

Iveta Podobinská and Ilona Torri

## Integration Cards

A Tool for Instructors Working with Immigrant Women

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<p>This functional final thesis was done as part of the OSMOS project of Metropolia University of Applied Sciences and the Eastern Family Centre of Helsinki City Social Services Department. The product of the final thesis – Integration Cards – was designed for instructors working with immigrant women to support the integration of immigrants into Finnish society. The product consists of discussion cards with two themes – ‘Finnish culture’ and ‘Services’ – and helping questions and advice related to the cards for the instructor. For easy availability the product was created in a PDF format.</p> <p>The theoretical framework of this final thesis is social pedagogy and its related means of interaction and dialogue. The cards are designed to be used in various groups for immigrant women where the participants can share information and experiences and learn from each other. The aim of the cards is to promote the adaptation of immigrant women into the new culture through the use of dialogue and interaction with each other. The cards also promote the learning of the Finnish language.</p> <p>Both of the themes, Finnish culture and Services, include ten topics for discussion. On each card there is a picture and a Finnish word referring to the topic. The picture is designed to be understandable even if a participant is not familiar with the Finnish word. The role of the instructor is to lead the discussion, evoke further questions and provide information about Finnish culture and services.</p> <p>The product was tested in groups of immigrant women and the results show that the use of the cards promotes interaction and dialogue and helps the instructors to deal with topics related to integration together with the participants. However, the outcomes are closely related to the structure of the group and the language skills of the participants. Future possibilities would be to develop the cards further by creating more themes according to the needs of participants.</p>	
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<p>Tämä toiminnallinen opinnäytetyö on tehty osana Metropolia ammattikorkeakoulun ja Helsingin kaupungin sosiaaliviraston Itäisen perhekeskuksen OSMOS-projektia. Opinnäytetyön tuotos – kotoutumiskortit – on tarkoitettu apuvälineeksi maahanmuuttajanaisten kanssa työskenteleville ohjaajille, jotka tukevat maahanmuuttajanaisten kotoutumista suomalaiseen yhteiskuntaan. Työ koostuu keskustelukorteista ja korttien aiheita tukevista apukysymyksistä ohjaajalle. Keskustelukorteissa on kaksi teemaa: suomalainen kulttuuri ja palvelut. Kortit ovat PDF-muodossa, jotta ne olisivat helposti saatavilla ja käytettävissä.</p> <p>Työn teoreettinen viitekehys on sosiaalipedagogiikka ja siihen kuuluvat vuorovaikutuksen ja dialogin käsitteet. Kortit on suunniteltu käytettäväksi erilaisissa maahanmuuttajanaisten ryhmissä, joissa osallistujat voivat jakaa tietoa ja kokemuksia sekä oppia toisiltaan. Korttien tarkoitus on edistää maahanmuuttajanaisten sopeutumista suomalaiseen yhteiskuntaan korttien pohjalta käytävän keskustelun ja vuorovaikutuksellisen toiminnan avulla. Korttien käytössä painottuu myös suomenkielen oppiminen.</p> <p>Korttien teemat, suomalainen kulttuuri ja palvelut, sisältävät molemmat kymmenen keskustelunaihetta. Korteissa on kyseisiin aihepiireihin liittyvä kuva ja suomenkielinen sana. Kuvat on suunniteltu ymmärrettäväksi myös ilman suomenkielisen termin tietämystä. Ohjaajan tehtävä on ohjata keskustelua, herättää lisäkysymyksiä ja tarjota tietoa suomalaisesta kulttuurista ja palveluista.</p> <p>Kotoutumiskorttien testaus maahanmuuttajanaisten ryhmissä osoitti, että korttien käyttö edistää vuorovaikutusta ja dialogin syntymistä sekä auttaa ohjaajaa käsittelemään kotoutumiseen liittyviä aiheita yhdessä osallistujien kanssa. Tuloksiin vaikuttaa kuitenkin ryhmän rakenne ja osallistujien kielitaito. Tulevaisuudessa kortteja voisi kehittää luomalla lisää teemoja osallistujien tarpeiden mukaan.</p>	
Avainsanat	keskustelukortit, kotoutuminen, maahanmuuttajanaiset, dialogi

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## 1 Introduction

This final thesis was realized as a part of the OSMOS project (Participatory Multicultural Social Counselling) of Metropolia University of Applied Sciences and the Eastern Family Centre of Helsinki City Social Services Department. The aim of the functional final thesis is to provide the instructors working with immigrant women a tool for supporting the integration of these women into Finnish society. The product of the functional project consists of discussion cards to be used in different kinds of groups for immigrant women and a set of helping questions and advice for the instructor to promote diverse discussion. The themes of the cards, 'Finnish culture' and 'Services', provide topics for discussion about the Finnish customs and culture and the services and institutions in Finland. The product is designed to support the integration of immigrant women into Finnish society by tools of social pedagogy – particularly by means of interaction and dialogue, which offer participants a possibility to grow both as individuals and as social beings and thus become active members of the society.

According to Martikainen and Tiilikainen (2007: 15) in *Maahanmuuttajanaiset: Kotoutuminen, perhe ja työ*, before the year 1990 most of the immigrants living in Finland were men but at the present moment half of the immigrants are women. The arguments behind the increase in the numbers of immigrant women are re-unification of families, marriages and return migration. When comparing Finnish women with immigrant women, immigrant women are also having more children at a younger age than Finnish. As stated in the book of Martikainen and Tiilikainen (2007), all the studies concerning immigration were previously performed with no consideration of gender differences, even though the acculturation processes are diverse between men and women. Women and men have different reasons for moving into a new country and the level of education, language skills, personal wealth as well as the motivation to integrate into Finnish society differ between them. Immigrant men are often more active in public areas whereas women spend most of the time at home, raising their children. From the authors' point of view it is desirable to shift the attention to immigrant women and to offer them more opportunities to become familiar with Finnish culture, society and language. Women can socialize and learn in an enjoyable way using the integration cards in peer groups or groups for integration.

In this final thesis the concept of social pedagogy, theories of culture and different acculturation strategies are described more closely to illustrate the theoretical framework for the final thesis. The role of the instructor in the use of the cards is also explained. The instructor functions as a cultural mentor, who leads the discussion, evokes further questions and provides information about Finnish culture and services, while the clients, immigrant women, learn from each other through dialogue and interaction in the discussions. Furthermore, the process of planning, implementation, testing and evaluation of the product is explained. The reasons behind developing such a product were the motivation of the authors to create a useful and creative means of integration as well as the authors' interest in multicultural work.

## **2 Integrating by Tools of Social Pedagogy**

Social pedagogy forms the theoretical basis for this final thesis. Social pedagogy is an orientation of theory and practice towards the integration of individuals into society through individualisation and socialisation. By supporting a person's growth as an individual and a social being, the person can grow to become an independent member of the society and to learn to interact with their social environment. (Hämäläinen 1999.)

As a theoretical concept, social pedagogy can be understood from different points of view. It can be viewed as a societal movement emphasizing pedagogical promotion of humanity and community, an educational/pedagogical field of study that is based on social sciences, or a professional orientation that combines both social and pedagogical perspectives in practice (Hämäläinen & Kurki 1997: 13). As a practical orientation – which is the basis in the implementation of this final project – the aim is to strengthen and clarify the social identity of people, to support their subjectivity and life control and promote their participation and involvement in society (Hämäläinen 1999: 66).

Through means of social pedagogy excluded individuals may learn to take responsibility for their own well-being and the well-being of their environment. Social pedagogy tries to find means to improve the quality of life of people, which is done by supporting growth, empowering individuals and communities, preventing and correcting problems and changing society. The idea is that an individual could live in harmony with the val-

ues and norms of society and be the subject of his own life by making decisions, taking responsibility and being in control of his own life. (Hämäläinen 1999.)

## 2.1 Socio-pedagogical basis

The idea and planning of the integration cards stem from the theory of social pedagogy. The basis of social pedagogy is to prevent and alleviate social problems by pedagogical means (Hämäläinen 1999). Gathering a group of immigrant women together to ponder on and discuss topics related to Finnish culture and society not only provides them with information and knowledge about Finland, but at the same time it promotes their social and societal identities, which are the foundations for social participation and involvement in a new culture (Hämäläinen 1999: 69).

Societal identity, according to Hämäläinen (1999: Appendix 1), is the perception of how an individual sees him/herself as a member of the society where he/she lives and which he/she belongs to. Identity is built in interaction with other people and in relation to the society and communities (family, neighbourhood, school, work, hobbies, ideological) which one belongs to and where one acts. This kind of group activity of using the integration cards contributes to communality (*yhteisöllisyys*), functional activity (*toiminnallisuus*) and emotional experience (*elämyksellisyys*), which all are basic concepts of social pedagogy. Communality, functional activity and emotional experiences are also important factors that contribute to the strengthening of the societal identity of an individual in a new country.

The idea of Hämäläinen (1999: 6) that social pedagogy promotes the social integration of people who have difficulties finding their place as members of the society suits especially well our target group of immigrants trying to find their way and place in Finnish society. Understanding Finnish culture, which is the aim of the use of the integration cards, contributes to the societal functioning capacity and life control of the participants at large. By participating, discussing, sharing information and experiences and learning from each other the participants are able to take steps closer to integrating into the new society.



Socio-pedagogical work is also preventive – it affects areas where exclusion and social problems have not yet arisen, but where exclusion from society is a threat (Hämäläinen 1999: 74). That is relevant when considering how important the understanding of Finnish culture and customs is in the prevention of exclusion and in the process of successful integration. Discussions on the topics of the cards have the potential to awake the participants to critical thinking and raise awareness and activate them to help themselves. According to Hämäläinen and Kurki (1997: 127) social pedagogy has an orientation towards everyday life and the socio-pedagogical means in the form of interaction, dialogue and peer learning contribute to the objective of immigrants learning about Finnish culture and society on a practical level.

## 2.2 Interaction and dialogue

Interaction and dialogue are central concepts of social pedagogy and they are also the central concepts of this final thesis. Immigrant women using the integration cards together with an instructor learn by interaction and dialogue. According to Hämäläinen (1999: Appendix 1) interaction happens in an interactive relationship where partners influence each other and promote change in each other. In the best case interaction supports human growth, development of personality and self, learning of new things, deepening of consciousness, improvement of social capacities and increase in life control. In the case of immigrant groups, however, where there might be no other common language than Finnish, the success of interaction depends greatly on the level of the participants' Finnish skills and on other circumstances, such as the ability of the instructor to support discussion equitably.

Dialogue, according to Hämäläinen (1999: Appendix 1) is cooperation and communication between two subjects where the participants treat each other as equal partners respecting each other's subjectivity and right for self-determination. Subjectivity refers to a person's own perspective, feelings, beliefs and desires (Solomon 2005). In this final thesis the definition of dialogue refers to the dialogue among the participants as well as the dialogue between the participant/s and the instructor. Furthermore, Isaacs (1999: 83-159) defines four elements of dialogue – listening, respecting, suspending and voicing. As Isaacs (1999: 19) puts it: "...dialogue is a conversation in which people think together in relationship". When using the integration cards in a group (either one

or more times) there is a potential that warm and friendly relationships will be established.

All in all, the socio-pedagogical means of interaction and dialogue are naturally applied when utilizing the product of this final thesis in real settings. Using the cards, the instructor and participants form a pedagogical relationship, which consists of interaction, dialogue and learning together. Integration happens when participants gain better understanding of the features of Finnish culture and society. Dialogue and interaction are the tools leading to integration in this final thesis.

### **3 Culture and Acculturation**

Culture is the theoretical framework for the contents of the integration cards and successful acculturation is the desired objective for immigrants wishing to settle in a new culture. The integration cards have as their objective the ability to help immigrants in their acculturation and integration process. The themes of the integration cards are largely based on theories of culture which will be explained, and different acculturation strategies will be briefly presented with a stronger emphasis on integration.

#### **3.1 Definitions of culture**

The way one thinks, feels and behaves is the outcome of what s/he has learned during life in various environments – in the family, in the neighbourhood, in religious and in educational institutions or at the workplace. Besides the above mentioned, the ordinary daily actions, for example greeting, the way of eating and physical distance from another person are attributes of culture. (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010: 4-6.) To explore the phenomenon of culture further, Hofstede (1991: 5) defines that culture is always happening between people – the difference of a group of people from another group of people is culture. In the words of Bennett and Bennett (in Hannila n.d.) culture refers to “the learned and shared values, beliefs and behaviours of a group of interacting people”.

According to Bennett and Bennett (in Hannila n.d.) culture has also often been described with the parable of an iceberg, where external culture – the tip of the iceberg – including behaviour, appearance and language, is visible to the outsider, whereas internal culture – the iceberg below the surface – including values and thought patterns, is hidden from the outsider and is often subconscious even for the representatives of the culture. External culture is explicitly learned and it is conscious and can be easily changed. Internal culture, instead, is implicitly learned and it is difficult to change. In the middle of these two there are beliefs, which may be partly visible or partly hidden to the outsider; an example of this is religion with visible manifestations but with invisible values. (Hannila n.d.) A prerequisite for understanding a foreign culture is to learn about the underlying values and ways of thinking in the culture.

Hofstede et al (2010: 7-9) distinguish four levels of how cultural differences are manifested in societies – in symbols, heroes, rituals and values. Symbols (for instance words, gestures, clothes, flags) are the most visible to other people. The level of heroes refers to important characters or persons in a particular culture (for instance Mika Häkkinen or Viivi and Wagner in Finland). Rituals stand for actions which are performed collectively (for example christening of a newborn) and finally, values are the core of culture, the most hidden, which are about the preferences of people.

### 3.1.1 Five cultural dimensions

Hofstede (Hofstede, Pederson & Hofstede 2002: 34) defines five dimensions that drive behaviour in all cultures – identity, hierarchy, gender, truth and virtue. The dimension of identity refers to *'individualism versus collectivism'* – cultures where people are either individual or group orientated. Wealthy countries tend to be relatively individualistic, whereas poorer countries relatively collectivistic. The dimension of hierarchy is connected to the phenomenon of equality, which manifests in *'large versus small power distances'*. Power distances are small in the case of a country/family/company where people are regarded as equal and the hierarchical system is less prevalent between people, while large power distances are common in a society/institution where hierarchy is considered an important phenomenon. The dimension of gender is associated with *'feminine versus masculine'* type of culture. In feminine cultures men and women are wearing the same kind of clothes and are occupied in relatively similar

types of professions, whereas in masculine cultures the roles and responsibilities of men and women are different and can hardly be exchanged. The dimension of truth refers to '*uncertainty avoidance versus uncertainty tolerance*', which has to do with anxiety about whether there is one or more truth. In cultures that avoid uncertainty, differences are considered to be dangerous – for instance in the case of immigration. In cultures that tolerate uncertainty, people are more tolerant to differences. Finally in the dimension of virtue the concentration is on the '*long-term orientated versus short term orientated*' perspective – either on the future or the present. Many Asian countries like Japan or China are thought to be long-term orientated, whereas most European and American countries are rather short-term orientated. Culture is the manner in which groups of people manage to cope with these five challenges. (Hofstede et al 2002: 35–39.) The connection of this theory to the integration cards will be explained more specifically in the chapter of Implementation of the product.

### 3.2 Acculturation

The centre of attention of this final thesis is on immigrants who are becoming familiar with a foreign culture. Acculturation is a process which an individual experiences when changing cultural environment (Berry, Poortinga, Segall and Dasen 2002: 349). Liebkind (2000: 13) describes acculturation as a process of changes that happen over time in the beliefs, emotions, attitudes, values, behaviour and assimilation patterns of persons who are in contact with another culture. On the other hand, according to Liebkind, acculturation can also be understood as a measurable state, where behaviour, feelings and attitudes of an *acculturated* individual can be measured on a certain point of time. Berry et al (2002: 353–355) define four strategies of acculturation, which refer to different ways of how an individual or groups acculturate: integration, assimilation, separation and marginalization.

The acculturation strategies are all about how much a newcomer maintains his/her own cultural identity versus to what extent s/he is involved in the new culture (Berry 1997). The *marginalization* strategy is outlined as little opportunity or interest of maintaining one's own culture and similarly little interest in involvement in the new culture. *Assimilation* stands for exchange of the person's own cultural identity for the new one – an individual participates daily in the other culture but does not wish to preserve

his/her own culture. The strategy of *separation*, instead, refers to holding on tightly to the culture of origin while avoiding contact with others in the new culture. Finally, the last alternative, *integration*, refers to the state when maintaining one's own cultural identity is in balance with involving oneself in the new culture. (Berry et al 2002: 354.)

### 3.2.1 Integration

The product of this functional final thesis is called 'Integration Cards' and it functions as a tool for helping immigrant women to integrate into Finnish society. Integration is also the most fruitful alternative of the acculturation strategies, therefore it is essential to define more closely what the concept of integration means. In Finnish there are two terms corresponding to integration: 'kotoutuminen' and 'kotouttaminen'. In the Finnish Act of Integration of Immigrants (Laki maahanmuuttajien kotouttamisesta 493/1999) 'kotoutuminen' is defined as the personal development of immigrants, aimed at participation in working life and the functioning of society while preserving their language and culture, whereas 'kotouttaminen' is defined as the measures taken and resources provided by the authorities to promote such integration. In the next two paragraphs the different circumstances which affect the process of integration will be outlined.

The process of integration is always individual (e.g. Lairio, Nissilä, Puukari & Varis 2001: 138). The level and progress of the process are affected by many factors such as the conditions behind immigration, e.g. if the person has come to the new country as a professional specialist or as an illiterate refugee. In the integration process an immigrant acquires knowledge and skills with which he/she can get along in the new country, to work and to participate in the economical, political and social life of the society like anyone else living in the country. (Martikainen & Tiilikainen 2007.)

Learning the language is a central factor in integration. The education level of the immigrant, understanding of different cultures and the attitudes of the mainstream population play an important role in the progress of integration. It would be also important to find use for one's own language, culture, earlier education and work experience in the new country. Immigration is always a big change in an individual's life and often requires social support. (Martikainen & Tiilikainen 2007.) An immigrant may live in two

cultures simultaneously and while communicating between these two cultures various differences and challenges can arise.

### 3.3 Communication across cultures

There are two types of communication defined by Hannila (n.d.) – verbal and non-verbal. The tool of verbal interaction is language. Language is the outcome of a person's perceptions and thoughts, therefore people from different cultures communicating in a foreign language may understand things diversely and misunderstandings may easily arise. Furthermore the way something is said has an impact; this refers to the style of verbal communication – the speed, the loudness/quietness, intonation and pause making.

Non-verbal communication means the way something is said – what kind of body language is used. The way a man from Japan stands and sits, moves the body and hands, uses facial expressions and eye contact and how he keeps personal distance or greets, among others, is definitely different from the behaviour of a Spanish man for instance. (Hannila n.d.) Non-verbal and verbal communication is part of culture, although it might not be very obvious to a person settling into a new culture.

Hall (in Alitolppa-Niitamo 1993: 149-151) divides cultures into high and low context cultures. In high context cultures verbal information distribution is rather small and it is expected that messages are understood without words, whereas in low context cultures words are a very important part of communication and little information is distributed and interpreted through context. While countries such as Japan, Korea and Arabic countries belong to the group of high context cultures, for example German speaking and Scandinavian countries are low context cultures. In conclusion, information, expressed either in words or non-verbally, transmitted from one participant to another can be understood differently depending on the participants' experiences and cultural background.

## 4 Immigration

The integration cards are intended to be used with immigrants settling into Finnish society. In this final thesis refugees are also included in the term 'immigrants'. Potocky-Tripodi (2002: 4–5) explains that the difference between immigrants and refugees is that immigrants depart from their country of origin voluntarily, whereas refugees are forced out from their home country in the fear of persecution. The word immigrant stands for a person who, for various reasons such as family re-unification, economical, political or other motives leaves his/her own country and settles into a new one (Potocky-Tripodi 2002: 13-14).

### 4.1 Immigrants in Finland

In 2010, there were 167 954 foreigners living in Finland, of whom 88 613 were men and 79 341 women. In 2009, the previous year, there were 155 705 immigrants living in Finland, which means that the number of immigrants grew in one year by 12 249 persons. (Tilastokeskus 2011a.) In 2010 there were 3 207 new refugees accepted into Finland, 1 784 asylum seekers with either asylum or work permit status, and beyond these numbers there are others coming for work, family or other reasons (Tilastokeskus 2011b). However not all immigrants/refugees are planning to stay in Finland, but rather are waiting for a suitable moment to return back home (Martikainen & Tiilikainen 2007).

### 4.2 Immigrant women

There are many factors that affect the adaptation process, gender being one of them. According to many studies (Martikainen & Tiilikainen 2007: 24) females are more at risk than men. Women compared to men, especially the ones who originate from a very different culture than they reside in, are more predisposed to difficulties with integration into the new society (Hofstede 1991: 223, Martikainen & Tiilikainen 2007). Mothers with children often spend most of their time at home or in their own community and have neither the time nor many opportunities to interact with the other culture, whereas men usually learn the new language and have employment (Martikainen & Tiilikainen 2007). According to Hofstede (1991: 223) and Martikainen and Tiilikainen

(2007) in a case that the woman uses the opportunities of the new culture, it is possible that some problems may arise in the family – such as a loss of respect from the husband, jealousy or even violence. The integration cards have the potential to support the knowledge of women's own values as well as the Finnish culture and language; the cards enhance their integration.

## **5 Aims of the Integration Cards**

The aim of the final thesis is to provide a tool for instructors working with immigrant women to help the women integrate into Finnish society. For this a set of discussion cards has been created. The approach is socio-pedagogical, which emphasizes interaction and dialogue. The aim of the use of the cards is to create dialogue between the participants. The idea is that by discussion and dialogue immigrants share information and experiences that will help them to understand the Finnish culture and society better, which will contribute to their integration.

The discussion cards are intended to be used in various groups for immigrant women. These kinds of groups can be for example different integration courses (so-called "koto-kurssi"), peer groups for immigrant women or Finnish language courses. The foundation idea is that people gather and talk together, sharing ideas and experiences and thus learn from each other. The cards can be used in the perspective of peer learning – educational processes where peers interact with other peers interested in the same topic and learn with and from each other (Boud 1999). Another objective of the cards is to support the learning of the Finnish language. That is why the discussion should happen in Finnish and the instructor should have Finnish skills in order to explain different words and phenomena for the participants.

Through dialogue on different topics of the cards together with an instructor, immigrants learn about Finnish culture and services. The role of the instructor is to lead discussion, raise further questions and topics for discussion and provide participants with information. To support diverse and comprehensive discussion there is a handbook for the instructor with relevant questions related to the themes. The product of



this thesis is the combination of the cards and the handbook, but for a clearer understanding of the purpose of each, they will be explained separately.

### 5.1 Integration cards

The integration cards consist of two themes, 'Finnish culture' and 'Services'. Berry (1997) defines three different ways of adaptation (refers to a change in behaviour due to the influence of the environment) of migrants to a new culture – psychological, sociocultural and economic. The theme 'Finnish culture' intends to focus on the perspective of sociocultural adaptation. By discussing the topics in this theme the aim is to enhance the knowledge of Finnish habits and customs. The second theme is called 'Services'. Socio-cultural adaptation is about how well an acculturating individual can cope in everyday situations in a new culture (Berry, 1997). In the opinion of the authors it is important to know about Finnish customs as well as the different services available to citizens, therefore these two themes were selected. Both of the themes consist of ten cards. On every card there is a colourful picture and a word referring to the picture in block letters in the Finnish language.

### 5.2 Handbook for the instructor

The instructor's handbook offers advice on how the cards can be used, as well as helping questions or suggestions for discussion for every card. It is possible that sometimes no conversation arises from a certain topic and the idea of the helping questions is to raise thoughts, help the participants to ponder on the topic from different viewpoints and invite the participants to speak out. There are no correct "answers" for any of the topics or discussions. The role of the instructor is simply to lead the conversation and give the participants ideas to think about, while also participating in the conversation. Every discussion will take different forms according to the number and background of the participants. For easier orientation there is a picture of every card present next to the helping questions in the handbook.

### 5.3 Use of the integration cards

In order to change the cards from the PDF format into concrete usable cards, certain preparations are needed. For this a colour printer, scissors, glue and a sheet of cardboard are required. After printing out the PDF document containing the cards, each card is cut out and folded in half in the middle. After that the cardboard is cut into pieces the size of a card and glued inside the card, so that on one side stays the picture and on the other the colourful background. It is good to leave the cards to dry under a heavy item in order to have the cards straightened. This process can be performed by either the instructor herself/himself or by the clients.

The set of cards can be utilized in many ways. The simplest way to use the cards is to discuss the topics in a group of clients. In this case each of the clients has a turn to draw a card. The client shares her own experiences about the topic in the card with the other participants, who in turn can add their own comments and views on the subject. The idea of the cards is to create dialogue among the participants. The instructor functions as a supportive unit in the discussion, participating in the discussion and bringing forth new ideas for discussion as well as information.

Another way to use the integration cards is to apply body language, as in a pantomime game, to explain a topic of a card. In this method the participants would try to guess the topic being presented by pantomime and when guessed correctly, there would be discussion about the topic. Use of creative ways in doing things is beneficial for people. According to Hämäläinen (1999: 67) creative activity in different forms helps people to structure and deepen their self-knowledge, to find new orientation and meaning in life, to strengthen self-esteem, to develop themselves, to play and to relax, and to solve problems related to their own lives. Creativity is one of the work models of the socio-pedagogical approach (Hämäläinen 1999: 67). However, there should be enough time reserved for a pantomime session as the performance demands some time in addition to the discussion that follows. The instructor has an opportunity to choose the way in which the cards will be used; s/he can even develop a new method, according to the size of the group, the participants' language skills and their desires.

## 6 Role of the Instructor

The integration cards are intended to be used in a group of immigrant women guided by an instructor, who is familiar with Finnish culture and society. The instructor may be a professional of social services, a student, or an immigrant who has lived in Finland long enough to support newcomers in their integration. The idea of the use of the cards is to share information and experiences in a peer group manner, but the role of the instructor is to lead the discussion, raise new ideas for discussion and explain concepts that might be new to the participants. Without the role of the instructor the deeper knowledge or explanation of different concepts and phenomena may remain obscure or unclear, even misunderstood by the participants.

### 6.1 Cultural mentor/cultural interpreter

The perspective of instruction differs according to whether the instructor is a Finnish native or an immigrant – an immigrant having lived through the integration process personally, while a Finnish instructor would probably highlight deeper feelings of the Finns in general. The authors of this final thesis came across the terms 'cultural mentor' (kulttuurimentori) and 'cultural interpreter' (kulttuuritulkki), which could be used in this context of the role of the instructor. There was not much academic reference to cultural mentoring or cultural interpreting available, but what the instructor does – guides, advises and instructs a person in the beginning of her integration process by sharing his/her experiences and knowledge – fulfills the common use of the term cultural mentoring. (Look for example Haapaveden Opisto 2011 or Oulun Seudun Settlementti ry 2011.)

Mentoring is traditionally associated with working life and career development. In professional mentoring knowledge and experience relevant to work or professional development is transmitted by a more experienced person to someone less experienced or knowledgeable at the beginning of his career (Bozeman & Feeney 2007). The Merriam-Webster dictionary (2011) defines 'mentor' simply as "a trusted counsellor or guide" or "tutor or coach", which could refer to other kinds of mentorship as well, not only career-related. Cultural mentoring in that sense could be understood as a relationship where an immigrant already integrated into a new culture acts as a support person – a

mentor – to a newcomer to the culture. In addition, Wai-Packard (n.d.) suggests that mentoring can take place in a peer group, where it would advance both psychological and social functions of the participants.

The role of a cultural interpreter is similar to that of the cultural mentor. In the definition of the glossary of ELY-keskus (2010) a cultural interpreter is a person who acts as a cultural mediator in intercultural encounters between representatives of the mainstream and minority cultures. According to Väisänen et al. (2007) a cultural interpreter can be representative of either the mainstream culture or a minority culture. Cairncross (1989) emphasizes the ability of a cultural interpreter to act in cross-cultural and cross-lingual interaction, thus having a strong understanding of both cultures and their beliefs and practices.

In the light of the definitions, 'cultural mentor' or 'cultural interpreter' refers to a person with an immigrant background. However, looking at the concepts more broadly, anyone could act as a cultural mentor or cultural interpreter – also a native of the mainstream culture, as long as the person is culturally sensitive, familiar with the mainstream culture and aware of the differences between the cultures in question. Cultural mentoring or interpreting would fit into the ideology of the integration cards as they are used in situations where culture and customs are clarified to someone new to a culture, by an instructor working with immigrants.

## 6.2 Culturally competent practice

Lum (in Patocky-Tripodi 2002: 131) emphasizes that a person working with immigrants has to first be aware of his/her own culture – this knowledge leads to openness and prevents against judging and negative responses towards people from other cultures. Alitolppa-Niitamo (1993: 168-169) adds that an instructor should not be 'colour blind' and see the differences between cultures as a problem but instead s/he should be ready to experience the differences. To continue with Patocky-Tripodi (2002: 181), culturally competent workers are interested in cultural diversities, they are ready to learn more about various cultures, and most importantly, the workers continuously revise their own beliefs, attitudes, knowledge and skills while working with people from different cultures.

## **7 Process of the Integration Cards**

According to Vilkkä and Airaksinen (2003: 41-42) in the functional final thesis a student must be able to combine theory with practice fruitfully – s/he should find solutions and develop professional culture. In this chapter the connection of the theories of culture and social pedagogy to the choices realized concerning the topics for the cards will be demonstrated. Additionally the process of planning, implementation, testing, evaluating and finalising the product, as well as plans for distribution of the product will be presented.

### **7.1 Planning**

The idea for this final thesis arose while the authors were brainstorming for the subject of a functional final thesis and came across a board game designed for children as someone else's final thesis, presented in a *Talentia* magazine in the spring of 2011 (Talentia 2011). The authors came up with an idea to develop a game for immigrants to help them in their integration process into Finnish society. There was an initial interest in multicultural work and an idea to socialize people in order to help them to become active members of the society. A socio-pedagogical approach was essential, as in socio-pedagogical work the basic idea is to offer people who have difficulties a possibility to participate, to meet other people, to fulfil and develop themselves, to do things they enjoy, to feel themselves to be useful, and find direction in life together with others. (Hämäläinen 1999: 72.) This would suit the idea of a game.

This final thesis was performed as part of the OSMOS project. Thus it was clear from the beginning that there were not enough resources to create a "real" game (e.g. a board game), but instead it would be possible to create cards in a PDF format, which would be available for use to anyone. The plan was to create a card game with different themes dealing with Finnish culture and society and the game would be used with immigrants of different nationalities regardless of their level of Finnish language. The authors started to search for whether there was already something similar to this in existence that would utilize socio-pedagogical means with immigrants to support them in their integration process. As a result of the search there were many different kinds of discussion cards found for various target groups such as clients of mental health,

child protection, children or youth – but not any for immigrant clients supporting integration. Convinced by this, the authors saw this as an opportunity to develop something new in the field of integration.

The idea was that the cards could be used as a so-called word explanation game (in a way like in the Finnish 'Alias' game) where the participants would have to explain words on the cards and others in the group should try to guess what word was meant and when they guessed correctly, there would be discussion about the topic in the group, which would lead to mutual learning. This has characteristics of sociocultural animation, a pedagogical method, which aims to change attitudes and improve the social reality of individuals through activity and participation. The aim of sociocultural animation is also to create social networks for individuals, evoke feelings and open up interest for one's environment and surroundings. It also emphasizes learning through communication and teaches individuals to make decisions and to be in dialogue with other individuals. (Kurki 2000.)

The next step was to think about the themes for the cards. The authors searched the internet for information about Finnish culture and integration. A teacher of Metropolia teaching multiculturalism, whose students had done research on the needs of immigrant mothers in Helsinki, was consulted. The authors also asked for the opinion of an instructor of a peer support group for immigrants in Helsinki, who supported the ideas of the authors. As a result of another brainstorming session, five themes were chosen: 'Customs and habits in Finland', 'Services in the Finnish society', 'Health', 'Family' and 'Finnish culture'.

As a start, topics for the themes of 'Customs and habits' and 'Services' were planned together with questions related to the topics. Information about essential topics was browsed through on the internet, on different websites concerning Finnish culture. The idea was to make the two themes ready, test them and get feedback on them before planning and making the rest. The plan was that on every card there would be a colourful picture and a word in the Finnish language referring to the topic. According to Perhoniemi and Jasinskaja-Lahti (2006: 79) the knowledge of the Finnish language is a factor contributing to the wellbeing and success of social adaptation and thus it was justified that a Finnish word alongside with the picture would serve the purpose of lan-

guage learning. There were many doubts about how the topics would be portrayed – would the pictures be drawn by the authors, would they be acquired from somewhere else (for example free clipart from the internet) or would there be someone else to draw them. In the end the authors decided to draw the pictures themselves.

At a stage when sketches of the cards and questions for the first two themes were ready, the authors visited the instructor of the peer support group in Helsinki for a second time and discussed relevant topics which should be included in the themes. The ideas and advice received from the instructor affected the selection of topics to be included and the authors found the discussion very supportive and helpful in the process of planning.

## 7.2 Implementation of the product

To start with, the process of creation of the integration cards will be illustrated. After the topics of the cards had been chosen, the next step was to draw the images for the cards. The theme of 'Customs and habits' was nearly all completed in April 2011. The pictures for the cards of the theme of 'Services' were drawn during the following month in May 2011. A picture for each card was drawn by the authors with help from the internet. For instance when a card for the topic of greeting was about to be drawn the authors searched for free clipart pictures on this topic on the internet as an example. An important objective was that the picture is understandable even if a participant is not familiar with the Finnish word related to the picture.

A picture was portrayed on a half of an A4 sheet with a pencil and later coloured with watercolours. After this the picture was scanned and edited in the Photoshop Elements program and saved in a JPG format. The process of drawing and editing the cards in the above mentioned program was at the beginning very time consuming but with experience the authors became more efficient. The cards in JPG format were first transferred onto a Word document but later it was decided that the whole product with the helping questions would be made with the InDesign program so that it would have a more professional look. The authors received help from an external person in the design of the outlook as well as in finishing the product with InDesign.

The ten topics created for the theme of 'Customs and habits' were: Greeting ('Tervehtiminen'), Distance ('Välimatka'), Visiting someone ('Kylässä käyminen'), Sauna, Being on time ('Ajoissa oleminen'), Loudness/silence ('Kovaäänisyys'), Table manners ('Pöytätavat'), Recycling ('Roskien lajittelu'), Honesty ('Rehellisyys') and Order ('Järjestys'). The eleven topics for the theme of 'Services' were: Bank ('Pankki'), Doctor ('Lääkäri'), Shop ('Kauppa'), Day care ('Päiväkot'), School ('Koulu'), Studying for profession ('Opiskelu'), Playpark ('Leikkipuisto'), Library ('Kirjasto'), KELA, Local Register Office ('Maistraatti') and Social Station ('Sosiaaliasema'). These topics of the two themes were tested in the first round of testing sessions, which is explained in the paragraph of Testing the product. However, the above mentioned cards as well as the topics were modified after the testing and this is explained subsequently.

Due to lack of time resources and the extent of the final thesis, it was decided by the authors, with the advice from the supervising teachers, that instead of the original five themes, the product would only contain two themes. The themes of 'Customs and habits' and 'Services' were fully ready but since the aim of the final thesis was from the beginning the enhancement of the knowledge of Finnish culture it was decided that the name of the theme 'Customs and habits' was changed to 'Finnish culture'. Some of the cards in the theme of 'Customs and habits' were exchanged for more suitable ones. For instance, the card for recycling ('Roskien lajittelu') was exchanged for nature ('Luonto'), the card for table manners ('Pöytätavat') was replaced by food ('Ruoka'), and the name of the card of visiting someone ('Kylässä käyminen') was changed so that more cards ('Järjestys' and 'Rehellisyys') were combined into one card named 'manners' ('Käyttäytymistavat'). However, the card 'Käyttäytymistavat' was challenging to understand by the participants of the second round testing sessions and therefore it was again later modified.

Some of the cards of the other theme, 'Services', were excluded or replaced according to the oral feedback received from the first two testing sessions. The card of playpark ('Leikkipuisto') was excluded and the card of shop ('Kauppa') was replaced by a card of police ('Polisi'). Additionally the card of day care ('Päiväkot') was renamed to 'Päivähoito' which would cover the topic from a broader perspective and the discussions could progress in more depth. The objective of the authors was to have the same



number of cards in both themes, which had an influence on the changes concerning the topics of the cards.

### 7.2.1 Topics of the theme 'Finnish culture'

On the basis of the feedback from the testing sessions and theory about Finnish culture, the final ten topics for the theme of 'Finnish culture' ('Suomalainen kulttuuri') were chosen to be: Greeting ('Tervehtiminen'), Distance ('Välimatka'), Being on time ('Ajoissa oleminen'), Loudness/silence ('Kovaäänisyys'), Visiting someone ('Kylässä'), Sauna, Family ('Perhe'), Food ('Ruoka'), National holidays ('Juhlapäivät') and Nature ('Luonto'). The suggestions for discussion in these topics are mostly based on theories of culture. To provide examples of the theory behind the reasons for choosing these topics, the concepts of family, distance, time and silence will be explained in more detail.

The Hofstede's (2002) theory of five cultural dimensions talks about individual and collective cultures. One of the most distinct expressions of the individualistic versus collective dimensions is the conception of family. What is family like in Finland? Is it a nuclear family consisting of a mother, father and their children or is it a broader unit including also grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins or even further bonds of kinship? In an individualistic culture, which Finland also counts in, children become independent much earlier than in some countries with collective cultures. Likewise, respect for the elderly is not a central value in an individualistic culture because in an individual culture youth is idolized. (Alitolppa-Niitamo 1993: 120.)

The use of space in interaction between people differs from culture to culture, as well as the meanings people give to it. People from different cultures have a different need for personal space. Cultures can be divided into close-contact and remote-contact cultures: in close-contact cultures it is normal to express emotions with strong expressions, touching and use of voice; in remote-contact cultures interaction is much more reserved. (Alitolppa-Niitamo 1993: 148.) In Finland prominently people require their personal space, which might be confusing for someone coming from a different culture.

The conception of time and use of time also varies according to culture. In Western cultures "time is money" – this reflects a linear time concept, where time is regarded as a limited resource and which emphasizes timetables and hurry. In some other, for example African cultures, time is not so important and people live more in the present moment without thinking about the future. Being late in Finland often signals lack of punctuality or lack of respect for the other person. (Alitolppa-Niitamo 1993: 145.)

Alitolppa-Niitamo (1993: 151) also discusses the concept of silence. The amount of silence and talking is considered differently in different cultures. If one is not familiar with the prevailing norm of silence, misunderstandings are likely to occur. Even within Western cultures silence is received differently. In Finland silence is allowed. For some others silence in interactive situations is greatly uncomfortable and might convey sadness, critique or confusion. In Finland useless talking is often considered annoying.

Other topics in the theme of Finnish culture include the way of greeting, which is also culture specific and close to people's everyday life. On the basis of reading about Finnish culture and recollecting their own experiences and observations, the authors came to conclusion that sauna, food, national holidays and nature are also aspects very central to Finnish culture and essential for a foreigner to understand and know about. Sauna and nature are often regarded as the essence of Finnishness and the way Finns celebrate some of their holidays (e.g. 'vappu' and 'juhannus') could also be very exotic for a person from another culture.

### 7.2.2 Topics of the theme 'Services'

In social pedagogy, societal functioning capacity (yhteiskunnallinen toimintakyky) and life control (elämänhallinta) of an individual are fundamental concepts. They refer to the ability of an individual to maintain and promote the quality of life and control of life of oneself and one's family in a changing society. This is possible by possessing knowledge and skills that are needed for a stable life as a member of the society. Life control relates to the societal functioning capacity in the form of access to sufficient living, human relationships, work, education, hobbies, services and other social institutions and operational systems that are significant for the quality of life. (Hämäläinen 1999: Appendix 1.)

To become an independent member of a society, it is important to understand how the society functions, what kind of services it offers to its citizens and what kind of institutions are central for the wellbeing of individuals. Because of this the authors chose "Services" as the second theme of the integration cards. The topics in the theme of Services introduce the basic institutions and services available for the residents of Finland. The topics in this theme are: Health centre (Terveyskeskus), Day care (Päivähoito), School (Koulu), Studying for a profession (Opiskelu), Library (Kirjasto), Bank (Pankki), Social station (Sosiaaliasema), KELA, Local Register Office (Maistraatti) and Police (Poliisi).

For immigrants moving to Finland and aiming to settle, language learning and studying are often prerequisites for finding employment. Often work experience and qualifications from the country of origin are not appreciated in Finland (Martikainen & Tiilikainen 2007) and immigrants may find themselves in a situation where they have to learn their profession anew or learn a new profession. The topics of school and studying offer discussion for the understanding of the Finnish school structure and possibilities to develop oneself professionally.

Finland is a country of universal social policy. This means that basic subsistence and wellbeing are secured for all the citizens of the country. The objective of universal social policy is a high living standard for everyone through ideas of equality and justice. (Niemi 2005.) That is why Finland has institutions such as KELA, social stations and a free health care system. At the beginning of settling into the new country, immigrants are greatly dependent on the services that the state provides. Therefore it is important to discuss these topics in the integration groups.

### 7.3 Testing the product

The discussion cards were tested in two rounds. The first round concentrated on the relevance, understandability and appearance of the cards as well as the usefulness of the helping questions for the instructor. Feedback received from this testing round was essential for the authors in developing the product further. The second testing round concentrated in the outcome of the use of the cards and the usefulness of the helping

questions for the instructor. The aim of this testing round was to find out if the cards served their purpose of creating interaction and dialogue and if the instructors benefited from this tool and the helping questions complied to facilitate its use.

First testing session was conducted in May 2011 in a peer support group for immigrant women in Helsinki. In it the initial theme of Finnish customs and habits was tested. The testing group consisted of one client, two instructors of the group and the authors who participated in the discussions as instructors. Feedback from this testing session was collected orally from both the client and the instructors of the group.

The second testing session took place in June 2011 in a Finnish language course for immigrant women organized in a playpark in Helsinki. There both of the initial themes of Finnish customs and habits and Services were tested in two groups of immigrant women. The group testing the theme of Customs and habits consisted of four clients from different cultures, with the authors of this final thesis acting as instructors. The group testing the theme of Services consisted of five clients, a few of them with a common cultural background, with the language teacher as the instructor. From the theme of Customs and habits feedback was collected orally from the participants and from the theme of Services feedback was collected in a written form from the instructor of the language course. Due to lack of time, oral feedback from the participants testing the theme of Services was not possible to be collected.

The second round of tests was carried out in October 2011. It was conducted in order to collect feedback from instructors of groups for immigrant women testing the cards in authentic surroundings without the authors' interference in the situation. Two testing sessions were carried out in peer support groups for immigrant women in Helsinki, organized in one place. One of the groups tested the theme of Finnish culture with thirteen clients and four instructors participating in the session. Another group tested the theme of Services with seven clients and five instructors participating in the testing. From both of the sessions feedback of the instructors was collected with a written feedback form. Feedback was received from all four instructors testing the theme of Finnish culture and three instructors testing the theme of Services.

#### 7.4 Evaluation of the cards and the helping questions

The response from the professionals from all the testing sessions was very positive – the idea of using discussion cards in integration groups for immigrant women was well-liked. Feedback from the first testing round helped the authors to develop the product further. The second testing round played a more important role in the evaluation of the complete product in total and the conclusions of the product and its usability were based on the results of the second testing round sessions. Feedback forms for both of the testing rounds can be found in the Appendix.

As mentioned earlier, the aim of the first round of testing sessions was to collect feedback about the looks, understandability and relevancy of the cards. The instructors were also asked about the usefulness of the helping questions. According to the oral feedback from the first testing conducted in the peer support group for immigrant women where the theme of Finnish customs and habits was tested, the integration cards proved to be useful and many suggestions were provided on how to develop the cards further.

The second testing in the first testing round was performed in a playpark. The result of this testing was that most of the pictures of the cards were understandable but many of the Finnish terms were unfamiliar to the participants, which required more explanation from the instructors. However, in case that a participant's language skills in Finnish or English were not sufficient and there was no one in the group speaking a common language, there was a risk of exclusion from the conversation. The participants found the topics of visiting someone and honesty to be relevant subjects to talk about. According to these two testing sessions the changes in the composition of the cards were made before there was another testing conducted.

As explained earlier, the second round of testing took place in a peer support group for immigrant women. In the feedback form for the second round of testing sessions the instructors leading the groups were asked questions on the participation of the clients in the discussion, encouragement for the use of Finnish language, emergence of dialogue, elements of dialogue, the usefulness of the helping questions for the instructor and the usefulness of the product in general. In additions the instructors could add their own comments regarding the product and the testing.

Majority of the participants in the two testing sessions were from Middle Eastern, Asian and African countries, which all are culturally quite different from Finland, for example in the communication context. According to the feedback received, the clients participated well in the discussions. The cards supported the use of the Finnish language – Finnish was used most of the time but concepts were also explained in other languages between the participants, or the instructors had to help in translation.

The feedback confirmed that the cards supported creation of dialogue. Dialogue was born after the participants understood the meaning of the cards. According to one of the instructors good dialogue was raised about different cultures. According to the feedback the cards also promoted good interaction between the clients and the instructors.

When asked about the different elements of dialogue – listening, respecting of each other's views and opinions and supporting each other – the feedback received was that the participants did listen and respect each other, which was manifested for example in time given for others to speak and waiting for one's own turn to talk. The participants pondered together for instance how different services function in Finland and they supported each other by complementing each other with their own experiences and information. Support for each other was also shown in agreeing with each other or giving recognition to what had been said. In a situation where a mother had her child with in the session, taking care of the child might have taken the attention of the mother away from the discussion.

The helping questions for the instructor were recounted to be useful in all the feedback received. Especially the helping questions were beneficial in cases where discussion did not arise. According to the feedback, the helping questions created more discussion, but due to lack of time, not all of the topics the helping questions offered for discussion could be used.

The feedback received was that this kind of tool of discussion cards is useful. In the opinion of one instructor, the use of the cards enables new immigrants to receive plenty of new information, and immigrants who have lived in Finland for a longer period of

time can update their information. The feedback states that the immigrant women received information about Finnish culture and customs and could compare them with their own cultures.

In the feedback there were many suggestions for new topics or themes to be included in the set of cards. Some of the cards were difficult to understand because of the picture that was portrayed on the card, together with an unfamiliar Finnish word related to it, but with the help of the instructors and the helping questions the topic or concept was finally understood. Suggestions for further topics included among others the relationship between a mother and a child and how children are taken care of in Finland. In the theme of 'Services' future topics could include for example employment office (työvoimatoimisto), the Finnish Immigration Service (Maahanmuuttovirasto), maternity clinic (neuvola), playpark (leikkipuisto), family centre (perhetalo), youth centre (nuorisotalo) and a centre for girls (Tytöjen Talo). Feedback was also given on the name of the product, which will be discussed in the following chapter of Finalising the product.

To sum up the results of the testing sessions, the cards were found to be functional and practical. Most of the portrayed pictures were understandable. The helping questions were beneficial in the use of the cards. When testing the cards it became clear that a person with insufficient language skills could be disadvantaged in discussions and thus the role of the instructor became even clearer. The instructor functioned as an interpreter in a case where a topic or a Finnish word was not familiar to the participants. The instructor also encouraged the use of the Finnish language in the discussions. In oral feedback received from an instructor who participated in the testing it came up that in big groups of over ten participants it is useful to have more than one instructor participating, as leading a big group is challenging and furthermore the instructors can support each other; if one does not know something, the other one can add information or find out. All in all, the discussion cards were a new and wanted tool in the groups where they were tested.

## 7.5 Finalising the product

After the first round of testing sessions in May and June 2011, changes were made in the composition of the topics of the cards according to the feedback received from the clients and instructors testing the cards. This process was explained in the paragraph of Implementation of the product as it was in the middle of the process and the outcome of the changes were tested later in the second testing round.

The seven feedback forms returned from the second round of testing sessions had an impact on how the product of the final thesis took its final shape. There was feedback from the instructors concerning the look of some of the cards, which gave reason to do final modifications on the cards. As presented in the evaluation, some of the cards were difficult to understand due to the abstract content and the specific picture portraying the topic. As a result, pictures of two topics in the theme of 'Finnish culture' were modified in order to clearer demonstrate the content of the topic and the name of one topic was changed. Moreover, the feedback also concerned the actual name of the final thesis. The changes done and explanation about how the cards and the whole product was finalised is explained in more detail in the next paragraphs.

One of the cards was dealing with Finnish customs and habits ('Käyttäytymistavat'). The topic offered ideas for discussion from areas of visiting someone to the honesty of Finns, i.e. general topics about the customs and habits of Finns. The picture portraying the topic was a woman ringing someone's doorbell, referring to a person visiting someone. This topic turned out to be too general when compared with the other topics concentrating on one subject only and it was difficult for the participants to understand the content by the picture the card was portraying. Thus, as a result, the topic was changed from 'Käyttäytymistavat' to 'Kylässä' (visiting), which would concentrate on one topic only, visiting someone in Finland and customs and habits related to it. The rest of the suggestions for discussion that were offered in the card of 'Käyttäytymistavat' were left out.

Another card, which created misunderstandings during the testing discussions was 'Kovaäänisyys' (loudness) due to the picture on the card portraying a waiting room where people sit and one talks loudly on the phone. The participants of the testing sessions were more likely to relate the picture to a doctor's waiting room as there was



a word 'lääkäri' (doctor) on a door in the background. To avoid misunderstandings, the card was portrayed all again. On the new card of 'Kovaäänisyys' there are only two persons next to each other – one talking on the phone and another one reading newspaper. This way the card should have become clearer, so that discussion can proceed more smoothly from explaining the topic to talking about the topic.

The greatest conversation as a result of the feedback from the second testing round rose about the title of the product and the final thesis. The original title 'Kotoutuskortit' received attention from the instructors working with immigrant women by sounding slightly debatable in today's society where the ethical use of terms develop as attitudes of the society change. As it appears in the definitions of the chapter of Integration, the Finnish terms 'kotoutus' or 'kotouttaminen' imply the authoritative measures taken to integrate immigrants in the Finnish society. In this perspective immigrants may be regarded as objects of the system. According to the feedback received from the instructors testing the product, the term 'kotoutumisen edistäminen' is gaining a foothold in replacing the term 'kotouttaminen'. Indeed, there was a new Finnish act, Laki kotoutumisen edistämisestä, coming into force 1.9.2011 (Laki kotoutumisen edistämisestä 1386/2010), which prescribes the measures for the promotion of integration of immigrants. Considering this, changing the name for the product and the final thesis became topical.

As the term 'kotoutumisen edistäminen' is long and does not fit as fluently in the name of the product as the concise 'Kotoutuskortit', another alternative turned out to be 'Kotoutumiskortit'. As explained in the chapter of Integration, the Finnish term 'kotoutuminen' implies a subjective perspective emphasizing a personal integration of an individual. In the new act for promotion of integration (Laki kotoutumisen edistämisestä 1386/2010) 'kotoutuminen' is determined as interactive development of an immigrant and the society, with an objective to offer an immigrant the knowledge and skills needed in the society and working life while supporting the maintenance of his/her own language and culture. In order to keep the name of the product simple and concise, and to be able to preserve the original English title 'Integration Cards', the name 'Kotoutumiskortit' became the new title of product and the final thesis.

To conclude, after the second round of testing sessions, one card was portrayed all over again and the name of another was changed so that during a discussion the group could concentrate on one subject only instead of talking about a too wide subject as Finnish customs and habits; the helping questions for this new card were also modified. The title of the product and this final thesis in the Finnish language was changed due to the ethical sensitivity of the concept of 'kotouttaminen' and thus the name of the final product became 'Kotoutumiskortit' – in English 'Integration Cards'.

## 7.6 Distribution

When contacting different places for testing the cards, the idea of the cards raised interest in the recipients and the authors received many enquiries concerning the availability of the cards for use in their groups. This made the authors to consider the future distribution of the cards. Since the start of the planning the product was meant to be for free use and it was designed to be delivered in an electronic form to the users. With the advice from the supervising teacher, the authors decided to offer the ready product to different channels of social work professionals, through which the integration cards could be passed on to as many instructors working with immigrants as possible.

## 8 Ethical questions and reliability

In this final thesis there were only few ethical questions to be considered. One of the ethical issues concerned the themes and topics of the cards in the planning phase of the process. Due to the fact that the persons using the cards come from different cultural backgrounds, the themes and topics were chosen in a way that possible sensitive issues (e.g. religion) would not be included in the cards. The idea was that the topics for discussion should be easy to deal with and talk about for people from various cultures and they should not create discomfort in the participants.

Another ethical aspect concerned the safeguarding of the anonymity of the participants in the testing of the cards. In regard to all of the testing sessions, names of the clients or instructors participating in the testing, or the names of the places where the cards

were tested, are not mentioned in the thesis. In the second testing round the authors were not present in the testing situations and thus did not receive any other information about the clients participating in the testing than what could be read from the collected feedback forms, filled by the instructors of the groups. The testing of the cards was voluntary for the instructors, as it was for the clients in the immigrant groups.

Considering the reliability issues of this final thesis, the cards were tested in two rounds. In the first testing round the authors participated in the group discussions in the role of an instructor together with the instructors of the groups and the clients and received face-to-face feedback from the participants. In this kind of setting, the authors might have influenced the feedback given by the group and the instructor. In the second round the cards were given for testing to instructors of the immigrant groups, without the participation of the authors. This guaranteed feedback from authentic group situations without the interference of the authors in the testing situation. It was important to receive feedback from the instructors testing the cards in a setting where there was not external influence by the presence of the authors.

The feedback received on the cards depends also greatly on the composition of the group where the cards were tested. In the first testing round the opinion of the immigrant clients was asked in addition to the feedback form collected from the instructor of the second group. When asking feedback directly from the immigrant clients their cultural background, as well as their level of the Finnish language skills were likely to have affected the results. In the second testing round only instructors were asked for feedback and also in these testing situations the number of clients participating, their background and their Finnish language skills affect the results received. When making final conclusions on the topics of the cards, the authors combined both theory and feedback received from the testing sessions.

## 9 Conclusion

The objective of this final thesis was to provide a tool – Integration Cards – for instructors working with immigrant women. The cards would be used in various integration groups for women who share the common goal of integrating into Finland. The aim of using the cards was to create dialogue, which in turn would lead to integration. The cards, through interaction and dialogue, aim at supporting the everyday life coping of the immigrant women by allowing them to share and receive knowledge and information about Finland, Finnish culture and services of the society. The theoretical framework of the final thesis was social pedagogy, but many of the topics of the cards were based on theories of culture.

The product of the final thesis proved to be successful. Feedback received from instructors testing the cards was positive – the cards were functional and clear and created dialogue. In a dialogical relationship participants treat each other as equal partners and respect each other's subjectivity. Elements of dialogue also include listening to one another and respecting each other. A sign of successful dialogue in the testing sessions was the feedback recounting of significant conversations that had emerged between the participants and instructors during the sessions and the evidence that the participants respected and supported each other in the discussions by letting each other talk, complementing each other with their own experiences and clarifying unclear phenomena of the topics to each other, possibly with the help of their own language.

The cards proved to support the use of the Finnish language in the conversations. However, the knowledge of the Finnish language is likely to influence the participants' involvement in the discussion. Talking turns of participants with less language skills can be overtaken by participants speaking more fluently, which naturally affects the emergence of a balanced dialogue. Therefore the role of the instructor is essential in encouraging every member in the group to engage in the discussion more or less equally. The helping questions for the instructor proved to be helpful especially in a situation when discussion does not arise. However, it is natural that all of the helping questions, or new topics for discussion, cannot be applied every time due to time limitations for discussion.

The ability of the cards to generate dialogue is important as through dialogue something new can be born – whether it is new understanding or new ideas. As Bohm (1996: 6) puts it, in a group of people, dialogue has the possibility to enable a flow of meaning, which can bring about new understanding, which may hold people and societies together. To continue in the words of Bohm, dialogue may create “a stream of meaning flowing among and through us and between us”. The Integration Cards have the possibility to help people connect with each other, learn from each other and develop themselves as active members of the society. All in all, this final thesis provided a new tool in the field of integration to be used in the promotion of integration of immigrant women and their everyday coping in the new culture and society – Finland.

## **10 Discussion**

In this last chapter some parts of the process of creating the integration cards that came across as meaningful will be discussed. During the process the authors faced many challenges and were forced to think over and justify different solutions. In this discussion suggestions for future development of the integration cards will be presented. Finally, there will be a review of the process that the authors have undergone themselves, in terms of creating the idea, division of labour and professional learning.

In the planning of the discussion cards there were many potential themes and topics that could be included in the product. However, in relation to the amount of ECTS credits received for the final thesis and the limited time available, the implementation of all the potential themes and topics was a too extensive task to be completed. Thus the themes were reduced to only two and the topics to ten in each of the themes. As brought out in the evaluation of the testing the cards, there were many topics that were not included in the cards, but which would have been of interest to the immigrant women to discuss. This brings forth an idea of possible further development of the cards by creating new topics in the existing themes or creating completely new themes for the discussion cards.

According to the feedback, important future possibilities for new topics could be for example playpark (leikkipuisto) and employment office (työvoimatoimisto). Playpark

was one of the original topics considered to be included in the cards, but it was left out because of feedback received from one of the first round testing sessions as it being already familiar with the immigrant women who visit it regularly. Also, playparks, as they function and offer services in Helsinki, do not exist in every city or town in Finland in the similar way; thus the relevancy of the topic depends on the municipality where the cards are used.

Portraying the topics of the cards in a pictorial form understandable by all proved to be challenging. Some of the topics are abstract in content and thus difficult to convey in a picture. In the testing of the cards misunderstandings occurred, especially if the participants were not familiar with the Finnish term related to it. It has to be kept in mind that the perception of a meaning of a picture is always subjective. Different perceptions of the pictures on the cards can also evoke new ideas for discussion. There could have been endless modifications on the cards but at some point it was inevitable to settle with what had been done.

At the very end of the process, confusion about the name of the product arose due to a discussion with one of the instructors testing the product, who brought out the idea that the original title of the product, 'Kotoutuskortit', might soon be "old-fashioned" in the field of integration of immigrants as the term 'kotoutumisen edistäminen' is being used increasingly replacing 'kotouttaminen'. The authors realised that the terms being used change as the society and ways of thinking change and a term that has been widely used in the past might be ethically debatable in the future. The name of the product will stay, even if the surrounding perspectives and viewpoints change over time. Thus the name of the final thesis and the product had to be rethought in order to stay on the cutting edge of societal phenomena. A possible name could have been 'Kortit kotoutumisen edistämiseksi' – 'Cards for Promoting Integration', but in order to keep the name short and concise, the authors stuck with 'Kotoutumiskortit' – 'Integration Cards'.

The process of planning and implementation of the integration cards as a whole was a great learning experience for the authors. At the beginning of the process the authors had difficulties to begin with. There was a mutual and clear understanding that the final thesis should deal with multicultural work and it would be functional – there would

be a concrete product as an outcome, but the idea of what and how was vague. However, as soon as there was the idea, the authors started to work enthusiastically. The amount of work was equal for both authors and they were divided according to their strengths and preferences.

The process of planning and implementation of the final thesis was significant in terms of professional growth of the authors. Going through different theories and combining them with the practical implementation of the cards contributed to a deep understanding of the connection between theory and practice and learning about social pedagogy and the subjects of culture and acculturation. After developing a new tool in the field of integration and testing it in real working life settings with real clients, the authors have gained valuable experience and resources to enter the professional field of social services.

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**Feedback form for the first round of testing sessions**

- 1) Arvioi asteikolla 1–5 miten hyvin osallistujat osallistuivat keskusteluun:  
1 – vain yksi puhui, 5 – kaikki osallistuivat.

1      2      3      4      5

- 2) Olivatko kuvat ymmärrettäviä? Mitä niistä pitäisi muuttaa?

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- 3) Olivatko sanat ymmärrettäviä? Mitkä niistä pitäisi muuttaa?

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- 4) Miten hyödyllisiksi koit apukysymykset keskustelun ohjauksessa?

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---

- 5) Oliko apukysymyksiä riittävästi? Jos ei, mihin aiheeseen kaipaisit lisää avustavia kysymyksiä?

---

---

- 6) Mitkä aiheet olivat tärkeitä osallistujille? (Ympyröi tärkeimmät aiheet.)  
Oliko joku aihe, josta ei syntynyt helposti keskustelua? (Laita ruksi sellaisen aiheen kohdalle.)

pankki

lääkäri

kauppa

päiväkoti

leikkiapuisto

koulu

opiskelu

kirjasto

sosiaaliasema

KELA

maistraatti

Kiitos palautteesta!

**Feedback form for the second round of testing sessions**

1) Kumpi teema oli käytössä:      Suomalainen kulttuuri      Palvelut

2) Kuinka monta henkilöä osallistui keskusteluun ohjaajan lisäksi?

---

3) Mistä kulttuureista osallistujat olivat kotoisin?

---

---

4) Arvioi asteikolla 1–5 miten hyvin osallistujat osallistuivat keskusteluun:  
1 – vain yksi puhui, 5 – kaikki osallistuivat.

1      2      3      4      5

5) Kannustivatko kortit käyttämään suomen kieltä vai käytettiinkö keskustelussa myös muita kieliä?

---

---

6) Syntyikö korttien avulla dialogia?

---

---

7) Kuuntelivatko osallistujat toisiaan ja kunnioittivatko he toistensa mielipiteitä ja näkemyksiä?

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---

8) Tukivatko osallistujat toisiaan (esim. osoittivat ymmärrystä tai antoivat neuvoja toisilleen)?

---

---

9) Koitko ohjaajana korttien apukysymykset hyödyllisiksi?

---

---

10) Onko tämänkaltainen apuväline hyödyllinen maahanmuuttajanaisten kanssa tehtävässä työssä?

---

---

11) Muita kommentteja?

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Kiitos palautteesta!

# KOTOUTUMISKORTIT

Apuväline maahanmuuttajanaisten kanssa työskentelevälle ohjaajalle



**Tekijät:**

Iveta Podobinská ja Ilona Torri

# Johdanto

Kotoutumiskortit – Apuväline maahanmuuttajanaisten kanssa työskentelevälle ohjaajalle on Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulun kahden sosionomiopiskelijan tekemä opinnäytetyö.

Opinnäytetyö koostuu teorian lisäksi kotoutumiskorteista ja niihin liittyvistä apukysymyksistä. Korttien tarkoitus on edistää maahanmuuttajanaisten sopeutumista suomalaiseen yhteiskuntaan korttien pohjalta käytävän keskustelun ja vuorovaikutuksellisen toiminnan avulla. Kortit on tarkoitettu käytettäväksi esimerkiksi maahanmuuttajien kotoutumisryhmissä, vertaistukiryhmissä tai kielikursseilla. Kortit on suunniteltu erityisesti maahanmuuttajanaيسille siksi, että on tärkeää tukea heidän osallisuuttaan, sosiaalista kanssakäymistään ja suomalaisen kulttuurin ja yhteiskunnan tuntemustaan. Ryhmissä, joissa kortteja käytetään, osallistujat voivat tavata toisia maahanmuuttajia, jakaa tietoa ja kokemuksia sekä oppia toisiltaan. Korttien käytössä painottuu myös suomen kielen oppiminen vuorovaikutuksen ja dialogin keinoin.

Korttien käytössä tulisi mukana olla ohjaaja, joka tuntee suomalaista kulttuuria ja palveluja sekä puhuu suomen kieltä. Ohjaaja voi olla sosiaalialan ammattilainen, opiskelija tai maahanmuuttaja, joka on jo kotoutunut ja pystyy tukemaan uusia maahantulijoita.

Kotoutumiskorteissa on kaksi teemaa: suomalainen kulttuuri ja palvelut. Ensimmäinen tarjoaa keskustelunaiheita suomalaisista tavoista ja kulttuurista, toinen suomalaisesta yhteiskunnasta ja instituutioista. Molemmat teemat sisältävät kymmenen korttia, jotka käsittelevät keskeisiä aiheita kyseisistä teemoista. Kortit on eroteltu punaisella ja sinisellä värillä teeman mukaan. Joka kortissa on kyseiseen aihepiiriin liittyvä kuva ja suomenkielinen sana. Kortit ovat tämän vihkosen liitteenä. Lisäksi vihkossa on apukysymyksiä ja vinkkejä ohjaajalle monipuolisen keskustelun tukemiseksi. Ohjaaja voi myös itse osallistua keskusteluun ja luoda lisää keskustelunaiheita.

Kortit toimivat keskustelukortteina, jolloin niiden aiheita pohditaan yhdessä. Jokainen osallistuja nostaa vuorollaan yhden kortin ja miettii aiheen sisältöä: miten omassa ja miten suomalaisessa kulttuurissa menetellään kyseisessä tilanteessa? Muut osallistuvat keskusteluun jakamalla ajatuksiaan ja kokemuksiaan. Ohjaajan tehtävä on ohjata keskustelua, herättää lisäkysymyksiä ja tarjota tietoa suomalaisesta kulttuurista ja palveluista. On myös tärkeää, että ohjaaja tukee osallistumista rohkaisemalla osallistujia puhumaan tasapuolisesti ja suomen kielellä. Kortteja voidaan käyttää myös sananselityspelinä tai niiden aiheita voidaan esittää pantomiimina (osallistujat selittävät sanoja kehon ja ilmeiden avulla). Ohjaaja voi valita korttien käyttötavan ryhmän koon ja osallistujien taidon ja kiinnostuksen mukaan.



Kotoutumiskortit ovat vapaasti käytettävissä, mutta tuotteen muokkaamiseen tarvitaan tekijöiden lupa.

Opinnäytetyö on luettavissa kokonaisuudessaan Theseus-verkkokirjastossa, [www.theseus.fi](http://www.theseus.fi). Työ on englanninkielinen ja löytyy nimellä 'Integration Cards - A Tool for Instructors Working with Immigrant Women'.

## Käyttöohje

Leikkaa kortit ääriviivoja pitkin ja taita keskeltä puoliksi.

Leikkaa pahvista kortin kokoinen pala ja liimaa pahvi kortin sisälle niin, että toiselle puolelle jää kuva ja toiselle värillinen tausta.

Laita kortit painon alle, jotta ne suoristuvat.

Innostavia keskusteluhetkiä!

Iveta Podobinská ja Ilona Torri

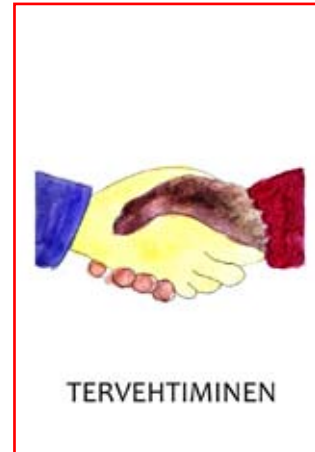
Degree Programme in Social Services

Metropolia Ammattikorkeakoulu, 2011

# Suomalainen kulttuuri

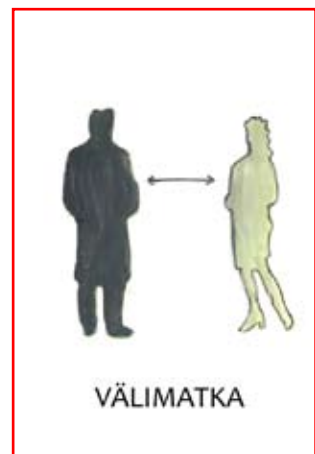
## Tervehtiminen

Miten Suomessa tervehditään?  
Halataanko tervehtiessä tai annetaanko  
poskisuudelmia?  
Voiko kaikkia kätellä?



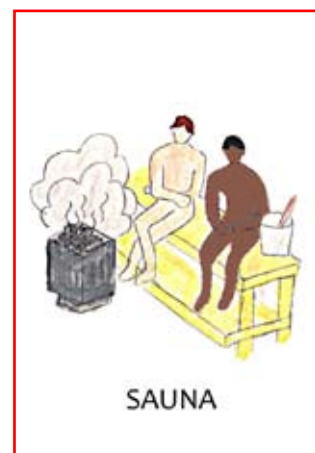
## Välimatka

Mikä on henkilökohtaisen tilan tarve?  
Kuinka etäällä ihmiset ovat toisistaan  
vuorovaikutustilanteessa?  
Voiko bussissa mennä istumaan toisen viereen?



## Sauna

Miksi käydään saunassa?  
Kekä voivat saunovat yhdessä?  
Täytyykö saunoa alasti vai voiko käyttää  
pyyhettä?  
Miten toimitaan uimahallin saunassa?



## Ajoissa oleminen

Kuinka tärkeää ajoissa oleminen on Suomessa?  
Kuinka paljon voi myöhästyä?  
Pitääkö ilmoittaa, jos ei tule/tulee myöhässä?



## Kovaäänisyys/hiljaisuus

Onko tavallista puhua kovaa/hiljaa?  
Voiko julkisella paikalla puhua kovaäänisesti?  
Haittaako hiljaisuus keskustelussa?  
Jos suomalainen on hiljaa, onko hän vihainen/  
ujo?  
Mihin aikaan kerrostaloissa tulee noudattaa  
hiljaisuutta?



## Kylässä

Pitääkö ilmoittaa etukäteen, jos menee  
vierailulle toisen kotiin?  
Pitääkö viedä tuliaisia?  
Otetaanko sisällä kengät pois?  
Onko Suomessa tapana tutustua naapureihin?



## Perhe

Millainen on suomalainen perhe (ydinperhe vai laaja perhe)?

Miten naisten ja miesten roolit eroavat toisistaan?

Millaiset ovat lasten ja vanhempien roolit perheessä?

Kuinka varhain lapset itsenäistyvät Suomessa?

Millainen on vanhusten asema?



## Ruoka

Mikä on tyypillistä suomalaista ruokaa?

Kuinka monta ateriaa syödään päivässä? Mihin kellonaikaan? Mitä kullakin aterialla syödään?

Terveellisen ravinnon tärkeys? (Esim.

D-vitamiinin tarve talvella)

Millaiset ovat ruokailutavat? (Esim. haarukan ja veitsen käyttö)

Syökö koko perhe yhdessä?



## Juhlapäivät

Mitä juhlia Suomessa vietetään ja milloin? (Esim. vappu, juhannus, itsenäisyyspäivä, joulu, uusivuosi)

Miksi näitä juhlia vietetään?

Miten niitä juhlitaan?



## Luonto

Mitä luonto merkitsee sinulle? Mitä se merkitsee suomalaiselle?

Miksi on tärkeää suojella luontoa?

Mitä itse voit tehdä? (Esim. ei heitetä roskaa luontoon)

Miksi kierrättäminen ja jätteiden lajittelu on tärkeää?

Mitä voi kierrättää ja mihin kierrätettävät tavarat voi viedä?



# Palvelut

## Pankki

Miten voi saada pankkikortin? (Pankkitilin avaaminen, johon jokaisella on oikeus)

Miten käytetään pankkiautomaattia?

Miten voi maksaa eri paikoissa? (Esim. käteinen, pankkikortti, lasku)

Miten pankkikortilla maksetaan kaupan kassalla?



## Terveyskeskus

Mitä palveluita on terveyskeskuksessa? (Esim. lääkäri, hammaslääkäri, neuvola)

Pitääkö lääkärille varata aika? Miten aika varataan?

Mitä tarvitaan mukaan, kun mennään lääkäriin?

Mihin voi mennä, jos terveysasema on kiinni?

Voiko valita lääkärin (esim. naislääkäri)?

Onko mahdollista saada ulkopuolinen tulkki mukaan lääkärikäynnille?



## Päivähoito

Millaisia hoitomahdollisuuksia lapselle on Suomessa?

Miten päivähoitopaikkaa haetaan? (Esim. lomake Sosiaalivirastosta tai päiväkodista)

Maksaako päivähoito?

Miksi on hyvä, että lapsi on päivähoitossa?

Mitä päivähoitopaikassa tehdään?

Vanhemmilla oikeus tietää, miten lapsi viihtyy päivähoitossa (esim. keskustelu hoitajan tai lastentarhanopettajan kanssa).



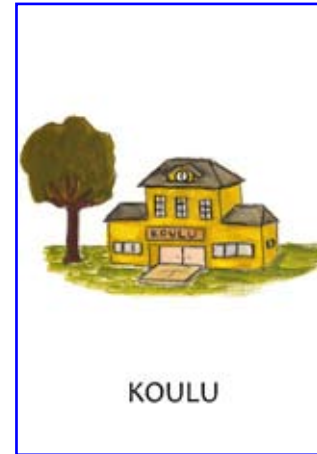
## Koulu

Minkä ikäisenä mennään kouluun? (Suomessa 6-vuotiaana esikouluun, 7-vuotiaana peruskouluun)

Maksavatko koulukirjat ja -tarvikkeet, entä kouluruokailu?

Millainen on suomalainen koulurakenne? (Ala-aste 6 vuotta, yläaste 3 vuotta, lukio, ammattikoulu)

Mitä kieliä koulussa voi opiskella?



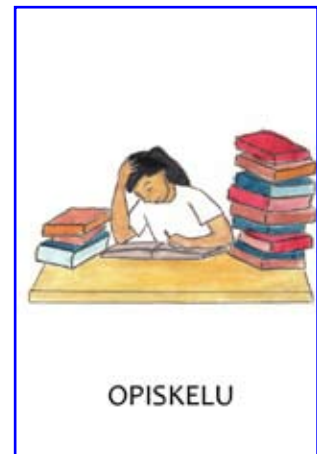
## Opiskelu ammattiin

Maksaako opiskelu Suomessa?

Millaisia vaihtoehtoja on opiskeluun?

(Esim. työväenopiston kurssit, aikuislukio, ammattikoulu, ammattikorkeakoulu, yliopisto, oppisopimuskoulutus)

Suomen kielen tärkeys opinnoissa?



## Kirjasto

Mitä palveluja saa kirjastosta? (Esim. kirjojen, lehtien ja elokuvien lainaaminen, lehtien lukeminen, tietokoneen käyttö, tiedonhaku, pelien pelaaminen)

Miten voi saada kirjastokortin? (Tarvitaan henkilöllisyystodistus)

Maksaako kirjojen lainaaminen ja kirjaston muiden palvelujen käyttö?



## Sosiaaliasema/sosiaalitoimisto

Milloin otetaan yhteyttä sosiaaliasemaan/  
-toimistoon?

Mitä kuuluu sosiaaliaseman palveluihin? (Esim.  
toimeentulotuki, kotipalvelu)



## KELA

Mikä on Kela?

Milloin otetaan yhteyttä Kelaan?

Mitä kuuluu Kelan palveluihin?

Mihin tarvitaan Kela-korttia? (Esim. apteekki,  
terveyskeskus)



## Maistraatti

Mitä kuuluu maistraatin palveluihin? (Esim.  
ulkomaalaisten rekisteröinti, osoitteenmuutos,  
avioliittoon vihkiminen)





## **Poliisi**

Milloin otetaan yhteyttä poliisiin? (Esim. rikos, väkivalta, oleskeluluvan hakeminen)

Miten otetaan yhteyttä poliisiin? (Yleinen hätänumero 112)

Millainen kokemus sinulla on poliisista? Voiko poliisiin luottaa?





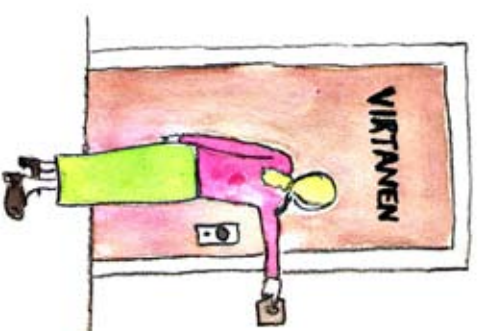
JUHLAPÄIVÄT



AJOISSA OLEMINEN



KOVAÄÄNISYYS



KYLÄSSÄ



PERHE



LUONTO



SAUNA



RUOKA

TERVEHTIMINEN



VÄLIMATKA





KIRJASTO

Kela 

KELA

  
MAISTRAATIIT  
MAGISTRATERNA

MAISTRAATTI



KOULU



PÄIVÄHOITO



OPISKELU



POLIISI



PANKKI



TERVEYSKESKUS



SOSIAALIASEMA