

IMMIGRANT ARTISTS' INTERCULTURAL IDENTITY FORMATION AND  
DEVELOPMENT PROCESS THROUGH ART MAKING

Master's Thesis

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*“YOU’RE JUST LIKE A CHAMELEON, YOU JUST CHANGE COLOR A LITTLE BIT AND THEN YOU MOVE TO ANOTHER OCCASION AND YOU’RE LIKE “OH, NOW I’M RED AND I’M SUPPOSED TO BE GREEN””*

*“HEY I CAN SEE THE LANDSCAPE WITH THESE COLORS, AREN’T THEY BRIGHT, AREN’T THEY NICE, DON’T THEY MAKE YOUR DAY FEEL BETTER WHEN YOU LOOK AT THEM. WOULD YOU LIKE YOUR CHILD TO MAKE SOMETHING LIKE THAT, SO HE CAN SEE THE WORLD IN A DIFFERENT WAY”*

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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>The present study examines how immigrant artists view their intercultural identity formation and development process through art making. The study is based on a theoretical foundation combining the concepts of identity, immigration and art. Art is commonly seen closely connected to one's self and experiences, and therefore it is possible that great changes in life, such as immigration, have an influence on one's art and vice versa. Because immigration is becoming more and more common, it is important to take into account also the emotional aspect of immigration through listening the thoughts and experiences of the people who are immigrants themselves to get more information about the ways people make sense of living in a foreign culture. In the theoretical part of the study first the concepts of immigration and cultural identity are discussed, from which the focus proceeds to the connections between immigration, art and cultural identities.</p> <p>This study aims to answer two main research questions about immigrant artists' perceptions and experiences of their intercultural identity formation process and the meaning of art for this process: (1) what are the key meanings and purposes of making art to immigrant artists in Finland and (2) how do immigrant artists investigate their intercultural identities through art making in Finland?</p> <p>The study is a qualitative study with a phenomenological approach. The data of the study was collected through semi-structured interviews of 12 immigrant artists from different fields of art living in Finland.</p> <p>The results of the study show that making art had a very important role in the lives of these artists. Making art had a variety of meanings for them varying from the meanings for one's own well-being and investigating oneself to communication with other people. The study also showed some signs that making art might be used in the process of investigating cultural identities but it did not show any clear explanations how this was done.</p>	
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<p>Tiivistelmä – Abstract</p> <p>Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli tutkia, millaisena maahanmuuttajataiteilijat näkevät taiteen roolin oman interkulttuurisen identiteettinsä kehittymisessä. Tutkimus pohjautuu teoreettiseen taustaan yhdistellen identiteetin, maahanmuuttajuuden ja taiteen käsitteitä. Taide liittyy usein läheisesti ihmisen minuuteen sekä kokemuksiin, ja siksi voidaan ajatella, että elämän suuret muutokset, kuten maahanmuutto, vaikuttavat taiteeseen ja päinvastoin. Maahanmuutto yleistyy jatkuvasti, joten on tärkeää keskittyä myös sen emotionaalisiin vaikutuksiin. Kuuntelemalla maahanmuuttajien omia ajatuksia ja kokemuksia voimme saada lisää relevanttia tietoa siitä, kuinka maahanmuuttajat saavat selkoa vieraan kulttuurin keskellä elämisestä. Tutkimuksen teoriaosuudessa tarkastellaan ensin maahanmuuttajuuden ja kulttuuri-identiteetin käsitteitä, mistä edetään vähitellen maahanmuuttajuuden, taiteen ja kulttuuri-identiteetin yhteyksiin.</p> <p>Tutkimus pyrkii vastaamaan kahteen tutkimuskysymykseen liittyen maahanmuuttajien näkemyksiin ja kokemuksiin heidän interkulttuurisen identiteetin muodostumisestaan ja taiteen roolista tässä prosessissa: (1) mitkä ovat taiteen tekemisen tärkeimmät merkitykset ja tarkoitukset maahanmuuttajataiteilijoille Suomessa ja (2) kuinka Suomessa asuvat maahanmuuttajataiteilijat tutkivat interkulttuurisia identiteettejään taiteen kautta?</p> <p>Tutkimus toteutettiin laadullisin menetelmin hyödyntäen fenomenologista lähestymistapaa. Tutkimusaineisto kerättiin puolistrukturoitujen haastattelujen avulla haastatteleamalla 12 Suomessa asuvaa maahanmuuttajataustaista taiteilijaa taiteen eri aloilta.</p> <p>Tutkimuksen tulosten perusteella taiteella oli erittäin keskeinen rooli näiden taiteilijoiden elämässä. Taiteen tekemisellä oli monia eri merkityksiä ihmisestä ja tilanteesta riippuen. Tärkeimpinä nousivat kuitenkin esiin merkitykset liittyen taiteilijan omaan hyvinvointiin ja itsetutkiskeluun, sekä merkitykset kommunikaatiolle muiden kanssa. Tulokset näyttivät myös useita todisteita siitä, että taiteella voi olla keskeinen rooli omien kulttuuri-identiteettien tutkimisessa. Tulokset eivät kuitenkaan antaneet kattavia selityksiä siitä, kuinka tämä käytännössä tapahtui.</p>	
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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Identity has been for a long time a popular research topic in many different contexts, and the discussion about culture and identity is constantly ongoing amongst communication researchers (Moss, 2010). This study will approach cultural identities and identity formation from a quite different point of view than most research previously done in the field of intercultural communication. This study combines the concepts of identity, immigration and art because these three can be seen to be related in many ways. Art is commonly seen closely connected to one's self and experiences, and therefore certain impactful changes, such as immigration, may have an influence on one's art and vice versa. The present study examines the views of a group of immigrant artists about their intercultural identity formation and development process through art making. I have previously studied craft education and through these studies my interest in art evoked some years ago. However, I am not interested in the art itself but the meanings it has for artists.

It can be assumed that many immigrants face an identity crisis after moving to a new country because identity crises tend to occur during the great changes in life such as ending a relationship, beginning a new relationship, starting a new job, death of a close person or migration (Andersson, 2012; Stroebe, 2006; Heilbrunn & Brown, 2013). These are all situations when people easily start thinking again who they really are, where do they belong and what is their purpose in life. These are all also central questions in the identity formation process. Although identity crises may occur in many different situations in life, this study focuses on the situation of immigration. According to Le Roy (1994) "(a)n individual's identity develops within a cultural framework and cannot be separated from it" (p. 180). He also stated that "(w)e become most aware of our cultural identity when our individual identity is separated from it, for example

(...) when alone in a strange cultural context” (p. 181). So, often the moment of moving to a new country is the moment when everything familiar and self-evident to us turns into unfamiliar and confusing, and this is often the first time when our cultural identities become visible to us.

There is some research about the connectedness of art and cultural identity (e.g. Marshall, 2007; Caruso, 2005). This study, however, focuses more on the process of how cultural identities change and develop after migrating to another country, and what kind of meaning art has in this process. According to previous studies art can be used as a way of investigating cultural identities, a form of therapy and a way to take a stand. Art is often used as a way of self-expression and it reflects our inner thoughts. According to Kröger and Kokko (2009) art is always connected to the surrounding cultural reality. When we do arts, we can express ourselves, our thoughts and our feelings, which are all connected to our culture. With the help of arts we can make our culture, thoughts, and identities visible, learn about other cultures, and help others to understand different cultures. Another important point is that “art can be seen to mix and change culture, and vice versa” (Paatela-Nieminen, 2009, p. 66).

I have always been interested in art and everything beautiful. More recently, however, I realized that the main thing that interests me in art is the artist’s mind. I recently went to see a photo exhibition and the photos on show did not have any explanations on them: no names and no annotations. I found this lack of knowledge very frustrating. I want to know what is going on in the artist’s mind while making art, why she/he makes art and what makes her do what she’s making. That being said, the focus of this study lies on the process, the meaning of art-making, as well as on the thoughts and feelings of the artists.

The present study focuses on the meanings of art to immigrant artists, and the connections between art and intercultural identity formation. It also aims at exploring the



importance and different uses of art for artists, in this particular case centered on the subject of immigration. It has been said that art is its own way of communication. It is also believed to be a way of expression. These two interpretations enable us to believe that art might also have a meaningful role in the immigration process, often accompanied by difficulties to communicate with the new environment. This study also aims at highlighting the meaning of the emotional aspect of integration, and the process that is going through in the minds of the immigrants. For the purposes of this study, Collier and Thomas's Cultural Identity Theory (CIT), Kim's (2001) definition of intercultural identity, as well as some identity development theories were chosen to be used as the theoretical framework in this study.

### **1.1 Relevance of the study**

In the field of intercultural communication there is pretty much research about groups such as international students (e.g. Fotovatian & Miller, 2014), expatriates (e.g. Peltokorpi, 2010), refugees (e.g. Hatoss, 2013), and also about immigrants (e.g. Mähönen, Leinonen & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2013). However, the most studies focus on practical issues like language (e.g. Stanat, Becker, Baumert, Lüdtke & Eckhardt, 2012). The aim of this study was to take account also the emotional aspect of immigration which increases its relevance and novelty. Additionally, the main research target – the immigrant artists - has not been examined broadly in available studies. It has been even said that there is too much talk about immigrants and no talk from the immigrants themselves (Huttunen, 2002). For that reason, the focus in this study is on the immigrants' own experiences and thoughts. Most studies done on identity formation focus on the identity development process in adolescence. In this study, however, these theories are applied in the adulthood and the case of immigration. Theories such as Erikson's psychosocial identity development theory and Marcia's identity status theory mention the essential meaning of identity

crisis in the identity formation process in adolescence and emerging adulthood. However, in today's rapidly changing world these crises are more common than ever (KOÇ, 2006) and they cannot certainly be limited to the period of adolescence only. For instance, Ward, Stuart & Kus (2011) found out that living in between two cultures can be challenging in many ways for immigrants and due to this they often face identity crises during the acculturation process. KOÇ (2006), instead, argued that the whole world is going through an identity crisis and the concept of identity is becoming increasingly problematic because of globalization. The process of identity formation is not anymore as clear as it perhaps used to be in the past. There have been studies on other factors that influence and increase the complexity of this formation process, such as information and communication technologies (KOÇ, 2006). It can be assumed that increased immigration is also one major reason for this.

Based on the previous research, art can be used for making cultural connections and investigating cultural identities (Marshall, 2007). Through art, artists can combine and elaborate their multiple cultural identities. However, previous studies show that there is a need for further research to find more ways on how to efficiently weave multiple world views to the teaching and how to focus more on the aspect of cultural identity (Marshall, 2007). Therefore, this study aims at filling in this gap by examining immigrant artists and their experiences on what is the role of art in their cultural identity formation process. Through this study I want to find out the ways these immigrant artists, who have significant experience in both intercultural communication and artistic expression, use art in cultural identity formation and weaving multiple world views together. These results may also be useful in developing art education, intercultural communication training, integration strategies for immigrants, and increasing the knowledge about the connectedness of art and cultural identities.

Wang (2009) studied how the intercultural experiences of Chinese American artists' influence their art, social identity and self-identity. Instead of focusing on how artists' intercultural experiences influence their art, this study is taking a different point of view and focus on what is the role of art in their identity formation process. However, Wang's (2009) study shows that there is a significant connection between art-making and intercultural experiences, and therefore it shows that there is a reason for further studies in this field.

Szabo and Ward (2015) studied the identity development during cultural transition and they indicated that "there is a growing need to understand how cultural transition affects the identity of immigrants and explore the factors that can potentially contribute to the development of a positive and coherent immigrant identity" (p.1). My suggestion to this is that art making can contribute to this positive development and this is what I want to find out in this study.

Lippard (1990, as cited in Wang, 2009, p. 19) indicated "(...) that searching for cultural identity and self identity is an ongoing process for minority groups and that art making helps them to connect to their identities. Art has social and aesthetic meanings. The new multicultural identities bestow a significant cultural capital, permitting immigrants to function effectively in new and challenging cultural worlds." Therefore, this study aims to test if any of the participants really use art in this way to connect with their identities and to create a new intercultural identity. This study also helps people to understand the struggles immigrants might have while adapting to a new culture. Results of this study may be beneficial to the fields of art education, immigration studies, and intercultural communication. The study does not aim to provide information that can be generalized to other artists and immigrants but only to examine and unfold the experiences of the involved participants.

## **1.2 Outline of the study**

This study is divided into seven main parts. In the first four parts, the theoretical background of the study and some of the previous research done about related topics is presented. After the introduction, the phenomenon of immigration is discussed, as it is one of the key terms in this study. In this section, the term “immigrant” is defined, immigration in Finland is discussed, some previous studies are presented, and the influences of immigration on one’s identity are evaluated. The third section focuses on the notion of cultural identity by introducing different viewpoints and some theories related to it. The last chapter of the literature review (chapter 4) consists of previous studies done on the connectedness between art and cultural identities.

The methodology of this study is introduced in the fifth chapter. In the beginning, the aims and research questions of this study are presented. Next, the chapter proceeds from the research method to the introduction of the participants of the study to give a good introduction about the nature of the data. Further, the data analysis process is outlined a step by step. The research method of this study is qualitative using a phenomenological approach. In turn, the data analysis is done by using the main aspects of thematic analysis.

In the next chapter (chapter 6), the results of this study are presented. The presentation of the results is based on the aspects that are regarded as important for the research questions of this study. After the results have been exposed, they are interpreted and some further research topics are suggested in the final chapter (chapter 7).

## 2 IMMIGRATION

This section first introduces the concepts of immigration and immigrant. Then, it provides a brief introduction on immigration in Finland. Towards the end, this section discusses the research done about immigration. Lastly, it evaluates how immigration and cultural identities relate to each other.

### 2.1 The concepts of immigration and an immigrant

Migration and immigration are not new phenomena in the world because both animals and humans have been moving from place to place throughout history. Nowadays, there are only a larger variety of reasons for human migration. In the far past, the main reasons for migration might have been more simple, related mostly to the survival, such as to find better food sources and a more favorable environment. In present times, the reasons usually go beyond a simple matter of survival. Researchers have divided the purpose of immigration roughly into two main categories: material and non-material. Material factors mean mainly economic benefits such as better opportunities, better standards of living and better availability of jobs. Non-material factors, instead, mean mostly social-psychological reasons. Some examples of these factors are seeking a safe haven, or a hope for a better place for self-actualization (Demirdjian & Mokatsian, 2013). In addition to these, there are also individual factors such as family reasons. Alternatively, in some cases people are forced to move because of, for instance, political instability in their home country or lack of basic resources such as food and water. Talib (2002) defined immigrants coming to Finland as foreign people who move here with an intention to stay here long-term. The most common types of immigrants are immigrants who come to Finland to work or are returnees or refugees. This is the way the term immigrant is often used but there has also been

discussion about the contradictory nature of it. The term “immigrant” has very often negative connotations. For instance, Huttunen (2002) noticed that this term highlights the barrier between “us” and “them” and maintains the idea that an immigrant is not one of “us”. According to her, in this way the term immigrant is perhaps not suitable for foreigners who aim to integrate well in the host society.

As discussed above, the term “immigrant” is contradictory in many ways, as well as difficult to define. It can, for instance, be asked for how long does one have to live in the host country to not to be an immigrant anymore. According to Kilpi (2010), the term “immigrant” can also refer to a second generation immigrant who was born in Finland but whose parent had earlier immigrated to Finland. So, the group of immigrants is never a homogenous entity and there is no one clear definition an immigrant. Very often the only thing that these immigrants have in common is the country in which they have moved in. The stories behind the immigration are always individual. In this study, the notion of “immigrant” refers to all people who have immigrated to Finland themselves, regardless of their reasons to migrate.

## **2.2 Immigration in Finland**

Finland, until recently, has been a country of emigration rather than immigration. After the Second World War, many Finns migrated to countries such as Sweden, North America and Australia. However, not many people from other countries moved to Finland. In other words, Finland, compared to many other countries, has been quite a homogenous society and with a relatively short history and experience of immigration. However, minorities such as the Sami people, the Roma people and the Swedish-speaking minority, have already been in Finland a longer time. Also, the number of immigrants arriving to Finland from a variety of countries of origin has been increasing constantly since the 1980s. First consisting mostly of the Finnish

citizens returning from Sweden, where they had emigrated earlier to find better job opportunities, and then later on in the 1990s the immigration to Finland significantly increased also from other destinations (Lobodzinska, 2011). Up until now, the most numerous immigrant groups in Finland are mostly from the neighboring countries such as Estonia, Russia and Sweden.

Recently, the discussion on immigration has attained interest not only in Finland but also in many other European countries. It seems that immigration is becoming a more and more debated topic. In a country like Finland, in which immigration is still a quite young phenomenon, living as a foreigner is not necessarily easy, and the integration strategies are not perhaps as advanced as they could be. The integration is often described as a two-way and reciprocal process or as the outcome of this process in which both the newcomer and the host society adapt to each other to create a more coherent new society (Biles & Frideres, 2012). Integration and intercultural identity can also be seen to relate closely to each other because integration can be seen as a process in which the cultural identities of the newcomer and the host society change from having a one single cultural identity to an intercultural identity. However, the discourse on integration and integration strategies makes it sound like immigrants themselves are not active members in the process and the host society is trying to make them integrated through a certain strategy. This is why assimilation is still often seen as a pursued goal (Herranen & Kivijärvi, 2012). Therefore, it is important to see the newcomers as active members in the process and it is not the host society who can alone make anyone integrated.

Among the immigrants, there are naturally people from different professional backgrounds and also some artists migrate to Finland. In this study, they are referred to as “immigrant artists”, although many of them did not like being defined with this term. However, this specific term was chosen as it provides the best combination for their profession and

background which are in the focus of this study. Generally, immigrant artists move to Finland for various reasons, as do their counterparts from other professional fields.

### **2.3 Previous research on immigration**

As I mentioned earlier, immigration has been a popular research topic for a long time. The focus of the recent research has mainly touched upon issues such as acculturation, adaptation and the well-being of immigrants (e.g. Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2008; Berry & Sabatier, 2010; Mähönen, Leinonen & Jasinskaja-Lahti, 2013), racism and discrimination (e.g. Rastas, 2009), immigration policy (e.g. Saukkonen & Pyykkönen, 2008), local's attitudes towards immigrants (e.g. Mähönen, Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind & Finell, 2010; Pitkänen & Kouki, 2002), and identity (e.g. Andreouli, 2013; Szabo & Ward, 2015). In addition to these, immigration has also been studied in many different contexts such as in educational environments, from the viewpoint of immigrant women, in institutions, in family life and in different countries. This study will be a part of the identity research category. That being said, the next section will focus in more detail on the research done in the field of identity.

### **2.4 Immigration and identity**

While reading about immigration, one cannot avoid encountering terms such as identity, cultural identity and intercultural identity. These are all very closely related to the processes of immigration and acculturation. In a new situation, identities start to dissolve and be questioned. Moving to another country weakens our perception of who we are and where we belong. In other words, it weakens our identity. After the immigration, we often have to rebuild our identity and convert it to match with the local culture. On one hand, the identities of immigrants usually change slowly into more flexible and manifold systems when encountering the host culture. On



the other hand, cultural identities might stay very strong in the changed reality (Talib, 2002). However, there has been discussion on whether it is good or not if the original cultural identity stays very strong in the new cultural environment. There has been a common assumption that a person should choose between maintaining a positive original cultural identity and developing a flexible intercultural identity, and assimilating fully to the host culture has been seen as a pursued goal. This can also be referred to as “a melting pot theory” (Kim, 2001). According to Kim (2001) this notion is false. The present conception of identity development suggests that it is possible to acquire both. Kim introduced an idea of intercultural identity which is employed to reflect the boundary-crossing nature of identity development. This process of identity development in a new cultural environment is often a process full of confusion and self-doubt, but still the individual’s identity usually becomes increasingly intercultural.

### 3 CULTURAL IDENTITY

*“Identity is defined as “self-conception”- one’s theory of oneself” (Cupach & Imahori, 1993, p. 113 as cited in Gudykunst, 2005, p. 197)*

In this section, the terms of identity, cultural identity, and intercultural identity are defined. In addition, identity formation and diffusion will be discussed, and later on the focus will turn to some of the most relevant theories for this study such as psychosocial identity development theory, cultural identity theory, and Kim’s theory of acculturation and intercultural identity.

In the past, identity has been largely understood as a fixed and unified entity that “belongs” to people. In this view, people are thought to be unified agents and whole persons who possess a stable identity. However, a more popular way of defining the notion of “self” is by viewing it as a construct made of multiple and changeable identities. This viewpoint posits that people are constantly searching for their identities (Barker, 1999). The underlying assumption of this study leans towards the latter view of identity. So, in this study identity is seen as a shifting and developing entity.

Identity, in fact, can be a very difficult concept to define and also to recognize. It is not as transparent as we often think and maybe we should consider it more as a process rather than an already accomplished fact. For most people, identity is a core issue and it is considered as something very private and unique (Martin & Nakayama, 2010). There are many different definitions of identity. It has been defined to be “a framework for understanding one’s self and the surrounding world” and as “one’s theory of oneself” (Gudykunst, 2005, p. 197). A few of the reasons, why defining identity is so difficult, are perhaps that identity is something very abstract, it is difficult to recognize one’s own identity as an insider, it is something that is constantly

changing, and there are many different identities which overlap. According to Imahori and Cupach an individual's complete identity is constructed of many overlapping facets or subidentities (Gudykunst, 2005). Identities, among other factors, can relate to aspects such as region, nationality, gender, sexuality, occupation, age and various social groups (Gudykunst, 2005). There are identities such as gender identity, racial identity, ethnic identity, religious identity, class identity, personal identity, national identity and regional identity (Martin & Nakayama, 2010). Cultural identity, instead, can be considered as an umbrella identity for all of the aforementioned identities associated with social and cultural groups (Gudykunst, 2005). In this study, the focus is on cultural identity, and therefore a more thorough definition of the term is provided in the next section.

According to Hall (1990), there are at least two ways of defining cultural identity. The first one defines it as a one shared, collective culture in which people have a shared ancestry and history. In other words, our cultural identities reflect our common historical experiences, and thus are very stable and unchanging entities. This definition could have had more truth in it in the past but nowadays we can ask how accurate this definition is in the globalized world where multicultural identities are increasing. For instance, Adler (1998) has argued that we are even going beyond cultural identity.

The second definition concentrates more on 'becoming' than 'being'. According to this viewpoint, cultural identity is not something that already exists; it is as much about the future as about the past. We are constantly positioning ourselves within this world and society (Adler, 1998). This is also the way cultural identity is viewed in this study. Jensen (2003) has argued that "(f)orming a cultural identity involves adopting the beliefs and practices—the custom

complexes—of one or more cultural communities” (as cited in Jensen et al. 2011, p. 286). In simple words, cultural identity is the concept of who we are (Martin & Nakayama, 2010).

### **3.1 Identity theories, models and research**

According to Martin and Nakayama (2010), there are three main perspectives on identity in communication research: the social science perspective, the interpretive perspective and the critical perspective. *The social science perspective* considers identity as a construct created partly by the self and partly through the group membership. It emphasizes the individualized and familial self. The self is made up of multiple identities and the way we understand ourselves depends very much on our cultural background. One of the researchers supporting this perspective, Erik Erikson, argues that our identities are not formed in one smooth process but via different identity crises and conflicts through identity confusion and diffusion. Based on this approach, reality is objective, external and describable, and this view sees culture as a quite stable entity. Once it has been formed, according to this view, there are multiple overlapping cultural identities based on characteristics such as nationality, race, ethnicity, class, gender, sexual orientation and religion.

The second perspective, *the interpretive perspective*, in turn, argues that identity is formed partly by the self and partly through communication with others. It also highlights that people do not see their identities the same way as the others see them, and therefore avowals and ascriptions are commonly referred to in this perspective. This perspective sees reality as subjective, internal and describable, and that reality is formed differently in different situations. It also claims that culture is formed and maintained by communication processes.

*The critical perspective* emphasizes the dynamic nature of identity and the contextual elements of identity development. Here, the starting point is that identity is formed through

social and historical forces. This perspective pays significant attention to the societal structures and institutions that restrict identities. According to this view, reality is subjective and changeable. On the contrary, culture is viewed as an unstable entity in this perspective.

The approach in this study includes aspects of all these perspectives but turns a bit more into the direction of the interpretive and critical perspective. This study would be placed somewhere between these two perspectives because, on one hand, it sees culture and identity both as quite unstable and dynamic entities. On the other hand, the results of this study show that people do not always see their identities in the same way as the others see them. As culture in this study is viewed as something changeable, it could be assumed that it changes because of different communication processes. Therefore, one of the objectives of this study is to find out if the culture, identity, and cultural identities are formed and maintained by communication processes.

Although the approach in this study turns more into the directions of the latter perspectives, it was seen important to introduce briefly some identity development theories such as Erikson's psychosocial theory of identity development which is seen more as a representative of the social science perspective. These theories are important for introducing the process of identity development and formation.

### **3.2 Identity formation and development theories**

Most of the identity theories suggest that identity is a matter that is constantly changing. No one is born with an identity, and therefore it has to be constructed through an identity formation process. However, most identity research focuses on identity formation and development only in the adolescence and emerging adulthood (e.g. Klimstra, Hale, Raaijmakers, Branje & Meeus, 2010) but there are also some research arguing that the formation process is an ongoing process

and can take place throughout the entire life (e.g. Kim, 2001; Kim, 2015). In this study, the ongoing process of identity formation is highlighted. In other words, cultural identity is considered as something that is constantly constructed even in adulthood; it does not stop after becoming an adult, particularly amongst people who face identity crises.

One of the earliest and central theories of identity formation is Erikson's (1950, 1968) psychosocial theory of identity development. Erikson's idea of identity is multidimensional and he referred to many different aspects of identity such as moral, social and cultural (Schwartz, 2001). According to Erikson, in adolescence people tend to "...become disturbed and confused by new social conflicts and demands" and in this stage they also establish a new sense of ego identity which means a feeling of who one is and what is one's place in the society (Crain, 2011, p. 291). This can lead to identity confusion. However, Erikson noted that this process of identity development does not only occur in adolescence. It is rather a lifelong process (Crain, 2011).

Erikson presented also an idea of dimensions between identity synthesis and identity confusion. According to his view, people can be placed somewhere between these two dimensions at any time during their lives. However, Erikson's theory has been claimed to lack detail and therefore the neo-Eriksonian models were developed. The first neo-Eriksonian model was Marcia's identity status theory developed in 1966 which aimed at developing Erikson's work. Marcia developed dimensions between identity exploration and commitment based on Erikson's previous work. In this theory, exploration means a phase when a person is sorting through a variety of alternatives before choosing one. Commitment, instead, means the time when a person chooses one or some of the alternatives and decides to stick to them. Then, she divided the phases between exploration and commitment into four different identity statuses:

identity diffusion, identity foreclosure, identity moratorium, and identity achievement. Identity achievement describes the status when a person has made a commitment after a period of exploration. This has been considered to be the most mature status and the end-point of identity formation. Identity moratorium, instead, means the state of active exploration. Individuals in this state are the most open-minded and thoughtful compared to other statuses. It is also very common to face stress and storm in this state. The third status is the identity foreclosure when a person has made commitments before exploration of new alternatives. This state is seen the most closed-minded of all statuses and individual in this state are often trying to resist all change. The last one of the statuses is the identity diffusion status in which an individual is very apathetic lacking both commitment and exploration. This is the state when an individual is in the biggest danger of getting into trouble because of the lack of commitment of interest in exploration (Schwartz, 2001).

Later, Identity status theory was extended into interpersonal domains. Some other scholars (e.g. Phinney, 1989) have extended Erikson's and Marcia's theories as well to also include ethnic identities because they realized that there were more and more people defining themselves in relation to both or balancing between one's own ethnic group and majority culture which was noticed to be an essential part of identity formation (Schwartz, 2001).

Nowadays, people have more exposure to different cultures, and therefore cultural identity development is not anymore as clear process as it used to be earlier and people might have many different pathways of cultural identity formation. Recent theoretical research on cultural identity has largely focused on describing these multiple pathways (Jensen, Arnett and McKenzie, 2011). Jensen et al. (2011) argued that this increase in plural developmental pathways for cultural identity formation has both opportunities and risks. Today, people grow up knowing

about many different cultures, and increasingly have contact with people from various cultures, either through direct communication or through different existing media in this globalized world. This phenomenon has led to a situation where cultural identity formation is not anymore a matter of learning and being surrounded by one culture, but rather learning how to negotiate multiple cultures (Jensen et al., 2011). So, at least some people do definitely face identity crises also after adolescence.

Because cultural identity formation is not anymore as clear as it perhaps used to be, cultural identity confusion is also faced by a large number of people around the world. This kind of confusion may take place because of many different reasons such as a lack of commitment to any particular culture, marginalization and bouncing between various cultural identities in different context and situations (Jensen et al., 2011). Consequently, this has been argued to possibly lead to mental and other problems. “Berry (1997) has observed that the greater the “cultural distance” in beliefs and behaviors between cultures, the greater the psychological and social problems in immigrants” (as cited in Jensen et al., 2011, p. 296).

Marcia's and Erikson's theories of identity development are used broadly in the research still today although they have been developed already decades ago. Still, they are both mainly used to analyze the identity formation in adolescence. Recently, Marcia's theory of identity statuses has been used to examine, for instance, occupational identity statuses amongst high school students (Ahn, 2015). Erikson's theory, instead, has been used as a starting point in a variety of studies that focus on identity development, considering that it is one of the first and central theories dealing with identity development. Lately, Erikson's theory was used for similar purposes as in this study to examine the identity development during cultural transition (Szabo &



Ward, 2015). Szabo and Ward (2015) discovered that this theory provided a potential framework for understanding the phenomenon of identity reconstruction during acculturation of immigrants.

### **3.3 Kim's theory of acculturation and intercultural identity**

One of the main theoretical conceptions for my study is Kim's (2001) concept of intercultural identity. This concept is only one part of Kim's theory of acculturation and intercultural identity, and this study will not focus on the other parts of the theory that thoroughly. Kim's theory explained the idea of intercultural identity as a broader, richer, and a more complex version of a person's original cultural identity. She included intercultural identity to be one of the three most central facets of intercultural transformation: functional fitness, psychological health and intercultural identity. In this sense, the intercultural identity is the identity that develops through prolonged experiences of trial and error, for example, in the situation of immigration. The original cultural identity links a person to his/her specific cultural group but intercultural identity links a person to more than only one cultural group (Kim, 2001). Other researchers have introduced consistent notions with Kim's "intercultural" identity. For instance Grotevant (1992) introduced the idea of "adopted" identity, and Phinney (1993) the idea of "achieved" identity.

An individual's cultural identity develops through the enculturation process which takes place in the childhood. When a stranger encounters a new cultural environment, his/her identity is not shaped anymore only by the influences of the culture of his/her childhood but also by being in contact with the new cultural elements. Therefore, according to Kim (2001), identity is not a state but rather a continuum aiming at fuller psychological integration and health. It is a continuum from cultural identity to intercultural identity, in which the boundaries of identity are extended and new life patterns are explored. This developmental process is far from being smooth, and individuals going through it may face stress and also identity crises, also mentioned

earlier by Erikson. These crises and conflicts are, in fact, an integral part of the intercultural identity development process because usually in the end they lead to psychological growth of an individual through the stress-adaptation-growth process. Other important elements of intercultural identity development are individualization and universalization. By individualization, Kim meant an emerging self that allows individuals to live their lives without being strictly constrained by any traditional categories of social groupings. This individualization of one's self involves a clear self-definition, heightened self-awareness and self-identity, feeling of certainty of one's place in the world and seeing the mutuality with respect to other people. Universalization, instead, means learning to see the oneness and unity of humanity and feeling greater sensitivity towards others who are different. Universalization is a mind-set that integrates people (Kim, 2001).

Recently, Kim's theory has been used to examine, for instance, intercultural personhood and intercultural communication competence. One of these particular studies mentioned that "no two individuals travel an identical path of intercultural personhood, the experiences of crossing cultures offer everyone opportunities for blossoming of the uniquely human capacity to face challenges, learn from them, and grow into a greater self-integration beyond the parameters of one's "home" culture" (Kim, 2015, p.7). Another study using this theory was done by Yunlong (2014) and it focused on constructing intercultural communicative competence framework for English learners.

Also, Tian & Lowe (2014) used Kim's definition of intercultural identity in their research about intercultural identity development of American students in China. Their findings showed that the students did undergo some degree of cultural identity shift towards more flexible intercultural identity during their studies in China. The study also showed cases, for instance

between the Chinese teachers and American students, that the boundaries between “us” and “them” started to disappear. This was a clear sign of developing “universalized” identity which is an important element of intercultural identity development. Generally speaking, Kim’s (2001) theory of acculturation and intercultural identity is used broadly in different studies focused on identity and acculturation.

### **3.4 Cultural identity theory**

The cultural identity theory (CIT) was developed initially by Collier and Thomas in 1988, and was later extended by Collier. Collier and Thomas’s theory of cultural identity suggested that we have multiple identities and cultural identity is only one of them (Asante, Gudykunst & Newmark, 1989). They presented a subjective theory focused on the process of how cultural identities are managed and formed through intercultural interactions (Asante et al., 1989; Gudykunst, 2005). They argued that cultural identity should not be treated as a separate factor in the research, as it is only one of the many identities of an individual. In fact, they have not been the only researchers who supported the pluralistic and flexible view of identity. Many other theories, which also highlight the multilayered nature of identity, have been established as well. Good examples of these are Imahori and Cupach’s identity management theory, and Ting-Toomey’s identity negotiation theory (Gudykunst & Mody, 2002).

Collier and Thomas also recognized different properties and processes connected to cultural identity enactment such as avowal, ascription, and salience. Avowals are related to how groups see themselves and present themselves to others. Ascriptions, instead, are representations of other groups and how others see one’s own group. Last, “salience refers to the importance of particular cultural identity enactment relative to other potential identities” (p. 45). These properties have been broadly used in cultural identity research (Chen & Collier, 2012).

In addition to cultural identity, Collier and Thomas's theory included assumptions about intercultural communication competence. According to them, intercultural communication competence is "(...) created by the negotiation of mutual meaning rules and positive outcomes" and "(...) a process in which cultural identities are validated" (Asante et al., 1989, p. 37). They picture a group of people with similar cultural identities as a system in which the members share the similar patterns for verbal and nonverbal communication. They also share the same rules and goals (Kim & Gudykunst, 1988). It is not a new idea that intercultural communication is process-oriented (Krajewski, 2011), and there has not been a clear agreement on how intercultural communication competence should be defined (Deardorff, 2006).

The cultural identity theory has been used in a variety of research such as studying identity positioning, cultural representations, identity negotiation, cultural identifications, and intercultural communication competence. Collier has studied cultural identifications in a variety of contexts. Collier and Myers (2003 as cited in Gudykunst, 2005) examined, for example, the staff working in courtrooms, their perceptions of other people, as well as the role played by different cultural backgrounds in the courtrooms. Another study, conducted by Thompson and Collier (2003 as cited in Gudykunst, 2005), focused on couples who were in an interracial relationship and how they viewed their own and their partner's cultural identifications. Both of these studies aimed "to build understanding of the intersecting ways that privilege and social context are implicated in respondents' locations of speaking and acting and the situated negotiation of their multiple cultural identifications" (p. 243). In the first study, Collier and Myers found out that some cultural ascriptions did take place in courtrooms. The ascriptions took the form of generalizations, for instance, about women, ethnic groups, and some members of various races (as cited in Gudykunst, 2005).

Also, Chen and Collier (2012) examined the respective avowals and ascriptions, and the degree of consistency and contradiction between them, intersectionality, and identity salience by extending the cultural identity theory. They studied some US nonprofit organizations and their employees, clients, and board members by using interview discourse. By interviewing these people, they wanted information about identity positioning and negotiation of relationships and hierarchies. They found out that “‘(b)eing’ Asian was one of the most frequently avowed and ascribed cultural identities(…)” according to both staff and clients (p. 50). They also discovered that the avowals by staff and board members were quite individualistic because they used to emphasize their higher status roles rather than their gender or other group identities. Last, some ascriptions were discovered to be problematic. When asked about others’ identities, the participants mostly ascribed specific Asian ethnic/national identities, educational levels or organizational roles.

As almost every existent theory, this theory has faced some critique as well. For instance, scholars approaching culture from a critical perspective have found some gaps in the cultural identity theory. In its initial form, the CIT “(…) seemed to minimize issues of unequal privilege, and be based on assumptions of equal agency across individuals” (Gudykunst, 2005, p. 240). Another point brought up by the critics was Collier and Thomas’s view that individuals can freely choose their cultural identity in “chameleon-like fashion” (p. 240). These critics reminded that this assumption is not consistent with all cultural identities, such as race and sex, which cannot be easily changed. They also claimed that CIT neglected more extensive social hierarchies, power, and other contextual limitations (Gudykunst, 2005).

These critical comments inspired Collier and Thomas to reflect and critically review their own theory. They acknowledged that their assumptions needed further clarification. Their

earliest work on cultural identity theory aimed to develop a set of testable propositions. However, later Collier considered theorizing more as “offering proposals of contingent understandings” (Gudykunst, 2005, p. 235).

It seems that identity and identification are very difficult concepts to define, making them also some of the least well-understood concepts (Hall & du Gay, 1996). There is a considerable amount of research on both identity and cultural identity. However, the research on CIT and its validity is quite limited. The CIT has evolved in a variety of cooperative projects, starting from its early versions, which highlighted an interpretive theoretical perspective, and ending in more recent versions, which concentrated more on critical perspective (Collier, 2009). Today, the research using CIT mainly focuses on cultural identity positioning, negotiation and implications of social justice (Collier, 2009). Research on the validity of the cultural identity theory is limited and has neither been used nor studied broadly by other researchers. One of the reasons why CIT is not used very extensively could be the variety of choices in identity theories

### **3.5 Cross cultural contact and cultural identities**

The diffusion of cultural identities occurs constantly. Cultural identities diffuse mainly because of migration, modern communication, and transportation. When people migrate and become surrounded by foreign cultures, they may face an identity crisis. In this crisis, individuals' own values and beliefs are being questioned. During this crisis, people are predisposed to effects of other cultures, and in the acculturation process may, for example, lose their old cultural identity and adopt the cultural identity of the majority culture. The identity status theory by Erikson developed in 1950s, and later extended by Marcia, discussed this identity crisis. The theory mainly highlighted its occurrence in adolescence when individuals are often confused about their own identities, and thus are prone to outside effects (Schwartz, Kim, Whitbourne, Zamboanga,

Weisskirch, Forthun, Vazsonyi, Beyers & Luyckx, 2013). However, it can also be applied to the acculturation process of immigrants because, as mentioned earlier, moving to a new country can be an identity crisis that people might face at any point of their lives, also in adulthood.

## 4 ART AND CULTURAL IDENTITIES

While art has a central role in this study, first of all it is important to define art. Art can be many things and it can mean different things to different people. What makes it hard to define is that who defines what art is. In brief, art can be defined as a product created through a creative process (Morari, 2014). Art is a way to express oneself and implement one's creativity. For art, it is characteristic that knowledge, skills, emotions, and will influence all together to the process. This is one of the reasons why art often has a strong influence on its receivers (Liikanen, 2010). As mentioned earlier, art can mean artifacts, such as paintings, sculptures or texts, but it can also mean performances such as dances or music. Sometimes when we talk about art, we mean acts of creation, sometimes the objects that are created, and at times it refers more to the experience of these objects (Dutton, 2006). According to Dutton (2006) art has different signal characteristics such as direct pleasure, skills, style, creativity, criticism, special focus, expressive individuality, imaginative experience and so on. As it can be noticed from these definitions, it is very difficult to give a clear definition for art because it can mean different things to different people. However, expressed in very broad terms it could be said that art is creative human activity.

Art has been used as a one tool in the integration process of immigrants through different art projects and workshops. These projects have often been organized by organizations and associations for all immigrants regardless of their professional background. However, this study focuses more on how immigrants themselves use art in this process, meaning that the initiative of making art comes from them, not someone from outside. In this section, some of the research done on the connectedness of art and cultural identities is introduced.

Marshall (2007) studied "(...) the use of the imagination for making cultural connections and investigating cultural identity through art making" (p. 1). According to her,



these connections “(...) can enable artists to create new worlds reflective of their emotive, spiritual, intellectual, and physical connections to their cultural identities” (p. 1). Artists can combine and elaborate their multiple cultural identities through art making. Art making is also a way to gain further understanding of connections and relationships to others (Marchall, 2007). In her study, Marshall highlighted the importance of integrating the cultural experiences in the curricula of art education. However, she also reminded that further research needs to be done on how to efficiently weave multiple cultural views of the world to the teaching, and how to focus more on the cultural identity perspective.

It is believed that art reveals very much about humanity (Jackson, 2010) and already researchers such as Jean Piaget, Howard Gardner, Georges-Henri Luquet, Viktor Lowenfeld, and Rudolf Arnheim have claimed “...that children’s drawings reflect and contribute to cognitive and emotional development. As a result, early art education often focused on promoting the development of self in children (...) The unique nature of artistic materials allows children to actively address their thoughts and feelings by encouraging them to reflect and broaden their understanding of self and their place in the world.(...) Creating art allows children to symbolically attempt to understand an adult world, a symbolic process of internalizing their environment.” (Jackson, 2010, p. 75). The same could be applied to adults, instead of attempting to understand an adult world they can try to understand a new environment and culture through art.

In her research, Haveri (2010) writes that good life has been thought to be the central goal of life since Aristoteles. Health is naturally the foundation of good life for most of the people and it is the person’s own experience of his/her overall condition. She also points out that making art offers a great opportunity to pursue this overall wellbeing because aesthetic

experiences have a significant role in it. In addition to this art can enrich the artist's everyday life. Liikanen (2003, as cited in Haveri, 2010) lists four important effects of making art for improving the quality of life and for the wellbeing: art gives the needed pleasures and experiences of life to the artist, art has a connection to a better experienced health and better life, making art improves the life control skills by creating communality and networks, and last art increases the beauty and comfort of the surroundings. All these things are very important for getting used to new situations in life, for example, new cultural environment.

“Making art makes you go out and do something, and guides you to enjoy of the beauty of the surroundings” (Haveri, 2010, p. 221-222). Art has a variety of meanings to different people. The meaning can even change from situation to situation. In addition to improving the quality of life, art is of course also a way of expressing oneself: a way to be seen and heard. Wang (2009), for instance, have divided the functions of art into three different categories: art as experience, art as social imagination, and art as cultural communication.

Caruso (2005) stated that many Asian American women artists are using art as a way to explore their self-identity, cultural identity, and gender issues. Lippard (as cited in Caruso, 2005) argued that the search of cultural identity and self-identity is an ongoing process within minority groups, and art making can have an important role in the process of connecting with their identities.

As I mentioned earlier, art can also be used as a way to take a stand and telling people who one really is. In his article, Perullo (2005) examined the ways youth in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, used rap music to face the stereotypes of young people. These artists used politically and socially relevant lyrics in their songs to take a stand and correct people's ideas about them. Through interviewing these young artists Perullo (2005, p. 75) found out that

“...youth have turned a foreign musical form into a critical medium of social empowerment whereby they are able to create a sense of community among other urban youth, voice their ideas and opinions to a broad listening public, and alter conceptions of youth as hooligans.”

Art has also noticed to function as a form of therapy. Art has been thought to build bridges across boundaries whether they were about gender, age, ethnicity, or any others differences. Arts have been called as the meeting points of cultural encounters and, in fact, aspects related to multiculturalism are at the moment one of the most important topics in art education. Many people think art only in terms of high culture but actually dance, music, visual arts, and crafts are an integral part of our everyday art culture (Rusanen & Ruokonen, 2011).

Art has already been used as a part of integration strategy for immigrants in Finland and around the world through different projects. For example, in Finland there have been projects such as “Kohtaamisia” (Encounters) in Rovaniemi in 2007-2010 and “Katso!” (Look!) in Jyväskylä in 2009-2010. The most searches with words such as “immigration” and “art” give results about art as an integration strategy for immigrants. Köttig (2009) examined the functions of art in the lives of Cuban artists in The United States and Germany and found out that art had multiple meanings for immigrant artists. One of the main findings of Köttig’s study was that art can “help individuals find solutions for contradictory aspects of life in the country of immigration or help create continuity with the migrants' past prior to their migration (Köttig, 2009, p. 1).

## 5 METHODOLOGY

### 5.1 Aims and research questions

Art is a tool for self-expression, and it has been proposed that art could be used as a medium for intercultural communication as well (Paatela-Nieminen, 2009). Some have even proposed that art can form a bridge between people from different cultural backgrounds (Wang, 2009). Related to the subject of immigration and acculturation, different forms of art have been used in helping immigrants in their acculturation process through a variety of projects and workshops. This study focuses on immigrant artists' experiences and perceptions concerning the role of art in the continuous negotiation and formation process of cultural identity. Art has also been referred to be its own form of communication (Wang, 2009; Bicak, 2013) and identities are formed mainly through communication. Identity development process can be seen as being full of setbacks, failures and crises. Art, instead, is often used as a way to escape reality, a form of therapy, and a way to clear one's ideas.

This study aims to answer two main research questions about immigrant artists' perceptions and experiences of their intercultural identity formation process and the meanings of art for this process.

RQ 1: What are the key meanings and purposes of making art to immigrant artists in Finland?

1.1. Can art be used as a coping strategy in the great changes in life?

RQ 2: How do immigrant artists investigate their intercultural identities through art making in Finland?

2.1. How is intercultural communication reflected in the art of immigrant artists?

The first research question focuses on the meanings of art to immigrant artists in Finland. Through this question the aim is to explore what kinds of meanings of art these artists find the most important for them and through that also see if the meanings really show signs that art is used in any ways in the adaptation process. For instance, Haveri (2010) and Rusanen & Ruokonen (2011) have argued that making art can function as a form of therapy. Similarly, also Ruismäki and Ruokonen (2011) highlighted the meanings of art for the wellbeing. Jackson (2010), instead, stated that creating art can help children to attempt to understand an adult world and use it as a symbolic process of internalizing their environment. With this question the study aims to find out if these adult artists use or have used art in the same way to internalize and process their new cultural environment.

The second research question aims to clarify the process of intercultural identity formation of immigrant artists in Finland, and if they use art as a way to investigate their intercultural identities. According to Marshall (2007) art can be used for making cultural connections and investigating cultural identities. She has also stated that there is a need for further research to find more ways to connect multiple world views to the teaching and how to focus more on the aspect of cultural identity. With this question, the aim is to find out if and how immigrant artists use art in this way.

## **5.2 Research method and data collection**

This study aims to uncover the views of the participants about the connectedness of art and their identity formation process, meaning that a qualitative approach is the most appropriate methodological background for this study. The study follows an open-ended approach in which the immigrant artists' experiences of the connections between their intercultural identity

formation process and art are examined. Qualitative research typically aims to gather in-depth understanding of behavior or phenomenon (Salkind, 2012). According to Daymon (2011) “(...) qualitative researchers seek to uncover the views and meanings held by research participants” and “(...) to understand the world in their terms” (p. 7). The focus of the study is on a quite small group of people and it does not aim to produce generally applicable information. This is in line with qualitative approaches in general, as they are not supposed to represent a larger population (Daymon, 2011).

Because this study focuses on individual’s experiences and thoughts, the phenomenological approach was seen as the most suitable way to approach the topic. Phenomenological approach focuses on the feelings and experiences of individuals, and it obtains descriptions of experience through in-depth interviews (Moustakas, 1994). Phenomenological research does not aim to search for measurements and explanations but meanings and essences of experience (Moustakas, 1994). In other words, this approach aims at understanding the world from the participant’s point of view and this can only be done if the researcher leaves out her own preconceptions (Gray, 2014). This is the reason why in this study it was chosen not to have a too strict theoretical framework before collecting the data but the framework developed bit by bit along the entire study.

The data was collected through interviews. The idea of a research interview is to explore the thoughts and motives of an individual (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998). The interviews were semi-structured. This means that all the interviews had mostly the same structure and the interviews were conversation-like. In semi-structured interviews the questions are mostly the same for every participant but they can tell in their own words what they have to say about the topic (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998). This way the researcher had a basic structure to follow but it

was also possible to present additional questions and skip some questions that the researcher did not find purposeful with that interviewee. More specifically the semi-structured interviews were chosen because the topic is about interviewees' experiences and thoughts, and therefore the researcher did not want to have too strict structure to give them the freedom to express their thoughts freely. The structure of the interviews developed throughout the interviewing process because every interviewee was different. After each interview, there was more information about which questions were useful and which were not. The themes for the interviews can be found in Appendix 1.

All the interviews were conducted between October, 2014 and March, 2015. The length of the interviews varied from half an hour till more than an hour, and all the interviews were recorded. The participants were contacted mostly by email. The first participants were found through a networking event for artists organized in Jyväskylä. After the first interviews, the search for more people continued. The work progressed by conducting more interviews, and working on the theoretical background of the study at the same time with the initial analysis. This method was found the best because the researcher did not know in advance what kinds of themes the interviewees would emphasize, and she did not want theory to limit the study and the results too much. In other words, the approach for this study was very data-driven, and the theoretical section was developed alongside with the data collection. According to Eskola & Suoranta (1998) qualitative research can be theory-driven or data-driven. In a data-driven research theory is used as a helping tool and the main focus is on the data. The theory is build using the data as a starting point. In this study, the theory was not completely driven from the data but both of them were built alongside each other.

Half of the interviews were conducted via Skype and the other half in face-to-face meetings. In most of the Skype interviews the interview questions were sent to the participants a few days before the interview, so that they could go it through and prepare for the interview if they preferred. This was done because a few of the participants asked for the questions before the interview. It was also possible that conducting the interview via Skype might create some distance between the researcher and the interviewee, and therefore it was better that the interviewees saw the questions beforehand. Always, when working with technology the Internet connection problems are possible. Also in this study there were some challenges because of a bad connection but still the main points of the interviews were understood. One of the reasons for sending the questions beforehand was also that some of the participants did not speak English and their Finnish skills were limited, so sending the questions beforehand gave them an opportunity to prepare for the interview and read the questions through. The Skype interviews were recorded by using Talk Helper application for recording Skype calls.

### **5.3 Participants**

The participants of this study consisted of artists with immigrant backgrounds. They all had moved to Finland when they were already adults. These artists were from different fields of art. The participants were chosen according to two main criteria: they were required to be immigrants in Finland and consider themselves as artists. All the participants were not professional artists but it was required that they considered themselves as artists and making art was at least a serious and goal-oriented hobby for them, meaning that their art had been presented in public. In this section the participants of this study are described.

The selection of participants was done by using both purposive and snowball sampling. Purposive sampling means the researcher chooses the participants based on his/her



opinion what is the most purposeful for the study. Some of the participants were found by using purposive sampling and searching for suitable artist through Internet and different organizations such as Multicultural Center, Gloria, in Jyväskylä and Interkult Cassandra in Helsinki. Many of the participants were also found through snowball sampling in which the participants already interviewed suggested some eligible people they knew. In this study, it was chosen to use these sampling methods because participants who were representatives of a specific professional group and were immigrants here in Finland were needed. The participants were required to be immigrant artists. Because 'artist' is also a very broad concept and can be used to describe many different practitioners of a variety of art forms, such as musicians, painters, dancers and actors, it was chosen to use art in its broad definition and interview artists from a variety of groups. In the beginning, the plan was to interview only visual artists but then it was realized it would have been too challenging to find enough visual artists with immigrant backgrounds. In the end, it might have been possible to find also only visual artists because it was clearly the most common field in this data. However, having people from different fields of art could give a broader view of this phenomenon. This is why people were interviewed from different fields of art and they were not limited to only one field. In summary, the participants were chosen according to their professional and cultural background.

This study had 12 participants who were interviewed via Skype or in face-to-face interviews. Most of them lived in Jyväskylä or in the Helsinki metropolitan area. Some of them were visiting their families at the time of the interview and were on the other side of the world. Half of the interviews were conducted via Skype and half of them in face-to-face meetings. When the researcher was searching for the participants, she aimed at finding people from a variety of cultural backgrounds, both males and females and people from different age groups. It

was also hoped to find participants who had arrived to Finland quite recently and the ones who had stayed here already a longer period of time. It also would have been interesting to find people who had come to Finland from a variety of reasons such as refugees and who had come here voluntarily.

The youngest participant was 31 years old and the oldest 59 years old, and nine of them were women and three men. Some of the participants had lived in Finland already for a longer time and spoke very good Finnish, while some of them had just arrived to Finland a few years ago and did not speak Finnish very well yet. Also, the reasons why they had come to Finland varied a lot and some of them were sure that they wanted to stay in Finland and some still a bit unsure about their future plans.

TABLE 1: Description of the participants

<b>Participant</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Country of origin</b>	<b>Time spend in Finland</b>	<b>Art form</b>
<b>1</b>	Female	Portugal	5 years	Printmaker/ Ceramist
<b>2</b>	Female	Canada	9 years	Visual artist
<b>3</b>	Female	Russia	20 years	Painter
<b>4</b>	Male	Japan	11 years	Printmaker
<b>5</b>	Male	Ivory coast/Burkina Faso	3 years	Dancer/Choreographer
<b>6</b>	Female	Hungary	14 years	Ceramist/Printmaker
<b>7</b>	Female	Spain	1 year	Painter/Textile designer
<b>8</b>	Female	Philippines	10 years	Painter/Art framer
<b>9</b>	Female	Mexico	5 years	Sculptor
<b>10</b>	Male	Spain	3 years	Drawer/

				Photographer/ Art educator
<b>11</b>	Female	Taiwan/USA	4 years	Visual artist
<b>12</b>	Female	Malaysia	6 years	Painter/drawer

#### **5.4 Data analysis**

The analyzing process started by transcribing all the interviews verbatim. In total, the transcribed interviews were 106 pages long. Some of the interviews were conducted in Finnish, and although the researcher was able to understand the main points in the interviews, at times some minor changes had to be made into the transcribed versions to make them more coherent and understandable. The process of data analysis started already while transcribing the interviews because in the transcribing process the researcher has to listen to the tapes very carefully and go back and forth in them. So, some notes were already made during this process and some of the main themes already started to emerge at this point. After transcribing all interviews the actual analyzing process of the data started. According to Eskola and Suoranta (1998) it is often almost impossible to use only one analyzing method in open-ended qualitative inquiry, and many different methods can be combined in the course of the study. In this study, the researcher decided to utilize an approach usually referred to as thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method used for recognizing and analyzing different patterns and themes within qualitative data (Gray, 2014).

After the transcription and initial analysis, the researcher started to familiarize herself more with the data by reading and re-reading it. While reading the data, some initial coding of the most pertinent parts of the data was done, and looking for some possible connections and contradictions between them was started. The purpose of this type of qualitative coding is to find the interesting features of the data and then collate the relevant topics together (Blaxter, Hughes

& Tight, 2010). It is important to remember that coding is always subjective and based on the choices made by the researcher (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998). Because of the open-ended and data-driven nature of this study, the categorization was developed and changed during the entire research process. In effect, this meant the researcher was constantly comparing the different codes and the categories they comprised.

The data analysis was done mainly on paper manually by using different colors for different codes. After coding all the interviews by using this technique, the most interesting parts into one document were collected, the themes named, and then the summaries of each category were made. A theme is a pattern recognized in qualitative data that captures something important in relation to the research questions of the study (Gray, 2014). The categories were based mostly on the research questions and on which parts the researcher found the most important for the study. The final stage of the data analysis was producing the report of the analysis and writing the results part which will be presented over the next pages.

## 6 RESULTS

This chapter presents the main findings of this study, illustrated with extracts from the interviews. Because the focus of this study is on immigrant artists' thoughts and feelings, it was important to use the original extracts from the interviews as often as possible.

This section will begin by discussing the challenges the informants have faced after moving to Finland. After that the discussion will focus on what influences their art and the topics and themes they use in their art, before moving on to the actual results related to the research questions. Then, it is presented what kinds of meanings making art has for the immigrant artists and why they make art. In the end, the concentration will be more on their cultural identities and the connections between their art and their identity. Because some of the interviews were held in Finnish, the original quotations in Finnish can be found in appendix 2.

### 6.1 Faced challenges and experiences of Finland

The faced challenges form an important background for the results of this study because they relate directly to the sub-question of the second research question about whether and if art can be used as a coping strategy in the big changes in life. Therefore, it was important to see if moving to Finland had been a great change for the informants. The participants had a variety of experiences of living in Finland. Some of them had very positive experiences and they highlighted that they did not have any major problems here. However, most of them had faced many difficulties and a few of them also had very negative experiences of living in Finland as an immigrant. Although the previous studies introduced in the theory section show that it could be possible that immigrants face identity crises after moving to a new cultural environment, the participants of this study did not show any clear signs of major identity crises.

A few of them experienced that Finland was not used to people from other countries and that the people in Finland were even afraid of foreign people, and therefore they felt discriminated and different very often. One of them said that she felt discriminated even today in little things.

*P1: ...it has been a big fight because Finland, it's not yet very used to foreign people. And I still feel very discriminated. For example, yesterday I just...my my colleague...I just came in and smiled to her and she looked at me and she turned her eyes off, like as I did not existed. And these kinds of situations happen every day still.*

Most of the participants had at least a bachelor's degree from a university and some of them felt discriminated because their education was not recognized in Finland. One woman had a background as an art teacher in her home country and she was very upset that she was not recognized as an art teacher in Finland although she felt she would have so much to offer for Finnish children.

*P1: I mean these things are very important and by not being recognized as an art teacher and how I can contribute for the cultural education here with my background, not been recognized and just being treated like someone who had not any kind of education. I mean it's not that people that had not the opportunity to have an education, it's not that they should not be treated as well...everyone should be treated with dignity and sometimes I am not treated with dignity. I am treated like I am an animal and it feels bad because I know that I can give so many good things, especially for the children and especially for the ones who needed the most the one that understands them the most. I don't need to speak the same language. It's just the gestures, just the action, just the making and through the making the language will come and that is the most difficult thing I have encountered in Finland...is that that ok you don't speak fluently Finnish then you're not a part of this society at all and that is bad. That is the most hard thing that I'm facing in Finland. But the rest, everything is fine.*

In this quotation, she also expresses an idea that through art it is possible to work together across cultural boundaries even without a common language. Other artists expressed similar thoughts about the meaning of art when language skills are limited which will be discussed more in the

“meanings of art” section. According to her, people in Finland did not recognize how important it is to be open to new cultures and how it can enrich the whole culture.

*P1: But the most hard is actually the...it is political...it is the...the people don't recognize how important it is to be open to new cultures and how rich it...this culture can be with that openness, I mean...I think people are not yet ready or they don't understand how...so who thinks we can bring with our cultural background to here with our examples. I mean how creativity can contribute for better life quality in every aspect of life and especially in education, starting by the children. Give examples of children here that they don't understand, so when they grow up, they have these examples on their mind and they can be better people. But that is kind of a universal because, for example, a Finnish cultural background teacher can also give a lot in Portugal when they go there to teach children.*

Some of the participants also had very positive experiences of Finland. One woman who used to live in France described her living in Finland this way:

*P2: Well...hmm...coming from France it was so much easier to be in Finland. Culturally...there's a lot of...maybe I ran into the right people, met the right people right at the beginning. I think that plays a really important role in your experience of the culture which...who are your friends and what kinds of connections you have...hmm...my...I don't know...I mean, I guess that forms everything you feel about the country. But yeah, I have a very positive experience of being here and because things were so difficult in France. It is so much more closed, in terms of...foreigners are not allowed into the culture really. You're always in the periphery, no matter how well you speak the language, no matter...it is not a visual thing either because you could blend in, you know, visually into the society but really with the language, it's very, very hard to be accepted just as a person and not a foreigner.*

In general, the participants had faced many challenges in Finland but not many challenges directly related to their identity. Most of the challenges had to do with practical things such as the language, bureaucracy, finding friends and finding a home. Also, some cultural barriers and discrimination caused some challenges to these immigrant artists. This shows that moving to another country had been a big change in their lives and the challenges that need to be dealt with

are existent. Later in this chapter, the results related more closely to the meanings of art in facing these challenges will be presented.

## 6.2 What influences art?

As mentioned above, the interviews showed that moving to a new country had been a great change for most of the participants and they had faced some challenges in Finland. Therefore, the next step in the process of examining the connections between art, identity, and immigration, is seeing what influences art. When inquired about the influences behind their art, the most typical initial answer was that everything has an influence. Everything that happens in life can have an effect. Upon closer reflection, other themes began to emerge. One of these was the importance of change. When something big happens in life, it must have an impact, and as mentioned earlier also moving to another country is often a big change.

*P1: Yeah yeah, yes of course especially in the use of colors, the use of motives, themes...yeah yeah they quite reflect, the change reflects a lot in my artworks...yes yes indeed.*

Also, many other things influenced their art. The interviewed artists expressed that they were influenced by things that they saw or did. Also, their cultural background had an impact on their art work. In addition to this, they mentioned much smaller and more concrete issues such as techniques and skills which had an influence as well.

*P1: Everyone is unique in each own life and cultural background...everyone has a different perceptions of the world. So I'm just one more. And I use that in my art obviously. Technically and conceptually. I mean the skills I've learned to do printmaking in Japan. For example, if someone teached me how to do ceramics or how to burn my pots in the kiln, was a Japanese old man. So by looking at his works and by learning with him how to do things, it gives me some experience to do things now and that is just an example, or for example, by using Japanese paper in my work, it's also kind of transposing some of that experience to now, to my works now.*



However, it was often challenging for the informants to recognize what really influenced them.

They also thought about whether those influences could be seen in their art.

*P2: I know that I'm very influenced by things that I see or do, but I don't always recognize it right away. That maybe I'll look back ten years later and say "oh, this is what influenced me" and I didn't realize it at the time.*

*P3: I know it myself now but I hope that currently it's not reflected in my art work that much in which country I studied because I think...it is not bad when there is a mentality of a specific country inside the piece of art...but I think art doesn't have boundaries, no mentality...it is good, touching or not. This is what I try...it is my common thread. When people see the work, it is difficult to answer if the artist is a man or a woman or from which country she comes from. At the moment I think many of my works reflect that I am a woman. (2)*

In summary, many of the interviewees talked about how their cultural background, identities, and experiences did reflect in their work, although most of them were not able to explain how exactly they could be seen in their art. However, it was expressed that changes, such as immigration, can be seen in things such as selection of colors and themes.

### **6.3 Topics of their artwork**

In the interviews there were also discussion about the concrete topics and themes the participants dealt with in their art because it could be valuable in unraveling the ways in which art and identities are connected. This section concerning the topics relate to the research question two: how do immigrant artists investigate their intercultural identities through art making? The interviews showed that the informants had a large variety of themes they focused on. Some of them had very clear themes they preferred and some did not have main themes at all, and instead they only had a certain style or technique they mostly used. It was surprising to notice that quite

many of the interviewees mentioned directly identity, immigration or culture related themes as their main focus.

*P2: ...one of my latest projects did touch on specifically immigrants. Yeah I don't know if anyone wants to be an immigrant...it's kind of a dirty word.*

*P2: Well, it's a quite common theme to go for...a lot of art students go for identity and I started out with identity, I think...and it always revolves...is close to identity but what I'm really interested in is...are things that we take for granted as structural elements that make up the identity...oh this is getting complicated...so things like, I'm interested in boundaries...like maps. So, I'm interested in that line that is drawn to make that map and then to define that specific space as something, and the reasons...I'm interested in the reasons that place is specifically is that place that it is...why the boundaries are there, specifically there, and why it is so different inside and outside. What is the difference between, you know, that land and the plants that are growing there and the plants that are growing here. So I'm looking at it through mostly...mostly through plants and animal life, and then translating it a little bit more subtly into human nature and how people are dealing with that same thing.*

In the next quotation, the interviewee directly tells that she does not have one clear national identity and that in her art she is interested in the question of national identity. This participant was a woman who had been living in different countries already before coming to Finland and she was originally from a very multicultural country. By comparing the previous and the next quotation, it seems like this woman tries to explain to herself what having one national identity is and criticize the whole idea of national identity through her art: what makes us so different?

*P2: Yeah, well, it [art making] started with like, my personal identity but, you know, you only go so far with that really. What I'm more interested in is the idea of a national identity and what that means because that's something that I don't understand and it is not something that I have experienced with and so... with having one national identity. So, I'm looking at that a little bit and just playing around with that idea because it's an interesting question to me.*

The same woman also told more specifically about one of her projects that did touch upon immigration. It was interesting how this artist did not like to be referred to as an immigrant but

she focused a lot on immigration in her work. This shows how art can be used for clarifying one's own life and also taking a stand. Some criticism can be found on national and immigrant identity in her work: how long one has to be in the host country to be considered as native? She made a parallel between lupine, the flower, and immigration.

*P2: Yeah, yeah, I was looking at the lupine, the flower, and there are a lot of really passionate feelings about the lupine. There's people that really really hate, really hate it, a flower, they really hate this flower, and then other people who think it's the most wonderful thing, it has a nice smell and is beautiful and all that. And with that there's a lot of feelings, like the hate, that is coming from a place of fear. There's fear that the lupine will take over Finnish forests and there won't be any blueberries growing anymore in the forests because there'll be only lupines and I mean this is what... I've talked to a lot of different people about what they feel about the lupine and this is like a real fear, it sounds like really incredible but this is what people are feeling. And I'm making a direct parallel to how people feel about immigrants because the lupine is an immigrant, even though it has been here for 200 hundred years. It's still considered as an immigrant and this is what I'm doing with my project... is that I'm looking at which plants are considered immigrants, still today, and which ones aren't, you know, and how long they have to be here in order to be considered a native plant. Because all plants have come here at some point, I mean, it's all just making this subtle parallel between immigrants, the migration of humans and the migration of plants which ones are local and which ones are assimilated into the culture and which ones aren't. Then the lupine was so special two years ago because I got a working grant from the arts council and so I was feeling very much...I felt a strong identification with the lupine because the lupines were originally from the northern America, and then I moved to England and then to continental Europe and through there to Finland. So, it travelled a similar path and then it's a very successful plant here which is what an invasive species is, just a plant that is thriving. And having that grant, you know, it felt like I was thriving too. So that was the parallel that I was making. So, I mean, it's directly related to my experience as a foreigner.*

So, in this case lupine is the immigrant. Some people really hate immigrants and some find them absolutely fascinating and as an asset for Finland. The fear is described to be caused by the fear that immigrants will take over Finland and destroy the traditions. In the next quotation, there is also some evidence that the interviewee's identity is really changing. It sounds like she is talking about intercultural identity. She also uses themes related to immigration in her work.

*P7: I would say domesticity is a lot in there like hmm...and then since Finland I would say the fact of exile, not exile because of war or, you know, exile more as a metaphor of living abroad, immigration, and transition because I felt I was used art to be a little bit alienated from yourself, you invent or create or recreate a new self when you are an immigrant, and that's why I started to experience and also to read a lot about it...read...and I talked a lot about it with friends of mine that are also doing art and they are even doing more, doing very well art, one is for instance in Ireland, and she told me the same that it's very strange how you start to develop almost a second personality when you are abroad.*

There were also themes that did not touch immigration or identity that closely such as pop culture. One informant also mentioned she did not represent the problematic things with Finnish culture or other encounters with Finnish culture at all in her work. Instead, she told her works touch often upon the status of women around the world.

*P1: Yes, yes African background, Caucasian backgrounds all...it doesn't matter. What matter is the act or the attitude that is represented not the cultural background.*

One of the most interesting findings was that also many other of these artists dealt with topics related to womanhood and the status of women. Altogether five participants named womanhood as one of their main themes. Four of them were women themselves and one was a man. The title of one of these art works referred directly to giving a voice to women in different cultures. This shows the function of art as a way to be seen and heard by giving a voice to the ones who need it the most. Some of them dealt with womanhood in general but many of them also compared the status of women in different cultures in their art.

*P7: I would say a lot of self-representation and a lot of womanhood while again women orientated because I think it's my way of self...or to rewrite my daily life and as I am a woman, so motherhood and all these kinds of topics are important to me, so I talk about them or I paint about them.(...) So I wanna, of course, I wanna affect and some topics such as motherhood and gender, they really affect me and, nowadays there are still a lot of things to be done, so of course I wanna affect...or about immigration yeah, it's a sacred process and can be horrible, so why not to talk about the ugly aspects of it.*

*P9: ...my main theme is women. It is like their different cultures and now when I live abroad, in Finland, I can see the different...like...what is the woman's role here in Finland, and I also think about other cultures that I have encountered here in Finland, for example, Muslim women and Asian women and I always think that we are all similar yes...but culture is something that sometimes separates us and that can give the small thing that can have a huge impact and then we think...I think...well I think a lot about this woman theme...that we should get all the rights in the world and we all have to always stick together and we all have to be free here and in other countries but there is still a lot to do. And this is where the idea comes from that always my art works are women and feminine, and also collective. (1)*

When asking them why they represent women, most of them replied that because they were women themselves. So, it seemed that they had quite strong gender identities which can also be seen as one part of cultural identity. I found it very interesting that this gender identity appeared to be very important and maybe even stronger than the other cultural identities, for instance, national, ethnic, or religious identity for some of the participants. The interviews showed that identity, culture, and immigration related topics were popular amongst the participants which again strengthens the view that making art and dealing with the new cultural environment might be connected.

#### **6.4 The meanings of art**

*P3: Well, the meaning for me is like...it's like medicine. When a person has, for example, a cancer and they give her permanently medicine, and if there isn't that medicine, she dies... (3)*

The first research question of this study was: what are the key meanings of making art to immigrant artists? The results indicated that art had a variety of meanings to them. All the participants highlighted how important making art was for them. The importance can be seen in the interviews because the participants described art as something that fills them up completely and is a part of their life and identity. They also mentioned they could not live without it and they

made art to not go mad. These being only a few of the meanings they mentioned. The most commonly mentioned meanings were that art was a way of communication, a way of expressing oneself, a way of forgetting, a way of finding the balance, and an integral part of them and their identity. While reading through the interviews, three distinct categories about the meanings of art could be recognized: artist's own well-being and self-investigation, communication with other people, and practical benefits.

The most often described meanings were the meanings related to their own well-being and self-investigation. Making art made them often feel better if they had stress, and it gave them pleasure. This is, of course, the reason why people do also many other things in their life. For some people it may be exercising, travelling, cleaning the house, and for some it is making art. Naturally, people enjoy of different things.

*P2: Yeah it's a part, it's a part and for me it's really important to work through ideas and using imaginary, really important for me to work through those ideas. So, I can't really...I don't think I could really let it go completely. I know there's a...I feel a little bit more balanced. Maybe it's like people... like we do exercise. You feel a little bit better after you've exercised. You just like...your body needs to move a little bit and I think that my brain needs to move a little bit through art in order just to feel good. Something like that.*

It is quite obvious that people make art because they enjoy it and it makes them feel good.

However, what was even more interesting was that three of the participants mentioned that for them art was a way to find the balance in their life as this woman in the quotation above and the man in the quotation below show us.

*P4: ...I think that people who call themselves as artists, are kind of uncompleted people, like me, like I am. Because if I'm not making work, I'm not anybody. Even it is very difficult to keep my living, I mean not in the money thing...I have to take my balance by making work. So, I think that's why.*

As this study focuses on connections between art and identity development, it was interesting to notice that these two things were really connected in the data. One of the interviewees told that

she had a life crisis a few years ago and that was also the time when she started making art more seriously. According to her, making art helped her to define who she was and what she wanted to do in her life. She was also the only participant who had started making art later in her life. She had always been interested in art but she was discouraged to do it when she was younger, and therefore she found it again later when the right time came. All the other participants had been making art almost their entire lives and they could not say a specific time when they started it. Also, other participants mentioned meanings related to self-investigation. One informant explained that for her art was a way to understand herself. Another told that it was her way of thinking. Third described art as a way of self-representation and one told it was her approach to her life. It was also named that art is a great tool for investigating one's own wants and imagination.

Another matter many participants wanted to discuss was that they made art to forget and escape reality. Art was described to be the place where one feels the most comfortable. When one faces difficult times or otherwise feels bad, it is important to find a hobby or some other way to forget and feel better. This was also one of the most commonly mentioned meanings in the interviews. In the first section of this chapter, some of the challenges the immigrant artists had faced in Finland were presented, and it showed that the challenges are existent. Therefore, it can be assumed that art may have played a role in facing these challenges because by making art, these challenges and the bad feelings they have caused could be forgot at least for a while. The last question in the interviews was if the interviewees had used art as a way to deal with the challenges they had faced, and all of them agreed that it did help them at least to some extent. For some of them art had played a major role, and for some not so crucial but still it was important.

The second category of the meanings recognized from the data was art as communication with others. This was mentioned almost in every interview but not as often as the meanings for artist's own well-being and self-investigation. Therefore, these results support the view of art as communication. Through their art the participants wanted to, for instance, start dialogue, make other people happy, point out injustices, show how bad or beautiful the world can be, provoke, represent their cultural backgrounds, and make suggestions. So, again there were a great number of ways in which art was used as a way of communication. Most of the informants said they wanted to affect other people in different ways but a few of them also explained they did not aim to influence other people at all. According to one interviewee, people need different kinds of art. It does not always have to be political but it is ok to have art also because of its beauty which shows the aesthetic aspect of it.

*P6: ...I took a line that I don't want to affect in that sense (...) I think that by living well or trying to live in a right way or...so in that way one can affect the most. I think that people don't always need that political art but people need art for different purposes. I, of course, appreciate those artists who do that and it's important but I feel that my personality isn't like that that I would need to affect in the same way. (4)*

In five of the interviews, it was clearly mentioned that art was a way of communication. Also, other participants discussed about topics that can be seen as communication with others. Art was even referred to be its own language. For some, art played an important role as a communication medium, especially, because of the lack of Finnish language skills but also because of the differences in nonverbal communication and in the entire way of interacting in this new cultural environment. It was also said that art was their best way of communication because they were not always so good at human relationships.

*P5: Well. For me it's a little bit like what singers do, they sing always about themes and they also want to like make their own impact to the world that what is...they sing to people and citizens what they want to say but they can't, and for us it's possible to go to the stage in front of a big audience and sing and say that this is good and this*



*is bad. I, instead, as a dancer tell the world through my body and that is like my message of what I can also give to the world, which is important, without words. That is also when the language is still so limited or you don't speak the language of the country, and that is a boundary. You can't like say your opinions but through dance I can do that, I think, in any country like discuss with the world. (5)*

Another interviewee mentioned similar meanings. In the next quotation, she describes how she, as everyone else in this world, has a necessity to communicate and how making art as a communication medium became even more of a necessity for her in Finland. She also mentioned the social aspect of art making which can be important for people in a new environment with no connections to other people.

*P11: Hmm, well...it's something that I've always done and you just...for me I just have to do it and I think one of the reasons why I'm so interested in translation studies is that I'm always living in places that...usually that I don't know the native language, so this necessity to communicate, you know, whether it would be in different forms or mediums or languages, so...and then in Finland, I...actually now that I, you know, now that I think of it and I think of...because I have felt very isolated here and it has become even more a necessity to make art and...so that was my...this is my way of communicating and doing things with other people because I...my focus is on participatory art and I like creating art with others, so this has been a way...a way to push myself to be alone but then also reach out to others.*

As I mentioned earlier, there was also discussion on art being its own language. There were different opinions about this. One said art was a language and another was not as sure about it. However, it was agreed that art was definitely a way of communication.

*P10: ...so I use art to express...and arts are languages...to paint, to take photos, and they are as useful as to write. So, one person can explain what you feel by writing but also taking photos. So, I need to express...*

*P2: So, I mean...I guess I'm dealing a little bit with some of my questions that way, but I think maybe the art is a way of communicating in a way that you don't have to think about those details of communication because it has its own language...but I don't know if I really want to say that it has its own language, but what it has is that people understand that there is going to be different interpretations of it. So, even if it doesn't have one...yeah a lot of people say that it has...that art is its own language but I'm not sure that it is. I think that what it is more, is that people understand that there are more ways of interpreting it. So, it's more of an open kind of communication.*

The woman in the previous quotation explains how, according to her, art is more of an open kind of communication and that people understand more easily than with spoken languages that there are different interpretations of it. This observation was found very interesting because often people do not realize that languages also have different interpretations. If you have learned a foreign language, but you do not know the cultural rules of using it, misinterpretations occur easily.

Other ideas these artists wanted to communicate to other people through their art were showing their own perception of the world and through that make an impact on the world. It seemed like many of these artists used their art to give perspective to other people. According to the next examples, art can make people to think “outside the box”.

*P1: Yes I use art to forget that because it's the only way I have to explain people how I see the world and how can I contribute for their lives. So, I really do use my art to make their lives feel better every day. That's the way I use my art to show them “hey I can see the landscape with these colors, aren't they bright, aren't they nice, don't they make your day feel better when you look at them. Would you like your child to make something like that, so he can see the world in a different way”. And that is how I use my art here.*

*P11: ...I would like to remind children that there's another way to communicate, you know, and to see how the world is and world can function outside of your computer, so I am...I meant through that, I mean, that you can learn about other cultures and start dialogue through pictures and it's been really great. So, basically, I just wanted to share with them what is so close to me as well, like I've gained so much from living in other countries and I, actually, don't travel that much. I just move there. And yeah...I just wanted to share that with others and then not only learn about how other...what other languages there are but that you can communicate through the language of images.*

The last category emerged from the data was the practical benefits such as being a source of earning. It was interesting to notice how differently artists, who made their living by making art, and artists, who did not earn their living only by making art, approached the topic. The artists,

whose only source of earning was art, talked more about practical aspects of it and they had a more straightforward approach to their art. In turn, the artists who did not work full-time with their art emphasized more the meanings of art for their own well-being and communication with others. Maybe, they were still able to express themselves more freely than the ones who had to also sell their works.

### **6.5 Perceptions of cultural identity**

Usually, people see identity as a very broad and difficult concept to define as well as the concept of culture. Also, amongst the interviewees cultural identity was clearly a difficult concept for most of them and they defined it in many different ways. On one hand, five of the participants had not thought about their identity almost at all and they had difficulties in explaining what they identified with. On the other hand, some told that they had been thinking about their cultural identities a lot. The data also showed that the participants saw and understood the concept of cultural identity in different ways. Some considered it as something very broad including their original national identity, gender identity, interests, and influences from other cultures among many other things. Some, instead, saw it only in terms of what their passport said, some through being an artist or their family culture, and one told that she did not want to think about cultural identities at all because she wanted to consider everyone as the same.

*P10: I don't know, I never think about my identity. I am a Mediterranean or European, and what's the difference when I go to somewhere...what is the difference. Identity is something that I have never been thinking, so I don't know what to say. Well, my cultural identity comes like where I was born...yes, in Spain in Catalan culture...I am not religious but it is a catholic culture, I mean the Mediterranean and I see it is different to Baltic and I see my connection to some kinds of paintings...but really I have never had problems with identity, my identity.*

*P11: Hmm...well...I...even though I am Taiwanese and American, I think I've lived outside both of those countries for a longer period of time than I have been in them...I think...well, for sure...for sure Taiwan because I've only lived there*

*technically for seven years and then in the states back and forth but I think collectively I've been outside of the states longer. And I identify with both of those countries and those cultures, and for me....because I moved away from Taiwan when I was little, I feel very emotionally attached to the place and all of my family is still there but it's very hard for me to go back so often, so maybe every five years I get to go back if I'm lucky.*

Some also asked the researcher what identity means. With two of these interviewees the only common language was Finnish and their language skills were quite good but not perfect, so there is the possibility that they did not understand the concept because of the language skills or they just had never thought about it. With one of them the interview language was English and her language skills were very good and still she was asking what an identity is. The researcher did not want to lead them too much by defining how she saw cultural identity because she also wanted to see how they would define it and what aspects they found important in their identity. For instance, according to the participant in the next quotation it would be more interesting to focus on the identity of a group not one person. So, he probably had a different perception of cultural identity because usually cultural identity is seen as based on the membership of different groups.

*P10: I think it's more interesting to see an identity of a group, not me but we. For example, I spend a lot of time doing...to join people doing projects in different countries and to...so I...we can discuss a long time about the differences between Spain and Finland but it's more interesting to see what are the similarities and to try to do that, and how to be all together, something like that. This is more interesting.*

In general, almost all participants had difficulties in telling about their cultural identities at least to some extent. For some of them their cultural identity meant a lot and for some it was a thing they had never been thinking about. It was seen to be related to matters such as their behavior, way of thinking, nationality, and different aspects of other cultures.

*P1: Oh wau, “iso”, it’s a big question also. But I think it is related with the way I make the assimilation with the new country I visit, it is the way I make...hmm my...it’s related with my openness to the culture I visit and then it’s related with what I am doing with that in the present in my every day acts since saying “hello” to someone until doing complex art work or study. So, I bring it in the study, I bring it in my art work, my background, my cultural background, my professional background and my experience background, not only academic or professional but I also bring my heart in it and my view from the world. Of course, everyone has different views, so I just bring in mine.*

*P1: I don’t have any particular, strong identification, unless my Portuguese background is very strong obviously because I was born there but...but I mean I also identify myself a lot with the [unclear] philosophy, so it’s...I also identify myself a lot with the Japanese art, Asian art...I’ve identified a lot with the Finnish organization...so, it’s a very complex to answer because I don’t have any particular unless the Portuguese is obviously the most strong but I mean...*

One interviewee pointed out an interesting comment about national identity. She reminded that holding one national identity can mean many different things and there are still differences in the backgrounds of people from the same nationality. So, even one nationality is not one coherent entity. The next quotations both describe the complexity and multilayered nature of holding a nationality of one country.

*P1: But in terms of looking back to the Portuguese history, I’m proud because it’s really old and it’s so rich in terms of...and of course it has its bad sides of this slavery and that kind of things but in the other hand, when I say that I’m Portuguese, I can also say that I’m African, or I’m a Brazilian, or I’m a Indian, or I’m a Chinese because it’s very natural for us to...to hold that nationality is just...well I have friends that were born in Macau, I have friends that are Indian, I have friends that are African, they are like my brothers and...so for me being Portuguese is also being African or Brazilian or this or that.*

*P2: Hmm...yeah... that’s a tricky...hmm...because coming from North America...it’s a...it’s not a clear background...I wasn’t...I was born in the United States and we moved to Canada when I was quite young...and I have Canadian citizenship and both my parents were born in the United States but they now have the Canadian citizenship as well. Hmm...but...my grandparents...almost all my grandparents were children of immigrants from different countries. One of my grandparents has a longer lineage in the United States but some came from Ireland and England and Ukraine and it’s not known where else...so there is not one real cultural...*

On one hand, many of the participants made it clear that they did not see themselves as immigrants and did not want to be identified as immigrants. The main reason for this was that they did not feel they were any different than other people in Finland. Another reason for not liking to be referred as an immigrant was that they felt they were being separated from the society.

*P2: And I kind of see myself as pretty well integrated, I mean, I don't speak perfectly and...in Finnish...but I do feel pretty much at home and I think that the subjects that I'm working with are relevant in one way or another to Finnish culture. I don't like to be identified as an immigrant ever, just because it feels like a very heavy title and that's just my idea, I mean, I have been an immigrant my whole life in different situations and I don't really see how that makes me that much different.*

*P9: I don't mind because I know who I am. Then, I think that sometimes...I know that for some people it's also important that we are not only immigrants. It's a really big question because if I'm...I have been discussing a lot about how separate or how do...that we, immigrants, how can we go into the culture if there is always someone putting a note on our foreheads to like suggest, but I also think that we are in a foreign country that has adopted us. (6)*

On the other hand, some did not mind being called immigrants. However, most of them did not like to identify themselves as immigrants but it was more the way other people saw them. In other words, mostly they either did not like the title at all or they did not care if people called them as immigrants. This participant describes how she has been used to always being the different one because her mother was an Ingrian Finn. According to her, it has always been the same no matter in which country she had been living in.

*P3: For me it's all the same. It can be that it has an influence that when we lived in Russia and when at school...it was still the Soviet Union time...behind me there was "shshsh her mom is Finnish". When we moved here it was "shshsh she's Russian", so I have learned to live with this idea, and because later when it was the time when the Soviet Union was changing, it was still "shshsh she's a Finn. In Russia they didn't say an Ingrian Finn but a Finn. And in the beginning it was negative and then it was more positive, and yes many things affect and inside me there was sometimes, when I was small, I was thinking that why...why it is so important. I am the way I am.*

*And my beloved mother, my mother...how does it affect that where she comes from.*  
(7)

There were also other contradictions between how the participant defined herself and how the others tended to define her. Here is an example in which the interviewee tells about her cultural identity, and while telling this she sounded very sad and frustrated:

*P7: ...they wanted to say that I was a Spaniard, that I was Spanish. And then it created me a bit of sadness that I couldn't say no that excuse me I'm not even...I'm a Catalan...I want to make it...and then I was thinking that what's the point. They think that it's the same, so it's the same. But nothing's the same! So, it created me...*

This matter was very important for her and she did not want to be mixed with Spaniards because that was not what she identified herself with. This shows how frustrating and difficult it can be when people categorize you into a wrong group.

In summary, these interviewees identified themselves as members of a variety of groups. Some of them identified more with the national culture such as being Japanese. Some found a regional culture such as being Catalan stronger than being Spanish. Others identified themselves more according to the family culture or being an artist. Also, identifying oneself through different parts of different cultures or cultural products was mentioned.

## **6.6 Identity development and intercultural identity**

This theme was created to answer to the research question two: how do immigrant artists investigate their intercultural identities through art making? In the interviews, the participants expressed some thoughts about their changing cultural identities. It seemed that most of them already had quite intercultural identities, some even since their childhood. This was probably

because almost all of them had lived also in other countries before coming to Finland or otherwise had a quite multicultural background.

*P11: Yeah, but I think, you know, my mum raised me with those values but it's also funny with, you know, with these...with immigrants, usually when you leave the country that country of origin stops in time, so in some ways my mom is of this Taiwanese generation that doesn't even exist anymore. So, in some ways I'm of that generation that doesn't exist anymore, you know, and...but I feel very close to it but if you were to ask what other Taiwanese people think of me, it would be, I think, very different, you know. Also, because I'm mixed, so sometimes I don't...sometimes with interracial people there can be this tension like...I don't know if you've heard of that before or anything but...I have gotten some comments sometimes that oh I'm not really Taiwanese, I'm not really American, I'm not this or that. I know because I'm both and they just get confused.*

The informants expressed thoughts about assimilating and losing parts of their original identity but also thoughts that now their cultural identity was richer in many ways. In general, the change was seen more as a positive phenomenon. The change was considered to have both negative and positive aspects depending on how one reacts to the situation. Assimilation with the host culture and losing the original cultural identities entirely was not seen desirable by any of the participants.

*P2: Yeah it has...it has...like I said before when I was living in France and I was trying to erase my former culture. It does disappear and then it disappears even when you don't try...little by little things become unfamiliar again and you have to readapt, like this summer we went back to Canada for three months, it took me probably about a month and a half, to two months to be able to relate to people in a way that I felt comfortable with because we get used to doing things in a certain way and then those little extra things fall apart.*

*P2: I don't think it's (the change) either, I think it just is...yeah it just is...I mean...maybe it's negative when you move out of the...because you just assimilate...things that are happening around... just being... and then when you leave that group and go, there. Then maybe it feels a little bit negative for a while until you get your system working again but I don't think it's negative at all. And I don't really think it's something you can build on either, I mean, it's something that just kind of happens. You're just like a chameleon, you just change color a little bit and then you move to another occasion and you're like "oh, now I'm red and I'm supposed to be green".*



A few of the artists also expressed similar thoughts as presented in the literature review of this study that when they moved to Finland they really started to see what their cultural identity actually was.

*P2: Yeah yeah a bit hard...hmm well yeah I think there have been obstacles and I think both. I think both because when you leave your own environment is when you really see what's happening. When you take a step back and someone does something completely different and you're like "that's wrong" and you're like "oh yeah, that's how we do it differently and that's what we think is right" and that's when you really get a perspective of how your culture is and what your culture is: when you're not in it. So, in that sense it's a very positive aspect and you only really can see with distance...*

For some of the interviewees their cultural identity and background was a very clear structure. The man quoted in the next paragraph felt still very strongly Japanese and that his cultural identity had not changed due to living in other countries.

*P4: I always think myself as Japanese and it doesn't change actually after I moved here, after that it doesn't change.*

He also thought that his Japanese identity had actually become stronger than it used to be while living in Japan. Also, he expresses how his cultural identity has become more visible for himself after coming to Finland.

*P4: Maybe, if I went back to Japan, then I would notice it...but now...but more than I was in Japan, I am thinking myself as a Japanese, more stronger than before. Actually, I never thought about that when I was in Japan because we are Japanese, and Japan is a kind of isolated island and there's not so many foreigners at least ten years ago. So, we don't have to think about what being Japanese is or something but after we moved here, naturally, I have started to think about it.*

Furthermore, it was interesting to hear how he realized something about his identity during the interview. He felt freer to do what he really wanted to do in Finland because he did not feel he

had to be like the others as in Japan. In this way, being an immigrant allowed him to be different. He did not feel any pressure of being like the Finns but he saw it contrarily as an opportunity to be different because, according to him, he would never be able to be like the Finns. He experienced Finland as an open place to live.

*P4: So, I try myself not to do what I have to do...what I feel I have to do. Actually, that's a...in Japan...actually I wasn't thinking that way, I felt like art should be like this and the art has to be done like this, something more stronger than now. So, that made me a bit stressed in Japan perhaps and here, as I said that I started to think about my identity perhaps...how I should be and how I want to be and think about it more and the Finnish culture allowed me to do that. This part I love in Finnish culture.*

Intercultural identity is often defined as something richer, broader, and more flexible than the original identity. The participants showed some agreement with this definition, and therefore indicated that they had started to develop or already had an intercultural identity. One of the male interviewees describes below what cultural identity means to him and what his cultural identity is:

*P5: Well, what the cultural identity means to me, first it means to me...it's a surname. And it's like humanity, surname, culture, and if you understand cultures or art well, one can't say, that this person is this and that...or if you make works related to cultures or different visions of the world...well yeah...for me it means quite a lot because all cultures are different and all cultures are important. Finnish culture is not any better than the culture in Burkina Faso or the culture in Burkina Faso is not any better than the Finnish culture, and we have to like...I have now both of these cultures and that gives me like...it's richer when I have both of these cultures and I have like found them, and I am not saying that there is the good and the bad one. They both have good and bad things. (8)*

The participants also described some practical ways in which they had changed due to moving to Finland. One of them told how she was quieter, listened more carefully, and was more patient nowadays. She had realized how much people talk in her home country and often even felt

overwhelmed because of the amount of extra talking when she visited her family and friends there. She thought that moving to Finland enhanced and broadened her cultural identity although in the beginning living in Finland was very challenging for her. In addition, another participant described how there was more of an increase than decrease in her identity.

*P8: Yes, and actually I wouldn't even say that there was a decrease. It was more like adding to my, you know, knowledge and knowing, you know, more about other cultures and because in Cyprus I was already involved a lot with a multicultural organizations.*

## **6.7 Connections between art and cultural identities**

One of the main focuses of this study is on the connectedness of art and cultural identities. The main interests are what is the role of art in the formation and development process of identity and how do these artists investigate their intercultural identities through art making. The results of this study support the views about the connectedness of art and cultural identities presented in the previous studies. According to the interviews, identities and art are so closely related to each other that one cannot really extract the two. All of the participants agreed that there was a connection. Some of them experienced that these two concepts were very closely related in general and some described some specific aspects of cultural identity which were connected to their art.

*P2: ...you can't probably extract the two. I wouldn't be able to, you know, pinpoint one thing and I think that they are so connected that you can't separate.*

*P5: Well yes, for me they are connected because I don't say that this is my art and this is my life. For me, my art and my life are together, and my culture...and like my life and art they are all together. (9)*

*P1: Everyone is unique in each own life and cultural background...everyone has different perceptions of the world. So I'm just one more. And I use that in my art obviously.*

Some concrete ways how these two concepts were related were mentioned in the interviews. Although many of the participants were sure there was a connection, they found it difficult to describe it in any concrete ways. One of the reasons for this was that it is challenging to talk about one's identity and art because one is an insider and as an insider it is sometimes difficult to see things clearly. In other words, for most of them there were connections but not very clear ones. However, a few very concrete ways how this relation could be seen were described in the interviews. One participant explicated how her original cultural identity could be seen, for instance, in her choices of colors which were very vibrant in her home country. Another participant told how she had started to use more colors while being in Finland, and later when she went back to Spain, she realized how saturated her works were with color. It was too much, as she described. According to her, this might have been because of the lack of colors and light in Finland, and also because she felt very lonely and isolated in Finland in the beginning.

*P10: No, I cannot but I grew up in a culture in Spain where there is a lot of light and a different kind of weather, so of course there are very strong connections, for example, in my painting some strong traditions, Mediterranean traditions obviously are in my work. Like the Finnish artists with Finnish traditions. And I can see very strong traditions in Finnish art like how strong is the forest for Finnish people, and that is very strange for me.*

Also, traditions were mentioned in many interviews. One interviewee used a traditional Mexican technique in her work. Another told that she researched often folk culture and ethnicity in her work. The third told how he used to mix some traditional African tribal dances and modern dance in his works which made the result richer. In the choices of themes there were also some interesting connections to cultural identity. These artists did not use their own national identity very directly in their themes but, instead, they used other parts of cultural identity such as gender

identity. So, art was used to tell about this part of their cultural identity and make a stand about some issues related to this.

One of the main interest of this study was also how art was used in processing the identity. There were no clear explanations of how this was done. However, it was told, for example, that some of them did projects touching on immigration and being an immigrant, which can mean there is something interesting going on with the identity of an immigrant. Also, many of the meanings of art mentioned by the participants, show that there is something related to identity development happening. It was their way of thinking, finding the balance, understanding oneself, expressing opinions, and forwarding messages, which are all signs that there is something going on in their minds related to their selves. It was said that art represents the inside of a person and belongs to one's identity.

## **6.8 Summary of results**

The analysis illustrates how the concept of cultural identity can be a difficult topic to explore, and how people understand it in different ways. Some of the participants saw it as an integral part of their self and had been thinking about it extensively, while for others it did not play that important a role - or at least they had not been thinking about it before. However, this study indicates that being surrounded by an unfamiliar cultural environment had made the cultural identity more visible or tangible for some of the participants. Different aspects of cultural identity were seen as important, such as national, regional, gender, and artistic identity. There was also discussion about immigrant identity, and how the interviewees saw other people defining them.

Not many of the immigrant artists in this study communicated a clear cultural identity. This could be seen as a sign of an "intercultural identity". This was shown, for instance,

through descriptions of a more flexible and broader personhood, and better understanding of diversity. Assimilation was not seen as a desirable goal by any of the participants. Most of the participants agreed that moving to Finland had an influence on their personhood, but they found it difficult to express clearly how it had changed them.

The meaning of art was obviously very important to the interviewees and the results showed a great number of different explanations about the meanings of art. It was clearly shown in the data that art making had an important role especially for one's own well-being and the adaptation process to the new culture. In the end, the analysis revealed three distinct categories related to the meaning of art: artist's own well-being and investigating oneself, communication with other people, and practical benefits. These categories showed some similarity with Wang's (2009) three different functions of art which were art as experience, art as social imagination, and art as cultural communication. The most important meaning, according to this study, was the meaning for one's own well-being and self-investigation. The second most important meaning was its meaning as a communication medium with others. The last category, practical benefits, was only mentioned a few times in the interviews and included matters such as art as source of earning. It was also mentioned that art and identities are so closely related that one cannot really extract the two which shows the possible connection between art making and intercultural identity investigation.

All of the interviewees had faced some challenges in Finland but none of them showed any signs of major identity crises. However, it seemed that these identity-related themes were important for them because many of these artists dealt with topics such as identity, immigration, exile, translation, boundaries, and culture in their work. Art was mentioned to be a way to investigate oneself, one's own imagination and wants, and to rewrite one's daily life. Art

was considered an escape from reality and the place where one feels the most comfortable which shows its function as a coping strategy. Most of the participants agreed that art had had a role in facing and dealing with the challenges at least to some extent.

There were signs that art might be used in the process of investigating cultural identities but there were no clear explanations in the interviews how this was done. However, the key meanings of art mentioned in the interviews show some evidences of this investigation. Art was said to be helpful in defining who one is and investigating one's own thoughts, wants, and feelings. The selection of themes, which were often identity-related, also showed some proof of this ongoing investigation. Intercultural communication was reflected in their works in some practical ways such as in the choices of colors, themes, and techniques.

The results of this study show that there are major positive impacts of making art for the adaptation of an immigrant which can be seen to include the intercultural identity formation process. Therefore, this study supports the previous research about the therapeutic effects of art making in different occasions of life. These results will be further discussed in the following chapter.

## 7 DISCUSSION

The meanings of art to immigrant artists and the connections between their art making and intercultural identity formation were in the focus of this study. It aimed at exploring the importance and different uses of art for artists, in this case in the situation of immigration. The aim of this study was to explore if art really can act as a functional and helpful tool in the process of adaptation and intercultural identity formation of immigrants, as it has been used in different kinds of projects and workshops targeted for immigrants. There is a growing number of immigrants coming to Finland which also makes the topics of adaptation and wellbeing of immigrants increasingly important. The data collected for this study strengthened the view of art's multiple functions in many different situations of life. However, it is important to remember that all the ideas expressed in this study are only views of a few individuals and something that works for them does not necessarily work for someone else. Because the purpose of this study was to uncover the experiences of the immigrant artists and through that produce more information about the different functions of art, this study can hopefully give new ideas to organizations and professionals working in these fields by evoking more discussion about the connectedness of art and cultural identities. In this final chapter, the main results of the interviews are discussed and compared to the previous research and theoretical background of the study. The results are discussed by using the research questions as general guidelines, and therefore this chapter is divided into two main parts: the key meanings of art making for immigrant artists and investigating intercultural identities through art making.

Although many interviews offered support for the view that art making can have an important role for one's wellbeing and adaptation to a new culture, not all interviewees expressed similar functions. While the previous research discussed in the theory part showed that



art can be a great tool for investigating cultural identities, in this study many of the participants were not able to express clearly any concrete ways in which this investigation was done. However, many aspects that show the potential connections can be seen in the data. It is possible that some of the participants had not thought about it before, and all the main concepts of this study, art, culture and identity, are very complex to define and the participants defined them in different ways. All these three terms were also seen so closely related to one's self that sometimes it was challenging for the informants to analyze them. Many of them had lived in other countries or in other way were used to encounters with different cultures because of their profession, which may have influenced the results. Many of the interviewees did not have a clear cultural identity which can be seen as a sign of a broader and more flexible intercultural identity.

The results of this study showed some evidence of the investigation process of intercultural identities through art making but it did not show many concrete examples of how this was done. Instead, plenty of examples of the meanings of art to immigrant artists emerged from the interviews. These meanings showed some proof about the connectedness of art making and intercultural identity formation. However, it is important to remember that these are only opinions and experiences of 12 immigrant artists.

### **7.1 The key meanings of art making for immigrant artists**

*P4: "Making art solves everything for me"*

The participants were artists, so it was expected that making art was very important for them. The interviewees expressed a variety of meanings that art making had for them such as social, aesthetic, and therapeutic. Many of these meanings were in line with the results of previous research done on the topic. Similar results included things such as art's importance for

wellbeing, being seen and heard, and understanding a new environment. The most interesting matter from the point of view of this study was the notion that art was used as a way of communication and self-expression when the language skills and other communication skills in the new environment were still quite limited. According to Paatela-Nieminen (2009) making art enables us to express ourselves, our thoughts and our feelings, which are all connected to our culture. If they are connected to our culture, it can be assumed that they are connected to our cultural identities as well. Also, naturally people have a necessity to communicate and according to this study it seems that art can be useful in the situation when the language and other communication patterns are still unfamiliar for the newcomer.

Most common meanings of art mentioned in the interviews were related to one's own well-being and self-investigation which shows that art may have an important role in the immigration process or dealing with any other major life events or changes. Haveri (2010) pointed out that making art can offer a great opportunity to seek and maintain overall well-being because aesthetic experiences play an important role in it. She also highlighted that art can enrich the everyday life of an artist. As the participants described, they had faced challenges during their time in Finland. They had felt, for instance, isolated, lonely, discriminated, and unsafe. These are all matters that are seen usually very common amongst immigration and they decrease the overall wellbeing of an individual in longer term. Therefore, making art can function as a tool for fighting against these negative feelings. This, of course, requires that the person enjoys art making. When discussing art, it can always be argued what is considered art and is it at the end any more special than any other hobby. The results of this study show that art can be very useful for immigrants in many ways but it can be possible that many other hobbies have similar impacts as well. The most important thing is to find something one enjoys doing. If one plays football, it

can function as the source of wellbeing as well. What might make art subtly different than other hobbies is its function as a tool for self-expression and self-investigation. Many other activities can also give pleasure, help make new friends and give meaning for life but the question is can they be used in the same way as art for purposes such as self-investigation.

According to the results of this study, art can definitely be useful in the adaptation process of immigrants. However, I believe that it can be useful for those who enjoy making art and already have tendencies for artistic expression but for other people it can be something else such as playing football or gardening. The most important thing is to find something one enjoys. Thus, art is not necessarily anything extraordinary but it might work for some people as a great tool for self-investigation and maintaining the overall wellbeing. All these meanings of art can be useful for anyone in different occasions of life and not only in the case of immigration. It is also important to notice that not all immigrants face any major challenges related to immigration and many can even feel more comfortable in the new country as shown in this study as well.

## **7.2 Investigating intercultural identities through art making**

It was obvious that making art was important for the immigrant artists in their life in general, and therefore also for the immigration and intercultural identity development. However, the participants had major difficulties in explaining how these were related in concrete ways. The interviewees expressed that art and identities are so closely related that one cannot really extract the two. This could also be one of the reasons for the difficulties in explaining how they were connected in concrete ways. It might be also that because identity is a very abstract concept, it is difficult to describe it with precision. The concept of cultural identity was also experienced as a very broad and difficult term, and the informants defined it in a variety of ways. The most interesting finding in this was that many of them used the theme of womanhood frequently in

their work. So, was gender identity more predominant for them than, for instance, the national identity? Mostly they described that they dealt with womanhood because they were women, and in general it seemed that they identified themselves strongly with being women. There are women around the world and there are many things that connect them no matter in which country they live in, and therefore this identity could be described as universal. Could it then be possible that they found the gender identity more relevant in the new surroundings because through that they had something in common but through, for instance, national identity they did not have that much in common with the people in Finland? This would be interesting in the future studies to examine if different aspects of cultural identity become more predominant when moving to a foreign culture to find something else in common than the nationality. It is commonly known that individuals usually try to find something in common with other people.

As mentioned earlier, many of the interviewees had difficulties in describing what their cultural identity really was. Kim (2001) defined intercultural identity not as a state but as a continuum from cultural identity to intercultural identity in which new life patterns are explored and the boundaries of identity extended. She also stated that it is a broader, richer, and more complex version of a person's original cultural identity. According to this definition, it could be assumed that most of the interviewees of this study were already in this continuum from cultural identity to intercultural identity because they were not able to describe a clear entity as their cultural identity. In other words, these boundaries of identity that Kim introduced were unclear for many of the participants. They also expressed some ideas about the richer identity and more open-minded attitude towards diversity. However, interestingly Kim also talked about the important elements of individualization and universalization in the development process of intercultural identity. Individualization means an emerging self that allows individuals to live

their lives without being strictly constrained to any traditional classifications of social groups. This definition also supports the assumption that most of the participants already were in this continuum. However, Kim has also said that this individualization involves a clear self-definition, heightened self-awareness and self-identity, feeling of certainty of one's place in the world and seeing the mutuality with respect to other people. The interviewees expressed ideas about mutuality with other people and heightened self-awareness but many of them did not express ideas about having a clear self-definition. Therefore, it would be valuable to study further the role of heightened self-definition in the intercultural identity formation process. Universalization, instead, means seeing the oneness and unity of humanity. This was also seen in many of the interviews by telling that we are all different but still the same.

Kim (2001) divided the process of intercultural transformation into three different facets: functional fitness, psychological health, and intercultural identity. Functional fitness means the capability to communicate successfully and carry out the everyday-life activities smoothly. Psychological health, instead, reflects as the normal and taken-for-granted state of being. These two are then accompanied by the emergence of the intercultural identity. When comparing these three facets to the meanings of art described by the interviewees, some connections can be recognized. First of all, the participants expressed ideas about art as communication, and that it was useful when they were not yet familiar with the host language and other communication patterns. This can be seen to relate with the functional fitness aspect. Secondly, the participants told that art helped them to balance their lives and that it was very important for their wellbeing which relates to the psychological health facet of intercultural transformation. This could mean that these two are relevant to each other, and therefore it would be interesting to combine these two, and further studies about this topic are needed.

Collier and Thomas (1988 as cited in Gudykunst, 2005) argued in their cultural identity theory that we have multiple identities and cultural identity is only one of them. According to my data, it can be difficult to separate these different identities. For instance, one participant told that for her everything in her identity and self was interconnected. So, can we really separate these multiple identities or is it only one big identity which includes many different aspects? I was also wondering if all identities are actually cultural identities. Cultural identity theory has faced some critique because of its view that individuals could freely choose between their identities in a “chameleon-like-fashion” (Gudykunst, 2005, p. 240). There was an interesting connection to this when one of the participants used a similar description to picture her cultural identity, adaptation and the change in this process. In this description it seems like one could not choose it.

*P2: You're just like a chameleon, you just change color a little bit and then you move to another occasion and you're like "oh, now I'm red and I'm supposed to be green!"*

Another aspects Collier and Thomas (1988 as cited in Gudykunst, 2005) discussed in their theory of cultural identity were avowals, ascriptions, and salience. Avowals such as representing oneself as a woman were found from the data. Also, ascriptions were found such as the interviewee saw the others defining her/him as an immigrant but one did not identify with being an immigrant herself or the others defined one according to her nationality although one identified herself more according to a specific region. Although many of the participants did not describe their cultural identities very clearly, they mentioned things that show that at least their national identities were sometimes quite salient.

The results also showed an interesting aspect about the pressure to assimilate. In one of the interviews, an opposing opinion emerged. This participant told that, in his opinion, being

an immigrant made his life easier because in Finland he did not feel the pressure to be like the others. In fact, according to him he could never be like the Finns. So, he thought that as an immigrant “being different was allowed” for him and therefore life was easier. Nowadays, it could be argued that does one have to move to a foreign country or otherwise have an intercultural background to develop an intercultural identity or is this happening also amongst other people because of globalization (KOÇ, 2006; Jensen, Arnett & McKenzie, 2011). At least with these participants it seemed that many of them had a quite intercultural identity already before coming to Finland.

In this study, the expression “use art” has been used quite often. However, it was noticed that these artists mostly did not purposefully use art in investigating their intercultural identities or in the entire process of immigration. It was probably more unconscious because they were not able to describe the process and connections very clearly, and it seemed like some of them realized during the interview that art might have had a role in that. In general, according to the results, this study agrees with Hall’s (2002) notion that the concept of identity is not as transparent and simple as we often tend to think.

### **7.3 Evaluation of the study**

While doing research it is always important for the researcher to evaluate the study constantly and acknowledge the limitations of the study. In qualitative research, the researcher has to constantly assess the decisions made about the study, and this way take into account the reliability of the study in the entire process (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998). Every research has its limitations, and therefore it is important to be aware of them. The reliability of the study usually means the repeatability of the results. The validity, instead, is often defined as the competency of the research method in measuring the matter it has been intended to measure. Although these

terms are not always used in the qualitative method, the study has to be evaluated. The precise and continuous description about the progression of the study in different stages plays a very important role in evaluating the qualitative study (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara, 2009). In this study, the aim has been to describe the entire process as precisely as possible.

The research methods were chosen for the purposes of the study. The qualitative method and interviews were seen to suit the best for the purposes of this study because the aim was to explore the individual thoughts and experiences. The number of the participants was quite small but as this study is qualitative it does not aim at producing generalizable information about a larger group of people. It only aims at giving more in-depth information about this specific group of people by unraveling their thoughts and experiences. The quite limited amount of previous research about the topic can also lower the reliability of this study. There is plenty of research about identity and cultural identity but not much about the connectedness of art and cultural identities and almost not at all about the relation of art making and intercultural identity formation.

There might be some limitations because of the specific group of people interviewed for this study. All participants were artists which may have had an either positive or negative impact on the results. On one hand, they all had a very positive attitude towards art and art making and no opposing opinions aroused, and this may have had an impact on the findings. On the other hand, they also had a lot of experience and knowledge of art and they were prone to artistic expression. This way they had more knowledge about the topic I was interested in, and therefore the artists were chosen as the focus group. In the future, it would be interesting to do a similar study, for instance, with a group of non-artist immigrants who have taken part in an art project or workshop and see what kinds of experiences they have about this topic.



Beforehand, there were doubts about the suitability of using Skype for the interviews because the aim of this study was to gather more in-depth information, and technology is critiqued to create distance between the parties in communication. This difference in the collection method can, of course, cause some differences within the data but it is believed these differences are only minor. It was felt that the people who were interviewed via Skype talked freely about the discussed topics. Also, the main purpose of this study was not to compare and parallel the interviews but just to collect different opinions about the topic and through that get a bigger picture about the phenomenon. The aim was also to make the distance as small as possible by sending the interview questions beforehand to the participants and also informing them about the relaxed nature of the interview.

Other important points from the viewpoint of the evaluation of the study were the languages used for the interviews and the language skills of the researcher and the participants in these languages. Four of the interviews were held in Finnish, which was not the native language of the participants, and therefore the participants might have had some difficulties in expressing themselves. Identity is often considered to be a very complex and abstract concept, and the data of this study showed again this difficulty. Therefore, one more aspect that has to be taken into account when evaluating the reliability of this study is that because of the nature of the data the results are only interpretations of the researcher.

## **7.4 Conclusion**

The present study aimed at uncovering the meanings and purposes of art making to immigrant artists and examining how art is used in the investigation of intercultural identities by them. The interviews succeeded to show a great number of meanings of art and some signs also about possible identity investigation through art making.

The results supported the earlier research done on the meanings of art. They showed that art was very important for all of the interviewees and it had a variety of meanings for them. Many of these meanings could be seen to relate to identity investigation and be useful for the whole adaptation process. The presented meanings could be divided into three main categories: wellbeing and self-investigation, communication, and practical benefits. The first research question focused more on what the meanings were and the second aimed at finding answers to how the intercultural identities were investigated. The results showed that most of the participants were already in the process of intercultural identity development and, in fact, many of them showed signs that they had had an intercultural identity already before moving to Finland. Most of them had lived in other countries before coming to Finland or otherwise had a quite multicultural background. Although there were signs that art might have been used for investigating intercultural identities, the artists were not able to express many ways how this was done and seen in practice. It also seemed that they had not realized this function themselves but, for instance, the selected themes in their art works implied that there might be a connection. This again showed the complex nature of identity and that often things such as identity formation and development are processes that happen unconsciously.

According to the results, art can be very useful for immigrants in the adaptation process to a new culture in many ways which shows that it could be utilized even more in this process. Art has been already used in different projects and workshops targeted for immigrants in their early path of acculturation. The results of this study could be useful for organizations that offer these kinds of activities for immigrants. This study aimed at highlighting the importance that the initiative for art making or any other activity comes from the participant. Art making might work in this way for people who have the tendency of artistic expression. Of course, other

people can benefit from it as well in some ways such as meeting new people and expressing themselves. Intercultural identity development is something that happens necessarily and art is not crucial in that process. However, it can be a beneficial tool for it.

The results also showed an interesting connection between several participants about the importance of gender identity. This can, of course, be only a coincidence. It is also a commonly known fact that people usually try to find something in common with other people. This evokes a question that could it be possible for other aspects of cultural identity, such as gender identity, to become more important when there is no longer a common national identity in the new environment. Studying this possible change in the importance of different cultural identities while immigration, would therefore add knowledge about the identity development.

This study aimed at finding more practical information on how the investigation of intercultural identities was done but at the end it showed again the difficult natures of both identity and culture. There are plenty of different definitions and no clear consensus about neither of the concepts. It seemed like many of the participants of this study had already quite intercultural identities even before coming to Finland which created an interest in comparing the intercultural identity formation and adaptation of people who have significant intercultural experience prior immigration and people who do not have that much experience. Another interesting topic more related to art would be to have both artists and non-artists with immigrant backgrounds as informants, and compare how their views about art and its functions would differ. For these artists, art was important in the process of immigration but so it was for their whole lives. As it was said in several of the interviews, art was an integral part of their entire lives and their selves. In other words, art was important in many ways for these artists because it was their way of living. Therefore, there is a little doubt if the art projects and workshops

organized for immigrants really work. Further studies to test the efficiency of these kinds of projects would be interesting to find out if making art works in the same way with people who are not as prone to expressing themselves through art as artists.

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## APPENDICES (4)

### Appendix 1: The Interview Questions in English

#### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- Age?
- Education?
- Is art your profession?
  - o Have you had any exhibitions?
- How would you describe your cultural background?
- How long have you been living in Finland?
- Have you lived in any other countries? For how long?
- Why did you come to Finland in the first place?
- How would you describe your living in here so far?

#### INTERVIEWEE'S ART

- What art form?
- Main topics/themes?
- How long have you been doing art?
  - o Why did you start doing art?

#### THE ROLES OF ART

- Why do you do art now?
  - o What do you want to say with it?
- How do you feel while doing art?
- How does art making change you or does it?
- How the changes and experiences in your life are seen in your art? Moving to another country?
- How has your art developed/changed over time? Why?
- What does being an artist mean to you?



- What do you think when people call you an immigrant artist?
- Do you try to affect to other people with your art?
- Who do you make your art for?

### CULTURAL IDENTITY

- Tell about your identity/ies
- What does cultural identity mean to you?
- How has your cultural identity changed over time or has it?
  - o How do you feel about your cultural identity (proud, confused etc.)?
- How do you express your cultural identity?
- Has your identity changed due to immigration?
- Has immigration built some obstacles/created new opportunities for maintaining or building your identity?
- What is the connection between your cultural identity and making art, or is there any?

### INTERCULTURAL EXPERIENCES

- What kinds of challenges have you faced after moving to another country (e.g. adaptation problems, racism, language barriers, other cultural barriers etc.)?
  - o Have you used art as a way to deal with these challenges? How?

## Appendix 2: The original quotations in Finnish

- 1) *...minun pääteema ovat naiset. Se on niin kuin niiden erilaisia kulttuureja ja nyt kun mä asun ulkomailla Suomessa, mä voin katsoa erilaisia niin kuin, että mikä se on se rooli naisella täällä Suomessa ja mä mietin myös erilaisia kulttuureja, joihin olen myös tutustunut täällä Suomessa, esimerkiksi, musliminaisiin ja aasialaisiin naisiin ja mietin aina, että me ollaan samanlaisia joo...mutta kulttuuri on jotain, joka joskus erottaa meidät, joka voi antaa sen pienen asian, joka vaikuttaa paljon ja sitten me pidämme...mä mietin...no mä mietin paljon tästä naisten teemasta...no että meidän pitää saada kaikki oikeudet maailmassa ja meidän pitää kaikkien pitää aina yhtä ja meidän pitää olla vapaita täällä ja erilaisissa maissa, mutta vielä pitää tehdä paljon. Ja tästä tulee se idea, että aina minun taideteokset ovat naisia ja feminiinisiä, ja myös kollektiivisia.*
- 2) *Nyt mä itse tiedän, mutta toivon mukaan tällä hetkellä mun teoksissa ei heijastu niin paljon, että missä maassa mä opiskelin, koska mun mielestä...se ei ole paha, kun teoksen sisällä on jonkun maan mentaliteetti...mutta minun mielestäni taiteessa ei ole rajoja, ei ole mentaliteettia...se on hyvä, koskettava tai toisella tavalla ei. Tämän mä yritän...se on mun punainen lanka. Kun ihmiset näkevät teoksen, on vaikea vastata onko se miestaiteilija tai nainen tai minkä maalainen hän on. Tällä hetkellä varmaan monet teokset heijastavat, että olen nainen.*
- 3) *No merkitys minulle itselle kuin ihmiselle...se on kuin lääke. Kun ihmisellä on esimerkiksi syöpä ja antavat hänelle pysyvästi lääkettä, että jos ei ole tuota lääkettä, hän kuolee...*
- 4) *...mä otin sellaisen linjan, että emmä sillä tavalla halua vaikuttaa (...) Mä ajattelen, että elämällä hyvin tai yrittämällä elää oikein tai...niin sillä tavalla voi eniten vaikuttaa. Mä ajattelen, että ihmiset ei aina kaipaa sitä poliittista taidetta vaan ihmiset kaipaa monenlaista taidetta. Mä arvostan kyllä niitä taiteilijoita, jotka tekevät sitä ja se on tärkeää, mutta mä koen, että mun luonne ei ole sellainen, että minun pitäisi samalla tavalla vaikuttaa.*
- 5) *Niin. No mulle se on sama niinku laulajan työ, ne laulaa aina niiku aiheista ja ne haluaa myös niinku vaikuttaa maailmaan, että mikä on...ne laulaa niinku ihmisille ja kansalaisille, että mitä ne haluaa sanoa, mutta ne ei voi, ja meillä on mahdollista mennä lavalle ison yleisön eteen ja laulaa ja sanoa, että tämä on hyvää ja tämä on pahaa. Minä taas tanssijana kerron maailmaa niin kuin kehon kautta ja se on niin kuin minun viesti, mitä mä voin myöskin antaa maailmalle, mikä on tärkeää, ilman niinku sanoja. Sekin on, kun kieli on vielä niinku on niin rajallinen tai sä et puhu maan kieltä ja se on raja. Sä et voi niinku sanoa sun mielipiteitä, mutta tanssin kautta mä voin, mun mielestä, missä maassa vain niinku keskustella maailman kanssa.*

- 6) *Ei haittaa, koska minä tiedän kuka minä olen. Sitten mä mietin, että joskus...mä tiedän, että joillekin on myös tärkeää, että me ei olla vain maahanmuuttajia. Se on todella iso kysymys, koska jos mä olen...mä olen keskustellut paljon, että miten erottaa tai miten tehdä...että me maahanmuuttajat, miten me voimme mennä sisään kulttuuriin, jos aina joku laittaa lapun meidän otsalle, niin kuin ehdottamaan, mutta mä myös mietin, että me ollaan vieraassa maassa, joka on adoptoinut meidän.*
- 7) *Mun mielestäni ihan sama. Se voi olla, että se vaikuttaa, että kun asuimme Venäjällä ja kun koulussa...se oli vielä Neuvostoliitto aikaa...ja kun takana ”shshshs tuon äiti on suomalainen”. Siis, kun muutimme tänne se oli ”shshshs tuo on venäläinen”, että mä opin elämään ajatuksen kanssa ja koska myöhemmin, kun oli vielä Neuvostoliiton vaihto aikoja niin se oli vielä ”shshsh hän on suomalainen”. Venäjällä eivät sanoneet, että inkerinsuomalainen vaan suomalainen. Ja alussa se oli negatiivinen, sitten se oli enemmän positiivinen ja siis monet asiat vaikuttaa ja sisälläni joskus, kun oli pieni, mietin, että miksi...miksi se on niin tärkeää. Mä olen sellainen kuin mä olen. Ja mun rakas äiti, mun äiti...että miten se vaikuttaa, että minkä maalainen hän on.*
- 8) *No mitä se kulttuuri-identiteetti merkitsee mulle, se merkitsee mulle ensimmäisenä...se on sukunimi. Ja se on niinku inhimillisuus, sukunimi, kulttuuri ja jos sä ymmärrät hyvin kulttuureja tai taidetta, ei voi sanoa, että tämä on tämä ihminen ja tämä on tämä...tai jos tekee kulttuuritöitä ja eri visioita maailmasta...joo ja...mulle se merkitsee aika paljon, koska kaikki kulttuurit ovat erilaisia ja kaikki kulttuurit ovat tärkeitä. Suomalainen kulttuuri ei ole sen parempi kuin burkinafasolainen kulttuuri ja burkinafasolainen kulttuuri ei ole sen parempi kuin suomalainen kulttuuri ja meidän pitää niinku ne...mulla on nyt ne molemmat kulttuurit ja se antaa mulle niinku...se on rikkaampi kun mulla on ne kaksi kulttuuria ja olen löytänyt niinku ne ja ei sano, että on parempi ja on huonompi. Niissä molemmissa on niinku huonoa ja hyvää.*
- 9) *No kyllä se, mulle ne liittyy, koska mä en sano, että tää on mun taide ja tää on mun elämä. Mulle se taide ja mun elämä on yhdessä ja mun kulttuuri...ja niinku mun elämä ja taide ne ovat kaikki yhdessä.*

### Appendix 3: Information letter

#### RESEARCH ABOUT IMMIGRANT ARTISTS AND THEIR CULTURAL IDENTITIES

Dear artist,

I am doing my master's thesis about the meanings of art to immigrant artists. I am interested in the role of art in the formation of intercultural identity and in the process of migrating to another country. The aim of the study is to better understand the meanings of art in the big life events, such as migration. Now, I am looking for artists with immigrant background who would be interested in participating and being interviewed for my study.

Currently, I am a master's degree student in intercultural communication in the University of Jyväskylä. My supervisor for this research project is PhD Marko Siitonen, the senior lecturer in the department of communication in the University of Jyväskylä.

The focus of the interview is on the feelings and thoughts of the artist and no foreknowledge or preparation is needed. I will personally conduct the interviews and the interviews can be held in Finnish or English depending on the preferences of the participant. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed but the names of the participants will be kept confidential at all times.

If you are interested in participating in this study, the only thing we require from you is to participate in the interview during the fall 2014. The participants should be immigrants and artists of any field of art. Art does not have to be your fulltime profession but it should at least be a very serious and goal-oriented hobby.

If you have any questions regarding the study or you would like to participate in the interviews, please contact me by email as soon as possible ([emirjele@student.jyu.fi](mailto:emirjele@student.jyu.fi)). Also, if you know any artist who might be suitable and interested in participating, you can forward my contact details.

Respectfully Yours,

Emmi Jelekäinen

[emirjele@student.jyu.fi](mailto:emirjele@student.jyu.fi)

## **Appendix 4: Letter of Consent**

### **LETTER OF CONSENT**

Dear Participant,

I am very pleased to have you as a participant in my study. I am a Master's Degree student in Intercultural Communication in the University of Jyväskylä. My current study examines the meanings of art for immigrant artists and their cultural identity formation through art making.

Your participation is voluntary but very important for the study. Participating involves taking part in an interview that will be audiotaped. The interview questions will be related to your own thoughts and feelings about your art and your cultural identity. In the beginning there will also be some questions about your background.

The interviews are then transcribed. You can ask the copy of the transcript of your interview.

The researcher can attach and quote the written transcript of your interview in this research project. The names of the participants will be kept confidential.

If you have any questions about the interview or the research project, please feel free to contact me via email ([emirjele@student.jyu.fi](mailto:emirjele@student.jyu.fi)).

Sincerely,

Emmi Jelekäinen

**I agree to take part in this study.**

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_