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OUTSIDER WITHIN

Experiences of multi-cultural Finnish people

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This master’s thesis examines Finnish people who have a multi-cultural background through their parents. The study aims to understand how these participants feel belonging to Finnish society and different cultural groups that they have in their every-day life. I study how they describe their identity and what concepts are related to Finland in their lives.

The data was collected through interviews with seven participants aged 25-29 in Helsinki, Finland. The participants had a parent or parents’ who had moved to Finland from another country because of various reasons. The interviewees had Finnish as one of their mother tongues and had gone through the educational system in Finland. The interviewees had either been born in Finland or moved with an early age.

The conclusion of this research is that the interviewees feel themselves of not being an outsider in the society of Finland but have mixed feelings of their cultural identity. The participants belong into many cultural groups in their life and feel of being on the border of different cultural identities.

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Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Tämä Pro-gradu tutkielma tutkii suomalaisia ihmisiä, joilla on monikulttuurinen tausta. Tutkimus lisää ymmärrystä siitä, miten haastateltavat tuntevat kuuluvansa Suomen yhteiskuntaan ja erilaisiin kulttuuriryhmäihin. Tutkin, miten he kuvailevat identiteettiään ja mitä käsitteitä he liittävät Suomeen ja suomalaisuuteen.


Tutkimustulosten perusteella voidaan todeta, että osallistujat eivät kokeneet ulkopuolisuuuden tunneta suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa, mutta heillä on erilaisia tunteita heidän kulttuuri-identiteettinsä liittyen. Haastateltavat tuntevat kuuluvansa eri kulttuuriryhmäihin ja eläväänsä useampien kulttuuriryhmien rajalla.

Asiasanat

Identiteetti, kulttuuriset ryhmät, kokemus ulkopuolisuudesta, yhteiskunta
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1. PICTURE: Third culture model
Introduction

The idea of the research developed from my personal experience of living in the Finnish society. Having the personal feeling of being an outsider in Finland, which did not relate with social class, role in the society or experiencing my appearance, I had still felt different from the mainstream. Anna Rastas (2002, 78-79) talks how cultural differences are fixed in “certain type” of people and that biological differences like skin color are observed in certain meaning for a certain culture. As noting that my appearance was more of the mainstream in Finland, my feeling was not related with my looks either. The feeling was more about my profound aspect of culture and how I experienced living in cultural groups in the Finnish society. It was hard to verbalize the feeling of being an outsider in different groups of people, but I started to get the urge to research it more closely. My background was that I had Finnish parents, but I had moved to Finland when I was six, so as a child I had lived in different cultures. Hence I wanted to write this Master’s thesis about how these people experience different identities through cultural groups and being and outsider in the society of Finland.

When I started my research, I felt that the main aspects in the feeling of belonging in the society was the relation with home, the feeling of belonging to a certain place and possibly been born in the country. When living in Finland, the biggest questions that Finns ask is “where are you from” or “where have you been born”. Having a different life story and explaining it to people started to make me feel uncomfortable and almost embarrassed. This was not necessarily related with negativity towards me but just with the feeling of being different, having a distinct life story than many other people and then growing the feeling that it is not always easy to relate to certain behavioral or manners in Finnish social groups. This feeling made me wonder, if people who have been living in different cultures, or have family from abroad, would have this mixed feeling when living in Finland.

For my bachelor’s thesis I interviewed a person who had moved to Finland from abroad and I wrote the thesis about the culture identity, and how she felt living and integrating in the Finnish society. This person had inspired me to research her feelings about being a refugee and living in Finland almost her whole life. After my bachelor’s work I wanted to profound my research of people with multi-cultural backgrounds and how they saw themselves in the society. When I came across the TCK-theory, I felt I could be able to find the understanding of culture identities and the feeling of belonging.
My research is for my master’s thesis of Social Sciences and handles issues about social and cultural borders between people in the society of Finland. I felt necessary to do interviews with people and hear their different life stories about their family and the feeling of being in between of different cultural groups. When I started my learning process, I knew that it could be that my interviewees would not even share the same feelings that I have had. Even though they’ll have their parent/s from another culture, they can feel themselves fully Finnish and live their lives without the feeling of being an outsider. My expectation was that the interviewees can be very disconnected with their Finnishness, because they are so in between of different cultural groups. I wanted to get all the results possible from the interviews, so I made research questions that would allow me to explore these sometimes-uncomfortable issues. I felt a need to talk with people of multicultural backgrounds to find the answer for my research. My expectations were that I would make them uncomfortable because I was handling delicate issues about their lives, what they possible would have never gone through in an interview. Talking out loud these experiences and wondering where is your cultural identity could raise up more questions in the minds of participants and the feeling of explaining all these feelings can be considered uncomfortable.

1.1 Significance of the Study

In my research I investigate the feeling of being an outsider in the Finnish society. I study how the participants feel different cultures in their every-day life and how they perceive themselves to belong in cultural groups. This study aims to answer how primarily Finnish people with foreign backgrounds are conscious of their cultural identities and feel the sense of belonging to Finnish culture in Finland.

The research felt necessary to do because it felt that immigrants who had lived only some years were in the spotlight. I felt that it was obvious that integrating as an immigrant would have its cultural clashes that are also important to research, but I felt I did not want to narrow my perspective to a more specific group. These multicultural participants that I wanted to interview were going to be more likely Finland’s citizens. I chose some qualities for the interviewees to have them close of being in different cultural groups in Finland. The qualities that I chose were that they would be fluent in Finnish language and that they would have studied mainly their whole life in the Finnish educational system. Through these characteristics I felt they would be “well integrated” or just living their Finnish life with many cultures around them. To assure that there would be many cultures in the interviewee’s life, I wanted that their parents or just one would have the nationality of some other country or been immigrated to Finland.
For me the experience of Finnish society felt quite homogenic with a lack of multicultural backgrounds and stories, because being a migrant with Finnish parents made it more complicated to explain and to others to put you into a certain cultural group. This raised the idea to research people who have these multicultural backgrounds but are not necessarily immigrants themselves. The terms were to get deeper with people who have passed almost their whole life in Finland, even been born there, but still have the possible ‘sense of home’ in other countries. This was easiest to frame the research group through their parents. I wanted to find people who live multicultural lives every day and choose people who have parents who are foreigners/immigrants, seemed a good way to get results. I wanted to hear these people’s experiences personally and know if there is a possible feeling of being an outsider in the Finnish society. I became familiar to the theory of TCK – third culture kids, that became my main theory for the research. Through this theory I felt that I could get deeper to understand the feeling of being on outsider in a certain cultural group and importantly, living in the borderline of many cultural groups. From this became the idea of the “outsider within”. Through the TCK-theory, I researched also the feeling of belonging to the “third culture” that will be explained more specifically later.

Even though for centuries in Finland there has been living some cultural minorities, like Roma and Sami people, multiculturality has been increasing. With the increasing modern mobility and new minorities like refugees and migrants are cultural encounters more common and likely to happen in Finland. With new I refer to the migrants who have moved to Finland in the 1990’s. In 1994 increasing multiculturalism was noted and it has been increasing more rapidly until this day. (Liebkind, 1994, 9.) In the year 1994 there was 56 000 foreigners in Finland that is 1 % of the population. Now there is 243 639 (4,4%) foreign citizens, 353 993 (6,4%) foreign-language speakers and 357 541 (6,5%) born abroad in Finland (The Family Federation of Finland (Väestöliitto), 2016). This means that Finland is more multicultural, and it has been increased quite a lot in a few decades. It still has to be noted that Finland has absolutely and relatively small number of foreigners when comparing to other European countries.

In 1994 the Finnish immigration advisory board (PAKSI 1994:5) notes that “Finland needs to develop its society and people's attitudes because in Finnish society there will be permanent or temporary presence of more people with foreign background. Finland has become a new stage of development, characterized by the need to develop a monoculture into a more multicultural Finland”.

This note presents how Finland has been seen more monocultural than multicultural before. Multiculturalism has been raised up in the media and people with foreign background are more in spotlight. It still feels that there is not enough talk about how these people feel living in the society
that has been developing to be a home to citizens who have different cultural backgrounds. In my research I want to give a voice for these multicultural Finnish people who are not only refugees and migrants but living citizens in the society of Finland.

The questions of life condition and survival of the offspring of immigrants are vital for the research of a new society and international migration. It can be assumed that the offspring of immigrants, in other words second or the next generations, are as successful as the mainstream, because they have had generally the same education and life conditions than the rest of the population. Immigration started to increase in the 1990’s so the children of the second generation have grown up in the 2010’s. The interest towards the second generation has been increasing, but research has been low. (Martikainen & Haikkola, 2010, 9-10.)

Coming to the 2010’s the questions of belonging and multiculturalism in the society of Finland have become vital. In Finland we are in a turning point of how Finnishness is seen and who are Finnish people. Ruskeat Tytöt- group is a good example of people who have created a space in media for brown people who live in the society of Finland but bring up the position of multi-cultural people who talk about ethnic issues. Ruskeat Tytöt-organization can be seen as the voice that is needed in Finland for immigrant backgrounded people who arise visibility.

1.2 Research questions

Through these research questions I constructed my interviews and themed my data.

1. What kind of meanings do the interviewees of my research give for Finnishness?
2. How is the third culture in their everyday life? What kind of meanings does it have?
3. Do they feel being an outsider in the society because of their background?
2 TCK-theory and concepts of ethnicity

My research is based on the theory of third culture kids and different understandings of the concepts of ethnicity and culture. I will go through the “third culture kids”-theory, in other words TCK-theory. The first part of this chapter deals with the theory of Third Culture Kids. The second part is about the critical evaluation of cultures by Gerd Baumann (1999), while in the third part I focus on the different domains of Finnishness, which can be explored through the concepts of ethnicity, nationality and citizenship. I have chosen the TCK-theory as a starting point because it contains many similar themes that my research is interested in. Much like the theory of Third Culture Kids, my research also deals with the impact of the third culture on everyday life, concepts of Finnishness, being an outsider in the society and living in between the cultures (Pollock, Van Reken & Pollock, 2017, 21).

2.1 TCK-theory

When analyzing the data, it is essential to define the significances of different cultures in the interviewees’ lives. Explaining the meanings of the first, second and third culture for them gives the idea what different characters of culture represent for them. Understanding the meaning of culture for the interviewees focuses on the idea of belonging to a certain culture. The TCK-theory will be used to reflect and analyze the data. The following text is a straight quotation of the description of how David C. Pollock sees the TCK-theory.

“A Third Culture Kid (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her developmental years outside the partners’ culture. The TCK frequently builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture may be assimilated into the TCK’s life experience, the same sense of belonging is (often) in relationship to others of similar background.” (Pollock, 2017, 15-16)

David Pollock mentions that TCK links itself to all cultures but hasn’t any ownership. In my research it is essential to explain the meanings of these cultures for the different interviewees. Overlapping from culture to another happens in the TCK-theory, so crystallizing certain meanings for some cultures helps to understand their feeling of belonging into the society and in their lives.

The research on Third Culture Kids was founded in the 1950s by two sociologists John Useem and Ruth Hill who created the concept of the third culture. The concept was coined during their stay in India for a year during the time they studied Americans who worked there in different careers. In India, Useem discovered that expatriates who worked in different positions still were closely linked
with each other. The lifestyle that the expatriates had was not the same as their host or home culture and that was the feature that united the experiences of different families (Pollock & Van Reken, 2009, 19-20.)

David Pollock (1989), who has been studying the phenomenon, defines Third Culture Kids as follows:

A Third Culture Kid (TCK) is a person who has spent a significant part of his or her development year outside the parents’ culture. The TCK builds relationships to all of the cultures, while not having full ownership in any. Although elements from each culture are assimilated into the TCK’s life experience, the sense of belonging is in relationship to others of similar background. (Pollock, Van Reken, 1999, 19)

Useem (Pollock, Van Reken, 1999, 19-20) defined the expatriate world by dividing the cultures that third culture kids spend their lives in into three categories. Firstly, the home culture of the adults was their first culture. The second culture was the one that they lived in with their family. In my research, this refers to the Finnish culture. The third culture was the interstitial culture, or in other words, the mix of different cultures. The interstitial culture is located in the borderline of the first and second culture, “a culture between cultures”. Third culture kids are the children who live in this interstitial culture. The third culture kids have also been defined simply as “children who accompany their parents into another culture”. (Pollock & Van Reken 1999, 19-20.) Below, the third culture model illustrates the researcher’s idea.
This “Third culture model” is the core of my research. In the TCK-theory, the people who have been researched are often children of people who have been working as diplomats, missionaries or for the military and colonial administrations. The children usually follow their parents’ careers and do not intend to move into country permanently (Pollock, Van Raken & Pollock, 2017, 27.) The interviewees in my research have various reasons why they ended up living in Finland. However, in all cases one or two of their parents have a different home culture other than Finland. They also were more stable in the way of being a permanent immigrant in their host country, while TCKs often are described as being mobile. The interviewees in my research wanted to stay in Finland and did not express interest to move away from Finland.

The TCK-theory was the base of the interviews for the interviewees. The motivation behind choosing the TCK-theory was also to expand the issue to not just the children of immigrants, even though immigration was the motivation why their parents moved to Finland in the first place. The TCK-theory provided a possibility to research how the interviewees felt themselves in the borderline of different cultures and especially if there were feelings of not belonging to certain cultural groups and being an outsider.

When Useem started the research on Third Culture Kids in the late 1950s (Pollock, Van Reken, 1999, 16), the scope of the TCK-theory was quite narrow. Until this day it has been expanding to adapt more cultural complexity for the TCK’s. It is now understood that the background stories of third culture kids can be more diverse, which is why I felt that the theory would be suitable for my research (Pollock & Van Reken 1999, 36). Van Reken and Pollock asked Useem (2017) about different ways
of describing cultures from her original studies. Useem felt that because she is a sociologist/anthropologist, she thinks that concepts can never be defined permanently and that they change constantly like the world around them (Pollock, Van Raken & Pollock, 2017, 17).

There are questions that connect the TCKs and my group of interviewees. One of them is “Where do I belong?” For individuals of multicultural background this is the most deep, problematic and emotive question that can be asked. I do not ask it straight away from my interviewees, but I do base a lot of my questions on the expectation of the importance of the issue of belonging. I do not expect to receive simple answers, but the focus of the questions on the sense of belonging helps to comprehend the whole picture of their cultural identity and where the participants feel like they belong to (Pollock, Van Reken & Pollock, 2017, 183).

As the previous research (Pollock & Van Reken, Pollock, 2017 & 1999) has shown, there are a lot of feelings of rootlessness among TCKs and this understanding is a big interest also in my research. The questions, such as “Where are you from?”, are not so simple to answer. This same question inspired me to do my research on this certain subject. This question is often asked from Finnish people who consider themselves of people of color. This question gives the feeling of otherness for them and in my interviews, they realized that my participants are not seen as Finnish people. This question can trigger the feeling that a Finnish person does not look like them. The place we are from locates usually for people who they are, even though it is not a simple task for many of us. The question “Where is home?” can be answered more easily but can still bring about surprising answers. The participants can develop a strong sense of home with countries they have never lived in. This being said, the connection through the parents to the first culture may be so strong, that even for those who were born in Finland, the answer to the question about where home is can be a different place than where they currently live in. (Pollock, Van Reken & Pollock, 2017, 184-188.) In my research, I asked the interviewees “do you feel like a Finn?” Through this question I got a deeper sense of their rootlessness based on the TCK theory.

As the concept of third culture kids is changing, like Useem (Pollock & Van Reken, 1999, 21) said the certain norms for the third culture has started to change. Even though the theory is decades old, it makes a fair point about how different people have the sense of belonging in certain cultural groups. The newer definition is about living in certain communities. As Pollock, Van Reken and Pollock (2017, 21) have noted, many TCK children attend more local schools, while in the past they were more often sent off to boarding schools or private international schools. Western expatriates had lived during Useem’s research in more specific communal systems. This has changed, as the communities that children are a part of have changed from specific to larger with a wide range of living cultures.
and backgrounds of people. The term Expatriates as used by Useem is an interesting choise. Because in general it seems, that for people of mobility, migrant is usually used when coming from a non-Western part of world, and migrants who are western, is used expatriates. This concept makes the feeling that expatriates and migrants are of different value, because the term is used differently.

2.2 Critical evaluation of TCK theory

Baumann (1999, 136-137) questions the definition of ethnic identity that is based on their authority on bonds of blood and descent. Also, he criticizes the tendency to treat the bonds of culture and language as natural facts. Baumann feels that an ethnic identity is far from being a natural identity, but rather a more cultivated one.

When analyzing the cultural backgrounds that my interviewees have with the domain Finnish culture, Baumann’s point of view on changing culture is relevant. The TCK-theory points out the cultural groups in a narrower way. In the TCK-theory, seeing cultural groups as home culture, host culture and interstitial culture is a more one-sided view to cultural groups that are not affected by the society. Baumann (1999, 138-139) is critical of such narrow definitions of culture and claims that we can discover a processual discourse of culture, that is, a theory of culture that understands differences as relational, rather than absolute. It recognizes that there are many different opinions of identification and that these cut across each other. Instead of viewing society as a patchwork of five or fifty cultural groups, it views social life as an elastic and crisscrossing web of multiple identifications. People make choices about whom to identify with, when and where, and they even make choices when to engage the reifying discourse of culture and when to engage the processual discourse.

Through Baumann’s analysis of the identification of culture, belonging seems less bound to a certain group. People making choices about belonging and who to identify with is more about taking cultural identity into their own hands. In my point of view, this seems complex to carry out in the real life. There is a possibility, that just choosing a certain group of preference can be difficult. This because the group that you have “chosen” to be part of does not possibly accept you to be part of it. So the power of choice is quite questionable when really carrying it out in every-day life. Choosing your own cultural group in this sense seems to be more than just the right of choosing. Baumann (1999, 137) claims that multiculturalism is a new understanding of culture and that culture can be thought of as something we make and shape how we please. This was a relevant point to me when I was reflecting on my research.
Baumann feels that ethnic identity is far from being natural identity, but more cultivated (Baumann, 1999, p. 136-137). This cultivated culture can be seen in my research data. Situations, people and age cultivate the culture that my interviewees produce.

“Culture is not a giant photocopy machine that turns out clones, but the most sensitive capacity of humans who cannot but produce change even when they mean to produce stability.” (Baumann, 1999, 137-138).

What Baumann says about culture can be reflected in the critical evaluation of the TCK theory and how there are different ways to produce culture. Culture is not the same to all individuals and culture does not pass on as a perfect copy of itself. Change is an important element even in culture and cultural groups. The idea of seeing humans producing change instead of the stability that they are looking for, makes the nature of culture very variable. (Baumann, 1999, p. 138.)

As in with TCK-theory and other research of “expatriate young” (Warinowski 2012) the participants are often privileged families when comparing migrants who move to a country for different reasons. Privileged because of a guaranteed job, resident permit and support in schooling from organizations who hired them. (Benjamin & Kuusisto, 2016, 79-80.) In my research the participants are from a more various backgrounds and not all of the families were privileged because some of them did not have any option to choose where to move and were forced to leave their home country. For this reason, I want to criticize how limiting the group is that has been considered in the study of TCK. In my research the participants are not all from same backgrounds and mainly have lived in Finland, but still are relevant when considering multicultural people who have their home country in a different place than in Finland. The big factor in the connective side of TCK with my interviewees and research is that they have moved to another country because of their parents.

2.3 Concepts of ethnicity

The understanding of ethnicity gives the tools to understand more about the feeling of belonging. The different conceptualizations of ethnicity that I refer to here are based on Steve Fenton’s (2003) discussion on ethnicity. In my research, it is important to be conscious of these four conceptualizations of ethnicity, in order to analyze more profoundly what ethnicity and Finnishness mean for the interviewees. I will analyze Finnishness through different perspectives of ethnicity, which are the primordial, circumstantial, situational and instrumental. Furthermore, I will investigate how Finnishness can be approached with different concepts of ethnic identity, citizenship and nationality.
The definition of ethnicity as a primordial concept is based on the perception of ethnicity as a natural part of how humans operate. Fenton (2003, 83) refers to Eller and Coughlan (1993), who argue that the primordial “ethnic tie” has been seen in a biological, social and emotional way. In this respect, ethnicity can be seen as sharing a same racial, religious or cultural factor to feel togetherness in a group. The primordial concept of ethnicity can be reflected in the analysis of how being of Finnish nationality constructs a frame to a certain cultural group. As being a part of the nation of Finland and sharing common factors, like for example a geographical location and the natural feeling to be a part of the society (Fenton, 2003, 83-84), primordial understanding of ethnicity can be seen as a simple way to connect a certain culture with an ethnicity. Fenton says that nationality is an extensive aggregate of people who share common features like language, descent and history (Fenton, 2003, 14).

Fenton (2003) also argues that ethnicity can be viewed as a circumstantial concept, by which he refers to the ways in which identity is visible in a certain context. The ethnic identity stays the same, but the role of the circumstances influences how it is visible or not. So, in this case, certain cultural ethnicity is considered strong but not variable. Only the circumstances change and define the meaning for the individual (Fenton, 2003, 84). Finnishness can be seen as a core ethnicity that does not change, but how it is presented goes with the groups of individuals around. In these situations, it may be important for a person to express a certain identity to others, so they can gain stronger feelings of belonging to a certain group.

The concept of the situational ethnic identity is about being in a state of continuous change. Through the social situations of the individual, the change happens also to the identity of ethnicity (Fenton 2003, 84). Situational ethnicity can be seen in situations where the interviewees visit their home country and live in Finland. In this case, the identity changes according to the situation and makes them shift in between different cultural groups.

According to the instrumental understanding of ethnicity, people are not naturally connected with any ethnic groups, but they connect to certain groups because it benefits them. According to this concept, the group of people achieves their material or political goals and ending up in a certain group is made by choice. (Fenton, 2003, 84.)

When looking at Finnishness through ethnicity, the primordial ethnic concept feels closest to how Finnishness can be seen in my research. In Finland, the growth of immigration has been slow and
increasing since the 1980s (Tiilikainen, 2010, 437–438). Even though the history of Finland’s immigration is slow-paced and has been increasing during the years, according to Tiilikainen (2010) the Finnish culture and its citizens are considered homogenic. According to Fenton (2003, 76), there exists a debate between primordial and circumstantial ethnicity. Primordial answers more to the question of “what kind of society do we live in?” and reflects the ethnic identity with the surroundings. Circumstantial (Fenton, 2003, 85) view is seen as variable according to social situations and external forces affecting the ethnic ties. Both primordial and circumstantial points of view can be seen in my research in the ethnic ties of my interviewees.

Fenton (2003, 14) describes nation as: “An extensive aggregate of persons, so closely associated within each other by common descent, language or history as to form a distinct race of people, usually organized as a separate political state and occupying a definite territory.”. In this case official strings of being part of the nation is vital for Finnish nationality. In Fenton’s view, nationality is about having a common descent, language or history. With the interviewees these features can be seen as filled by the language and from the other parent’s descent and throughout their own. Fenton’s interpretation is quite old-fashioned and, in that way, fits the homogenic view of Finnish ethnicity.

2.4 Citizenship and nationality

Citizenship, as the Finnish immigration service defines it, is than about having the status of being a citizen of the country of Finland. The possibility to be a citizen is acquired through either the Finnish citizenship of a parent, by birth or by being a young adult who is 18-22 years old and having had lived in Finland for “enough time” (Migri). In this point of view being a Finnish citizen is quite limiting. All the participants of the interviews met the requirements of the definition for a citizen of Finland. Still not all of them remained to be on because of personal reasons. The lack of citizenship can be seen in my research as a factor for feeling more of an outsider and not a full member of the Finnish society.

Harinen (2000) describes citizenship to be formally a membership of a nation. For these reasons, one of my interviewees was not a citizen, because she did not have the full membership of a nation. Inside the borders of the nation, there are always people who live without the citizenship rights and are not in the same position as citizens by birth. (Harinen 2000, 27.)

During my research, an interviewee raised the question of the “legally born citizen” because there were members of the family who were valued to have a full membership. Finland’s Nationality Act
(Migri) carried into effect in September 2011. There it is mentioned that the dual nationality that has been carried to exist later after Harinen’s (2000) research, where it is not so profoundly represented. After 2011, citizens do not have to choose between two citizenships anymore because of the dual citizenship model. In my research, there were examples of interviewees having the dual citizenship. To be a citizen of Finland the requirements of the Finland’s Nationality Act must be fulfilled. In my research, there was also examples of a citizenship that was inherited through the parent’s culture, or through birth. However in cases where they had a background of a refugee, they also lacked the official membership of citizenship. (Finnish immigration service, Law of Finnish citizenship)

Turner (1993, 2-3) analyzes citizenship through the concept being modern and connected to the idea of the Western world. He sees citizenship as a social membership that is emphasized with collective principles. (Harinen, 2000, 21.) These collective principles are seen in my research in the interviewees’ behavior that they considered as Finnish reaction in situations.

Citizenship and nationality are two different concepts, but they can be mixed together. Gordon and Lahelma (1998, 257) have analyzed the issue through the Finnish perspective. They have suggested that locally in Finland people often think of nationality and citizenship as one concept which is called Finnishness. (Harinen, 2000, 21) In the light of their results, it feels important to clarify these concepts, especially when researching the feeling of belonging in the Finnish society. In my research, it felt also vital to break loose from this way of thinking, mixing the two concepts to represent only Finnishness.

Harinen (2000, 21) says in his analysis that in the minds of the people citizenship and nationality are associated to one or the same wholeness, which is taken for granted. In my research this is a relevant point when analyzing my data. Unfortunately, not all people in the society can take the nationality and citizenship for granted. This happens especially with who are refugees or have dual citizenship in my interviews.

As Harinen (2000, 22) refers, Turner (1993, 2-3) and Roche (1992) define that citizenship and nationality have divergent interpretations. To define the concepts more clearly, citizenship indicates to a nation and a membership to it. Nationality indicates more about belonging to a certain group of people. Harinen brings up the fact that in both concepts it is about membership and being a part of something. Nationality is regulated more formally than citizenship. If nationality was historically more about the question of place of birth, now it is more defined with politically refined area. (Harinen, 2000, 22.)
Harinen (2000, 24) thinks that when nationality means a deep down rational, analytical, formal intent to bound and to be bounded, can the ethnic and national belonging be irrational and emotional? In a state that irrational and emotional can be easily grown and rooted into. This statement comes up in my research and it is essential to realize that nationality is not only about choosing or being somewhere, but the process is a journey where the rooting and emotional involvement happens.

The concept of nationality can be connected to the nearby concept of nation state. A nation state is constructed when an administrative authority becomes uniformed in a certain area. In this case, enough of homogenic cultural elements are needed to unify the nation state. (Harinen, 2000, 22.) Harinen points out that Bauman (1996) sees the nation nationalized through modernization. This has happened through conscious attempts to put together people in a certain national area taking advantage of linguistic, ideological and cultural aspects.

When defining the origin of nation and to understand it, I will give the example of the “force of the tribe” that is based on Wulf (1997, 145-146). Nation is seen as an abstract phenomenon that is defined through birth, culture, history and language. Inside the nation these are still challenging qualities, because they can bring up some outsider-feelings inside the nation for certain people. (Harinen, 2000, 23.) “The force of the tribe” can be seen in interviewees when they were defining their Finnishness. They analyzed their identity of nationality through birth, culture, history and language. If some of these factors were outside the mainstream, sometimes the nationality was questioned by themselves.

Harinen says that the national belonging is a universal base. (2000, 23) We naturally feel the need to be a part of some nationality. In my research, my interviewees could even have controversial feelings about which nationality they belong to, and what they want to choose in certain situations. Usually the choosing happens between their home and host country.

In the research of Rastas (2007, 22-23), she chooses not to use different “race classifications” of people and refers to the term “transnational roots”. She thinks that through the “root metaphor” is relations that people have to certain places and people. When thinking about the feeling of belonging through the concepts of nationality and citizenship, the term transnational roots would be more approachable also in my own research. Transnational roots would be a more neutral way to see the backgrounds of people, than only seeing the meanings through the concepts of citizenships and nationality.
2.5 Defining identity

When the social structure of the society is changing and possibly disappearing, the questions of “who am I” is getting more current. Identity has become centrally important issue when collective structures have become more problematic. Identity means different ways how people understand in the relation with themselves, in a social environment and culture. (Rautio & Saastamoinen, 2006, 170-172.)

Defining your identity can be seen as defining your self and where you belong. Defining your own identity is difficult because the existing categories do not always fit the one you feel of being. In this I refer to multi-cultural backgrounds with my participants, and how it is difficult for them to pin-point their identity to a certain cultural group.

The idea of identity, from culture, is that it is constantly changing by the day and situation. Identity is an enigma that defies an actual definition. Identity is the same time intuitive and social and is created in and through culture. (Brah, 1996, 20-21) Brah explains that culture and identity are linked concepts in a complex way.

In my research I learned that identity is not a simple thing to understand or explain. Identity is situational, cultural and linked with how people experience the world around them. Through this I interpret that identity for everyone, especially to my participants, is very personal experience and is affected by how they connect with different cultural groups in their lives.

The age when the participant has moved has an essential meaning. The child feels the move differently depending on the age, social position of their peer group and the situation in the family. The younger the age is the easier the move has been for the child and their growing identity (Benjamin & Kuusisto, 2016, 84). In my research all my participants have moved to Finland in a fairly young age. Oldest has been two years-old when arriving to Finland. In this way the move has been vital for their constructing identity for the future and can have a positive affect with their strong cultural connection to Finland.
3 Methodology

The aim of my thesis is to study how the participants of my research experience being a part of the third culture in Finland and living in the Finnish society. To achieve this, I asked if the young adults, who took part in the research, experience the feeling of being an outsider with regards to their relation towards the meanings of Finnishness and different cultural identities. I collected the research data through interviews with young adults between the age of 18-30 years. As a research method, I chose phenomenographic method to understand-the different experiences that the interviewees had while living in Finland. Through this method I could establish how their experiences differ from each other.

In this research, the following issues were considered to help understand the research questions. I researched factors that influenced the young adults’ feelings about being a part of the Finnish society. Also, researching the cultural backgrounds of the interviewees explained their feelings about themselves and their surroundings. Questioning the young adults about their feelings about being a part of certain cultural groups and investigating what possible cultural groups there are make their position in between cultural borders clearer.

3.1 The selection of participants

The interviews started in November of 2017. The process of finding the interviewees had a slow snowball effect when searching for the interviewees. There was approximately one interview per month until May of 2018. People were searched online, through contacts and friends of the interviewees. The interviews were successful with 7 participants, two did not participate who were contacted with and one interview was lost. I will explain this later in this chapter. The busy schedules of the interviewees made it difficult for some to participate and sometimes it felt like a big effort for them to schedule time for the meeting.

There was one case of an unsuccessful interview as one person told me directly that they did not want to participate in the interview. They felt the theme was too heavy for them and they were tired of being asked the same questions about their identity time and time again. I am using the term “they” to not reveal the sex of this person. I had heard that this kind of feeling was common with people who had been born or had lived their whole life in Finland. These feelings with their living in between many cultural groups in Finland and that it possibly brought out the feeling of being an outsider. For this person, the battle of them constantly having to justify themselves-being Finnish felt endless and
they expected that being in an interview would awaken some unwanted feelings. Through this experience, I started to understand and become more certain that the theme of my research could be uncomfortable and sensitive for some people. It felt therefore important to define before conducting the interviews that this was not a research of Finnishness, it was more about meanings, cultural identities and the feelings of being an outsider in the Finnish society. This required me to work harder on defining the research questions and structuring the questions for the interviews.

During the collection of the data, the interviews and the meetings with the interviewees went well and there was a good atmosphere during the interviews. I considered an interview to go well, when all the questions were handled through with the interviewee, the communication worked well and the atmosphere was pleasant and the participant could trust me with their personal issues. Before starting the interview, I usually introduced myself briefly to the interviewees. I also told about my own background and why I felt like this research was important for me personally. This usually built trust between me and the interviewee and made our relationship more friendly. Often there was some effort needed to persuade the interviewees to agree on doing the interviews, but it happened by explaining carefully about the real cause of the research and striking a balance between being friendly, while keeping a professional distance.

To begin with, I had decided to interview people who had multi-cultural backgrounds and spoke Finnish language as their mother tongue. There were 7 participants and I had individual one-to-one interviews with them. The age limit was 18 years, because the themes of my research were applied for people who have a more developed sense and certainty of their culture identity. The prerequisites for choosing certain interviewees were a Finnish education, fluency in the Finnish language and that one or both of their parents were foreigners. The interest of the research was to collect the data from individuals who have lived their whole life or almost their whole life in Finland. Therefore, choosing participants who have done their basic education in Finland became a selection criterion as well.

The idea of the research was to interview Finnish young adults or immigrants who presumably identified strongly with the Finnish society by having lived in Finland most of their lives. For the interviewees to talk Finnish fluently or as their mother tongue was a criterion, because it made them more presumably a part of the more dominant group, in this case, Finnish people without foreign family members.

Making the decision about how to limit the group of interviewees brought up different questions. Why were not immigrants who had lived a shorter period of time in Finland chosen? In my research ”a long time” refers to time in decades, usually at least 15 years. Mostly all the interviewees had been
born in Finland, the oldest of the interviewees moved to Finland at a time when they were starting primary school. Including people who have arrived in Finland more recently, there could have presumably been more feelings of being an outsider within the society. I wanted to focus on a group of people who are not so easily categorizable in the Finland. People who had been born in Finland and possibly have Finnish nationality, but still have the connection to another country and cultural group, could have more variation within their cultural identity.

The term "multicultural" is a central concept when discussing people who live in the diversity of many cultures. The age range felt necessary to be narrowed down to adults, because the questions were about the feeling of belonging into their cultural group within their family, in this case their parents and siblings. I presumed that for people, who are over the age of 30 years, it is more common to have a family of their own and then reflect their identity more on their children and partner. I also felt that young adults are more suitable to be approached through the theory of third culture kids. Furthermore, focusing the research on people who were aged between 18-30 years was also used to narrow down the possible interviewees into a one group of people who had similar qualities.

In the beginning, a couple of the interviewees were chosen first from personal encounters with people who met the requirements. After interviewing these people, the rest of the interviewees were found through personal social contacts and using the snowball effect. After the interviews, more names were provided by the participants in order to ask around for more interviewees. It is important to take into consideration the fact that because the participants were collected through the snowball effect and asking around, it is likely that this affects the results of the data. The group that was interviewed can be seen to represent the more social people in the society, who are well connected with other people and are more visible. The more isolated members of the society were not heard, because there was no direct route to reach them, and it would have been more difficult in this case to find them. These people could have been the ones who possibly had even more complex cultural identities compared to the people who willingly participated in the research. Interviewees that had more visibility socially in the society possibly have a more positive attitude and perhaps social success in living their lives in Finland, than the others whom I was not able to reach.

There were attempts to collect the interviewees through the internet from certain groups in the social media, but these attempts failed, and no participants were found. I noted that a social and straightforward attempt to ask them to participate was an easier approach. Volunteering to the interview without knowing the interviewer personally or through a social connection made it almost impossible to get them to participate. The theme of the research also felt threatening for one possible interviewee, who refused to participate. This tells about the social nature of the theme and that it can be taken very
personally. This was only one case and this person did not know the specific details of the questions in the interview.

All the interviews were recorded and transcribed afterwards. Unfortunately, one interview file was destroyed, and it was not possible to return the data file. The interview was temporally the longest, almost 2 hours, so I decided to not repeat the interview because of my own personal mistake. The interview was destroyed before transcription. Through this experience, I learned to invest more effort into how I preserve the recordings of the interviews.

In my research my interviewees have pseudonyms, so they will be anonymous. I have collected the factors as age, sex, place of birth, background and nationality so the understanding of the participants would come up clearly. Through background I wanted to explain how the different cultures took place in their family, in this case, with their parents. Nationality was brought up to observe how it would affect the feeling of being Finnish, when there were participants of double nationality.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Petteri</th>
<th>Nico</th>
<th>Lisa</th>
<th>Jenni</th>
<th>Emilia</th>
<th>Basak</th>
<th>Anna</th>
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<td>Finland</td>
<td>Finland</td>
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<td>Congolese parents</td>
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<td>Congolese</td>
<td>Finnish</td>
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Table 3.1 Information on the research participants

### 3.2 Collecting the data by interviews

The decision to choose interviews as a primary method of data collection was to give voice for young adults in the society who presumably identify themselves with diverse cultures in their lives. The sense of belonging into a certain culture group and possibly not belonging in any can be better explored through using individual interviews. In getting a better understanding of the idea of being the outsider within, is about belonging in different cultural groups in the society of Finland and
firming the third culture of their own. Revealing these topics was important to get understanding of the experiences of the interviewees and that is why interviews were chosen instead of ethnography or observation.

There were 18 questions in the interview, and they were based on the research questions about being a part of the third culture in everyday life, being an outsider within diverse cultural groups and the meanings of Finnishness. The structure of the interview questions can be found in appendix 1. Choosing people who have foreign parents and live in Finland did not automatically put them in a certain cultural group. Different countries and cultural backgrounds gave all of the interviewees very individual stories and feelings about their identity and what Finland represents to them.

Although racism is not be in the focus of my research, I will discuss it shortly. This is due to the fact that some of the participants had feelings of discrimination in the society, so I find it important to discuss it in the analysis.

The question of belonging is a sensitive topic, especially when all the interviewees were not immigrants themselves. The cultural border of being a Finnish person or from somewhere else gives a platform for many emotions. Talking about the issues related to home, family and identity can also give rise to negative feelings. It was important to recognize this before starting the interviews. Raising certain questions could also be the first time for the participants to even think about certain issues, and in this way not possibly produce enough data. The reason for reluctance could be because of the sensitivity of the issue for the interviewee. This was a risk that I chose to take in order to get to the “bottom of the issues”.

Making the setting comfortable and safe was a key concept in constructing the interviews. Some locations like cafeterias, were extremely unsuitable for the interview situation. Talking about sentimental issues from the past and present could not bear the situation of somebody interrupting or having other people present. Therefore, interviews were chosen to be done in a calm surrounding, sometimes at the interviewee’s home. This way it would be assured that the feeling of privacy and trust would be kept during the interview. Sometimes there were family members present in the situation, but because the data was aimed to be collected from a certain kind of group, no group interviews with family members were organized.

The research was made in a qualitative half-structured way. The questions that I asked from the interviewees were based on the research questions and the data divided into different themes. As Hirsijärvi & Hurme (2001, 47) analyze, the half-structured way of interview’s formality lies between a full structured form interview and a theme interview. In this research, the interviews are half-
structured and themed. The structure of the questions was asked from all the interviewers in the same order. When analyzing the data it was themed to certain topics. Hirsijärvi & Hurme (2001) mention that sometimes, half-structured interviews are called themed interviews because the questions are strongly based on certain themes. In my research, the questions were structured through themes and my research questions, even though sometimes the questions were asked in a different order, if no proper answer was given during the interviews. My basis for the answers to my research questions was to get the general feeling of the interviewee’s life and about cultures in their life.

Even though the interviewees had the freedom to answer how they please, the half-structured way of the interview was strongly displayed. There was a big need to get data on certain questions and that is why the half-structured model felt natural. Getting answers for certain questions that answered the research question was crucial but also the half-structured form gave more freedom and room for emotions for the interviewees to answer the questions. (Saaranen-Kauppinen & Puusniekka, 2006).

3.3 Phenomenography as a research methodology

Data was collected in a narrative and phenomenographical way. Analyzing the data happened through the process of transcribing and analyzing the interview answers, the atmosphere and wholeness of the participants’ life story. Using the phenomenographic method felt natural because I wanted to focus on understanding the different views the interviewees held of their cultural identities.

Narrative interview was chosen to be the method because it is based on the idea of collecting memoirs as data. The main reason this was chosen was because it was based on the idea of knowing the past of people and through that getting to know the identities of the different interviewees. Through their memoirs it is easier to find out the participants’ sense of belonging into their place in the ethical world and answer the big questions of “who am I” which is a big part of my research of culture identities. (Hyvärinen & Löyttyniemi, 2005, 189.) Constructing the interview to hear the life stories fitted with the narrative way of listening to a tale. The narrative method was the base for the interviews and in the light of this method, the idea of the straw poll did not feel like an inviting option. I ended up collecting data through interviews.

Phenomenographical qualitative research methodology was chosen to research the different experiences of interviewees’ lives. The same questions were asked from every one of them and all interviews were tried to have the same structure. All the participants had a different reaction to the questions and the telling of their experiences. The questions of the interview were chosen based on the research questions and structured through certain themes. Some questions were about researching
the participants’ background and they set the foundation for more difficult and personal questions. Having phenomenography as the base, the assumption of different opinions and feelings of the questions and themes was supposed from the start. (Rissanen, 2003).

Researching background details gave more understanding about the interviewees’ lives and attitudes that were reflected in their answers during the interviews. The interviews were half-structured, because they were it was built with a certain amount of questions around them. Also keeping the interview in a certain structure made the interviewees often answer certain questions again, even though they would have possibly given an answer before when telling of their memoirs. Keeping the interview half-structured and still open was a challenge but led to better results, because it was important that all the questions were answered to collect all the relevant data. All of the questions were not always answered and sometimes the reason was because the questions were too difficult to answer or were not understood, even though they were explained for the interviewee again in the interview situation.

Phenomenographic methodology was a theoretical point of view in the research. In phenomenography, the research focuses on the understanding of differences. In qualitative research phenomenographic methodology is often used to interpret everyday life phenomena and how to understand them from different perspectives. (Huusko & Paloniemi, 2006, 162) The base for this methodological approach is human’s different understanding of life. It is important when choosing the approach for making interviews. Knowing that the feeling and way of understanding all participants will be different, but to analyze through phenomenography. The key concepts of phenomenography like describing, analyzing and understanding different conceptions of the phenomena and the inner relations between them, help start the interviews and analyze them in a more profound way.

In phenomenographical research, there is different material that has been written from individual interviews, group interviews and inquiries. there has been made the most of different material that has been written from individual interviews, group interviews and inquiries (Huusko & Paloniemi, 2006). The most central aspect in collecting the data is the phrasing open questions. Openness makes it easier to comprehend the interviewees’ understanding of their feelings towards their cultural identity. The individual constructs of interpretation are based on the situation from their former understanding, knowledge and experience and forms the data of this research with the answers to the questions. The main goal in the interviews is to get the interviewees to possibly experience how they see how to see their own position in the society of Finland and whether they have a sense of belonging in any possible cultural groups. In phenomenography, it is accepted that a common reality does exist, but all people experience and understand it individually (Huusko & Paloniemi, 2006). Getting the
individual sense of the participants’ world was one of the main points of the research. Through phenomenographical method in the research it was more of aiming at systematical approach over the individual view and having the true meaning of the research on how different understandings are between participants in a certain group of people. In this case, it means people who are living in Finland and have a foreign background through their parents who have diverse cultural backgrounds and identities.

Having the interviewee reflect their own subjective experiences in the interview paints a picture of how they feel in their inner consciousness, or in other words the pre-reflection in the mind. Through reflection it is possible to get to know the-experiences of the interviewees, even though they might not be aware of them before the interview.

The narrative point of view for the qualitative data felt natural because of the form of telling a story. My interviews were the life stories of the interviewees. Their stories had a starting point, a middle section and an ending. I listened to their stories and themed the answers to answer the research questions. The starting point for them was when I asked about their childhood, place of birth and how their parents ended up in Finland. Some of them told about their childhood in Finland, some told about their journey from their parents’ home country. The second part was usually about their integration into Finland, remembering their feelings of how cultures in their lives have affected them and comparing them. The end point was usually structured through their own analysis of their Finnishness, if they felt of being an outsider of the society and describing their feeling of being in between cultures. (Eskola & Suoranta, 1998, 22-23.)

The research questions were constructed with a strongly narrative way in mind. The form of the interview questions was loose enough so that people could freely talk about their lives and for as long as they wanted. I felt that giving them an option to speak freely and creating space for them would generate more profound answers.

3.4 The process of the analysis

In my bachelor’s work I did a one-person-interview in which I reflected the same themes that would eventually be adapted into my master’s research. Researching the feeling of being an outsider in the society formed the whole base for the idea in my bachelors’ and masters’ research. My analysis was based on the TCK-theory that I encountered during my master’s studies at the university. In the TCK-theory, the strongest themes are about living in the first, second and third culture in the interviewees’ everyday life and how they felt about settling into these different groups. Other parts of the thematic
base concerned the meanings that people gave for Finnishness. The main themes for the meanings of Finnishness were: language, characteristics of Finnishness and well-being and nature. Before the interviews I set up my questions based on these themes and through them I also constructed my research questions.

The main themes for the interviewees were the meanings of Finnishness, third culture in their everyday lives and the feeling of being an outsider in the society. After the interviews I transcribed them as soon as possible. Having the interview fresh in my mind gave me the chance to make more detailed notes of the atmosphere of the interview and about the general feeling of how I succeeded. These kinds of observations did not end up in my research, but I felt like they were important for me to analyze them when collecting data. During transcription, I divided the data thematically according to my research questions.

After transcribing the data, I read it through many times and interpreted it using the themes that I had chosen. I gathered the relevant phrases and thoughts from my interviews under each different theme and mainly all of them ended up in the research data. During the writing my research, the questions changed slightly and through this also the themes got sharpened to their right form.

After collecting and transcribing the data, my writing process was put off for the spring of 2019 and I got more time to really get into the data and reflect upon it. During the year I came back to the data and finally, when the themes got a clearer form, I could really take note of the nature and answers of the questions of the interview. The themes and points that I felt were relevant and important for my research surfaced.

Some themes that I had felt important for my research did not fall through. The theme about being a second-generation immigrant was an interesting point of view in the beginning but did not feel relevant anymore as the interpretation of the data continued. I wanted to stick to the themes about the feeling of being an outsider, but if I had added into the research the feelings about being a second-generation immigrant, I felt like the research would have unnecessarily expanded. I wanted to focus more on the cultural identities and groups.

3.5 Researching sensitive topics

When I started my research, I did not acknowledge that my topic or the interviews would be so sensitive for the interviewees. Not until I started constructing the questions to be more about the feeling of Finnishness and cultural identity was the level of sensitiveness of the research revealed to me. Some of the questions could make the interviewees connect themselves to memories, trauma or
unpleasant events in their lives. Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio (2016, 15) mention Raymond Lee’s thoughts about sensitiveness in research. Raymond Lee (1993) explains that by participating in a research, the examinees face different kinds of risks. Talking and explaining personal stories to the researcher can also feel very intimate and uncomfortable. This was an important aspect that I had to acknowledge before starting the interviews and bringing up certain subjects during the collecting of data.

Especially the question about the identity of a Finnish person and the cultural identity related to it contained sensitive topics for my interviewees. The interviews went on at a good pace and with an understanding of the boundaries between me and the interviewees. Some of the interviews felt quite intimate and my role as an interviewer became friendlier because of the relation that was built during the interviews. In some interviews, more effort had to be made to remain in the role of an official interviewer, even though the interviewee made me feel more like a friend. The questions with sensitive topics were the ones that usually ended up making the interviewees unwilling to comment on the issue too much or unable to find any words for their answer.

Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio (2016, 16) find that different topics are sensitive for different people. One theme can be a very sensitive subject for one interviewee to talk about and for another person the theme can be pleasant. In my interviews, the sensitivity was noticed when I started the interview and analysed the atmosphere between the interviewee and me. In my research the variety of sensitiveness among the interviewees handling different topics was understandable. The difference was seen when going through the questions with them during the interview. Topics that I personally presumed to be hard to answer were answered with enthusiasm and joy of having brought the attention to this aspect of their lives. Sometimes the questions that I considered easier caused more problems for the interviewee to answer, for example, the questions about their relationship with their parent who was from another country than Finland.

Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio (2016, 18) explain that the theme of the research is evaluated before the beginning of the research but it is not fully understood how sensitive the topic can be for the researcher. Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio (2016) mention that when the researcher is making choices about the research, the topic can be found too sensitive for them. This means that the researcher can notice themselves having painful personal experiences about the topic and the research can be cancelled. In my case, I personally did not cancel interviews because of my own personal experiences, but one interview was cancelled presumably for this reason. During the interviews, my personal experiences with similar situations came up sometimes and were used to encourage the interviewee
to continue with their story. If my own personal experiences were painful or unpleasant in nature, I never revealed them, because I felt like that would be irrelevant for the interview.

This sensitivity to which Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio (2016, 18) refer was an important aspect at one point in my research. The topic I had chosen felt like a disappointment and I wanted to change it to a less painful subject matter. I did not want to put my interviewees on the spot and ask them uncomfortable questions. This phase of questioning the sensitivity of my research ended when I realized that I still wanted to have an answer to the questions about the concept of being an outsider in the society. To get answers for this matter, it was necessary to ask the questions that I had constructed for my interivies. I wanted to see how the interviewees had handled their emotions and how they saw themselves in the society, even if it meant going through possibly negative experiences.

Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio (2016, 36) think that when giving a voice for the examinees, it is good to take under consideration the fact that they are at the same time members of a certain culture and group. Kallinen, Pirskanen & Rautio (2016) explain that the way they speak or explain a situation is relative to their relation to the expectations of being a certain member of a certain cultural group. This subject of sensitivity in research gives a different aspect on I can see my interviewees. It is vital to think that all the collected data from them reflects the expectations of how they see themselves as members in certain cultural groups. In my research, this as a subject and the questions related made it hard to point out only one membership of a group for a certain person.

The sensitivity of my research revealed itself in practice particularly when I approached the person who declined my invitation to be interviewed. She did not want to participate and found the subject matter to be too heavy in her current life situation. Through this experience I understood that the process of discussing one’s identity and ethnicity can be difficult for some people, and to others participating in a research like mine can be a positive life experience. Some of the interviewees felt that talking about their life experiences gave them a voice and more more understanding of their life.

**3.6. Why study young adults?**

In this chapter I will go through some ethical aspects of researching young people of age. When choosing the group of interviewees, I encountered some issues related to their age range. Even though my main theory is based on TCK’s that could be applied to a wider spectrum of age, I decided to interview people who were over 18 years old. Keeping in mind that the interviewees are a group of people who are from 18 to 30 years old, it is good to notice that my research lacks the point of view
of the younger people. Researching young people contains ethical aspects that were too complex for me to confront in my research.

Liebkind & Jasinskaja-Lahti (2001) have made a research on how Russian speaking young people in Finland identify themselves with the Russian and Finnish ethnical groups. In their research, they assume that the ethnic self-identification of a young person can differ from their ethnic identity. (Puuroinen, 2006.) Through this notion I believed that for my research, it is relevant to interview people older than 18 years old. It could be assumed that the interviewees’ ethnic self-identification conforms more realistically with their ethnic identity. This could give me more reliable results when collecting data from my interviewees during handling their ethnic identity between the Finnish and their parent’s culture.

Lagström, Pösö, Rutanen & Vehkalahti (2010, 95) analyze the complexity of how under 18-year-old youth are responsible for their answers in research context. They say that in the constitution of Finland children have the right to be treated equally as individuals and that they should have the power of influence over things that concern themselves. Lagström, Pösö, Rutanen & Vehkalahti (2010) also say that on the other hand, the Child Welfare Act childcare law has enacted this right to the guardian to decide about the minor’s personal things. This is related to the idea of protecting the child. These are thought on how complex the idea of researching young people is and that interviewing them could be contradictory, I wanted to research people who were over 18 years old.
4. Living in Finland as a third culture kid

In this chapter, I will analyze how these young adults experience different cultures in their lives. The different cultures are outlined through the TCK-theory. The “first”, “second” and “third” culture will be explained through the data that is collected through my interviews. Through the interviews, it can be seen how the interviewees experience these different cultures in their lives and what meanings they give for them. With different meanings for cultures, we can understand more how Finnishness and their parent’s culture affect them. I will discuss in what sense the interviewees are third culture kids and whether it is a good concept to describe my interviewees.

It is important to take under consideration that the young adults that have been interviewed for the research have relevantly different family backgrounds, by this I mean the parent’s home culture. The differences come from the home culture: has the family lived all together in the country that they left, or are the parents both from a same cultural background. Sometimes the parents are separated and the differences with behavior can be seen easier, first culture is represented in the home of the parent who is foreign backgrounded and the second culture at the home of the Finnish parent’s home. Also, the interviewees’ personal backgrounds are different from each other. Being a refugee, immigrant or born in Finland are the biggest differences with these young adults who participated in my interviews. These factors are important to acknowledge and take under consideration when analyzing the results of the collected data. The variety of backgrounds of the interviewees and their family produce different results to the answers and the feeling of different cultures in their lives.

4.1. Experiences of first, second and third culture of the young adults

In this chapter I will introduce the concepts of first, second and third culture, that are based on the TCK-theory.

4.1.1 First culture

First culture can be seen as the “home” or “passport” culture of the parents. (David C. Pollock etc., 2017, 17) Examining the interviewees and their experiences of the first culture showed that there was variety in how it manifested in their lives. In my research, how the first culture was constructed, had an influence on the backgrounds of their parents. Having both parents from the same country outside of Finland gave the first culture an important meaning for how they saw their life in Finland. First culture in effect meant the country that they had left behind after having settled down in Finland.
One interviewee named Lisa felt a direct connection to Congo through her nationality and what legal documents she and her family had. The ongoing process to get the nationality of Finland legally binded her to her Congolese nationality. Her sense of nationality was different when compared to the others who had the official nationality of Finland.

Lisa: “At this moment, I have the nationality of Congo and the alien’s passport, so I am a “citizen of no country”. Because we came here as refugees, I did not have any documents. In the 90’s mother could have a shared passport with the child. So, we did not have any documents of our own. We applied as foreigners or refugees. The Congolese citizenship came later, that it had been applied. So, I am a citizen of Congo for the time being. I have left the application for the citizenship of Finland.”

The meaning of the first culture for the interviewees can be seen through the parent’s relationship with their home country. Being a refugee or an immigrant without your own choice shows a different relationship to their home culture. In the of case Lisa, she did not have a passport of any country when leaving Congo. Having the situation of having no nationality officially, in this case, did not make her totally feel rootless. She felt that official documents did not make any difference concerning her sense of belonging. Even though she and her family were refugees and first without documents, they still had a strong connection to Congo, and it felt like their origin and home.

In the next part of the interview, Petteri seemed to have more difficulties in separating the first and third culture from each other. His father is from the United states and in this case, the type of country of origin could have been noticed in a different way than with Lisa in the interview.

Tuuli: “Do you identify yourself having certain thoughts or mindset that is straight from American culture, or that you could outline as connecting to the other culture than only from Finnishness.”

Petteri: “Not really, I think that my father is a very untypical American, maybe that is why.”

Tuuli: “And why so?”

Petteri: “That my father is untypical American? Well, he does not fit the stereotypical image of an American.”

Tuuli: “What does stereotypical mean in this case?”

Petteri: “Well patriotic type.”

“And he has lived for a long time here in Finland?”

Petteri: “Yes. 30-40 years.”

Petteri: “I don’t feel strongly for my national identity to point any direction, maybe I don’t have any.”
In the case of Petteri, the identity of the first culture felt closer to their third culture. This can be a result of not having such a strong meaning of belonging to the first culture, that can have a connection with the parent’s relationship with his/her country of origin, that was not Finland. Factors that influence the parent’s more distant relation from home country or the more integrated way of living, can be the longtime of having lived in Finland and strong integration into the culture. These two interviews have been chosen to be examples that show two different meanings for the interviewees denoted to their first culture.

With the next interviewee Emilia, the relationship to the first culture was notably strong and their identity was as related to the parent’s culture from Turkey as to Finland.

Emilia: “But it’s hard to say, if I would have to choose, I probably would say that I am more Finnish because I have lived here. But I wouldn’t like to, my cultural bond to Turkey is very important. That I would not like to even think of myself of being completely Finnish. More as an mix of both – And I have took it more as an positive thing.”

The meaning for the first culture in some cases were strong and connected to the home culture. The interviewees had feelings of belonging to the culture and reflected their habits of culture of the country they or their parent had left behind. The other meaning was more about being more distant to the home culture and in a way possibly seeing the first culture as second culture by having this vague national identity of the first and second culture. First culture in this research is the country of the origin of the parent and, some cases, the interviewee. The interviewees were picked by the criterion of having a parent of a culture outside Finland, so that is why the home culture can be seen of having important significance for all, even though the meaning changed for them sometimes.

Emilia: “Always when I visit Turkey, I enjoy the lifestyle a lot. But when I return, I start to enthuse how I am going to do thing like “this” and “that” and I start doing them differently. But then I start to stiffen back to my old routines how I have acted out before.”

With this case, the Emilia’s connection to the first culture gets stronger after visiting the parent’s country of origin. The habits of Turkey are noted more and wanted to be mixed more with the Finnish every-day life. In the case of Emilia, the frequent visits to Turkey keep her strongly rooted to the country and cultural group, even though she notices that she is in the border of both cultures, the first and the second culture.

4.1.2 Second culture

In this research, the second culture is referenced to as the host culture to which the family has moved into and lived for a longer period of time (Pollock, 2017, 17). In this research, the second culture is
considered as the Finnish culture, because all the interviewees and their families have lived most of their lives in Finland. The data that is about living in Finnish culture is seen in this research as experiencing the second culture. The concept of being Finnish is in this research considered as the dominant culture that is lived in Finland. In this case, it means having both parents born locally or having lived their whole lives in the country. Features like using Finnish as their mother tongue and being a part of the Finnish society. Also, living a long period of time in Finland or having been born there gives the right for the Finnish citizenship. (Finnish Immigration service.) Emilia describes her identities in three different groups, that fit perfectly with the theory of TCK.

Emilia: “Yes, I kind of have three identities: Turkey-identity, home-identity, when we are at home among family, and then the Finland-identity.”

The Finland-identity that is mentioned by the interviewee, is interpreted as the second culture. Living in the Finnish society constructs in this case a well-integrated Finnish identity that Emilia feels she exists in. Living in the host culture, meaning the Finnish culture, shapes and gives the sense of belonging. The long time that has been lived in the country, gives them insight of the society and understanding how the Finnish cultural group works and how they feel the sense of belonging. Still the identities that Emilia describes are constructed into three groups and she can recognize that they exist.

The next interviewee Lisa recognizes the understanding of being on the border of different cultural groups. When talking about Finnish people, she understands them and mentions that she feels like her good language skills are the path to really have a full understanding of the society and the Finnish cultural group.

Lisa: “I realize, that I have good language skills, that gives me a good understanding, how is it to live and to be with Finnish people in a Finnish society and such. So I have become to understand, I get it.”

For the next interviewee Nico, the idea of being strongly a part of the second culture feels foreign. The feeling of being a part of the two cultures is difficult to explain but is needed to understand the feeling of being on the border of these cultural groups of the first and second culture.

Nico: “I don’t have a feeling that I have become rooted totally to Finland. I don’t feel that I am 100 % Finnish. It’s just not possible.”

The connection to the second culture can be seen through the feeling of belonging or the will to stay. In this case the connection to the Finnish culture is strong because the interviewee does not really feel it to be necessary to go back to the first culture, even though he has lived there himself as a child.
Nico: “I have never thought what Finnishness means to me. But somehow I feel that it is easier to live here than in Russia. That’s how I’ve felt. I haven’t really had the need to go back to Russia.”

The participant Anna refers to Finland as her home and in her interview the connection to the second culture can be seen strong.

Anna: “Finland is home.”

Jenni relates to Finnishness through her life experiences but is still in the border of the two cultures. It can be seen that some of the interviewees have a stronger or more certain feeling towards their relationship with second culture and others are aware of being in between the first and the second culture, and do not want to pinpoint themselves to only one group.

Jenni: “Yeah especially because I’ve grown up here and passed my childhood, teenage and young years so I feel myself more Finnish, but still I don’t feel myself Finnish.”

4.1.3 Third Culture

In this research, the term third culture means the mix of the two cultures of home and host culture. The first culture and second culture are melted into a hybrid of both. During collecting the data, it could be seen in the interviews, that there are mixes of cultural behavior in different cases. Some interviewees had certain culture coming out stronger situationally than others.

“The term third culture then refers to a way of life that is neither like the lives of those living back in the home culture nor like the lives of those in the local community, but is a lifestyle with many common experiences shared by other living in a similar way” (David C. Pollock etc., 2017, 17).

As David C. Pollock refers above, calling the third culture as a lifestyle makes it easier to understand how the third culture is constructed in the interviewees’ lives. In the data some features came up when considering living in the third culture. Using a certain language in variable situations gave a good example of the mix of cultures. At home the language of the parent was used between the family. Language can be connected to the parent’s home country and sentiment. Nico noticed even that the his way of thinking changed when he switched language with his family. Lisa had their own slang that was a mix of the parents’ language, Finnish and English. It can be considered a perfect example of how all cultures mix and make a hybrid that suits the interviewee’s life and situations with different groups of people. Other examples of third culture were the holidays and food habits. Living by
themselves outside their family home, continuing to carry on making food and certain holiday traditions made their own mix of culture be a part of their every-day life.

Here are some examples of the different interviewees and their feelings of noticing the two cultures in their lives. Emilia noticed the mix of cultures in herself, understanding the third culture to be a part of her life. Also, Anna felt as being a mix.

Emilia: “So maybe I have the feeling, that I often say, that I am a mix.”
Anna: “Well yeah, I do feel (of being Finnish)! So I am half and half, I can notice it because I am a big fan of ice-hockey.

In the case of Basak, she was more certain of being Finnish, even though she lived her life in the third culture.

Basak: “Yes I would say that even though I feel that I am not totally a Finnish person, but I am a Finnish person, who no one can vocalize my name. So that is why sometimes it is like, that I have to pretend something in a way in my parents.”

The experiences of having the third culture in their lives were divergent of each other. Some of them lived strongly every-day being aware of the third culture and some did not even notice it existed. For some, being at home with their parents and living their life in the society, did not really construct that different identities. For the interviewee Lisa, that was because their parents had lived for so long in Finland that they had “become very Finnish”. Especially in cases where the parents had lived for a long time in Finland, they all lived closer to the second culture and did not feel a significant difference in their lived life. Possibly the interstitial culture, third culture, was so transparent that it was more difficult for them to notice. Comparing the results of the data, there were people who had a very strong culture at home and parents who strongly brought their culture into their children’s lives. Petteri was a good example of not having the three different cultures so clearly outlined.

Tuuli: “Do you feel that when you go outside your home, that you have a different identity in your home with your family, than outside of it?”
Petteri: “Well yes, but I do not know if it is, that it’s not necessarily dependent on the culture, but maybe because there is always a little bit different identity with parents and family or than with friends.”
Tuuli: “How do you connect Finnishness and the other parents home culture? Or do you connect them at all?”
Petteri: “I don’t consciously try to connect them.”
Tuuli: “But in principal they are melt into together?”
Petteri: “Yes..”
The doubt in the voice of the interviewee Petteri, gives the impression that he does not feel that there is much mixing of culture, in other words living in the third culture. He did not feel certain that the cultures were blended, but possibly lived more in only one culture that constructed his reality. In this sense, the Finnish culture.

In the case of Nico, he felt that with his parents he could be more like himself than when using the Finnish language to express his feelings. The parents’ culture made him think and express himself differently than in Finnish culture, and in home the expressions could become stronger with his relatives.

Nico: “I talk Russian with my mother and my grandmother. In a way the Russian manner to talk maybe shows in my behavior. It kind of feels that in Russia people are more connected with their family and that grandparents and parents are respected more.”

Nico: “Yes but I don’t do it consciously, but I can see certain things. And like maybe how I form my sentences and form words, that they go how I think some things in Russian. Still they come out in Finnish. that in some way they are in my head. Difficult to explain.”

Nico felt a switch of culture from second culture to first, in this case, from Russian to Finnish. Through the language that was only used with family members, the contact to the first culture was made and instantly, the way of thinking was more Russian than Finnish. Even though the language used was Russian, and the culture switch happens, the parent was changing to Finnish and was influenced by living in the Finnish society. His time passed with his family is living in the third culture.

The youth research approach that has seen western culture through the idea hybridity and mixing culture. It helps to understand the concepts of identity, ethnicity, culture and national belonging. (Haikkola, 2012.) Living in the third culture can be seen as mixing culture into a perfect hybrid of their own. As much of having the first culture close through using the language, as combining elements of every-day life when living in Finland.

The interviewees saw how their parents adapted into the Finnish culture during the past years. This makes them and their parent closer to the host culture and mixes their home culture with the Finnish one. A common language with the parents makes children and their parent connected with the home culture. Even thinking in a “different way” happens through the home culture’s language and grows their home identity. The parent’s identity can be seen in many cases also as living in the third culture. This is how N expresses the issue.
N: “I can see it already in my mother, she also has lived here for a long time. She also has started to change in a way. Like becoming more Finnish. But what means becoming more Finnish? Difficult to explain.”

L: “Christmas and holidays I have tried to get more of a twist, and we try together, if something happens we go with my mother to see and get her along with Finnish culture. When been living so long her, I’ve noticed that mother is also. Our father doesn’t live here anymore so I talk only about my mother. My mother has noticed herself that when you live here for a long time, you have to act differently than in your home country.”

Some experienced that they were more abstained home with their parents because of the cultural habits or expectations. They noted that they had a double identity when visiting parents. Some had radical differences in their behavior with the Finnish parent and the parent who was from a different culture. Some interviewees felt that with the Finnish parent they could be their real selves and act more naturally. Jenni and Lisa discuss their lives when living with a parent from different cultural backgrounds.

Jenni: “For my father (who is Finnish) I can talk about everything honestly and to my mother (who is Brazilian) I have to have a filter 24/7 on, so I don’t say accidentally anything wrong or if she has a different opinion about something have to be ready to fight about it.”

Lisa: “Yes. There is a certain identity that has been developed. That of course I guess I am different when I am home with my family members, than with my other friends. Of course, it depends how close the friend is. But yes I am more abstinent at home because there is the another culture…”

Tuuli: “So you are more abstained at home?”

Lisa: “Yes. Because there are some things at home that are not allowed to talk about. Because of cultural reasons. The respect to honor mother and father is so strong. Of course, at ours its diverse. Yes, it is that I have a double identity there (with parents).”

Constructing the third culture can be seen through language (their own slang), holidays, food habits and having a connection with immigrants or with people from a foreign background. Some felt the sense of solidarity with people who had their parents from the same culture. Some did not even know people who had the same background as they had. J tells about the difference with two separated parents and experiencing the cultures in their homes.

Jenni: “Yes and of course there is Brazilian music, Brazilian food and that kind of stuff. At my dads there is like meatballs and smashed potatoes and that kind of. I didn’t recognize it that much, than through food, music and language changed between homes. It wasn’t that weird.”

When the parents of the interviewee were separated, the cultural diversity became more culminated.
Two homes were two different cultures, the other one was the first culture, the other was the host culture. In this case the other was the Finnish culture and the other was the Brazilian culture. The cultural difference did not feel significantly different, but some still felt that they could be “more like themselves” in the Finnish culture.

Nico: “Well in a way yes and in a way not. In a way I feel that I’m in a state of being in between. I’m not totally Finnish but I think about a lot of stuff in Finnish. And I have liked a lot to write in Finnish lately. But then I can notice that I don’t manage totally that kind of Finnish. But not even Russian in that way. It is a very strange thing, kind of a mix like everything.”

4.2. Meanings of Finnishness for interviewees

When collecting data of the feeling of being part of the society of Finland, the meaning of what is Finnishness, it became important to inspect the matter closer. Through knowing the meanings of Finnishness for the interviewees, it made it easier to get the feeling of their identity of being a Finnish person and what they possibly considered to be local culture. Finnishness got many meanings from the interviewees. Some of them did not understand the question or how Finnishness was meant to be described. Some felt that the meaning of Finnishness was too profound to describe and it was hard to choose just some features. The meanings were for example: qualities of personality, language, appearance, relationship with nature and well-being in the society.

The interviewees had been living in Finland for many years. From this angle, the meanings of Finnishness were troublesome to describe because of a strong integration or by just having it as home culture. The meaning of Finnishness gave a more specific perspective how they also saw themselves as being a part of the society. Interviewees Petteri and B struggled to describe the meanings of Finnishness.

Petteri: “Not really nothing, I don’t know, I don’t… Finnishness is so many different things, it’s maybe difficult to summon up to only one thing in specific.”

Basak: ”I don’t really know, what means to be a Finnish person.”
”That is such a hard question. That what is means to be a Finn, I don’t know.”

The host culture, in this case the Finnish culture, seems to be hard to describe even though the interviewees have the capability of seeing the culture from an outside perspective, through the experience of living in the third culture. The question sometimes felt a little vague and not so clear for the interviewees. This question was the most problematic for people to react or in general to get a proper reaction. Many of them did not know what “Finnishness” is or that it contains too many
things to describe. This is understandable, because they are asked to describe their host culture, where they live daily. Describing your own everyday-life and characteristics of it is not easy, if you do not feel like an outsider in the society and feel like you are looking at it from the inside.

These two interviewees especially, Petteri and Basak, seemed to live more in the second culture than in the third culture. This answer and others revealed that they did not have such a close relationship with their first culture, in other words the culture of their parent. Living in a Finnish culture felt like their only way to be and in many parts, they did not show indications of being in between different cultures.

4.2.1. Language

The interviewees saw using Finnish fluently or as the mother tongue as a way through which they could understand how to be in the society with Finnish people. Good language skills were one meaning of Finnishness and a way to get closer to the Finnish culture group, in my research this means the first culture. Interviewees had pressures to speak correctly and not talk Finnish in a “funny way”. Mastering the language made them get inside into different cultures, also into the third culture which was constructed with a language or a dialect of their own. Lisa and Emilia describe their relationship towards their Finnish language skills.

Lisa: “All of those! Talking, even though I have lived here for many years, sometimes you can notice that I stumble in my speaking.”

Lisa: “I have developed Fingala, Lingala-Finnish. Language, that I talk with my parents! That is a good example how I combine different cultures together.”

Tuuli: “So you never attended the class for immigrants in school? You were always in the same class with Finnish people?”
Lisa: “Yes. They found our Finnish language skills so good that we were put there straight away.”

In Lisa’s case, managing the language of Finnish is clearly a straight route to the Finnish culture and to the second culture. Through her own point of view, she appreciates the mastering of the language fluently and understanding more about the different groups.

Emilia: “It’s funny that in Finland people always say that someone “talks Finnish in a funny way”, even though it should be thought that how great it is when someone speaks Finnish.”

Emilia: “I use a lot of gestures, for example with my face and hands, than others so to speak, Finnish person would. And also, one that people have commented is that I
interrupt people when speaking with them, it is a Turkish way. That I speak over people and interrupt, but I’ve notices that my mother does the same, so I believe that my mother (Finnish) has adopted it, because she has been together with my father over 30 years.”

Emilia has noticed that her different way of communicating has been affected by the first culture. Living in the second culture and still having the strong influence of the first culture in practice, tells about how she is near both cultural groups and can expose herself to certain borders of the cultural group. Language and gestures can be seen as a good example of living in the third culture.

When interpreting the data, the natural ethnic bond of Finnishness happens through geographical location, because all the interviewees live in Finland. Naturally being in the same country, talking the same language and mostly having the effect of religious views in their life constructs their Finnish identity. When defining what could be the Finnish ethnicity and will the factors of location, language and attachment to certain cultural things be a good measure.

### 4.2.2. Characteristics of Finnishness

Qualities of character were brought up because many interviewees could understand that they sometimes acted differently in various situations in different cultural groups. Qualities that were related to Finnishness were being shy, inhibited and using composed communication. L and E tell about how they reflect Finnish and their own behavior in relation with others.

Lisa: “Well yes. I can notice, that if I go to visit some friend and I introduce myself to everyone. I notice that when being with Finnish friends, there kind of lacks some kind of hospitality, that they are kind of shy.”

Emilia: “It is interesting to notice. And when eating it’s not that snobbish, we reach a lot and eat from the same plates together. It’s not like everyone has their own plate. And food has usually been quite Turkish descended.”

Lisa and Emilia notice how their behavior is different and how they stand out with their gestures in every-day life. Their reflections tell how they can still in the society of Finland pinpoint their behavior that connect them with their first culture. This can be seen also related with their relation in living in the third culture in the society, because they connect different elements of cultures in their behavior.

Haikkola (2017, 22) says that the second generation shakes the category of immigration because they have not moved like immigrants. This can be seen with the interviewees, Petteri and Basak, who have been born in Finland and in this way are second generation immigrants but have the difficulties to express meaning of their Finnishness. Giving meanings for their host culture made them more distant in the interview and they did not want to discuss the matter further. The question did not make them
feel comfortable because it possibly felt like they did not consider themselves living their life in the third culture that is a mix of others. Refugee backgrounded Lisa can easily describe more about the characteristics of Finnish people. She feels that knowing them has come through learning.

Lisa: “Finnishness.. It means.. So I have to be like, think what it means for me. I can tell what I have learnt from Finnishness. Finnishness means for me to be persistent, because this place is quite tough. What ever you do, you have to be persistent, when working, studying. – Going to school, going to school of economics or university of applied sciences, buying a flat from like Itä-Pakila, giving birth to children, that kind of easy-life. That’s what Finnishness means to me.”

Finnishness was considered to connected to the term of grit sisu. Living in Finland was described of being tough, because of its climate and the living style needed, persistence to survive and patience. The Finnish lifestyle was described as easy and linear, when comparing to other countries. Some interviewees had not even thought about the meaning of Finnishness before.

Being “truly a Finn”, that was mentioned in the interviews, was used to refer to people who were born in Finland. For interviewees who had not been born in Finland, the meaning of their birthplace had a different meaning. For the ones that were born in Finland, living in the second culture was strong, and they felt in many senses, more like being a part of the group of the host culture. Still, even these people described themselves as being “not completely Finnish”, so living in the third culture was still happening in their lives. The fact that some interviewees had not been born in Finland could easily end up with having them classified and valued differently than the ones that have been born or have their background in Western countries. (Haikkola, 2017, 23.) Having parents from Western countries can make them more acceptable than the ones who aren’t (Harinen & Ronkainen, 2003, Rastas, 2005). Petteri can be described as an example of what Harinen & Ronkainen think about the issue. In Lisa´s interview it can be seen how the birthplace makes her assume that her youngest sister is “fully Finnish”.

Lisa: ”1996 my youngest sister was born and she is the only one who was born in Finland. Fully Finnish, as we speak in our family. We have all been brought up here, gone to kindergartens and schools.”

In this way, it can be seen that the birthplace has a meaning for the interviewee Lisa. All the interviewees wanted to stay in Finland and some of them felt, that living in Finland was easier, than in their country of their departure. Part of the interviewees had not been born in Finland but still did not feel longing for their first culture, or in other words the home culture.
Citizenship and nationality are two different concepts that can be mixed. Gordon & Lahelma (1998, 257) have analyzed the issue through the Finnish perspective. They have presented that locally in Finland nationality and citizenship are often thought of as one certain concept that is Finnishness. (Harinen, 2000, 21) In the light of their conclusion, it feels important to clarify these concepts, especially when researching the feeling of belonging in Finnish society. In my research, it felt also vital to break loose from this kind of thinking of mixing the two concepts to represent only Finnishness. My interviewee easily mixed these two concepts and strongly connected birth to the right to be a citizen in Finland and that she was more “Finnish” than the rest of the family.

None of the interviewees expressed longing to move to their parent’s home country. Living in Finland felt definitive for many. In this way, it can be seen that the interviewees who had not been born in Finland, felt like being a part of the third culture.

Appearance was a meaning, because even when the interviewee felt like a Finnish person, there was an experience about comments being made by other people, that they were not, because of how they looked. This experience made the interviewee move to the border of the different cultural groups. The external pressure made interviewees unsure of their position in a certain cultural group and in this way grows the feeling of being an outsider. The feeling of an outsider was usually with people who felt or knew that they looked different from the mainstream. Jenni who was of Brazilian descent, felt that her appearance brought out pressures from Finnish people about her not being a part of their cultural group.

Jenni: “Well it is like, I don’t care about how I look, but when others who comment your appearance, so I start to feel that I know that I’m not. That I kind of am, but I am not. It’s kind of weird to try to explain that how I feel, am I Finnish or not.”

Jenni: “But the sometimes they start string and I’m like: “Yeah I know I don’t look 100 % Finnish, because I am not 100 % a Finn.” And they are like: “Okay, I just was wondering because you have darker skin and darker eyes” or something. And I am like: “Okay.””

With the case of Jenni, we can reflect through the TCK-theory that she feels like she hasn’t a full ownership of any culture or at least when it’s questioned by others and it makes her uncertain. She is conscious that her appearance is not considered always typical in Finland and the pressure from outside also makes it more visible for her to see. In a way the first culture group then makes some boundaries on the border of their group which she feels as obstacles which inhibit her from entering the group.

Lisa: “Language and my skin color. They come out strongly.”
Lisa is conscious that her dark skin comes out strongly. So through this, we can consider that the idea of how an regular Finnish person is seen, differs with darker skinned people. The way it is discussed about is not necessarily negative, but in the case of Lisa and Jenni, the color of their skin is something that they cannot ignore when talking about their appearance that reflects their belonging to cultural groups.

Emilia: “Let’s say what bothers me with Finnish people. That exoticism is a good thing, and by some reason when I was younger, when I’ve told people that I am half Turk. So people have commented that “you don’t look at all like a Turkish person!” I have been offended about that and it has hurt my feelings.”

People commenting how Emilia does not belong to her first culture group, pushes her outside the group that she feels she also belongs in. The questioning of her Turkish identity and hurting her feelings can be seen in how she feels herself still representing her Turkish cultural group or in a way wanting to represent it at least.

Nico: “But I got a lot of friends because I was exotic.”

In Nico’s case with him considered as being exotic, or in this case something else than Finnish, was found as a strength and an asset.

4.2.3. Well-being and nature

In this theme nature, summer cottages and forest were mentioned as things that came into the mind of the interviewees when thinking of qualities of Finland. Many interviewees liked to compare Finland to their parent’s culture and find differences in them. Finnish culture was seen in a positive light. Nature, summer cottages and forest can be blended together as representing one theme all together. These things that came to the mind of many could be stringed together under the idea of the theme named well-being.

Emilia: “First that came into mind: Forest, summer cottage and nature. In a good way independence and individuality. Maybe comparing to Turkey. And I guess that things are quite well in the end of the day. But still people want to complain. And of course, well-being.

Anna: “Well I can tell what comes up to my mind of the word “Finnishness”. Summer nights, ice-hockey, four seasons, that I think is refreshing and really nice, I really like it that we have that in Finland. I love it.”

Nico: “To have your own space. In a way that everything is peaceful and there is the possibility to do things. More than really. More opportunities to affect your own life.”
For the interviewees, the feeling of appreciation towards Finland could be seen when gathering data about this theme. Security, independence and individuality were mentioned because an interviewee possibly did not possibly that it could be the same in the other parent’s country.

4.3 Feeling of being an outsider

In my research I wanted to question my interviewees about the feeling of being an outsider in the society of Finland. I had chosen a group of people for interviews, that I assumed were connected strongly with the Finnish culture and living their every-day lives in Finland. The idea of the feeling of being an outsider came from the TCK-theory and being possibly in the borders of different cultural groups. Also, I wanted to research if multi-cultural backgrounds increase the feeling of being an outsider in the society, or not. All of my interviewees answered to this question and I got different aspects of the feeling of being an outsider.

Tuuli: “But you haven’t met a lot of people who have the same background as you?”
Petteri: “I don’t think I’ve ever met people who have the same situation that I have.”
Tuuli: “Have you had a feeling, that you are an equal member of the society of Finland?”
Petteri: “Well yes I do have.”
Tuuli: “Have you felt like being an outsider in the Finnish society?”
Petteri: “Not really, but for me it’s easy to blend in Finland. Everybody thinks I am Finnish.”

In the case of Petteri, he notices that he is well blended into the society. His father is American, but he does not feel strongly involved with the American community in Finland nor has a connection with people who have the same background as he has. Through Petteri, we can think that having the strong connection only through family to the parent’s culture, the first culture group is not that present. Petteri apparently did not live so strongly in between the many cultural groups and did not feel like an outsider or being different in the society of Finland.

Tuuli: “Have you felt of being an outsider in the society? How?”
Anna: “Well maybe as I said before, that sometimes when I’m in a group of people I feel discriminated. I don’t know if it’s because there have been unfamiliar people, or that they have discriminated me because I have a foreign background or something else. I can’t really know where it has come from.”
Anna: “My last name is that kind of that I can be judged that I am not totally Finnish. So because of that I have felt sometimes. Yes.”
In the case of Anna, she has some feelings of being an outsider but she could not pin-point clearly where that feeling came from, or what were the reasons that caused it to be connected with her multi-cultural background. In her case, the feeling was relevant, but not so strong that she could be sure.

Basak: “The reason that you have not got a job is maybe because of your name” And that has never occurred to me before. And I am like, of course, why wouldn’t I be Finnish for someone? But then when you see my name (Turkish), so it sounds a little bit. In the health center they’ve asked me many times if I speak Finnish?”

Basak: “That I feel myself as a Finnish person, but sometimes I can see, what other people possibly see in me.”

Tuuli: “Have you felt like an outsider in the society of Finland?”

Basak: “No. Does not come into mind.”

In the case of Basak, we can see how she feels about being “a Finnish person”, but she admits seeing how people could view her. In this way, she clearly changes her position in the cultural groups, of being inside of the Finnish culture, but still outside by noticing how she is possibly different, and her Finnishness is questioned. Still she does not feel like an outsider, but she is clearly changing her position in different cultural groups.

Emilia: “Sometimes I feel that I don’t fit perfectly to the traditional Finnish mold, but I don’t fit to the Turkish one either. It’s more of a personal feeling of being an outsider, not comprehensive, that is not connected to others.”

Emilia is referring to molds, by which she possibly refers to the cultural frames or groups that she feels like she doesn’t fit into. Her personal feeling can be thought of as her relation to herself and being an outsider in her mind, but not having that great of a pressure to push her outside from all cultural groups. In Emilia’s case, we can see that even though there is a strong feeling of belonging to the society of Finland, there still are aspects why the feeling of not totally belonging somewhere can exist.

Jenni: “Well, I have never felt myself that different, not especially when I was little. I felt that I was the same as others, except I talked that weird language.”

Jenni: “The bus was standing still and a small boy, 5-year-old sits next to me in the bus. Then comes his mother and grabs him and on the way says to him, that he can’t sit next to a darkie (mutiainen).”

Jenni doesn’t feel different and the sense of belonging can be seen to belong to the Finnish society. But in her case, there are the pressures or the reactions of different people that make her question her cultural identity.

Lisa: “And then in the 90’s we were the only ones dark-skinned in the kindergarten. When we started primary school, more dark-skinned people arrived. There were
foreigners from Estonia and Russia. I didn’t feel that I was different, when all had different backgrounds. Those were nice times.”

Lisa: “In some individual cases I’ve had the feeling of being an outsider but not personally. I’ve had good luck and good people around me.”

Tuuli: “Have you felt like a full member of the society?”

Lisa: “Well because of my passport-situation, I haven’t. Hey, I have the alien passport, so absolutely not felt... But I still see that I am equal with everybody.”

With Lisa, she can relate to different cultural groups inside the society. She has a strong connection to Finland and also brings up her connection to other foreigners. She does not feel like an outsider, even though she has mentioned her different appearance and that she does not have a Finnish passport.

Nico: “I’ve not felt like an outsider. Well yeah, in a way I haven’t. I haven’t encountered a certain thing that I would feel. Or that in a way somebody has left me outside, because I am like from Russia. It has happened in my life in a way, that I’ve got along very easily. Always. It has been quite cool. People haven’t left me outside of the group because “He is from Russia, we can’t hang out with him.”

Nico’s experiences are positive and he does not feel of like an outsider.

4.4 Summary of findings

In this chapter I summarize the findings of the data that I have collected. The three topics, the meaning of Finnishness, the question of third culture and feeling oneself as an outsider are all related to my research questions. The meanings for Finnishness was an aspect to get the idea how my interviewees saw their Finnish identity. This was the most difficult question for my interviewees to answer because they had to analyze their Finnishness that they were living through every-day. In other words, put themselves in the spectrum of how Finnish they felt or what did they consider to be Finnish in the society. Some of them struggled to answer the question and the data that I got was variable. To some even explaining Finnishness was not possible.

The interviewees found that they had characteristics that they recognized to be related with their parent’s culture. This happened with social habits and gestures in their every-day life. They connected characteristics like hard-working, shyness and grit with Finnishness. Meanings were found from the place of birth. With an interviewee who had not been born and did not have the citizenship of Finland felt that been born made you “more Finnish”. Interviewees mentioned appearance as a meaning because usually they had experienced comments of being different. The word exoticism was usually brought up in a negative and positive way of how experiencing their appearance.
Well-being and nature were one meaning that was more country related, than others. Interviewees felt that Finland was secure, gave independence and individuality. Nature was found being an essential part of Finland and that in general the well-being of the society gave satisfaction.

Some interviewees felt that they were a mix of two cultures, of the culture of the parent/s’ and Finnish culture. Others felt that they had the elements of mixing the two cultures and living the third culture in their life. But they still lived more in the second culture, in this case, Finnish culture in their life. In the end the living in the third culture happened for them all, but for some it was stronger than for others.

Examples for living in the third culture were the language used by the interviewees. One of my interviewees used many languages in her life as a slang with friends and family. Other had specifically the parent’s language that was used when passing time with family. Food habits and holidays had a meaning in interviewees lives. One of them wanted to continue carry on making food and certain holiday traditions of their parents’ culture. When describing themselves the interviewees told that they were “a mix”, “half and half” and “I am not totally a Finnish person, but I am a Finnish person”. One interviewee had their first culture only connected with the parent at home, other had the presence of it in their every-day life.

From seven participants only three expressed that they’ve had the feeling of being an outsider in the Finnish society. One of them had the feeling of being discriminated but was not sure if it was because of her background. The other felt that she sometimes did not fit in a certain cultural group full on. The third felt that did not have full membership because of her passport-situation. The rest of the interviewees were sure not of being and outsider in the Finnish society. Couple of them felt that they were sure of not being an outsider but understood that they could be being foreign Backgrounded. The reasons were in their thoughts of that they felt that their appearance could tell for people that they were from another country or cultural background.

Overall, the results of the empiric data made me to make the conclusion that my interviewees have mixed feelings of their cultural identity in Finland. There can be conclusion that multi-cultural backgrounds don’t automatically mean that you are feeling as an outsider within the society. It is relevant to say that still even though they did not feel of being an outsider, they sometimes expressed of being unsure which cultural group they belonged in different situations. In this way cultural identities can be seen that they are situational, fluid and constructed of different spectrum of feelings.
5 Conclusions

Increasing mobility, globalization and internationality has its effect of Finland. Finland has always had immigration and emigration but since the 1990’s there has been more movement throughout refugees and other immigrants. Finland is transforming from a homogenic country to a heterogenic one and people have more variety in their cultural backgrounds. The spectrum of Finnish people’s identity is getting wider and more complex. The questions of home, belonging and identity are not simple and should be more researched, especially in Finland that is in a turning point.

In this master’s thesis I wanted to examine young adults (to 30-years) and see how they feel belonging in different cultural groups in their lives and what does Finland represent for them. I felt that examining concepts of identity and belonging to different cultural groups, would tell how they live in the Finnish society. I wanted to examine if they felt of being an outsider of the society.

Here are my research questions that I will answer shortly.

1. What kind of meanings do these people give for Finnishness?
2. How is the third culture in their everyday life? What kind of meanings does it have?
3. Do they feel being an outsider in the society because of their background?

The meanings for Finnishness that were more visible in the interviews were the significance of language, characteristics that related to Finnishness and the well-being in the Finnish society.

Language was related with the status of the interviewee’s Finnish language skills. Finnish language was spoken by many as mother tongue and still the interviewees thought language as an essential meaning of Finnishness. Knowing the language gave them an access to the Finnish culture and to understand cultural aspects and groups better through speaking Finnish. To have the “full membership” to the second culture. Knowing the language of the parent’s also gave aspect for them to see their understanding through other languages too. Interviewees created their slang or mix of languages of their own and used them with friends and family. Characteristics were related with the feeling that “Finns do this and are this”. Participants felt that they often behaved differently than their friends in Finland. They mixed their habits of Finnishness and their parents’ culture and this can be connected with experiencing third culture in their life.

Living in the third culture came out in the interviews of how the interviewees experienced the mix of their cultural identity. Other examples of the third culture were language, cultural habits and holidays.
Living in the third culture came out when the interviewees described themselves as “a mix” of both cultures. Describing their cultural identity as only Finnish, was not usually an option. The ways of feeling of being both was popular as an answer for the participants. Living in the third culture through language could be seen the example of slang and created language with mix of different languages and accents in speaking. Cultural habits that were connected with certain culture or group, like their parents. Holidays were created with their parents and mixed traditions of different cultural groups.

Interviewees did not feel as being an outsider but in some cases, they could understand how they were in the border of different cultural groups. Being on the border sometimes made them feel as being different than other people in the society but they still recognized how they were part of many groups.

My expectations were that my interviewees would have more meanings for Finnishness, but this was the part that my participants struggled the most in the interviews. My premonition was that language would play a big part with how the participants contact themselves with the cultural groups and this was true. Language as a concept came up in various situations in the interviews. This is why I conclude that language is truly meaningful when thinking of being on the border of various culture groups and the feeling of belonging.

Next, I will go through previous research of these themes and compare it with the result of my research.

Warinowski (2012) has researched expatriate families’ children. Prior research about this field of study has been quite unknown outside its own circle of study. Things like unestablished concepts, incoherence geographically, being not linked through a certain field of research and being mainly done us theses does not have been helping as growing the awareness of the issue. Children of expatriate families have been researched for decades but the research literature about the issue has not been extensive. (Warinowski, 2012, 30-31.) Through what Warinowski analyzes, all research related with immigrants, second generation and expatriate families are essential and would need more profound examination.

The most important and known prior research is the TCK-theory and the global shepherd (McCaig 2011). Different concepts for children who have lived abroad have been used in different countries. In American research the concepts for expat groups are missionary kids or military brats. In Japan children have been known as Kaigai-shijo (children who live abroad) and Kikoku-shijo (children who return) (Kano Podolsky 2004). In Finland missionary kids have been called matka-laukkulapset (suitcase children) (Marttinen 1992). (Warinowski, 2012, 31.)
These different concepts are good example how limiting is the prior research and the concepts of them. The participants of my research do not really fit in these concepts and would need a new concept of their own. The existing concept “second generation immigrant”, that has been used in the media, feels too restrictive for my interviewees. During the interviews they were asked how they felt about being one, majority did not divide themselves to this concept or group.

My research supports the conclusion that my participants do not feel being an outsider in the society of Finland. Their multi-cultural background through their parents’ cultural identity makes them feel of being on the border of different cultural groups and some of them are aware of that. Still, they feel of themselves to be “Finnish” and that Finland is their home. My participants had very diverse cultural identities because all of them had different life stories. It came as surprise for me, how Finnish some of them felt and did not consider themselves divided through different cultural groups.

When starting my research my expectations were that my interviewees would feel less connected with Finland, because the parent’s home culture would still be so near their every-day life. This changed after understanding that living in Finland rooted them strongly to Finland’s country and culture.

Even though finding the TCK-theory inspired me to proceed with the theme of researching this topic, during the process I realized that there are some issues related to how my interviewees fit the TCK description. The interviewees that were more suitable for the TCK-theory were the ones who had been born outside of the country of Finland. In this sense, they were children that had followed their parents to another country that is a relevant issue when defining a TCK. The children did not decide where they would end up and the country that they landed in was dependent of their parents’ situation. Mainly my interviewees had been born in Finland and were Finnish citizens. Through this it felt that this group of people did not totally fit into the TCK-range. I still embraced the theory because I wanted to research the belonging to different cultural groups and the feeling of being on the borderlines between them. In this sense, the TCK theory felt like a good choice, even though not all criteria were filled by my interviewees. Through the next sentence by Ruth Hill Useem I felt that I could continue my research with the TCK-theory.

“I think no concept is ever locked up permanently… Concepts change as we get to know more; other times concepts change because what happens in the world is changing.” (Pollock, Van Reken & Pollock, 2017, 17)

In this sense, Useem (1999) developed the TCK-theory for certain kind of children in a certain kind of world and time. I wanted to expand the concept to my group of interviewees because I felt that
through the theory, we could understand better how people with multicultural lives and backgrounds saw the society of Finland.

Other issue that I experienced how my participants differed from the TCK-theory was the meaning of being privileged. My participants did have the fortune of having parents who worked for the army, missionary or the embassy. Through these professions the parents often got help and private schooling for their children abroad and were more privileged that people who just migrant to a country because of a relationship, sanctuary or other reasons. The TCK-theories children often had the history of living in multiple countries, and only some years at a time. In this way it was difficult for them to integrate and they had the routine of changing countries. In the case of my interviewees, they had lived in the country of the origin of their parents, but mainly their lives they had been in Finland. This also gave a different aspect for their relation towards Finland. Through this I could experience that meaning of belonging is easier when there have not been too many countries that have been lived by the young adult. The understanding of Finnishness for them is complex because they have experienced different cultures, but the feeling of being an outsider in the society is too strong to impress their feelings. Being a mix of both or being half and half of different cultural identities gives them more moving space inside their own created third culture. Not only one cultural group is to impress their identity, because it would feel too limiting.

What I have learned through this process is that Finland as a society is only taking baby steps towards multi-culturalism. The way to be, speak and look as a Finnish person is still in an old-fashioned way of thinking in the back of our minds, even though it is extremely difficult to explain how. Finland is still very homogenic and we still often expect that Finnish person is from a certain group. Still, through this research I found out that times are changing and through different life stories, backgrounds and cultures, the concept of Finnishness is changing. The experiences of the interviewees made me to understand that there is hope for a brighter future in changing concept of multi-culturalism in Finnishness. The wind of change can be seen in media, music and how people with different backgrounds step up to represent themselves. The results of my research gave the impression that in Finland you feel as being at home, even though you can feel a bit different than others.

If I could now do my research again, I would take different things under consideration. I would specify my questions to understand more about the roles of different cultural groups. I would research more profound what is Finnishness and what are the cultural border around it, or is there? By understanding the concept of Finnishness deeper, I could also understand the borders between cultural
groups better. My approach would be more specific and concentrated that for my thesis and through that my data and conclusions would be more accurate.

Other interesting themes of research would be the phenomena of how this comes up in the society in culture and media. What kind of movements and platforms there are for multi-cultural people in Finland and what has changes during these recent years? How do these people see the change in the society for themselves or is there any change happened? These all would be interesting to research and get a wider view of cultural identities in Finland. Also interviewing a bigger amount of people and reach for the more invisible types in the society, would be make a more interesting and profound research.
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7 List of Pictures

Here are my questions for my interview. In the interview the questions were done in Finnish. The Finnish questions are in the original mode and the English questions are translated after the interviews.

2. Onko vanhempasi/yksi vanhemmistasi ulkomaalaistaustainen? Mistä maasta?
3. Minkä maan kansalaisuus sinulla on? Onko molemmat?
4. Oletko syntynyt Suomessa? Jos et niin missä?
5. Tunnetko, että sinulla on vaikutteita elämässäsi erilaisista kulttuureista? Minkälaisia kokemuksia sinulla on?
6. Mikä on äidinkieleesi? Onko sinulla niitä monia?
7. Tunnetko, että sinulla on erilainen identiteetti kodin/perheen ulkopuolella?
8. Onko sinulla ajattelut/toimintatapoja jotka huomata selkeästi liittyvän tiettyyn kulttuuriin (suomalaisuuteen & vanhemman kulttuuriin)?
9. Tunnetko olevasi suomalainen?
10. Tunnetko, että olevasi suomalainen ja toisen vanhempasi kotikulttuurin? Yhdistätkö sitä ollenkaan?
11. Miten yhdistät suomalaisuuden ja toisen vanhempasi kotikulttuurin? Yhdistätkö sitä ollenkaan?
12. Mitä tunteita herättää termi ”Toisen polven maahanmuuttaja” sinussa?
13. Mitkä asiat edustavat sinulle ulkomaalaistaustaa?
16. Mitä suomalaisuus sinulle tarkoittaa?
17. Tunnetko olevasi Suomen yhteiskunnan tasa-arvoinen jäsen?
18. Oletko tunnetut ulkopuolisuutta suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa? Millä tavoin?
1. Tell me shortly: Your age, family members, where have you studied, your current situation in life?

2. Is your parent/parents have a foreign background? From which country are they from?

3. What nationality do you have? Do you have double nationality?

4. Have you been born in Finland? If not, where?

5. Do you feel that you have different cultural influences in your life? What kind of experiences do you have?

6. What is your mother tongue? Do you have many?

7. Do you feel that you have a different identity outside of your home/family?

8. Do you have ways of thinking or acting that you recognize to be linked in a certain culture (Finnish or your parent’s culture)?

9. Do you feel that you are Finnish?

10. Do you feel that you have been treated differently because of your foreign background?

11. How do you connect your Finnish and your parents home culture together? Or do you?

12. What does the term second generation immigrant mean to you?

13. What things represent your foreign background?


15. Have you been in situations that you feel yourself as an outsider with other foreign backgrounded people? Do you feel a connection with other people who have a foreign background?

16. What does Finnishness mean to you?

17. Do you feel of being a equal member of the society?

18. Have you felt of being an outsider in the society?