

– EXPERIENCE MATTERS –

**Teachers' perceptions of multicultural education and their
competence to teach children from different cultural backgrounds**

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Pro Gradu -Thesis
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University of Jyväskylä
Spring 2008

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Työn nimi – Title – EXPERIENCE MATTERS – Teachers' perceptions of multicultural education and their competence to teach children from different cultural backgrounds	
Oppiaine – Subject Special Education, Intercultural Communication	Työn laji – Level Pro Gradu -Thesis
Aika – Month and year April 2008	Sivumäärä – Number of pages 90, 7 appendices
Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>The purpose of this study was to find out how teachers in basic education perceive multicultural education and how they see their competence to teach children from different cultural backgrounds. It was studied how gender, age, teaching experience, experience in teaching immigrant children and possible living abroad experience affected teachers' opinions of their competence. The aspect of special education was taken into account by studying how teachers saw the need for special education for their multicultural pupils. Also the significance of their education in working with immigrant children was viewed.</p> <p>The total of 143 teachers took part in the research. The respondents worked as class teachers or subject teachers in Finnish primary schools and they were studying in a one year further education programme to become special education teachers. This is a quantitative study and the data were collected during the spring of 2004 and the spring of 2007.</p> <p>The findings indicate that the most important thing affecting teachers' competence is their experience in teaching immigrant children. The teachers with experience in teaching immigrant children felt more competent than the ones without experience. However, the teachers did not feel very competent to teach children from different cultural backgrounds. Age or teaching experience did not have any impact on their feeling of competence. Part time special education was seen as an important form of education for immigrant children. The teachers were critical of their own teacher education. They believed that their education had not given them tools to work with culturally diverse children. However, they believed that qualifying special education programme had prepared them more than their background education to work with children from different cultural backgrounds.</p> <p>This research showed that teachers need more knowledge of multicultural education and teaching immigrants, which should be taken into account already in teacher education. There appears to be a need for knowledge of special education and of practical skills of handling a culturally diverse classroom.</p>	
Asiasanat – Keywords Multicultural education, Intercultural Competence, Immigrant, Teacher	
Säilytyspaikka – Depository University of Jyväskylä/Tourula, Department of Educational Sciences/Special Education	
Muita tietoja – Additional information	

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Työn nimi – Title – EXPERIENCE MATTERS – Teachers' perceptions of multicultural education and their competence to teach children from different cultural backgrounds	
Oppiaine – Subject Erityispedagogiikka, Kulttuurienvälinen viestintä	Työn laji – Level Pro Gradu -tutkielma
Aika – Month and year Huhtikuu 2008	Sivumäärä – Number of pages 90, 7 liitettä
Tiivistelmä – Abstract <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli selvittää kuinka perusopetuksessa työskentelevät opettajat kokevat monikulttuurisen kasvatuksen, ja miten he kokevat oman kompetenssinsa opettaa eri kulttuureista tulevia lapsia. Tutkimuksessa selvitettiin kuinka sukupuoli, ikä, opetuskokemus, kokemus maahanmuuttajien opetuksesta ja mahdollinen ulkomailla asuminen vaikuttivat opettajien näkemykseen omasta kompetenssistaan. Erityisopetus otettiin huomioon tutkimalla, miten opettajat näkivät erityisopetuksen tarpeen toisesta kulttuurista tulevilla oppilailta. Tarkastelun kohteena oli myös opettajakoulutuksen merkitys maahanmuuttajalasten kanssa työskennellessä.</p> <p>Tutkimukseen osallistui 143 opettajaa. Vastaajat työskentelivät luokanopettajina tai aineenopettajina suomalaisissa peruskouluissa ja he opiskelivat vuoden kestävässä erillisessä erityisopettajan opinnoissa saadakseen erityisopettajan pätevyyden. Tämä on kvantitatiivinen tutkimus, ja aineisto kerättiin keväällä 2004 ja keväällä 2007.</p> <p>Tulokset osoittavat, että tärkein kompetenssiin vaikuttava tekijä on kokemus maahanmuuttajien opettamisesta. Opettajat, joilla oli kokemusta maahanmuuttajien opettamisesta, kokivat kompetenssinsa paremmaksi kuin ne opettajat, joilla ei ollut kokemusta. Kuitenkaan opettajat eivät tunteneet olevansa kompetentteja opettamaan toisista kulttuureista tulevia lapsia. Ikä tai opetuskokemus ei vaikuttanut kompetenssikokemukseen. Osa-aikainen erityisopetus nähtiin tärkeänä opetuksen muotona maahanmuuttajalapsilla. Opettajat olivat kriittisiä oman opettajakoulutuksensa suhteen. He olivat sitä mieltä, että opettajakoulutus ei ollut antanut välineitä työskennellä eri kulttuuritaustaisten lasten kanssa. Sen sijaan heidän mielestään erityisopettajakoulutus oli valmentanut heitä enemmän kuin heidän pohjakoulutuksensa työskentelemään eri kulttuureista tulevien lasten kanssa.</p> <p>Tämä tutkimus osoitti, että opettajat tarvitsevat lisää tietoa monikulttuurisesta kasvatuksesta ja maahanmuuttajien opettamisesta. Nämä asiat tulisi huomioida jo opettajakoulutuksessa. Lisäksi tarvitaan tietoa erityispedagogiikasta sekä käytännön taidoista opettaessa monikulttuurista luokkaa.</p>	
Asiasanat – Keywords Monikulttuurinen kasvatusta, kulttuurienvälinen kompetenssi, maahanmuuttaja, opettaja	
Säilytyspaikka – Depository Jyväskylän yliopisto/Tourula, Kasvatustieteiden laitos/Erityispedagogiikka	
Muita tietoja – Additional information	

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1 INTRODUCTION

Demographic diversity in the society has increased during the last years; there are more people immigrating to Finland than before. It is a challenge for the education system and teachers because more often teachers are facing the challenges of multiculturalism. According to the Finnish Immigration Service the amount of immigrants in Finland has grown since 1990 when there were 26 300 foreign citizens living in Finland. By the year 2007 the number of foreigners in our country was 132 600 (Finnish Immigration Service 2008). This notable growth of the amount of immigrants raises a question whether our schools and teachers are ready for this change; are teachers competent enough to teach children from different cultural backgrounds.

In today's Finland multiculturalism is an interesting issue because the Finnish population is quite homogeneous. Teachers' attitudes towards and perceptions of multicultural education have been studied before (for example Miettinen & Pitkänen 1999; Vassilchenko & Trasberg 2000), but teachers' competence is still quite a new area of study in Finland. Intercultural competence itself has been studied, (for instance Lustig & Koester 1996; Byram, Nichols & Stevens 2001; Mushi 2004), but the fact how teachers themselves see their competence, is quite an unknown area. According to Matinheikki-Kokko (1997, 17–18), people working with immigrants have hoped for more knowledge about culture and attitudes, and help for everyday

work and practices. Also Jokikokko (2005, 78) found out that Finnish teachers want more knowledge in the areas of multicultural and pedagogical skills.

Special education has a significant role in the education of immigrants. According to Obiakor (2007, 154) special education is necessary for immigrants when Gay (2002, 613) claims that there is a chance of misplacing children in special education because of the lack of knowledge of their culture. However, Jokikokko (2005, 78) points out that teachers believe they need more knowledge of special education to be able to recognise the causes of delays. In addition to special education, teacher education affects teacher's competence. Garcia & Lopez (2005, 434) argue that the most important thing is to educate teachers to confront critical issues that are associated with migration. There seems to be a need for emphasising multicultural issues in teacher education.

The purpose of this study is to find out how teachers in basic education see their competence to teach children from different cultural backgrounds. The aspects of special education are taken into account when discussing the education of immigrants as well as the benefit which the teachers have gained from their education. This is a quantitative study and the data were collected with a questionnaire during the spring of 2004 and the spring of 2007. The respondents worked as class teachers or subject teachers in Finnish primary schools and they were studying in a further education programme, which lasts one year, to become special education teachers.

In the following chapters I will concentrate on multicultural education and especially on competence in multicultural education. The methodological frameworks will be presented and it will be followed by the results, discussion and conclusion.

2 MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

2.1 Definitions of Terms

In this chapter the basic and important terms of this study will be defined. First there will be discussion about multicultural education and intercultural education and their different aspects. The terms child, pupil, student and immigrant are present throughout this study and that is why their meanings are defined. Also the concept of culture will be discussed.

Multicultural and Intercultural Education

Multicultural education is quite complex to define since there is no universally accepted definition for it. Multicultural education can be broadly defined as education, which is usually formal, and in which two or more cultures are involved. (Ekstrand 1994, 3960.) Multicultural education involves the educational policies and practices which are linked to school's goals in order to meet the separate educational needs of various groups of pupils. It is important to consider the cultures and traditions of these groups. It requires that minorities learn about majorities and other minorities and majorities learn about minorities. Learning here means learning about culture and traditions. (Eide 1998, 60–61; Talib 2006, 141.) Flourishing cultural diversity and social equality is thus a goal for multiculturalism (Talib 2006, 141).

Gollnick & Chinn (2002, 5) define multicultural education as a strategy in which pupils' cultural backgrounds are used in order to develop effective school environments and classroom instruction. In a formal school setting it should support diversity, equality, social justice, and democracy. Also extending the concept of culture is supported. (Gollnick & Chinn 2002, 5.) Education is not only a way for immigrants to make sense of the local culture but it also offers skills and insights to individuals to survive in the changing world (Chen & Starosta 2005, 225). There is need for multicultural education since multicultural policies should support the existence of different kinds of groups, not just tolerate them (Sihvola 2004, 235). Mushi (2004, 183) understands multicultural education as "learner activities and experiences that are organised in ways which facilitate effective learning for every learner to the best of her/his potential". This is a wide definition and with it we can think every learning situation to be multicultural. In the concept of multicultural education Nieto (2002, 186–187) concentrates on the social aspect of education. She emphasises critical pedagogy as a ground for multicultural education. According to her, multicultural education is a process rejecting discrimination of any kind in schools and society.

The terminology concerning multicultural education is not uniform. The terms "intercultural education", "interethnic education", "transcultural education", "multiethnic education", and "cross-cultural education" are also used. However, the terms "multicultural education" and "intercultural education" are much more common than the other ones. (Ekstrand 1994, 3960.) The difference between "multicultural education" and "intercultural education" is not quite clear even though there are some differences pointed out in literature. Intercultural education stresses more the interaction process with mutual contacts between people representing different groups (Lahdenperä 2006, 68; Eide 1998, 60–61; Talib 2006, 141). People will learn to interact constructively with each other and thus they will have an influence on each other. Intercultural education emphasises the fact that also the majority should educate its own people in multiculturalism. (Eide 1998, 60–61; Talib 2006, 141.) Intercultural education is thus more demanding than multicultural education because in order to succeed; respect, mutual tolerance and cooperation must be developed. Multicultural education does not go so far (Eide 1998, 60–61). According to Talib (2006, 141) intercultural education is more frequently used in the

European context while multicultural education is more often used in North America. Banks (2005, 143), on the contrary, claims that multicultural education is more broadly conceptualised than intercultural education addressing, for example, societal inequities and racism.

In this study I will use the term multicultural education since it seems to be the most common term in literature. I have used both European and American literature but I decided to use only one term in order to have clarity in the study.

Child, Pupil, Student

The terms used in the literature differ a little depending, for example, on the origin of the literature. In this study the term *child* means a person in primary school, which means they are between 7 years and 16 years old. The respondents were teaching children between these ages. Also the word *pupil* is used meaning the individuals of the same ages, between 7 years and 16 years being in primary school. Both of these terms are used because using only one of them is not always functional. The term *student* refers to people studying at secondary schools and at the university.

Immigrant

In this study an immigrant is defined as a person who is born outside of Finland and has moved to Finland and whose mother tongue is something else but Finnish, Swedish or Sami language. The definition of an immigrant includes refugees, applicants for asylum and other foreign citizens. According to the Finnish Immigration Service, an immigrant is a person moving from one country to another because of different reasons. According to the Finnish National Board of Education the term immigrant includes refugees, migrants, remigrants and other foreigners. Also people born in Finland are considered to have an immigrant background if one's parents are born elsewhere.

Culture and Education

In order to understand the meaning of culture in education it is important to realise what culture actually is. The definitions of culture can be well associated with the context of education and taken into account in educational practices. There are many definitions of culture in this chapter and their purpose is to increase the awareness of

the meaning of culture and its possible effects on education and more concisely on a classroom.

One wide definition of culture is that culture is something that is common to every member of a certain group. It is a system of self-evident truths and it separates different groups from each other. It is perceived when it clashes with another system. (Tiittula 1997, 33.) Erickson (2004, 31) defines culture to be personal, familial, institutional, communal, societal, and global and culture is within us and all around us. However, he adds that even the experts have not been able to agree what culture really is. Thus there is no overarching definition for culture. (Erickson 2004, 34.) Intangible, symbolic, and ideational aspects of culture are often emphasised by the social scientists. (Banks 1999, 54.)

Culture can be seen as a set of fundamental ideas, experiences and practices of a group, which transmits them through learning. Culture may refer to norms, attitudes, and beliefs, which can be used to solve human problems. In addition, we can say that culture is a system of expressive practices and mutual meanings connected to our behaviours. (Chen & Starosta 2005, 25–26; Lustig & Koester 1996, 32.) The previous definition is strongly connected to education because in a long-term thinking children are the ones who are to solve problems in the future. There are certain attitudes, norms and values which exist in schools and which are transmitted through learning. Even though critical thinking is emphasised in schools the culture affects the learning processes.

Culture can also be defined as a learned programme of mind. It separates certain groups of people from each other and it defines the behaviour, values and way of thinking of people. (Talib 1999, 4.) Earlier Collier & Thomas (1988, 102) define culture a historically transmitted system of symbols, meanings, and norms. Forgas (1988, 188) suggests that culture and cognition are inseparable and culture exist in the minds of individuals, being individual interpretations and perceptions which are shared by many individuals. Kim & Ruben (1988, 305) emphasise that the foundation of culture is a social group where people share collective life patterns. People's actions and experiences make the existing culture (Miettinen 2001, 6). Ekstrand (1994, 3964) offers another point about culture. In addition to emphasising

what unites the members of the group, he also points out the fact that there is something distinguishing them from other groups. What is typical for the culture does not necessarily mean it is frequent. Something infrequent can be typical for the culture if it does not exist in any other culture. (Ekstrand 1994, 3964.) Mushi (2004, 182) separates four levels of culture. On the fourth level we can see behaviours and skills. The third level includes knowledge, beliefs and values. The second level is not so directly observable by including intellectual creativity for coping with level one. The first level consists of physical, historical, geographical, social, political and emotional conditions. (Mushi 2004, 182.) This definition is quite wide and gathers together many aspects of life.

Every person has learnt a cultural image through socialisation and it is part of one's identity. Important factors in this cultural image are the familiar environment, mother tongue and the cultural standards defined by one's own culture. These ideas are the foundations for multicultural education and multicultural learning. To be able to understand and evaluate oneself and others in a multicultural environment demands the ability to move to the area between familiar, and unknown and different. Multicultural learning is essentially based on the intensification of one's own cultural image. (Kaikkonen 1999, 17–18, 26.) Also Chen & Starosta (2005, 227) point out that multicultural education should function in order to help pupils discover their own original culture, too. Banks (1999, 2–3) and Verma (2005, 55) continue with the idea of multicultural education helping individuals to achieve better self-understanding. A clarified sense of self is important since the structures of self have an impact on the interpretations of reality (Talib 2006, 149). Self-understanding relates to identity and teachers have a big impact on children's identity development; this is quite a big challenge for teachers. How to help an individual from a different culture, which might be unfamiliar to a teacher, to maintain his or her own culture? And how to help one adapt to Finnish culture and at the same time have clarity in one's identity?

Internationalization demands the ability to observe one's own culture with the eyes of a stranger. What might an immigrant find different, weird, wrong or wonderful? When observing our own behaviour and background from the other cultural perspectives we can get a better view of our own culture and behaviour. (Banks 1999,

1–2; Pollari 1999, 153–154.) Multicultural education includes maintaining one's own culture and respecting culturally diverse values by providing pupils with the skills, knowledge, and attitudes, which are needed to function in the mainstream culture and also in the other cultures. Thus it assists pupils to work successfully together with people from their own culture and with people from other cultures. (Chen & Starosta 2005, 227; Banks 1999, 2–3.)

It should be taken into account that in one culture there is variation between individuals, not everyone is the same. This is significant for teachers to understand because there might be a possibility that they define a child through culture more than they should. However, Erickson (2004, 33) suggest that everyone is cultural and everyone is multicultural since in every person and in every group there is cultural diversity. We often interpret cultural difference as an individual difference. (Erickson 2004, 32–33.) Therefore, both aspects are worth considering in education. Being able to understand that culture makes a difference in learning is essential in multicultural education.

2.2 Insights to Multicultural Education in Finland

There has been a change in Finnish society during the last decade, which also has had an effect on the education system. At the end of the 1980s there were only about 17 000 foreign citizens living in Finland (Matinheikki-Kokko 1997, 10). In the 1980s Finland was already considered to be quite an advanced country concerning multicultural issues. Even though this term was not used, working with refugees aimed at equality and also maintaining one's own cultural identity and mother tongue. The employment situation of the immigrants is one of the biggest challenges in Finland as well as their education. Also psychosocial adaptation and the development of good ethnical relationships are seen as challenges. These areas need work since immigration policy is aiming at immigrants' integration to society. (Matinheikki-Kokko 1999, 31–32.) Also Patrikainen (1999, 13) points out that the policy is to integrate immigrant children to the Finnish school culture and at the same time to give them a possibility to maintain their own cultural identity, not to assimilate them to the mainstream culture. According to Talib (2006, 143) during the last decade there has been progress in the field of multicultural education in Finland. Especially

in the Helsinki region multiculturalism really exist in everyday life since teachers have worked with multiethnic children for a long time. (Talib 2006, 143.) In addition to Helsinki, also other regions surrounding big cities face the challenges of multicultural education because the amount of immigrant pupils can be quite big.

Although there have always been diverse children in the classes, teachers' intercultural competence was not really discussed until the end of the 1980s when new groups of immigrants arrived in Finland (Jokikokko 2005, 70). There were 26 300 foreign citizens in Finland in 1990. By the year 2007 the number of foreigners was 132 600. (Finnish Immigration Service 2008.) Therefore the amount of immigrants has grown notably since the beginning of the 1990's. The Finnish National Board of Education tells us that in 2006 about 3 % of all pupils were immigrant ones. However, in the big cities the amount of immigrant pupils can be much higher, even 60 % in certain schools. This means there is a risk that in schools exist intolerance and racism.

2.3 Cultural Diversity and Facing Difference

Different cultures and situations are present in daily life in its every aspect, also in a teachers' everyday work. To be able to take differences into consideration is demanding for the teachers and also for the whole education system. Diversity and multicultural education usually focus on the same thing (Nieto 2002, 183). Accepting every child as a valuable individual is a foundation for multicultural education and a significant goal for teachers (Jokikokko 2005, 73; Koppinen 1999, 70). However, there can be a danger involved in too much individualisation. It might lead to underestimating and forgetting or even denying cultural differences. It is also possible that a teacher does not want to acknowledge cultural differences if one thinks everyone should be treated in the same way. (Gay 2000, 21; Jokikokko 2005, 73; Miettinen & Pitkänen 1999, 20–21.) On the other hand, some teachers may emphasise cultural differences too much, which perhaps means that the teachers do not think about some characteristics as individual characteristics but as cultural ones, instead (Miettinen & Pitkänen 1999, 20–21). Even though there is a thought about every child being an individual, in the countries where population is quite homogenous, multicultural education often means educating the citizens of the

“home country” towards multiculturalism even though multicultural education as a concept means that people from different cultures converge. (Kaikkonen 1999, 17–18, 26.)

Equality is one of the Finnish school system’s significant goals. During the 1980s the universalistic approach was considered to be the right one in the school policy. This meant that equality was seen as similarity between children, which also meant that, for instance, immigrants and ethnical minorities were made to assimilate into the society so that they would adopt the Finnish habits and lifestyle. This idea of assimilation can be called singularity. Everything different is being rejected. A pluralistic approach on the other hand, aims at equal opportunities and accepting cultural diversity. (Miettinen & Pitkänen 1999, 6.) There is sometimes an unclear limit between assimilation and integration. This might also be due to the different aspect people have of the matter. Some assimilation is needed to be able to function in society but accepting cultural diversity is important.

Multicultural education demands activity from the teachers. It is important to realise one’s own cultural background and attitudes and reflect them critically when facing differences at work. (Byram et al. 2001, 7; Fennes & Hapgood 1997, 62; Sue & Sue 1990, 166; Talib 1999, 171; Jokikokko 2005, 75; Lerkkanen 1999, 165; Honkala 1999, 45.) Talib (2006, 143) underlines that in addition to being conscious of differences, teachers should learn to accept them. Teachers, as any other human beings, may have unconscious prejudices. Also pupils should be given guidance how to analyse critically one’s own culture. When both the teachers and the pupils are aware of their own cultural backgrounds, there is a place for real communication and interaction without trying to change people’s values but to become conscious of them. (Byram et al. 2001, 7; Talib 1999, 171–172.) When facing a new situation and developing multicultural learning most people prefer to continue in their old cultural ways without being ready to face the different and unfamiliar. Managing effectively new intercultural circumstances demands understanding, openness and orientation which go beyond one’s cultural perspective. Becoming intercultural and being able to work efficiently in an intercultural environment demands work. (Fennes & Hapgood 1997, 37; Kim & Ruben 1988, 300.)

Teachers and pupils from different cultures may have different expectations about competent behaviour in the classroom: structures in the classroom, the best ways to learn, regulations and also the importation of education itself (Lustig & Koester 1996, 286). If the pupils have learnt to respect the differences in beliefs, values, and worldviews, they can more effectively promote multicultural society beyond the classroom (Chen & Starosta 2005, 226). This is the goal for multicultural education because it should go further than just the school environment.

Teachers' Attitudes towards Multicultural Education Issues

Teachers' attitudes have an impact on the pupils and their school work. Teachers do not think how their work affects children with an immigrant background. They rather emphasise the practical difficulties in their work and how they may affect the learning of Finnish children. The reason for this is that teachers do not have training or guidance to face multicultural situations, and they are facing their own culture shock when facing immigrants. (Talib 2006, 143.) Even if teachers see diversity as a positive thing, which enriches the school, children's different cultural backgrounds are often seen as a problem.

Miettinen & Pitkänen studied teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education and based their research on a national survey conducted by Pitkänen and Kouki in 1999. The sample was selected from the OAJ's (Trade Union of Education in Finland) member register. A total of 789 Finnish speaking teachers and 124 Swedish speaking teachers returned the questionnaire. The respondents' age ranged between 20 and 63 years. One third of the respondents thought that the fact of having immigrant children in the classroom will increase the tolerance of cultural diversity. However, at the same time a remarkable majority of the teachers believed that having a multicultural class also causes different kind of problems, for instance, prejudices and racism. Bullying occurred also quite often and was mainly directed against immigrant children. Despite these problems, the teachers were hopeful and thought that with time the situation in the classrooms would become more peaceful and in the end lead to the growth of tolerance and difference. (Miettinen & Pitkänen 1999, 19–20.)

Many of the teachers who took part in the survey conducted by Miettinen & Pitkänen (1999) defined immigrant children in the same way as Finnish children, as individuals based on their own values and norms. This can be seen, for instance, in their attitudes towards children's work at school. Teachers emphasised adaptation, motivation, positive attitudes towards school, and being hard-working, which all are important values of the Finnish school system. However, negative characteristics, which were, for example, laziness, rudeness, impassivity and dishonesty, were also linked to immigrant children, especially to children from Russia and Somalia. These stereotypes were noticed to make many teachers take up a certain attitude towards immigrant children. Both positive and negative characteristics were often linked to the nationality. In addition, it was noticed to be common to regard immigrants from different countries as one group. (Miettinen & Pitkänen 1999, 20–21.)

Teachers' and teacher students' readiness and willingness to teach a multicultural class were studied by Vassilchenko & Trasberg (2000) in Estonia. It was found that they saw a need for a more competent approach to providing education for children from different cultural backgrounds. Half of the students thought that the current school system in Estonia was oriented towards one culture only, and that they would want more courses about multicultural education in their teacher training. However, 84 % of the students answered that multicultural education courses should be optional, not obligatory. 63 % of the students thought that multicultural education issues should be integrated into all courses while the others believed that a separate subject would be more useful. These students wanted more knowledge especially about effective intercultural communication in a multicultural classroom and about teaching strategies, which would allow flexibility in their reaction to different cultural relations in the classroom. Also cooperation with the parents whose children speak a language other than Estonian was seen as an important activity. (Vassilchenko & Trasberg 2000, 73–75.) Even though cultural diversity might be accepted and understood it seems that teachers do not feel comfortable about it and are unsure about their own abilities to face a multicultural class. In the following chapter the areas of competence will be more closely discussed.

3 COMPETENCE IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

In this chapter the different areas of competence will be discussed. Before concentrating on the concept of competence, insights of multicultural teacher education will be presented.

When discussing multicultural education and teachers' perspectives, the role of teacher education becomes an issue. As society changes so do the requirements of teachers. Teachers face needs from the pupils, their parents and society. Thus also the requirements of teacher education face a new challenge in order to be able to meet the needs of the school system.

Teachers are expected to adapt themselves to social change and for this they need skills. It is difficult to plan a teacher training curriculum which would meet these needs. (Tuomi 2004, 295.) Developing teachers' multicultural know-how is mostly based on teacher education and updating education for teachers. Short courses are sometimes even seen to be disadvantageous because they can confirm the prejudices against other cultures and stereotyped thinking of teacher students. (Talib, Löfström & Meri 2004, 148.) Leeman & Ledoux (2005, 588) found out in their study that teachers need to improve their knowledge of the theoretical background for multicultural education. There should be a framework allowing a differentiated and dynamic understanding of cultural identity in a specific social context. There seemed to be a lack of cultural views as a process, in which cultural orientation and

individual experiences would be connected with the influence of family and ethnic groups. (Leeman & Ledoux 2005, 588.)

Multicultural teacher education should give teachers varied views and professional abilities about multicultural learning and teaching, which would help these teachers work successfully (Koppinen 1999, 149). Talib (2006, 142) simply says that multicultural teacher education should concentrate on training culturally competent teachers. One mission of teacher education is to help students to find out what they have to work for when working in a multicultural environment (Matinheikki-Kokko 1999, 41). Also Valentín (2006, 196) emphasises the role of the teacher education programme as one preparing students to be competent when facing the challenges of diverse classroom settings. He sees that through the teacher education programme one has a possibility to develop one's understanding of diversity. Garcia & Lopez (2005, 434) argue that the most important thing is to educate teachers to confront critical issues being associated with migration. This is significant if the teaching practice is to address cultural diversity in the most theoretical, ethical, desirable, and practical way. (Garcia & Lopez (2005, 434.) Müller (2001, 58) sees a problem in multicultural teacher training since according to him it seems to be concentrating more on teaching methods and techniques while the conditions causing discrimination are not taken into consideration.

Koppinen (1999, 149–150) describes that multicultural teacher education should include the following areas: Firstly, personal growth and development, which would include understanding and supporting learning, secondly, language and communication studies, which should be wider than in normal teacher education and include cultural aspects, thirdly, cultural knowledge and –research, fourthly, studies of the subjects which must be taught and fifthly pedagogical studies which would include versatile practice in a multicultural learning environment. In addition Koppinen (1999, 150) suggests that students in multicultural teacher education programme should be creative individuals, who have good language skills and who are from different cultural backgrounds.

3.1 Pedagogical Competence

Nowadays schools are becoming more and more multicultural. In the Finnish school system there is not any special educational or professional competence required from a teacher when teaching immigrants. However, according to Matinheikki-Kokko (1997, 17–18) people working with immigrants, for example teachers, have hoped for knowledge of culture and attitudes. They also wish for help and guidance for everyday work and practices. If the education can be connected with the environment and the employee gets feedback from one's work, intercultural awareness grows and is more easily taken into account in practice. (Matinheikki-Kokko 1997, 17–18.)

Schools are expected to create a safe and effective learning environment for children where learning academic skills and social skills are emphasised. Schools are facing a challenge to create pedagogical environments which take notice of numerous individual backgrounds. (Gay 2000, 21; Husu 2006, 85.) The daily routines in schools and also the curriculum give an idea of how prepared the schools are to change their practices in order to work with children from different cultures. Schools show what kind of behaviour and values are expected from the immigrant children and if they are expected to learn the traditions that are followed in Finnish schools and the language used. These factors have an impact on the cultural values of Finnish schools and immigrant children's success at school. (Matinheikki-Kokko 1999, 30.)

Matinheikki-Kokko (1999, 40) separates three dimensions of teachers' competence: Firstly, there is the teacher's ability to recognise one's own cultural values, secondly, being able to evaluate teaching from the viewpoint of an individual coming from another culture, and thirdly, being able to choose suitable teaching methods for pupils so that the cultural and social environment are taken into account. All of these abilities are required when teaching, not just when teaching immigrants. (Matinheikki-Kokko 1999, 40.) But with immigrant children these abilities could be emphasised.

Mushi (2004, 184), on the other hand, emphasises more the practical ways of handling the classroom. The skills emphasise teachers' abilities to select materials and to develop pedagogical approaches that give every child a chance to learn and to

be heard and understood. It is important that the teacher treats the child as an individual and shows interest in her or his cultural background and what it can offer to the classroom. (Mushi 2004, 183–184.) The teacher's positive relationship with his or her pupils and creating a positive classroom atmosphere can be seen as aspects of pedagogical competence. According to McNeal's (2005, 415) research a positive relationship and trust between the teacher and the children provide a good ground for the infusion of multicultural education and children's willingness to participate in the classroom. The teacher should have an ability to influence the classroom atmosphere so that every child can learn to the best of her or his abilities (Mushi 2004, 183–184; Perez & Judson 2007, 20; Richards, Brown & Forde 2007, 64; Valentín 2006, 196).

The role of the teacher of immigrants is interesting since teaching is expected to meet their needs. Certain standard solutions are often used in immigrants' other areas of lives but the school is expected to work for differentiating teaching. The teacher should be able to understand immigrants' cultural basis and at the same time to know how to guide their children to the Finnish school system and culture. Teachers are expected to work for immigrants' integration and to share multicultural values for the Finnish society. (Matinheikki-Kokko 1999, 40.) Multicultural education demands that the whole schools become culturally competent educational systems, which means there is a need for support from the school administrators. (Brown 2007, 61.) Fennes & Hapgood (1997, 38) and Talib et al. (2004, 83) realise the educational problems where society has an impact on teachers' work. It is impossible for education to make up for the shortcomings of societies and political structures. Fennes & Hapgood (1997, 38–39) also see it as a problem and a possible ground for disappointment and frustration if the limitations of education are not understood.

Fear and uncertainty affect the feeling of competence. The processes connected with one's own personal development, changing teaching situations and wide changes in society and school increase the feeling of uncertainty. (Niemi 1993, 33.) According to Talib (1999, 170) teachers may experience fear and uncertainty when teaching children from different cultural backgrounds. Recognising one's own strengths and the content of work would help teachers to notice when the child or the whole family need help from other professionals. Having self-respect helps the teacher to find further help for the child or his or her family without having feelings of not being

good enough as a teacher. (Agge 1999, 83.) In the classroom teachers will plan and implement their teaching within their levels of cultural competence and self-identity development. However, this level is not stable because people are in different stages in their development. Teachers can develop their competence and identity and thus become multiculturally more competent in their profession. (Mushi 2004, 186.)

Even though there are many scholars suggesting that teachers need more awareness of pedagogical competence and they do not know how to handle a multicultural group, it is not proposed what pedagogical competence means in practice in teachers' work. Ideas of accepting cultural diversity are presented but there is a lack of information how teachers see their competence and what they believe to be part of it. The special areas of competence which teachers need are not defined and that is a challenge for the future research: What are the pedagogical skills teachers need when teaching a multicultural class.

3.1.1 Culturally Responsive Teaching

The concept of culturally responsive teaching is included here because it is strongly related to multicultural education. It takes into consideration cultural diversity in the classroom and uses cultural differences in the school work so that the pupils in the class will benefit from them.

Gay (2000, 29) defines culturally responsive teaching as making learning relevant and effective for ethnically diverse pupils by using the cultural knowledge, previous experiences, and performance styles. Culturally responsive teaching is multidimensional because it takes into account the curriculum content, learning context, pupil-teacher relationships, classroom climate, instructional techniques, and performance assessments and thus also enables pupils to be more successful learners. (Gay 2000, 30–31.) Gay is one of the scholars who are oriented with culturally responsive teaching. Her ideas are supported by research but there is a place for criticism too. Her ideas are often based on the separation of races, differences between black and white people. This is an important aspect of multicultural education and especially in the United States the racial issue is emphasised. However, it should be kept in mind that multicultural education goes beyond the race. When

emphasising the race too much it is possible that it eclipses other aspects of multicultural education. Still, culturally responsive teaching is an essential aspect of multicultural education.

Montgomery (2001, 4) suggests that culturally responsive classrooms acknowledge the presence of culturally diverse children and their need to relate to each other and the subject matter and the tasks they are asked to perform. Thus classroom atmosphere is one factor in culturally responsive teaching. According to Gay (2002, 621) in the classrooms where the atmosphere is caring, teachers are diligent and creative in order to create a classroom environment where every child can learn and achieve the best of their ability. This includes removing the threats of stereotypes from the climate of the classroom. Classroom atmosphere should thus support learning and living in an environment where ethnic prejudices do not exist. (Gay 2002, 621–622.) The negative attitudes of teachers are obstacles to culturally responsive teaching as well as confusing disability with diversity (Gay 2002, 614).

According to Richards et al. (2007, 64) culturally responsive pedagogy includes three dimensions: institutional, personal and instructional. The institutional dimension means reflecting the administration and its values and policies. The personal dimension refers to the emotional and cognitive processes, for example, reflection about attitudes, which teachers have to engage themselves in order to become culturally responsive. In addition to self-reflection exploration is important. This includes exploring one's personal history and experiences. Also pupils' and their families' history and current experiences should be explored. In addition to understanding of self and others, knowledge brings appreciation for difference. The instructional dimension means forming the basis of instruction which includes materials, strategies and activities. There is a chance that materials and strategies do not meet with pupils' needs. There might appear underachieving or perhaps dropping the school completely. Culturally responsive pedagogy uses cultural differences in instruction and works in order to benefit from them. When teaching reflects the practices and values of only one group, there are no opportunities to learn. (Richards et al. 2007, 64–68.) Culturally responsive teaching is thus an idea which reflects to teaching where different cultures are taken into account. It is an important aspect of

multicultural teaching but it should be kept in mind that there are also other factors affecting teaching, not just culture.

3.1.2 Working with the Children's Family

Integrating the culture of children into the curriculum and developing a supportive environment for learning is a challenge for a teacher. If a teacher is not able to do this, differences between home and school cultures may cause dissonance. Cultural factors as well as intellectual and physical factors affect learning. Failing to understand this causes difficulties when helping children to learn. (Gollnick & Chinn 2002, 5.) Sobel & Kugler (2007, 63) see engaging immigrant parents as a challenge for teachers but at the same time they see it as a necessity. According to Jokikokko (2005, 78) the ability to interact with children's parents is seen as one area of professional competence. In her research this was seen as an important issue especially when there is no common language or when parents' perspectives and values differ from those of the school and teachers. Richards et al. (2007, 65) emphasise that teachers' values have an impact on their relationships with children and their families. Teachers do not always understand the fact that their values might reflect prejudices towards certain groups. If teachers are able to let go of the biases, there is a chance for an atmosphere of acceptance and trust, both for children and their families. This may lead to children's success in schoolwork. (Richards et al. 2007, 65.) Even though cooperation with the family is seen as important, it is difficult to approach an immigrant family. It is easier if there is a concrete issue to discuss. Discussing different matters is important even though the encountering might be hard and emotional. Discussions and working with the family demand time and there must be room for honesty and openness in those discussions. (Kaisaari 1999, 80–81; Agge 1999, 86.)

Different expectations affect cooperation with the family. People from different cultures may be used to very different school cultures where for example teaching methods are very different, and this may cause misunderstandings between teachers, children and their families. (Agge 1999, 83; Patrikainen 1999, 15.) Patrikainen (1999, 15) writes that with an immigrant child the cooperation between the school and parents must be intensive, if possible the school could be supporting the whole

family in the adaptation process. Also Gay (2002, 621) and Montgomery (2001, 8) suggest that working with the whole family is important and part of the idea of culturally responsive teaching. Bazron, Osher & Fleischman (2005, 84) propose that teachers should work together with families and be sensitive because immigrant children go through a change between school and family culture. Montgomery (2001, 8) proposes that families should be informed about their child's progress and encourages the families to participate in school activities.

3.2 Intercultural Competence

There are many ways to determine what intercultural competence is. Talib (2005, 43) says that a teacher's multicultural professionalism includes increased self understanding, empathy, a critical attitude towards work and realising different ways of living. Collier & Thomas (1988, 108) think that intercultural competence can be defined as the "demonstrated ability to negotiate mutual meanings, rules, and positive outcomes". Competent people are able to mutually agree and follow rules for appropriate conduct. They can experience positive outcomes which include confirmation of the identity. (Collier & Thomas 1988, 108.) According to Jokikokko (2005, 74), an essential part of intercultural competence is the ability to perceive differences. Talib (2006, 140) continues that teachers' intercultural competence has been considered as one of the most significant factors in preventing the marginalisation of pupils.

Lustig & Koester (1996, 117) agree that there are three components which intercultural competence depends on: knowledge, motivation and actions. Byram et al. (2001, 5–6), on the other hand, separate three components that belong to intercultural competence: knowledge, skills and attitudes. Very similar to the theory of Byram et al. (2001) are Mushi's (2004, 184) perceptions about intercultural competences, she also emphasises knowledge, skills and dispositions as a basis for intercultural competence. Intercultural attitudes and dispositions mean openness and curiosity. One should be able and ready to reconsider beliefs about other cultures and about one's own culture. This includes accepting the fact that one's own values and beliefs are not the only possible ones and that there are different world-views. (Byram et al. 2001, 5–6; Mushi 2004, 184.)

Intercultural knowledge does not mean the knowledge about some other specific culture but it means knowledge about how social groups and social identities function and how they interact. It means the realisation of the fact that individuals belonging to different cultures have different experiences and expectations. (Byram et al. 2001, 5–6; Mushi 2004, 184.) According to Byram et al. (2001, 5–6) even though the teachers might not have had the possibility to experience the cultures their pupils might represent, they can still have skills to work with them. There should be understanding about how difficulties and misunderstandings arise and how they could be solved. Essential skills are those of comparison, interpreting and relating because then one can see the possibilities of misunderstandings. The skills of discovery and interaction are needed because one needs to acquire knowledge of a new culture and attach it to the old one. (Byram et al. 2001, 5–6.)

Jokikokko (2005) studied newly graduated Finnish teachers' conceptions about diversity and intercultural competence. In her findings she divides the conceptions of intercultural competence into three different categories: intercultural competence as an ethical orientation, intercultural competence as an efficacy orientation, and intercultural competence as a pedagogical orientation. The first, ethical orientation emphasises being aware of one's own values, prejudices and attitudes. This also means the correct way of thinking and acting in intercultural situations. Ethical orientation was also described by informants as a specific interpersonal characteristic, which is essential for people facing difference. Efficiency orientation means that one is able to cope with different tasks in different situations even under stress. However, teachers said that admitting the fact that there is a limit to one's own efficiency is an important skill. (Jokikokko 2005, 69–77.)

It has been pointed out before that teachers' intercultural competence includes reflective thinking about oneself, one's work and surrounding society. In addition, Talib (2006, 150) points out that teachers should understand that knowledge is socially constructed. According to McLaren (1998, 174) it means that in social interaction situations people's minds construct the world symbolically. Culture, context, customs, social class and history have an effect on that world. From the teachers' point of views this could mean that teachers should think how socially

constructed knowledge provides a better understanding of the pupils' world and how it is constructed (McLaren 1998, 186).

Intercultural competence could be shortly defined as ability to interact successfully with people from different cultural backgrounds and take different cultures and aspects connected to culture into consideration in different situations.

3.3 Communication Competence

Intercultural communication competence is an essential part of the competence a teacher needs at work. Communication can be verbal or nonverbal. Bennet (1998, 20) believes that our habits are determined by our culture and thus in cross-cultural situations there are differences in communication styles. Also the adaptation to other cultures affects communication being the crux of intercultural communication (Bennet 1998, 24). This can be related to teachers' work since when facing children from different cultural backgrounds teachers' might themselves have a culture shock (Talib 2006, 143). Thus also teachers need to adapt to the new situations and new communication styles. According to Barnlund (1998, 45) children learn from the surrounding what is appropriate behaviour and these messages are received mostly unconsciously, which means that one's own cultural assumptions are difficult to recognise. Children in the classroom might thus have very different manners and communication styles. This means that teachers should have knowledge of communication.

According to Lustig & Koester (1996, 55) social judgement is a component that belongs to the communication competence. It means how well a person interacts with others. This always depends on the context and the interpersonal relationship between people. The results of competent interpersonal communication process are regarded as appropriate. This means that they meet the expectations and the demands of the situation. The results of competent interpersonal communication are also the forms of behaviour which are effective in achieving the wanted outcomes. (Lustig & Koester 1996, 55.) However, how are the wanted outcomes determined? With teachers' work the wanted outcomes may be very different. Is the goal to communicate so that a child learns the communication styles of the host culture or is

the goal for a teacher to adapt to the communication style of a child from a different culture? In a multicultural classroom everyone in the class needs to adapt to different communication styles even though the cultures may vary. Therefore Lustig & Koester (1996, 286) emphasise one's own cultural patterns and their impact on the ability to communicate competently.

Communication is a dialogical process between pupils and teacher. Dialogical relationship was seen as an important part of intercultural competence in Jokikokko's (2005) study. Dialogue seemed to be creating a safe environment where everyone feels appreciated. It also made it possible for the teacher and the pupils to be reflective upon their practice and to be critical. (Jokikokko 2005, 76.) Communication thus had an effect on the classroom atmosphere which was discussed earlier.

3.4 Need for Special Education

Foreign children come to Finland from different circumstances and their cultural and educational backgrounds are diverse. That is the reason why the goals of their education may be different. It should be considered that teaching would be suitable for the child in that particular situation. (Rekola 1994, 5.) Special education relates to the teaching of immigrants. Many immigrant children are considered to be in need of special education. The basic idea of special education is that special educators are willing to address the complexities of educating children as they are, not as they are expected to be (Meyer, Bevan-Brown, Harry & Sapon-Shevin 2004, 351). Obiakor (2007, 154) writes that special education is necessary to achieve the best potential of learners with exceptionalities. Children with an immigrant background deserve teachers, both general education teachers and special education teachers, who understand the relationship between languages, culture, and learning (Obiakor 2007, 154). Also Miettinen & Pitkänen (1999, 6) agree that teaching a multicultural group needs differentiated support in order to help immigrant children integrate into Finnish society and to maintain their own cultural background at the same time. However, Gay (2002, 613) says that there is a possibility that children are placed in special education because so little is known of their culture. She continues that also incorrect diagnoses cause problems with diverse children (Gay 2002, 616). Tyler,

Yzquierdo, Lopez-Reyna & Saunders Flippin (2004, 23) propose that diverse special education teachers being aware of cultural differences would be likely to recognise inappropriate referrals and placements of pupils with culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Green (2007, 12) and Perez & Judson (2007, 21) suggest that special educators should find and use culturally responsive teaching methods in order to meet the needs of diverse pupils.

Teachers in Jokikokko's study constantly expressed that there is a need for more knowledge in the areas of multicultural, pedagogical skills. Especially a knowledge of special education was mentioned. Special education was seen as important because teachers wanted help in recognising the causes of delays, whether they are due to cultural factors, language or learning disabilities, for example. (Jokikokko 2005, 78.) Delays can be related to, for example, learning different subjects at school, language development or emotional development. According to Jokikokko (2005, 78) also the issue of differentiation concerned teachers: how to individualise teaching in a way that is meaningful and educative? Differentiation was seen as necessary in multicultural classrooms. Teachers felt, however, that they need more knowledge, both scientific and professional, in order to provide a better learning environment for their pupils. (Jokikokko 2005, 78.)

Special education for immigrant children is not meant to be a way to separate them from the education meant for every child. Special education is a way for an immigrant child to have access to general education class with other pupils. (Kortteinen 1999, 47.) Garcia & Lopez (2005, 434) emphasise that assimilating immigrant children with special education classes is insufficient and also probably an inappropriate way of handling the situations with them. However, Miettinen & Pitkänen (1999, 7) claim that special arrangements for immigrant children usually work, but there is a need for financial resources. Thus new pupils are often placed in the same classes with Finnish pupils (Miettinen & Pitkänen 1999, 7). Obiakor (2007, 154) suggests that special education is an important phenomenon which works when special and general education teachers work together challenging their own perspectives when facing children from different cultural backgrounds.

Jairrels, Brazil & Petrosko (1995) have discovered that special education teachers felt significantly more competent to teach a multicultural class than general education teachers did. Teachers were asked questions about their own skills concerning teaching multicultural pupils and they answered using a Likert-type scale. The results were based on one study and it cannot be used to prove that special education teachers are more competent with multicultural pupils than general education teachers are. However, the study suggests that there may be differences. (Jairrels 1999, 237.) Special education seems to be an important part of immigrant children's school work and thus also part of the learning process. Arranging immigrant children's education is a process where many factors are to be considered. There are different options available for their education and different options are also used. Finding the right one for each child is a challenge for teachers and the education system.

4 METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORKS

The purpose of this study is to obtain information on teachers' perspectives on multicultural education and how they see their competence in teaching children from different cultural backgrounds. In addition, I wanted to find out how teachers feel about the need of special education for multicultural pupils and how they perceive the significance of their education when teaching children from different cultural backgrounds.

4.1 Research Questions

1. How do teachers see their competence in teaching children from a different cultural background?
 - 1.1 What are the connections between the demographic variables and the teacher's competence?
2. How do teachers see the need of special education for their multicultural pupils?
 - 2.1 What are the connections between the demographic variables and the teachers' opinions about their multicultural pupils' needs for special education?
3. How do teachers see the significance of their education in working with immigrant children?

By using the above research questions, my goal was to find out about teachers' competence to teach children from different cultural backgrounds. Based on literature on the subject matter, there were some questions that I became interested in. With the question of competence I wanted to find out how teachers perceive their abilities with immigrant children in a classroom because, for example, Matinheikki-Kokko (1997, 17–18) has pointed out that teachers want more guidance for everyday work and practices. In addition to how teachers perceive their competence, I wanted to find out how the demographic variables affect these areas of competence.

Special education is an important area of immigrant children's education. Meyer et al. (2004, 351) and Obiakor (2007, 154) agree that special education is necessary for immigrant children. Jokikokko (2005, 78) says that teachers found special education significant in teaching immigrants. That is why I wanted to find out how the teachers in this study see the need for special education for their multicultural pupils. Also the significance of demographic variables to their perception about children's need for special education was included. Teaching immigrant children is becoming an everyday routine for many teachers, and that is why I wanted to find out what they think about their education and how it has helped them to be ready to face culturally diverse classrooms.

4.2 The Sample

The research subjects of this study were qualified class teachers and subject teachers who were studying to become special education teachers. All of those taking part this study have a Master's Degree in Education and work experience as teachers. The qualification for a special education teacher is achieved during one academic year. In this study two samples were collected on two separate occasions. The first sample was collected during the spring of 2004. This sample consisted of 74 teachers. The group was chosen systematically. Typical of systematic samples is that the respondents are selected by taking their availability into consideration, using one's discretion or taking the researcher's interest into account (Metsämuuronen 2003, 31). All of these 74 teachers were students at the University of Jyväskylä or at the Continuing Education Centre in Jyväskylä. The chosen participants were from multiple locations in Finland. All 74 teachers answered the questionnaire during one

class. These teachers were selected because of their availability as well as the contacts of the thesis supervisor.

The second sample was collected in April and May of 2007. The sample consisted of 222 teachers who were asked to fill in the questionnaire. This time 69 teachers answered the questionnaire – only 31 % of the total. The degree programme leading to special education qualification is offered at three universities: University of Jyväskylä, University of Joensuu and University of Helsinki. The second sample respondents were chosen from all three universities as well as from Jyväskylä's Continuing Education Centre. As with the previous sample, the participants are originally from multiple locations in the country. Systematically chosen samples were justifiable because I can assume that these teachers present well the group of teachers studying to become special education teachers. The number of the respondents can be seen in the table 1.

TABLE 1. The number of the respondents

Location	Frequency in the sample 2004	Frequency in the sample 2007	Frequency in Total	Percentage
Jyväskylä	74	52	126	88,1
Helsinki		8	8	5,6
Joensuu		9	9	6,3
Total	74	69	143	100,0

Demographic Variables of the Study

Gender

The respondents who took part in the research were mainly female. Only 7 % of the respondents were male and thus 93 % were female. Even though there were only 10 males taking part in the research, the results were statistically analysed between men and women. According to Kumpulainen & Saari (2005, 19) a total of 72 % of primary school teachers in Finland were female in 2005 and 89 % of the teachers teaching immigrants were female.

TABLE 2. Gender of the respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Female	133	93,0
Male	10	7,0
Total	143	100,0

Age

The respondents who took part in the research were between 27 and 61 years old. About 64 % of the respondents were under the age of 40. A total of 36 % of teachers in primary schools in Finland were under 40 years old in 2005 (Kumpulainen & Saari 2005, 19). The fact that teachers in this study are little younger than teachers in general can be explained by the fact that they are still in continuing education.

TABLE 3. The age distribution of the respondents (n=143)

Age, in years	27-30	31-35	36-40	41-45	46-50	51-	Loss
Frequency	23	34	34	30	16	5	1
Percentage	16,1	23,8	23,8	21,0	11,2	3,5	0,7

Teacher education

The respondents were mainly class teachers but also subject teachers took part in the research. The total of 79 % of the respondents was class teachers and 14 % were subject teachers. There were 8 respondents who announced their education to be something else. It is not known what these answers include. Two of the respondents did not answer this question at all.

TABLE 4. Teachers' background education

	Frequency	Percentage
Class teachers	113	79,0
Subject teachers	20	14,0
Other	8	5,6
Missing	2	1,4
Total	143	100,0

Experience in teaching

The teachers must have had teaching experience in order to continue their studies in this qualifying special education programme. The teaching experience of the respondents varied from 1 year to 36 years. Almost half of the teachers had 1 to 7 years of teaching experience. Therefore these teachers are quite in the beginning of their teaching career.

TABLE 5. Teaching experience of the respondents (n=143)

Teaching experience	1-4 years	5-7 years	8-12 years	13-19 years	20- years	Loss
Frequency	35	34	27	25	17	5
Percentage	24,5	23,8	18,9	17,5	11,9	3,5

Experience in teaching immigrant children

Almost half of the respondents answered that they did not have any experience in teaching immigrant children. About 30 % had some experience and almost 20 % had quite a lot of experience in teaching immigrant children.

TABLE 6. Respondents' experience in teaching immigrant children (n=143)

	Not at all	1-2 years	3-5 years	Over 5 years	Loss
Frequency	71	43	12	15	2
Percentage	49,7	30,1	8,4	10,5	1,4

Living abroad

Most of the respondents did not have any experience in living abroad. About 18 % had some experience and 6 % had quite a lot of experience in living abroad.

TABLE 7. Respondents' experience in living abroad (n=143)

Living abroad	Not at all	Less than 1 year	1-2 years	4 years	Over 5 years	Loss
Frequency	104	15	11	2	7	4
Percentage	72,7	10,5	7,7	1,4	4,9	2,8

4.3 Data Collection

The data were gathered in the spring of 2004 and the spring of 2007 by a questionnaire. In 2004 the teachers studying to become special education teachers filled in the questionnaire during their special education lecture. The lecturers agreed to give the questionnaires to be filled in during class and thus all 74 teachers who were in the classroom answered the questionnaire. In April of 2007 the questionnaire was available on the Internet for the 222 teachers selected for the study. Teachers studying at the University of Jyväskylä, in Jyväskylä's Continuing Education Centre and at the University of Helsinki were informed about the questionnaire by e-mail. For teachers studying in Joensuu the request to fill in the questionnaire was sent via an electronic platform they use. In this case the information did not go through by e-mail and that might have had an effect on the low percentage of responses. The teachers were also sent one reminder e-mail about the research.

The research questionnaire was developed in the spring of 2004. It was based on the questionnaire developed by Matinheikki-Kokko in 1998. Matinheikki-Kokko used the questionnaire at the University of Jyväskylä in order to find out class teacher students' views on multicultural education. In addition to Matinheikki-Kokko's questions additional questions were developed to support the research questions. The instrument used in the questionnaire was a 6 step Likert scale. (1=very unsure, 2=unsure, 3=quite unsure, 4=quite sure, 5=sure, 6=very sure). The Likert scale is often used as an instrument when studying attitudes and motivation, when the respondent evaluates his or her own subjective opinion or feeling about a question or an argument (Metsämuuronen 2003, 39). In addition, the teachers were asked for basic background information, such as gender, age, education, teaching experience, experience in teaching children from a different cultural background, and their possible experience in living abroad. In the end there were also five open questions and space provided for the teachers to write more about their experiences with children from different cultural backgrounds. However, these open questions were not analysed in this study to keep the size of the data suitable. Using mixed methods was not meaningful because the open questions did not provide important additional information to this study.

4.4 Data Analysis

The data were coded and analysed by using SPSS for Windows 14.0 –programme. After coding Explorative Factor Analysis was used in order to find the factors that are charged to the same factor. Based on the Explorative Factor Analysis and the researcher's own assessment six sum variables were created. The reliabilities of the sum variables were calculated with Cronbach's alpha. In addition, one question describing strictly pedagogical competence was taken into the research as a separately analysed variable. Frequency distributions (f), percentage distributions (%), means and standard deviations were calculated from the data. The connections between demographic variables and competence were analysed with Independent-Samples T-test (the connections of the gender and background education to the new variables). Oneway ANOVA and Tukey's Post Hoc Test were conducted to analyse the connections between demographic variables (age, teaching experience, experience in teaching immigrant children and living abroad experience) and competence. Tukey's honest significant difference test was used because according to Metsämuuronen (2003, 650) it is a good conservative test which does not show the differences too easily but is not as critical as Sheffe's Post Hoc Test, which can be even too critical. The study included variables that were not meaningful to be used to create sum variables. Some questions outside the sum variables were analysed with Independent-Samples T-test. It was used to find out the difference in teachers' opinions about teaching immigrant children between teachers with experience and teachers without experience in teaching immigrant children.

The teachers' opinions about the form of education for immigrant children were analysed with Chi-Square Test. Also the meaning of qualifying education of special education to the feeling of teachers' competence compared to their background education was analysed with Chi-Square Test. Independent-Samples T-test was used to analyse whether the experience in teaching immigrant children had an impact on teachers' opinion about the usefulness of their background education and the qualifying education of special education. The teachers' opinions about immigrant children's need for special education were analysed with frequency distributions (f), percentage distributions (%), means and standard deviations. Independent-Sample T-test was conducted to find out if the experience in teaching immigrant children

affects the opinions of these teachers concerning the need of special education for immigrant children. The research questions and the analysing methods can be seen in the table 8.

TABLE 8. Research questions and their analysing methods

Research question	Analysing method
1. How do teachers see their competence in teaching pupils from a different cultural background?	Percentage distributions, means, standard deviations
1.1. What are the effects of the demographic variables regarding teacher's competence?	Independent-Samples T-test, Oneway ANOVA, Tukey's Post Hoc Test
2. How do teachers see the need of special education for their multicultural pupils?	Percentage distributions, means, standard deviations
2.1. What are the effects of the demographic variables regarding teachers' opinions about their multicultural pupils' needs for special education?	Independent-Samples T-test, Chi-Square Test
3. How do teachers see the significance of their education in working with immigrant children?	Percentage distributions, means, standard deviations, Independent-Samples T-test, Chi-Square Test

4.5 Reliability and Validity of the Study

The reliability of a study is usually described with reliability and validity. These can be examined both with an instrument specific way and a research specific way (Soininen 1997, 54).

Measurement Reliability

Measurement reliability means that a study can be done again and it yields the same results each time used, which means that the results are not random (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2004, 216; Metsämuuronen 2003, 42–43; Ruane 2005, 67; Soininen 1997, 55). In this study Cronbach's alpha is used to assess the internal

consistency of the instrument. The alpha rates of the sum variables can be considered to be fairly good. The sum variables include only two items but this is arguable, because due to the Factor Analysis and the researcher's own interpretations and conclusions, these items describe well the new variables. The values of Cronbach's alpha are sufficient. The values of Cronbach's alpha of the sum variables can be seen in the table 9.

TABLE 9. The sum variables created from the data and their reliability by Cronbach's alpha

Sum variable	Items	The number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Competence to understand children's adaptation to the new culture	12, 13	2	.68
Communication competence	14, 16	2	.70
Competence of valuing and understanding children's cultural background	5, 17	2	.57
Competence of creating positive social atmosphere in the classroom	21, 22	2	.73
Readiness to work abroad	29, 30	2	.89
Readiness to work with the children's whole family	25, 26	2	.73

Measurement Validity

Validity indicates whether the research has been successful in measuring what was supposed to be measured (Heikkilä 1999, 178; Hirsjärvi et al. 2004, 216; Ruane 2005, 34). Validity can be separated into internal validity and external validity. External validity means the possibility to generalize the measurement. (Frey, Botan & Kreps 2000, 109; Metsämuuronen 2003, 43; Ruane 2005, 41.) Internal validity can be divided in many ways but here it will be reviewed by using content validity.

The questionnaire was not used before as such. It was made on the base of Matinheikki-Kokko's questionnaire used at the University of Jyväskylä in 1998. Extra questions were added due to the researcher's own consideration. The first

sample was collected in the spring of 2004 and the second sample in the spring of 2007. During the time between the samples and also after the spring 2007 there were other factors that the researcher became interested in and this might cause deficiency in the instrument.

Some of the questions in the questionnaire were not of interest in the final research and they were left out from the analyzing process. Some respondents wrote that some of the questions were confusing, for example question number 33: "I think that Finland belongs to Finns". Some of the respondents were of the opinion that this can be interpreted in both negative and positive ways. This was one of the questions which were left out from the study.

The content validity was aimed to be guaranteed by designing the questionnaire for teachers in a way that the questions would be clear and understandable for them. Instructions for answering the questionnaire were simple. The questionnaire on the Internet was designed in a way that it was easy to answer. The teachers were asked about their own experiences and feelings in the classroom. It was clear that many of the teachers would not have had any experience of cultural diversity in the classroom, while on the other hand many others would have had quite a lot of experience. It was important that also the opinions of those teachers without any experience would be found out in the study. Some of them without any experience wrote at the end of the questionnaire when answering the open questions that the lack of experience in cultural diversity in the classroom made it difficult for them to answer the questions. This is probably the reason why some respondents did not answer all the questions. Some respondents wrote that these issues with multicultural education are too much emphasised and difficult to answer. This might be seen in the answers as attitudes towards multiculturalism and as unanswered questions. Many of the teachers also wrote that these issues are important even though some questions were difficult to answer. Thus it seemed to be a fact that they had really thought about the answers. Both experience and inexperience seemed to have caused some difficulties in answering the questions. For some teachers without experience it was difficult to answer because they thought they did not know enough about the issues. Others did not have any problems in answering even though they did not have any experience. For some teachers with experience it was difficult to answer because they thought

these issues are more complex and cannot be simplified, others were satisfied with the questions.

Validity of the Research

Reviewing the validity of a research means that the study is reviewed based on how adequate and useful information is found and how it can be generalized (Soininen 1997, 54). The two types of validity are important when reviewing the validity of the research: internal validity and external validity. Internal validity means the accuracy of the conclusions drawn from the research and external validity means the generalisability of the findings from the research (Frey et al. 2000, 109; Moberg & Tuunainen 1989, 58, 64.)

The results are dependent on the time when the teachers answered the questionnaire. The first sample was collected by giving teachers the questionnaire in the class. Thus they did not have a possibility to choose the time of answering. At some other time their answers might have been different. In the second sample teachers were given a web address where they were asked to answer the questionnaire on the Internet. Thus they could choose the time of answering themselves. However, also this means that at some other time the answers might have been different. This causes limitations to the external validity of the research because it cannot be concluded that all the teachers in Finland studying to become special education teachers would answer the questionnaire in the same way. In the second sample the answering percent was low, 31,0. It can also be questioned if the teachers who answered the questionnaire have stronger opinions about multicultural education issues than the teachers who did not answer.

Teachers' hometowns are not known but it can be assumed that the teachers are from multiple locations in Finland since the Universities of Jyväskylä, Joensuu and Helsinki are the three universities organising education for teachers to have the qualification for special education teachers, and it is known that teachers from all over Finland apply for this further education. It can also be assumed that the sample consists of teachers from big and small towns with various experience of culturally diverse children in the classroom. Thus this increases the validity of the research. However, even though the teachers in the second sample were reminded to answer

the questionnaire, the response rate was quite low. Careful conclusions from the research can be made when considering teachers' competence to teach children from a different cultural background.

5 RESULTS

The results of the research will be presented in the order of the research questions.

5.1 Teacher's Competence

The competence of the teachers was evaluated with a scale 1 to 6 where 6 represented the most positive idea of one's competence.

The teachers did not feel very confident about their pedagogical competence, they reported to be "quite unsure" about it. The mean in pedagogical competence was the lowest in the different areas of competence. Teachers felt quite sure about understanding children's adaptation to Finnish culture. However, the teachers were more aware of the factors affecting the adaptation than of being able to help pupils with their adaptation process.

The teachers felt quite neutral about their ability to communicate with their pupils. The dispersion in both questions was quite similar. The competence of valuing and understanding the children's cultural background was seen to be quite good. It was interesting to notice that 15 % of the respondents answered that they are sure or very sure about knowing their multicultural pupils' cultural background. However, 25 % said that they are sure or very sure about their ability to understand the problems

occurring in teaching from the point of view of pupils' cultural experiences, values and lifestyle.

The competence of creating a positive social atmosphere in the classroom was evaluated to be good. Half of the teachers evaluated to be sure or very sure about being able to create a positive atmosphere and also affect Finnish pupils' attitudes positively. Half of the teachers answered that they would be ready to work abroad as teachers, but they were also ready to work in some other position than as a teacher. Cooperation with children's family was seen as an important thing. However, only 68 % were ready to work with the whole family when yet 88 % said that cooperation is important.

TABLE 10. Teachers' competence

Competence	N Total 143	Unsure %	Average %	Sure %	Mean
Pedagogical					
10. Knowledge of how to teach	139	29	62	6	3,04
Understanding adaptation					
13. Helping pupils with adaptation	138	12	65	20	3,70
12. Awareness of the adaptation process	139	6	51	40	4,22
Communication					
14. Ability to communicate with pupils	135	18	62	15	3,52
16. Ability to choose suitable teaching methods	136	15	67	13	3,44
Valuing cultural background					
5. Knowing the pupils' cultural background	132	15	63	15	3,58
17. Ability to understand cultural background	136	8	62	25	3,86
Creating positive social atmosphere					
21. Ability to create positive atmosphere	135	1	46	48	4,52
22. Ability to affect Finnish pupils' attitudes	138	3	43	51	4,51
Readiness to work abroad					
29. Readiness to work abroad as a teacher	140	16	32	50	4,20
30. Readiness to work abroad in other position	141	20	34	45	4,00
Readiness to work with the family					
25. Understanding the importance of cooperation	141	1	9	88	5,41
26. Willingness to work with the family	139	3	27	68	4,94

5.2 Demographic Variables' Connection to the Competence of Teachers

Independent-Samples T-test and Oneway ANOVA were conducted to find out if there were differences in competence between different groups of teachers.

Gender

The connection of the teachers' gender to their competence was analysed with Independent-Samples T-test. The teachers' competence was not dependent on their gender. The only statistically significant difference was in readiness to work with the children's whole family. Men answered not to be as ready as women to work with the whole family. The significance of gender to the teachers' competence may be found in the appendix 4.

Education

The background education of the teachers did not make any difference on their perception of their competence. Only in communication competence the difference was almost significant. However, it can be seen that the subject teachers' means were higher than the class teachers' means in every sum variable except in the competence of creating a positive social atmosphere in the classroom. The significance of education to the teachers' competence can be seen in the appendix 5.

Experience in teaching immigrant children

Experience in teaching immigrant children and its connection with competence was studied with Oneway ANOVA and Tukey's Post Hoc Test. There were very significant differences in pedagogical competence, in competence to understand children's adaptation to Finnish culture, in communication competence and in the competence of valuing and understanding the children's cultural background. The differences can be discovered in the table 11 and here they are analysed more carefully.

In pedagogical competence there was a statistically very significant difference between the teachers with no experience of teaching immigrant children and the teachers with experience for over 5 years, $p=.000$. Also, there was a statistically very significant difference between the teachers with no experience and teachers with

experience for 1 to 2 years, $p=.001$. But there was no difference between teachers without experience and the teachers with experience for 3 to 5 years. The teachers having experience did not differ from other groups of teachers having different amount of experience.

Competence to understand children's adaptation to Finnish culture separated the respondents and the differences were statistically significant. There was a statistically very significant difference between the teachers with no experience of teaching immigrant children and those with experience for over 5 years, $p=.000$. There was a statistically significant difference between the teachers with no experience and those with experience for 3 to 5 years, $p=.009$. There was no difference between the teachers with no experience and those with experience for 1 to 2 years. Also in this case the teachers having experience did not differ from the groups of teachers having a different amount of experience.

Also differences in communication competence were statistically significant. There was a significant difference between the teachers with no experience of teaching immigrant children and the teachers with experience for 3 to 5 years, $p=.005$. There was no difference between the teachers without experience and those with experience of 1 to 2 years. Teachers with no experience and teachers with experience for over 5 years showed almost a significant difference. Between the groups of teachers having experience there were no differences.

In the competence of valuing and understanding the children's cultural background the differences between the groups were statistically significant. There was almost a significant difference between the teachers with no experience of teaching immigrant children and those with experience for 3 to 5 years, $p=.016$. Also with teachers with experience for over 5 years there was almost significant difference, $p=.030$. Between the groups where all the teachers had experience of teaching immigrant children there were no differences.

Age

The teachers were divided into 6 groups according to their age: 27–30 years, 31–35 years, 36–40 years, 41–45 years, 46–50 years and 51 years or more. There were no differences between different age groups concerning teachers' competence.

Teaching experience

The teachers were divided into 5 groups according to their teaching experience in years: 1–4 years, 5–7 years, 8–12 years, 13–19 years and 20 years or more. There occurred no differences between different groups of teachers with a different amount of teaching experience.

Living abroad

Living abroad experience affected teachers' feeling on their competence. There was a significant difference in pedagogical competence, $p=.007$ and a very significant difference in readiness to work abroad, $p=.001$. There were almost significant differences in competence to understand children's adaptation to Finnish culture and in readiness to work with the children's whole family.

Even though there occurred a significant difference in pedagogical competence and almost a significant difference in competence to understand children's adaptation to the new culture, Tukey's Post Hoc test did not prove between which groups the differences existed. There was a very significant difference in readiness to work abroad between the teachers who had not lived abroad and those who had lived abroad over 5 years, $p=.008$. There was an almost significant difference ($p=.047$) with teachers with no experience and with teachers living abroad for 1 to 2 years. Between teachers who had lived abroad there were no differences. Tukey's Post Hoc Test did not show the differences in readiness to work with the whole family.

TABLE 11. Demographic variables connection with competence

Competence	Experience in teaching immigrant children		Age		Teaching experience		Living abroad	
	F	p	F	p	F	p	F	p
Pedagogical	9,787	.000***	,338	.856	1,395	.239	3,736	.007**
Understanding adaptation	8,019	.000***	1,035	.400	2,066	.089	3,414	.011*
Communication	6,079	.001***	,531	.752	,386	.818	1,631	.171
Valuing cultural background	5,963	.001***	,547	.740	,672	.613	1,036	.392
Creating positive atmosphere	2,485	.064	,419	.835	,558	.693	1,698	.155
Readiness to work abroad	,130	.942	1,126	.350	1,258	.290	4,677	.001***
Readiness to work with the family	,527	.665	,223	.952	,427	.789	2,689	.034*

* statistically almost significant, $p \leq .05$

** statistically significant, $p \leq .01$

*** statistically very significant, $p \leq .001$

5.3 Experience in Teaching Immigrant Children Affecting Teachers' Views on Multicultural Education

In the study there were variables of which it was not meaningful to create sum variables. Since there appeared to be significant differences between the teachers with experience in teaching immigrant children and those without any experience, some questions were analysed separately with Independent-Sample T-test. These questions where a significant difference was found were analysed one at a time. The questions which were included in the sum variables were not analysed here separately.

The teachers with experience in teaching children from different cultural backgrounds were more aware of the limitations which can occur between the teacher and his or her pupils caused by cultural difference than the teachers without experience. The difference was very significant, $p = .000$. They also told that they enjoy teaching multicultural class more, the difference was very significant, $p = .001$.

The teachers with experience in teaching immigrant children were more aware of how their own values can affect pupils. The difference was significant, $p=.002$. It also seemed that teachers with experience were significantly more aware of our Finnish school policy and its effects on multicultural pupils' success at school and on their adaptation, $p=.003$. They also felt being more able to use their knowledge of children's culture in the classroom, $p=.006$. The teachers with experience understood that the school success of their pupils from different cultures can vary a lot, $p=.003$. The teachers felt that they are more able to support the development of the identity of their multicultural pupils by offering them value and civic education than teachers without experience, $p=.002$. All of these differences were statistically significant.

TABLE 12. Teachers' views on multicultural education regarded to the experience in teaching immigrant children

	Mean not having experience	s	Mean having experience	s	t	p
20. Noticing cultural differences	3,91	,868	4,48	,933	-3,653	.000***
3. Being aware of values	4,96	,869	5,36	,638	-3,107	.002**
7. Awareness of the educational policy's affect	3,46	,958	4,01	1,169	-3,075	.003**
9. Ability to use the knowledge of pupils' culture	3,78	,910	4,28	1,110	-2,789	.006**
11. Awareness of culture affecting school success	4,90	1,065	5,38	,792	-3,011	.003**
18. Ability to support identity	3,63	1,021	4,12	,802	-3,083	.002**
19. Enjoying multicultural class	3,54	1,177	4,22	1,170	-3,284	.001***

* statistically almost significant, $p \leq .05$

** statistically significant, $p \leq .01$

*** statistically very significant, $p \leq .001$

5.4 The Form of Education for Immigrant Children

Special education was one area of interest in this study. Here are presented the frequencies and percentages which show what teachers believe to be the best form of education for immigrant children.

TABLE 13. Teachers' opinions about immigrant children's form of education

Education	Frequency	Percentage
General education class	33	23,1
Part time special education	82	57,3
Special class	6	4,2
Missing	22	15,4
Total	143	100,0

The experience in teaching immigrant children had effects on the competence of the teachers. I wanted to look at this experience factor more closely. Experience in teaching immigrant children and its effect on the opinion about their form of education was studied with Chi-Square test. The experience in teaching immigrant children had an impact on the teachers' opinions about the form of education they believe is appropriate for immigrant children. The difference between the teachers with experience and those without experience was statistically very significant, $p=.000$. The teachers with experience in teaching children from different cultural background were more convinced that immigrant children should be placed in a general education class instead of a special education.

TABLE 14. Teachers' opinions about the form of education for immigrant children depending on teachers' experience in teaching immigrant children

Immigrant pupils' placement	Experience %	Not experience %	Chi-Square	p-value
General education class	16,0	11,1	73,603	.000***
Part time special education	29,9	37,3		
Special class	3,7	2,0		

* statistically almost significant, $p \leq .05$

** statistically significant, $p \leq .01$

*** statistically very significant, $p \leq .001$

5.5 Immigrant Children's Need for Special Education

In the second sample there were stricter questions added to the questionnaire concerning teachers' opinions about the need for special education with immigrant children compared to native-born Finnish children. The total of 30 % of the respondents believed that immigrant children needed more special education in reading and writing compared to native-born Finnish children. The teachers did not see as much need for special education in mathematics when almost half of the teachers were unsure about the issue. However, the teachers believed that immigrant children needed more special education in mathematics than in foreign languages. Over 60 % of the teachers answered to be unsure that immigrant children needed more special education compared to native-born Finnish pupils because of behavioural problems and only 1 % answered to be sure about the issue.

TABLE 15. The teachers' perceptions of immigrant children's need for special education

An immigrant pupil needs more special education compared to a native-born Finnish pupil	N Total	Unsure %	Average %	Sure %	Mean
In reading and writing	66	17	48	30	3,86
In mathematics	67	45	36	16	2,94
In foreign languages	66	45	45	6	2,71
Because of behavioural problems	67	62	33	1	2,12

Earlier there was a difference in the competence between teachers with experience in teaching immigrant children and teachers without any experience. Because of this, Independent-Sample T-test was conducted to find out whether the experience affects the opinions of the need of special education for immigrant children. There were no differences between the teachers with experience and those without experience in teaching immigrant children. However, all the means were higher with teachers without experience than with those with experience. Teachers' opinions of immigrant children's need for special education compared to the experience in teaching immigrant children can be discovered in the appendix 6.

5.6 The Significance of Teacher Education

The teachers were asked how they believed their background education (class teacher, subject teacher, other) had prepared them to work with children from different cultural backgrounds. The teachers were critical of their education the mean being 2,04. The total of 69 % believed that their background education had not given them tools to work with immigrant children. Only 5 % answered that their background education had prepared them to face different cultures in the classroom.

In the second sample (n=69) the teachers were asked how they felt their special education courses had prepared them to face multicultural children in the classroom. The teachers felt that special education had prepared them more than their background education to face difference in the classroom. This time the total of 33 % of the respondents said that special education had not given them tools to work with children from different cultural backgrounds and the total of 10 % responded that it had prepared them to face difference.

TABLE 16. The significance of education to the readiness to face difference

Education has prepared me to face pupils from different cultures	N Total	Unsure %	Average %	Sure %	Mean
Class teacher/subject teacher education	141/143	69	25	5	2,04
Special education	67/69	33	54	10	3,00

There appeared to be a very significant difference between readiness given by class teacher education / subject teacher education and special education. The difference was studied with Chi-Square Test. The teachers felt that special education had prepared them better than their background education to face children from different cultures. Chi-Square was 21,388 and $p=.001$.

Since there appeared to be a difference in gained benefit between class teacher education / subject teacher education and special education, I wanted to find out whether the experience in teaching immigrant children had an impact on this. Independent-Samples T-test was conducted to analyse the difference. There were no differences between the teachers with experience in teaching immigrant children and

those without any experience. The teachers with experience and those without experience felt equally about the benefit they had gained from their education. The significance of experience in teaching immigrant children to the teachers' opinion of the benefit of their education can be discovered in the appendix 7.

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Teachers' Competence

Pedagogical Competence

The teachers participating in the research were quite unsure about their pedagogical competence to teach children from different cultural backgrounds. Also Matinheikki-Kokko (1997, 17–18) has pointed out that people working with immigrants hope for more knowledge about cultures and attitudes, and in addition to that, guidance for everyday work and practices. The teachers who had experience in teaching immigrant children felt more competent than the ones without experience. According to Niemi (1993, 33) fear and uncertainty affect the feeling of competence. The teachers without experience in teaching immigrant children might feel that they are uncertain about how to manage the class and children. According to Leeman & Ledoux (2005, 588) teachers must improve their knowledge of the theoretical background for multicultural education. This may be one step towards a stronger feeling of competence.

Neither age nor teaching experience had an impact on pedagogical competence. This is remarkable because it could have been assumed that teachers of different ages have had their education in different times. If there had been a difference between different ages it could have been asked whether the education had had some impact on the feeling of pedagogical competence. It was significant to notice that teaching

experience did not have any effect, either. Even though teachers are facing different pupils every day, having a lot of teaching experience does not seem to raise the feeling of being able to teach children from different cultural backgrounds. This raises a question that do teachers get used to their work and is it difficult to face new and different situations later.

Having experience in living abroad had a significant impact on the feeling of pedagogical competence. There were no previous studies dealing with the issue of living abroad and its effects on competence. Living abroad did not mean that the teachers had worked as teachers abroad. Thus it can be wondered what kind of useful skills they found and achieved when living abroad. Did the experience give perspective to diversity or did they gain a feeling of self-confidence and the feeling that they can manage abroad and therefore also with immigrant children? Living abroad experience might have affected teachers' perspectives on living in a different culture and what it is like to speak a different language and try to adapt to the culture. Thus it is likely that the ability to understand the differences grows. Therefore teachers might be able to identify themselves with immigrant children if they have had experience in living abroad. Maybe even anticipating some issues immigrant children are facing is possible, and thus there might be a chance to discuss and handle them before they affect the school work.

Competence to Understand Children's Adaptation to Finnish Culture

The teachers in the research felt quite competent to understand children's adaptation to Finnish culture. Also here there occurred differences between the teachers with experience in teaching immigrant children and the ones without this experience and, likewise, between the teachers who had lived abroad and those without this experience. According to Miettinen & Pitkänen (1999, 20) Finnish teachers emphasise immigrant children's adaptation, motivation, and positive attitudes towards school. When teachers emphasise adaptation to the Finnish school system it can be asked if they take into account the adaptation of immigrant children. If the teachers are emphasising the adaptation of children, does it mean that they understand the process adaptation demands? Choosing suitable practices in the classroom demands that a teacher is aware of his or her pupil's adaptation stage and how it might affect learning. The fact that teachers feel they have competence to

understand children's adaptation can be seen as a good start to develop teachers' pedagogical competence.

Communication Competence

Communication competence was an area where teachers were not very unsure about it but not certain about their abilities either. According to Barnlund (1998, 45) children learn their behaviour from the surrounding. When immigrant children arrive in Finland they already have behavioural patterns which are appropriate in their home culture. This is a challenge for a teacher. Jokikokko (2005, 76) found out that teachers believed that a dialogical relationship is important in intercultural competence. However, it was not known that did teachers believe that dialogical relationship with verbal communication is the only way to communicate competently.

The mean in communication competence was the second lowest after pedagogical competence. There might appear feeling of fear of the possible misunderstandings and how to handle difficult situations. However, teachers are used to communicate with different people, children and parents. Therefore why do they feel incompetent in this matter? Is it because of lack of language skills or is the uncertainty in communication related to culture? Is it actually lack of knowledge of different communication styles and their impact on school work? There is a possibility that teacher is actually quite competent communicator but because of the lack of knowledge of communication believes that he or she does not have enough competence.

Competence of Valuing and Understanding the Children's Cultural

Background

The teachers in the study felt quite sure about their ability to value and understand the children's cultural background and there was a significant difference between teachers with experience in teaching immigrant children and teachers without any experience. Lustig & Koester (1996, 117), Byram et al. (2001, 5–6) and Mushi (2004, 184) agree that knowledge of the fact that different cultures exist is one part of intercultural competence. Teachers should thus understand the differences due to the cultural background and develop awareness of different values (Byram et al. 2001, 5–7). It can be discussed if teachers feel competent to teach children, for example,

from different family backgrounds or children from different parts of Finland because there are cultural differences between many groups inside Finland, too. Children in rural and urban areas might have some differences; the age of parents might affect the family culture, or the education of parents. Here only a few examples of possible cultural differences in one culture were mentioned. Differences inside Finland may not be as clearly in view as differences between different cultures and thus they are not as easy to notice.

Competence of Creating Positive Social Atmosphere in the Classroom

Creating a positive social atmosphere in the classroom was seen as a goal which teachers were confident to achieve. According to Gay (2002, 621), Mushi (2004, 184) and Montgomery (2001, 6), the classroom climate should support learning and creating an environment where prejudices do not exist and where every child can learn to one's best potential. Even though the teachers did not feel sure about their pedagogical competence, they felt they were able to create a classroom climate where every child is valued. Thus they also felt that they were able to affect Finnish pupils' attitudes towards multiculturalism. Being able to do that is important because a classroom without prejudices demands that Finnish pupils are willing to accept different pupils and their backgrounds.

Readiness to Work Abroad

The teachers' working abroad experiences were of interest to the researcher. There were no mentions of this issue in literature and therefore nothing about how it might affect teachers' competence. It was found out that if teachers had been living abroad before, they were readier to work abroad than teachers without living abroad experience. This is quite a natural thing; when one has experiences in living abroad it is easier to consider that possibility also later. On the other hand if one has already been abroad it can be assumed that he or she has had some interest on the issue.

Readiness to Work with the Children's whole Family

The teachers in the study were ready to work with the children's whole family. This was the item where the teachers felt the most competent. Engaging immigrant parents and cooperating with them is seen as a necessity (Jokikokko 2005, 78; Sobel & Kugler 2007, 63; Vassilchenko & Trasberg 2000, 75). It was interesting to find out

that the women were readier to work with the family than men. It must be considered here that the amount of men answering the questionnaire was low, only 7 %; and that means 10 male teachers. Noteworthy was to observe that teachers were certain about the need for cooperation with the families but not as many was ready to actually put the idea into practice. Since teachers were quite unsure about their communication competence, did it have an effect on the issue of cooperation with the families? If teachers do not feel competent to communicate with children, there may be uncertainty also about the ability to cooperate with parents since it demands communication. Often the case is that immigrant children's parents do not have as good language skills as their children. This might be one issue to consider when thinking about cooperation between teacher and parents and why there may be difficulties in it.

6.2 Teachers' Views on Multicultural Education

There were significant differences in teachers' views on multicultural education depending on whether they had experience in teaching immigrant children or not. The teachers with experience in teaching immigrant children were more aware of the limitations between them and pupils than the ones without experience. It was interesting to find out when considering the teachers' opinions of their competence. The teachers with no experience in teaching immigrant children did not see their competence being as good as the ones with experience. In spite of that, teachers with experience noticed that cultural differences caused limitations between them and the children, even though it could have been assumed that teachers without experience would have noticed that more clearly. On the other hand, maybe the teachers without experience are not as aware of the cultural factors as the ones with experience are.

The teachers believed to be very aware of how their own values affect children. The teachers were more aware of their own values affecting pupils than of noticing the limitations cultural differences can cause. Realising one's own cultural background and attitudes is important in multicultural education (Fennes & Hapgood 1997, 62; Sue & Sue 1990, 166; Talib 1999, 171; Jokikokko 2005, 75). Being aware of the values is the first thing in understanding that they may have an impact on pupils. However, Talib (2006, 143) claims that teachers do not think how their work affects

children with an immigrant background. This is not quite the same thing but I believe that if teachers understand that their values can affect pupils they also understand that their work in general has an effect on them. Teachers' values affect teaching even though there are no multicultural pupils in the classroom. Since teachers with experience in teaching immigrants were more aware of this it can be discussed that why is it so. Do different cultures make the differences in values clearer?

The teachers with experience in teaching multicultural children had a significantly better idea of how our education policy affects the school success and adaptation of pupils from other cultures than the ones without experience. According to Johnson (2003, 108, 115) multicultural policy matters even though there often seems to be a gap between multicultural policy and practice. The function of multicultural policy is to promote multicultural education, not to have a negative effect on it (Johnson 2003, 117). The fact that the teachers did not have a very good knowledge of the policy in Finland raises a question that why teachers are not aware of it. Do they think that the education policy is something that is far away from them and not really related to the issues of multicultural education? Or is there a thought that the most effective ways of affecting learners are the practices in the classroom, not the education policy as such?

The teachers were quite confident that they are able to benefit from the knowledge they have of each child's culture in a multicultural classroom. Being able to use children's culture in teaching is part of culturally responsive teaching. Including the family to a greater extent in the school work is one way of learning about the culture and using it in teaching. Using culture as a positive material for classes helps also other pupils to understand and accept differences. Positive material could mean, for example, immigrant children's knowledge of their own culture and country which could be used in the classes of geography or history.

The respondents of this study were aware that the school success of children from different cultures can vary. Teaching is based on understanding the cultural matters and every child's individual qualities. According to Richards et al. (2007, 67) it is the responsibility of teachers to make sure that every child has equal opportunities to learn. Thus they should find teaching methods suitable for all children. Teachers

were quite sure that they can offer value and civic education so that it supports the development of identity also for a pupil from another culture. However, the teachers with experience in teaching immigrant children were significantly more convinced about their ability, which is interesting because every child is an individual and teachers should be able to support children as individuals anyhow.

The teachers were not very sure about enjoying teaching a multicultural class. Anyhow, the teachers who had experience in teaching a multicultural class were surer about enjoying it than their colleagues without experience. However, the teachers believed that they could enjoy teaching more than they do now. This raises a question: would these teachers enjoy their work more if they did not have a multicultural class. Did the fact of having a multicultural class have an effect on their enjoyment of their work? It seems that they enjoy teaching a multicultural class more than what they believe their competence is.

6.3 Immigrant Children in the Need for Special Education?

Over half of the respondents answered that immigrant children should receive part time special education. Many researchers share this idea. Meyer et al. (2004, 351), Obiakor (2007, 154) and Pitkänen Miettinen (1999, 6) wrote that special education is necessary for immigrant children. Over 20 % of the respondents in this study answered that the right place for immigrant children was a general education class. These ideas go together with Gay's (2002, 613) and Garcia's & Lopez's (2005, 434) ideas that special education is not the answer as such. However, it must be noticed that as much as 15 % of the respondents did not answer this question. It was unclear why the percentage was this high. Did the teachers not have a clear opinion about immigrant children's placement in school or did not they perhaps want to give their opinion?

The teachers were quite sure that immigrant children need more special education compared to native-born Finnish children in reading and writing. This result is natural because the language is often a clear difference between children from different cultural backgrounds. Teachers in Jokikokko's (2005, 78) study said that they needed more knowledge of multicultural, pedagogical skills. However, the

teachers in this study were of the opinion that immigrant children were in need of special education even though they thought that qualifying education of special education did not give very much competence. Even though the teachers with experience were more confident that immigrant children should be placed in a general education class than the teachers without experience, all the respondents agreed on children's need of special education in reading and writing, mathematics, foreign languages and because of behavioural problems.

6.4 Meaning of Teacher Education to the Feeling of Competence

The teachers in this study were critical of the skills their education had given them to manage with culturally diverse classes. Jokikokko (2005, 78) described teachers constantly expressing need for more knowledge and pedagogical skills. Even though these issues are more and more emphasised, teachers still feel their competence is not sufficient. Education gives permission to teach but it does not mean that one is ready for all the circumstances one faces. Can teachers' competence ever be good enough? There is always something to improve. If teacher would think that he or she was a really competent teacher and there is nothing to improve, that would not be a very good sign either because it would prevent development happening. Education is supposed to give tools for teachers to manage their work. It can also be asked that do teachers have too high expectations to their studies because it is not possible to teach all the aspects of teachers' work. Experience during the years is also a way to learn and achieve competence. Competence is a subjective experience and people have different ways of defining their own competence.

In this study there was a remarkable difference between the background education and the qualifying education of special education to the feeling of competence. Even though the teachers felt quite unsure about competence special education had given them, they thought it had given them tools to face immigrant children better than their background education. The same kind of results were in Jarrrels' et al. study (1995) according to which special education teachers felt significantly more competent to teach a multicultural class than general education teachers (Jarrrels 1999, 237).

There was no difference between the teachers with experience in teaching immigrant children and the teachers without experience in this matter. The teachers felt equally about the competence their education had given them. It could have been assumed that the teachers with experience might have been able to get more from the education because they had experiences to which they could relate new information. It can also be speculated if the difference between the background education and special education was due to the fact that all teachers had experience in teaching after their background education and before studying in the special education programme, or to the possibility that special education was actually more informative in this sense. Working experience might have given the teachers new perspectives and ideas so that they were able to benefit more from the education than before.

7 CONCLUSION

The main purpose of this research was to study teachers' perceptions of multicultural education and their competence to teach children from different cultural backgrounds. The aspect of special education was also involved in the study by studying what teachers believed to be the best place for immigrant children at school and how they perceived the need of special education with children from different cultural backgrounds. Also the advantage of their education was viewed. It was studied how teachers' gender, age, teaching experience, experience in teaching immigrant children and living abroad experiences affected the matters mentioned previously.

I was specifically interested in teachers' own perceptions and how they see their competence themselves because teachers are quite a big part of immigrant children's lives. The process with this research has been rewarding and challenging. During the process there were a lot of questions in my mind and my interest also changed slightly. The aspect of special education started to interest me more as well as the meaning of education to teachers' competence.

Next the significance of the results and the research method will be discussed. To conclude some ideas for future research will be presented.

The growing amount of immigrants and immigrant children in schools makes this topic interesting and relevant. Teachers are facing multicultural children in their

classes more and more. Half of the teachers in this study responded that they had had a child or children from a different culture in their class. Thus many of the general class teachers face issues concerning diversity in their daily work. However, the teachers conveyed that they were quite unsure about their pedagogical competence. With other areas of competence they felt a little more competent. When developing the education of teachers, teachers themselves are important sources of ideas because they know what their work demands and what kind of skills they lack. This study gives information about teachers' opinions about their competence and thus it shows areas that need development in teacher education.

This study showed that the most important factor affecting teacher's competence was experience in teaching immigrant children. Even though the teachers with experience in teaching a multicultural class felt more competent than the ones without experience, they did not feel very competent either. Living abroad appeared to have a significant effect on pedagogical competence. This is interesting because living abroad did not mean that they had been teaching there. And the question is: why did it have an effect on pedagogical competence, not for instance on the competence of valuing and understanding children's cultural background as could have been assumed.

It can be discussed if the feeling of competence has an effect on teachers' work. The constant feeling of insufficiency might affect even other aspects of teachers' work. The growing amount of demands for teachers requires a lot from the education. The teachers were critical about their education: most of the teachers believed they had not gained tools to work with culturally diverse pupils. An interesting thing was that there were no differences between the teachers of different ages and those with different amount of teaching experience concerning their satisfaction to their education. That raises a question: is our teacher education still the same as before when concerning multicultural education? Nowadays there are courses dealing with multicultural education in teacher education programmes. It could have been assumed that younger teachers thus would have agreed that they gained more information about their teacher education but this was not the case. There seems to be a need for more multicultural education in teacher education programmes. However, the education should be planned so that teachers and students would

benefit from it and that they would be able to take their knowledge to the field and use it in practice. On the other hand, does the information which students absorb increase their feeling of incompetence when knowing many different aspects of multicultural education and possible difficulties in it? When finding out about different aspect concerning multicultural education is there a chance that it might increase the actual competence but not the feeling of it?

Also educating more diverse teachers in teacher education programmes might be useful. Since the pupils are getting more and more diverse maybe also diverse teachers would be needed. Having more diversity in teachers may give more aspects of multicultural education in the classroom. This demands both changes and flexibility in teacher education programmes. Educating immigrants to be teachers would give diversity to schools and different aspects for teaching.

Special education was seen as a very important thing in teaching immigrant children. It has been discussed if teaching immigrants is part of special education because being an immigrant pupil does not mean that one has some disability. The teachers felt that qualifying special education programme had given them more tools to work with immigrant children than their background education had. In that sense it is natural that the teachers believed that immigrant children need special education because the teachers felt that after studying special education they were readier to face a multicultural class than before.

The meaning of teachers' competence is not confined only to school setting. School has a significant meaning to immigrant children's lives. Integrating to society and being able to manage in Finland are important goals for immigrants. Teachers' competence is one important part but to have competent teachers demands a lot from the whole educational system and educational policy. The amount of immigrants in classes is going to grow. This is something that should be kept in mind when planning teacher education programmes. How can the competence of teachers be developed? In order to have individuals who integrate into society we need competent teachers as well as functional educational policy to support the common goals of integration. Developing teacher education is not enough because there are a lot of teachers in the field who feel incompetent in teaching immigrant children. Also

they need more knowledge of the subject matter. Developing teacher's pedagogical skills needs support from the whole educational system. Immigrant pupils are often seen to cause problems. Would there be a high time for a change in the attitudes and the time to begin seeing them as an important resource for our society?

7.1 Reviewing the Research Method

The answers to the research questions were studied quantitatively by using a questionnaire. The questionnaire made it possible to study the opinions of quite considerable amount of teachers. The research method was mainly suitable for this purpose. Studying perceptions and opinions is not absolutely unambiguous. When studying people it is possible that their motives, intentions, goals and attitudes affect the results and make the research process sensitive but, at the same, time challenging (Metsämuuronen 2003, 4).

There are many things affecting the competence of teachers. Here only part of them was studied. Teachers were asked how they themselves perceive their competence and how they believe their education has helped them in their work. One's own perceptions are not always the right ones. A teacher might feel incompetent in his or her work but someone else would say he or she is very competent. Evaluating one's own competence relates to one's own aims; somebody is satisfied with oneself the way he or she is, while somebody else has very high expectations to one's own work and competence. Evaluating one's own ideas is always difficult because the matters of questions are so personal and subjective. Immigrant issues have been one important topic of educational policy and teachers might have ideas how they should answer the questions or what the good and appropriate way to answer is.

The teachers in the first sample were asked to fill in the questionnaire at a certain time in the classroom. This might have had an effect on the answers; some other time and place the answers might have been different. The teachers in the second sample answered on the Internet so they could choose the time of answering themselves. The answering percentage in the second sample was only 31 which is low. Using an Internet based questionnaire might be one reason for the low percentage because often in the Internet based research answering percentages are low. Answering is

easy to forget and people often get a lot of e-mail not having time to answer or not bothering to answer maybe because they think that the topic is not of their interest. Also teachers without experience in teaching immigrant children may have thought that this area does not relate to them.

After finishing this research process I noticed there are things I would have done differently. When planning the questionnaire the research questions should have been defined more precisely. Also my interest changed slightly during the process and that is why there were additional questions developed for the second sample. By leaving some questions out it would have been possible to concentrate more on the issues that were strictly connected to competence and thus gain more information about that area. The ideas were not quite clear in the beginning but they became clearer when the research progressed. The questionnaire turned out to be a little problematic but I chose those parts which were essential for the study. If I did the study again I would prepare the questionnaire more accurate and concise, concentrating on the points strictly related to the research. However, a questionnaire which gives some additional information may bring new knowledge that the researcher did not think of in the beginning. Thus there might be a possibility for new ideas for future research.

7.2 Ideas for Future Research

This research gives the idea that there is a room for improvement in our education system. Even though the researcher's original interest was in teachers' competence, this study raised questions about immigrant children's views on their school environment. How do they feel about their teacher's competence? What they think about their school environment and do they enjoy going to school? How does school affect their later life? What are the possibilities for immigrants to have further education? What are their employment opportunities later in their lives? A qualitative profile study might be useful in the future to find out whether the educational aims of immigrants have been accomplished. It would also be interesting to find out if there are differences in immigrants' integration into society depending on the school environment; whether there are a lot of immigrants in the school or class or whether there are only a few of them.

Working with the whole family was seen as one part of teachers' competence. It would be interesting to compare the views of teachers and parents. If there was more cooperation between schools and families, what kind of effect would this have on children's school success? The role of special education is quite significant in the teaching of immigrants. One area for the future research might be the role of special education in children's lives and how it affects the development of identity.

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APPENDICES

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Appendix 1: A covering letter for the teachers

Jyväskylän yliopisto
Erityispedagogiikan laitos

Tutkimus monikulttuurisesta opetuksesta

Arvoisa vastaanottaja,

Monikulttuurisuus on lisääntynyt peruskoulussa viime vuosina ja yhä useammin opettajat kohtaavat monikulttuurisuuteen liittyvät erilaiset haasteet. Monissa tapauksissa myös erityisen tuen tarpeet liittyvät monikulttuuriseen opetukseen.

Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on selvittää erityisopettajaksi opiskelevien opettajien käsityksiä monikulttuurista ryhmistä ja valmiuksia kohdata niitä. Tutkimukseen osallistuvat opettajat ovat suorittamassa erillisiä erityisopettajan opintoja tai he ovat vasta saaneet nämä opinnot valmiiksi Jyväskylän, Joensuun tai Helsingin yliopistossa. Kyseiset yksiköt ovat ystävällisesti lähettäneet vastaajille sähköpostitse tämän viestin.

Tämä tutkimus suoritetaan Jyväskylän yliopiston erityispedagogiikan laitoksella ja se liittyy kasv.yo Salla Määtä pro gradu – tutkimukseen. Tutkimuksen vastuullisena ohjaajana toimii KT lehtori Matti Kuorelahti. Kyselyyn vastataan nimettömästi ja vastaajien henkilöllisyys ei ilmene millään tavalla. Kyselyyn voi vastata vain yhden ainoan kerran.

Alla olevasta linkistä pääset täyttämään kyselylomakkeen Internetissä. Täytä ensin taustatiedot ja vastaa sitten kysymyksiin. On tärkeää, että vastaat kysymyksiin, vaikka sinulla ei olisikaan kokemusta monikulttuurisen ryhmän opettamisesta. Vastaamiseen menee aikaa n. 15 minuuttia. Kyselyyn toivotaan vastattavan 27.4. mennessä.

Linkki kyselylomakkeeseen

<https://korppi.jyu.fi/kotka/r.jsp?questionnaireid=1495>

Lisätietoja:

Salla Määtä, kasv.yo
xxxxxxxx@xxxxxx

Matti Kuorelahti, KT, lehtori
xxxxxxxx@xxxxxx

Appendix 2: The questionnaire for the teachers in Finnish

Kyselylomake pro gradu-tutkielmaa varten

Monikulttuurinen opetus. Täytä ensin taustatiedot ja vastaa sitten kysymyksiin. On tärkeää, että vastaat kysymyksiin, vaikka sinulla ei olisikaan kokemusta monikulttuurisen ryhmän opettamisesta.

Taustatiedot:

Sukupuoli: mies ____ nainen ____

Ikä: ____ vuotta

Opettajakoulutus: luokanopettaja ____ aineenopettaja ____ muu, mikä?

Opettajakokemus: ____ vuotta

Kokemus maahanmuuttajien opetuksesta:

ei ollenkaan ____ 1–2 vuotta ____ 3–5 vuotta ____ yli 5 vuotta ____

asuminen ulkomailla: en ole asunut ____ olen asunut ____ kuinka monta vuotta? ____

1= hyvin epävarma

4= jokseenkin varma

2= epävarma

5= varma

3= jokseenkin epävarma

6= täysin varma

	hyvin epävarma			täysin varma		
1. Tunnen, että olen selvillä omasta kulttuuritaustastani.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. Pystyn opettajana arvostamaan ja kunnioittamaan oppilaiden kulttuurieroja.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. Olen selvillä siitä, kuinka omat arvoni voivat vaikuttaa oppilaisiin.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. Minun ja toisesta kulttuurista tulevien oppilaiden välillä vallitsevat erot tuntuvat minusta luonnollisilta.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. Tunnen vieraasta kulttuurista tulevien oppilaitteni kulttuuritaustaa.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	hyvin epävarma					täysin varma
	1	2	3	4	5	6
6. Silloin, kun kulttuurierot ovat huomattavia, tarjoaisin oppilaalle mahdollisuuden saada jonkun asianomaista kulttuuria ja kieltä hallitsevan opettajan opetusta.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. Minulla on käsitys siitä, miten Suomessa vallitseva koulutuspolitiikka vaikuttaa toisesta kulttuurista tulevien oppilaiden koulumenestykseen ja sopeutumiseen.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. Erilaiset kulttuuritaustat tulee mielestäni ottaa opetuksessa huomioon.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. Pystyn käyttämään oppilaiden kulttuuriin liittyviä tietoja hyväksi monikulttuurisessa opetusryhmässä.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. Minulla on selkeä käsitys siitä, miten opetuksessa tulee edetä monikulttuurisen opetusryhmän kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. Olen selvillä siitä, että toisesta kulttuurista tulevien oppilaiden opintomenestys suomalaisessa koulussa voi vaihdella runsaasti.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. Olen tietoinen uuteen kulttuuriin sopeutumiseen vaikuttavista tekijöistä.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. Pystyn auttamaan toisesta kulttuurista tulevia oppilaita heidän sopeutumiseensa liittyvien vaikeuksien käsittelyssä.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. Pystyn viestimään selkeästi sekä sanallisesti että ei-sanallisesti toisesta kulttuurista tulevien oppilaiden kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. Pystyn vaikuttamaan siihen, että yhteiskuntamme tarjoama opetus on kaikkien, myös eri kulttuurista tulevien oppilaiden etujen mukaista.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. Pystyn opettamaan siten, että opetus- ja oppimismenetelmät sopivat kaikille monikulttuurisessa ryhmässä opiskeleville.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. Pystyn ymmärtämään opetuksessa syntyviä ongelmia oppilaiden kulttuurisesta kokemuksesta, arvoista ja elämäntyylistä käsin.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	hyvin epävarma			täysin varma		
18. Pystyn tarjoamaan arvo- ja kansalaiskasvatusta siten, että se tukee myös toisesta kulttuurista tulevien identiteettikehitystä.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19. Nautin siitä, että saan opettaa monikulttuurista ryhmää.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. Pystyn havaitsemaan sen, miten kulttuurierot aiheuttavat rajoituksia oppilaiden ja minun välillä.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. Pystyn luomaan myönteisen sosiaalisen Ilmapiirin opetusryhmässä, jossa arvostetaan eri kulttuureita edustavia oppilaita.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. Pystyn vaikuttamaan positiivisesti suomalaisten oppilaiden asenteisiin monikulttuurisuutta kohtaan.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. Olen tietoinen opettajan ammatillisesta ja eettisestä vastuusta monikulttuurisessa opetustyössä.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. Pystyn opetuksen arvioinnissa ottamaan huomioon kulttuurista ja kielestä johtuvat erot.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. Koen, että yhteistyö toisesta kulttuurista tulevan lapsen vanhempien kanssa on tärkeää.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. Toisesta kulttuurista tulevia lapsia opettaessani olen valmis työskentelemään koko perheen kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. Mielestäni luokan/aineenopettajakoulutukseni on antanut valmiuksia kohdata eri kulttuurista tulevia oppilaita.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. Saan työnantajaltani riittävästi tukea työskentelyyni toisesta kulttuurista tulevien oppilaiden kanssa.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. Olisin valmis toimimaan opettajana jossakin ulkomailla.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. Olisin valmis toimimaan muissa kuin opettajan tehtävissä ulkomailla.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	hyvin epävarma				täysin varma	
	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. Olisin valmis toimimaan kokonaan maahanmuuttajista koostuvan eri kulttuureista tulevien oppilaiden ryhmän opettajana.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. Mielestäni Suomeen muuttavien pitäisi ensisijaisesti omaksua suomalaiset tavat ja kulttuuri. (maassa maan tavalla)	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. Olen sitä mieltä, että Suomi kuuluu suomalaisille.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. On oikein, että pakolaisia Suomeen otettaessa otetaan niitä, joiden kotouttaminen suomalaiseen yhteiskuntaan voidaan olettaa tapahtuvan helpoimmin.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. Pakolaisia Suomeen otettaessa esimerkiksi ammatti tulisi huomioida ajateltaessa ammattitaitoisen työvoiman tarvetta.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Kysymykset 36–41 esitettiin ainoastaan opettajille, jotka olivat mukana tutkimuksessa keväällä 2007. N=69.

36. Maahanmuuttajaoppilaat tulisi yleensä ohjata erityisopetukseen.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. Mielestäni erityisopettajakoulutus on antanut valmiuksia kohdata eri kulttuureista tulevia oppilaita.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. Maahanmuuttajaoppilas tarvitsee erityisopetusta enemmän verrattuna syntyperäiseen suomalaislapsen lukemisessa ja kirjoittamisessa.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. Maahanmuuttajaoppilas tarvitsee erityisopetusta enemmän verrattuna syntyperäiseen suomalaislapsen matematiikassa.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. Maahanmuuttajaoppilas tarvitsee erityisopetusta enemmän verrattuna syntyperäiseen suomalaislapsen vieraassa kielessä (englanti, saksa jne.).	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. Maahanmuuttajaoppilas tarvitsee erityisopetusta enemmän verrattuna syntyperäiseen suomalaislapsen käyttäytymishäiriöiden takia.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Kokemuksia monikulttuurisesta opetuksesta.

42. Millainen opetusmuoto olisi mielestäsi paras maahanmuuttajaoppilaalle?

yleisopetus _____

erityisluokkaopetus _____

osa-aikainen erityisopetus _____

43. Millaista erityistä tukea ajattelet toisesta kulttuurista tulevan oppilaan tarvitsevan koulunkäynnissään?

44. Kuvaile jokin vaikeaksi kokemasi tilanne eri kulttuurista tulevan oppilaan kanssa ja kerro, miten selvitit tilanteen. Miksi tilanne tuntui sinusta vaikealta?

45. Kuvaile jokin myönteinen kokemus eri kulttuurista tulevan oppilaan kanssa.
Mikä tilanteessa oli positiivista?

Mitä vielä haluat kertoa kokemuksistasi tai ajatuksistasi monikulttuuriseen opetukseen liittyen?

Kiitos paljon vastauksistasi!

Appendix 3: The questionnaire for the teachers in English

Questionnaire for Master's Thesis

Multicultural education. Please make sure you submit your background information and answer all of the questions. It is important that you answer the questions even though you do not have experience in teaching a multicultural group.

Background information:

Gender: Male ____ female ____

Age: ____ years

Teacher education: class teacher ____ subject teacher ____ other, what?

Teaching experience: ____ years

Experience in teaching immigrant children:

None ____ 1–2 years ____ 3–5 years ____ over 5 years ____

Living abroad: I have not lived abroad ____ I have lived abroad ____ for how many years? ____

1= very unsure 4= quite sure
2= unsure 5= sure
3= quite unsure 6= very sure

	very unsure					very sure
1. I believe that I am aware of my own cultural background.	1	2	3	4	5	6
2. As a teacher I am able to value and respect differences in pupil's cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
3. I am aware of how my own values can affect the pupils.	1	2	3	4	5	6
4. The differences between me and pupils from other cultures feel natural to me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
5. I know the cultural background of my pupils coming from a different culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	very unsure					very sure
6. When the cultural differences are significant I would like to offer the pupil the possibility to be taught by someone who knows the particular culture and language.	1	2	3	4	5	6
7. I have an impression on how the educational policy in Finland affects the school success and adaptation of pupils from other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8. I believe that different cultural backgrounds should be taken into consideration when teaching.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9. I am able to utilise my understanding of the pupils' cultures in a multicultural classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10. I have a clear understanding how to approach teaching in a multicultural group.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11. I am aware that the school success of pupils from different cultures can vary a lot.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12. I am aware of factors affecting adaptation to a new culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13. I am able to help pupils from other cultures with their difficulties during the adaptation to the new culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14. I am able to communicate well both verbally and non-verbally with pupils from other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15. I can help ensure that Finland offers education that reflects the best interest of everyone, including pupils from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16. When it comes to learning and teaching methods, I am able to teach in a manner that suits everyone in a multicultural classroom.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17. I am able to understand problems arising from view of pupils' cultural experiences, values and lifestyle.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18. I can offer value and civic education so that it supports the development of identity also for a pupil from another culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	very unsure					very sure
19. I enjoy teaching a multicultural class.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20. I am able to notice how cultural differences cause limitations between pupils and me.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21. I am able to create a positive social atmosphere in the classroom where pupils from different cultures are valued.	1	2	3	4	5	6
22. I am able to affect positively Finnish pupils' attitudes towards multiculturalism.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. I am aware of the teacher's professional and ethical responsibility in multicultural teaching work.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. In the assessment I am able to take into account the differences arising from cultural and linguistic differences.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. I believe that cooperation with the family of a pupil from a different culture is important.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. When teaching pupils from a different cultural background I would be ready work with the whole family.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. I think that my class teacher education/subject teacher education has prepared me to face pupils from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. I get enough support from my employer in working with pupils from another culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. I would be ready to work as a teacher abroad.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. I would be ready to work abroad in some other position than as a teacher.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. I would be ready to work as a teacher of an immigrant group of pupils from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. In my opinion people moving to Finland should primarily adopt Finnish habits and culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6

	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. I think that Finland belongs to the Finns.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. When receiving refugees to Finland it is right to choose those ones whose adaptation to Finnish society can be assumed to happen the most easily.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. When receiving refugees to Finland occupation, for example, should be taken into account when thinking about the need of skilled labour.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Questions 36–41 were asked only from the teachers who took part in the research in the spring of 2007. N=69.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. Immigrant pupils should generally be guided to special education	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. I think that teacher education for special education has prepared me to face pupils from different cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
38. An immigrant pupil needs more special education in reading and writing compared to a native-born Finnish pupil.	1	2	3	4	5	6
39. An immigrant pupil needs more special education in mathematics compared to a native-born Finnish pupil.	1	2	3	4	5	6
40. An immigrant pupil needs more special education in foreign languages (English, German etc.) compared to a native-born Finnish pupil.	1	2	3	4	5	6
41. An immigrant pupil needs more special education because of behavioural problems compared to a native-born Finnish pupil.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Experiences of multicultural education.

42. Which form of education would be the best for an immigrant child?
- general education class _____
- special class _____
- part time special education _____

43. What kind of special support you think a pupil from another culture needs in his/her school work?

44. Describe some difficult situation with a pupil from a different culture and tell how you managed the situation. Why did you feel the situation difficult?

45. Describe some positive experience with a pupil from another culture. What was positive in the situation?

What else do you want to tell about your experiences or thoughts concerning multicultural education?

Thank you very much for your answers!

Appendix 4: The significance of gender to the teachers' competence

Competence	Mean male	Std. deviation	Mean female	Std. deviation	t-value	p-value
Pedagogical	3,000	1,333	3,050	,999	-,138	.890
Understanding adaptation	3,900	,966	3,956	,903	-,189	.850
Communication	3,450	,798	3,496	,948	-,149	.882
Valuing cultural background	3,722	1,003	3,719	,863	,012	.990
Creating positive atmosphere	4,100	,658	4,540	,797	-1,698	.092
Readiness to work abroad	4,900	1,220	4,031	1,546	1,735	.085
Readiness to work with the family	4,500	1,269	5,225	,737	-2,820	.006**

* statistically almost significant, $p \leq .05$

** statistically significant, $p \leq .01$

*** statistically very significant, $p \leq .001$

Appendix 5: The significance of education to the teachers' competence

Competence	Mean male	Std. deviation	Mean female	Std. deviation	t-value	p-value
Pedagogical	2,960	1,009	3,200	1,056	-,958	.340
Understanding adaptation	3,869	,922	4,263	,839	-1,738	.085
Communication	3,387	,900	3,971	,892	-2,484	.014*
Valuing cultural background	3,668	,864	3,861	,967	-,857	.393
Creating positive atmosphere	4,524	,812	4,342	,688	,916	.361
Readiness to work abroad	4,012	1,542	4,475	1,602	-1,224	.223
Readiness to work with the family	5,158	,772	5,194	1,002	-,180	.858

* statistically almost significant, $p \leq .05$

** statistically significant, $p \leq .01$

*** statistically very significant, $p \leq .001$

Appendix 6: The significance of experience in teaching immigrant children to the teachers' opinions of immigrant children's need for special education (n=69).

An immigrant pupil needs more special education compared to a native-born Finnish pupil	Mean Not having experience	Std. deviation	Mean Having experience	Std. deviation	t-value	p-value
In reading and writing	4,04	1,105	3,74	1,537	,875	,385
In mathematics	3,07	1,438	2,85	1,329	,661	,511
In foreign languages	2,74	,984	2,69	1,217	,171	,864
Because of behavioural problems	2,21	1,134	2,05	,826	,681	,498

* statistically almost significant, $p \leq .05$

** statistically significant, $p \leq .01$

*** statistically very significant, $p \leq .001$

Appendix 7: The significance of experience in teaching immigrant children to the teachers' opinion of the benefit of their education

Education has prepared me to face pupils from different cultures	Mean Not having experience	Std. deviation	Mean Having experience	Std. deviation	t-value	p-value
Class teacher / subject teacher education	2,00	1,000	2,06	1,306	,033	,773
Special education	3,00	1,225	3,00	1,336	,000	1,000

* statistically almost significant, $p \leq .05$

** statistically significant, $p \leq .01$

*** statistically very significant, $p \leq .001$