

UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

Intercultural Management and Communication

Tuuli Järvinen

Immigrant Eldercare Workers in Ageing Finland

Experiences of Workplace Interaction

Master's Thesis  
Jyväskylä 2020

## UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ

Faculty: Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences	Department: Department of Language and Communication Studies
Name: Tuuli Järvinen	
Title: Immigrant Eldercare Workers in Ageing Finland: Experiences of Workplace Interaction	
Programme: Intercultural Management and Communication	Level: Master's Thesis
Month and year: May, 2020	Number of pages: 88
<p><b>ABSTRACT</b></p> <p>According to previous research, highly industrialized countries have benefitted from immigrant workers in care services during labour shortage which is partly due to rapidly ageing societies (e.g. Munkejord, 2017; Spencer et al., 2010; van Hooren, 2012). Studies have aimed to gain a better understanding of how the contribution of the immigrant care workforce shapes societies.</p> <p>This MA thesis contributes to the field by analysing experiences immigrant eldercare workers have of workplace interaction in Finland. As work in eldercare is mainly based on contacts with other people, understanding what immigrant eldercare workers regard important in terms of workplace interaction may generate valuable lessons to the field. The research question of this thesis is: What do immigrant eldercare workers consider important in terms of workplace interaction?</p> <p>The data was collected by interviewing 8 immigrant eldercare workers who live and work in Finland. The semi-structured interviews were recorded and transcribed. The analysis of the data was conducted by following the method of thematic analysis. I identified two themes from the interview data: the importance of language proficiency at work and the importance of sufficient resources.</p> <p>Participants discussed language proficiency from different viewpoints by presenting deviating experiences of how important Finnish language proficiency was in workplace interaction. In addition, multilingualism in the workplace proved to be an asset in eldercare as, for instance, participants had care recipients with the mutual linguistic background. Participants also highlighted insufficient resources affecting negatively in interaction with their care recipients.</p> <p>The experiences of immigrant eldercare workers in workplace interaction have enlightened the importance of a personal approach to issues regarding proficiency in languages. The better recognition of multilingualism as a part of a prescribed tasks could enhance the functionality of linguistically diverse eldercare. Alternatively, workplace interaction proved to be relevant in many ways, suggesting that future research would focus more on personal and shared experiences in eldercare. Overall, when studying immigrant eldercare workers, a homogeneous attitude should be avoided, and more personal nuances enhanced.</p>	
Keywords: immigrant eldercare workers, workplace interaction, language proficiency, workplace multilingualism	

## JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

Tiedekunta: Humanistis-yhteiskuntatieteellinen tiedekunta	Laitos: Kieli- ja viestintätieteiden laitos
Tekijä: Tuuli Järvinen	
Otsikko: Maahanmuuttajataustaiset vanhustenhoitotyöntekijät ikääntyvässä Suomessa: kokemuksia työpaikkavuorovaikutuksesta	
Koulutusohjelma: Intercultural Management and Communication	Työn laji: Pro Gradu
Kuukausi ja vuosi: Toukokuu, 2020	Sivumäärä: 88
<p><b>TIIVISTELMÄ</b></p> <p>Aikaisempien tutkimusten valossa pitkälle teollistuneet maat ovat hyötyneet maahanmuuttajataustaisista työntekijöistä hoitoalalla työpulan aikana, mikä johtuu osittain kiihtyvistä ikääntymisestä yhteiskunnissa (esim. Munkejord, 2017; Spencer et al., 2010; van Hooren, 2012). Tutkimusten tarkoituksena on ollut saada parempi ymmärrys siitä, miten maahanmuuttajataustaisen hoitotyövoiman panos muokkaa yhteiskuntia.</p> <p>Tämä pro gradu -tutkielma osallistuu tutkimusalaan analysoimalla maahanmuuttajataustaisten vanhustenhoitotyöntekijöiden kokemuksia työpaikkavuorovaikutuksesta Suomessa. Koska vanhustyö pääasiassa perustuu kanssakäymisiin ihmisten kanssa, ymmärrys siitä, mitä maahanmuuttajataustaiset työntekijät pitävät tärkeänä työpaikkavuorovaikutuksessa, voi tarjota arvokkaita oppitunteja alalle. Tämän pro gradun tutkimuskysymys on: Mitä maahanmuuttajataustaiset vanhustenhoitotyöntekijät pitävät tärkeänä työpaikkavuorovaikutuksessa?</p> <p>Aineisto kerättiin haastattelemalla 8 maahanmuuttajataustaista vanhustenhoitotyöntekijää, jotka asuvat ja työskentelevät Suomessa. Puolistrukturoidut haastattelut äänitettiin ja litteroitiin. Aineiston analyysi seurasi temaattisen analyysin metodia. Erottelin kaksi teemaa haastatteluaineistosta: kielitaidon tärkeys työpaikalla ja riittävien resurssien tärkeys.</p> <p>Osallistujat keskustelivat kielitaidosta eri näkökulmista ilmaisten poikkeavia kokemuksia siitä, kuinka tärkeänä suomen kielen taitoa pidettiin työpaikkavuorovaikutuksessa. Lisäksi monikielisyys työpaikalla osoittautui eduksi vanhustyössä, sillä esimerkiksi osallistujilla ja heidän asiakkaillansa oli yhteinen kielitausta. Osallistujat korostivat myös riittämättömien resurssien vaikuttavan negatiivisesti vuorovaikutukseen asiakkaiden kanssa.</p> <p>Maahanmuuttajataustaisten vanhustenhoitotyöntekijöiden kokemukset työpaikkavuorovaikutuksesta ovat valaisseet yksilöllisen lähestymistavan tärkeyttä koskien kielitaitoa. Monikielisyyden tunnistaminen paremmin osaksi työnkuvaa voisi kasvattaa kielellisesti kirjavan vanhustyön toimivuutta. Toisaalta työpaikkavuorovaikutus osoittautui relevantiksi monella tavalla ehdottaen, että tutkimus jatkossa keskittyisi enemmän henkilökohtaisiin ja jaettuihin kokemuksiin vanhustenhoidossa. Kaiken kaikkiaan maahanmuuttajataustaisia vanhustenhoitotyöntekijöitä tutkiessa homogeenista suhtautumista pitäisi välttää ja yksilöllisiä nyansseja ottaa enemmän huomioon.</p>	
Asiasanat: maahanmuuttajataustaiset vanhustenhoitotyöntekijät, työpaikkavuorovaikutus, kielitaito, työpaikan monikielisyys	

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1 INTRODUCTION	5
2 CONNECTING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND WORK	9
2.1 Conceptualizing culture in intercultural communication	10
2.2 Intercultural workplace communication	12
3 IMMIGRANT ELDERCARE WORKERS	16
3.1 Work mobility and immigration employment	16
3.2 Studying the immigrant eldercare worker	18
3.3 Role of the immigrant eldercare worker	22
3.4 Finnish context	24
4 METHODOLOGY	26
4.1 Data collection	26
4.1.1 Structure of the interview	27
4.1.2 Data	28
4.2 Thematic analysis	30
4.3 Application	33
5 FINDINGS	36
5.1 Importance of language proficiency at work	36
5.1.1 Learning channels	38
5.1.2 Effect on encounters	46
5.1.3 Using the first language	53
5.2 Importance of sufficient resources	59
5.2.1 Rush	60
5.2.2 Duties out of prescribed tasks	62
5.2.3 Lack of language training	63
6 DISCUSSION	66

	4
7 CONCLUSIONS	75
7.1 Limitations	76
7.2 Implications	77
7.3 Recommendations	78
REFERENCES	80
APPENDIX A: Interview questions	85
APPENDIX B: An informed consent form	87

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Today, concepts such as multiculturalism, global mobility, and blurred borders are widely discussed and have become common discourses to us. Work mobility across regions is increasing and a significant change in workforce has occurred in the field of social and health care, especially, eldercare which nowadays is much dependent on immigrant care workers mostly in highly industrialized countries (Ho & Chiang, 2015, p. 238; Munkejord, 2017, p. 230; Spencer et al., 2010, p. 7; van Hooren, 2012, p. 133). The significance and currency of immigrant care workers filling positions in care services is partly demonstrated through unbalanced demographics in which ageing population is rapidly increasing while population of working age is decreasing (Spencer et al., 2010, p. 15). For instance, Finland is facing the age of retiring baby-boomers as more people are leaving the work than entering it (Lundelin & Lee-Setälä, 2020).

According to European Commission's Ageing Report (2018), the ageing population increases while the population of working age decreases remarkably between the years 2016 and 2070 in Europe. It is estimated that the share of people over 65 years old will grow from 29.6 % to 51.2 % in the EU, meaning that the ratio of working age people to elderly people will decline from 3.3:1 to 2:1 by 2070 (European Commission, 2018). Finland is following similar numbers as the rest of the EU: the population of working age will decrease from the present 62 % to 58 % by 2050, meaning 200 000 persons of working age less than today (Official Statistics Finland, 2018). The biggest reason for labour shortage in social and health care is that both the workers and patients are ageing – by year 2038, a third of current employees are retiring from social and health care (Lundelin & Lee-Setälä, 2020). It is predicted that over 57 % of practical nurses retire between years 2016 and 2035 (Keva, 2016, p. 8–13).

Indeed, by looking at the numbers, demand for people working in eldercare is evident and immigration has a significant impact economically and socially on preventing shortages due to population declines in many European countries (Harper, 2016, p. 184). The importance of the immigrant workforce in care services has been acknowledged in many countries and even perceived as a possible solution for labour shortage in the field (e.g. Harper, 2016; Nichols et al., 2015; Ortega et al., 2009; Spencer et al., 2010; van Hooren, 2012). On that account, governments need to pay more attention to and reformulate policies in their social care systems so that, for instance, socio-economic equity is met amongst people regardless of their places of

origin (Anderson, 2012, p. 144–145). On one perspective, the most apparent challenges may be linguistic as immigrant care workers are ought to have sufficient proficiency in the dominant language of the place which they have immigrated to. Mobility across regions is increased also among elderly who needs care services (Zechner, 2011, p. 173). It can be assumed that elderly immigrants seldom know the dominant language of the nursing home and thus, they face linguistic problems too. On the other hand, there lies even larger, ethical problem among immigrant workforce. Immigrant workers are mainly filling low-paid jobs in highly industrialized countries, indicating their poorer possibilities to aim higher positions in working life compared to non-immigrants (Strömmer, 2017, p. 137–138).

Studies related to immigrant eldercare workers have been conducted all over the world, signalling its significance in the contemporary working life. A common factor for the studies is the recognition of this certain workforce's effect on and value to societies (e.g. Cangiano & Shutes, 2010; Munkejord, 2017; Ho & Chiang, 2015; van Hooren, 2012). The aim of this thesis is to focus on immigrant eldercare workers in the Finnish context and explore their experiences of workplace interaction. Similar studies have been conducted before, but less frequently the topic has been examined in a manner which focuses specifically on immigrant eldercare workers themselves (Munkejord, 2017, p. 231). Furthermore, little is still known about the immigrant eldercare workers in Finland, because in relation to many other countries, the share of them in Finland is still relatively low (Kröger et al., 2015, p. 14; Näre, 2013, p. 72). This does not, however, make the topic less meaningful, instead, it enables interesting insights and points of comparison to the topic.

Existing literature about immigrant care workers has mainly focused on inquiry of socio-political and economic aspects and often it has given a strong emphasis on cultural issues as constructed by nationalities (e.g. Nichols et al., 2015; Walsh & O'Shea, 2010; Ortega et al., 2009). As communication and interaction define most of the prescribed tasks in eldercare, these aspects become the foundation of overall working experience and well-being. This thesis discusses the findings with the guidance of critical intercultural communication. Workplaces have always been the foci of intercultural communication research, and it has evolved from simplifying and distinguishing “national cultures” to more intricate and heterogeneous inquiry with a purpose to identify and explain functions of diverse workplaces and work communities (Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 5; Piller, 2011, p. 91–93). Often, literature has drawn a rather homogeneous picture of workplace diversity, usually only concluding its assets or hindrances

(Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 4). Therefore, the aim of this study is to look beyond these features and explore which are the key issues that affect immigrant eldercare workers' experiences in workplace interaction.

Through the lens of current experiences, this study aims to be future oriented as the demographic shift is only in its early phases and starting to become a concern in highly industrialized countries, such as Finland. Therefore, the purpose is to see which are the key issues immigrant eldercare workers have regarded as important in workplace interaction and that way enlighten decision makers about what needs to be done in order to encounter the ageing society successfully and fairly. As said, the study is mainly interested in immigrant eldercare workers' perceptions and experiences, hence answers are sought to the following research question:

*What do immigrant eldercare workers consider important in terms of workplace interaction?*

The data is analysed in a way that the experiences, feelings, and opinions, which immigrant workers have, become the most essential. This thesis follows qualitative methods and the data is collected by interviewing immigrant eldercare workers who work in Finland. The gathered data then is thematized and scrutinised by following the approach of thematic analysis.

The thesis is organised so that it will first present general information and field-related concepts followed by more specialized and narrowed discussions. This structure enables the reader to become familiar step by step with the themes discussed in this study. In chapter 2, the concepts of culture and intercultural communication are defined. Also, intercultural communication and its position in workplace research is discussed. In chapter 3, immigrant eldercare workers are examined and discussed from different viewpoints supported by previous research. The chapter explores existing literature about immigrant care workers, distinguishes different studies to the field and draws general view to the topic. The role of an immigrant eldercare worker is also discussed based on a previous literature. Finally, the chapter introduces the Finnish context and the establishment of the research gap to this thesis. Chapter 4 presents the methodology which entails the data and method used. Here, the presentation and justification to approach the study by using qualitative methods is discussed. In subchapter 4.1, the data and data collection are presented and in subchapter 4.2, thematic analysis, which guided the analysis of the data, is



defined. Lastly, in subchapter 4.3, I present the application of thematic analysis and provide concrete examples in order to demonstrate the practice and support transparency. Chapter 5 presents the findings along with extracts from the interviews and summative graphics and discuss what can be concluded and interpreted from the interview data. In chapter 6, along with answering the research question, I discuss these findings by pondering their relation to what is covered in literature and theoretical framework of intercultural communication. Finally, in chapter 7, conclusions about the study are made featuring the implications, limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

## 2 CONNECTING INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION AND WORK

Various fields and research have applied the concept of interculturality in the course of time, proposing fluctuating understandings and meanings and offering discussions from several viewpoints (Lavanchy et al., 2011, p. 1). In general, intercultural communication refers to interaction which entails the element of parties having backgrounds different from each other and these differences are encountered with “the ability to overcome misunderstanding, stereotyping, ethnocentrism, and prejudice” (Zotzman, 2011, p. 153). Workplaces have always been the foci of interest in intercultural communication research as communication is a constitutive and essential part of every organisation (Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 5; Sias, 2009, p. 10). My intention is to see how this study positions itself in the field of intercultural communication which as a framework has commonly offered rather opposing views on the context of workplace communication. I will discuss this aspect more profoundly in subchapter 2.2.

Piller (2017) argues that the ways we define and understand culture, interculturality and cultural differences today have taken shape partly as a result of colonialism (p. 14). Particularly, today, discourses of intercultural communication are due to the current understanding of globalisation and vice versa (Piller, 2017, p. 14). Referring to the current understanding of globalisation results from the fact that globalisation as a phenomenon is by no means new, but rather today’s understanding is due to the speed at which we experience globalisation (Dervin, 2016, p. 24–25). The speed here refers to, for instance, increasing mobility across regions or the vast development of technology and how it makes connecting, one way or the other, effortless to people from the other sides of the globe.

The first publications of intercultural communication are from 1940’s and initially, there is a clear socio-economic connection to the studies of that time. In the US after the World War II, the field took its first steps in training and investigating overseas appointments of, for instance, diplomats and military (Piller, 2017, p. 25–27, 61; Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 5). The increase and awareness of internationality in the US started the study of intercultural communication and since, it has been applied to various fields, such as education and business studies (Piller, 2017, p. 28). However, it is worthwhile to keep in mind that interculturality as such is by no means anything new to us even though it often is tempting to understand it that way in the time of an exponential growth of mobility and global interaction. People have been on the move since the

beginning of time and interacted with others of different – social, regional, political, and so on – backgrounds (Dervin, 2016, p. 2).

In this chapter, I will discuss the concept of intercultural communication and its relation to workplace communication. First, in subchapter 2.1, the concept of culture and how it is connected to interculturality is discussed. Defining culture is far from simple, explicit assumptions and conclusions, and often it is good to handle with care. However, in order to understand how culture is conceptualized in the field of intercultural communication, next subchapter introduces its sometimes very opposite understandings of how culture is viewed and constructed. The theoretical framework is supported by the approaches of scholars who theorize the value and position of culture critically in the context of intercultural communication. In subchapter 2.2, intercultural workplace communication is discussed by providing concrete examples of previous studies. I will give a brief, yet explicit glance through the dualistic understanding of intercultural communication at work and how that understanding could be developed. As language is a focal aspect in the field, multilingualism at work is also discussed by means of previous research.

## 2.1 Conceptualizing culture in intercultural communication

Culture is contextual, and its significance is created in occurring situations. In the context of intercultural communication, one must ask “who makes culture relevant to whom in which context for which purposes” (Piller, 2017, p. 7). In other words, a person’s background perceived as cultural becomes meaningful when it is believed to be so or affect given circumstances. People’s tendency to think that we are the products of cultural components is made up and perhaps, during time, it has become falsely a reality to people. Any attempt to define culture or cultural habits easily lead to “segregating it from a world that has interacted with and influenced it” (Dervin, 2015, p. 9). Therefore, we can argue whether culture truly is always relevant, or people add too much weight to it. Conceptualizing culture in intercultural communication has changed course towards more individual and situational approach simultaneously moving away from essentialist view of people being determined by nation-centred characteristics (Piller, 2011, p. 91).

The element of nationality has been associated being at the very core of what is believed to be culture (Piller, 2017, p. 9). By looking at culture from the perspective of being dictated by nationalities, its entity is the elements that a nation retains, and therefore, the status of culture remains presupposed and stable (ibid., p. 9). For instance, if one denies the stereotypical assumption of “the Finnish people are silent”, one has still presupposed “the Finnish people”, therefore it is the entity which remains unchanged, presupposed even when its assumption is negated. Understanding culture from entity viewpoint is essentialist; “it is something people have, or to which belong” (Piller, 2017, p. 9). An essentialist sees people as a creation of their culture, which defines and often justifies people’s behaviour and belonging (Holliday, 2011, p. 4). Evidently, looking at culture from an essentialist perspective, it leaves no latitude to think otherwise of what culture and moreover a person retains. Essentialism can be understood as a shortcut to explaining people’s differing features and beliefs. That is why, at first glance, an essentialist way of thinking may feel natural when discussing culture and cultural differences. However, an essentialist remark does not fall far from chauvinistic assumptions: when the speaker claims that all Finnish people are silent, they have made a judgement about all Finnish people in their mind and anyone who does not fit in this description, does not meet the characteristic of what is expected from Finnish people (Holliday, 2011, p. 4–5).

Discussing essentialism and people being defined by their nationalities, we will look at the other side of the coin which is very opposite to the essentialist view of what is culture. The opposite understanding sees culture as a process. The viewpoint is on people doing culture, not something they already possess or to which they belong (Piller, 2017, p. 9). A comprehensive illustration of this understanding is to change the status of culture from a noun to a verb. (ibid., p. 9). Brian Street (1993) first coined the concept of culture being a verb, arguing that culture “is an active process of meaning making and contest over definition, including its own definition” (p. 25). Simply put, people create meanings for culture for different purposes.

In addition to the dichotomy of entity and process understanding of culture, intercultural communication research has also approached it by geographical and socio-political point of view. Holliday (2011) has divided the images of culture into two different categories: neo-essentialism, which presents the ideology of having “the West” and “the East” as two opposite poles, and critical cosmopolitanism which criticizes this dichotomy. (p. 14). The former image is very close to what Piller (2017) discusses an essentialist view of culture (p. 9). The latter, however, challenges a traditional, nation-driven understanding of cultures and acknowledges

the diversity rather as a norm than as an exception (Holliday, 2011, p. 14). Holliday (2011) encourages people to think beyond the search of difference and similarity and “to look at profound texts of interaction from every side” (p. 32). Similarly, Breidenbach & Nyíri (2009) have concluded that people approach culture from their individual understandings which is dependent on the sets of circumstances, from which their interpretations arise, and which are all unique (p. 322).

Dervin & Risager (2014) discuss identity in the context of intercultural communication similarly with what we have covered further above: instead of examining identity objectively and in a static form, one should approach identity as a process (p. 8). Both authors also consider any interaction to be intercultural as it is “an interplay of perspectives and thus as always ‘intercultural’” (Dervin & Risager, 2014, p. 4–5). Stokoe & Atteborough (2014) define culture not merely being just ‘culture’, but when it is understood and constructed in action in specific contexts of interplay the status of culture reveals its dynamic nature – ‘culture-in-action’ (p. 89). It becomes evident that the new paradigm of intercultural communication research shares the view of seeing culture contextual, dynamic, and holding individual understandings, not as something tied to one’s nationality – which is the view I share too.

The reason why I find it important to discuss the concepts of culture and moreover, how people create meanings for it is that previous studies of immigrant eldercare workers have sometimes taken a culturally driven approach which, according to my understanding as well as critical intercultural communication, lead to essentialist views of people being constructed by their nations. According to Holliday (2011), “any notion of a national culture which can be described and stereotyped is the product of chauvinistic imaginations” (p. 123). These imaginations need to be challenged as they are the creations of ideologies which in turn have constructed our societies in the history of time. As long as societies mould people into groups which divide “us” from “them”, the group of “us” remains favoured over “them”.

## 2.2 Intercultural workplace communication

To illustrate the difference of having and doing culture, which was discussed above, I will shortly present a part of the findings of the paper provided by Näre (2013) who studied

immigrant workers in Finnish care labour from the perspective of their employers. The study concluded that employers saw their immigrant employees having better working ethics and qualities towards eldercare than those who were not immigrants (Näre, 2013, p. 76). This is a common result in many studies relating to immigrant care workers that they are seen more committed and hard-working than their non-immigrant colleagues (see chapter 4.2). By examining the results from this perspective, a reader may quickly assume that the differences emerge because of so-called cultural differences. However, as Näre (2013) points out, immigrants' good qualities in care work are the result of their weaker position and discrimination in Finnish labour market: "The employers' misrecognition of migrants as different to Finns reinforces the social subjugation of migrants in the work places" (p. 76). Therefore, the social structures have created these differences which are explained by being cultural characteristics.

Other common purposes for the studies of intercultural workplace communication are to distinguish and solve misunderstandings and linguistic tackles which occur in intercultural encounters (e.g. Roberts, 2007; Lønsmann, 2014; Jansson, 2014). As to give an example, Roberts (2007) has studied interaction of a patient and a doctor from the viewpoint of intercultural communication and has reported that a lack of shared perspectives and assumptions results in feeding misunderstanding and vice versa (p. 256). Alternatively, linguistic perspective has been examined in a bigger scale as in a large international workplace where employees had different levels of competence in one or more languages and which had resulted in exclusion and discrimination among employees (Lønsmann, 2014, p. 112–113). Multilingual working environment has also been approached by studying strategies that linguistically diverse employees had used in interaction. According to Jansson (2014), regardless of immigrant care workers' linguistic differences they had managed to perform work tasks successfully by using multilingual resources creatively (p. 225). These examples of earlier studies imply language skills functioning either excluding or including factor in a working environment: it is a double-edged sword which becomes beneficial when knowing the right language, or it causes social exclusion when knowing the wrong language (Hua, 2014, p. 239).

According to Piller (2011), intercultural communication research has developed and extended from nation-oriented assumptions to more situational and in-depth analysis of what interculturality means in each context and what purposes it entails (p. 91). When formerly

studies approached multilingualism and diversity as a challenge, today these factors are approached as assets from which workplaces can profit (Piller, 2011, p. 91). The latter approach can be seen in Jansson's (2014) study of multilingualism and its creative use and benefits in eldercare – workers' different language proficiencies were not seen as challenging, rather they offered unique opportunities in today's multilingual care sector (p. 227). This is a natural development from the perspective of globalisation and increasing work mobility: companies are not as “nationally” homogeneous as before, but immigrants are more often employed too (Piller, 2011, p. 92).

However, it can be argued whether this turn from approaching workplace diversity as a challenge to celebrating its advantages falls far from viewing immigrant workers as a homogeneous group of people. Especially, early literature in intercultural workplace communication has commonly focused on two, rather opposing poles, generating a term “a double-edged sword” (Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 3). It means that research has concluded workplace diversity being either an asset or a liability for an organisation, the sword becoming either useful or harmful (Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 4; Mak & Chui, 2013, p. 130). This idea takes us back to essentialism and fitting people into the moulds of representing certain characteristics which people are believed to possess. As covered in the former subchapter, critical approach of intercultural communication encourages to not only seek differences and/or similarities but handle cultural concepts from the perspective of individual understandings and situational encounters (Holliday, 2011, p. 32; Breidenbach & Nyíri, 2009, p. 322).

Intercultural workplace communication research has developed from organisational, social, and political issues in the United States with the studies of antidiscrimination and diversity management (Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 6). Antidiscrimination as an approach has mainly focused on under-represented minorities in working environments, whereas diversity management has taken an interest of all employees in order to celebrate culturally diverse workplaces and highlight advantages they encompass (Wrench, 2005, p. 74). Workplace diversity research is also “viewed as an instrument or tool that uses people's diversity as the means of achieving economic end goals” (Lorbiecki & Jack, 2008, p. S23). According to Muir (2007), in the ever-growing diverse societies workplaces continue to manage diversity as communication between individuals occurs in frames which are work-oriented and serve workplaces' common goals (p. 81). More recent research in intercultural workplace communication has shifted their focus from perceiving nation-based differences as given to as produced in communication (Lahti &

Valo, 2017, p. 4; Luring, 2011, p. 233). Therefore, Luring (2011) has argued that studies should also give attention to communication practices which are not only understood as culturally framed (p. 233).

Multilingualism in a workplace has been studied widely in the context of intercultural communication. As covered above, often linguistic aspects are studied from the perspective of misunderstandings and experiences of exclusion (e.g. Roberts, 2007; Lønsmann, 2014; Jansson, 2014). Hua (2014) has summarised ideologies which influence language policies at workplaces: some languages are regarded as more important and useful than others, and language proficiency has been juxtaposed with professional ability (p. 237). Multilingualism in the context of working environment carries different meanings and purposes than multilingualism experienced outside work: in working environment, multilingualism becomes both a policy issue and an interactional issue (Hua, 2014, p. 233). On one hand, managers and people in charge control the use of languages, whereas, on the other hand, languages are used in contextualised interactions among individual workers (Hua, 2014, p. 233). The latter point has been brought up into discussion as needing more investigation because “a workplace is not only a physical space where people work, but also a social space where people meet, interact and build relationships” (Hua, 2014, p. 238).

According to Luring (2011), studies in intercultural business communication have often argued that culture afflicts how individuals communicate in international settings and thus, communication causes misinterpretations as “signs are not recognized because individuals are using values and norms of one culture to explain the behavior of individuals from another” (p. 234) This interpretation seems problematic as it treats cultural differences from the viewpoint of essentialism. Therefore, intercultural communication should be approached as “developed and organized in interaction” (Luring, 2011, p. 247). Similarly, studying language from the perspective of social medium rather than cultural would emerge new insights to the field (Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 19).



### 3 IMMIGRANT ELDERCARE WORKERS

Ageing populations and increased immigration especially in highly industrialized countries have generated perceptions of immigrant workers becoming the solution for filling the gap in care shortage (e.g. Munkejord, 2017; Ortega et al., 2009; Walsh & O'Shea, 2010). In Finland, similar implications have been made even though the share of immigrant care workers is still relatively low (Näre, 2013, p. 72; Vartiainen et al., 2018, p. 11). However, the division of people with immigration background working in health and care services has increased at least in the capital of Finland (Näre, 2013, p. 72).

The next subchapters provide an overview to main concepts of work mobility and immigration employment, as well as existing literature of immigrant eldercare workers which as a target of studies comprises of a wide spectrum of approaches. The purpose of these subchapters is, on one hand, to sum up the approaches that the field has provided in recent years. On the other hand, the objective is to establish the research gap of this thesis by mapping the existing literature as it offers many viewpoints to the topic. Also, these subchapters aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of immigration employment especially in care labour.

#### 3.1 Work mobility and immigration employment

Work is often seen as an integration base for any citizen to settle into a society (Strömmer, 2017, p. 137). Therefore, it is self-evident to assume that immigrants, as well as any other person, may secure their position within the society by getting a job. Apart from entering working life, learning the official language of the place of residence labels the success of integration of an immigrant in most cases (Strömmer, 2017, p. 137). According to Strömmer (2017), apart from earning a living by getting a job, immigrants also gain other valuable tools when joining working life in the place they have immigrated to – a job “acts as a site of recognition, linguistic and cultural socialisation and self-improvement” (p. 137). A job can be a place of networking, making new acquaintances and learning languages. These improvements, however, are usually limited to the sources available. Usually, an immigrant worker's social contacts and language learning areas are limited to an occupation held and therefore, much of potential learning and improving areas stays out of their reach. In Finland,

if an immigrating person is employed or a student, they are encouraged to learn Finnish language while working or studying, unlike unemployed immigrants who can receive an integration course which includes language learning (Strömmer, 2017, p. 139).

When talking about working age immigrants, usually they move to the other place already with a career or education received from the place of origin. However, it is common that education and work experience gained from their place of origin are not always valued in a place to which a person immigrates. Local, here meaning earned within a region, education and work experience are counted as recognisable assets for an applicant in regional labour market. Favouring local training explains partly difficulties immigrants face when settling in the country they have moved to (Forsander, 2001, p. 58–59).

According to Forsander (2001), the further the person immigrates, the bigger inflation their education and training suffers (p. 58). However, this statement needs to be approached critically as it carries double standards. Rather than a geographical distance acts as a determinant factor, the more accurate reason of favouring some immigrants more than the others is based on similarities in socio-economic positions: people, who move from one highly industrialized country to the other, are much more likely to be accepted as equal citizens in terms of their education and profession. This claim gets support from a case study of which two immigrants moved from less developed countries to Finland already possessing education and career received in their places of origin but which were not acknowledged in Finland and therefore, these immigrants ended up working in low-skilled jobs (Strömmer, 2017). The paradox of globalisation is that know-how capital does not correlate with the physical (Strömmer, 2017, p. 59). In other words, a citizen by birth, which in this study I will refer to a non-immigrant, often has an edge over the citizen by immigration in labour market.

This unrecognised training and knowledge and a low level of language proficiency act as possible reasons for immigrants usually ending up in low-paid and low-skilled occupations but stigmatisation of occupations guides career choices of immigrants too (Mankki & Sippola, 2015, p. 204). According to Mankki & Sippola (2015), this is possible due to rigid and old-fashioned structures in different fields which guide people's decisions to train to different professions (p. 204). These structures are ideological and are based on, for instance, gender: care work is labelled as women's work due to remnants of what is thought to be feminine work, therefore, the majority of immigrant care workers, as well among non-immigrants, are female

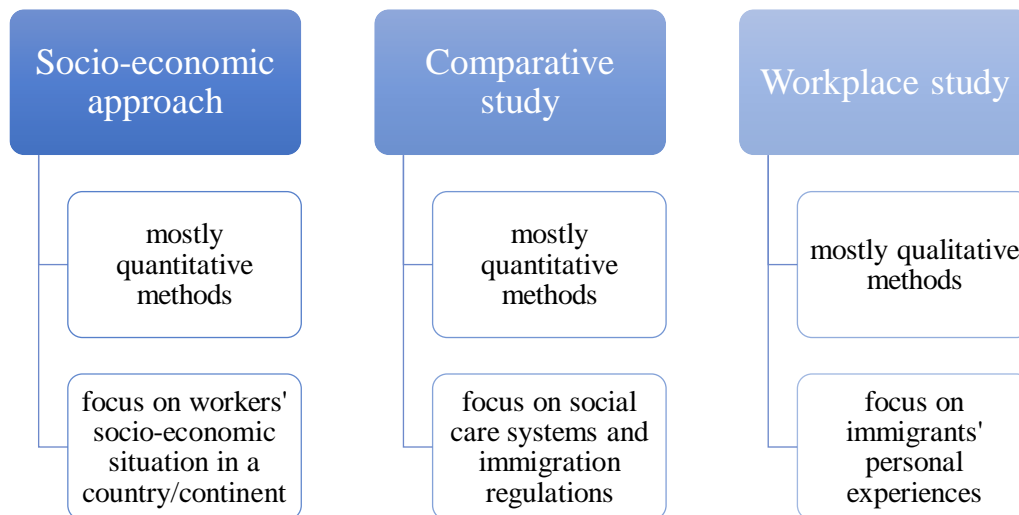
(Huang et al., 2012, p. 198). According to Wills et al. (2012), immigrants, who work in low-paid and low-skilled jobs, have less opportunities to widen and improve their economic and social position in the society as they are already in a situation of coping and getting by (p. 121).

This chapter has rather a critical approach to how immigrants are treated in labour markets. However, it is important to take a critical note in the matter as the existing literature has mainly addressed these problematic sites of the case. Therefore, it can be concluded that these problems cannot be disregarded, but rather addressed again by echoing previous studies done in the field. Also, as this thesis focuses on immigrants working in eldercare, these same problems are present in that subject too. In the next subchapters, immigrant eldercare workers are discussed in more detail and an extensive overview to the studies in the field is presented.

### 3.2 Studying the immigrant eldercare worker

Immigrant eldercare workers as a target of studies enable many different viewpoints from which to examine their adjustment, integration, well-being or simply, their overall feelings in diverse settings. Researchers have conducted comparative, cross-national studies in order to find similar and different patterns that occur between countries, whereas studies focused on work communities offer more in-depth results (e.g. Miyazaki, 2018; van Hooren, 2012; Munkejord, 2017). Additionally, some studies have concentrated on the bigger picture which usually takes place within one country or continent (e.g. Cangiano & Shutes, 2010; Cangiano, 2014; Lowell, et al., 2010; Harper, 2016). These studies are more concerned about a socio-political situation in each region.

By exploring articles of immigrant eldercare workers from the past ten years, it is possible to divide their approaches into three main categories which are ‘socio-economic approach’, ‘comparative study’, and ‘workplace study’ (See **Figure 1**). Also, many studies mix different methods in data collection and use a wide range of information available by favouring both quantitative and qualitative methods. A common feature for all the approaches is to gain a better understanding of how the implementation and contribution of the immigrant eldercare workforce shapes labour markets and the current shift in demography.



**Figure 1.** The summary of approaches to the studies of immigrant eldercare workers

Studies concentrated on a socio-economic viewpoint invariably conclude that immigrant eldercare workforce is often filling low-paid and low-skilled professions in labour (Lowell et al., 2010; Anderson, 2012; Cangiano & Shutes, 2010; Ortega et al., 2009). In addition, it has been concluded that immigrant care workers remain as an invisible workforce inside the society (Anderson, 2012, p. 143). A study conducted in the US found that immigrant care workers supply “the least regulated and least medically intensive settings in long term care” which has the lowest payment when comparing to other professions in the field (Lowell et al., 2010, p. 75). Similarly, a study conducted in the UK concluded that immigrant care workers earn less money from their work in relation to non-immigrants (Cangiano & Shutes, 2010, p. 49). Additionally, many families employ immigrants to provide domestic care at private homes which is inexpensive when compared to a formal carer (Anderson, 2012, p. 137). Leeson (2010) suggests that employing immigrants either formally or informally result from quality and finance of care work (p. 3). These conclusions strongly imply how social structures affect employment of immigrant care workers. According to Anderson (2012), governments and societies benefit from immigrant eldercare workers as a cheap labour without providing social services in turn (p. 143). This is partly possible due to a complex situation in care work as it covers both formal and informal, regulated and unregulated workforce (Anderson, 2012, p. 144). Therefore, immigrant eldercare workers need to be recognised inside the social care system in societies (ibid., p. 144). As Williams (2012) points out, “where care labour has historically been undervalued, it is performed by those with least negotiating power, in this case, migrant workers” (p. 365).

Socio-economic aspect is present in all three categories due to the nature of the field, however, studies included in the category of socio-economic approach have a focus on meta-level, that is the broader examination of the effects in societies. Alternatively, comparative studies examine sociological issues by comparing different countries' social care systems and immigration regulations (e.g. Miyazaki, 2018; van Hooren, 2012). Studies have explored different recruitment practices of immigrant eldercare workers and the use of grey market in the field. A common discovery is the difference in recruiting immigrant care workers between different welfare states. Immigrant care workers are employed either by marketized care services or directly by a family of a care recipient (Miyazaki, 2018, p. 166; van Hooren, 2012, p. 143). The latter practice enables using grey market, that is, recruiting unskilled and possibly illegal immigrants to work in private households (Miyazaki, 2018, p. 174). The favour of recruiting immigrant care workers privately is due to affordability when compared to marketized workforce. Therefore, the problem is partly in social care services which have low funding in some states and thus, employing immigrant workforce formally is too expensive (van Hooren, 2012, p. 141). By contrast, formal care services have also recognised the importance of the immigrant workers, hence, they highlight this potential growing workforce (Christensen et al., 2017, p. 229). Comparative studies are by no means of the same opinion, yet again different results are as a consequence of approaches and viewpoints as well as regions which have been studied.

Immigrant eldercare workers as a target of studies enable the examination of social, political, and economic issues as well as offer comparative data between different countries. Usually, results are statistic and end up generalising this certain workforce by showing them as one homogeneous group. For instance, comparative studies between two regions remain unreliable as there is no consistent definition for an immigrant as it may comprehend those who have immigrated after they are born and those who are second or third generation immigrants (Simonazzi, 2008, p. 225). Furthermore, there are regional differences in care work and thus, cross-national comparisons become complex (Williams, 2012, p. 364).

Studies conducted in specific work communities, however, offer more in-depth and personal results. For instance, researchers have been interested in immigrant eldercare workers' relationship forming, language skills and well-being in a workplace (e.g. Timonen & Doyle, 2010; Munkejord, 2017; Jansson, 2014). In contrast to socio-political and comparative studies' rather negative and generalising results, local workplace studies have implied much more

positive results in terms of immigrant eldercare workers' experiences. For instance, immigrant eldercare workers had described that they were warmly welcomed as a part of the community and they were able to build good relationships in a workplace (Munkejord, 2017, p. 244; Timonen & Doyle, 2010, p. 31–32). Also, despite of language tackles, immigrant eldercare workers had been able to find creative ways to cross these linguistic boundaries without causing distraction or weakening their work performances (Jansson, 2014, p. 225). Supposedly, narrowing down the study into local settings provides much more positive conclusions as they enable in-depth discussions with immigrant workers themselves.

Part of the previous literature is afflicted by its overly emphasis on cultural issues. All kinds of assumptions or suggestions of cultural differences further encourage people to think that culture is an explanation for problems and that people are a creation of cultural components. As discussed in chapter 2, the understanding of culture as an inseparable part of us is based on ideologies which have attempted to explain differences among people. This idea further encourages the idea of homogeneous groups of people and which in turn causes othering. For instance, the study of immigrant eldercare workers' position in a work community conducted in Australia focused on how their cultures shaped workplace interaction and relationships and how multiculturalism was managed by employers (Nichols et al., 2015, p. 30). Another study concluded immigrant care workers encountering "another culture" and responding to it by changing their behaviour in order to adapt better to the society (Ho & Chiang, 2015, p. 251). The findings of the study conducted in Ireland suggested that immigrants' poor knowledge of Irish culture hampered employing them and employers were concerned that the lack of shared culture would have had negative effects on caring relationship (Walsh & O'Shea, 2010, p. 25). The report observing the well-being of immigrant and non-immigrant care workers in Denmark associated immigrant eldercare workers' experiences of poor well-being with their "cultural differences" (Ortega et al., 2009, p. 705). Also, the study suggested that immigrant workers' cultural values reflected their working values (ibid., p. 705).

The examination of immigrant care workers through the lens of cultural components limit the research in a way that it falls on essentialist presumptions of having different "national cultures". Instead, looking beyond cultural frames, the studies could enable more in-depth approach to the field as the research would not content itself with stating that people have diverse backgrounds and starting positions which are already self-evident in this context. Rather the studies could exploit immigrant care workers' situational and personal experiences

and feelings in the workplaces without giving too much emphasis on culturally framed aspects which, as discussed further above in subchapter 2.2, are mostly connected to social structures, not immigrant care workers themselves particularly.

### 3.3 Role of the immigrant eldercare worker

Immigrant eldercare workers have usually been pictured as saviours of the labour shortage in social care services and, especially in highly industrialized countries, their contribution to eldercare is already significant (e.g. Munkejord, 2017, p. 230; Spencer et al., 2010, p. 7; van Hooren, 2012, p. 133). This has been discovered for instance, in a report containing the USA, Canada, Ireland and the UK where in all four countries immigrant care workers are remarkably of importance and a demand for them is only increasing (Spencer et al., 2010, p. 7).

In contrast to immigrant care workers being the solution for the labour shortage, the issue has also risen concerns about the future among care service providers. Overall, care work does not attract non-immigrants because of low payments and sometimes poor working conditions (Cangiano & Shutes, 2010, p. 55). This idea already puts immigrants into a position in which they would settle for jobs which are not “good enough” for non-immigrants, and therefore, creates inequality in societies and may, for instance, lead to the failure of integration and discrimination, among other possible problems. As discussed in chapter 3.2, many studies have risen these issues, and therefore, they would require more attention and solutions in order to diminish inequalities within social care systems.

A range of studies conducted around the globe suggests varying conclusions of immigrant eldercare workers’ position and image in the field. Immigrant care workers have been, for instance, thought to be hard working and willing to work long hours with minimum wage as usually, the salary is better in an immigrated country than in their places of origin (van Hooren, 2012, p. 135). A study conducted in Singapore implied that immigrants from less developed countries were pictured more work-oriented and efficient than non-immigrants because they do not mind “to do the ‘hands-on’ dirty work associated with care of the elderly” and they are “much more service-minded” (Huang, S. et al., 2012, p. 206). The study conducted in the UK concludes similar characteristics of immigrant eldercare workers and points out their several

advantages, including immigrant workers' high respect towards care recipients and willingness to work in all shifts (Cangiano & Shutes, 2010, p. 50). Over two thirds of all respondents in the study including the US, Canada, Ireland and the UK thought that immigrant workers have a strong work ethic and they are more willing to do some tasks which non-immigrants do not want to do (Spencer, et al., 2010, p. 52). As discussed in subchapter 3.1, these stereotypes of a good immigrant worker are based on their unequal positions in work labour when compared to their non-immigrant colleagues. Societies see immigrants a valuable workforce to fill low entry-level jobs in order to yield to non-immigrants filling jobs with better benefits and salaries.

Another commonality associated with immigrant care workers is a strong contribution of female workers. The change of women's role in the societies has shaped the workforce and demand for care workers. For a long time, nurturing has been imagined to be women's unpaid work within a family unit. However, as traditional family structures have been changed and challenged, female labour force has increased remarkably which has in turn increased demand for domestic care workers as there are more elderly people living alone than before (Anderson, 2012, p. 138–139; Isaksen, 2011, p. 9). Immigrant women care workers as a study offers another whole arena of insights and discussions (e.g. Cuban, 2009; Huang et al., 2012), therefore, in this study the surface of this viewpoint is only scratched.

Spencer et al. (2010) concluded in their study that the whole eldercare system needs to be reformed in order to diminish problems and malign understandings which are commonly present when talking about immigrant care workers (p. 7). According to Huang et al. (2012), "the triple casting of eldercare as feminine, dirty and migrant work" is the view which furthers othering and discourages standing with them otherwise (p. 211). Therefore, in order to recognise problems and raise the value of eldercare and people working in the field, these common stereotypes need to be challenged (Huang et al., 2012, p. 211). Furthermore, governments need to acknowledge and appreciate the immigrant labour by providing them equal premises for work and living than the rest of the labour. If societies continue disregarding issues related to immigrant labour, it is not possible to enhance an important and positive impact, which immigrant care workers have in societies (Anderson, 2012, p. 143).



### 3.4 Finnish context

Nordic countries, including Finland, have a long tradition in institutional and domestic eldercare which is almost fully provided by paid, formal workforce (Cangiano, 2014, p. 136). The share of immigrant eldercare workers in Finland is small when comparing to other countries. For instance, according to Kröger et al. (2015), the distinction is considerable between Finland, where the percentual number of immigrant care workers was 2 %, and the neighbour Sweden, where every fourth care worker was an immigrant in 2015 (p. 14). However, over the past twenty years, due to large flows of immigration, the number of these workers in health and elderly care has more than doubled in Finland.

A share of practical nurses has increased along with immigration (Vartiainen et al., 2018 p. 12). But, as concluded above, Finland does not have a great amount of immigrant workers in eldercare when comparing to many other countries. Instead, work mobility in Finland has been rather opposite and trained care workers have traditionally emigrated from Finland to elsewhere, especially other Nordic countries (Jönson & Giertz, 2013, p. 811; Näre & Nordberg, 2016, p. 17). Internationally, many countries recruit foreign care workers actively unlike in Finland where this kind of a recruitment has been a small-scale practice which is partly due to prerequisites for good language skills and proficiency which needs to be in accordance with Finnish training and requirements (Koivuniemi, 2012, p. 9). The lack of Finnish language competence usually explains immigrants' difficulties to find employment in Finland. That is why, those jobs, which do not require high entry-level language skills, are often filled with immigrant employers (Tarnanen & Pöyhönen, 2011, p. 150).

The existing literature of the immigrant care workers shows a wide range of studies which provides insights to concerns as well as positive experiences which diverse workforce offers to societies. Many studies have concentrated on the issue by looking at the big picture, that is the research has included several countries or the focus has more or less been on the whole society rather than on the target which is studied (e.g., Cangiano & Shutes, 2010; van Hooren, 2012). These approaches may possibly result from the locus of immigrants being employed to certain low-paid positions, such as eldercare; thus, they are over-presented in some trades more than the others, that is immigrant employment is occurring in recognisable patterns. Previous studies about immigrant eldercare workers have also approached issues from the perspective of a "double-edged sword", that is immigrant care workers are seen either as an asset or a liability

(Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 4). For instance, this workforce has often been pictured either a saviour with good working ethics or viewed with suspicion of their immigration background and its effects on work.

According to Munkejord (2017), immigrant care workers themselves have been studied only a little (p. 231). Therefore, also their relationships with their colleagues and care recipients have not been given much attention in a previous literature (Timonen & Doyle, 2010, p. 25). This study will contribute to the field by concentrating on these matters. My argument is that in order to understand the position of the immigrant employment in eldercare and society, the search for noteworthy insights should begin with studying immigrant eldercare workers themselves. As discussed further above and how this thesis has positioned its interest in intercultural communication, falling on presumptions of culturally framed aspects prompting the inquiry, is avoided, but rather the aim is to look beneath the surface and negotiate the meanings of such suggestions. Additionally, as interactional situations encompass most of eldercare work, focusing on those matters may give useful results to enlighten situations which would require urgent attention. Therefore, the research question foremost seeks insights to what immigrant eldercare workers regard important in workplace interaction:

*What do immigrant eldercare workers consider important in terms of workplace interaction?*

By asking this question, it covers both more individual and situational perspective and how this thesis positions itself in intercultural workplace communication. As discussed above, research in intercultural workplace communication has tended to approach culture as given, not something that is created in occurring situations. Similarly, studies of immigrant care workers have emphasised the significance of cultural diversity and its effects on work (e.g. Nichols et al., 2015; Ortega et al., 2009). At the same time, less often immigrant care workers have been studied in a manner which focuses on themselves (Munkejord, 2017, p. 231). Therefore, this study is positioned in the field from the perspective of immigrant eldercare workers' experiences.

## 4 METHODOLOGY

Qualitative method serves this type of study best as its goal is to pursue the understanding from the perspective of the target which is studied (Vaismoradi et al., 2013, p. 398). As the purpose of this thesis is to gain insights to issues related to immigrant eldercare workers' experiences in workplace interaction, the answers are sought from themselves as they are the ones who have the knowledge and practical experience on the matter. Qualitative research focuses on real life situations and aims to understand and interpret phenomena, therefore using a qualitative method was a self-explanatory choice in this study (Silverman, 2014, p. 4–5).

In subchapter 4.1, I will tell how I collected the data. Also, the requirements to participate in this study are shared. Next, the data is presented, and the basic information of the participants shared. Also, ethical questions are covered. Then, in sub-subchapter 4.1.1, the structure of the interview is presented, and its use justified followed by the presentation of the data in sub-subchapter 4.1.2. Subchapter 4.2. is dedicated to the presentation of the method used in this study. First, in sub-subchapter 4.2.1, thematic analysis is discussed by presenting its focal concepts and advantages in qualitative analysis. Then, in sub-subchapter 4.2.2, I will tell in more detail how thematic analysis was applied to the data used in this study with the help of the graphics of actual findings.

### 4.1 Data collection

The data was collected by interviewing the target of the study which is the immigrant eldercare workers working and living in Finland. Requirements to participate in the study were that the participant's first language should not be Finnish, they are first generation immigrants and they work as formal eldercare workers. I accepted only formal eldercare workers in the study because I was interested in the perspective of marketized care labour. The requirement of including only people, who have Finnish as their second language, was based on the interest of linguistic aspect and what previous literature has discussed multilingual working environments. Swedish, which is another official language in Finland, was left out due to practical reasons and my low competence in that language. Also, I contacted only workplaces where the dominant language used was Finnish and thus, I assumed that people working there

were expected foremost to know Finnish. My interest was on first generation immigrants because, based on previous studies and my own assumptions, their experiences in workplace interaction can easily be connected to their backgrounds.

Before I could contact possible participants, I applied for a permission to conduct a study as it included people and I was expected to confirm that my study would not cause harm to persons who would participate. I contacted municipal social services and sent them research application forms. After I was given a permission to conduct this study, I looked for the participants by approaching their workplaces and persons in charge via e-mail. In the e-mail, I informed the persons in charge about my study and its purpose, attaching the invitation letter addressed to possible participants. Additionally, I attached the research plan if a person in charge hoped to read it. First time I contacted the participants either by receiving an e-mail from them or sending them a message after I was given a list of people and their e-mail addresses. I also sent an informed consent form beforehand or gave it to the participants to read before the actual interview took place. Both the interviewee and the interviewer, that is I, had their own copies of informed consent forms, signed and dated. The data collection took place between September 2019 and January 2020 and all participants were interviewed at their workplaces.

#### 4.1.1 Structure of the interview

Interview as a method to collect data is twofold: interviewees can talk from their own perspective expressing their thoughts and events experienced, but their responses are partly limited in consequence of an interviewer's interest (Nikander, 2012, p. 400). Interviews are set to follow the agenda of the researcher, and this power relation has raised criticism towards using interviews in qualitative research (ibid., p. 400). Also, an interviewee's responses may be guided by their anticipation of what a researcher expects to hear from them (Nikander, 2012, p. 401). However, it can be noted that no data is free from pre-set agendas (ibid., p. 399). Interviews offer a straightforward and economic path to seek information from the target of the study by establishing interview questions which keep interviewees to talk on topic (Nikander, 2012, p. 400).

I chose to collect data by organising individual interviews mostly because of its practicality and a straightforward and versatile implementation for the study. Also, I felt that for me, who

is rather inexperienced in conducting research, interviews felt a reasonable and approachable way to do qualitative research. I considered conducting a focus group as it might have enabled interesting and profound insights and points of comparison to the discussion when in dialogue with other participants. Presumably, ethnography would have also been suitable for this kind of a study as it enables a close examination of actual interactional situations. Interviews and focus groups as methods of qualitative research take a grip on what people are *thinking*, whereas ethnography offers an access to see what people are *doing* (Silverman, 2014, p. 230). Nevertheless, interviewing as a method to collect data fulfilled my purposes sufficiently as my focus was on experiences which with suitable interview questions were possible to detect.

The interview of this study was semi-structured with open-ended questions, which included foci drawn from the literature. My intention was to give the participants opportunity to talk freely about their experiences, but I also formulated questions which directly dealt with the research problem in hand. When necessary, to further define the answer, I asked additional questions. The interviews were conducted in Finnish and later each was transcribed in Finnish as a whole. I analysed the data in Finnish and partly translated it in English for the text formation purposes. Also, I translated extracts into English used in this thesis. Due to different accents and levels of fluency, which participants spoke in Finnish, I translated the quotes by using standard English, leaving out personal characteristics of speeches. Original, unedited extracts are presented after the translated ones in order to emphasise transparency of the study.

The interview was divided loosely to five sections with basic information asked in the beginning, such as the age and occupation. The first section included questions of background information and overall feelings towards work. The second section focused on the care workers' interaction experiences with their colleagues and the third section with their care recipients. The fourth section comprised the use of language and the last section included two questions which were about the participants' work experience in their place of origin. The interview template, along with the informed consent form, is attached at the end of the thesis.

#### 4.1.2 Data

Altogether, eight people were interviewed, and they all worked in municipal eldercare sectors. Their occupation was a practical nurse at the time when the interviews took place. The time

they had lived in Finland spanned from five to 26 years and all participants were women between the ages 29 and 49. Six out of eight participants had a different occupation in their place of origin, whereas the remaining two had moved to Finland when they were children. Two of the participants had moved to Finland with their families when they were children, two had moved to Finland through marriage, two after work and two were returnees (See **Table 1**). Here, returnees mean people who have ancestry or otherwise close connection in a place where returning (Finnish Immigration Service, 2020).

**Immigrant eldercare workers who participated to the study**

<i>Participants</i>	<i>Age</i>	<i>Years in Finland</i>	<i>Current occupation</i>	<i>Different occupation or education in the place of origin</i>	<i>Reason moving to Finland</i>
<i>P1</i>	33	26	Practical nurse	No	With family
<i>P2</i>	35	13	Practical nurse	Yes	Marriage
<i>P3</i>	47	8	Practical nurse	Yes	Returnee
<i>P4</i>	49	14	Practical nurse	Yes	Work
<i>P5</i>	31	20	Practical nurse	No	With family
<i>P6</i>	29	5	Practical nurse	Yes	Work
<i>P7</i>	33	10	Practical nurse	Yes	Marriage
<i>P8</i>	42	5	Practical nurse	Yes	Returnee

**Table 1.** Immigrant eldercare workers' basic information

All participants were treated equally and respecting their anonymity. Participants were informed beforehand with the invitation letter which included the information of the purpose of the study and the rights a person had when participating in the interview. It was made clear that personal information was not shared for the participants to stay anonymous. Also, participants were informed that they had a right to withdraw from the study at any point without needing to give an explanation. This all was also made visible in an informed consent form which both the interviewer and interviewee signed and dated. During the interview, I also told the participants that they were free to ask anything about the study and be in touch with me via e-mail if anything came up regarding their participation to the study.

In order to avoid guiding questions, the interview was constructed so that the word culture was not used, thus, the relevance of culture and what it represents in a context was created only by interviewees themselves. As discussed further above in chapter 2, people understand and perceive the concept of culture from their personal experiences and circumstances, thus any suggestions and notions of culture from my behalf may lead to generalisation which has little to do with the reality and purpose of this study. As the intention of this study is to examine immigrant eldercare workers' experiences in workplace communication and interaction, it is not relevant to presuppose that these experiences would only result from their "cultural backgrounds". All in all, the questions were formed in a way that interviewees could interpret the questions their own way and therefore, answer as they feel is best.

#### 4.2 Thematic analysis

According to Braun & Clarke (2006), thematic analysis is independent from theoretical frameworks which already exist (p. 81). As already existing theoretical frameworks carry some level of presumptions and interest, thematic analysis offers a more transparent approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 81). Thematic analysis seeks patterns and themes within the data by organising and describing the data in detail (*ibid.*, p. 79). A theme is an item which "captures something important in the data in relation to the research question" (*ibid.* p. 82). The nature of qualitative approach becomes evident when seeking themes because quantity does not necessarily compensate quality: the number of instances within a theme does not define which theme is more meaningful or crucial than the other (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 82).

Braun & Clarke (2006) discuss two primary ways to identify themes in the data: inductive and deductive (p. 83). In inductive analysis, themes are primarily a creation of the data itself, whereas in deductive analysis, the formation of themes is guided by researcher's interests and pre-existing theories or assumptions (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 83–84). Unlike in deductive analysis, inductive approach does not try to fit into any existing frames. Instead, framing happens during analysis and it may well lead to new discoveries and perspectives which would not have been possible if previous researches impacted the search of themes and patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 84). Deductive approach always limits the analysis as it captures instances, which are known to have been identified before (*ibid.*, p. 84).

A third way to identify themes is called abductive approach which comes mid-way between deductive and inductive approaches. In abductive approach, the data stays an active creator in theme formation while considering pre-existing concepts and models which may become inspirational and useful in analysis (Thornberg, 2012, p. 247). Moreover, abductive approach not only combines data-driven and theory-driven discoveries, but it examines the data “by modifying, elaborating upon, or rejecting theory if needed, or putting old ideas together” (Kennedy & Thornberg, 2018, p. 5). An abductive approach to qualitative analysis describes best my research process – nuances applied from previous research on the topic, a certain understanding gained from critical intercultural communication literature as well as preformulated interview questions have all guided the course of this thesis, hence, my approach to the analysis cannot be purely data-driven, that is inductive. However, these aspects are used as an inspiration and a gentle guidance, rather offering possibilities than limiting them.

The process of thematic analysis does not proceed linearly, but it requires revisiting earlier phases and moving back and forth during the analysis when needed (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 86). This non-linearity is described as iterative approach in which data collection and analysis overlap during the research process (Kennedy & Thornberg, 2018, p. 2). Braun & Clarke (2006) have provided six phases for applying thematic analysis as a guidance (See **Table 2**).

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarizing yourself with your data:	Transcribing data (if necessary), reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas.
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code.
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme.
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts (Level 1) and the entire data set (Level 2), generating a thematic ‘map’ of the analysis.
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme.
6. Producing the report:	The final opportunity for analysis. Selection of vivid, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

**Table 2.** Phases of thematic analysis. (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87)

The first phase comprises of the immersion of the data, which requires “reading the data in an active way – searching for meanings, patterns and so on” (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). The recommendation is to take notes for coding already in the first phase as it eases the following



phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87). When the data is in a verbal form, such as interviews, it needs to be transcribed (ibid., p. 87). However, there is no single way to transcribe the data as thematic analysis does not follow any specific guidelines, but what is important is that the transcription retains the information the analyst will need (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 87–88). The second phase entails the search of codes which eventually form themes and which in turn are later established in the third phase (ibid., p. 88–89). The purpose of coding is to organise the data in order to identify groups of information the data entails (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 88). The process of coding is affected by how much the search of themes is either data-driven or theory-driven and if the focus is on particular issues related to the subject which is studied (ibid., p. 89).

The actual interpretation of the data starts in the third phase in which themes are searched from the data. Codes found in the former phase are collated in order to find relationships between codes and form possible themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 89). Visual representations, such as mind maps, help perceiving themes and having a sense of their significances. (ibid., p. 89) I found the use of mind maps helpful in piecing together and arranging the findings. In the next sub-subchapter, I will present two of the mind maps which helped forming one of the two main themes identified in this study. In the fourth phase, themes found in phase three are reviewed and reconsidered by going through the data extracts and make sure they form a coherent pattern (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 91). Next, the whole data is reviewed in order to ensure the validity and accuracy of themes and that additional codes, which earlier were missed, are identified (ibid., p. 91). In this phase, a thematic map, which is the visual presentation of the themes, is developed, and the analyst has an idea of what it actually tells about the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 91–92). In phase five, themes are defined and named, and each theme is analysed in detail, and in the sixth phase is the final step in thematic analysis (ibid., p. 92). Here, the final report of the findings is produced and demonstrated by data extracts which support the themes (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 92–93).

Thematic analysis is easy to adopt and due to its flexibility, it can be applied to a range of epistemologies. However, these features can also become a downside as thematic analysis is not dictated by any theoretical frameworks and thus, is not as claimed or proved as other analyses (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 97). Therefore, good thematic analysis is conducted explicitly and convincingly, and an analyst stays an active participant during the whole process as throughout the analysis the data requires comprehensive interpretation and reviewing (ibid.

p. 96). In next sub-subchapter, I will present how thematic analysis was applied to this study with the help of graphics of actual mind maps I produced during the analysis.

### 4.3 Application

For this study I interviewed eight immigrant eldercare workers whose requirements and descriptions as well as the structure of the interview are discussed further above. The interviews were recorded and after I had interviewed participants, I transcribed the recordings. Drawing on thematic analysis, I first familiarized myself with the transcriptions by reading them several times. I also started writing notes on this phase in order to keep track of early findings and become familiar with the data. Next, I coded the data with the guidance of the research question:

*What do immigrant eldercare workers consider important in terms of workplace interaction?*

I used several creative ways in order to distinguish codes within the data. For example, highlighting important parts by using a colour scheme and reading the printed data helped to identify codes and further forming potential themes. Once I had coded the data, I organised them into mind maps which also functioned as an early phase formation of the themes. To illustrate these findings more comprehensively, the examples of the first mind map and the one followed by it are presented below (See **Figure 2** and **Figure 3**).



**Figure 2.** The first mind map of a potential theme.

Figure 2 shows the identification of one potential theme which is the language proficiency and how it became important to immigrant eldercare workers in various ways. Bubbles with different colours represent subthemes from which it was possible to identify sub-subthemes. Also, I added items of which participants discussed during the interviews onto the map. These items are attached to sub-subthemes based on the area of discussion. In the first mind map I had included all that I interpreted essential and beneficial regarding the subject of the study. As I reviewed the data and codes I had identified, it was possible to narrow down and specify these findings and create the final theme (see **Figure 3**).



**Figure 3.** Mind map of the importance of language proficiency.

Decision to omit some of the components for the final version of the theme was based on the relevance and suitability in terms of the purpose of the study. Some components were possible to move from one subtheme to the other and some were combined as one area of discussion. For example, in figure 3, the subtheme of role and impact was omitted because of its vague position within the theme. Perceiving findings critically I felt that the subtheme was not comprehensive enough and did not bring a sufficient amount of value to the whole. Omitting, combining, and moving all served the study's interest. As the themes were settled in their final shape, I started the process of analysing them each at a time, but also reviewed the data in order to ensure I had not missed codes, which would have been important, or refresh my memory for possible new perceptions.

## 5 FINDINGS

In this chapter, I will discuss the findings which were organised into two main themes: the importance of the language proficiency in the workplace and the importance of sufficient resources. The main themes were drawn by their frequencies but also how they were discussed and entailed meaningfulness in the data; therefore, it can be assumed that the participants felt these themes and what they cover being important aspects in the context of workplace interaction. Overall, the themes covered discussions related to the purpose of this study which was to examine participants experiences of what was regarded important in terms of workplace interaction. Both themes include subthemes and some subthemes include varying issues which were possible to analyse further.

Next, in the following subchapters, the findings will be presented. The findings are presented through varying graphics in order to give an overview to the issues discussed. Also, extracts are used to demonstrate the themes more comprehensively and to support the analysis. The extracts are supplemented with the interview questions and English translations. Finnish extracts are written in their original forms and presented in square brackets after the English translations. English extracts are translated in standard language in order to ease reading and interpretation.

### 5.1 Importance of language proficiency at work

One of the two main themes identified from the data is the importance of language proficiency in workplace interaction. All eight participants discussed the importance of language proficiency with varying experiences and opinions. They either linked the language proficiency directly to what is important in workplace interaction or they told that it is important to be competent in Finnish language. Also, it was discussed that weak language proficiency did not hamper workplace interaction, but rather workplace offered an efficient ground for learning language while working. Participants also talked about language skills indicating its importance from the perspective of approachability, learning environments, and interpreting. **Table 3** below provides an extensive overview to the findings of this theme. In the following sub-subchapters, these subthemes are presented separately in more detail.

Importance of language proficiency	
<i>All participants expressed issues, which dealt with language skills and how they became important in workplace interaction.</i>	
(1) Learning channels <i>Participants pointed out ways of learning language in the context of the importance of the language proficiency.</i>	Training
	Learning from the staff
	Learning from the care recipients
(2) Language proficiency in encounters <i>Language proficiency was connected to workplace interaction and how care workers were treated based on their language skills and how they perceived their responsibility to be proficient in Finnish language.</i>	Performability
	Approachability
	Attitude
	Quality of interaction not dependent on language proficiency
(3) Using the 1 <sup>st</sup> language (L1) <i>Participants used their L1 for entertainment and translation purposes as well as communicating with their colleagues.</i>	With the care recipients
	With the staff
	At work in general

**Table 3.** The importance of language proficiency

Language proficiency was discussed from many viewpoints and after a thorough analysis, it was possible to separate three different subthemes which encompassed participants' responses to how the importance of language proficiency manifested itself. The subthemes are *learning channels* (1), *language proficiency in encounters* (2) and *using the 1<sup>st</sup> language* (3). In subtheme 1, participants shared experiences of how they had learned and improved their Finnish at or for work. In subtheme 2, participants told how language skills affected the interaction at work. In subtheme 3, participants discussed the ways they had used their first language at work. All these subthemes concentrated one way or the other on having good

language proficiency and how important it became from the participants' point of view. Next three sub-subchapters are organised so that each subtheme is discussed under its own heading.

### 5.1.1 Learning channels

Participants pointed out ways of learning language in the context of the importance of language proficiency. In the light of the findings, it can be assumed that eldercare as a working environment offers a range of possibilities to learn and improve language skills. Drawing on the data, I could identify three channels through which participant enhanced language proficiency: training, the staff, and the care recipients. Participants shared their experiences of learning and improving Finnish language at work, but also gave examples of other immigrant care workers' experiences in order to express their opinions of language learning and its impact on interaction.

In the channel of training, it was possible to divide two different aspects how participants experienced enhancing their language proficiency through training: it was either offered by the workplace or a care worker furthered effective learning by means of their own decision. In the channel of the staff, colleagues of the participants had supported their language learning. It was possible to identify two different ways colleagues enhanced the participants' language learning in the interview data: either by helping with new words or correcting language mistakes. The third channel included more detailed ways to learn and improve language with the help of the care recipients. It was experienced that one way to support language learning was to correct participants' language mistakes. Other ways were connected to more profound interaction between a care worker and a care recipient as participants experienced that their care recipients enhanced language proficiency through conversations. Participants told that the care recipients' speech was easy to follow because they spoke clearly. Conversations also involved the possibility to learn grammatical correct Finnish because participants experienced that the elderly spoke standard Finnish. Possibility to learn Finnish dialects from care recipients was also mentioned. According to the findings and themes they form, each channel is discussed along with extracts in the following paragraphs. Also, in **Table 4** below, these channels are organised and different responses each channel included are separately presented.

Learning channels	
Training	The effect of own decision to language learning
	Workplace's contribution to language learning
Staff	Asking for or receiving help with new words
	Asking for or receiving corrections
Care recipients	Correcting
	Conversations help improving language skills
	Clarity of speech and grammatical correctness
	Learning Finnish dialects

**Table 4.** Learning channels in the theme of language proficiency

One channel to learn Finnish language was through training either at school or teaching offered by a workplace. Participants shared their own experiences when learning language or discussed the possibilities a school or a workplace offered for language learning. They discussed their experiences on the effectiveness of language learning when studying or working with people who either did not share the same first language or they had Finnish as their first language. One of the participants told that immigrant workers with the same first language (L1) were put to different units at workplace:

*Extract 1:*

Q: "Does your mother tongue have any kind of a role at work?"

[“Onks sulla minkäänlaista roolia sun äidinkielellä töissä?”]

A: "...we were put to different units to prevent that we speak our own language because we need to practice (Finnish) and I agree."

["... meidät jaettiin eri osastolle et vaan estetään sitä et me puhutaan omaa kieltä koska pitää harjotella (suomen kieltä) ja mä oon ihan samaa mieltä.]



From the experience of the participant, immigrant eldercare workers with the same L1 were put to different units at work in order to prevent them talking to each other in their L1. This was explained to give them an environment which would maximize their Finnish language learning. The participant regarded the separation from workers with the same first language as a positive thing. This separation may have resulted in more effective language learning, however, does this also show some level of mistrust and homogeneous attitude on behalf of the workplace? This raises interpretations of workers' diverse language proficiency hindering their professional performance, or interactional situations are pictured as homogeneous and thus, excluding more interpersonal relationships at work. Also, the perception is that the workplace has thought of all immigrant workers with the same L1 to learn the dominant language best in a certain environment, not considering an individual approach of what kind of a learning method suits best to each person.

When studying to be a practical nurse, another participant's decision to join a Finnish group instead of a group designed for immigrants was explained by her willingness to learn Finnish more effectively:

*Extract 2:*

Q: "Could or should some things change in your opinion? Anything that needs improving, does something come to mind?"

[”Voisiko tai pitäisikö joidenkin asioiden muuttua sun mielestä? Onko mitään kehittämisen varaa, tuleeeko mieleen?”]

A: "...the teacher asks what kind of a class I want to go to, because there were two in the area. One immigrant group, the other Finnish group. I said, if I can, I would like to go to the Finnish group. Well, the teacher directly asks why, I say it improves Finnish language better. And either a person or people in the group [...] speak correctly and write correctly and say, how it is better to say and what is correct... I hear how Finnish people discuss and talk..."

[“...opettaja kysyy, minkälainen luokka mä haluun mennä, koska oli kaks alueella. Yksi maahanmuuttajaryhmä, toinen suomalainen ryhmä. Mä sanoin, jos voi, jos saa, mä haluaisin että mennä suomalaiseen ryhmään. No, se suora kysyy miksi, mä sanon se on kehittää suomen kieli ihan parempi. Ja joko henkilö ja joko ihmiset ryhmässä [...] oikeesti puhuu ja oikeesti kirjoittaa ja sanoo, miten parempi sanoo ja mikä oikeesti... Mä kuulen, miten suomalaiset keskustelee ja miten puhuu...”]

In extract 2, the participant told that she was given a chance to choose one of two school groups and she chose the Finnish group because from her perspective, she could learn Finnish more effectively in an environment where other students had Finnish as their first language. This extract implies the participant's willingness to learn Finnish the hard way and aim towards fluency and correctness in Finnish language. The purpose is probably been on achieving the most effective result in language learning, but alternative interpretation could also be the willingness to learn the language as if it is spoken "natively".

From the experiences of the participants, either workplace or care worker's own decisions guided their language learning towards effectivity and these decisions implied the importance of the language proficiency on behalf of both parts. A common factor in these two examples is that language learning was experienced to be most effective when participants were surrounded by people who had Finnish as their L1. The motivation has supposedly par excellence been on learning Finnish effectively. However, there is also a hint for achieving a level of language proficiency which could perhaps hide immigration background if the participants passed for "a native speaker". This interpretation produces an ideology in which a language is tied to a nation and vice versa.

Workplace's contribution to language learning was mentioned in the data in various ways. As discussed further above in extract 1, the workplace's decision to separate immigrant workers with the same L1 to different units was experienced as one way to support language learning in the interview data. Also, participants discussed how the workplace offered immigrant eldercare workers training in which they could practice reporting and at the same time improve their Finnish language. Participants also told that their workplaces organised Finnish language courses which they could exploit. For instance, in extract 3, the participant told how her workplace supported language learning by offering training specialized for immigrant care workers:

*Extract 3:*

Q: "Did you feel that in the beginning, colleagues supported language learning?"

[“Tuntuiko silloin alussa, että kollegat tuki kielen oppimista?”]

A: "Yes and there is this possibility to learn more, now here started this immigrant training on Mondays and there they go through more how to report, it helps a little to improve linguistic skills..."

["Joo ja se on se mahdollisuus, että voi oppia lisää, että nythän täällä nyt alotti se maahanmuuttaja semmonen koulutus maanantaisin, että siellä käydään just enemmän näitä, miten kirjataan, millä tavalla, just että vähän auttaa siihen kielelliseen taitoon..."]

Extract 3 gives the impression that the workplace has recognised the need for offering extra training for immigrant eldercare workers as if a way to target the language learning outside actual prescribed tasks. It can be assumed that besides offering alternative designed possibilities to enhance work related language learning, another reason for it might be in enhancing effective time management and work performance while actual job tasks take place.

The remaining two learning channels within the theme of the importance of the language proficiency are the staff and participants' care recipients. Overall, participants felt that they had good relationships with their colleagues, they worked as a team effectively, and they were treated equally in their workplaces. They also told that their colleagues helped them with the dominant language if needed. One of the participants described warmly her colleagues as helpful and she gave an example of her boss who had helped her with paperwork which was written in Finnish. Overall, her experience was that her colleagues supported her writing in Finnish and helped her with new words:

*Extract 4:*

Q: "What kind of situations have you encountered when you have been in interaction with your colleagues?"

["Millaisia tilanteita olet kohdannut, kun olet ollut vuorovaikutuksessa työtovereidesi kanssa?"]

A: "... If I hear new words or a new resident arrives, they always tell me and say how is better if I don't know."

["...Jos tulee joku uusia sanoja tai joku uusi asukas, aina kertoo minulle ja sanoo miten parempi, jos mä en tiedä."]

In extract 4, the impression is that the participant's colleagues took responsibility for supporting her language learning. Similarly, as they informed about a new resident in the nursing home, they also informed the participant with Finnish words which were new to the participant.

Another participant told that she had told her colleagues to correct her if she says something wrong in Finnish and some of them had corrected her while others did not:

*Extract 5:*

Q: "What kind of situations have you experienced when you have been in interaction with your co-workers? If you want to share some concrete examples."

["Millaisia tilanteita olet kohdannut, kun olet ollut vuorovaikutuksessa työtovereidesi kanssa? Eli jos haluat jotain konkreettisia esimerkkejä jakaa."]

A: "...it is nice that some colleagues can tell about mistakes for example and give feedback that yeah that word was wrong, but not all even though I've said that please tell, how else would I know if no one tells me that now something went wrong..."

["...kiva et osa työkavereita pystyy kertomaan virheistä esimerkiks ja antaa palautetta et joo toi sana meni nyt väärin mut ei kaikki, vaikka mä oon sanonut, et sanokaa ni enhän mä muuten tiedä, jos kukaan mulle ei kerro, et jotain meni nyt väärin..."]

In extract 5, the participant indicated that it was not only her responsibility to improve her language, but she expected and hoped her colleagues to support language learning too. The participant had not experienced colleagues correcting her language tackles as negative, instead, she had proposed to get feedback. This, again, indicates willingness to enhance language skills close to the level of "a native speaker".

One participant pondered that it would be nice to meet Finnish colleagues outside work too because it would also improve her language proficiency:

*Extract 6:*

Q: "Do you want to add something, anything comes to mind?"

["Haluatko lisätä vielä jotain, tuleeeko jotain mieleen?"]

A: "Well I could add for example, if I am with colleagues, if I was in Russia there is maybe a different working culture, there can be friends at work too, [...] but I think in Finland, that the kind of working culture that there are more colleagues at work than friends and friends can be from somewhere else. At least it is my experience. And we had talked a little with other multicultural workers that they agree that maybe [...] it can be good, that outside we are only colleagues but can also be good that there are also friends outside, to go visit and such. That how does Finnish sound as a mother tongue, is it talked the same way or does it give a different viewpoint."

[“No sen verran voisin lisätä esimerkiksi, et jos oon kollegojen kanssa, jos olisin Venäjällä, siellä on ehkä vähän erilainen työkuulttuuri siellä voi olla työpaikalla ystäviäkin, [...] mutta ajattelen Suomessa, että semmonen työkuulttuuri että se enemmän töissä kollegoja kuin ystäviä ja ystäviä voi olla jostakin muualta. Ainakin minä koen näin. Ja olin vähän puhuttu myös muiden monikulttuurien työntekijöiden kanssa että he on samaa mieltä että ehkä [...] se voi olla hyvä, että ulkopuolella olla vain kollegoja mut voi olla myös hyvä että ulkopuolella on ystäviäkin, käydä kylässä ja semmosta. Että miltä Suomen äidinkieli, puhuu samaa vai eri näkökulma...”]

The participant experienced that, based on cultural differences, forming friendships at work was different in Finland than in her place of origin. Also, she referred to her colleagues, who also had immigration background, sharing the same opinion. This viewpoint implies that language learning was not only linked to workplace communication and professional competence, but interaction during free time would enhance language learning, and perhaps, a sense of togetherness and belonging through a mutual language. Referring to different workplace cultures might have functioned as an explanation for experiencing exclusion due to linguistic differences between immigrant and non-immigrant workers.

Based on the responses of the participants, it can be assumed that the participants were pleased about the help of their colleagues with the language. They had also encouraged their colleagues to correct their Finnish and pondered how their language skills would improve even more if they met colleagues, who spoke Finnish as their first language, during their free time too. Another impression is also that not only participants or their workplace took responsibility in learning language, but their colleagues created language learning situations too when they corrected participants' language mistakes.

The interpretation is that interacting with their care recipients the participants were able to learn and improve Finnish more creatively when compared to the channels of designed nurse/language training and the staff. From their experience, there were various ways in how their care recipients supported language learning. For example, the participants felt that the

elderly spoke standard language, and their speech was clear which from their experience made learning easier:

*Extract 7:*

Q: “How do your clients stand with you?”

[“Kuinka asiakkaasi asennoituvat sinuun?”]

A: “When I am discussing with an elder person, I myself improve Finnish language, because the elderly always speaks very correctly, it’s not colloquial Finnish. And they speak clearly...”

[“Kun mä keskustelen vanhusten kanssa, mä itsen kehitän suomen kieli, koska vanhukset aina puhuu ihan oikein, ei mikään puhekieli. Ja puhuu selvästi...”]

Also, the participants experienced that they had deeper conversations with the elderly than with the staff and those conversations enabled more effective Finnish language learning. Participants also told that they were able to learn Finnish dialects from their care recipients. One participant was competent in Finnish language, but still she experienced learning something new every day especially from the care recipients:

*Extract 8:*

Q: “Did you feel that in the beginning, colleagues supported language learning?”

[“Tuntuiko silloin alussa, että kollegat tuki kielen oppimista?”]

A: ”...It is very hard, Finnish language, every day it feels like even though I know (Finnish), I still learn more words, and something specific as our elderly residents, when they use some dialects, I ask what is that and they can quite well explain what it means in Finnish but pretty well I have learnt here too while working.”

[“...kyl se on tosi vaikee se suomenkieli että se joka päiväki tuntuu, et vaikka osaa niin oppii kummiski lisää jotain sanoja ja tiettyjä jotain kun nää meidän iäkkäät asukkaat, kun he käyttää jotain murretta, sitten mähän kysyn, mikä se on ja kyl ne aika hyvin osaa selittää sen mitä se tarkoittaa suomenkielellä, mut aika hyvin on sille oppinut täälläkin työssä tekiessäkin.”]

In the subtheme of learning channels, participants shared experiences of how they had improved their language proficiency at work. Based on their experiences and viewpoints, work

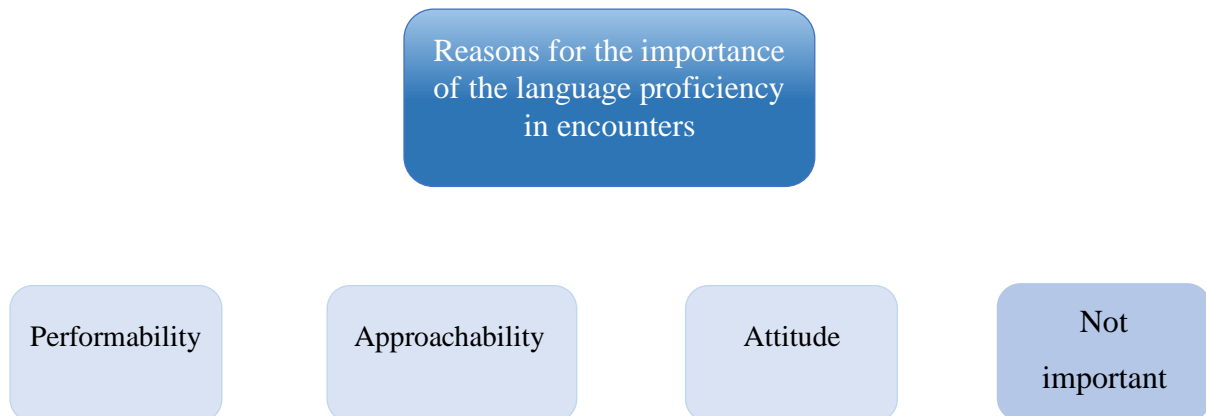
in eldercare had supported their language learning in various ways. According to the findings, participants were active in finding ways to learn Finnish more effectively. For example, in the channel of training, they had made conscious choices on the grounds of maximizing language learning. Also, they had actively asked help from the staff and due to more profound relationship with their care recipients, participants were able to learn the language while interacting with them. According to their experiences presented above, participants received language learning support from their colleagues foremost in work related tasks, whereas with their care recipients participants had conversations in which they were able to have more profound discussions.

Moreover, the workplace, the staff, and the care recipients created language learning situations with the participants by correcting, helping, and designing environments which were ought to enhance effective language learning. These experiences indicate the importance of language proficiency in the workplace and which can be further connected to workplace interaction. According to the findings, participants actively found ways to improve their language skills in interaction, this improvement occurred automatically through interaction or colleagues and care recipients created these learning situations themselves. Participants did not express having any negative experiences regarding their language tackles being corrected et cetera. However, it can be argued whether there is too much pressure on learning the language and whether pursuing the L1 level of proficiency compounds the idea of language seen as an entrance ticket to “the society of non-immigrants”.

#### 5.1.2 Effect on encounters

In the second subtheme, the importance of the language proficiency was discussed from the viewpoint of interacting with the staff and care recipients. Issues discussed dealt with either the immigrant eldercare workers’ own attitudes or attitudes others had towards them or other immigrant eldercare workers in relation to their language proficiency. Participants justified the importance of language proficiency in workplace interaction by giving different reasons which were possible to separate to different areas of discussion. Discussions and viewpoints were separated to different areas as follows: language proficiency affecting work performability, language proficiency affecting how immigrant eldercare workers were approached (approachability) and language proficiency affecting what kind of attitudes they encountered

(attitude). In contrast to reasoning why good language proficiency is important in interaction, an alternative response discussed the effect of the language proficiency from the viewpoint of how good workplace interaction was not dependent on language proficiency. Below in **Figure 4**, these reasons are presented separately in order to conceive the different aspects the participants delivered in the interviews. These reasons are further discussed further below.



**Figure 4.** Reasons to be proficient in Finnish language in terms of interaction

Performability is related to understanding terminology required in order to complete prescribed tasks successfully. Eldercare work requires the knowledge of technical terminologies of which medical and rehabilitation terminology were mentioned or discussed in the interviews. In extracts 9 and 10, participants told in more detail, according to their own experiences, what level of language proficiency they were expected to have:

*Extract 9:*

Q: “What kind of language skills you are expected to have at work?”

[“Millaista kielitaitoa sinulta odotetaan työssä?”]

A: ”Language skills are very important in this job too because it is very diverse, medical care and mood and everything should be able to speak in Finnish and the language does also effect on that you understand what the resident wants to speak or produce, that understandability is also important.”

[”Kielitaito on hyvin tärkeä tässä työssäkin koska niinku tää on aika monipuolista et se niinku tässä on lääketieteellisiä hoitotapoja ja mieliala ja kaikki pitäis niinku puhua



suomen kieltä ja kyl se kieli vaikuttaa myös että ymmärtää mitä asukas haluaa puhua tai tuottaa et se ymmärtäminen myös on tärkeää.”]

The participant experienced that language skills were focal when nursing care recipients due to versatility of care work and vocabulary it entails. She also pointed out that being able to understand what care recipients talk is highly of importance.

*Extract 10:*

Q: “What kind of language skills you are expected to have at work?”

[“Millaista kielitaitoa sinulta odotetaan työssä?”]

A: Well good of course because we have evaluation rehabilitation unit that our language skills are very important because everything these staff meetings and with the relatives we chat a lot and of course all doctor consultations and others and if we have to speak on a phone and call pharmacy and others and of course that we need to report every day so it has to be understandable... I think that anyone who lives in Finland and a Finnish person wants that excellent Finnish language skills because when I myself go to a doctor, if they have poor skills in Finnish [...] that do I understand correctly did the doctor understand what I mean, that yes always one has to have good language skills.”

[No hyvä tietenkin ja koska meillä on arviointi kuntoutusosasto et meidän niinku kielitaito on tosi tärkeä koska jos kaikki nää palaverit ja omaisten kaa tosi paljon tulee juteltuu ja sit tietenkin kaikki lääkärikonsultaatiot ja muut jos puhelimella pitää puhua ja apteekkiin soitetaan ja muuta ja tietenkin kun kirjata pitää joka päivä niin seki pitää olla ymmärrettävää... Mä luulen et jokainen niinku Suomessa asuva ja suomalainen halua sitä erinomaista hyvää tietenkin suomenkielen taitoa koska ite ku meen lääkärielle jos on huono suomenkielen taito [...] et ymmärrätkö minä oikein ymmärsikse lääkäri mitä mä tarkoitan et se vähän menee et kyllä aina ja pitääkin olla hyvä kielitaito.”]

In extract 10, having good language skills were also demonstrated from the perspective of the participant being the patient. In her opinion, that anyone, who lived in Finland, expected to receive good Finnish when communicating with professionals. Here, the attitude of the participant towards language proficiency was also demonstrated as participants discussed their responsibility to be competent in the Finnish language. Partly, this overlaps with the reason of attitudes but from the viewpoint of the participants targeting these attitudes towards their language proficiency. This own responsibility of knowing Finnish was also reasoned as follows:

*Extract 11:*

Q: “Would you like to add something?”

[“Haluaisitko lisätä jotain?”]

A: “First, it is important when an immigrant comes to Finland, I said, that Finnish language, a new occupation and to work. And in my opinion, one needs to evaluate what I want to do in Finland before moving [...] Do you just want to, for example, some person sits at home and does nothing, doesn’t work. [...] You must improve Finnish language, first thing. Then go to work.”

[“Se on tärkeää ensin, kun maahanmuuttaja tulee Suomeen, minä sanoin, että suomen kieli, ammatti uusi ja töihin. Ja ihan hyvin omasta mielestäni pitää arvioida, mitä haluan tehdä Suomessa ennen kuin muutan. [...] Haluatko sinä vain esimerkiksi, joku henkilö vain istuu kotona ja ei mitään tehdä, ei mitenkään käy töissä. [...] Pakko kehittää suomen kieli, ensimmäinen asia. Ja mennä töihin.”]

In extracts 10 and 11, participants felt strongly about needing to know the dominant language if they wanted to live in Finland. The expectation of everyone being competent in Finnish relates to the ideology of nativism. Surely, knowing the dominant language of the place of the residence is beneficial and important in eldercare services, however, it also implies ones right to identify belongingness or inclusion.

Another aspect dealing with the connection between language and interaction was about the participants’ experiences of how language proficiency affected approachability. One participant told that, from her experience, once she had learned more Finnish, more people approached her. Another participant told that she knew immigrant eldercare workers who lacked the competence in Finnish language and therefore, she felt that they stayed more distant than those immigrant workers who were more fluent in Finnish language. Also, it was experienced that those workers who had Finnish as their first language stayed more distant to those who did not have Finnish as their first language. According to the experiences of the participants, less fluent language skills effected on close relationship formations at work.

Participants also connected racism to approachability and moreover, language competence and how it was linked to low professionalism. From their experiences, participants themselves had not faced racism which they reasoned with having good language proficiency. However, from their understanding, some colleagues, who had poorer language skills, had been bullied and

faced racism because of the lack of language proficiency. One of the participants experienced that by having fluent skills in Finnish when comparing to her colleague with weaker language skills affected the way care recipients approached her and her colleague:

*Extract 12:*

Q: How do your clients stand with you daily?

[Kuinka asiakkaasi asennoituvat sinuun päivittäin?]

A: "Lovely for real. [...] here we dealt with racism in the last unit meeting and everything like that but well I haven't faced it in a sense as I speak very good Finnish so the elderly doesn't see that colour in me they say that have you born here, then similar nurse who speaks bad Finnish, they are called names, we have observed... They think that I am adopted, or I have born here... I have one client, says that hey that nigger nurse didn't know how to do their tasks that come you Finn to do it... It has come many times from the client's mouth, then I have said that hey the nurse has a name that although we have the same skin colour but they don't see it because I speak so good Finnish."

["Ihanasti oikeesti. [...] tässä me käsiteltiin viime osastokokouksessa rasismia ja kaikki tämmöstä mutta tota mä en oo kohdannut siinä mielessä jotenki ku mä puhun niin hyvää suomea ni vanhukset ei nää sitä väriä minussa ne sanoo et ootko syntynyt täällä sit vastaavanlainen hoitaja joku puhuu huonoo suomee nii sitä haukutaan me ollaan havaittu... Ne luulee et mä oon adoptoitu tai mä oon syntynyt täällä... Että mulla on yks asiakas sanoo et hei toi nekerihoitaja ei osannu tehdä asiansa sano mulle että tule sinä suomalainen tekemään... On tullu monta kertaa asiakkaan suusta sit mä oon sanonu et hei hoitajalla on nimi et vaikka meillä on sama ihonväri mut he ei nää sitä kun mä puhun niin hyvää suomee."]

In extract 12, the participant had experienced that due to her fluent Finnish language skills, she had passed for being a non-immigrant and therefore, she did not face discrimination or racism from care recipients. Also, the participant had experienced that colleagues, who lacked competence in Finnish not only faced racism, but they also were taken as having weaker skills in performing professional prescribed tasks. Thus, the implication is that language skills were experienced as correlating with one's professional skills.

Another participant told that the nursing home had received a new resident, who was told to have a tendency to racist commentary. When the participant met the care recipient, encounter turned out to be opposite to what she expected:

*Extract 13:*

Q: “Well could you say some positive experiences (relating to workplace interaction) or like if there has been organised some events or some conversations...”

[”No osaisiksä sanoo jotain positiivisia kokemuksia tai justiinsa jos on vaikka järjestetty jotain tapahtumaa tai tiettyjä keskusteluja...”]

A: “Actually I can we have had one client here a couple of days and right away he came it was said that he is very like [...] might have racist talks and something else and when I went to the room and started talking with the client they ask where in Finland do I come from...”

[”Itseasiassa voin meillä on ollut just tossa pari päivää sitten yks asiakas ja heti kun hän on tullut nii oli sanottu että hän on sitten sellanen tosi [...] saattaa olla rasistisia puheita ja muita ja sit ku mä tulin sinne huoneeseen ja rupesin puhuu hänen kanssaan niin hän sit kysyy multa et mistä päin Suomee sä oot kotosin...”]

According to the extracts 12 and 13, participants experienced having good language skills had a significant impact on what kind of attitude they received from the care recipients. The impression was that the level of Finnish proficiency was in accordance with overall professionalism. Also, there was a strong implication that fluency in Finnish marked “belonginess” and similarity attraction – care recipients saw that lower language skills equalled mistrust. Participants told that there had been discussions between the staff and the care recipients about immigrant workers and how they should be treated equally and above all, as nurses. Therefore, the workplace was aware of the attitudes immigrant care workers had faced and interfered to the cases in order to diminish racism.

Besides the reasons covered above, it was also highlighted that interaction had worked fine without good language skills when first starting to work in eldercare in Finland. It was experienced that understandability came first and the speech afterwards and that eldercare is a good environment to learn Finnish. For instance, one participant told about another immigrant eldercare worker who was still studying to be a nurse and did not speak Finnish when the student had practical training in a nursing home:

*Extract 14:*

Q: “Do you want to add something?”

[“Haluatko vielä lisätä jotakin?”]

A: ”Well I have already said that interaction works out fine without the language... And it is possible to... work in Finland and improve Finnish language, it is manageable... For example one Chinese nurse student was here, the nurse studies in English and was training and the first training was in Finnish language, it was so difficult but quickly quickly, and it lasted four weeks, quickly improved (Finnish language) and now has got gigs from this place.”

[“Siis minä sanonut jo että vuorovaikutus toimii ilman kieltä... Ja kyllä se onnistuu hyvin että siis... Tehdä töitä Suomessa ja kehittää suomenkieltä kyllä onnistuu hyvin... Esimerkiksi yksi kiinalainen sairaanhoitajaopiskelija oli täällä hän opiskelee englanninkielellä ja oli harjoittelussa eka harjoittelu oli suomenkielellä hänelle oli niin vaikeeta mutta nopeasti nopeasti ja se kesti neljä viikkoa nopeasti kehittänyt (suomen kieltä) ja nyt saanut keikat tästä paikasta.”]

In extract 14, language learning while working was experienced neither a challenge nor hindering work performability. It can be assumed that in the case of language learning, it was much dependent on participants’ personal experiences. Furthermore, the participant affirmed her argument by sharing a similar experience of her colleague who managed to work without knowing Finnish well. Also, one’s own attitude towards language learning was brought up:

*Extract 15:*

Q: “You started at your first workplace in Finland, was it anyway, like you got help in the beginning, if there were problems with the language, for instance?”

[“Alotit ensimmäisessä työpaikassa Suomessa, oliko kuitenkin semmonen, että autettiin alussa, jos oli vaikka kielen kanssa ongelmia?”]

A: “I didn’t have problems with the language because I had studied Finnish a little [...] it feels like it depends on a person, what is the attitude of a person, I had in the beginning an open attitude and I was ready to come here and then I didn’t experience any anxiety or something like that, didn’t have problems with the language or interaction.”

[“Kielen kanssa mulla ei ollut ongelmia, mä olin vähän opiskelen suomea [...] tuntuu, että se riippuu ihmisestä, mikä se asenne ihmisellä on, mulla oli alussa avoin asenne ja olin valmiina tulla ja silloin en kokenut joku ahdistusta jotain sellaista, ei ollut ongelmia kielen kanssa tai vuorovaikutukseen liittyen.”]

The subtheme of language proficiency experienced through one’s performability, approachability, and attitudes concluded rather opposing ideas of how important good language

competence was experienced in terms of workplace interaction. Participants reasoned competences and attitudes on the grounds of the level of Finnish language proficiency. The understanding was that immigrant care workers faced racism and mistrust if they were not fluent in Finnish language. Also, participants experienced that people in general expected anyone, who lived in Finland, to speak Finnish fluently. An alternative perception towards the issue was that one's poor language skills did not hinder interaction at work, but it was possible to "learn while doing", that is, the workplace offered a good learning ground to enhance language skills. These deviations highlight differences in participants' experiences of having good language proficiency and confirm the understanding of situational and personal experiences. As discussed further above, the way previous studies have tended to treat immigrant care workers as a homogeneous group, is, according to these findings, questioned as evidently much is dependent on participants' perceptions and personal experiences.

### 5.1.3 Using the first language

Apart from the importance of the Finnish language proficiency, the findings revealed that the immigrant eldercare workers also used their first languages in workplace interaction. This thesis follows a method of thematic analysis and thus, frequencies in the data are not quantified. However, it is worth mentioning that seven out of eight participants told that they had used their L1 at work, indicating that not only Finnish language is highly of importance, but immigrant eldercare workers had found it useful to know other languages too, and that they had benefitted from their proficiency in their first languages one way or the other. Usually, participants used their L1 with the care recipients, the staff or as an interpreter/translator between the care recipients and the staff or among the staff (See **Table 5**).

Using the first language (L1)	
With the care recipients	Sharing
	Knowing
	Teaching
With the staff	Sharing
With the staff and care recipients	Interpreter/translator

**Table 5.** Reasons to use L1 at work.

According to the findings, participants had used their L1 with the care recipients when they shared the same L1, the care recipient knew the L1 of the care worker or the care worker taught words in their L1 to the care recipient. Especially, when the care worker and the care recipient shared the same L1, empathy and comfort were the main reasons for the use of the L1. Some of the participants told that they had had care recipients who did not know Finnish well or at all, therefore, they felt that the use of the L1 was essential in those cases. Participants discussed the use of L1 with their care recipients, for example, as follows:

*Extract 16:*

Q: “Does your first language have a role at work?”

[“Onks sun äidinkielellä roolia työssä?”]

A: “If we share the same first language with the resident, then we speak in our language. Or with their relatives. Not everyone can speak Finnish effortlessly, that is why we use it. I feel that at least here I need to use my first language.”

[“Jos asukkaat on sama äidinkieli niin sitten mä käytän. Ja asukkaan omaiset. Ei kaikki pysty keskustelemaan suomeksi vapaasti, siksi käytetään. Tuntuu et tarvii käyttää, ainakin täällä työpaikalla.”]

In extract 16, the participant felt that the first language was an essential part of her job description, and not only she used her L1 with the care recipients but with their relatives as well. Another participant experienced that it gave her care recipient comfort to use their L1 with the care worker:

*Extract 17:*

Q: “Have you had clients with whom you have had a chance to speak in mother tongue?”

[“Onko sulla ollut asiakkaita joiden kanssa oot päässyt puhua äidinkieltä?”]

A: “Yes once I had this resident of my own that the resident was Estonian, who had dementia that for them it brought a lot of safety to take care of someone with the same language.”

[“Joo kerran mul oli yks tällanen oma asukas et se oli niinku virolainen et hänen kanssaan muistisairas et hänelle se toi tosi paljon turvaa et jos hoitaa samaa kieltä puhuvaa.”]

The participant appealed to her care recipients' illness that the use of their common L1 had a comforting effect and built trust between them. Besides sharing the same L1 with the care recipients, participants also used their L1 for entertainment purposes as shown in the following extracts:

*Extract 18:*

Q: "Does your mother tongue have had a role of any kind?"

[“Onks sun äidinkielellä ollut minkäänlaista roolia?”]

A: "With some residents we have, some residents have for instance studied French so with them we sometimes discuss small words but not like, very rarely I have had to use own language as there is no one with whom to talk to but with some residents who have been to language schools with them even in English many has known, they have studied in English so with them I try to suggest that lets talk a little so with them I have talked."

[“Joidenkin asukkaiden kanssa ollaan, jotkut asukkaat on esimerkiksi lukenut ranskaa joskus niin sitten heidän kanssa välillä keskustellaan pieniä sanoja mutta ei silleen, tosi harvoin on joutunut käyttämään omaa kieltä, ku ei oo ketään kenen kanssa voi puhua, mutta joidenkin asukkaiden kanssa just joka on käynyt kielikoulua, heidän kanssa englantiakin on monet osannut, niinku saanut sitä koulua käynyt englanniks nii sit heidän kanssa pyrin jotain heitellä et puhutaaks vähä et sit heidän kanssa oon puhunu.”]

In extract 18, the participant had encouraged her care recipients to have conversations in other languages too. Here, language skills were used for entertainment and activity purposes and perhaps to freshen care recipients' memory of their skills in languages. The participant had experiences not only using her first language but also to use other language of which she and her care recipients knew. In the following extract, the participant had used her L1 with the care recipients who had for instance traveling memories of her place of origin:

*Extract 19:*

Q: "Do you have positive experiences (relating to interaction with the care recipients)?"

[“Onko sulla positiivisia kokemuksia?”]



A: "For example the elderly who has travelled to, say, Russia or elsewhere in the world and then they want to know words, they ask and then we can learn some words and something like that..."

[“Esimerkiksi jos vanhukset, jotka on joskus matkustanut vaikka Venäjälle tai muualle maailmassa ni sit ne haluaa tietää sanoja, ne kysyy ja sit voi vaikka opetella niille jotain sanoja ja just tämmöistä...”]

In the light of these extracts, participants found advantages of knowing their L1 in terms of enhancing relationships with their care recipients. The participant's use of L1 was more diverse with the care recipients than with the staff. Using the L1 with the care recipients was used also for entertaining purposes and creating activities, whereas with the staff the participants spoke their L1 only in those cases when they shared the same L1 and they spoke the L1 to each other only when others with different L1 were not around:

*Extract 20:*

Q: "What kind of a role does your mother tongue have at work?"

[“Millainen rooli äidinkielelläsi on työssä?”]

A: "...Well at work a few friends are Estonian so with each other we speak Estonian but of course when we are just the two or three of us, only Estonians, like if there are Finns then it is like a rule in the workplace that then we speak Finnish..."

[“...No töissäkin muutama kaveri on virolaisii et näiden kanssa keskenään puhutaan viroo mut tietenkin silloin vaan kun ollaa kahdestaan kolmestaan, vaan virolaiset, et jos on suomalaisii nii sit kyllä se on niinku sellanen sääntö työpaikalla, et sit puhutaan suomea...”]

Further above, in extract 1, the participant had experienced that she and her colleagues with the same L1 were positioned to different units in order to give them better premises to learn Finnish in the workplace. In extract 20, however, the implication is that because Finnish was the official and dominant language of the workplace, it had become a common rule that all, who were in the same space, should speak Finnish. The reason for the rule might be in avoiding misunderstandings or that everyone should have an equal access to work related conversations. If that were the case, people on the managerial level had overlooked the importance of small talk and close interpersonal relationships in a workplace.

Participants told that they had used their L1 for interpretation and translation purposes too. One of the participants told that she had colleagues whose Finnish language skills were weak and often she helped them by translating things from Finnish to their L1:

*Extract 21:*

Q: “What kind of a role does your mother tongue have at work?”

[“Millainen rooli äidinkielelläsi on työssä?”]

A: “Really good, in our kitchen just started a person, who speaks really really bad Finnish so I have to interpret a lot and then I also have to write messages [...] or then there are nurses who don’t speak Finnish much so then I am well every other day I am an interpreter here.”

[“Tosi hyvä, meillä alotti just keittiös semmonen joka puhuu tosi tosi huonoo suomee ni joudun tulkkaa paljon ja sit joudun kirjottaa viestejä [...] tai sit on hoitajia, jotka ei puhu kunnolla suomee niin sit oon, no oon joka toinen päivä täällä toiminu tulkkina.”]

The participant’s role as an interpreter in the workplace begs the question whether interpreting and writing messages take time from actual prescribed tasks. The extract implies that the participant had interpreted a lot at work and hence, this duty, which assumingly is not a part of her prescribed tasks, would require a recognition from a managerial level.

One of the participants told that she had had a care recipient who did not speak Finnish and she helped her colleagues to interact with the care recipient by translating their speeches. She experienced that generally her L1 was often needed at work:

*Extract 22:*

Q: “Do you use your mother tongue at work at all, does it have a role at work?”

[“Käytätkö ollenkaan äidinkieltä työssä, onks sillä minkäänlaista roolia työssä?”]

A: ”...the mother tongue is ok, because for example, [...] in the nursing home lives an old granny with a very huge age and it is really difficult for a person to learn Finnish language [...] It is better, they speak their own language, for instance Russian. Well, I discuss with them in Russian. I was doing my internship and there was an old granny and she is an old Russian granny, and with her I discussed, and the staff comes to me and says [...] how they need to work and how some issue. Well because in Finland

many many people who need to help to translate from own language to Finnish language. It is an old granny, so the meaning is quite good.”

[“...äidinkieli käy, koska esimerkiksi [...] palvelutalossa asuu vanha mummo ja iso ikä oli ja tosi vaikea ihmisille oppii suomen kieli [...] Se on parempi, hän puhuu oma kieli, esimerkiksi venäjän kieli. No, mä keskustella hänen kanssaan venäjäksi. Olin työharjoittelussa ja missä oli vanha mummo ja hän venäläinen vanha mummo, ja hänen kanssa keskustella ja joku ja hehkilökunta tulee minun luokse ja sanoo [...] ja miten tarvitsee töitä ja mitä joku asia... No koska Suomessa monta monta ihmistä ja kenelle tarvitsee auttaa omasta kielestä kääntää suomenkielelle. Se on vanha mummo niin merkitys hyvä.”]

The findings show that the immigrant eldercare workers experienced having various situations and different reasons to speak their first languages. Mostly, L1 was used with the care recipients with varying reasons, one of them being the shared L1 between the care worker and the care recipient. This indicates the benefit of multilingualism in workplace interaction as nursing homes have residents with different language backgrounds. As the findings show, the possibility to use their L1 gives comfort to the care recipient and builds trust between the care worker and their care recipients. Also, multilingualism had been used in entertainment purposes and enhanced the relationship between the care worker and the care recipient.

The findings showed that using L1 at work had many advantages, especially when it was used with the care recipients. Participants had communicated in their L1 when they shared the same L1 with the care recipient. In those cases, it gave the care recipient comfort. Also, participants had had care recipients who did not speak Finnish and thus, being able to communicate with a shared language benefitted both. Participants had also used their L1 in order to entertain their participants by teaching them words. Apart from interacting with their care recipients, participants had colleagues with whom they had the same L1. However, they only spoke in their L1 when there were no one else around. The L1 was also used for translation and interpretation purposes. These two issues were not expressed as negative, yet it can be argued why these issues are perceived as allowed in the workplace. For instance, when thinking about a care worker’s job description, it does not include translation tasks.

## 5.2 Importance of sufficient resources

Besides the language proficiency, participants discussed labour shortage and how it affected their work performance and well-being. The importance of sufficient resources is the second of the two main themes from the data. In the interviews, participants discussed the lack of resources by raising different issues which they experienced to be problematic for them when working. These different issues were divided into separate sections in order to discuss them comprehensively.

In the table below (See **Table 6**), the areas of discussions are presented. The importance of sufficient resources does not directly link to workplace interaction, however, participants discussed this particular issue with such emphasis that this aspect could not be disregarded, although participants made clear connections to workplace interaction when discussing insufficient resources. Also, it can be argued that resources affect experiences of workplace interaction as most of the work in eldercare consists of communication. Therefore, this theme draws a secondary link to what participants regarded important in workplace interaction, yet the primary focus being on actual well-being which was hindered because of care shortage.

The importance of sufficient resources
<p><i>Participants experienced the lack of resources at work and expressed it from following viewpoints.</i></p>
<p>(1) Rush</p> <p><i>Causes exhaustion and sick leaves</i>  <i>Takes away from the time to be with the care recipients</i></p>
<p>(2) Duties out of their job description</p> <p><i>Causes burden</i>  <i>Takes away from the time to be with the care recipients</i></p>
<p>(3) Lack of language training</p> <p><i>Growing need for language training</i>  <i>Weak quality of language training</i></p>

**Table 6.** The importance of sufficient resources

The importance of sufficient resources was expressed through three areas which covered the different experiences of care shortage. These three areas are categorised under the theme as subthemes which are (1) *rush*, (2) *duties out of job description* and (3) *growing need for language training*. In the first subtheme, participants explained that they had experienced rush at work because of labour shortage, and it had affected the quality of time spent with the care recipients and their overall well-being at work. The second subtheme deal with experiences of the tasks which were out of a job description. The third subtheme covered the participants' opinions about language training and how the quality of language training was experienced insufficient. Participants made critical points about the lack of resources and they found problems to either successfully complete tasks or enhance the quality of nursing in eldercare. These three subthemes are discussed in more detail in the following subchapters.

### 5.2.1 Rush

Participants experienced that rush at work had caused sick leaves and taken time from keeping a sufficient company to the care recipients, indicating that both eldercare workers and care recipients suffered from rush. Participants told that by having more care workers, they would be able to spend more time with the care recipients. They felt it was important for them to be able to interact with their care recipients more deeply than only in the sense of technical nursing:

*Extract 23:*

Q: “Could or should some things change from the perspective of being a practical nurse when you think about it?”

[“Voisiko tai pitäisikö joidenkin asioiden muuttua näin lähihoitajan näkövinkkelistä, kun mietit?”]

A: “Yes it should, there needs to be more of us here because the elderly longs for a company and conversations and else than just technical, giving medicine and like that... And you can straight away notice if there are students here or one worker more if the spare worker is not occupied to anywhere else, they are at our disposal, then we can for example polish the nails or something just to be with them, you can notice it immediately.”

[“Pitäis kyllä, meitä pitää olla enemmän koska vanhukset kaipaavat seuraa ja keskustelua ja muuta ku sellasta niinku teknistä lääkkeiden antoa ja semmosta

niinku... Ja heti huomaa, jos on opiskelijoita tai meitä on yks enemmän, jos varahenkilö ei oo varattu mihinkään se on meillä käytössä, niin saadaan vaikka kynnet lakattuu tai jotain ihan vaan olla niiden kaa ni sen heti huomaa.”]

Participants often felt that the time spent with the care recipients was important for them, and it became also visible in the discussions concerning rush. The data showed that there was a genuine concern about the well-being of the elderly and the quality of their lives in the nursing homes. The time spent with the care recipients was experienced as an important duty which was challenged because of the lack of the resources:

*Extract 24:*

Q: “Do you want to add something?”

[“Haluatko lisätä jotain?”]

A: “The fact that there would be more staff so that these elderly people would get that daily life, to make it possible because they like sometimes to go somewhere else outside for example go to a restaurant or whatever that place is, if there was more staff, they would go out from here too, they have that [...] that they go there for the rest of their lives so they could also enjoy this and not only stare at that bed and wall and what else they can stare there, so it is a little boring for them and could get more [...] time to polish their nails something like different time too, set their hair in rollers after shower, there’s no time even for rollers, have to move to the other and rush is really that I want to do but then there is no time and it shows much that how it exhausts nurses if there is terrible rush, then the nurses tire themselves out and then there are a lot of sick leaves...”

[“Just että enemmänki et ois enemmän henkilökuntaa et sais näille vanhuksillekki sitä arkista elämää mahdollistaa ku näähä joskus tykkää käydä jossai muuallaki ulkopuolella vaikka mennä jonnekki ravintolaan tai mikä se paikka onkaan, et jos ois enemmän henkilökuntaa niin pääsis ulkopuolellekki täältäki et niil on vaa se [...] et he menee sinne loppuelämään nii he saa niinku vähä nauttiaki tästä ettei vaa tuijottaa sitä sänkyä ja seinää ja mitä ne siellä nyt tuijottaa ni se on vähä tylsää heillekin ja sais sitten enemmän [...] aikaa, laitetaan kynsilakkaa, vähä niinku erilaistaki aikaa papiljoteillekin suihkunkin jälkeen, ei ehdi edes papiljotteihin, pitää siirtyä jo toiseen ja kiire on se kyllä, haluan tehdä, mutta sitten kun ei oo aikaa se näkyy sitten hirveesti siinä et se uuvuttaa hoitajiakin, jos on hirveä kiire niin hoitajat uupuvat ja on paljon sairastumisia...”]

Participants talked about the care recipients with empathy, giving specific examples of how they would spend time with care recipients only if they had more time. Also, the quality of the care recipients’ lives was discussed as participants experienced that it was much dependent on

the resources of nursing homes. Due to rush, participants experienced that they did not have time to organise more events or other activities to entertain the residents and therefore, the care recipients had less content in their lives. According to the findings, rush affected the quality of workplace interaction as care workers did have less time to interact with their care recipients, even though they would have liked to spend more time with them.

Apart from not being able to spend more time with the care recipients, participants discussed from their experience that eldercare workers were often sick because of the exhaustion that rush causes. It can be interpreted that rush caused an endless chain in which eldercare workers wanted to spend more time with their care recipients but as they were lacking resources, they were too busy to be with their care recipients and furthered rush caused exhaustion and sick leaves which in turn worsened the situation. Experienced continuous rush at work had harmful consequences to a well-being of both the eldercare workers and care recipients. Rush not only affected the well-being of both sides, but also the time the care workers and care recipients had together decreased due to a limited time, which care workers had with their care recipients. Therefore, according to the experiences discussed in the interviews, rush caused humane work becoming more technical.

### 5.2.2 Duties out of prescribed tasks

Besides rush, the lack of sufficient resources was also expressed through duties which were experienced as not belonging to prescribed tasks. The perception was that since eldercare was lacking enough workers, job tasks exceeded of what usually was a care worker's area of specialty and further affected the overall work performability and well-being. Multitasking and taking time from the actual care work were experienced burdening:

*Extract 25:*

Q: "Could or should some things change in your work?"

[“Voisiko tai pitäisikö joidenkin asioiden muuttua työssäsi?”]

A: "We have all kinds of things, you name it, but one example is that this week we follow how long it takes us nurses to do laundry, I am a nurse, not a facility service, so laundry belongs to us [...] then on the weekends we don't have facility services, you are the laundry facility service lash nurse, a kitchen person, have to stretch to

many parts so one issue is that you could do care work, I feel that it cannot be recognised anymore that am I really doing care work.”

[“On meillä vaikka mitä aika monenlaista, mut yks niist esimerkiksi tällä viikolla meillä seurataan, miten kauan meillä hoitajille pyykkääminen, mä oon hoitaja en mikää laitoshuolto [...] sitten viikonloppuna meil ei oo laitoshuolto, sinä oot pyykki laitoshuolto kautta hoitaja, keittiö ihminen, pitää venyä moneen osaan nii yks niist on just se, että saisit tehdä sitä hoitotyötä ite nimenomaan hoitotyö, must tuntuu sitä ei enää tunnista, tekeeks mä oikeesti hoitotyö.”]

The participant experienced that she was expected to carry out duties for which she should not be responsible. She perceived that these tasks took time from actual care work and it resulted in the feeling of not being a care worker at all. It can be interpreted so that because there was less time for care work, it took time from being with care recipients as well, thus, tasks besides care work affected workplace interaction too.

### 5.2.3 Lack of language training

The importance of language proficiency also emerged in the theme of the importance of sufficient resources but from the viewpoint of language proficiency being a resource. Since there was an increasing number of immigrants working in eldercare, the findings suggested that there was not enough language training offered for immigrant care workers. A lack of language training was discussed either by pointing out directly how possibilities to learn Finnish language was weakened or sharing experiences of colleagues who had low skills in Finnish due to the lack of language training. In both cases, participants experienced that there was not an appropriate amount of resources available to immigrant eldercare workers to improve their Finnish. As their workplaces received immigrant students, participants felt that there should be more language training offered for them at work:

*Extract 26:*

Q: “Do you want to add something?”

[“Haluatko lisätä vielä jotain?”]

A: “...To make it possible to learn more Finnish at work because the language is important... Because now we have those immigrant students, so it is important to learn the language in this job.”



[“...Mahdollistaa niinku oppia sitä suomen kieltä siinä työssä enemmänkin että pääsee siihen koska se kieli on kyllä semmonen että on tärkee... Koska nyt meillekin on tullut noita maahanmuuttajaopiskelijoita ni kyllä se kieli on semmonen tärkee tässä työssä oppia.”]

The findings revealed that participants themselves expressed having no difficulties to learn or speak Finnish. Instead, to justify a weakened quality of language training, own experiences were shared in order to compare a current state:

*Extract 27:*

Q: “Do you want to add something?”

[“Haluatko vielä lisätä jotain?”]

A: “We receive students and I also look that for instance, god sake how that person has so many problems for instance if the language skills are very weak and now one friend, who has lived many years in Finland, wants to learn the language but language courses are different when I, for instance, went to one, there are fewer classes and they are somehow combined, like people with different levels of language skills are in the same group and people are tried to put to work more than the language training is given and then comes people who cannot speak but they are still at work, it is like the work is in a main role [...] like how this communication happens if the person has only been working all the time and not studied the language, this bothers me that now there’s very little effort to, like, Finnish language courses and teachers and rooms and electricity and everything are saved and then people are in trouble when they want to learn but they cannot for some reason.”

[“Meillähän tulee opiskelijoita ja mä kans katon, et esimerkiks herrajumala miten sillä ihmisellä on niin paljon ongelmia esimerkiks, jos on tosi heikko kielitaito ja nyt yks kaverihan yrittääkin, se on asunu monta vuotta Suomessa ja hän haluaa oppia kieltä, mut nyt niinku kielikurssitki on eri tavalla, kun sillon kun mä esimerkiks menin ni niitä on vähemmän, ne on jotenki yhdistetty, et siin on niinku eri tasosii eri niinku kielitaitosii ihmisii samassa ryhmässä ja kun ihmisiä yritetään vaan laittaa töihin enemmän ku sitä kieltä annetaan ja sit tulee ihmisiä, jotka ei pysty puhumaan mut et ne on kuitenkin töissä, et se työ on niinku pääroolissa [...] et miten tää kommunikointi tapahtuu, jos ihminen on ollu vaa töissä koko ajan eikä opiskellu kieltä, etä tää vähän niinku mua harmittaa, et nyt tosi vähän panostetaan siihen niinku suomenkielen kurssille ja säästetään opettajat ja tilat ja sähköt ja kaikki ja sit ihmiset on ihan pulassa, kun ne haluaa oppia mut ne ei pysty jostain syystä.”]

The focus had shifted from first learning the language to learning while working. This shift was experienced affecting immigrant workers negatively as it required more time and effort to combine work and language training simultaneously, in addition to other aspects of daily life.

However, as noted further above in sub-subchapter 5.1.2., the data also revealed a deviation in terms of learning language while working. It was also suggested that being capable of learning language while working did not hinder work performability.

Examining the discussions about the need for sufficient resources, it can be concluded that the lack of resources not only affected work performability and well-being, but also resulted in weakening the quality of interaction between the care worker and their care recipients. Participants expressed wanting to spend time with their care recipients and valuing the time spent with them. However, due to rush and other tasks besides care work, participants experienced that they did not have spare time to be with their care recipients. Also, participants were of the opinion that there should be more language training offered for immigrant eldercare workers in order to ease their workload and adjustment to a new job.

Sufficient resources are not related to intercultural communication per se even though participants linked rush hindering the quality time spent with their care recipients. This aspect gives an interesting input to the literature of immigrant eldercare workers as often this specified workforce has been pictured as saviours of care services. In the light of these findings, however, immigrant eldercare workers also experienced insufficient resources afflicting their work performance, not only non-immigrants, therefore, approaching immigrants as a separate workforce does not correlate with the reality.

## 6 DISCUSSION

This thesis shed light on experiences which immigrant eldercare workers had regarding workplace interaction. The interest was in those situations and issues which participants regarded important in their workplace. On the grounds of the study's interest, I established the following research question:

*What do immigrant eldercare workers consider important in terms of workplace interaction?*

The data of this study was collected by interviewing eight immigrant eldercare workers who all worked in a municipal care sector when the interviews took place. The interviews were conducted in Finnish and they were audio recorded. Interviews then were carefully transcribed and parts of them translated in English. By analysing the transcriptions, I identified two main themes which could be linked to the research question: the importance of language proficiency in the workplace and the importance of sufficient resources. The themes were extracted by following the method of thematic analysis which is presented in chapter 4. In chapter 5, these themes were presented and analysed and organised with the help of different subthemes and areas of discussions. The presentation of the findings was supported with the help of the summative graphics and extracts from the interviews. In this chapter, I will discuss these themes and how they responded to the research question. Additionally, these findings are discussed in the light of previous literature and theoretical framework.

Drawing on the interview data, immigrant eldercare workers highlighted the importance of language proficiency and sufficient resources at work. Language proficiency was discussed from many viewpoints which all were linked to workplace interaction and communication. Language proficiency also overlapped with the theme of sufficient resources in terms of language training which gathered responses of needing more investments. A lack of resources and care shortage were discussed mainly from two viewpoints: the well-being of the care workers and care recipients and the effect on the relationship between the care workers and their care recipients. The latter can further be connected to what immigrant eldercare workers experienced as important in workplace interaction and communication.

Based on the findings, language skills were a focal issue linked to workplace interaction. On one hand, the data suggested that proficiency in Finnish language was understood by the participants as being in a key position to a successful workplace interaction. This was justified, for example, by referring to work performability and understanding essential terminology, such as medical jargon, and what kind of attitudes they encountered. Also, participants referred to insufficient language training being the reason for weak language proficiency and which in turn affected workplace interaction. On the other hand, it was experienced that weak language skills did not hinder work performability, but rather a workplace acted as an effective environment to enhance language skills. This claim can be linked to the participants' experiences of the staff and care recipients who supported language learning by helping with new words and correcting language mistakes.

Some participants discussed learning Finnish in an environment that supported them aiming towards correctness and fluency in speech. The experience was that it produced more effective learning outcomes when, for instance, the participant decided to study practical nursing in a group designed to students with Finnish as their L1. Participants also experienced that their care recipients were an effective channel to learn and improve Finnish because from their understanding, elderly spoke grammatically correct and clear standard Finnish. Also, one participant pondered the possibility to meet colleagues, who speak Finnish as their L1, outside work in order to access an environment where they can learn Finnish from the perspective of the L1 speaker. It can be construed that favouring the learning environment of people, who speak Finnish as their L1, was pursued by both immigrant care workers and their workplaces. For instance, immigrant workers with the same L1 were put to different units to prevent them talking in their L1 and enhance their Finnish language improvements instead. Also, care workers could speak in their L1 only when workers who spoke the dominant language as their L1 were not around. These experiences could be interpreted as a willingness to achieve a level of Finnish which could get close to "a native speaker" and thus, even hide immigration background. This interpretation gets support from the experiences which some participants had of their immigrant colleagues with lower language proficiency. Participants told that some immigrant workers were discriminated because of their lower Finnish proficiency and thus, they experienced racism.

Discrimination linked to low language proficiency was also experienced as mistrust on behalf of some care recipients. Therefore, participants experienced that language proficiency was

linked to one's ability to carry out prescribed tasks successfully. This was also demonstrated by highlighting the importance of knowing work-related vocabulary, such as medical jargon, in the dominant language. Juxtaposing language proficiency with professional expertise has been present in previous studies too. For instance, in the study of Välipakka et al. (2016), an immigrant worker's low Finnish proficiency was connected to unprofessionalism which further led to mistrust (p. 6). In the study conducted in a rural area in England, immigrant care workers experienced that in order to secure their professional position, they should improve their language skills even though many of them already had sufficient skills in the dominant language of the workplace (Cuban, 2009, p. 181). Also, in the study conducted in Norway concluded that immigrant care workers felt learning the Norwegian language as a challenge because "they still had to devote significant energy to learning it as well as possible" (Munkejord, 2017, p. 243).

In the light of this study and previous literature, the level of mastering the dominant language of the workplace has often been experienced as a key factor to successful workplace interaction and work performance. According to the findings in this study, some participants had pursued Finnish language learning and improving by exploiting different channels and methods, often aiming towards perfection in language proficiency. Some participants had also experienced that knowing Finnish is a must if an immigrant wants to live in Finland. This aspect becomes rather problematic as it indicates the ideology of "one country, one language". This study as well as previous research suggest that immigrant care workers are not content when knowing the dominant language sufficiently, but they continue pursuing more fluent level of language proficiency (e.g. Cuban, 2009; Munkejord, 2017). The findings also give an implication that participants did not only perceive mastering the dominant language on account of working environment but knowing the language defined their belonging to the society. This, again, alludes to the perception of merging language and place as an inseparable ensemble. However, this study also covered the experience of Finnish skills not being the most important and valued factor in workplace interaction. From this viewpoint, it was experienced that workplace offered good premises for improving language skills, and it was underlined that the lack of language skills did not hinder work performability or workplace interaction.

This dualistic understanding of the importance of Finnish language proficiency is indeed an interesting aspect which invokes different interpretations. On one hand, it can be argued whether participants had experienced Finnish language being linked to nativism and that it is/it

is not the way/their responsibility to blend in the workplace, and furthermore, in the Finnish society. On the other hand, participants may have experienced that language proficiency was directly linked to their professionalism, that is the language proficiency measured their expertise to work in eldercare (Hua, 2014, p. 237). However, it is worth to note that language skills are to some degree important in eldercare especially in the case of nursing care recipients as they are entitled to receive care in their own L1. This, however, raises the question of immigrant care recipients who speak other languages than Finnish and whether receiving care in their L1 is fulfilled. Participants discussed the significance of their L1 and multilinguistic abilities in eldercare as some of the participants had care recipients with who they shared the same linguistic background, and in some cases, their knowledge in their L1 became essential when it was the only language a care worker and a care recipient shared.

An interesting discovery to language proficiency was the use of participants' first languages. Often, the role of the first language may have been overlooked in a context which concentrates on workers of different linguistic backgrounds than what is the official language of the workplace. All participants except one had experiences of using their L1 at work and it appeared to be very useful for them and the workplace. Especially, using L1 with their care recipients proved to give many advantages in terms of quality interaction. As discussed further above, participants told that they used their L1 with the care recipients of the same L1 or for entertainment purposes. In some cases, participants experienced that it was essential to speak L1 with the care recipients, as it was the only language the care recipients knew. From the experiences of participants, communicating in L1 helped participants to build trust with and give comfort to their care recipients.

According to their responses during the interview, participants had translated and interpreted from their L1 to Finnish and vice versa at work. Even though participants themselves did not connect negative feelings to it, it can be argued whether using their L1 as consulting purposes should be a part of their prescribed tasks, especially, if it takes time from essential tasks and actual care work. Previous literature has shed light on this particular issue. For instance, Jansson (2014) noticed that the care worker, who was fluent in the L1 of the care recipient, had received a special position in the unit as an expert of the care recipient's L1 and thus, was consulted by colleagues when they had difficulties with communicating with the care recipient (p. 221). In Germany, the use of bilingual employees as consultants of their L1 in hospitals is widely recognised and even generated a term "ad-hoc-interpreting" which refers to these

employees in question as well as family members who are bilingual (Meyer, et al., 2010, p. 164). According to Meyer et al. (2010), since the implementation of professional interpreters in the workplace was rather difficult due to political and financial issues, specific training modules of interpretation to bilingual employees served as one solution (p. 181). It becomes evident that participants in this study used their multilingual abilities beyond their actual prescribed tasks and supposedly, language skills had become an important tool in everyday workplace interaction. Also, in the light of these findings, some participants seemed to have a lot on the table in terms of linguistic practices. On one hand, they actively engaged in learning Finnish by exploiting different sources and, on the other hand, they consulted other people who needed help with the L1 of the participants.

A proper design for recognising multilingualism in eldercare would be needed in order to understand better the significance of linguistic diversity and how these issues could be implemented efficiently as a part of social care services. More generally speaking, the relevance of workplace interaction could be emphasised more in research as, based on the findings, its role is multifaceted: workplace interaction functions as educating and instructing, and it provides solutions for translation, interpretation, and entertainment. Consulting with language tackles occurred mutually between immigrant and non-immigrant workers too: participants had asked help with Finnish from their colleagues, whereas colleagues had asked help with the L1 of the participants. Also, both sides created situations for Finnish language learning by participants asking help for language tackles and their non-immigrant colleagues offering their advice to the participants. On the grounds of the exchange of languages between the staff, it can be assumed that multilingualism is or at least is becoming a commonplace in eldercare; thus, research that focuses on linguistics and communication might benefit employers too. Moreover, as demonstrated in this study, not only immigrants of working age represent linguistic diversity, but the spectrum of different languages is present among care recipients, hence, the ageing Finland is linguistically diverse too. Even though Finnish is the dominant language, it does not mean that other languages would not play an important role in today's eldercare.

Deviations in experiences of good language skills effecting on workplace interaction indicates the importance of individuality. In this study, how language proficiency had been perceived and how it affected one's work performability and interaction was much dependent on personal experiences and attitudes. This study has taken into account of a personal approach to the

subject by focusing on immigrant eldercare workers themselves, and as a result it has shown that experiences vary among people who may have often been treated as a homogeneous group in previous research. Therefore, it is important to acknowledge that language proficiency needs a situational approach so that everyone's needs are considered. Much can be dependent on one's linguistic background, own attitude, and overall learning styles what kind of a language learning suits best. Moreover, previous literature has had a tendency to treat workplaces and work communities as homogeneous too. It has been suggested that inquiry of workplace interaction and communication could turn its interest from cultural differences to the dynamics of, for instance, teamwork and interpersonal relationships within a workplace and hence, experiences would be regarded as shared, not as culturally influenced (Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 18). For instance, on the grounds of the findings discussed in this study, the exchange of language expertise between workers of different linguistic backgrounds enhances the significance of collaboration and shared experiences. Also, deviating experiences of the importance of knowing Finnish language could be explained by different dynamics and interpersonal relationships in different work communities.

Participants discussed the importance of having sufficient resources at work which is a widely recognised discourse in social and health services. This indicates that regardless of one's background, common problems resonate with everyone. In this study, participants experienced care shortage as affecting their well-being and the quality of care in terms of keeping company with their care recipients. As discussed further above, it was possible to link the experiences of insufficient resources to workplace interaction and communication as participants reasoned care shortage affecting relationships with their care recipients. They expressed their sympathy for their care recipients as due to rush, that they had experienced, care workers rarely had time to interact with the care recipients other than during the time of essential nursing. Timonen & Doyle (2010) have made similar findings which suggested that due to pressures experienced at work, immigrant care workers had little time to interact with their care recipients more profoundly (p. 32). Respondents in the study felt it important to interact with their care recipients through conversations as they experienced conversations to be an important part of care giving (Timonen & Doyle, 2010, p. 32). In this study, if they had the extra time with their care recipients, participants proposed various entertainments, such as doing their hair or taking them to a restaurant. Also, the lack of quality time spent with the care recipients can be linked to the use of language as participants and their care recipients had less time to have conversations which in turn functioned as one way to improve language skills. Also, some



participants expressed their dissatisfaction to the quality of language training. Moreover, it can be argued whether participants experienced care shortage affecting them even more than their non-immigrant colleagues since some of them might have used a noticeable amount of time in practices which included linguistic consulting et cetera on top of their actual prescribed tasks. Also, as it was discussed in chapter 5.2.3, the lack of language training was experienced as burdening the workload since immigrant workers had to learn language while working.

Whether participants discussed the importance of language proficiency or the lack of sufficient resources, they often linked issues to the relationships with their care recipients. These findings strongly imply that participants regarded the quality of care being linked to the importance of interaction and communication. This is also suggested in a previous study which noted that communication “was an important factor that shaped positive experiences of care for both elderly clients and migrant caregivers” (Spencer et al., 2010, p. 40). Also, the study concluded that rush resulted from care shortage caused the lack of time for care workers and their care recipients to spend time together (ibid., p. 40). Stressful working environment has also been studied to hamper good relationships with non-immigrant colleagues (Timonen & Doyle, 2010, p. 37). In this study, participants mainly responded having good relationships with their colleagues by means of supporting each other and working as a team in a hectic working environment. Similar findings, as this thesis covers, have been captured before, although it can also be noted that despite neither side’s backgrounds, caring relationship between a care worker and a care recipient is at all events regarded important in eldercare.

A conscious choice to omit the word culture in the interview template may have impacted the way participants discussed their experiences. Overall, participants explained their interactional experiences directly through “cultural differences” only a little. In the context of language proficiency, culturally framed negative experiences were linked to one’s Finnish proficiency by understanding that discrimination on behalf of care recipients occurred in cases when an immigrant care worker did not speak Finnish fluently. Participants had experienced level of language skills affecting how care recipients treated immigrant care workers, in other words, language proficiency acted as a scale of how meaningful one’s background became to care recipients. In this study, participants experienced that one’s language skills were approached as means of being culturally attached: the more fluent a worker was in Finnish, the less they faced negative attitudes regarding their immigration background. As discussed further above, this case indicates how language was experienced as tied to one’s “national belonging”.

This study has aimed to find reasons behind culture-related behaviour, with a view to not fall back on presumptions of culture serving as an explanation for inquiry, as seen in some previous literature (e.g., Nichols et al., 2015; Ortega et al., 2009; Walsh & O'Shea, 2010). For instance, a study conducted in Denmark was interested in immigrant care workers' well-being and health and aimed to identify similarities and differences between employees who were categorised into three groups which were "Danes, Western and Non-western immigrant" (Ortega et al., 2009, p. 700). The study concluded that, for instance, the group of "Western" immigrants responded more negative feelings towards their working environment in relation to the other two groups (ibid., p. 705). These negative feelings were linked to cultural differences and as a solution, the study suggested that minorities should adopt values of the majority in order to enhance their well-being at work (Ortega et al., p. 705). As to compare to this study, participants experienced the lack of resources affecting their well-being, but without implying it had anything to do with their "cultural differences". Rather, they discussed care shortage being a common problem regardless of a worker's background, something that they all shared. The study conducted in Denmark shows what kind of conclusions are made when the focus is on an essentialist viewpoint of "having culture": problems which the study identified were explained by cultural differences and it was immigrant workers' responsibility to overcome these difficulties by adapting to the work community of the majority.

As discussed in chapter 2, basing our understanding of people on cultural issues, and furthermore, a separation of people into groups of "different" cultures, we have not given much latitude to think otherwise of a person whose character is framed by pre-existing cultural components. If this kind of a mindset is applied to working life and work communities, its effects might lead to discrimination at workplaces and taking notice of issues which should not be implemented as a part of prescribed tasks or which are not even relevant in the context of workplace interaction and communication. A similar approach was taken in a comparative study which analysed work-related problems between immigrant and non-immigrant eldercare workers, and which concluded that the problems experienced did not stand out as distinguished only among immigrants or non-immigrants, thus the research of immigrant eldercare workers should not put too much emphasis on cultural issues (Jönson & Giertz, 2013, p. 820). This thesis has shown that regardless of their regionally different backgrounds, immigrants can be studied without giving too much emphasis on issues related to culture and thus, the findings have primarily focused on what immigrant care workers regard as important in workplace interaction. Perhaps, the most fruitful findings are related to the collaboration and exchange of

expertise in languages which show that workplace interaction is foremost a shared experience regardless of people's different backgrounds.

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

The aim of this thesis was to examine the immigrant eldercare workers' experiences of workplace interaction in Finland. The previous literature of the topic has put a little emphasis on the workplace study which takes into account more personal approach. Therefore, my interest was in actual experiences and encounters between immigrant eldercare workers and their colleagues and care recipients as these relationships might entail interesting and undiscovered insights to immigrant employment in eldercare. According to the findings, these experiences were mostly linked to proficiency in languages and insufficient resources in eldercare. Language proficiency was discussed from various viewpoints, signalling its growing significance in eldercare, whereas sufficient resources in eldercare were experienced important from the perspective of well-being of care workers. Also, lack of sufficient resources afflicted interaction between care workers and their care recipients.

There were mixed feelings towards Finnish language proficiency in the workplace as participants regarded it either important to know sufficient Finnish or they experienced that the workplace offered good premises for language learning while working. However, a common perception was that eldercare as a working environment enhanced language learning and improving as mostly, care work is about interacting with both the care recipients and the staff. A critical nuance towards the quality of language training was reasoned by appealing to colleagues or care work students whose Finnish skills were weak from the perspective of the participants. Overall, participants highlighted the importance of knowing Finnish as well as possible, indicating that the proficiency in the dominant language could be linked to nationalistic thinking: the willingness to be as fluent in Finnish as a L1 speaker cements the ideology of the language equalling belongingness and inclusion. Perhaps, the most interesting aspect of language proficiency was the participants' use of their first languages. On the grounds of their experiences expressed in the interviews, being able to communicate in their first languages benefitted both the care recipients and the staff as there were cases in which the participant and their care recipient had a mutual first language. Also, participants had used their first languages in order to entertain their care recipients.

The importance of sufficient resources was highlighted throughout the interviews; therefore, it is worthwhile to note that care shortage was experienced as affecting work in this study too. Previous and current literature has discussed labour shortage in eldercare and its effects on

social structures. Many studies have approached the subject as immigrant care workers being the solution for care shortage, but not perhaps taken account of the fact that immigrant care workers also experience challenges that care shortage causes. Possibly for the reason that immigrant employees are pictured as saviours, experiences and perspectives have been sought from employers, non-immigrant co-workers or by examining social structures and socio-economic issues in comparative ways (e.g. Spencer, et al., 2010; Huang, et al., 2012; Cangiano, 2014).

### 7.1 Limitations

Semi-structured interviews as a method of collecting data is a common approach in qualitative research and enables a collection of rich content as participants are able to express themselves more freely compared to questionnaires or similar. However, a focus group or ethnography in a study like this might have produced more in-depth results as the foci of interest was in interactional and communicational situations. Also, as an interview template already gives an idea of what the interviewer wants to hear from their interviewees, participants may have partly responded in a way they felt that was expected from them. In order to diminish the danger of anticipatory responses, I designed the interview such that it did not mention the word culture as it might have guided participants responses too much. Nevertheless, the findings of this thesis derived from the experiences which immigrant eldercare workers had in terms of workplace interaction. On that account, the findings and discussions presented in this study are not based on information that can be handled with perfect certainty.

The findings of this study produced similar as well as deviating patterns in responses, therefore, it would have been fruitful to conduct a focus group with the participants in order to observe whether their opinions stayed the same or they could relate to other participants in their responses. Also, the presence of more than one participant might have generated new viewpoints and ideas which might have stayed hidden with only one participant present. Also, as the main finding in this study was related to the use and proficiency in languages, an ethnographic approach would have served the purpose in rich data collecting better as the observation of real life encounters in eldercare could have produced interesting, real life insights to the topic. This can be seen in Jansson's (2014) study for which she conducted an

ethnography in a nursing home among care workers and a care recipient with diverse language backgrounds. She was able to demonstrate different strategies, which these care workers used in order to tackle language issues in the workplace. A similar method might have produced interesting and detailed findings; however, this study did not reach to see how these linguistic aspects were demonstrated in actual situations.

## 7.2 Implications

A proper recognition of immigrant workforce still needs societies' attention as social structures are impacting the position of immigrants in work labour. As many countries are ageing rapidly, increased workforce needed in eldercare is becoming more urgent and supposedly, the share of immigrants in the field is only increasing. In order to secure their position in labour, societies need to acknowledge the importance and impact of immigrant eldercare workers. This can be achieved by avoiding a homogeneous approach which looks at immigrant workers as forming one separate unit of workforce, but societies should rather aim to recognise resources of immigrant care workers, such as linguistic, and also enhance their belonging as equally recognised employees.

A multifaceted use of linguistic expertise in eldercare also implies the need to recognise language related practices in eldercare. As the findings of this study has shown, immigrant eldercare workers often use their first languages in diverse ways. For example, participants had used their first languages for translation and interpretation purposes as well as communicating with their care recipients and families of care recipients. Furthermore, they had used their linguistic abilities to entertain their care recipients. The significance of linguistic diversity in eldercare becomes emphasised as not only eldercare workers have diverse linguistic backgrounds, but linguistic diversity is present among care recipients too. Today's eldercare encompasses diverse use of languages, therefore, issues related to language use would require attention and careful design. As much of talk has been concentrated on immigrants of working age and issues related to languages, here it is worth to note that ageing Finland is linguistically diverse too.

### 7.3 Recommendations

In order to recognise necessary actions for embedding diverse proficiency in languages as a part of eldercare, future studies should focus more on a practical level, for instance conducting ethnography at workplaces. As this study has shown, approaching the subject from the ground level, it enables immigrant workers themselves to express their opinions and experiences of working in eldercare in Finland. Instead of concentrating on possible differences and challenges, immigrant eldercare workers as a subject of studies should be examined as what is their contribution, advantage, and position to Finnish social care systems. For instance, this study offered interesting insights to the language proficiency and its effects on workplace interaction.

Immigrant workers in eldercare by no means function as a homogeneous group of people, therefore, future studies should approach this aspect with caution. Instead, research focusing on the Finnish context would benefit from regional studies as in the light of previous studies, immigrant workers are over-presented in the capital of Finland, Helsinki (Näre, 2013 p. 75). According to Munkejord (2017), many studies related to immigrant care workers have concentrated on the urban context, whereas rural context is overlooked (p. 229). She suggests that as smaller towns need more people to inhabit their communities, workplaces “may show a particular openness and an ability to include new migrant workers” (p. 243). Alternatively, the study conducted in rural areas in England suggested that partly due to rural working conditions, which included long distances and rush affecting well-being, had worn immigrant care workers out so that they did not have energy to plan their future in terms of advancing their career planning. Instead, they remained a marginalised group of people in rural communities (Cuban, 2009, p. 183). Finland’s rural areas would offer new insights and viewpoints to the research as less immigrant care workers inhabit rural areas in relation to big cities.

Perhaps, future studies could focus more on issues which is experienced as shared in work communities in eldercare. Instead of studying workers based on their different backgrounds and whether these backgrounds affect work, studies would gain a better understanding of workplace interaction and interpersonal relationships if the focus were, for instance, on teams, regardless of one’s background. This shift enables research to turn its focus from cultural diversity to study what is shared in workplaces (Lahti & Valo, 2017, p. 18). According to Näre (2013), as long as welfare states regard immigrant workers as “them” and not “one of us” and

these nationalistic norms are not challenged, equality in labour stays out of our reach (p. 78). Therefore, future research would take a step towards situationally orientated studies and avoid falling back on preconceptions of cultural diversity.



## REFERENCES

- Anderson, A. (2012). Europe's care regimes and the role of migrant care workers within them. *Journal of Population Ageing*, 5(2), 135–146. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1007/s12062-012-9063-y>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Breidenbach, J. & Nyíri, P. (2009). *Seeing culture everywhere. From genocide to consumer habits*. University of Washington Press. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Cangiano, A. & Shutes, I. (2010). Ageing, demand for care and the role of migrant care workers in the UK. *Journal of Population Ageing*, 3(1–2), 39–57. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1007/s12062-010-9031-3>
- Christensen, K., Hussein, S. & Ismail, M. (2017). Migrants' decision-process shaping work destination choice: The case of long-term care work in the United Kingdom and Norway. *European Journal of Ageing*, 14(3), 219–232. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1007/s10433-016-0405-0>
- Cuban, S. (2009). Skilled immigrant women carers in rural England and their downward mobility. *Migration Letters*, 6(2), 177–184. <https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.jyu.fi/docview/1268703463?accountid=11774>
- Dervin, F. (2015). *Interculturality in education. A theoretical and methodological toolbox*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Dervin, F. & Risager, K. (Eds.). (2014). *Researching identity and interculturality*. London: Routledge.
- European Commission. (n.d.). *Active ageing*. Retrieved April 29, 2020, from <https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?langId=en&catId=1062>
- European Commission. (2018, May 25). *2018 Ageing report: Policy challenges for ageing societies*. Retrieved from [https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/economy-finance/policy-implications-ageing-examined-new-report-2018-may-25\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/info/news/economy-finance/policy-implications-ageing-examined-new-report-2018-may-25_en)
- Finnish Immigration Service. (n.d.). *Remigration*. Retrieved April 29, 2020, from <https://migri.fi/en/remigration>
- Forsander, A. (2001). Maahanmuuttajat ja työllistyminen. Suomi maahanmuuttomaana. [Immigrants and employment. Finland as a country of immigration]. In *Maahanmuuttaja kahden kulttuurin välissä*. [An immigrant between two cultures]. (pp. 53–65). Helsinki: Hakapaino Oy. Retrieved May 6, 2020, from <http://eurocult.fi/data/documents/Maahanmuuttaja-kahden-kulttuurin-valissa-2000.pdf>
- Harper, S. (2016). The important role of migration for an ageing nation. *Population Ageing*, 9, 183–189. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1007/s12062-016-9152-4>

- Ho, K.H.M. & Chiang, V.C.L. (2015). A meta-ethnography of the acculturation and socialization experiences of migrant care workers. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*, 71(2), 237–254. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1111/jan.12506>
- Holliday, A. (2011). *Intercultural communication and ideology*. Thousand Oaks (Calif.): Sage Publications.
- Hua, Z. (2014). Piecing together the “workplace multilingualism” jigsaw puzzle. *Multilingua*, 33, 233–242. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1515/multi-2014-0010>
- Huang, S., Yeoh, B. S. A. & Toyota, M. (2012) Caring for the elderly: The embodied labour of migrant care workers in Singapore. *Global Networks*, 12(2). 195–215. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1471-0374.2012.00347.x>
- Isaksen, L. W. (2011). Introduction: Global care work in Nordic societies. In L. W. Isaksen (Ed.), *Global care work: Gender and migration in Nordic societies* (137–158). Lund: Nordic Academic Press. <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Jansson, G. (2014). Bridging language barriers in multilingual care encounters. *Multilingua*, 33(1–2), 201–232. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1515/multi-2014-0009>
- Jönson, H. & Giertz, A. (2013). Migrant care workers in Swedish elderly and disability: Are they disadvantaged? *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 39(5). 809–825. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1369183X.2013.756686>
- Kennedy, B. & Thornberg, R. (2018). Deduction, induction, and abduction. In Flick, U. (Ed.) *The SAGE handbook of qualitative data collection*. London: SAGE Publications Ltd. <https://dx-doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.4135/9781526416070>
- Keva. (2016) Kuntien ja valtion työntekijöiden eläköitymisennuste 2016–2035. [Prediction of retirement of state and municipality employees 2016–2035]. Helsinki. [PDF] Retrieved May 13, 2020, from [https://www.keva.fi/globalassets/2-tiedostot/ta-tiedostot/esitteet-ja-julkaisut/julkaisu\\_kuntien\\_ja\\_valtion\\_tyontekijoiden\\_elakoitymisennuste\\_2016\\_2035\\_keva.pdf](https://www.keva.fi/globalassets/2-tiedostot/ta-tiedostot/esitteet-ja-julkaisut/julkaisu_kuntien_ja_valtion_tyontekijoiden_elakoitymisennuste_2016_2035_keva.pdf)
- Koivuniemi, S. (Ed.). (2012). *Maahanmuuttajataustainen koulutettu hoitohenkilöstö sosiaali- ja terveydenhuollon työyhteisössä*. [Trained immigrant care staff in the work community of health and care services]. Tehy ry. [PDF]. Retrieved April 29, 2020, from [https://www.tehy.fi/fi/system/files/mfiles/julkaisu/2012/2012\\_b\\_1\\_maahanmuuttajat\\_austainen\\_koulutettu\\_hoitohenkilosto\\_id\\_28.pdf](https://www.tehy.fi/fi/system/files/mfiles/julkaisu/2012/2012_b_1_maahanmuuttajat_austainen_koulutettu_hoitohenkilosto_id_28.pdf)
- Kröger, T, Van Aerschot, L. & Puthenparambil, J. M. (2015). *Hoivatyö muutoksessa. Suomalainen vanhustyö pohjoismaisessa vertailussa*. [Care work in change. Finnish eldercare work in Nordic comparison]. University of Jyväskylä. [PDF]. Retrieved from <https://jyx.jyu.fi/handle/123456789/57183>
- Lahti, M., & Valo, M. (2017). Intercultural Workplace Communication. In *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*. Oxford University Press. doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.404
- Lauring, J. (2011). Intercultural organizational communication: The social organizing of interaction in international encounters. *Journal of Business Communication*, 48, 231–

255. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.jyu.fi/doi/pdf/10.1177/0021943611406500>
- Leeson, G. W. (2010). Migrant carers – saving or sinking the sustainability of eldercare? *Journal of Population Ageing*, 3(1–2), 1–6. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1007/s12062-010-9027-z>
- Lorbiecki, A. & Jack, G. (2000). Critical turns in the evolution of diversity management. *British Journal of Management*, 11, S17–S31. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1111/1467-8551.11.s1.3>
- Lowell, B. L., Martin, S. & Stone, R. (2010). Ageing and care giving in the United States: Policy contexts and the immigrant workforce. *Population Ageing*, 3(1–2), 59–82. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12062-010-9029-x>.
- Lundelin, K. & Lee-Setälä, Y. (2020, January). Sairaanhoidajan ura vaatii sisua ulkomaalaiselta. [Career as a nurse takes guts for a foreigner]. *Helsingin Sanomat*, A16, A17.
- Lønsmann, D. (2014). Linguistic diversity in the international workplace: Language ideologies and processes of exclusion. *Multilingua*, 33(1–2), 89–116. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1515/multi-2014-0005>
- Mak, B. C. N. & Chui, H. L. (2013). A cultural approach to small talk: A double-edged sword of sociocultural reality during socialization into the workplace. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, 8(2), 118–133. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1080/17447143.2012.753078>
- Mankki, L. & Sippola, M. (2015). Maahanmuuttajat suomalaisilla työmarkkinoilla. Intersektionaalisuus ja ”hyvä kansalainen” työmarkkina-aseman määrittäjänä. [Immigrants in Finnish labour. Intersectionality and ”a good citizen” as defining labour position]. *Työelämän tutkimus*, 13(3), 193–208. [PDF]. Retrieved from [http://www.tyoelamantutkimus.fi/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Ty%C3%B6el%C3%A4m%C3%A4n-tutkimus\\_3-2015\\_SISUS.pdf](http://www.tyoelamantutkimus.fi/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Ty%C3%B6el%C3%A4m%C3%A4n-tutkimus_3-2015_SISUS.pdf)
- Meyer, B., Bührig, K., Kliche, O. & Pawlack, B. (2010). Nurses as interpreters? Aspects of interpreter training for bilingual employees. In Meyer, B. & Apfelbaum, B. (Eds.). *Multilingualism at work: From policies to practices in public, medical and business settings*. (pp. 163–184). John Benjamins Publishing Company. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Muir, C. (2007). Communicating diversity at work. *Business Communication Quarterly*, 70(1), 80–82. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1177/1080569906298243>
- Munkejord, M. C. (2017). 'I work with my heart': Experiences of migrant care workers in a northern, rural context. *Journal of Population Ageing*, 10(3), 229–246. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1007/s12062-016-9157-z>
- Nichols, P., Horner B. & Fyfe, K. (2015). Understanding and improving communication processes in an increasingly multicultural aged care workforce. *Journal of Aging Studies*, 32, 23–31. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1016/j.jaging.2014.12.003>
- Nikander, P. (2012). Interviews as discourse data. In Gubrium, J. F., Holstein, J. A., Marvasti, A. B. & McKinney, K. D. (Eds.). *The SAGE handbook of interview research: The*

- complexity of the craft*. (pp. 397–414). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. <https://dx-doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.4135/9781452218403.n28>
- Näre, L. (2013). Ideal workers as suspects. Employers' politics of recognition and the migrant division of care labour in Finland. *Nordic Journal of Migration Research*, 3(2), 72–81. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.2478/v10202-012-0017-5>
- Näre, L. & Nordberg, C. (2015) Neoliberal postcolonialism in the media: Constructing Filipino nurse subjects in Finland. *European Journal of Cultural Studies*, 19(1), 16–32. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1367549415585557>
- Official Statistics Finland (OSF). (2018). *Population projection 2018–2070*. [PDF]. Retrieved April 29, 2020, from [https://www.stat.fi/til/vaenn/2018/vaenn\\_2018\\_2018-11-16\\_en.pdf](https://www.stat.fi/til/vaenn/2018/vaenn_2018_2018-11-16_en.pdf)
- Ortega, A., Gomes Carneiro, I. & Flyvholm, M. (2009). A descriptive study on immigrant workers in the elderly care sector. *Journal of Immigrant and Minority Health*, 12(5), 699–706. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1007/s10903-009-9257-4>
- Piller, I. (2011). *Intercultural communication: A critical introduction*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Piller, I. (2017). *Intercultural communication: A critical introduction*. 2<sup>nd</sup> edition. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- Piller, I. (2012). Intercultural communication: An overview. In Bratt Paulston, C., Kiesling, S. F. & Rangel, E. S., *The handbook of intercultural discourse and communication*. (pp. 3–18). Blackwell Publishing.
- Roberts, C. (2007). Intercultural communication in healthcare settings. In Spencer-Oatey, H., & Kotthoff, H. (Eds.). *Handbook of Intercultural Communication*. (pp. 243–262). De Gruyter Mouton.
- Sias, P. M. (2009). Organizing workplace relationships. In *Organizing relationships: Traditional and emerging perspectives on workplace relationships*. (pp. 1-18). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.4135/9781452204031>
- Silverman, D. (2014). *Interpreting qualitative data*. 5<sup>th</sup> edition. Los Angeles: Sage.
- Spencer, S., Martin, S., Bourgeault, I. L. & O'Shea, E. (2010). *The role of migrant care workers in ageing societies. Report on research findings in the United Kingdom, Ireland, Canada and the United States*. [PDF]. Retrieved May 6, 2020, from <http://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/mrs41.pdf>
- Stokoe, E. & Attenborough, F. (2014). Ethnomethodological methods for identity and culture: Conversation analysis and membership categorisation. In Dervin, F. & Risager, K. (Eds.). *Researching identity and interculturality*. (pp. 89–108). New York: Routledge Ltd.
- Street, B. (1993). Culture is a verb: Anthropological aspects of language and cultural process. In Graddol, D., Thompson, L. & Byram, M. (Eds.). *Language and culture: Papers from the annual meeting of the British association of [i.e. For] applied linguistics, Held at Trevelyan College, University of Durham, September 1991*. Multilingual Matters.

- Strömmer, M. (2017). Work-related language learning trajectories of migrant cleaners in Finland. *Apples: Journal of Applied Language Studies*, 11(4), 137–160. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17011/apples/urn.201712214863>
- Tarnanen, M. & Pöyhönen, S. (2011). Maahanmuuttajien suomen kielen taidon riittävyys ja työllistymisen mahdollisuudet. [Immigrants' sufficient competence in Finnish language and possibilities for employment]. *Puhe ja kieli*, 31(4), 139–152. Retrieved from <https://journal.fi/pk/article/view/4750>
- Thornberg, R. (2012). Informed grounded theory. *Scandinavian Journal of Educational Research*, 56(3), 243–259. Retrieved from <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1080/00313831.2011.581686>
- Timonen, V. & Doyle, M. (2010). Caring and collaborating across cultures? Migrant care workers' relationships with care recipients, colleagues and employers. *European Journal of Women's Studies*, 17(1), 25–41. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1350506809350859>
- Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H. & Bondas, T. (2013) Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study. *Nursing & Health Sciences*, 15(3), 398–405. <https://doi-org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1111/nhs.12048>
- van Hooren, F. J. (2012). Varieties of migrant care work: Comparing patterns of migrant labour in social care. *Journal of European Social Policy*, 22(2), 133–147. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0958928711433654>
- Vartiainen, Koskela & Pitkänen. (2018). Sairaanhoidajia Filippiineiltä. [Nurses from the Philippines]. Tampere: Suomen Yliopistopaino. [PDF]. Retrieved April 29, 2020, from <https://trepo.tuni.fi/bitstream/handle/10024/103145/978-952-03-0699-1.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>
- Välipakka, H., Zeng, C., Lahti, M. & Croucher, S. (2016). Experiencing cultural contact at work: An exploration of immigrants' perceptions of work in Finland. In Shenoy-Packer S. & Gabor, E. (Eds.). *Immigrant workers and meanings of work: Communicating life and career transitions*. (pp. 21–32). New York: Peter Lang. <http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:jyu-201606062910>
- Walsh, K. & O'Shea, E. (2010). Marginalised care: Migrant workers caring for older people in Ireland. *Journal of Population Ageing*, 3(1–2), 17–37. <http://dx.doi.org.ezproxy.jyu.fi/10.1007/s12062-010-9030-4>
- Wills, J., Datta, K., & Evans, Y. (2009). *Global cities at work: New migrant divisions of labour*. Pluto Press. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Wrench, J. (2005). Diversity management can be bad for you. *Race & Class*, 46(3), 73–84. <https://journals-sagepub-com.ezproxy.jyu.fi/doi/pdf/10.1177/0306396805050019>
- Zechner, M. (2011). Global care and Finnish social policy. In Isaksen, L. W. (Ed.). *Global care work: Gender and migration in Nordic societies*. (pp. 173–194). Lund: Nordic Academic Press. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>
- Zotzman, K. (2011). Discourses of globalisation in approaches to intercultural business communication. In Dervin, F., Gajardo, A. & Lavanchy, A. (Eds.). *Politics of interculturality*. (pp. 153–172). Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing. Retrieved from <https://ebookcentral.proquest.com>

## APPENDIX A: Interview questions

Ikä / *Age*:

Sukupuoli / *Sex*:

Lähtömaa / *Place of origin*:

Ammatti/koulutus / *Profession/education*:

Miten monta vuotta Suomessa / *How many years in Finland*:

---

1. Miksi muutit Suomeen? / *Why did you move to Finland?*
  2. Miksi työskentelet vanhustenhoidossa Suomessa? / *Why do you work in eldercare in Finland?*
  3. Kuinka sinut otettiin vastaan nykyiseen työhösi? / *How were you welcomed to your current work?*
  4. Miten viihdyt työssäsi? / *How do you enjoy your work?*
  5. Voisiko tai pitäisikö jokin/jotkin asiat muuttua? / *Could or should some issues change?*
- 
6. Kuinka työtoverisi asennoituvat sinuun päivittäin? / *How do your colleagues stand with you daily?*
  7. Millainen suhde sinulla on työtovereihisi? / *What kind of a relationship do you have with your colleagues?*
  8. Millaisia tilanteita olet kohdannut, kun olet ollut vuorovaikutuksessa työtovereidesi kanssa? / *What kind of situations have you encountered when you have been in interaction with your colleagues?*
  9. Kuinka asiakkaasi asennoituvat sinuun päivittäin? / *How do your clients stand with you daily?*
  10. Millainen suhde sinulla on asiakkaisiisi? / *What kind of a relationship do you have with your clients?*

11. Millaisia tilanteita olet kohdannut, kun olet ollut vuorovaikutuksessa asiakkaittesi kanssa?  
/ *What kind of situations have you encountered when you have been in interaction with your clients?*

---

12. Millaista kielitaitoa sinulta odotetaan työssä? / *What kind of language skills are you expected to have at work?*

13. Millainen rooli suomen kielellä on työssäsi? / *What kind of a role does Finnish language have at your work?*

14. Millainen rooli äidinkielelläsi on työssäsi? / *What kind of a role does your first language have at your work?*

---

15. Teitkö töitä/kouluttauduitko synnyinmaassasi? / *Did you work/study in your place of origin?*

- Kyllä → Ammattisi/Koulutuksesi? / *Yes → Your occupation/education?*

16. Koetko työn erilaiseksi Suomessa verrattuna synnyinmaahasi? / *Do you feel work is different in Finland comparing to your place of origin?*

- Kyllä → Millä tavoin? / *Yes → How?*

---

17. Haluatko vielä lisätä jotain? / *Do you want to add something?*

## APPENDIX B: An informed consent form



JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

**SUOSTUMUS TIETEELLISEEN TUTKIMUKSEEN**

Minua on pyydetty osallistumaan pro gradu -tutkielmaan *Maahanmuuttajataustaiset vanhustenhoitotyöntekijät ikääntyvässä Suomessa*. Tutkielma on maisteriopiskelijan lopputyö Jyväskylän yliopistossa ja se julkaistaan valmistuttuaan englannin kielellä.

Tutkielman tarkoituksena on kartoittaa maahanmuuttajataustaisten vanhustenhoitotyöntekijöiden kokemuksia työstänsä viestinnällisten ja vuorovaikutuksellisten tilanteiden näkökulmasta. Tutkielman aineisto kerätään haastattelemalla hoitotyöntekijöitä ja tutkimuksen luonne on laadullinen. Haastattelun tarkoituksena on kerätä hoitotyöntekijöiden omakohtaisia kokemuksia ja tunteita työn tekemisestä vanhustenhoidossa. Kerätty aineisto analysoidaan niin, että siitä on mahdollista muodostaa johtopäätöksiä.

Haastattelut äänitetään ja litteroidaan. Tarpeen mukaan haastattelut voidaan myös kääntää englannin kielelle. Itse tutkielmassa voidaan käyttää suoria lainauksia. Tutkija säilyttää äänitykset siihen asti, kunnes tutkielma on valmis ja sen jälkeen ne tuhoetaan täysin. Ulkopuoliset eivät pääse käsiksi aineistoon ja haastatteluja käytetään ainoastaan tieteellisiin tarkoituksiin.

Ymmärrän, että osallistuminen on vapaaehtoista ja aineistoa kohdellaan luottamuksellisesti. Ymmärrän myös, että minulla on oikeus jättäytyä tutkimuksesta pois milloin tahansa ilman selitystä ja että tutkimuksesta ei käy ilmi tunnistettavia tekijöitä eikä aineistoa voi yhdistää minuun. Minulle on kerrottu tietoa tutkimuksesta ja minulla on mahdollisuus esittää tutkijalle kysymyksiä. **Allekirjoituksella vahvistan osallistumiseni tutkimukseen ja hyväksyn yllä mainitut seikat.**

**Haastateltava***Allekirjoitus**Nimen selvennys**Paikka ja päiväys***Haastattelija***Allekirjoitus**Nimen selvennys**Paikka ja päiväys*