their relevance in respective contexts. Saying this, in agreement with Paul Gorski (2000) I feel that there is still a long way to go before particularly post-colonial (Anglo-Celtic; Saxon) European cultural groups fully recognise and understand the unequal transactions which occur in everyday and academic life³.

Multiculturalism has been a much contested concept over recent decades in the discipline of post-colonial theory. Authors such as Homi Bhabha, Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak and Bill Ashcroft, Helen Tiffin and Anthony Griffiths have discussed the tokenistic use in which the term ‘multiculturalism’ has been applied. For example, a governmental form of multiculturalism has been likened to a food hall, wherein a majority of consumers belong to a dominant cultural community, they arrive at the food hall, purchase some Chinese, Indian or Italian food, eat it within their dominant cultural framework (i.e. in the ‘hyperreal’⁴ context of an airconditioned shopping mall) and go home. This is an example of a sampling approach to multiculturalism, whereby products ‘things’ from alternate cultures are chosen and applied according to the dominant culture’s norms and values, yet without any understanding or background knowledge of the cultures which are being sampled. However, in the context of this project and project report, ‘multicultural’ and ‘multiculturalism’ are being used to describe a group of learners who literally represent many cultures. The term ‘international education’ is being applied due to the fact that learners have travelled across national boundaries. In other words, a significant about of the participating staff and students are studying in national boundaries other than their own.

In realising this, subsequently a complex web of factors needs to be considered. The first, most apparent factor is that students will be arriving from countries such as

³ Richard Dyer (1997) *White* addresses the specificity of the ‘white’ position, claiming that in order to address inequality we must first make ‘whiteness’ odd (or coloured).

⁴ See Jean Baudrillard

Poland, Romania, Austria, China and the Netherlands, among others, to an area in Central Finland. Not only will they be surrounded by many Finnish people, customs, the Finnish language and food, but they will also be listening to a predominantly Finnish-based programme of presentations, delivering the Finnish societal viewpoints on health and social care of children and the elderly. Apart from the fact that the Summer School is aimed at sharing perspectives and overcoming cultural boundaries, the international students and academics will be faced with an overriding system of Finnish norms and values in terms of areas such as hygiene, care protocol and social health. Further, all participants of the Summer School will be required to communicate and study in English. This is a second or third language to possibly everyone taking part in the Summer School, with the exception of me. Therefore, not only is there the possibility of misunderstandings on a cultural level, but we may also expect to experience difficulties in understanding and expressing on a linguistic level.

3.2 Culture, health and social care

If culture is considered to be a social systemic ‘whole’ then it should not come as a surprise that practices of health and social care fall inside this whole. Health may include both physiological and psychological care facets. Social care includes consideration for the individual’s interactions and relationship to their social environment. Social care often incorporates the services of social workers, who are designated to identify, evaluate and intervene in less functional situations. ‘Social care’ is defined by the English Department of Health (2007) as a wide field of services which include caring for people in the home and institutions (elderly and disabled). Following on from the broad terms of multiculturalism and internationalism in the educational context, practitioners in the field of social and health care must be aware of imminent issues that will be faced when working with patients from varying cultural backgrounds. With increasing awareness of cultural differences within contemporary ‘Western’ societies it should not be surprising that various people in the same population perceive illness, pain and medical treatment differently.

One of these concepts which holds particular significance for me is pain. Helman (1998) points out that pain is not just physiological but also social and psychological. It is believed that there is an ‘original’ (involuntary) sensation – the universal one – where one feels pain as a response to tissue damage or bodily alterations. Then there is the

‘pain behaviour’ (voluntary reaction), in which one chooses to react to the pain – not universally, but more socially and culturally specific. In some cultures such as those pertaining to Anglo-Saxon origins, restraint from expressing pain, particularly among men is predominant (Helman, 1998). Whereas, a study in 1952 showed that members of Italian and Jewish communities seemed to be more emotional when responding to pain (Zborowski, cited in Helman, 1998). Either way, in order to gain the most attention to their disorder, people will react in the way that is socially recognisable by their cultural groups. The topic of pain was one that a colleague on the Summer School project had suggested in terms of inclusion in the presentation programme. However, as a response to the negotiation process between academics and schools at the University of Applied Sciences, the topic was dropped. This identifies a mismatch in the project orientation of elderly and children’s issues. It also suggests that the topic was not highly favoured cross-disciplinarily. But this is still an issue that health care professionals and social carers cannot ignore when evaluating the physiology of their patients.

Another topic that has come to mind in regards to culture, health and social care is that of institutionalised members of minority groups. An episode I remember from my own experience is where an elderly Italian woman was living in a dementia ward of a nursing home in Western Australia. Due to her condition she could no longer speak English. Some members of staff spoke the bare minimum of Italian but it was not enough to clearly understand her, or to be understood by her. Further, she seemed afraid of everyone and their habits. Language was possibly the most difficult obstacle, but so were everyday routines such as moving to the kitchen table to eat. The woman was terrified although she had lived in the residence for quite sometime. In my opinion better education and understanding of as many cultural ‘world views’ as possible (combined with language learning) will assist in the development of better, more effective, social and health care.

3.3 International education for culture and well-being

In order to most effectively learn about cultures other than our own, individuals should learn *from* those cultures. I say this not in terms of anthropologically observing ‘other’ cultures as Helman (1998) suggests, but through interaction and lived experience – i.e. getting to learn how to understand the world from as close to an-other’s position as possible (Geertz, 1973). Authors such as Mark Twain (1894) suggest that one is

never able to fully understand or come into an-‘other’ culture entirely in terms of emotions, patriotism and world view. I believe that learning environments such as the Summer School which allow students to live abroad for a certain period of time and encourage them to interact with people from various cultures, in another language, at least help individuals come nearer to understanding each other. This is not to say that one week is all an individual needs to come to understand other cultures, but it is a start, or an introduction to understanding.

The value of international cooperation has been discussed constantly over the last four decades. One may find abundant material relating to international courses on the role of culture in health and social care throughout library catalogues and the internet (i.e. UNESCO). International.Ed (n.d.) states that international education is important because:

- Globalisation creates a demand for an internationally competent workforce.
- In order to obtain “good” jobs, individuals need new skills and competencies – careers in business, health care, government and law enforcement etc. require global knowledge and skills.
- National and human security issues need to be solved – problems such as HIV/AIDS, terrorism, poverty and global warming demand that individuals are familiar with other world regions, cultures and languages.
- Increased diversity in the classroom, workplace and community means that in order to integrate and accommodate new citizens, everyone needs to be involved.

As mentioned earlier, one of the key characteristics of international education is to put oneself in another’s (i.e. cultural minority’s) position through either being physically located in a country or a culture other than one’s own. It is also achieved through placing oneself in a position of another (i.e. linguistic minority) through the necessity of speaking a language other than one’s native language. While, the environment generated by an international summer school overall does not specifically emphasise the characteristic of needing to negotiate one’s own culture to communicate and be in contact with others, students may become more aware of their own cultural and linguistic tendencies when having to adjust them to the international environment. Seelye (1996) describes how this form of adjusting perspective and taking on the role of another “is a further step away from perceiving the reality of the situation solely as *you*

see it” (110). Therefore, all students, whether Finnish or not Finnish will be experiencing a sense of international education.

The role of international education might also be interpreted quite literally as an education where individuals and groups from different nations come together to study. Most importantly, the role of an international school and international education (even if online) is to establish a global community, thus creating a social and learning network for educators and students (Jobson, 2001, 1). In this respect international education environments offer opportunities for participants to expand intellectual networks — the more contacts and friends we have over all, the more access we have to valuable information. Quite simply put, one may also view the international educational environment as a means through which participants have the opportunity to establish contacts and friends from other geographical locations and various cultures. These environments also give participants the opportunities to find out about the situation, for example in the social and health care sectors in respective countries. They even provide opportunities for participants to directly ask those from other cultures, how to communicate with patients and clients in various situations. Thus, particularly the Summer School 2007 will afford the opportunity for example, Finnish participants to ask for example the Chinese healthcare professionals what medical procedures and hospital visits mean to Chinese patients to better understand perceptive processes or procedures and hierarchies that Chinese patients and clients in Finland might anticipate. Similarly, the process works both ways, Chinese healthcare professionals might ask the same questions, or Finnish participants planning on travelling to or working in China will have opportunities to ask questions.

Overall, international education in this situation for the purpose of developing participants’ understanding of culture and well-being provides the students with opportunities to expand their professional and information networks. It also allows them the opportunity to experience what it is like to be in the position of someone outside their home country, operating in a language other than their own. In addition it provides them with the opportunity to gain immediate, first-hand feedback regarding queries and issues that the practitioners face, or will face, when dealing with patients from differing backgrounds in the future.

3.4 Multicultural Education – considering the students

In the introduction to *Multicultural Education, Critical Pedagogy, and the Politics of Difference*, Sleeter and McLaren (1995, 11) trace multicultural education as well as critical pedagogy, back to specific social struggles such as the Civil Rights movement in the United States of America. Multicultural education is significant in its definition in light of other terms such as “multiethnic education”, as the term “multicultural education” not only accounts for ethnic diversity amongst students, but also diversity in terms of gender, sexuality, age and other abilities⁵ (Sleeter & McLaren, 1995, 12). This is especially a core theme in terms of subject matter of the Summer School whereby separate days are allocated for the presentations of issues relating to age (i.e. the days for children and the elderly) and family (which includes presentations on women’s issues and hopefully will develop into discussions on sexuality). Sleeter and McLaren (1995) claim that multicultural education and critical pedagogy aim at bringing:

“into the arena of schooling insurgent, resistant, and insurrectional modes of interpretation and classroom practices which set out to imperil the familiar, to contest the legitimating norms of mainstream cultural life, and to render problematic the common discursive frames and regimes upon which “proper” behaviour, comportment, and social interaction are premised.”

(Sleeter & McLaren, 1995, 7)

I am using critical pedagogy in tangent with the term multicultural education, in order to question the very framework and context in which the Summer School is taking place. Through my approach I am attempting to counter the traps of ‘multiculturalism’ highlighted by post-colonial theorists — i.e. such as seeing culture as merely symbolic or physical, or equating non-Western cultures as ‘Other’, exotic or primitive. The sampling approach to multicultural education has a long history amongst European originated (White) teachers. Derman-Sparkes (1989) classifies this as a “tourist” approach to multicultural education, similar to the food hall argument. Only in the “tourist” instance, the students from the dominant cultural background are given a comfortable tourist-like glimpse at ‘other’ cultures in the discourse and perspective of their own. In saying this, it is meant that in multicultural education, there has been a

⁵ I choose to use the term ‘other abilities’ rather than disabilities, as disabilities carries the negative connotation of not being able to achieve as much as the so-called mainstream.

tendency that students originating from particularly non-European or non-Western backgrounds have needed to come more than half way in their pursuit of integration into the classroom environment (Derman-Sparkes, cited in Sleeter & McLaren, 1995, 13). This means that in addition to learning the dominant language to communicate, students from non-Western cultures have also needed to behave and seemingly adopt the ideas of the dominant cultural framework, thus neglecting their own values and de-validating their own cultural backgrounds to be accepted into the dominant one.

As mentioned above, the pedagogical circumstances of the Summer School and the ways in which culture and multiculturalism are dealt with are complex. This is due to the fact that in addition to students purely learning about what to be aware of and how to work with minorities in the health and social care fields of their home countries, the students are also learning in the dominant Finnish (Western) cultural structure and in the English language of instruction. Thus, when considering the formulation of the exercises, Sleeter and McLaren's description of how multicultural education aims to disrupt and question the dominant frameworks will be instrumental. For example, while Finland has had a long history of being dominated by its neighbouring countries (Sweden and Russia), on a global scale, it is also apart of the Western paradigm in terms of thoughts, systems, beliefs and technology. Further, the English language has a long history as a tool for colonisation, where dominated indigenous peoples around the world were forced to learn English⁶. While these days English is quite useful in being used as an international language of business, connecting people globally, it is still impossible to deny that there are cultural power structures and hierarchies at play. The use of the English language certainly does not occur on equal grounds.

The students participating from not only countries outside of Finland, but from Finland themselves need to be able to see how their own experiences and perceptions of culture are remarkable and unique. In addition, students' perceptions of 'centre' (particularly the European centre) or the 'norm' should be destabilised and questioned. This is especially pertinent considering that many of the presentation topics are focused around themes such as the Roma communities in Finland, the Netherlands and Romania. Due to the historically de-based perception of Roma cultures, and their circumstances as only ever being known as a mobile minority, there is always a tendency for students and professionals to view these people as immigrants, 'nomads'

⁶ For more information on the use of English to dominate please see:
<http://www.english.emory.edu/Bahri/Language.html>

and strangers amongst the dominant. Thus, they are viewed as something different, rather than as a part of the complex whole of Finnish, Dutch and Romanian societies. Possibly also due to policies and attitudes particularly here in Finland which allow individuals of Roma communities to dress in traditional costume, members of the Roma community can readily be identified amongst members of a predominant Western, Finnish population. There is rarely a moment when members of a dominant culture, living inside their own cultural framework identify their own traditions, habits and beliefs as odd as this is what is familiar to them (Parekh, 1986, 23-24).

For this reason, the pedagogical approach I have adopted towards devising the activities is an experiential one. The activities are physical, communicational and intellectual and are focused on allowing the students to experience scenarios and moments when they are aware of their linguistic limitations and conscious of the fact that their own norms do not apply to everyone.

3.5 My multicultural background and experience in arts and well-being

I was born and raised in Adelaide, South Australia. I am approximately seventh generation Australian, which means that my family(s) who arrived in Australia from places such as the Shetland Islands, Scotland, Ireland, England and Cornwall did so over one hundred and ten years ago. Apart from my Cornish relatives who most recently came to Australia (around the 1890s), my family has not spoken any language other than English in the last two hundred years. However, I was fortunate enough to spend my childhood living in a lower socio-economic suburb where one could find people from many different nationalities and cultural backgrounds such as Australian Indigenous peoples, people from Italy, China, Vietnam, Czechoslovakia (now the Czech Republic), Scotland, Syria and Greece — and this was just down my end of the neighbourhood street. So ethnic diversity has always been a normal part of life to me, and even during the early stages of my life I identified very closely with our Indigenous Australian neighbours (and close family friends). In addition, as a result of working at a summer camp in the United States at the age of twenty, I met my Finnish husband with whom I have lived in Sweden, Australia and now Finland. Through these experiences I realise that even cultures with very similar systems and ideologies (Finland and Australia have been very closely related through their Western social democratic

systems) present obstacles that people need to overcome to develop lasting and fulfilling relationships. These obstacles for my husband and I have mainly related to language, gender relations⁷ and geography.

As an adult, my practice as an artist and researcher in the arts and cultural fields has extensively concentrated on issues dealing with power imbalance and exploitation of Australian Indigenous artists and communities in general. Cultural consumption of Indigenous Australian art, through visiting art exhibitions and closely studying painting and photographs such as those by Gordon Bennett, Gordon Hookey, Vernon Ah Kee and Tracey Moffatt, has deepened my understanding of injustice and discrimination that Indigenous Australia peoples have faced not only in the past but in the present. Thus, art serves as a tool for me and many others, as it informs us, the public, on matters regarding current issues and things to be mindful of when considering history and cross-cultural relations. Artworks of all shapes, sizes and forms, including architecture, are documents. Just like books, they tell about social movements, dominant cultural ideologies and cultural values at any given time. This is what my teaching practice course *Identity in the Urban Landscape – Architecture in Finnish Cities* focused on.

The arts however, are not simply ready-made documents, but are means of communication through which anyone may express themselves. Art of all forms (visual art, drama, dance, creative writing and music etc.) is used in education and in various fields of therapy as it offers students and other participants the opportunity to communicate and express themselves without reliance on verbally (or written) linguistically bound communication. Like international education, art in education is currently a research area that is on the significant increase in light of rapid globalisation. Researchers and practitioners such as Tintti Karppinen, a Drama teacher specialised in socio-drama, have worked specifically on developing discussion and techniques for using the arts in order to ease intercultural educational processes and generate a peaceful coexistence between immigrants, refugees and indigenous cultures. Karppinen (2003) sees art as playing “the most valuable and effective role in the education, when handling such important, but non-measurable elements of life as love, fear, friendship, desire, dreams, etc.” (1). Thus, one might say that the arts provides the experiential environment in which educators and students do not just talk about systematic physical

⁷ In Australia it is still quite common for women to choose to be housewives, only returning to work once the children are of school age. Thus, men in many circumstances are still seen as the prime ‘bread-winners’ of the family.

processes of multiculturalism, but they actually feel these through simulated and created scenarios.

In planning the activities for the Summer School I am quite weary of introducing exercises that will intimidate or alienate participants (please see my developmental analysis of surveys in Chapter 4). That is why I will not be using terms such as art and drama when I am introducing the activities as they carry heavy connotations to the fine arts (a traditionally exclusive area of consumption). Rather, I will call them short exercises. In stating this however, as an artist, I feel that experiential learning through simulations and interactive exercises are artistic processes, as students are engaged in imagining, realising and communicating their perceptions of real life scenarios⁸. The reason why I theoretically mention arts in education and art education is for the fact that even when viewing the theoretical material of intercultural communication and experiential exercises all of them appear to be based on one art form or another. For example, one of the most common exercises introduced to groups of intercultural communication students is the “Zebra’s Stripes” exercise by Ann and Charles Hubbard (cited in Seelye, 1996)⁹. In this exercise students need to suggest what colour the zebra’s stripes are [figure 2]. This is an interpretive art reading exercise.



Fig. 2. *The Zebra’s Stripes*, Hubbard, A. & C. (1996)

⁸ On this note, when looking at art one may say that photo real oil paintings are always abstract, as they are painted from the perspective of the artist.

⁹ University of Turku scholar Pia Lindgren has written a Licentiate thesis titled “*What Colour Are the Zebra’s Stripes?*” *Business Bachelor Students’ Perceptions of Teaching and Learning Intercultural Communication - Research Reports from Turku Polytechnic 16* (2005) which discusses the need for more studies focusing on intercultural communication. Lindgren’s study also suggests that intercultural communication should be a separate course or entire course module, held in multicultural groups (thus in English) and that teaching should be learner and culture-centred.

Other activities such as simulations and role plays rely on the animated involvement of the participants, thus, degrees of dramatic activity to successfully *feel* what it is like to be confronted by a situation in which people from more than one culture share experience a clash of perspectives. Thus, 'mild' forms of drama also help individuals practice problem solving scenarios, and how to find solutions to tricky situations. Finally, creative writing comes into play in the forms of word association games and brainstorming. Although full-length stories and poetry might not be created, what are created are individual and group interpretation of educational contents and new narratives created through the re-formulation of materials. Given the time dimension that I need to consider when implementing the Summer School exercises, I find that perceiving art education in this way helps eliminate the need to use other materials such as paints and clay, as we will be creating a mental collage of our experiences.

4 Pedagogical Methods

4.1 Method research, collection and development process

My pedagogical responsibility for the Summer School is to devise seven short (five minute) activities to be undertaken during academic presentations and two longer activities for the opening and closing parties. I am also working in collaboration with Irmeli Katainen to create a blended-learning style observation exercise which will expand the Summer School onto the streets of Jyväskylä and the World Wide Web. As a new-comer to teaching and the educational sciences, I found starting the method research quite difficult. I have studied art as well as drama and drama therapy, and have wanted to find new methods along these lines to introduce to the participants of the Summer School. Through these methods I wanted to focus on developing Summer School participants' understanding of culture, multiculturalism and various sociological barriers that they might come across when working in their professional environment. The exercises that I have been acquainted with in the past have generally been physically-based and trust-oriented. While they are effective for developing group dynamics I feel that they often ignore the factors that may be the cause of, for example a lack of trust, or difficulty in communicating.

Elliott, Adams, and Sockalingam (1999, n.p.) suggest that when difficulties in group or interpersonal communication occur, the reason seems not to lie in the differences in cultural groups per se, but more in the lack of understanding of these differences. The greatest problems through not understanding the differences arise when modes of 'breach of trust' in various ethnic systems are not identified. In relation to this, the 'restoration of trust' also must be learned. Elliott et al (1999) are particularly referring to intercultural communication between minority and majority groups in the United States. Based on many of the themes that will be presented at the Summer School, the identification of this problem is particularly relevant when considering discussions of health and social care treatment of refugees and minorities in Finland and throughout Europe. But mostly, when dealing within our own intercultural environment of the Summer School we must be particularly weary of not so much differences in customs and traditions, but differences in beliefs and behaviour. This is why I feel it necessary to develop group exercises that identify areas which are sensitive to other

peoples' emotions (whether acting personally, or as a representative of their culture). Thus, rather than treating the international group as a homogenous cluster, I am hoping that the following exercises will give insight into group members' sensitivities, which will hopefully also give rise to consideration for the disposition of future patients and colleagues that the participants will encounter in the future.

Another important aspect to mention at this stage is the expectations individuals have when considering 'other' cultures. A friend from the International Teacher Education programme recently told a story of a young woman who had travelled to Finland to study. She had arrived in Finland from China and had been living here several months when her mother had wanted her to describe in a letter, what Europeans are like. The young woman wrote in her letter, "Well, the Northern Europeans are all tall with blond hair, fair skin and blue eyes and they drink spirits. The Southern Europeans are shorter with dark hair, darker skin and brown eyes and they drink wine". Then the woman concluded in her letter "So the Europeans aren't all the same after all". As my friend added, "On top of seeing 'others' as the same, we all share a universal habit of asking our parents for money when we're studying abroad".

Quite often culture is confused with race, and individuals' perceptions of who belongs to *different* cultures are based upon outward appearances (Gorski, 1995-2006). Gorski talks of this particularly in regards to the condition of those considered 'white' (of Northern European origins) and their perception of 'others' (those particularly of non-European origin). Europeans have a long history in differentiating non-European cultures from their own. Scientific strategies seen throughout the history of colonialism and European education have constantly placed European values and norms at the centre of human kind and non-Europeans at the periphery¹⁰. Thus, it is particularly important when approaching an international learning situation to keep in mind that learning environments are never culturally neutral (Flinders University, n.d.), and to attempt to deconstruct one's own cultural norms and particularities above highlighting the differences in others (Elliott et al, 1999; Gorski, 2000).

Based on this theory I feel that an atmosphere amongst the participants of the Summer School needs to be established in which everyone understands some basic principles. These principles coincide with Gorski's (1995-2006) general rules, including firstly, that negative labels and stereotypes are avoided at the Summer School. Everyone

¹⁰ See authors such as Edward Said (1978), Homi Bhabha (1994; 1990) and Gayatri Spivak (1999)

has the right to inquire about particular aspects of each other's cultures – as is required in many of the multicultural activities designed for the school – however this must be done sensitively and constructively. Likewise, as some of the exercises require an amount of generalisation, generalisation must be kept positive and to a minimum, if necessary a vocabulary for the Summer School may be agreed upon during the sessions. Finally, students are asked to share reflections on their own cultures and own lived experience as much as possible, this will give others the opportunity to gain more of an understanding of each other from first hand accounts.

4.2 City observation exercise

The observational exercise is being planned by Irmeli Katainen and me as a practise for the nursing, physiotherapy and social work students in identifying positive aspects and hazards in environmental planning. While the exercise does not consciously stress ideas of multiculturalism and intercultural interaction, it does require that international groups of students learn to cooperate together and share ideas from each individual's own perspective. Jyväskylä city centre is the focus area of the exercise, in which small groups of students will be assigned certain sites to investigate. With the main focus being what is considered a 'child-friendly environment' some of the types of factors that the students are to consider when observing the areas are safety, education, entertainment and access. The students are to take the position of health and safety investigators and are to monitor for example a local playground. Students are asked to not only pay attention to the safety of the playground itself, i.e. in terms of heights, ground covering, possible dangers on the play equipment, but they are also asked to observe imminent hazard zones surrounding the playground such as busy streets, no traffic lights and the types of buildings and companies that are around.

The idea of the exercise is to firstly promote critical thinking, whereby the students are encouraged to seek and then "use evidence skilfully and impartially" (Nickerson, cited in Schaferson, 1991, n.p.). In this instance, critical thinking and material collection is not seen as the sole responsibility of the individual but as a team effort. It is also to encourage teamwork and group learning that will hopefully provide students with valuable insight into types of scenarios they will face when investigating as professionals in the workplace. The further significance of this exercise is that through encouraging a practical, observation-based group learning we are also

promoting contact between fellow students and staff which will be difficult to achieve during normal presentation sessions (Liverpool John Moores University, 2003). The observation exercise is also just one component of a larger blended-learning module, in which through the material collected from the observations in the form of notes, photographs and videos, the students are asked to continue their investigations in their own home cities or towns. They will be given a due date by which they are asked to deliver their gathered material plus a short paper to an R5 environment that we are creating for the Summer School. One week after this due date the students will take part in an international online forum.

Thus, while we are trying to emphasise a multi-faceted learning activity that everyone can do in their own style, provided they participate as a part of a group, and are critical about their observations, we are trying to also encourage the students to create and maintain international contacts. This makes the online environment the ideal tool for extending the classroom environment across national boundaries, furthering the students' live multicultural and intercultural experiences to a mediated form. It is also hoped, that on the day of the Jyväskylä observations some students will gain the opportunity to interview a Jyväskylä City Council member regarding the town planning. This emphasises the idea that learning is a cooperative task not only between students but also between organisations and while the students are learning through observations, the city also has an opportunity to learn from the students' observations.

4.3 The short Summer School exercises

The nine exercises (seven, five minute exercises and two, 20-30 minute exercises) are listed in chronological order of how they will be implemented. The first exercise is the "Story of my name game" (Neill, 2004), which will take place during the first day. The opening party exercise "Getting to know you through your frames" is a slightly longer game (20-30 minutes) which will allow participants to get to know each others' cultural backgrounds better. The next several exercises are completely designed by me. The first exercise for the second day is called "Help me out" which is a short group exercise examining communication when language barriers are present. The second exercise for the second day is based on the Summer School's day theme "Promotion of Children's Health and Well-being", and the game is a role playing exercise called "When I was a child". The first third day exercise is called "This is how I see it" a game

based on cultural interpretations of professional field terminology. The second third day exercise is based on the Summer School's day theme "Promotion of Elderly Well-being" called "When I'm 94" which will be a brainstorm in regards to which direction the students feel the aged care profession and services will be heading in the future (considering technology, funding, welfare and multiculturalism). The second exercise on the elderly well-being day is called "I'll be fine on my own" this game is designed to demonstrate some of the frustrations with the aging process.

Both exercises on the fourth day correspond with the student presentations that will be taking place. The first exercise is a fast word association game, requiring the students to stand in a large circle and throw a ball to each other. In this game called "Don't tell me twice" each student needs to give one word describing the theme of their presentation. If someone has already said a word corresponding to someone else's presentation, the next person needs to think of a word that means the same thing. If they cannot think of it in English they can use their own language. The second exercise on the presentation day is a physical mind-'web' called "We are connected like this" where the students in larger group create a web of themes which have been raised in the presentations, and connections are made from one theme to the next.

The final exercise that I will be guiding is a partial continuation of a Summer School tradition, which includes the use of a large parachute. I would like this to be a fun activity – particularly considering that the day and week would have been intensive theoretically and mentally – therefore a slightly physical and non-mental exercise seems to be appropriate. The game I have planned for this is called the "Ball in Bucket" where two different coloured balls are placed on the top of a parachute. The participants around the edge of the parachute are divided into two groups, and each group needs to attempt to get their ball into the centre pocket.

4.3.1 The story of my name game

"The Story of My Name Game" was designed by Neill (2004) in which individuals in one large group, smaller groups or pairs tell each other about the stories of their names. The duration of the exercise is varied depending on whether students are in groups or pairs (pairs being quicker). The idea is that participants recall the stories of how they got their names, and they may even possibly describe what their names mean. This is both a culturally specific and personal historically specific exercise. Cultural

specificity may be seen in stories such as the following example. ‘Seija’ was created by a former head of the National Board of Education in Finland, Yrjö Karilas, in 1917. After reading the name “Seia” in a book of world religions, which was the name of the Roman God of the new crop, Karilas combined this with “seijas” an old Finnish word meaning tranquil, serene, clear and calm (Nikulainen, n.d.). The story of how the name Seija was created can be seen as both culturally specific and personal, due to the fact that it both directly relates to an old Finnish word and an actual Finnish person, as well as personal to the Karilas family’s own story of how Seija Karilas received her name.

Another example may be seen in the story of my name ‘Rebekah’. The name ‘Rebecca’ was quite a common one in Australia and other English speaking countries around the time of my birth. ‘Rebecca’, spelt this way with two ‘c’s has derived from the Italian adaptation of the Hebrew ‘Rivqah’ or ‘Rivka’ (the biblical wife of Isaac¹¹, the second of the four mothers of the Jewish people¹²), and my form of spelling ‘Rebekah’ derives directly from Hebrew origins. These are the historically cultural specific origins of my name, yet the way in which I received it can be seen as both personal and cultural. My mother was a fan of Mark Twain’s books such as *Huckleberry Finn* (1884) and *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer* (1876). In these stories was a character named Becky Thatcher, and after getting acquainted with this character my mother had decided that if she had a baby girl at any stage, she would call her ‘Rebecca’ after Becky Thatcher. But again, my mother’s exposure to ‘Rebecca’ was through a series of cultural interactions caused both by creative cultural channels (i.e. the ability to read American Mark Twain books in Australia) and through linguistic channels (i.e. English, and written English). The way my mother decided upon ‘Rebekah’ however, was through reading the ‘Births, Deaths and Marriages’ section (which is also culturally specific) of the local newspaper and seeing a birth notice for a baby named ‘Rebekah’. Thus, the occurrence of seeing the written form of the name and finding it visually appealing was a personal experience.

In effect, through just two examples, one can see that the story behind a name can be very specific personally and culturally, and may reveal a lot about the values, histories and norms of respective cultures. It is hoped that by doing this as a short exercise on the first day, participants are not only able to develop a better understanding of each other’s personal and cultural backgrounds, but also the perspectives from which

¹¹ See *Behind the Name* at: <http://www.behindthename.com/php/view.php?name=rebecca>

¹² See *Hebrew Names* at: <http://www.learn-hebrew-names.com/Show-Hebrew-Name-en251.htm>

each respective participant is coming from. Most importantly, the purpose of this exercise is to hopefully assist the participants in learning one another's names. As another personal acquaintance has highlighted, in professional organisations of Western societies today, paying attention to and remembering names is a highly valued attribute.

4.3.2 Getting to know you through your frames – Opening Party

To begin identifying sensitivities¹³ which may commonly be felt amongst members of each respective culture, the participants will be exposed to 'internal' and 'external' perceptions of respective cultural systems. The way that the game works is that the group of participants is asked to form pairs or groups of three at the most. The participants are then told that they must take it in turns at firstly asking their partners where they are from. Then once the partner has responded by telling where they are from, the question asking partner is to say something about their own image of their partner's culture. For example:

Partner A: Where are you from?

Partner B: I am from the USA.

Partner A: When I think of the USA I think of George Bush, big cars, McDonald's and people who love destructive talk-shows.

Once this initial image has been told (and please note, the stereotypes must not be derogatory, participants must find a way of describing general, but constructive versions of stereotypes such as "silent Finns") the partner who actually comes from the culture replies by offering their perception of their own culture:

Partner B: Well actually, I didn't vote for George Bush, I drive a Mini Cooper, and have several friends who drive semi-electric cars such as the Toyota Prius. I don't eat McDonald's because I am a vegetarian who is very weary of my diet, and talk shows really aren't very popular in the States — they're just a good form of cultural export (cheap TV that rakes in the cash).

¹³ In our Intercultural Communication seminar March 21st, 2007, several of these sensitivities arose in regards to assumptions such as "all Australians are racist", and various Hitler references which are constantly made towards people from Germany.

This process is then repeated in the opposite direction. The aim of the game is to not just learn more about ‘others’, but to learn more about oneself. The idea is to help participants identify their own ‘norms’ or belief and behaviour systems, which is mostly based on not how we perceive ourselves, but how we perceive ‘others’. In other words, the exercise is an attempt to ‘break with the norm’¹⁴ of participants’ own cultures, and to hopefully enable them to step-into and understand the ‘norms’ of other cultures. The game is also designed to make participants aware of the limitations of stereotypes through questioning each other in terms of perceptions and beliefs. For example, when I guided this exercise in a recent workshop (discussed in the next chapter) I was surprised to hear participants agreeing with the stereotypes their partners had suggested. In one particular instance, one of the partners (Partner A) told the other (Partner B) that they perceived Partner B’s culture as peculiar because there was nothing peculiar about their culture. Or in other words, Partner A told Partner B that they considered Partner B’s culture to be totally *normal*. In the group discussion Partner B agreed with Partner A by saying that they too see nothing abnormal about the culture in question, and that it is neutral or normal. Suddenly, all the group members were in agreement. So I asked, “What is normal?” and the group laughed and alluded to this particular culture. What I am interested in is if people agree with the stereotypes others give them, then that they question why they agree with these stereotypes. This, I feel is the secret behind gaining a better understanding of the limitations of constructions of not only other’s perceptions of culture, but one’s own.

4.3.3 Help me out

This is a non-verbal communication game in which participants are divided into small groups and are given a card with a scenario written on it. The scenario is written in English in order to ensure that the participants have a personal understanding of the situation, but the group’s challenge is to communicate this scenario to another group without using words. The scenarios range from instances such as: A group of people have just walked from a bus crash on the other side of a hill, they need the other group to come and help them with the injured driver and passengers still at the scene; Or another scenario might be that the staff of a hospital need to tell a family that their

¹⁴ See Richard Dyer’s book *White* (1997) and Elliott et al (1999).

young child has a serious health condition and that they must get written permission in order to operate.

This is a simulation exercise in which both groups face the communication difficulties of neither understanding each other's language. The exercise is designed to be particularly relevant to the social and health care fields in order for participants to experience what it is like to either be in a professional situation, or in the position of the patient and to need to communicate serious matters without depending on verbal language. As this exercise is only supposed to last for five minutes there is the possibility that only one round of the exercise will be completed. However, I feel that it is an important exercise in that at some stage of the participants' career lives, and even personal lives in countries other than their own, they are likely to come across these incredibly alienating and difficult experiences, in which neither party can communicate in each other's languages.

4.3.4 When I was a child

When I was a child is a simple and fun role playing game, in which participants are asked to recreate a doctor visit, school nurse visit, or social worker visit from when they were a child. This will be another five minute exercise, requiring participants to form small groups. The exercise operates similarly to a Drama Therapy game called "Living Photograph" that I learned during my studies. In the "Living Photograph" game a group of participants decide upon one of the group member's described scenarios, to create a living photograph of that event. In "When I was a Child" this will be limited to participants' experiences with the health and social services, and instead of thinking in terms of recreating a two dimensional photograph, the participants are encouraged to take on the roles of characters that have been described in the participant's recollection.

For example, the chosen scenario might be one where a participant has recalled the time that they slammed their fingers in the car door. Their mother rushed them to the hospital and at the hospital the child was required to have a tetanus injection. Nurses tried asking the child to sit still while they give the injection but the child runs away and hides under a bed. The mother, the nurses and a doctor finally need to hold the child down to give the injection, and in the end for being such a 'brave child' they are rewarded with a chocolate. In this situation members of the group would take the positions of the nurses, doctors and child. The one telling the story should play the part

of the lead character. The intention of this exercise is to give a glimpse of what health and social services are like in respective countries, and to deepen an understanding of factors such as hierarchies, roles of various staff in hospitals in addition to the customs of hospital visits (i.e. such as chocolate frogs). It is also to give an understanding of the child's positioning and perspective when they are experiencing social and health care services, because sometimes in general we forget what it was like to be a child in those types of situations. Thus, the cultural feature of age is also incorporated into the exercise.

4.3.5 This is how I see it

“This is how I see it” is an exercise in which a word (term) or a picture relating to health or social care will be delivered to the group via the white board or an overhead projection. Preferably the participants will be in one group, but if the group is too large it may need to be divided into two. The idea of this short five minute exercise is for every member of the group to say a word which they associate with the main term. For instance, the term “Well-being” may invoke associations such as health, exercise, happiness, care etc. The idea is to develop an understanding of individual perceptions of the terms in addition to hopefully gaining some insight into the cultural relevance and perceptions of the terms in respective national professional fields. For example, “social care” might be inclusive of health care and family planning in Australia, but it might specifically refer to child safety and correctional services in countries such as England.

4.3.6 When I'm 94

“When I'm 94” is a short brainstorming exercise in which the participants are divided into groups and provided with large pieces of paper and markers. In this exercise participants need to think of what type of conditions the elderly from their own countries may possibly face in approximately fifty years. This is a purely speculative exercise designed to encourage students to think about various aspects affecting health and social care such as globalisation, welfare systems, financial issues and technology. For instance, will ninety years of age ever be the ‘new fifty’? What do the students think that living conditions and medical treatment will be like in fifty years? Are all of the

students of the opinion that the same conditions will be faced in each respective country, or will these conditions differ from country to country?

4.3.7 I'll be fine on my own

For this exercise participants need to be divided into pairs. One partner will volunteer to be an elderly person in their 80s. Each of the partners is given a card on which is written a brief statement about what they have done during the day and who the person they are talking to is. For example, the person who has chosen to be elderly is given a card which says:

“Today you woke up at 5:00am to do the gardening. You went to the shops, came home and made a cup of tea. Now your son/daughter has come to see you.”

On the partner's card is the scenario:

“You are visiting your grandmother/father in a nursing home. You have noticed that their health and memory is deteriorating quickly but you are hoping that they are having a good day.”

The partners are not allowed to tell or show each other what they have on their cards they are instead supposed to work with the scenarios as if they were in those circumstances. The game is a mixture between the “Help me out” game of communicating difficulties, in addition to a cultural awareness card playing game (which is described in the next chapter). The idea of the game is to give each participant a physical and emotional sensation of the aging process, and to help them experience conditions such as dementia, memory loss, incontinence and deafness (this is constructed through the writing on the card). As mentioned earlier, ages are both directly linked to culture and are cultures of their own. It is hard to understand what it is like to be at a certain age if we have not already experienced it. Age in itself does not just affect those who are aging but those around them. Hopefully through constructing scenarios which will manipulate the participants' perceptions of what is happening, they will some chance in which they will be able to experience what it is like to be older. Likewise, their partners will hopefully get a better idea of both their partner's aging

process and will also be able to monitor their own reactions to circumstances they are facing within this short exercise.

4.3.8 Don't tell me twice

This will be the first exercise on the student presentation day whereby, in a large group each student will be required to quickly say one word about someone else's presentation (i.e. elderly, discrimination, communication etc.), whilst throwing a ball to one another without repeating what somebody else has said before them. This can be referred to as an English language exercise, but it is also an activity which will hopefully challenge the participants' perceptions and connections of various terms and concepts. To make the exercise more accessible to all and to hopefully limit feelings of alienation, as well as to also expose all participants to various forms of expressing the concepts, participants are allowed to use a term from their own language, if the term that they are familiar with in English has already been used.

4.3.9 We are connected like this

"We are connected like this" is a web-like brainstorm that the group will do as a whole. Each member of the group writes down the name or theme of their presentation in large enough letters that they may hold the paper up and others can read. Once everyone is ready the students should start finding others who have similar themes, or themes that can be related to each other. They then stand in the related groups as someone goes around with a line of string that each participant in the entire group, one by one holds on to. Naturally in the smaller 'theme groups' the string web will be tighter and more concentrated, but when the string reaches from one theme group to the next, individuals from each group needs to give examples of how the seemingly different themes are connected [figure 3].

The point of this exercise is focused towards drawing awareness to the interdependency of service sectors. Quite often scholars and professionals in fields ranging from social work and humanities to medicine, physics and mathematics, see their disciplines as separate. Also there is a tendency to adopt hierarchies towards for example the greater social value given towards the natural sciences where research is often quantified as opposed to humanistic-based studies where research is often

qualified. As the participants in the Summer School will be coming from both social work education and health care education, this exercise provides participants with an opportunity to see how each other's work is related, and how they may cooperate academically and professionally with one another. Further, indirectly and on a more philosophical level this exercise can also be interpreted on a cultural level, whereby cultural values presented through emphasis on social welfare and health care sectors may be observed. For instance, in some traditional communities possibly from Papua New Guinea or several African countries, equal if not greater emphasis may be given towards spiritual and symbolic means of healing (and health in general) rather than completely relying on the natural sciences. I feel in these instances it is important for future professionals to not only be aware of the values, but to realise that no one's cultural system holds greater weight over the others'.

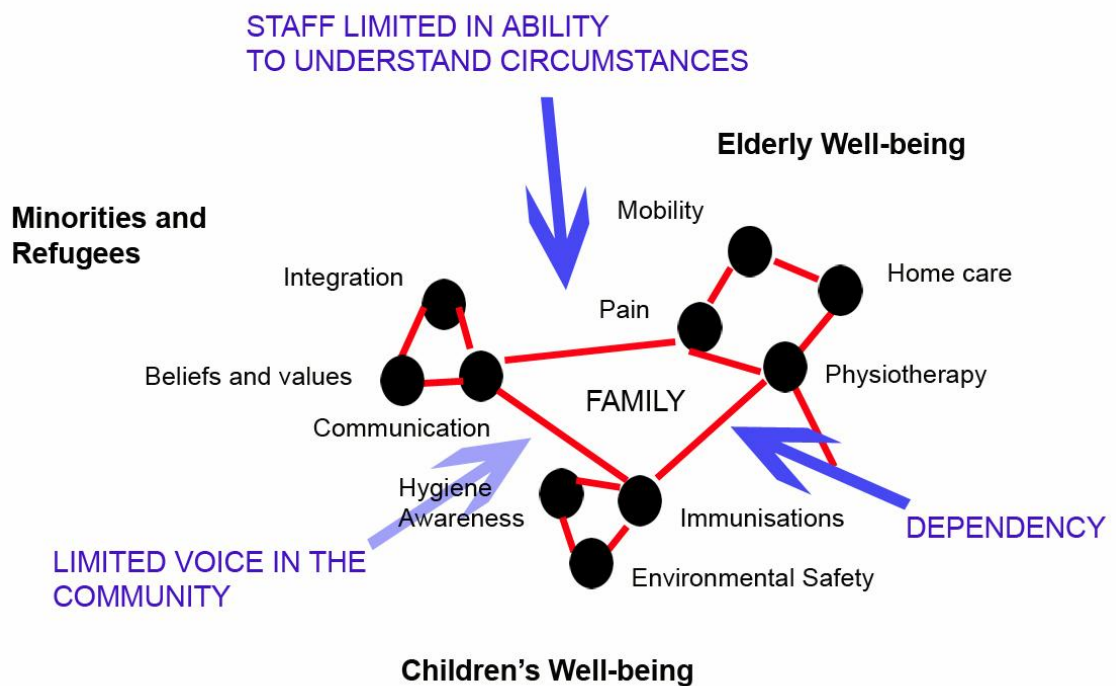


Fig. 3. Example of "We are connected like this"

4.3.10 Ball in bucket — closing party

I want to maintain a tradition that was established by the Summer School several years ago, by facilitating a physical exercise revolving around a large parachute. The

exercise will take place in the gymnasium at and will require several coloured balls. The participants, standing around the edge of the parachute will be divided into groups according to the colours of the balls. The idea of the game is for the various teams to get their colour ball into the 'bucket' (the hole or pit in the middle of the parachute) before the other groups. The exercise is to encourage team spirit and cooperation, in addition to simply building up the participants' adrenalin after many days of sitting still through presentations. I see this exercise also as a more physically-based less mentally challenging exercise to reward the group for their work over the past week.

5 Developmental process and analysis of surveys

In order to formulate the appropriate exercises to use for the Summer School I have undergone a process of trying the exercises out in a workshop situation, in addition to collecting surveys asking people about past experience in multicultural educational situations. I wanted to take this opportunity to gain empirical material through collecting and observing live and written responses to multicultural exercises and learning situations. This is due to the fact that I will not be able to observe how the exercises are received by the actual group of students until September, 2007 (after the submission of this report). Further, while every group of individuals is different, affecting both group dynamics and group learning processes, I still wanted experience how the planned exercises would work in a group situation, and whether my directions would be clear and understandable to a group of second and third language English speakers.

5.1 The workshop

I delivered a workshop style presentation to a group of Intercultural Communication for Teaching students at the Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences on April 10th, 2007. In this workshop I combined a talk of my developmental processes for this project with two exercises “The Story of My Name Game”, and “Getting to Know You through Your Frames”. We began with “The Story of My Name Game” before I began telling the group about myself. I introduced the activity by giving an example of how I got my name, and then we progressed one by one around the circle. Each individual embraced the exercise by giving quite detailed examples of what their names meant, from which other names theirs had been created (i.e. every group member was Finnish and many of the names were Finnish names adapted from Roman, Hebrew and Germanic names), and how their parents had decided upon the names. Although every member of the group was Finnish, the stories varied greatly, in regards to parents deciding upon names due to family traditions or the meanings of the names, to names being chosen due to the names day the person was born on. One group member had received her name as a result of being born in a foreign country (Sweden). Her name

had been chosen to be able to 'blend in' with the new culture, while at the same time still relating to her Finnish origins.

In each of the individual's stories they had received their names as the result of a complex process of cultural negotiations, whether that was due to the factor of names days — something which is European specific and varies from country to country — or the process of considering cultural integration (such as the Swedish example). The formation of national cultures as a hybrid version of many separate cultures was also apparent when considering the relationship of many Finnish names to those from other countries such as Juhani, Juha and Juho with John and Jonathan for example. Then the way that we recall personal narratives verbally in a language shared by the group (even if it is not a native language for all) is also specific not only to our geography and educational, but as a result of a globalisation process in which English is used as an international language.

I have to admit that I was a little perplexed before giving the instructions for the "Getting to know you through your frames" exercise. The reason for this was because I believed before arriving at the workshop, that the group would be extremely international, with members coming from all over the world. Instead, I realised with horror that everyone was from Finland. The reason for my horror was that this exercise is designed for groups of students who come from different cultural backgrounds, and initially I fell into the trap of considering cultural backgrounds as 'ethnic' backgrounds. Before throwing in the towel and considering another exercise for the group to do I realised that the Finnish nation state is a relatively new concept. Until the formation of the concept of a homogenous Finnish nation, different cultures had existed in various regions of Finland, for example the Tavastians (Häme people), the Savonians and communities from all over Finland had their distinct cultures and traditions, even if a conscious concept of 'identity' was not needed to be overtly expressed. Still today, at least in the context of my own family and friends, there is a tendency to hear about "those Östrabothnians", "those Western Finland people" or "those Häme people". Or, more specifically I hear reference to people from specific cities such as "those Helsinki people", "those Jyväskylä people", "we Tampere people" etc. Thus, at least there is a tendency to specify and separate cultures even amongst Finnish people. Räsänen (1998, 32) expresses how there is not just a difference amongst perceptions and attitudes of people from various parts of Finland but there is also the very literal differences

expressed in aspects such as class distributions, sex distributions, professions and worldviews.

So I explained this factor to the group and told them to form pairs and ask their partners from where in Finland they come and then to tell their partner how they have always perceived people from those locations/cultures. This generated great discussion amongst the pairs which lasted twenty minutes in itself. I then wanted to generate some kind of resolution from the exercise so I brought the pairs together for a group discussion. I asked each individual to describe their perceptions of their partner's culture and how this compared to their partner's own perception of their culture. I was surprised to hear that group members truly were very multicultural in that they had come from almost every culture in Finland ranging from South Western Finland, North Karelia, Häme, Uusimaa, Central Finland and North Western Finland. Their descriptions and perceptions were varied from describing how business meetings are painfully long in Savo to how people from North Karelia have had to adjust their attitude towards Russian people in light of the Russian tourism boom during the last two decades. So while I was also surprised that many of the participants had agreed with the stereotypes that their partners had mentioned (this relates to the example given earlier about the 'normal' culture of Central Finland¹⁵) the group also entered into a much deeper discussion as to why the cultures are like they are, and how they are constantly changing due to global and economic processes. One thing that I would have liked to do but we had run out of time, was find out how much the participants had learnt from the respective Finnish cultures — whether they had learnt anything new. It was at least an extremely enlightening exercise for me as the facilitator and I feel that the group discussion at the end of the exercise served to internalise and consolidate information that had been shared amongst partners.

5.2 The surveys

In order to learn from other people's previous experiences and opinions I sent out a survey to members of the teacher education community. I emailed approximately twenty-five copies to various individuals and received four completed. I realise that the

¹⁵ An interesting point to consider here is why people from our Finnish cultures agreed that Central Finnish culture was normal, because this implies that there is a shared experience amongst their cultures specifying what is normal for at least Finnish people and what is not. This is a highly explicit sign of cultural hierarchies in Finnish national rhetoric.

lack of responses is partially my fault as I did not specify a due date on the form. However, the surveys I did receive are extremely detailed and seem to flow more like written interviews. Thus, this section will outline the questions asked on the survey and the overall responses that were received, which is followed by a discussion of the findings.

5.2.1 Personal details

For demographic purposes I asked the participants to mention their age, nationality and gender. The reason for this is that the age of the participant might have affected their opportunities for exposure to multicultural awareness activities within educational contexts. For example, in Australia during the early 20th century history and teachings of cultural identity focused on Europe and especially British history. From the 1940s to 1980s Australian educations focused on creating a pioneer narrative for students in which the history of Australia was told to have started with British settlers¹⁶. From the 1990s onwards, particularly in South Australia, knowledge of histories from non-European cultures, and the plurality of Australian history, pre- and post- European settlement began to be taught. With the current reality of everyday globalisation presented through educational tools such as the internet displaying an internationalised knowledge-base, over the past thirteen years, school groups have gradually included at least the communicative aspect of multiculturalism (and multi-geographism) into learning processes. Initiatives such as the “Global Citizenship Lifelong Education” programme which started in 1995, in which students from approximately 80 educational institutions, have aimed at encouraging students to employ self-directed learning to develop an understanding of issues such as development, human rights, culture/multiculturalism and the environment (Allahwerdi, 1998, 140-141). This is in light of current matters such as integration of refugees, foreign politics and cooperation and global warming.

Nationality also plays a role in the individual’s exposure to multicultural education as geographical location, socio-political histories and economic systems change the perceived necessity for multicultural educations. For example, Christopher

¹⁶ For an example of how this pioneer narrative is still alive and strong please look at Gregory Melleuish’s paper *The Teaching of Australian History in Schools: a normative view* available at: http://www.dest.gov.au/NR/rdonlyres/6224494B-2428-48D6-846B-D6BAA6BF97FD/13383/HistorySummit_AusPast_004FINALtotal.pdf

Bagley (1986, 49-59) has made a comparison of education systems, considering the factors of multiculturalism, class and ideology in Canada, the Netherlands and Britain. Bagley considers factors such as the impact that technological change has on class structures and uses this as a means of identifying how the status and recognition of immigrants in the respective societies also changes. Although the study is over twenty years old and multicultural programmes in each of these countries have vastly developed, arguably due to the introduction of the World Wide Web, we can see the differences in which each country has considered multicultural education at respective points in time. Bagley (1986, 50-53) notes that the system in the Netherlands of a seemingly harmonious living between 'Blacks' and 'Whites' went into chaos during the 1980s due to the Netherlands' involvement in the European Economic Community. This involvement caused a boost of prosperity and a renegotiation of class structures, this compromised and altered perceptions of ethnic minorities. During the 1980s Canada saw controversy in multicultural educational programmes which treated First Nation (Indigenous Canadians) peoples in line with immigrants¹⁷. At this point in time, rather than set programmes of developing intercultural understanding, British schools also saw a grouping amongst students who separated themselves into 'Black' and 'White' irrespective of specific cultural backgrounds. Thus, given the ways that each nation's concept of multicultural education and that its experience of multiculturalism is unique in itself, I felt that it was important to ask the participants about their nationality.

I also asked the gender in addition to the amount of years spent away from the participant's home country. My reason for asking gender was due to the fact that the roles of gender differ from culture to culture. Even subtle differences can be observed in the Nordic countries. Through monitoring social policies, one may see that while Norway has had a tradition of maintaining welfare policies which reward mothers for staying at home with young children, in Sweden and Finland there has been a tradition of ensuring that women can return to work as soon as possible through emphasising the necessity of public childcare (Kjelstad, 2001, 81-85). In my opinion, this factor would also affect the individual's ability to travel abroad or to participate in education.

Thus, through asking these questions it was determined that the participants' average age was 44,25 — all participants being between 36 and 52 years of age. This

¹⁷ Australia's Department of Aboriginal Affairs is still combined with immigration issues, see the Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs website at: <http://www.immi.gov.au/>

means that the participants would have undertaken compulsory schooling between the 1960s and 1980s. All of the participants were from European countries. One was from Ireland (Participant 2), another was from Germany (Participant 1) and two were from Finland (Participants 3 and 4). Time that the participants had spent abroad ranged from 1,5 years to 17 years. Surprisingly participants still living in their home country (Finland) had also at least spent 1,5 years abroad; the other had spent 13 years abroad. Also, what I consider to be a reflection of the values and social structure of any given society is that both of the Finnish respondents are female.

5.2.2 Multicultural learning groups

Once establishing a background image of the participants I then asked them in the survey what types of multicultural learning groups they had participated in. All participants identified the International Vocational Teacher Education programme that they have been involved in since 2006. The dates and types of other programmes that they had been a part of were of particular interest due to the socio-political relevance to education in their home countries, and the vast array of experiences they had voluntarily participated in. Participant 1 told of how they had participated in a friendship programme during the 3rd and 5th grades of schooling which brought the students into contact with Soviet Union pioneers and soldiers. Participant 1 had undertaken a student exchange to St Petersburg and Tallinn in 1988, and also had travelled to Israel on a journey to “Follow Jesus’ Path” and had completed five years of studies in an international programme in Finland. Participant 2 only mentioned multicultural programmes that they had experienced here in Finland.

These programmes included Finnish for Foreigners courses, social circles and extra curricula activities in addition to studying and teaching international programmes in the Finnish educational system. Both Participants 3 and 4 had participated in multicultural programmes in Finland and abroad. Participant 3 had undertaken an international education in France in an America-European college where students had come from between 20 to 30 different nationalities. Participant 3 had also undertaken an intercultural communication course in Turku and had participated in a multicultural awareness conference in London. They also had experience of teaching an international group. Participant 4 had been involved with numerous international education projects regarding student exchange programmes such as Nordplus and other European projects.

This participant had also undertaken several international and multiculturally oriented courses in Finland including a communication skills session for staff working with international students at the university and an intercultural communication course online. They had also undertaken an intercultural communication skills course in Finland with participants from countries several different countries.

Thus, all of the people who participated in this survey have several years of experience participating in various intercultural communication and multicultural awareness programmes. The programmes have differed in characteristics such as those pertaining to participants and purpose, and the location of the programmes have differed. The roles of the participants have also varied from one situation to the other. Where in one case an individual has been a student of a programme and in another they have been a project worker or an educator. This provides a sound building block for the types of answers they have provided to the following questions.

5.2.3 Frequency of intercultural communication and/or multicultural awareness exercises

In addition to the friendship programmes Participant 1 had been a part of during elementary school, this participant had undertaken intercultural communication and/or multicultural awareness exercises approximately five times in their adult life. Participant 2 had only experienced multicultural awareness exercises twice, both of which were through their education in Kuopio, Finland. Due to the college in France being run an “American way” (quoted directly), Participant 3 mentioned that multicultural awareness exercises had not been arranged officially in this programme. This participant mentioned that everyday life was an intercultural exercise, as people would discuss contrasting elements between each other’s cultures and from this came my observations. Yet, in addition the participant has participated in many multicultural exercises as this is a major field of their studies. Participant 4 also mentions that in their daily interactions (on top of two organised multicultural awareness programmes they had participated in) informal exercises of observation and discussion would arise between individuals from differing cultures and nationalities.

5.2.4 Types of exercises

The types of exercises that Participant 1 had undertaken included the socialistic brother country programme (mainly with the USSR) they had mentioned from elementary school. This is in addition to meetings with local students in St Petersburg and Tallinn. They also participated in information sessions about history and political situations while on the trip to Israel, and have participated in multicultural discussions which have occurred as a part of the International Vocational Teacher Education programme. Participant 2 mentioned a multicultural card game in which a large group was divided into smaller ‘table groups’ of four people. Each of these smaller groups was given a set of rules to play the card game. The groups would play a game and at the end of each game the winner and the loser of each table needed to move to another table. The trick of the game was that each table had been given slightly different sets of rules, so subtle that the forms of the games seemed the same until the groups would start playing. This was where the frustration set in as players were not allowed to talk and those who had moved to other tables struggled to properly understand the sets of rules their new table played by¹⁸.

Participant 3 who had specialised in multicultural studies took part in several exercises in which people from differing nationalities would work in groups to list certain things such as: the meanings of colours; the importance of knowing the rank of new acquaintances; who people should be greeted first (rank, status, age and gender); and in what order men and women should stand up. This participant also took part in exercises where they received charts listing questions which asked what type of culture they preferred living in (‘high’; or ‘low’ context cultures — where individuals avoid direct reference to matters and opinions; or where individuals refer directly to matters and opinions in communication) in addition to how prepared the participant would be to adjust to new cultural circumstances. This participant also describes an exercise they undertook relating to personal space in which the group needed to stand in two parallel lines facing each other. Individuals in each line were required to take one step forward at a time until they had reached a point at which they felt too close to the person standing opposite them.

¹⁸ This is the exercise I make reference to when describing “I’ll be fine on my own” (see Chapter 3).

Participant 4 listed a range of exercises they had undertaken regarding matters such as ethnocentricity, communication styles in various cultures, and cultural competence etc. Some of the exercises they described included an exercise where participants were given a form to fill in. The form had been created in mirror image and they needed to adjust their own handwriting to mirror image in order to complete the forms. This exercise was designed to provide participants with the sensation of righting from right to left as people do in many cultures around the world. The participant also mentions an exercise in which groups were shown images which displayed scenery that is generally associated with developed Western countries. The participants were told to guess from which country the images came, the participant notes that many had guessed Italy and Canada. The correct answer was Iran, thus smashing ideas of the primitive, undeveloped East.

Another task Participant 4 mentioned was one where two people use one pen (both holding the pen) to draw a house. The idea behind the exercise is to put oneself in another's position, whereby while one of the partners guides the pen, the other follows their partner by thinking that they will not hurt the other's feelings by disturbing the flow of the image making process. The exercise is also to illustrate different thinking styles by drawing attention to the fact that quite often pictures are left un-drawn due to people's fears of hurting the other's feelings (this is referring to scenarios in which neither wants to be the one to take charge to complete the house, for fear of oppression the 'other'). Likewise, other people will complete the picture only if the process will hurt the other's feelings, thus arrogantly demonstrated that their own ideas are the only ones that matter. Participant 4 also described an exercise in which the facilitator showed an image of a black and a white man having a conversation on the tube (subway). The black man was wearing a suit and the white man was wearing overalls. Participants were asked to give three alternatives (negative and positive) as to what is happening in the picture. The exercise was designed to show participants how prejudices operate. The final exercise this survey participant described was that of asking participants to look at a map where they first look at another part of the world, and then suddenly look at their country in the middle of the map (i.e. the way that many world maps are constructed in respective countries — I always thought Australia was the centre of the world).

5.2.5 Most positive multicultural educational experience

Participant 1 told that their most positive experiences were being able to talk normally to people of the same age from St Petersburg and Tallinn without having a political agenda. The participant mentions that getting to know Israel's history and both sides of the Jew versus Palestinian conflict was also positive, and that the most positive factor that has arisen through studying in Finland is the opportunity to get to learn other people's stories and cultures without having to read the media or books. Participant 2 mentioned how the card game exercise they gave as an example was a positive point in that it truly demonstrated the emotion of frustration. The exercise appealed to the feelings rather than to the understanding (as most standard lecture courses do), this was what they said was the key to showing participants how it is to be the odd one out. This experience relates to Karppinen's (2003, 1-2) statement regarding the power of the arts (in this instance 'mild' drama/simulation) to teach about emotions.

Participant 3 mentioned that they cannot remember exactly how it happened, but it was the realisation that deep down people are different due to the ways they had been raised. In this way they have gained certain understandings, ideas and attitudes which they have not voluntarily chosen. This participant also stated that they cannot fully understand anyone unless they can, to some degree, understand the basis of their thinking. Participant 4 stated that each one of the exercises they mentioned had contributed a lot to their understanding of multiculturalism and the ways that intercultural communication works.

5.2.6 Learning from the positive experience

Participant 1 stated that they had learnt that while people are different depending on their cultural background, they are also the same when it comes to a sense of right and wrong, in addition to respect. Participant 2 told that they had learnt that "[p]atience and empathy are necessary tools for communication". Participant 3 commented that they had learnt that it is very difficult to get to understand someone from another culture entirely, no matter where they are. Participant 4 stated that they learned about their own ethnocentricity and prejudices. This participant also mentions that once they had realised these factors were able to "handle/understand" them and "try to avoid them".

5.2.7 A negative multicultural educational experience

Participant 1 mentioned that apart from experiencing some episodes of arrogance presented by various groups of people they had not experienced anything negative in their multicultural educations. Participant 2 was self-critical in describing that they were too opinionated during the educational processes. Participant 3 told how they dislike drama of no matter what form, whether they are watching it or doing it — which is a point I have felt strongly about when creating the Summer School activities, and which is also why I label the activities as simulations and experiential learning rather than relating them to drama specifically. Participant 4 mentions that while they had not had any negative experiences in particular, there was one time when someone labelled them a “bad woman” just because they were Finnish.

5.2.8 Learning from the negative experiences

Participant 1 mentions that they had learnt that certain groups of people like to sometimes use their unfortunate histories to their advantage. Participant 2 told of how they learned to keep quiet and let others speak. If people are shouting every moment they have a chance to, it is the quieter people who get “cut off”. Participant 3 learned what they did not feel comfortable with doing however it had nothing to do with culture (ethnicity). Participant 4 told of how just living in another country is not enough, people need to be taught about the cultural differences and the ways of thinking, in order to become aware of them and to accept them. In addition, Participant 4 told that people “just have to be aware of their own prejudices”.

5.2.9 Opinions on what intercultural communication and multicultural awareness exercises should focus on

Participant 1 recommended that these exercises should focus on stories which highlight intricate (small) details — the kinds of things that are hard to find in the media. Participant 2 mentions that exercises should concentrate firstly on communication styles and then things such as points to avoid. Participant 3 tells that they feel that understanding in practice that there are basic differences in the ways that people from differing backgrounds think. That it is not just the ways that people have learnt and become accustomed to doing things, but that there are deep underlying reasons and concepts which have caused these differences. Participant 4 suggests that

removing prejudices, “awareness of different communication styles” and “awareness of cultural differences” are what should be focused on. Participant 4 mentions that people should not have to accept or agree with everything presented through other cultures, but just be aware of the reasons behind cultural differences. This participant also ends by stating that exercises could point out the similarities between cultures, as there are many.

5.3 Survey Summary and implementation analysis

From what I could observe in the surveys, it seems that in European countries multicultural awareness activities in education seems to have been emphasised from the 1980s onwards (see Participant 1). Much of the organised activity seemed concentrated towards the Finnish educational environment (see all Participants’ examples), while some institutions in Germany also ensured comprehensive school students and teenagers gained understandings in terms of intercultural relations concerning major political players (i.e. the Soviet Union and the Christian pilgrimage to Israel; Participant 1).

All of the participants were from European origins and they had all experienced an extended period of time away from their home countries (the shortest period being 1,5 years). Further, the participants from Finland (Participants 3 and 4) gave much more detailed accounts of their multicultural training. All of the participants stressed positive experiences through the multicultural exercises they had described and none of them particularly mentioned a negative experience relating to multicultural exercises, a part from Participant 3 telling of their dislike of drama (which is something I have constantly considered through the development of my exercises).

All of the participants related how exercises which appealed to their emotions and developed a deeper understanding of how ‘other’ peoples think were the most positive experiences. Thus, experiential learning exercises which engaged participants’ problem solving processes and required them to adjust their point of perception were the most effective. From these experiences participants had been placed in positions which simulated the feelings and drew forth attitudes that we as human beings feel when we are marginalised, cannot understand the logics of systems or are faced with physical situations which demonstrate our own concepts of personal space. Further, as particularly Participant 4 demonstrated, exercises which ask the participants to give

their own immediate opinions of scenarios which present ‘other’ people (as in the photograph of the black and white men talking), reveal our own prejudices through revealing our thought and perception processes. I also conclude from Participant 4’s examples, that prejudices are not necessarily evil intentions of individuals, or characteristics which are only possessed by “bad people”, but are limitations and systems which guide every individual’s ways of receiving and perceiving the world.

A crucial problem that I have discovered once sorting through this material is that I did not ask the survey participants what their professions exactly were, and what vocational training they had undertaken. This is a vital mistake, as this development project is directly related to the education and training of nurses, physiotherapists and social workers. It would have been useful to have seen whether any of the participants’ occupations and trainings corresponded with education in social and health care. It would have also been interesting to have compared the perceived importance in intercultural communication and multicultural awareness training in various vocational fields. But most importantly, through not asking questions pertaining to vocational training and occupational fields I restricted the possibility to understand whether the variation in quantity and type of multicultural training was directly linked to the profession of the respondent.

Conclusion

Summary

This development project has given a brief summary of how the SOTE Summer School is significant in relation to the overall internationalisation strategies outlined by JAMK. The Summer School itself has been described as a result of an international networking and brainstorming process, which among other things also serves to encourage co-operational research and development amongst the key players, JAMK and Poznan University in Poland. While the Summer School is mentioned as one component amongst others such as community based health and well-being promotional initiatives, in the programming of the Summer School we are also trying to combine some of these separate components in the curriculum, such as the online learning component. Another important factor that is described in Chapter 2 is the pedagogical influence from Kolb's Experiential Learning model. The reason for using this model is due to the fact that it describes actions and processes, but does not explicitly prescribe particular methods. Instead, the methods are free for educators to choose and the Experiential Learning model is merely a guideline for types of learning processes and how they can be combined to maximise learning opportunities.

Issues pertaining to multiculturalism and multicultural education were described in Chapter 3 in reference to the Summer School and my own personal and professional background. The discussion of culture in the health and social care sectors was designed to demonstrate how culture is considered in studies and practice, and what type of emphasis will be placed on culture during the Summer School. In this vein the relevance and currency of international educations was also outlined. International schools and courses are on the increase, and the main reason being that they establish knowledge rich environments which enable students and other participants such as teachers to gain valuable information from contemporaries in other nations. Thus, through the expertise gained by those involved in international activities such as summer schools, participants are able to develop a competitive edge amongst other practitioners in their fields. This is a factor described on JAMK's international pages, and it is important to keep in mind whenever considering any pedagogical planning.

The pedagogical methods described in Chapter 4 have arisen from a process of online and literary research, in addition to my own creative process. Games that have been encountered previously have been reformulated to suit the cultural and multicultural orientation of the Summer School. I have tried combining factors that participants should be mindful in general in everyday life, with factors that would be specific for their fields of health and social care. The exercises are a mixture between the larger project type observation exercise Irmeli Katainen and I are developing which involves, observation, written and pictorial documentation, to online communication and archiving, to the smaller exercises that range from brainstorming in groups to actual role plays. Each of the activities are described in terms of what happens in the activities and for what reason I have chosen the exercises. Cautiousness has been the approach in terms of not selecting exercises that may alienate or possibly be too confusing for the participants. Also, as mentioned before, Kolb's model was adhered to in regards to providing a mixture of methods and processes.

Chapter 5 outlines the developmental process of the project in which some of the exercises were tried and tested, and other people's experiences with multicultural training were analysed. This was a chapter designed to reflect on findings to this point and to provide possible insight into what might happen in September when the exercises are used with the Summer School participants. This chapter was also used to provide insight into the way students themselves had considered and received exercises in the context of multicultural training. The types of matters considered in this chapter in conjunction with the analysis of surveys were: the background details of participants (whether this would have affected the type and range of experience of the participants); what multicultural training survey respondents had undertaken and how often; types of exercises (which provided ideas on possible alternatives to use at the Summer School); positive and negative experiences and what was learnt from these experiences; and opinions on what multicultural training should include and focus on.

Findings and challenges

The idea of collaborating to plan and develop an international summer school for students of health and social care presented a great challenge to me. In the early stages I was consciously cautious of interfering in the development of a programme for students of an area I know very little about. Once the fear of interdisciplinary

pedagogical development subsided I was again presented with the problem of what part of culture (and in what forms) to focus on when designing the pedagogical lay-out of the exercises. Art as an educational tool, and culture meaning the arts, was a point of personal interest, but the project as it has unfolded has shown the necessity in concentrating my focus towards culture as a 'total system'. After several months of working in collaboration with my colleagues Pia Piispanen and Irmeli Katainen, it became clearer that what I should focus on in the first instance is how intercultural communication and differing cultural systems affect the process of health and social care in respective countries. I also discovered through analysing the surveys and reading theoretical studies describing multicultural education that simulation exercises¹⁹ such as role plays and tasks which reveal the individual's own thought processes are some of the most powerful tools in promoting an intercultural understanding amongst students. To draw on the emotions in the first place, and intellect in the following discussions and written reflections, appears to be an ideal way to concretise and develop intercultural understanding amongst individuals.

Other challenges that I have faced include the fact that the Summer School will not take place until September 14th, 2007. Thus, I have had to find other alternatives through which I may test the exercises that have been designed. As mentioned above, the alternative modes of implementation and preliminary evaluation were extremely useful and possibly gave a much clearer and detailed idea of the processes which take place during intercultural communication and multicultural exercises. In addition, one of the main reasons why the feedback from the surveys and workshop were in such detail was because the participants had specialist understandings of the processes under consideration. What is more, this form of feedback and material collection has offered many more ideas on what can be done with a multicultural learning group. Thus, there is now a greater source of options that I may choose from once I have met with and observed the students of the Summer School.

Thoughts on the coming Summer School

Kolb's (1984) ELT model has been an important basis in devising the pedagogical processes of the exercises, the summer school lay-out and the student

¹⁹ Simulations, I maintain, always adhere what I believe as art – the materialisation and communication of thoughts and the imagination.

assignments. We have constantly been attempting to combine the four stage cycles of Concrete experience (CE), Reflective observation (RO), Abstract conceptualisation (AC), and Active experimentation (AE). It is hoped that via the combination of traditional lecture-style presentations (AC), the long and short experiential exercises (CE and AE) and the group work exercises (RO, AC and AE) that there is something for everyone. This is in addition to the constant RO that will be taking place through learning logs for the duration of the Summer School. Further, the R5 component of the observational project would provide some continuity to the Summer School experience. Rather than making acquaintances that many of the students may feel they will never see again, students may find security and motivation in the fact that the learning and socialising experience has not stopped at the end of the Summer School.

Factors to consider when the Summer School arrives include the ages of participants, as there will be a majority of students undertaking Bachelors educations many will most likely be around their late-teens and early twenties. We must also consider the side of the group, and implement exercises and activities accordingly. The language levels of students also need to be monitored and accommodated for in order to ensure that all students feel comfortable and confident in understanding what is happening during the Summer School. These elements will be focused on in a follow-up report which will be written after the conclusion of the Summer School in September 2007. Otherwise, the development of this project so far has been enlightening in terms of international and inter-disciplinary negotiation practices and considering the way that cultural studies may be included in the education of health and social care workers. This has certainly given me more ideas in terms of what types of exercises and methods can be developed which include art (visual arts and drama) as a tool for education in the future. It has also reminded me once again that culture can never be separated from anything we say or do, as every discipline of study has be originated and shaped in particular cultural frameworks. This also means that the field of education is never culturally neutral, but perhaps if we remain conscious of this, and proactive in challenging our own perspectives we may overcome many of the cultural obstacles and prejudices that have been presented in the past.

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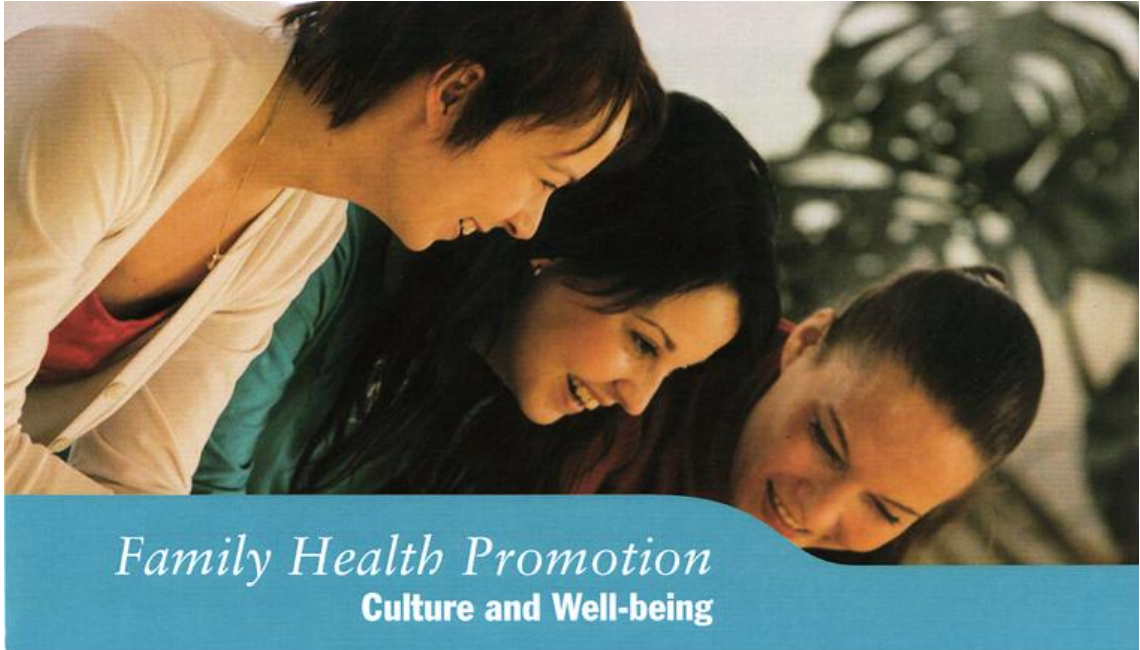
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Family Health Promotion
Culture and Well-being

The 5th Summer School in Jyväskylä, Finland
10-14 September 2007

Family Health Promotion
Culture and Well-Being

Welcome!

Jyväskylä University of Applied Sciences, School of Health and Social Studies has the pleasure hosting the 5th Summer School in September 2007. The Summer School will enhance international cooperation and increase the knowledge of the participants in culture and well-being, in societies and family life, with special focus placed upon children and the elderly. Internationalization plays an important role in the preservation and promotion of well-being and in the competitive abilities of regions on both the local and international levels.

The Summer School provides students, teachers and other professionals with an opportunity to meet and exchange ideas and professional experiences, in order to further develop the important work done for the well-being of the population.

We wish especially welcomed working life representatives and teachers to Summer School - 12th September programme is particularly designed for you!

Wishing to meet you in Jyväskylä

Eila Latvala
Director

Preliminary Programme

Monday 10th September - Culture, Health and Well-being

- Silent Finns in the Global Context
- Health and Well-being of Minority Groups-Focus of Romany Population in Romania and Finland
- Immigrants and Refugees Well-being in Utrecht and Jyväskylä
- Get Together Party

Tuesday 11th September - Promotion of Children's Health and Well-being

- How does the Jyväskylä Parish Support Children's Well-being?
- Community Planning and Children -Environmental Observations Activity
- Health and Functional Capacity of Children in Jyväskylä and Poznan
- Health Promotion of Chronically Ill Children and Their Families in Finland
- Dance Therapy Methods Assisting Children's Healing
- Welfare Clinics and Multiprofessionality, Supporting the Well-being of Children

Wednesday 12th September - Programme for working life representatives and teachers focused on

- Programme for working life representatives and teachers focused on
 - Challenges in Health and Social Care Management
 - Nurse Practitioners in Social and Health Care
 - Availability of Skilled Workforce
 - R&D activities
- Optional Programme: Field Visits to Health and Social Care Institutions; Cultural Events/Recreational Activities
- Jyväskylä City Reception

Thursday 13th September - Promotion of Elderly Well-being

- Finnish Elderly Population in Mälardalen, Sweden
 - Health and Functional Capacity of Elderly Finnish Population
- Health and Functional Capacity of Elderly Population in Jyväskylä and Poznan
- What is the Secret of High Quality Elderly Care in Denmark?
- Polish Point of View to Religion and Health among Elderly Population
- Old Age in China: From Home to Institutions

Friday 14th September - Culture, Health and Well-being

- Student Presentations
- Workshops

The daily programme includes lectures, workshops and student presentations. Students from different educational fields will have an opportunity to discuss, reflect and present the viewpoints of their discipline during workshops. There will also be visits to interesting local venues. The students will get 1.5-3 ECTS credits from the Summer School, according to their own institution's guidelines and regulations.

Posters for the 12th of September

For participants who are interested in exhibiting posters focusing on working life development, please contact Katri Ryttyläinen, Principal Lecturer, at: katri.ryttylainen@jamk.fi, by the April 27th, 2007.

Registration

Registrations for Summer School are due by May 11th, 2007. Registration forms and up-dated information can be found at: www.jamk.fi/sote/summerschool2007.htm
Summer School is free of charge.

www.jamk.fi/sote



JYVÄSKYLÄ UNIVERSITY OF APPLIED SCIENCES