

Pair Interview 4

<p>Interviewer</p>	<p>I would like to welcome and thank you for participating in today's focus group discussion as part of my Master's Thesis in this Educational Leadership programme on the matter of discussing on what it means to study in an academic environment in a Finnish higher education institution - which we are in right now, the University of Jyväskylä. Well, you know my name... Christine Niemi and I am a Master's degree student here at the University.</p> <p>As an international student in an international programme, previous experiences of teaching and learning in different places come here together and may influence the educational setting, in which you find yourself in, in various ways, positively and negatively.</p> <p>The aim of this focus group discussion is therefore to provide an opportunity for you to share your experiences and thoughts in an official space as a student here at JYU with specific focus on your engagement in academic work and the academic environment.</p> <p>Äh... Your views will be used to understand the teaching and learning environment from the student perspective and eventually further develop certain content areas such as research methods courses, research seminars and individual supervision. The main aim of the research at this stage is awareness building. By sharing the findings of this research, it is hoped that providers of international programmes can better respond to the diverse experiences and backgrounds of international participants.</p> <p>This should not last longer than an hour. So, 10 past 11 ish. Please note that the following session is video-and audio-recorded and informed consent sheets have been provided and you have signed them and I will provide you a copy.</p> <p>Ok, I am gonna address basically three main... well, certain themes... individual experiences, group work experiences, the support which is provided here at the university and then in the end I will provide you also space to provide recommendations.</p> <p>I will give you some background on yourself, so you know who you are sitting next to. So, we have P8. He is ('cultural' background P8), but your mother tongue is (mother tongue P8) and (mother tongues P8) and you are currently second-year education student. You have completed a degree in English before, an honesty degree programme in (home country P8), but you have done an internship in (ESL environment). And then we have P7, who is (nationality P7) and your mother tongue is (mother tongue P7) and you are first-year Educational Leadership student and you have completed a Bachelor's degree in (home country P7), I don't know which language though...</p>
<p>P7</p>	<p>English.</p>

Interviewer	And you haven't submitted a thesis. You (P8) have submitted a thesis.
P8	Yes.
Interviewer	And, could you provide a bit of background what kind of people you were surrounded by in your degree program in your Bachelor's. Did you have international students there as well?
P7	No, it was just local.
Interviewer	Ok, and you (P8) said you had one...
P8	One... from (student from ESL environment).
Interviewer	So, usually they offered this to international students, but you had only one.
P8	Yeah.
Interviewer	Ok. So, we start out with very general questions and you can just start talking to each other about those. How do you manage your studies at JYU? How would you describe your study experiences so far? What has gone well and what has been difficult and why?
P7	<p>A lot. Can I look at it?</p> <p>How do I manage it? I don't know. Week by week. It's not like I plan the entire semester day by day, but I go week by week and see how I do. How would you describe your study experience so far? Interesting (smiling). <i>I kinda came here expecting not much, but some kind of stimulating environment that, you know... puts us in that position of experiential learning (P8: Yeah) or anything that we learn in theory.</i> We will experience it, but that wasn't that much here. And it was pretty traditional, but the assessment methods were very new for me. So, I love that. No exams and I was used to exams. So, I really love the assessment methods. What is going well, what has been difficult? Having the independence to chose was like 'What?' (P7 and P8 laughing). That was difficult because in the Bachelor's I did and even in school, we had like set text books and set curriculum that we have to learn and remember and present (smiling). But here is like choosing, you have to chose, you are responsible for everything. That was kinda shocking in the beginning, but now I am getting used to it and it's going pretty well. Yeah, that's basically it. I am that kind of person that learns from any environment. So, I kinda learn even if the environment is not very rich (P8: living). But I would prefer more...</p>
Interviewer	Hands on...
P7	Yes. (Laughing)
P8	I think there are similarities for me, but I think also there are differences, especially in the programme. I am not doing the Leadership. For my day to day is more panic, when I first arrived here because it was so different in my previous experience in (home country P8) where in (home country P8) you have a set for weeks like this,

	<p>your schedule. Whereas over here, you have to check every morning exactly, because there is a chance your classes are always changing. So every week is not the same days you have. So, that was a new experience for me. And, yeah,... more kinda experience and I think in our programme, we were able to explore more, which is good for me I suppose because this is the part how education should be.. Really hands-on and your stimulus as well. Can I just have a look at?...</p>
Interviewer	<p>Yeah.</p>
P8	<p>My study experience... (?) in the programme itself. It's (shortly laughing).. I was hoping to learn more in regard to the subjects. It is quite similar to what I have done previously. So, that was a slight disappointment for me. But the way I learn here, is nice as well. It is not very grounded in text books. There are options to do that, but here you kind of have the discussion open more as well, which is good. And I sat in classes where you have to do examinations and there is no other way.</p>
Interviewer	<p>So, that is maybe different between the programmes.</p>
P8	<p>Yeah. But then there are classes, where the teacher can be more flexible. So, I think I have mentioned before... I am not sure if that has to do with the programme itself or how the teacher kinda take approach on it. What has gone well and what has been difficult for me. Difficult part was the way we have been assessed, it was more kinda of all the classes are within one month. So, it is just piling up for us basically and that was difficult for me because I haven't been studying for two years after I graduated first time. So... but was has been going well, was the support that you get here. I think you get lots of support if you ask for it. But you really have to kind of venture out and be brave to ask for help because it is not really signed properly and maybe not in English as well. That's the thing. It could also be because of my own naivety, I guess... (laughing) not looking hard enough maybe or being too afraid. But, yeah...</p>
Interviewer	<p>Ok. You have both like done your Bachelor's in English. When it comes to the academic reading and writing processes, are you familiar with those or was it more difficult or easier. Did it prepare you for coming here? Maybe better?</p>
P8	<p>For me it was a breeze 'cause it is for my kinda mother tongue. So, I am bilingual anyway. So, I grew up with English as well.</p>
P7	<p>Hm, certain concepts were familiar, but I haven't written a thesis before. So, I found the course helpful in that way. Language-wise I didn't have a problem because I grew up learning in English environment. So, yeah.. The process of writing a thesis and how it's done here, I got to know through the course. So I think it was useful for me.</p>
Interviewer	<p>Ok, back home you got prepared a bit?</p>
P7	<p>Yeah, language-wise. But not writing a thesis.</p>
Interviewer	<p>Ok. So, the next questions, they are based on your individual experiences and then the next section is going to address similar questions on group work experiences. So I</p>

	<p>have this lovely quote here.</p> <p>Often as part of a course here at JYU, it is your task to write an essay in an academic format and this is referred to academic writing. Additionally, the so-called final project is to conduct a small scale research and write a Master's thesis supervised by professors and senior lecturers. The thesis topics are related to the research areas of the Faculty of Education. The thesis process is supported by research method course, research seminars and individual supervision.</p> <p>So, this is a direct quote from the JYU website on how to.. Or that you find (project thesis?) basically, but these questions next refer to assignments and this process as well. So, how do you approach like individually, when you have an individual assignment, a given assignment. Can you think of an example, which has gone well and you were pleased with and can you think of an example you were disappointed with and then explain a bit around.</p>
P8	I only have one experience where it was kind of rough, I guess. It was a research class methods thing, which I don't understand why I have to do it.
Interviewer	Which course?
P8	The 101 Research something... yeah, basically the foundation on how to conduct research and so on, which I didn't understand why I have to do it because I have done a thesis before and I have done a research class before in (home country P8). It's just, it has different names, which is similar to some of the classes here, the courses. I have done that before but just because it's different names, I had to do it again. But in that class, there was direct points that you have to follow, but there is no explanations on how you supposed to conduct it. So, a lot of people in the class just took it as 'we can do it anyway we want as long as we follow these points'. And, yeah.. The lecturer was not really happy with everyone. And because we didn't give the exact way that the lecturer wanted it. So, I was also not really, I guess, with the kind of comments that we got because it was a general group comment that we got instead of individual.
Interviewer	General feedback.
P8	Yeah. So, we didn't exactly realize what went wrong. And I think it was more kind of... the communication was not really there. So, that was the bad experience I had.
Interviewer	So, she graded it individually because it was an individual task, but then she gave feedback for the whole group, not on an individual base.
P8	Yeah. So, in the end, we didn't know what went wrong. And when we had to contact the lecturer, it was just not really... (?)
Interviewer	How did you solve it in the end? Was there any?
P8	Yeah, I just went up to the office and kind of waited for her. (laughing) And we had a nice talk, actually we had a lot in common to be honest. Yeah, because I previously sent quite a... aggressive email (laughing) after some time, after two weeks of no

	reply of her. So... regarding individual work. Everything else went pretty well to be honest. It is quite good for me.
Interviewer	Why do you think that is like that? Maybe because of your background? And the English language supports...
P8	I think it is definitely it has a lot to do with my background. I have education background and a lot of the classes are so similar and of course with English being native language. So, yeah.
P7	Individual assessments.
Interviewer	Like.. individual assignments.
P7	Assignments. What went well. My style of writing is naturally academic. So, I didn't find any difficulties in that. The hard part for me was, doing all the readings before the assignment. There is like a lot. And getting it done before writing the assignment, was a challenge for me. Yeah, right now I am gonna be cool. I have like five things to finish before May and I am travelling in four days for the Internship. So, right now I am facing the hard part where I have to finish like eight page-assignments and send it.
Interviewer	Has there been any like.. Because this is only your second semester. So, you maybe have only completed first-semester assignments. Has there any been like... assignment you were disappointed with or not pleased with?
P7	I am disappointed with everything I submit (slightly laughing) because I always think I can do better. But...
Interviewer	But is outcome... but is your outcome reflecting this thinking, you thinking you could do better, but what is the actual outcome for you as a grade or...
P7	No, that's very good. (laughing) That's been good. But I just think that I could have done better, but like... "disappointed" that I still got the grade. (laughing) But, yeah... it's just me. I haven't had major disappointments, but just difficulties completing it.
Interviewer	Time management.
P7	Yeah. But it could be a personal thing and not necessarily the...
Interviewer	Let's see... we could reflect still on the... these research methods courses. Do you think they are supporting your process for individually writing a thesis? You (P7) are not fully done with all of those courses...
P7	No.
P8	From my experience, they are not the best. They are very, pretty much powerpoint-guided. (P7 nodding) So, if it is a class like that, I think it's better if we just get a book and read the book, I think (P7 nodding). We had our space, where we can approach the lecturer or email, where you can ask questions. I think for most of the students, they have never they have never done a thesis before, they find it very difficult. I think

	that's something that you need to support, one to one.. Or at least where you have an open access to kinda have a discussion more freely. So... which is kind of ironic, especially in our programme where reflection is kind of really... you know (slightly laughing)...
Interviewer	Emphasized?
P8	Yes, emphasized and so, it's difficult to have a reflection in this kind of class.
P7	I haven't been through it completely, I guess....
Interviewer	But, you had at least one or two courses?
P7	We had this Research Seminar, where like five professors just came and told us about how research is done, how the thesis is done and different aspects of the thesis. But... I don't know... I think, the timing of it all was so confusing (P8 nodding, smiling). Like... I didn't know 'Ok, this is how I start and this is how I go.' It was like (making arm movements of different things coming to her body)... parts thrown at me (P8 nodding) (laughing) and I have to put it together and I still am trying and I am going to start the thesis and everything in a few months. And I have to go back and then... I think the timing of, even the academic reading and writing... the timing of it was like kinda mismatched with what we were going through as a class. And selecting the topic and you know? And.. already we have to write a literature review...
Interviewer	In the first or second semester...
P7	Yeah.
P8	Yeah, I can actually attest to that as well. Cause some of the classes, they don't actually match up where... what you supposed to have, a topic and everything, a proposal, but you don't have any classes on how to do this. (P7 nodding). So, that was kind of confusing for us in the first year. (P7 nodding) So, but it was a nice thing where they actually... in the last session of the research class, they had previous students to come in to show an example on how they would have done it and so on...
Interviewer	So, they shared their experiences.
P8	Yeah, that was nice.
Interviewer	Ok, now we look into group work experiences because this is quite a big part (P7 and P8 nodding) of the courses here at JYU. Similar question basically... how do you approach assignments within a group or as an individual within a group, could you give an example of an assignment you were pleased with and why and could you give an example of an assignment you were disappointed with and why.
P7	I can go... I drive in groups, I am my best like I work best with people and I love that kind of environment and that was the best part for me in my experience here. And every single group work was very smooth for me cause I work well with people, any kind of people and find a way to work with them. It was all different because people are different, but I didn't have the problem that many people had about others being

	not committed and... because, I just kinda tend to get people together and push them.
Interviewer	So, you are like motivating?
P7	Yeah. But there was one (slightly laughing) group experience where we were all demotivated (slightly laughing) because the topic that we chose, we had nothing to go on with because it was... it wasn't available to us and we tried our best...
Interviewer	Where you allowed to choose the topic or did the teacher give you the topic?
P7	We were allowed to choose the country on which we had to... there was a format of presentation and writing and we had to choose the country on which we have to do that on. And the country we chose was like (smiling) it was UAE and we couldn't find a lot of things about it and that was one difficult, but I wouldn't say disappointing. It was harder than the others but I personally love groups and I get involved in as much group work as possible.
Interviewer	Ok, so you said you had not so much problems with commitment, but what about like.. Different level of skill sets because the students come all from different backgrounds (P7: Yeah, P8 nodding) and usually some for example have submitted a thesis, some of them haven't, some of them have never done group work before in their whole life (P7 and P8 nodding) and then they come here where it's quite emphasized. Did you have any problems with that? Like different kind of skill levels? Or were you lucky in that sense?
P7	You could say lucky, but I think we managed to work. Because positivity (smiling) always... that's why I like groups. Even though it goes down, or 'Ok, you are good at that, you do this, I am good at that, I do this. We put it together.' Even right now, the last course, I am not here for the presentation, but I am preparing the entire PowerPoint and the others are helping with the content. I haven't met them at all, like only in the class and I've been travelling and haven't met them, but it is going well, it's still going well..
Interviewer	It's quite distributive...
P7	Yeah. I volunteer this time because I couldn't meet them and we couldn't form a group bond thingie. So, I volunteered that I will do this, this and this and you guys help with this and if anything more has to be done. It was distributive and it was very smooth for me. Individual assignments were more difficult than group for me (P7 slightly laughing).
Interviewer	Because maybe you are lacking the energy of the people...
P7	Not just the energy, but also the information to do the assignment. When I am doing by myself, sometimes I could miss out on things because it's bound to happen with me, but in a group I get reminded about (P8 nodding) all the aspects and I focus more.
P8	Yeah, for me group work has been a grand experience here to be honest. I have

	<p>enjoyed it, everyone has been kind of supportive and nice. I like working in groups because of the different interactions, and different kind of way of thinking, which I always really enjoy. Difficulties in group work so far... I'd like to say 'culture', but I think that's just an excuse for me, you know people kinda say 'Oh, yeah... but this was this and this.', because when you are working on something that should be the main focus (P7 nodding). It shouldn't be how your cultures influencing you in any way I think or any format (P7 nodding). And we should be more focused on the topic. This is my believe. So, I try to kind of put forward that kind of way of thinking. And, yeah.. It's helpful in some cases, but in some cases it's not, you get people that are quite shy and it's the first time also doing group work. So, yeah...</p>
Interviewer	<p>So, the shyness is like what may refers to 'culture' like because they come from areas where they haven't done group work and then suddenly they are put into a group and they...</p>
P8	<p>I can't be 100% sure because it is international settings. So, maybe they are not really comfortable using the language, that they are not used to every day speaking with. With our group, it was quite a small group. So, in most cases in our class it is always the same people, but when we are in different classes with other groups. All of the international, they would stick to their own groups. And there are occasions when the lecturers (P7 nodding) kind of appoint the groups and those moments are interesting (P7 nodding) cause there are occasions you just sit there and you look at each other for a moment kinda figuring out 'What are you doing, what do you want?' So, another point that has been difficult, is probably how our programmes cause everyone is from different courses, it is difficult to meet up. So, and this has caused issues in some group works I believe, especially with one of my classes where there was every single week we have to meet twice and it is so difficult because we don't have any classes with this and then we have to meet up after reading two kind of sets of reading and discuss about it and in the end you have to do a big kind of project book. So, that was difficult because everyone is always in different stages, will you make it to the class and so on. I have no solutions regarding this because if you can't really meet up and discuss it, it's difficult in the end to kinda hand in something that is based on a group work (P7 nodding), I believe.</p>
Interviewer	<p>When it comes to writing an essay together, had you any challenges there? Because people have different kind of writing skills and writing styles...</p>
P8	<p>Yeah, I questioned one of the students because when they were speaking, their English was not so great. But when you read the writing, it's so academically well written, which kind of creates suspicion (slightly laughing). I thought 'How is this possible?'. So, and I didn't want to get the whole group kind of marked down because of that cause I am not sure if it was kind of plagiarized. Yeah, so... that was an interesting experience.</p>
Interviewer	<p>But how did you react on that? Did you...</p>
P8	<p>I just got up and asked the person (laughing).</p>
Interviewer	<p>And the person said...?</p>

P8	Asked 'Can you explain this, what you mean?' and so on, which that person was finding it difficult to explain what they've written. So...
Interviewer	So, there was a different level of writing and reading...
P8	... understanding as well. So.. but in the end, I just kind of believe (slightly laughing), we have to believe (P7 nodding).
Interviewer	... that it was written by that person...
P8	Yeah.
Interviewer	What about you?
P7	I didn't have any problem like that. The problem of differences in writing happened when we had to write a huge assignment with five people, but one of us took the lead to like go through it and correct the writing style. So, that it's all uniform. It was a breeze.
Interviewer	So, again appoint a person who is going to do that and maybe who has the skills to do it...
P7	Who volunteers, not has the skills necessarily, who has the time to do it.
P8	See.. for me I think that is not necessary, especially in group work we have to a big kind of assignment because it shows the different flows of thinking as well, how you write. So, as long as everything correct English, I think it is ok (P7 nodding). But to have everything the same style of writing, it's not necessary for me.
Interviewer	Ok, we have addressed this already a bit but.. Ideally, academic support should be constructed around your needs, the needs of the students. So, this is very much referring to your maybe supervisors, research seminars responsables and the research methods lecturers. To what extent have you been supported for your academic work here at JYU, are you satisfied with the support you receive. Yes, no, why.
P8	I am pretty happy with the support I've received so far. I think, as I said before, it's really up to us to kind of just go and ask. I've find t really strange where you can't just enter to the office, you have to either ring the doorbell outside from afar, kind of creates distance and I think that also creates barrier where maybe you wouldn't feel so comfortable to go up. But, when you email them, in most cases they reply quite quickly.
Interviewer	In some cases as you mentioned not.
P8	In some cases, yeah. When you ask questions, but when you ask for feedback, that's a different matter, yeah.
Interviewer	Ah, ok.

P8	They don't really respond that much, sometimes they don't respond at all. So, but I think the university provides a good support. It's there, you just have to figure it out and go and get it. (laughing)
P7	What do you mean by 'support' like in what aspect?
Interviewer	Well.. you have quite... there are students in this university who have not a skill set of writing and reading academically and you kind of have that already, you bring it from back home. So, you may not have experienced any problems. Maybe you are, as P8 also, a bit more proactive (P7 nodding) when you want something, you try and ask. So, these courses you had so far, how did they academically for example enhanced your skills.
P7	Yeah, regarding asking for support. I didn't that much. I usually, I find it difficult to ask for support. (Pause) What I needed support the most, was during the... there was a personal development plan session, course (P8 nodding). I kinda expected more there, but it was just.... I didn't get any clarity about myself out of it. I didn't understand the point out of it.
P8	Is it when we have to go, you know, website and kind of put all your schedules and so on?
P7	Not exactly. That too. But, it was a one on one with T3.
P8	Ah, ok.
P7	And.. we were talking, it was useful, but I expected more questioning towards me that would guide me to... you know... find what I like (smiling). Maybe that's the wrong expectation, I don't know, but that's what I expected to have some clarity of what I wanna do, which I figured very late in time (smiling). If I could have done that... I thought this session was about that figuring out how you are gonna do your studies here and how you gonna plan it, but yeah...
Interviewer	But is wasn't necessarily about that...
P7	It wasn't. I can't even remember every part of it (slightly laughing). It was very short and it was about, like you said (addressing P8) something to do online, she was talking to me about the courses. At that point I was like 'What? I can't understand ... (?)' (P8 laughing)... It was just (making hand movement over head).
Interviewer	Too much.
P7	Yeah, too much to digest. It was like the first or second week I think (P8 nodding) and it was... I couldn't, I was just grasping the way things work here well it was there. Yeah, I thought that was one thing I would like to comment on. But otherwise the support is good like in the class, for the assignment, anytime you have a question, the teacher respond and if you can't understand, they're gonna help you and they're gonna send materials for you to read (P8: Yeah) and gain more knowledge.
P8	I think for us, for our group, I kinda speak for the year before or the year now after, but

	regarding their personal development kind of classes, we took it upon ourself to go up to our coordinator and ask 'Is it possible for us to use this space to kinda create classes and lesson plans?' So, where we would actually sit there as a group and teach each other. So, that kinda space was given to us.
Interviewer	So, like a peer support in that sense.
P8	Yeah. So, whatever kind of subject or interest you have and you want to share it with the group. I think that's a good thing.
P7	That's a good idea. Thank you. Yeah, because every single one of them is doing different things (P8: yeah) and we don't even know what they are doing and then regret not doing that because we also interested in it. It is a good idea.
P8	I know now that the coordinator has taken it to the next year. So, now the new first year students are doing that as well.
Interviewer	So, it has helped actually maybe.
P8	Yeah
Interviewer	To further develop it, this process.
P8	Yeah.
P7	To at least know what you wanna do or not (P8 nodding) and what's available. Alright.
Interviewer	P8 do you think you have.. Or in what ways do you think you have developed as a student academically here at JYU?
P8	I had this conversation with C2, my coordinator (smiling). Not much. As I said previously (slightly laughing), the classes and the courses are so similar. What I have learned mostly, is kind of social way. I have learned a lot more about myself actually (slightly laughing). It's always quite interesting, but... I mean they are quite similar. (?) Academically.... (Pause) it's a personal thing as I said, not much. I've learned a few more things of course, we all do, but...
Interviewer	Did you expect more?
P8	No, I don't have any expectation. I was actually more feared.. I was so afraid to start this programme. Yeah and when I realize, this is quite easy (slightly laughing), I was a bit disappointed. So...
Interviewer	What do you mean by easy? Just because it is so similar?
P8	Yeah, it is. So similar. So and I guess it was more support than I realize. I thought being a Master student, you are so independent in everything, it's kind of (P7 nodding) thrown at you, but here.. They throw at you, but at the same time they open the door

	(slightly laughing), which is nice. Yeah.
Interviewer	Ok, you (addressing P7) have addressed already a bit like this recommendation section, for example the personal learning plan or how was it called?
P7	(agreeing) Personal development plan.
Interviewer	Yeah.
P8	PDP.
Interviewer	Yeah. Do you have anything else in that area what you would like to see more, differently...
P8	I like with my supervisor at least that you can just basically interaction and we can any question even if it is not regarding with the thesis (smiling). I wish that's possible with every lecturer, but I don't think it is... granted they are busy and they have their own kind of life. They don't really wanna go back home and open an email and say 'Ah, here we go again, questions.' (laughing) So, but I think there should be some sort of space like that because we are not just students, we are also going to be educators in the end. So, if this is the whole point of educating and working together, there should be kind of... instead of saying one thing, but behaving differently (smiling). So, yeah.
P7	If you ask me for recommendations. There was this course, which started of with C2 and T3. In the beginning when we entered, this was the first session ever. Like an introduction. And we had the same before we broke off the first semester, after the first semester... just like a start and an end reflection type of thing. I think maybe having that more (P8 nodding) as a class, would bring the class together too and also would be a space to give some feedback, which can ratified immediately and not semester by semester (P8 nodding).
Interviewer	So, basically this is the last question. What do you think is the most important thing we've talked about today here.
P8	Her of course (pointing to P7, P7 and P8 laughing). No, I am kidding. You (P7) wanna take this? (laughing)
P7	I am trying to think back. What do you think is the most important thing what we have talked now?
Interviewer	Yeah.
P8	I think our own experiences.
P7	And development.
P8	Yeah.
Interviewer	Would you think, I should add anything to this discussion about academic environment and academic development? Anything you thought was missing to ask

	here?
P8	Regarding academic environment being more outside the classroom would be great I think. I know this is not a teaching programme, the Master's, but I think it would help to have kind of this environment where you are in that setting where you have to practice and so on. You have classes and courses where you can do observation, but being in Finland and most international students don't really speak Finnish, it's kind of difficult (P7 nodding). So, I think it was good that we were provided that space where we can teach for ourself and so on. It would be nice if we could practice that more outside the class.
P7	Reflection spaces as a cohort. Quite often, not very often, but in...
Interviewer	More regularly.
P7	Regularly, yeah. So, we can get on track (P8 agreeing) and not just sit and not do anything or do too much and be like 'What is going on?'. Reflection spaces and ... (pause)...
P8	We have our reflection every week.
P7	That is amazing.
P8	Yeah, it is part of our class... we have to, part of our PDP as well. We have to like every week in our experience and it doesn't just have to be only academic, it can be what you have learned outside as well.
Interviewer	Where do you share that?
P8	Ähm, in ... it is Optima?
Interviewer	Optima.
P8	Yeah.
Interviewer	So, you have like a forum or...
P8	Yeah. We have like a folder. You don't get graded, but you have to do a certain set within one semester.
Interviewer	Every week?
P8	Yeah?
P7	Wow.
Interviewer	Based on like the programme...? Kind of. Not only course-based?
P8	Yeah. Just your experience in the programme itself.
P7	That's brilliant.

P8	I don't know if that's the same in Leadership, but in our programme it is kind of mandatory.
P7	We do not have anything like that.
Interviewer	Is it shared with everyone? Everyone can see it?
P8	Yeah everyone can see it. So, it is really up to you if you wanna show it to everyone, if you wanna share it with C2.
Interviewer	And can people comment on it because that's an option, i think.
P8	Yeah. So, I think this is really good.
Interviewer	Is this maybe something you (P7) would have liked to?
P7	Yeah, I am gonna be taking some notes actually (smiling)
P8	(... whispering... ?) That's why. (P7 and P8 laughing)
P7	One more thing I would like to add, is the way of presentation, the way of conducting the class. I mean we talk about different environments and creating them and stimulating the kids and giving them opportunities to do different things while we are just sitting (P8 commenting, not understandable) and looking at presentations. (P7 and P8 laughing)
Interviewer	So, it is a lack of teaching methods and styles.
P7	For example, yeah. (P8 nodding) T10's class was also presentation, but we could do it any way we want. The first class, he was teaching and briefing us, but after that all the sessions were individual presentation by each and every student based on articles that we read, that he gave us. And each presentation was different. We were doing activities, some were just presenting. Yeah, it was very very.. That's the highlight of my year one. That course.
Interviewer	Was that a mandatory course?
P7	Nope. It was an optional course. And it was the most most most interesting course and very... it was pushing my thinking.
Interviewer	Yeah, because it was giving you the space to have different perspectives.
P7	Yeah, different perspectives in different forms. Like we address with kids, not every kid learns the same way (P8: Yeah), not everyone of us learns the same way. So, it applies here too.
P8	Yeah, if I could just add... I think the programme itself, our programme, it provides that space where you can be creative and flexible (P7 nodding), but when it comes to the lecturers themselves, it is a different matter. (P7 nodding) They are not always so prone or kind of well-aware on people-creativity, when you think about presentations,

	So, it is difficult for them to mark what you actually achieve or have done, which I think is also why they ask in the end to do a small essay, reflection essay what you have learned, which I think is important as well, but there was one class where...
Interviewer	You do reflection essays?
P8	Yeah. Based on your assessment.
P7	For every course?
P8	Not every course, some.
Interviewer	Some courses only.
P7	Ok.
P8	That's why I say it depends on the lecturers. If they find it difficult to understand our presentation cause there are cases where we did a musical and stuff like that. So, it could be difficult to mark, yeah (smiling). So, but there is one class where we had to a presentation, but it was no mark on it. So, that was kind of a waste of our time. When we had to study for an exam afterwards.
Interviewer	So, you would have rather had a grade as well for the presentation?
P8	Yeah, at least...
P7	Or a distributive grade at least.
P8	Yeah.
Interviewer	But you got feedback on it, or?
P8	Nope.
P7	Ahh...
P8	Yeah, so it was really a waste of time for us, a lot of us just complain about that.
Interviewer	Was it clear that you would not get a grade?
P8	Yes.... Actually, no until we kind of finished. (P7 smiling) So, we thought that way would kind of be half, quarter of the exam.
Interviewer	Yeah, so like the final grade as well. Having influence on the final grade.
P8	Yeah, but now (shaking head).
Interviewer	How do I address this. Do you think if the teacher or lecturer would have told you that it's not graded and has no influence, how much would there be motivation?
P8	I think, we shouldn't have to do any presentation (slightly laughing). I think it should be

	a kind of open... if you want, if you don't. So, plus when it happened that day during the presentation, the lecturer was not there. Someone else kind of took over. Yeah.
P7	I look at it as an example of, just comparing... I don't know how this is relevant to you, but we say that in schools, if kids don't like coming to school (smiling), they are not gonna learn. (P8: Yeah.) This is something similar because if you are very passionate about it, you are gonna do it respective of grades. So, just putting it out there.
Interviewer	It's a good point. Ok, this is one question, which the first group added to this whole thing, which may not be related to you (P7) yet, but... are you finishing your thesis in time?
P8	(laughing) Well.
Interviewer	So, in times means two years.
P8	Oh yeah, for sure.
Interviewer	So, this is now the semester in which you should finish your thesis.
P8	I think for me... I am gonna say that I am at the same stage as you. So, I analysed my first set of data and now I am at the second set, I have a third one to do. And after that... (shoulder movement). It's gonna be smooth sailing. Yeah.
Interviewer	Yeah, so in Summer time basically.
P8	I am gonna finish by the end of the month, yeah. (slightly laughing)
P7	Uhh.
Interviewer	Ok. In time.
P8	Yeah. What about you (P7)? Do you think, you finish in time?
P7	I've been hearing a lot of 'Oh nom, I can't finish in time.' I didn't understand it before, now I am grasping it. I haven't started it, I haven't picked a narrowed focus of of topic.
P8	(making funnily doubtful noises) (P7 and P8 laughing)
P7	I am not worried because I can't afford to finish late, I can't stay here because financially I can't. So, I will finish it whatever happens. So, yeah. Probably going to help, but will finish it. (P7 and P8 laughing).
Interviewer	Ok, that's it. Thank you.