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# Empathy Education in Early Childhood

Creative Methods in a Multicultural Kindergarten

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Helsinki Metropolia University of Applied Sciences

Bachelor of Social Services

Degree Programme in Social Services

Empathy Education in Early Childhood

November 2018

Authors Title	Tara Pihlajaniemi and Krista Raitio Empathy Education in Early Childhood
Number of Pages Date	34 pages + 3 appendices 5 May 2010
Degree	Bachelor of Social Services
Degree Programme	Social Services
Specialisation option	Early Childhood Education
Instructors	Sylvia Hakari, Senior Lecturer Mervi Nyman, Senior Lecturer
<p>The aim of the thesis was to observe and strengthen the existing skills of empathy in children in a multicultural kindergarten, in a group of 3 to 5-year-old children. The group consisted of children with Finnish as a second language, and where some of the children have developmental challenges. Together with the parents and the workers in the kindergarten, we decided upon the participating children according to who would benefit from the workshops the most. One of the aims was to observe possible cultural differences in understanding of the concept of empathy. In addition, one of the aims was to utilise the workshops in our future work and share our findings in a multiprofessional team in the field of early childhood education.</p> <p>The thesis consisted of functional workshops, where drama education and visual arts were utilised as support for understanding and coping with emotions. The emotions we covered were designed specifically for the needs of this child group. Drama education was carried out in the workshops through a fifth dimension character, who supported the understanding of emotions in every-day life, and with whom the children discovered ways to cope with the situations. Visual arts was utilised with the children by drawing individual emotion cards.</p> <p>The group of children enjoyed the workshops, and the fifth dimension character helped them name emotions and recognise them in their own lives. During the workshops, the children also started to recognise each other's emotions and observe individual differences in expressing emotion. The emotion cards created in the workshops had been used at home and discovered useful in the every-day life of the family. The kindergarten group has taken emotion education as a part of the group's every-day operations with the help of a fifth dimension character.</p> <p>The development of empathy skills in children is nearly impossible to measure, therefore the observations are merely our subjective point of view. Empathy education could be utilised with long-term operations, which would be re-evaluated after a few months. In this case, the understanding of the concept of empathy could be observed more precisely</p>	
Keywords	empathy, early childhood education, multiculturalism, visual arts, drama education, emotion education, social pedagogy

Tekijät Otsikko	Tara Pihlajaniemi ja Krista Raitio Empatiakasvatus varhaislapsuudessa
Sivumäärä Päivämäärä	34 sivua + 3 liitettä Marraskuu, 2018
Tutkinto	Sosionomi (AMK)
Tutkinto-ohjelma	Sosiaalialan koulutusohjelma
Suuntautumisvaihtoehto	Varhaiskasvatus
Ohjaajat	Sylvia Hakari, Lehtori Mervi Nyman, Lehtori
<p>Opinnäytetyön tavoitteena oli havainnoida sekä vahvistaa lasten jo voimassa olevia empatiataitoja monikulttuurisessa päiväkodissa, 3-5-vuotiaiden lasten ryhmässä. Lapsiryhmä koostui lapsista, joilla on suomi toisena kielenä, sekä osalla lapsista on kehityksellisiä haasteita. Yhdessä vanhempien, sekä päiväkodin työntekijöiden kanssa, päätimme osallistuvat lapset sen perusteella, joille työpajat olisivat tarpeellisia. Tavoitteisiin kuului myös mahdollisten kulttuurierojen havainnointi empatian käsityksen ymmärtämisessä. Lisäksi yksi tavoitteista oli työpajojen mahdollinen hyödyntäminen tulevaisuuden työssämme sekä löytöjen jakaminen moniammatillisessa työyhteisössä varhaiskasvatuksen piirissä.</p> <p>Opinnäytetyö koostui toiminnallisista työpajoista, joissa hyödynnettiin draama- ja taidekasvatusta tunteiden tunnistamisen ja käsittelemisen tukena. Käsittelemämme tunteet oli suunniteltu juuri tämän lapsiryhmän tarpeiden mukaisesti. Draamakasvatus tapahtui viidennen dimension hahmon avulla, joka kullakin toimintakerralla auttoi havainnollistamaan erilaisia tunteita arjen tilanteissa löytäen yhdessä lasten kanssa keinoja niistä selviytymiseen. Taidekasvatusta hyödynnettiin lasten kanssa yksilöllisiä tunnekortteja piirtämällä.</p> <p>Lapsiryhmä nautti työpajojen toiminnasta ja viidennen dimension hahmo auttoi heitä nimeämään tunteita sekä tunnistamaan niitä omassa arjessaan. Työpajojen edetessä lapset alkoivat tunnistamaan myös toisten tunteita ja huomaamaan yksilöllisiä eroavaisuuksia tunteiden ilmaisussa. Työpajojen aikana luodut tunnekortit olivat päätyneet myös kotikäyttöön ja todettu hyödyllisiksi perheen arjessa. Myös päiväkotiryhmä on ottanut tunnekasvatuksen osaksi ryhmän arkea, viidennen dimension hahmoa hyödyntäen.</p> <p>Empatian kehitystä lapsissa on lähes mahdoton mitata, joten havainnot jäivät vain meidän subjektiiviseen näkemykseen. Empatiakasvatusta voisi hyödyntää pitkäjaksoisemmalla toiminnalla, johon palattaisiin muutaman kuukauden tauon jälkeen. Tällöin empatian käsityksen kehityksen voisi havainnoida selkeämmin.</p>	
Avainsanat	empatia, varhaiskasvatus, monikulttuurisuus, taidekasvatus, draamakasvatus, tunnekasvatus, sosiaalipedagogiikka

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## 1 Introduction

Empathy has been discussed a lot around the media during the past years. It has also been discussed during our studies in the Degree Programme of Social Services, as one of the most important skills that we can have in our future practice. Chopik, O'Brien, and Konrath (2016) tell us about an online questionnaire-based study of empathy, with more than 100 000 participants. The study was made at a university in the United States. According to Chopik et al. (2016), there were participants from 63 different countries around the globe. This study showed that Finland is one of the weakest countries when it comes to feeling empathy. Chopik et al. (2016) state that the United States has placed in this study as one of the highest. However, we have to be critical when reading this article, since we do not have access for the data that was collected during the study, nor what are the criteria that the numbers and rankings are based on.

Researching for possible topics for thesis we found a bachelor's thesis called *Empatian kasvaminen (Growing into empathy)* made by Vilhelmiina Väyrynen (2017). It discusses empathy as an important part of social interactions and character in helping others. Väyrynen (2017, p. 27) writes in her conclusion that it could be interesting to have research about the differences in empathy between children from Finland and other nationalities, and that it could be useful to raise the awareness of the topic of how different cultures and ways of education can influence the skills of empathy of a child. Väyrynen (2017, p. 27) also concludes that these kinds of researches could be made in the early childhood education environment with different kind of group activities and plays.

Reading this thesis, made us realise that there is still a lot of possibilities for a thesis subject about empathy. Considering that empathy could possibly be a social pedagogical concept in the future, we see a place of development in the emotion education (*tunnekasvatus*) in early childhood education. We are interested in using creative methods, such as visual arts. As going through different bachelor's theses of the topic of empathy in early childhood education, we noticed that none of them had a multicultural environment as one of the main subjects.

These previously discussed findings conclude our developmental task. We wish to design workshops that utilise visual arts and drama education to help children to acknowledge and utilise empathy in a multicultural environment. In the workshops, we aim to give the children the resources of understanding different emotions, and how to express them. We wish to observe the possible differences in understanding of empathy between children from Finnish culture and children from other cultures. Our aim is to create workshops that can be utilised in our future as teachers in early childhood education. One goal is to be able to continue utilising these types of workshops and share our findings with multi-professional teams in the field of early childhood education.

## **2 Early Childhood Education in Finland**

### **2.1 National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care**

Teachers in early childhood education are expected to have and utilise pedagogical knowledge to plan and implement goal-oriented operations that support children's wellbeing and learning (National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care, 2016). Early childhood education is formed by an ensemble of education, teaching and care, and it is carried out through interactions between the children, the staff and the environment. Through education, children are guided to form their own opinions and use critical thinking. Education strives to support the formation of children's individual identity so that children learn to recognise their actions in relations to others and to their environment. Teaching in early childhood education is based on the concept of learning, and its mission is to improve children's learning, and help children create meanings for themselves, other people, and their environment. Care in early childhood education is not only physical caretaking but also emotion based caring. Children should feel valued, understood, and in connection to other people in a daycare setting. (National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care, 2016.)

As the target group is children in a multicultural kindergarten, it is important to take into consideration each child's right to their own culture and language. In the National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care (2016), culture is recognised as a resource, and it is stated that everyone has the right to their own culture, language, religion, and worldview. It is stated, that early childhood educators must have knowledge

of different cultures and be able to see things from different perspectives. (The National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care, 2016, p. 30.) This is something that must also be practiced when doing the developmental task in a multicultural kindergarten. We must be able to use empathy towards the children from different cultures for us to be able to help develop their skills of empathy towards others. As mentioned before, we are also interested to see if there are differences in empathy skills between Finnish children and children from other cultures.

The developmental task of this thesis will include creative methods. It is stated in the National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care (2016), that early childhood education must support the development of children's musical, visual as well as verbal and physical expression. Creative methods with artistic experiences support this holistic development in children, and we want to utilise these methods in developing the children's skills of empathy. In the National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care (2016) it is stated that artistic expression provides tools for making observations, emotions, and creative thinking visible, which is one of the goals of the developmental task. The approach of this developmental task is to use creative methods to help children in a multicultural environment to develop their skills of empathy, in the hopes of making the learning experience motivating for the children.

As one of the underlying values of early childhood education, the National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care (2016) has named growth as a human being. This includes the support of the children's growth to become human beings who strive for truth, goodness, beauty, justice, and peace. "Early childhood education and care respects knowledge and ability, which manifest themselves in our attitudes to ourselves, other people, the environment, and information, in the ways we act and, in our willingness, to do what is right." (National Core Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and Care, 2016, p. 22.) This type of growth as a human being should include skills of empathy, since empathy, especially reflective empathy, allows recognising different attitudes, and helps with understanding other people's experiences.

## 2.2 Early Childhood Education Plan of the City of Helsinki

Since the implementation of this thesis will be carried out in Helsinki, the Early Childhood Education Plan of the City of Helsinki (2017) was something to take a closer look at. In



the Early Childhood Education Plan of the City of Helsinki (2017, pp. 18-19), one of the pedagogical objectives is cultural knowledge, interaction, and expression. Especially in the Helsinki Metropolitan area, children grow in a culturally and linguistically diverse world. For this reason, it is important that children learn cultural knowledge and sensitivity, which include skills of listening, recognising, and understanding different views and opinions, and the skill of reflecting of one's own values and attitudes (Early Childhood Education Plan of the City of Helsinki, 2017, pp. 18-19). In the Early Childhood Education Plan of the City of Helsinki (2017, p. 21), it is stated that putting oneself in another's position, seeing things from different points of views, and resolving conflicts in a constructive way should be practiced together with the children. These objectives go well with the developmental task, since the goal is to go to a multicultural kindergarten, and through creative methods gain more understanding of children's skills of empathy. As discussed further on, empathy is something that allows us to understand more about other people's experiences, and how they see the world, and this is an important part of education in our continuously evolving multicultural society.

### 2.3 Pedagogical Documentation as a Tool

Pedagogical documentation is a way to examine a child's operational ways, and learning (Ruokonen, Rusanen & Välimäki, 2009, p. 86). Making observations of all children in a kindergarten group, and documentation of those observations are a part of an early childhood educator's main tasks, which can be the teacher in early childhood education, the nurse or the personal assistant of the child group. The main observational areas can, for example, be the child's emotional development, memory and learning, linguistic development, motoric skills, social skills, and playing. (Koivunen & Lehtinen, 2015, pp. 18-19.) Observations of individual children can happen in a group setting, and in when a child is alone. When observing a group of children, the educator can become aware of the interactions and social connections in the group. (Koivunen & Lehtinen, 2015, pp. 36-38.) In the developmental task, the group of children will be observed as a whole, as well as individuals.

According to Ruokonen et al. (2009, pp. 84-84), the visual outcome of a creative activity may overshadow the process where the learning, growth, and development happens, which is where pedagogical documentation is useful. Pedagogical documentation is done by an early childhood educator, and it is based on the observations of the processes, so they are able to be reviewed and examined later. Using pedagogical

documentation allows the educator to record the meaningful moments and learning experiences of the creative work of children. (Ruokonen et al., 2009, pp. 84-84.) Pedagogical documentation allows an early childhood educator to record the children's individual learning, as well as the group's interactions in different stages of the process (Rusanen, Kuusela, Rintakorpi & Torkki, 2014, p. 67).

#### 2.4 Multiculturalism in Early Childhood Education

As stated in *Varhaiskasvatuksen käsikirja* (Hujala & Turja, 2016, p. 235) multiculturalism has become even more highlighted in early childhood education these days. The number of immigrant children has increased in the kindergartens and life, in general, has become more globalised, due to media and other factors. In the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children (1989) it is stated that all the rights apply to all the children. This means that no child should be discriminated against, and all should be equal. In Finland, the convention acts as a base for the Curriculum for Early Childhood Education and care, and it states that each child should be treated as an individual (Hujala et al. 2016, pp. 235-236). It is also stated by Hujala et al. (2016, pp. 237-238) that there has not been made much research about immigrant children in kindergartens in Finland, especially from the perspective of the children.

According to Halme, and Vataja (2011, p. 43), in the future, those who know how to act in a global world will be the most successful in society. Learning to act in a global world starts already in early childhood. As stated by Halme, and Vataja (2011, pp. 43-44), children begin recognising differences in people early on, including skin colour and linguistic differences. For this reason, teachers in early childhood education should provide different cultural and linguistic experiences for children, with a goal to decrease racism, discrimination, prejudice, and stereotypes. Choosing appropriate learning materials and group activities can affect positive attitudes. According to Halme, and Vataja (2011, p. 45), many evaluation methods used in early childhood education demand good skills of Finnish language, which means that not all children have the same opportunities to participate and succeed.

*Ota koppi!* (Helsingin kaupunki, 2012) is a programme developed to strengthen the linguistic development, and participation of children from different cultural backgrounds. The aims of the programme are to create equal prerequisites for learning and participation to all the children, as well as well functioning bilingualism. *Ota koppi!* (2012,

pp. 7-9) emphasises the significance of a child's mother tongue in the child's sense of identity, and the importance of the ability of a teacher in early childhood education to support it. To support the learning of Finnish for children from different linguistic backgrounds, using pictures to describe the activity or theme, is helpful. Physical exercises, doing arts, and games are ways to support the participation of children from different linguistic backgrounds since it does not require such a high level of linguistic development than, for example, imaginary play. (Ota koppi!, 2012, pp. 7, 9.) According to Halme, and Vataja (2011, p. 91), immigrant children in Finnish kindergartens often like to do arts and crafts, since it gives them a break of using the Finnish language. Observing an immigrant child doing arts and crafts can give more of an understanding of that child's thoughts and emotions, that they are not yet able to express in Finnish.

One of the most significant causes of cultural differences is an individual's relationship with their family, according to Halme, and Vataja (2011, p. 59). Cultures can be divided into those that value individuality and those that value communality. In cultures that value individuality, people have their own opinions and needs, and they base their actions by what is most beneficial to themselves, whereas in cultures that value communality, the benefit of the group goes ahead of the benefit of an individual of that group. The sense of belonging in a community is vital in communal cultures. The reputation and honor of the family are important, and domestic matters are rarely shared with people outside the family. (Halme & Vataja, 2011, p. 59.) These cultural differences should be considered when discussing empathy in children; are there differences in children's empathy skills between the individual culture and the communal culture?

Teachers in early childhood education should accept culturally different behaviour and values and take those into account when planning and implementing the education. Teachers in early childhood education should be able to recognise and aim to change the unequal structures that may even be seen in the curriculum. Each child should be seen as an ever-changing individual and their personal strengths should be supported. Teachers in early childhood are expected to consciously recognise and remove prejudice between children to create a safe and supportive learning environment. (Halme & Vataja, 2011, pp. 102-103.)

### 3 Growth and Development in Early Childhood

#### 3.1 Developmental Stages in Early Childhood

According to Damon (as cited in Santrock, 2014, pp. 367-368), each child is able to use empathy, but they might not do so depending on a variety of reasons. Damon's description (as cited in Santrock, 2014, p. 267) of children's empathy develops and changes in four different stages which are: early infancy, 1- to 2-year-old, early childhood, and 10- to 12-years-old. When discussing these stages, it must be remembered that each child is an individual and the development happens at a different pace with each child.

In early infancy, the child shows empathic responses to feelings and needs without any clear boundaries. This is called global empathy. Infants, at the age of 1 to 2 years, start to realise the feelings of distress but they cannot act appropriately in order to help in the situation. When the child reaches early childhood, the perspective of each mind's uniqueness starts to clarify in the child's' mind and it is easier to respond empathetically to another's feelings. At the age of 10 to 12 years, the child starts to feel empathy at a higher level. They start to realise the more unfortunate ones in society and concerns towards them might evolve. (Damon cited in Santrock, 2014, pp. 367-368.) When considering these developmental stages of a child's capability to feel empathy towards others, it can be argued that the developmental task, that we have planned out, would work out best for the children in early childhood.

According to Kalliopuska (1997, p. 57 - 58), the environment where the child has grown has a big effect on how the child will act in the future. It is stated that a child who has negative self-perception, is more likely to get angry over small issues and bully others. This creates conflicts within different cultures since they have an effect on how the child is raised and what kind of social statuses they have. The boundaries can be broken in order to have more empathic behaviour, but usually, each culture has their own principles for educating the child (Kalliopuska, 1997, p 58). The positive emotions of a child develop when one is interacting with another person, and this makes the way of parenting important. Even when a culture has their norms for raising a child, parents can still choose their own way and they have to answer the question of how they want to raise

their children. The relationship that the child has with their parents will reflect on the future relationships that the child will have. (Kalliopuska, 1997, pp. 57-59.)

### 3.2 Importance of Self-Image and Peer Relationships in Early Childhood

According to Salmivalli (2005, pp. 32-33), having peer relationships is rewarding for a child, since they create feelings of belonging, as well as help children learn about themselves and their identity through social comparison. A group of peers create a field of practice of social skills and being left out from that group exposes a child to feelings of rejection and loneliness (Salmivalli, 2005, p. 33). Friendships in early childhood consist of shared playing with children who enjoy doing similar things. In early childhood children learn, for example, regulation of feelings, waiting for one's own turn, and sharing with friends. (Salmivalli, 2005, p. 36.)

Having a peer relationship is also important for the child to learn skills that might seem difficult at first. As stated by Dowling (2010, p. 43) an individual will not give up as easily when working in pairs and an uncomfortable activity might end up being something that both of the children enjoy. Each child has their own way of thinking and by working as pairs different kind of strategies might evoke from the co-operation. As mentioned earlier, through friendships children learn, for example, taking turns and sharing, and these skills are important when it comes to working together and maintaining the peer relationship. (Dowling, 2010, pp. 42 - 44)

Brotherus, Hasari, and Helimäki (1990, p. 70) state that when a child is interacting with a group of children, the child will learn how to take care of themselves and their actions. While interacting with a group of children, that is equal, the group needs also the safety provided by an adult. The educator can influence the surroundings that children have during their play and activities. By planning activities and the wished outcomes, the educator can make sure that the child will have the best possible developmental environment while creating relationships with other children. (Brotherus et al., 1990, pp. 69-72.)

### 3.3 Development of Empathy in Early Childhood

As Koivunen, and Lehtinen (2015, pp. 143-144) state, children's empathetic development is individual, and it develops through interactions with other people. The development of empathy is considered one of the most important aspects of social understanding and interactions between people, and for children to develop their empathy, they need to mirror an empathetic adult. (Kinnunen cited in Koivunen & Lehtinen, 2015, p. 145.)

Developing empathy in children can be started already in the early years, even when the child does not have the capabilities to understand emotions. For example, Kalliopuska (1997, p. 153) states that during infancy, family members can use baby massage, to start developing emotions and a positive parent-child relationship. Baby massage helps the family to have an open and safe atmosphere. Later on, the feeling of safety will help the child to start developing healthy self-perception, which is important since it will be easier to act emphatically without feeling that something is taken away from you (Kalliopuska, 1997, p. 155). During the early years, it is important to receive as many stimuli to your emotions as possible, since later on it will make it easier to understand and communicate your feelings, and the feelings you may experience, has a larger scale. (Kalliopuska, 1997, pp. 152 - 155.)

Empathy creates a base for individuals' positive attitudes. Empathy is a way and a skill to appreciate yourself and others. If one does not understand and love themselves, it is impossible to share the love with others or put yourself in someone's shoes and to experience empathy towards others. Empathy is a skill that stays with you forever and you can educate it further once you have learned how to use it. (Kalliopuska, 1997, pp. 150 - 151).

According to Kalliopuska (1997, p. 75), empathy is important for positive moral growth. It is a way to prevent aggression in children. A child with empathetic skills has more sense of imagination, which is an important part in the play since it is a way of exploring things that might not occur in daily routines (Dowling, 2010, p. 144). While using imagination in their play, children can learn good manners and behaviour, as well as help them to survive from struggles that occur during growth and development (Kalliopuska, 1997, p. 76). As said earlier, through positive interactions child's morality develops and so does the level of empathy. Positive emotions help the child to develop friendships and

through these interactions the well-being of a child increases (Dowling, 2010, pp. 31-32).

As Koivunen, and Lehtinen (2015, pp. 142-143) state, the development of empathy is closely intertwined with the development of emotions. Both commonly seen as negative emotions, as well as positive emotions, should be discussed together with children. Children's emotional lives and behaviour should be supported by helping and guiding children to recognise and express their emotions, as well as coping with strong emotions through understanding and discussion. A child who is emotionally sensitive can sense another human's emotional state and is more likely to be motivated to help another in need than others. (Koivunen & Lehtinen, 2015, pp. 143, 145.)

#### **4 Social Pedagogy**

According to Storø (2013, p. 1), social pedagogy is a concept that has its main focus on children and young people. One way to open up the concept is to say that it is how we socially deal with other people, for example, upbringing. In order to be able to use social pedagogy, you need to have knowledge of techniques and concepts, and you are always connected to the client's needs. One should also respect the ethical values and understand that theory is applied differently in each client case. (Storø, 2013, pp. 11-15.)

Social pedagogue is an educator, who can work with children and youngsters, such as teachers and social workers. A professional learns their skills for social pedagogy from everyday life situations, we are able to study it from the books as well, but daily life is what trains us to be professionals in social pedagogy. (Storø, 2013, pp. 63-64.)

According to ThemPra (2015-2018), there is different kinds of models and concepts that can be used to apply social pedagogy into practice.

1. Haltung is what we use in order to put our own values into the work.
2. Common Third is used to describe different plays that we use to create trustful relationships with children.
3. Learning Zone is used to describing situations where we can learn things and how one can create new opportunities for the learning to happen.

4. Zone of Proximal Development explains to us why it is important to learn together with others and describes us the different social ways of learning.
5. 3Ps shows the roles of that a professional should have in them, which are professional, personal and private.

(ThemPra, 2015-2018.)

According to Karila, Kinos, and Virtanen (2001, pp. 112-118), social pedagogy is a tool for thinking, it gives the possibilities and direction to think in certain ways, but it does not guide one. It is something that helps an individual to socialise with others and to grow into the community. In early childhood social pedagogy is seen as a study that supports the well-being of an individual. (Karila et al., 2001, p. 118.) It is important to understand that early childhood education is more of an upbringing than education, which is a key to social pedagogy (Karila et al., 2001, p. 130).

#### 4.1 Social Pedagogy in Early Childhood Education

Early childhood education is planned and targeted care, education, and upbringing of a child, which is based on the pedagogical approach (Act 540/2018, 2 §). One of the objectives is to execute a versatile pedagogical activity that is based on the child's play, movement, art, and cultural heritage, and that allows the child to have positive learning opportunities (Act 540/2018, 3 §).

According to Brotherus et al. (1990, pp. 46-47), early childhood education includes a wide range of pedagogical perspectives. The child needs a pedagogue that understands the needs of a child's growth and development. The educator takes care that the child gets a wide spectrum of daily activities, such as play and learning, that supports the well-being of the individual. The needs of each individual needs to be taken into account and the individual needs to be directed into a way that supports this individual's growth and development in the best way possible. The learning happens in all daily activities, and not only during planned learning situation, so the role the pedagogue is showing for the children is important as children might mimic and identify the features they see in others. (Brotherus et al., 1990, pp. 46-47.)

According to Piironen-Malmi, and Strömberg (2008, p. 78), planning the environment where everyday activities happen, in kindergarten, is one of the most important things the educator has. The environment needs to be one that can also advocate the learning



of individuals and it has to be pedagogically planned so that it is motivating for the children. An environment, that has been planned well, supports the learning of a child and it offers the opportunity to observe different kinds of things. In addition to the environment, the basic care is also a basis in early childhood education. Each of these situations where a child needs support and guidance, should be considered as a pedagogical learning opportunity, since these situations create the basis of the daily life of an individual. (Piironen-Malmi et al., 2008, pp. 78-80.)

#### 4.2 Sense of Self and Community in Early Childhood

As mentioned earlier, peer relationships are something a child needs in order to learn different kinds of skills. As stated by Karila et al. (2001, p. 128) these kinds of relationships are needed in order to have a social pedagogical activity. Karila et al. (2001, p. 127) state that in social pedagogical upbringing the basis is in the understanding that the persona is the actor. In order to understand this, an educator needs to know that each individual is unique and allowed to make decisions on their own, so in a way they are free. Also, upbringing is preparation for life and it gives the basis for social relationships, and skills such as communication and having a dialogue with others. (Karila et al., 2001, pp. 126-127.) Karila et al. (2001, pp. 121-127) state that persona centered upbringing is good in environments where social pedagogical education happens, for example, in kindergartens, since it is the place where children learn about daily life and create their first relationships inside a community.

This in mind, sharing experiences between children and adults, as well as peers in the group is an important factor in a child's life. When communicating with a child, we show them respect and it builds the child's self-esteem. (Downling, 2010, p. 35.) As mentioned earlier, children who have a positive attitude towards themselves, are more capable of sharing their experiences with others and are more open for discussion. According to Dowling (2010, pp. 32-35), children learn from others through positive interactions and having even temporary relationships with peers help them go through changes. After all, children live in a society and belonging to a group is a way of surviving in daily life. (Dowling, 2010, pp. 32-35.)

In order to create a community that consists of different personas and that has healthy peer relationships, there are some steps that need to be considered. According to Velan (as cited in Karila et al., 2001), there is in total four of these stages and they start from

early infancy and last through childhood (pp. 128-129). First of these stages is in early infancy, where the child is experiencing everything through themselves, without the persona, in other words, the child is living in a self-centered world. In the second stage, the child starts to create a relationship with other humans, usually with their mother and other close relatives. The child starts to realise the difference between what is mine and what is yours. The sociality of the child starts to grow in this stage when the child is having interactions with others. (Velan as cited in Karila et al., 2001, pp. 128-129.)

Third stage development happens usually between the ages of 6 to 12, and it consists of the idea "us". This stage requires the successful development of the earlier stages, since when talking about "us", one cannot be selfish. The fourth stage is an idea of the friendship between individuals. The relationship is equal and not selfish, and it is the step closer to a harmonic community. The fourth stage will lead into a community where each individual has the right to be as they are, but this requires that each individual has gone through all of the other stages and has gained the full understanding of those. (Velan as cited in Karila et al., 2001, pp. 128-129.)

After all, a group is created with individuals who have different kinds of personalities, interests, skills, and abilities. The self-esteem of an individual grows, when one experiences that they are needed in the group. In a kindergarten, such happens when the teacher in early childhood education supports each child as an individual and cares for their needs. The needs of an individual are found through observation and discussion with the child. When each child feels that their contribution is needed for the group to be successful in their task, the dynamics of the group are in balance. With a balanced group, we are able to support a sustainable growth and development for each individual. (Vehkalahti, 2007, pp. 21-28.)

Karila et al. (2001, p. 130) state that in early childhood education we can support both sides of social pedagogy: helping the children to socialise as well as supporting the individuals and families that are in need. The ones who study to become professionals in the field of early childhood has to gain social pedagogical orientation and way of thinking, which is moulded from each individual's own thinking, ethicality, and reflection that happens during education. Social pedagogy is seen in the best way when it is used in the upbringing of an individual, through functional and entertaining activities, that also support the development of the community. (Karila et al., 2001, pp. 130-134.)

## 5 Empathy

According to Neumann, Chan, Boyle, Wang, and Wesbury (2015), over the past 20 years, there is no single definition of empathy. In social psychology alone, there are more than ten different definitions of empathy, which makes it more difficult to fully understand the concept. However, according to Neumann et al. (2015), similarities can be seen in different definitions. These commonalities include an inductive affective and cognitive evaluative process that allows us to experience the other's feelings, and understand the situation of another person (Neumann et al. 2015). According to Aaltola and Keto (2018), empathy is one foundation to moral, and it helps us to see others as subjects rather than objects. According to Gerdes, and Segal (2009), empathy is the ability to imagine what another person is feeling and thinking, and in this context being presented as "--a dispositional trait, a cognitive skill, a physiological reaction or some combination of these components."

### 5.1 Different Forms of Empathy

Cognitive empathy, according to Aaltola, and Keto (2018, p. 49), is a skill that allows us to observe or define other people's emotions without taking part in those emotions. Cognitive empathy could be considered as a form of mind reading since an individual observes others' facial expressions and nuances in their voice to determine what emotions the other is feeling (Aaltola & Keto, 2018, p. 49). As described by Aaltola, and Keto (2018, pp. 49-51), cognitive empathy does not mean sharing emotional experiences with other individuals but evaluating the other's emotions or even suffering without being affected by it. For example, a doctor could use cognitive empathy to observe and evaluate a patient's pain, without being emotionally affected by it.

According to Gerdes, and Segal (2009), developmental psychologists have recognised that infants mirror and mimic the feelings of their parents and other people, and thus developing the ability to recognise others' feelings. The cognitive processing part of empathy, according to Gerdes, and Segal (2009), develop as we age, where we are able to take on other roles and imagine the feelings of others.

Cognitive empathy is an important tool and most of us use it in almost all social situations. Cognitive empathy allows us to be critical and not let our emotions define how we see

other people. Cognitive empathy is the skill that allows us to critically evaluate an individual as how they truly are, instead of, for example, seeing the individual through the idealisation of adoration. (Aaltola & Keto, 2018, p. 50-51.)

Cognitive empathy can cause issues if not connected to other forms of empathy. As mentioned above, cognitive empathy does not allow us to share emotional experiences with other individuals. If an individual relies only on cognitive empathy, the danger of losing the touch of subjectivity towards ourselves and others appears. (Aaltola & Keto, 2018, p. 51.)

As opposed to cognitive empathy, affective empathy is the sharing of emotions and experiences with another individual, according to Aaltola, and Keto (2018, p. 64). After one has observed and evaluated an emotion and formed a perception of it using cognitive empathy, those emotions move into the observer. This is affective empathy in which other's happiness generates happiness, and distress generates distress. (Aaltola & Keto, 2018, p. 64.) However, this does not mean that the emotion would be exactly the same, but the individual's own form of that emotion. For example, if the other feels sorrow, the observer will not feel the exact emotion since they cannot truly know the other person's feelings, but their own perception of sorrow. (Aaltola & Keto, 2018, p. 64.)

As Aaltola, and Keto state (2018, p. 65), affective empathy is a pathway to morality, where the ability to feel others' suffering creates the need to take that suffering away. According to Aaltola, and Keto (2018), affective empathy is not as mystical as once thought by philosophers such as Humes, and Schopenhauer, but rather a skill that has developed in humans very early on. According to Aaltola, and Keto (2018, p. 65), animals have possessed the skill of affective empathy for a long time, and in humans, the skill of affective empathy can be detected from a very early age. As the target group of the developmental task is children, it is good to know that affective empathy can be seen at a very early age. It means that empathy is not a completely foreign concept for children, even though they would not know the name of it.

According to Gerdes, and Segal (2009), humans tend to imitate actions that they see, unconsciously and automatically. When we observe people's vocal nuances, facial expressions, and gestures, our brains are stimulated and generate the feelings that reflect the experience of the people we are observing (Gerdes & Segal, 2009). According to Aaltola, and Keto (2018), this is called emotional contagion, and it should not be

confused with affective empathy. However, according to Gerdes, and Segal (2009), the lack of physiological mirroring seems to relate to a lack of empathy. Gerdes, and Segal (2009) explain that while the mirroring response is involuntary, there is a conditioning element as well. For example, adults often smile at babies trying to get them to smile back. As the baby imitates and smiles back, it delights the adult which gives the baby positive feelings of the mirroring. As the developmental task will be in a kindergarten, and the target group is children, it is good to take into consideration the children possibly mirroring our facial expressions and gestures.

As well as cognitive empathy, affective empathy does not work well on its own. According to Aaltola, and Keto (2018, pp. 70, 72-73), without cognitive empathy, affective empathy stays a little naive. Without cognitive empathy, it is difficult to detect the mechanisms and motives behind feelings, which is why affective empathy on its own is not enough. Those individuals who possess the skill of affective empathy, but fail to use cognitive empathy, are easily manipulated, according to Aaltola, and Keto (2018, p. 70). As mentioned above, infants learn cognitive empathy by mirroring the feelings of parents, and that skill develops when we age, and the skill of affective empathy can be detected from an early age. This leads us to believe that it is possible to develop the skills of empathy already in kindergarten.

According to Aaltola, and Keto (2018, p. 76), empathy is not only an occurrence inside our minds but also a physical function that occurs in our movements, senses, and ability to be in touch with other physical beings. Our bodies react to other individual's physical gestures, and even small children are able to detect and understand other people's feelings this way (Aaltola & Keto, 2018. pp. 77, 79).

As the target group is children in a multicultural kindergarten, physical empathy is an aspect that should be considered in terms of developing skills of empathy. It is probable that in the group of children, where we implement the developmental task, there are children from several different cultures and with different languages as their mother tongue. If there are language barriers, and not everything is easy for every child to understand, we can utilise our body language and thus develop their skills of detecting other people's emotions by using physical empathy.

Reflective empathy, according to Aaltola, and Keto (2018), is not a form of empathy per se, but a pathway to practice empathy holistically. It allows us to understand why, and

what or whom we feel empathy towards, and it allows us to critically evaluate our own tendencies to empathy. Even though Aaltola, and Keto state (2018, p. 99) that reflective empathy is rare, they argue that it is easy if practiced. Reflective empathy may be too advanced for children to understand but exercises that lead in its direction could be practiced. Aaltola, and Keto suggest (2018, pp. 101-102), that breathing exercises and meditation are ways to relax our minds and allow us to see things from different perspectives. Breathing exercises and mindfulness is something that could be practiced with children, which would be the root of practicing reflective empathy.

## 5.2 Entangled Empathy

According to Gruen (2015, p. 77), entangled empathy is a process where emotions and cognition is blended, and our caring is focused on someone's experience of wellbeing. In the book, she describes an idea of how we should build our relationships with animals while responding to their individuals' needs ethically. She wishes for us to forget about what is called "animal rights" and start to feel empathy towards other living beings. (Gruen, 2015.)

Gruen argues (2015, p. 35), that empathy is a type of attention, a moral perception, since it requires reflection and information that we have of a situation where empathy is used in. In order to be able to use empathy in its right manner, Gruen believes that thinking ethically can be helpful (2015, p. 3). She says that ethical theory should work as a guideline in the right direction and that it should motivate us to act correctly (2015, p. 4). Gruen also argues against the traditional theories, since they fail to see the importance of the relationships that we have with other people (2015, pp. 4-10).

In this book, we are introduced to a term called storied empathy. It is described as a skill of empathy in early childhood. This kind of empathy usually happens towards fictional characters, and once the child realises that the character is not true, the feelings of empathy start to fade away. A child feels empathy towards the characters in the stories when they are suffering or are in danger. (Gruen, 2015, p. 42-43.) Storied empathy is a typical emotional contagion for children. We all share different ways of behaviour that happen as emotional contagion, and it is usually towards someone familiar to us. Yawning is the most common way of empathetic behaviour, when discussing emotional contagion. It does not require contextual knowledge of one's situation or history, also you do not need to use reflection, or you do not have to understand the other being. You will

yawn when you see someone else yawning, and it is unavoidable for us due to its nature. (Gruen, 2015, pp. 41-42.)

Gruen argues that empathy is a process that will be successful once we understand the world, in the same way as the individual, we are emphasising with. She suggested that we forget about standing in other individual's shoes in order to be able to empathise with animals. Also, empathiser needs to understand the development of the other, their history, and species-typical ways of behaviour. This way we are able to minimise the damage we might do whilst using empathy. (Gruen, 2015, pp. 56-62.) Gruen discusses here how to be empathetic towards animals, and as we think that children could have skills of empathy, it is important to remember that they have not developed as much as adults. So, in children's perspective, we should skip categorising the beings and just talk about empathy as something we all have and should cherish. Instead of talking about it as a process, we could talk about it as a feeling, when we discuss with children. (Gruen, 2015, pp. 56-62.)

### 5.3 Qualified Empathy

According to Raatikainen, Rauhala, and Mäenpää (2017, p. 117), "qualified empathy is the ability to reflectively and emotionally separate oneself from another and understand the context; then in an intentional process, focus on understanding of the others person's viewpoint both cognitively and emotionally." As stated by Austring, and Sørensen (as cited in Raatikainen et al., 2017, p. 117) the three phases of understanding others viewpoints are 1) "we feel like us...", 2) "I feel like you ("as if") ..." and 3) "I know how you feel but I am not you". Once one has moved from the second phase to the last phase, empathic manner can be used in the work, making it easier to connect, and build a relationship between the worker and the client. Qualified empathy is more supportive of the client's situation than responsive actions to one's feelings. (Raatikainen et al., 2017, p. 119.)

Reflecting to social pedagogy, qualified empathy is not only a way to empower the clients but also something that facilitates the professional growth of the worker. In the process of using qualified empathy as a tool while working with different types of clients and clients from different backgrounds, one should be able to be connected to the emotions the other is feeling. The professional becomes a mirror that can balance someone else's feelings without experiencing them too deeply. (Raatikainen et al., 2017, pp. 114-120.)

According to Raatikainen et al. (2018), using creative methods is useful when thinking about each individual's own experiences. Via arts one can describe own experiences of emotions with colors and different shapes. It is not useful only for sharing emotions of the client, but also for mapping out the feelings that the professional is experiencing. Having awareness of this, it makes it easier to protect oneself from burnout or compassion fatigue. (Raatikainen et al., 2018.)

## **6 Methods of the Developmental Task**

Austring, and Sørensen (2012) have developed a model for three learning methods. First of them is empirical learning, which is developed in the infancy and through it we learn, sense, and experience the world through our senses and with our bodies. During this, the child will start to develop emotions and sensations through different kinds of experiences. The second one is aesthetic learning, which develops in the years of an individuals' early childhood and continues throughout our lives. Since the developmental task is done in the field of early childhood education, the second method will be discussed furthermore later. The third is discursive learning, which we use partly for our socialisation and it develops through the earlier methods, once the child has identified emotions and experiences with the abstract meaning of the verbal expression. The discursive learning is associated with language, symbolic and note system. Language and note system can sometimes be associated with aesthetic learning, for example, in poetry and music. (Austring & Sørensen, 2012, pp. 6-8.)

As mentioned above, according to Austring, and Sørensen (2012, p. 7), the second learning method is aesthetic learning, that starts to develop in the early childhood. Empirical experienced starts to develop further into more expressive ones. This happens via different creative methods, such as drama and visual arts (Austring & Sørensen, 2012, p. 7), which are the methods used in the developmental task. Using these types of methods, the child gets the possibility to share and communicate experiences with others. The aesthetic expressiveness does not only happen through art or language but also through how we express ourselves in everyday life, for example, how we dress, do our makeup or how we decor our homes. (Austring & Sørensen, 2012, p. 7.)



It is stated by Austring, and Sørensen (2012, p. 8), that not everything is the child's own perceptions of emotions in the beginning of the learning process. Through a process where one shares their experiences and communicates continuously throughout the process, one is able to mirror themselves and share their understanding. In the end, understanding of the aesthetic expressions is formed from the experiences that one has reflected on the cultural forms and their peer's actions. (Austring & Sørensen, 2012, p. 8.)

### 6.1 Visual Arts as a Form of Self Expression in Early Childhood

In the developmental task, the aim is to learn about the children's skills of empathy and understand how to develop it through creative methods, such as visual arts. According to Ruokonen et al. (2009, p. 48), arts education supports not only the children's aesthetic stance and development of creativity but also the holistic growth of a child as a cultural participant of society. Arts education creates possibilities for children to develop their observational operations, through aesthetic experiences. According to Ruokonen et al. (2009, p. 49), supporting the process rather than the end results is key to developing children's creativity. The preparation of a creative process includes enabling the children to create mental images and conceptions of the theme, which then the children visualise in their artwork (Ruokonen et al., 2009, p. 49).

According to Ruokonen et al. (2009, pp. 50-51), in early childhood's visual art education there are four divided areas: artistic expression, artistic experience, the environments aesthetic and cultural experience, and media examination. In the developmental task, the emphasis is on the environment's aesthetic and cultural experience. According to Ruokonen et al. (2009, p. 50), the aim of the environments aesthetic and cultural experience is for the child to learn to observe, analyse, and value their own living environment, and holistic use of senses. As opposed to the environment meaning buildings and their architecture, as Ruokonen et al. (2009, p. 50) suggest, in this developmental task the environment includes the group of children, and the observational target is one's own, as well as each other's emotions.

The value of children's creativity is not in the results but in the process. When an artistic activity is emphasised as a process, it is similar to playing. (Rusanen et al., 2014, p. 32.) In the developmental task, the aim is to create an ongoing process of visualising one's own feelings and emotions through drawing them out using imagination, and thus be

able to recognise the differences and similarities between themselves and others. Children's development of imagination is a part of ethical education. Visual arts that aim to strengthen a child's expression of emotion and imagination, strengthen the skills of empathy and reciprocity. (Rusanen et al., 2014, p. 32.)

Drawing is a flexible form of expression for children, where a child is able to experiment with their bodily dimensions and perception of space. Drawing can demonstrate a child's temper and skills of using drawing equipment, as well as demonstrate a child's imagination, and skills of observation. (Rusanen et al., 2014, p. 100.) According to Halme and Vataja (2011, p. 32), drawing is a good method for a group of children with multilingual backgrounds. Drawing is a spontaneous way of communication that supports a child's concentration. Drawing in a group can be used as assistance of communication and discussion. (Halme & Vataja, 2011, p. 32.) The developmental task will include drawing, so the children can express their emotions in a flexible way, and we are able to use them as the assistance of discussion.

## 6.2 Drama Education and the Fifth Dimension Model

According to Ruokonen et al. (2009, p. 35), drama education has proven to improve children's socialising, understanding and accepting of others, and skills of empathy. It is also stated that drama education accommodates well with children of a multicultural background since the child can use their ideas and body to work together with other children exchanging experiences and viewpoints. Drama education creates the possibility for children to express themselves, their feelings, and their perceptions of the world. (Ruokonen et al., 2009, p. 35.)

Sirkka-Liina Heinonen (2000, pp. 19-21) states that play, and drama have plenty of similarities, since both of them are based on the creativity and activity of an individual. The pedagogical surrounding of drama is child-oriented learning, which is based on the observations and experimentalism of a child. The child learns to interact with others through play. (Heinonen, 2000, pp. 19-22.) According to Dowling (2010, p. 25) play is needed in activities to give the children the opportunity to learn through creativity and imagination. Giving the child the opportunity to be in control, it builds their self-confidence and gives the children the opportunity to learn about everyday interactions through playtime (Dowling, 2010, p. 25). The play is natural for children since most of their actions turn into playtime (Hakkarainen, 1990, p. 124).

According to Hakkarainen (2002, pp. 80-83), the fifth dimension model was made because motivation towards learning was lost during the school years, and for using motivation one needs to have imagination. Michael Colen was one of the developers of the fifth dimension model, where imagination and play come together in many different levels. The important factors of this model are to have a character that the children can be connected with, there should be some kind of a journey that the children and the character go on. During the usage of the model, the children will learn new skills through plays and activities that are not too simple and are educative, without them noticing it. (Hakkarainen, 2002.)

The most important thing, when planning activities inside the fifth dimension, is to remember that the learning should be fun for the children. It is not only learning about different factors and terminology, but it is memorising things with fun activities and in good company. It is also important that the children receive the opportunity and space for failure and thinking on their own. When learning happens in a comfortable area it makes the pressure of failing to seem less. (Hakkarainen, 2002.)

As it can be seen, the drama is one of the main skills of the fifth dimension, but in order to make it most efficient learning for the children, we are supposed to add other levels into it. As teachers in early childhood education, we use our competence and knowledge of the growth and development of a child group to decide upon which skills need to be developed further or which ones need to be considered during the sessions. The individuals need to be considered and many other factors that can have an effect on the success of drama education. According to Heinonen (2000, p. 204), drama is a moment for learning in kindergartens that is led by the educator. Heinonen (2000, p. 208) states that drama is something that is done together with others, even if there are moments when one works individually. In order to have a successful drama, the peer relationships and dynamics of the group have to be on point (Heinonen, 2000, p. 210).

According to Owens, Barber, Airaksinen, and Korhonen (2002, pp. 40-43), an individual who is energetic and disruptive, can make the drama working almost impossible and can make the whole group lose their motivation. When thinking about using drama with children, it must be remembered that they have more energy and their concentration might fade quite fast. The activities and drama need to be interesting enough so that the children will have the motivation to follow through until the end. Owens et al. (2002) state

that we are not supposed to make the others do anything since not everyone wants to participate, but we have to do our best in making the activity so interesting that at least one wants to join. There also needs to be room for failure from all perspectives, ours and the children.

### 6.3 Qualified Empathy in Practice

As in our developmental task we aim to observe and develop the skills of empathy in children, we must also be aware of our qualified empathy and how it affects the process of our developmental task. As mentioned earlier, qualified empathy is an intentional process of cognitively and emotionally understanding another person's point of view with three phases; 1) we feel like us..., 2) I feel like you ("as if") ..., 3) I know how you feel but I am not you (Austring & Sørensen as cited in Raatikainen et al., 2017, p. 117). The third phase of qualified empathy is reached when a social field practitioner takes their cognitive learning to an experiential understanding of the client's world, being able to separate themselves to work in a professional manner, which enables the practitioner to build relationships in an empathetic manner without becoming overwhelmed by emotion and become vulnerable to burnout (Raatikainen et al., 2017, p. 117). As our developmental task is carried out with a group of children from diverse cultural backgrounds, we, as the practitioners, need to be consciously striving to understand the emotions and viewpoints of the children, and where they might originate from, to gain a better understanding of the children's experiential world.

According to Gerdes, and Segal (2009), the human brain is wired to involuntarily observe and mimic other people, which helps us to understand other people by some forms of inner imitation, and according to this our mirror neurons activate when seeing others showing emotion, as if we were making the facial expressions ourselves. These factors we need to take into consideration when implementing our developmental task. As we are using drama education as a tool in our developmental task, we must concentrate on showing strong empathy towards our fifth dimension character, which can cause the mirror neurons of the children participating to activate and feel the emotions with us.

## 7 Implementation of the Developmental Task

### 7.1 Methodology

In our developmental task we used observation research, which is a direct way of observing what actually happens (Denscombe, 2010, p. 196). In an observation research the researcher must take into consideration the time-blocks where the observation happens. In our developmental task we chose the time-blocks to be the most appropriate for the group of children. We chose to implement the developmental task twice a week and always at the same time to create a clear structure for the children and enabling a continuous process to help us evaluate the development and progress of the children in relation to our aims. In observation research, a deliberate selection of people included in the research is important to get a representative picture of a situation (Denscombe, 2010, p. 201). Before starting our workshops, we discussed with the teachers in early childhood education in the kindergarten and selected together with them the children that would in the teachers' and the parents' opinion benefit from the workshops the most.

Another thing to take into account when implementing observation research is how to make notes. According to Denscombe (2010, p. 208), the researcher needs to make some form of notes of the observations that could be, for example, written notes or tape-recorded memos, and the notes should be done at the earliest convenience to prevent forgetting passing thoughts that may be important. In our developmental task we decided that one of us would lead the workshops and one of us would be making notes throughout the duration of the sessions. After each session we discussed the notes to see if there is something the other had observed that was not written down. This way we made sure that our observations were as accurate as possible.

However, it must be remembered that in observation research, the observations are affected by the observer's perceptions, thus the results cannot be perfectly reliable. According to Denscombe (2010, p. 198), we tend to see what we are used to seeing, past experience may filter our perceptions by, for example, exaggerate desirable things, and our physical and emotional state can affect our perceptions as researchers. As our aim is to observe and develop the skills of empathy in children, we need to be self-aware of our perceptions while observing the children. As we wish to see empathic traits in the children participating in our developmental task, we may have a tendency to exaggerate

desirable outcomes. To get the most accurate results, we must be critical towards our own perceptions.

## 7.2 Ethical Considerations

As the developmental task involves children, there needs to be permission from the parents to carry out the developmental task. We have created a permission slip for the parents that needs to be returned to us before starting the implementation of the developmental task. The permission slip consists of information of the aims and function of the developmental task as well as a clear consent from the parents of their child's participation in the workshops.

As children are involved in this developmental task, there will not be any information that may identify a child. When describing the individuals or the group, it is made sure that it is merely phenomenon based. This is also informed to the parents beforehand.

The information gathered during these workshops will not be handed out or published anywhere and they will be disposed of appropriately. These steps are taken due to confidentiality issues. This developmental task is designed for the benefit of the children and not to harm them.

## 7.3 Planning Process

As we are doing our developmental task in a kindergarten where we do not know the children personally, before starting our task we need information. For an activity to be meaningful for a child, the educator should know about the child's social and cultural background, as well as their temper, skills, interests, and fears (Rusanen et al., 2014, p. 60). Before starting the developmental task, we discussed with the teachers in early childhood education in the target kindergarten and formed the group of children. After these discussions we decided upon a group of children from ages 3 to 5 years old. In this group, some of the children have difficulties in the areas of development, for example, concerning the resilience of disappointment, as well as recognising and expressing emotions appropriately. Most of the children in the group have Finnish as their second language. Due to the language barrier between the peers, as well as the

children and the teachers in early childhood education, the children's appropriate expression of emotions has been difficult in the kindergarten.

The aims of our first session were to get to know the children participating in the workshops, introduce ourselves and the theme of the workshops to the children. By familiarising ourselves to the children, we created a lower threshold for participating in the workshops, and for bringing our fifth dimension character with us. We also wanted to discuss with the children to get a view of their existing knowledge of emotions; what are emotions, what do they look like, and how to cope with them. With these findings, we were able to plan our sessions to be the most beneficial for this child group.

With these findings in mind, we decided that our developmental task will be done over the course of a month, twice a week. The developmental task will be a continuous long-term process. Our developmental task aims to motivate the children participating in the workshops to recognise and reflect on their emotions. In our workshops, each child will be making their own emotion card depending on the emotion discussed during the session. The aim is to create an emotion card that reflects each individual's perspective of the emotion. According to Rusanen et al. (2014, p. 60), in artistic activities, the aim of the teacher in early childhood education is to strengthen the child's motivation and initiative in long-term activities, where there are possibilities for practicing, implementing and deepening of skills. Given that some of the children have difficulties with the Finnish language, we decided to have emotion cards for our fifth dimension character as well, to support the children's understanding of the feelings discussed.

As mentioned previously, some of the children in this group have difficulties expressing emotions appropriately, especially the ones commonly seen as negative emotions. The emotions that we chose for the workshops for this specific group of children were anger, joy, sadness, dislike, fear, and love.

#### 7.4 Outline of the Workshops

In the first session of our workshops, we described the personality of our fifth dimension character, Piipa the penguin. As we described the personality of Piipa (see Appendix 2), we formed ground rules for the sessions together with the children, to strengthen the participation of the children in these workshops. Based on the needs of behaving with Piipa, the rules that we, together with the children decided upon included, for example,

no bullying others, using indoor voice and no talking over others. These rules were discussed at the beginning of each session. In addition to the rules, we went through the emotion of the last session and how it has been visible in the kindergarten since.

Furthermore, each emotion was introduced by using an example story of a situation from Piipa's everyday life. Before revealing the emotion of the session, we let the children lead the discussion with guessing what the emotion in Piipa's situation could be. We helped the children to guess the emotion by using our facial expressions and altering the nuances of our voices. On occasion, we brought Kalevi the bear, Piipa's best friend, to the kindergarten. Kalevi was an additional character during sessions with emotions, that dealt with the confrontation with friends. We attempted to prompt ideas and discussion by asking the children what they might feel in a similar situation. As mentioned before, Piipa had emotion cards that could be used as guidance for the children to figure out the emotion that was the topic of the session. Once the emotion was solved by the children, we led the discussion of situations where this emotion may occur for an individual. We gave each child the opportunity to share an example from their life, where said emotion could be visible in.

In addition to Piipa's emotion cards, we also had made our own, to demonstrate the children the diversity of emotions and how expressing them through visual arts might drastically differ between individuals. After showing the examples, we moved into drawing the emotion cards. Children could choose between using crayons, coloured pencils, or both. Before starting to draw, we reminded the children once more that they should focus on their own view of said emotion, for example, what colours to use. We also demonstrated to them that by using more pressure you could get more depth into the chosen colour.

Once the children were all finished with their drawings, Piipa's emotion card was shown again and Piipa described why the emotion card looked the way it did. We followed Piipa's example and did the same with our own emotion cards. Then each child was able to present their own emotion card, describing it in their own words. We utilised open-ended questions when needed, to provide the possibility of understanding each other's emotion cards appropriately. Once again, we brought up the diversity between each and everyone's emotion cards, to emphasise the individuality of expressing emotions.



At the end of each session, the emotion cards made by the children were collected by us. We gave the possibility to ask Piipa (and Kalevi) questions, so the children would get to know Piipa (and Kalevi) better and ask about things they might be pondering about. In the end, each child also had the opportunity to give Piipa (and Kalevi) a hug and say goodbye if they wished to do so.

## **8 Discussion**

In our developmental task one of the aims was to help children to acknowledge and utilise empathy in a multicultural environment. We chose to pursue this aim through creative methods. We chose visual arts because according to Ruokonen et al. (2009, p. 48), arts education supports not only the children's aesthetic stance and development of creativity but also the holistic growth of a child as a cultural participant of society. Visual arts that create space for children to express their emotions helps to strengthen the children's ability to feel empathy (Rusanen et al. 2014, p. 32), which is directly compatible to our methods in the workshops. The children will draw their individual emotion cards, so the children can express their perceptions of the emotions in a specific way. We decided to use drawing as the form of art since it demonstrates the children's imagination and skills of observation. In addition, drawing is a good form of art for children from multilingual backgrounds (Halme & Vataja, 2011, p. 32). Observing an immigrant child doing arts and crafts can give more of an understanding of that child's thoughts and emotions, that they are not yet able to express in Finnish (Halme & Vataja, 2011, p. 91).

As another method to help children acknowledge and utilise empathy, we chose drama education. According to Ruokonen et al. (2009, p. 35), drama education has proven to improve children's socializing, understanding and accepting of others, and skills of empathy. And as mentioned before, it is also stated that drama education accommodates well with children from multicultural backgrounds, which includes most of the children participating in our workshops. As a form of drama education, we chose to use the fifth dimension model, where we create a character that the children can be connected with, and go on a journey of learning about emotions. Our fifth dimension character helped with storied empathy, which is the child's ability to feel empathy towards the character in the story (Gruen, 2015, pp. 42-43). Using our fifth dimension character as a "leader" for the workshops helped to keep the children motivated to concentrate, and it helped to

conceptualize the emotions through example situations from our character's life, that the children were able to relate to. In addition to these we used our own facial expressions and the nuances of our voices to demonstrate the emotion and prompt involuntary mirroring by the children.

We wanted to give the children resources for understanding different emotions and how to express them, and we wanted them to be able to use these resources after our developmental task is over. For this reason, we made copies of the emotion cards made by the children, so the kindergarten has copies of them, and the children could take them home and utilise them in their everyday life at home as well. We also wanted to provide resources for the kindergarten, so they are able to continue with the theme of empathy and emotions with the child group. We discussed our workshops and its findings with the workers in that child group, and as said, gave copies of the emotion cards to the workers, so they can continue utilising them in their everyday life in the kindergarten.

### 8.1 Findings of the Workshops

As previously mentioned, the child group that we were doing our workshops with had mostly children that have Finnish as their second language. This ended up being quite challenging since the differences between the skills of Finnish language with the children were very noticeable. We did our best to linguistically simplify the contents of our workshops so that it would be easier to understand, and we used helping gestures (*tukiviittomat*) and photos that supported our discussion. Even so, there were a couple of children who did not seem to understand the topic. This could have been also due to the fact, that these children had difficulties with concentrating for more than a couple of minutes at a time.

This in mind, the fact that some of the children could not concentrate during the workshops, caused some running around or distracting the other children. The workshops ended up being a bit incoherent due to the fact that we needed to take a lot of breaks from the drama in order to get the children back to their seats. When we needed to take breaks, it also meant that the time we had reserved for the workshops was not enough. In the end, we had to cut out some parts in order to make the actual workshop shorter, even that we had reserved almost double the time that was needed, in case anything happened that needed the extra time.

During our workshops, we had the same routine each time. First, we had our drama, then drawing, and afterward we had a brief discussion about the emotion that we went through during that time. Before starting our workshops, we had discussed with the workers of the group, that for the children who have developmental difficulties, it would be important if we could have the same routine each time. This was the reason why we planned the sessions as we did. Now, after we have finished all of the workshops, we started to think that would it have been better if the workshops would have had a bit different outline every time. By having differing outlines, it might have allowed us to have more changes during the workshops, so maybe the distractions would not have been such a big issue, if we had had more flexibility.

As mentioned earlier, some children had difficulties with understanding the topics of our workshops. It was not only due to the Finnish language but also due to the fact that some of the emotions that we went through were a bit hard to understand for the children, for example, dislike, was one emotion that none of the children understood at first. By giving examples of how the emotions could look like and telling example situations where the emotion can appear in, helped them to understand what we were talking about. When talking about the emotions, the children also gave out examples from their own lives where they have encountered said emotions. One of the workers in the group was participating in some of the workshops, and when she was talking about her fears, one of the children stroke her leg as to comfort her.

### 8.1 Meeting Our Aims

During the process of our developmental task, we realised that our aims were quite demanding. Even though we managed to accomplish some of them, not all of them were even possible to accomplish in such a short period of time with limited resources. One of our aims was to design workshops utilising visual arts and drama education to help children acknowledge and utilise empathy. We managed to accomplish this aim fairly well, however, we could have utilised drama education in a wider spectrum. For example, our fifth dimension character could have been even more involved in order to enrich the experience even more for the children.

Another one of our aims was to help children acknowledge and utilise empathy and provide resources for understanding emotions and for expressing them. In our personal opinion in addition to the feedback we have received from our workshops, we can

confidently conclude that the aim met. As further discussed, the children who participated in our workshops have started to recognise their own as well as the other children's emotions and act upon them. According to the feedback from the kindergarten, the children who participated in the workshops have been seen to show empathy towards their peers.

One of our aims was to observe the possible differences between cultures in the understanding of empathy in a multicultural environment. This we found to be one of the most demanding aims. The most crucial revelation was that empathy is nearly impossible to measure, which means that the differences in understanding of empathy between cultures are difficult to determine. The only difference between cultures we found was that some of the children highlighted the importance of their extended family in our discussions, in relation to the Finnish children of the group. In addition to this, as we promised complete anonymity for the children, we realised that it is quite difficult to describe the perception of the cultural effect without the risk of exposing the children of the group.

As one of our aims was to create workshops that can be further utilised, and share our findings with multi-professional teams in the field of early childhood education, we are proud to say that in the kindergarten where we implemented our developmental task, the theme of empathy and emotions is being continued in this particular group for at least until the end of the term. Even though we might have had our doubts about the effects of our workshops, we are thrilled to have received feedback that the developmental task has modified the group's daily activities in a positive way, at least according to the workers of that group.

## 8.2 Feedback from the Children and Families

As mentioned earlier, at the beginning of each workshop we went through the emotions discussed in the previous workshop, but for our last workshop we had a feedback session with the children, where we went through all of the emotions that we had discussed during our workshops. During that we also asked the children to give us general feedback about the workshops.

First, the children were a bit confused and were asking when we would be drawing again since it was fun in their opinion, but once we explained to them that we would only be

talking with Piipa, they understood, with a little disappointment in their voices. At first, we asked the children to go through all the emotions we had discussed during the workshops, but the children could not remember any. We tried to get the answers by using examples of the emotions, but in the end, we had to take Piipa's emotion cards as a help. Once we showed them the cards, they started to memorise the emotions and were also able to tell us some examples from their lives during past weeks, where these emotions have been seen.

After going through all the emotions, we asked which was each child's favorite emotion. Most of them answered love because, for example, it is an emotion that we should express to the ones that we are feeling it towards to. One child also said that love is what makes you behave nicely towards mom. The ones who did not say that love was their favorite emotion, said sadness, and once we asked why it is their favorite, they could not tell us the reason. Later on, these children said that it is important to show the emotions and talk about them to others so that the other person will be able to know how they are feeling.

After the last workshop, we asked the workers of the group if there had been any feedback from the homes. What we were told, was that some children had already started to use the emotion cards at home in situations where they have not been able to name the emotion. A few of the parents had asked, that what is the idea of using the emotion cards if the drawing is only a big mess with no point. This comment made us think that should we have provided more guidance during the workshops and drawing. We had example emotion cards made by us and Piipa's emotion cards, that were on display during the drawing process, but most of the children drew whatever the emotion seemed like for them. A few of the children were absent on most of the workshops, and their emotion cards seemed to look the same every time. This in mind, we could have been guiding these children a bit more, especially since they had difficulties with the Finnish language.

This in mind, we started to think that should we have had more drama during our workshops. Having more drama would have given us the opportunity to communicate more about the emotions and the purpose of the workshops. This would have increased the length of each workshop, which in the end could have been valuable for some of the children, but for most having even this long session was too much, and they started to get distracted halfway through. However, as mentioned earlier we ended up having a

larger group of children in the workshops than we first planned to have since we wanted to include the whole group in the workshops. In this situation, maybe having too many children in the workshops, was the thing that distracted the ones who had difficulties with Finnish. This concludes to the fact that maybe the workshops were not as fulfilling to the ones with difficulties as to the ones who were able to understand the instructions fully.

### 8.3 Feedback from the Kindergarten

After the workshops, we had an evaluation meeting with the group's workers. We wanted to hear how the children have developed in daily activities concerning empathy or emotions after the workshops, as well as feedback from the workers. As discussed earlier, while observing the children and having a discussion with them during our workshops, we did receive feedback from them and were able to notice changes. However, we wanted to hear comments from the workers too, since they are more familiar with the children and their behaviour, and they could also let us know how the workshops have affected on the children.

As a result of our workshops, the group has started to discuss more about emotions during their activities. The children came up with guidelines together with the workers, that should be followed when being in kindergarten. These said guidelines include, for example, a rule that there should be no hurting others (in many forms) and that the children should come to talk with an adult if something that hurts them happens so that the emotions can be discussed together. The workers had also come up with a fifth dimension character, that is included in the group's activities, and it is used as a help in conflicts. In addition, the group has now an emotion mirror, that has example pictures of emotions that children can use to mimic expressions and see how they seem like on their own faces. This mirror can be also used as a help if the child is not able to express the emotion verbally.

In addition, the group has started an emotion-week, that happens once a month. During said week, the activities of the child group highlight emotions even more. The workers mentioned that they have taken emotion into consideration during playtime. They have made a memory-game with different emotion cards, that the children can play. Every day during the emotion-week the group reads a book that has stories featuring emotions and during morning circle one emotion is highlighted. They also told us, that they will develop the emotion-week every month considering the needs of the children and what emotions

have been discussed during the past month. Basically, the children are included in the making of each emotion-week.

Furthermore, the children of the group have started to recognise emotions that others have by naming them and coming out with reasons for the said emotion, for example, a child is feeling sad and another child says that the other one is sad because they miss their parents. The workers told us that before our workshops, the children did recognise different emotions, but they did not have the appropriate words to describe them. Also, they had noticed empathetic behaviour in few of the children in some occasions, for example, another child was crying because she fell down so the other child went and gave her a hug and said that it will be okay. These children had not shown empathy towards others before, according to the workers of that group, so these moments had been a huge improvement in the behaviour of these individuals.

## **9 Conclusion**

In this thesis, we have discussed the development and understanding of empathy in children in a multicultural environment. In our developmental task, we utilised visual arts and drama education in order to provide the children with resources of understanding different emotions, and how to express them, to strengthen their understanding of empathy. Due to the positive feedback we received from the workers, as well as the parents in the kindergarten, we feel confident in utilising these themes and activities in our future profession as teachers in early childhood education.

As discussed earlier in this thesis, it is nearly impossible to measure the development of empathy in children. However, we think there is a possibility of gaining more understanding of the skills of empathy in children and how it develops through guidance. It would be interesting to have, for example, empathy workshops in a group of children for a period of time, have a significant break, and then come back to the themes with the same child group. This way, it could be further observed how the understanding of empathy has or has not developed since the previous workshops.

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## Letter to the Parents

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**Opinnäytetyö**  
**Bachelor's thesis**

Hyvät vanhemmat,

Olemme kaksi viimeisen vuoden sosionomi opiskelijaa Metropolian ammattikorkeakoulusta, varhaiskasvatuksen opintopolulla. Olemme tulossa suorittamaan toiminnallista opinnäytetyötä Päiväkoti \*\*\*\*, \*\*\*\* ryhmään, \*\*\*\*\*aikana.

Opinnäytetyömme on Empathy Education in Early Childhood Education (Empatiakasvatus varhaiskasvatuksessa). Tulemme tekemään työpajoja lapsiryhmän kanssa hyödyntäen draama- ja taidekasvatusta. Työpajoja järjestämme noin 5-8 kertaa.

Haluamme painottaa, että dokumentoimme toimintaa ilmiö tasolla, joten lapset eivät tule olemaan tunnistettavissa julkaistavassa opinnäytetyössä. Muistiinpanot, joita teemme työpajojen aikana tullaan hävittämään asianmukaisesti, emmekä jaa niitä ulkopuolisille.

Haluamme kuitenkin varmistaa, että saamme suostumukseen lapsen osallistumiseen työpajoissa. Palautattehan vastauslomakkeen viimeistään \*\*\*\*\*.

Jos haluatte lisätietoa työpajoista tai opinnäytetyöstämme, voitte ottaa meihin yhteyttä.

Ystävällisin terveisin,

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\*\*\*\*\*

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\*\*\*\*\*

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Lapseni \_\_\_\_\_

saa osallistua työpajoihin.

ei saa osallistua työpajoihin.

Allekirjoitus: \_\_\_\_\_

## Session Plans

### Piipa-Penguin

- 5-years-old
- family: mom and dad, lives at Marjaniemi beach
- loves family and friends (best friend: Kalevi the bear)
- going to preschool and needs help with emotions
- shy and sensitive
- gets angry easily, but calms down fast

Session 1
<p>OVERALL THEME: Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talking with the children about emotions in general <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What emotions do they know</li> <li>• How do they look</li> <li>• How do they sound</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Introducing the upcoming workshops with Piipa-Penguin</li> </ul>
<p>EQUIPMENT   MATERIALS   ENVIRONMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa-Penguin</li> <li>• Kindergarten group room (the environment stays the same throughout the workshops)</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES
<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get to know the children's existing knowledge of different types of emotions</li> <li>• Get to know the children and their personalities</li> <li>• Create a safe environment for the children to share experiences about different emotions</li> <li>• Pedagogical documentation</li> </ul>	<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing ourselves to the group of children</li> <li>• Leading discussion of different emotions, how they look and sound</li> <li>• Asking questions from the children and the other student</li> <li>• Introducing Piipa-Penguin to the group of children</li> </ul>
<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get to know the topics of the workshops</li> <li>• Acquire the feeling of safety in the group</li> </ul>	<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing themselves for the students</li> <li>• Share experiences of different kinds of emotions</li> </ul>

Session 2
<p>OVERALL THEME: Anger</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing the emotions of the session with an activity with Piipa</li> <li>• Discussing with the children about the emotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it can be described</li> <li>• How to deal with anger</li> <li>• How does it look when someone is angry</li> <li>• What to do in order to make someone feel better</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>EQUIPMENT   MATERIALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa-Penguin and emotion cards</li> <li>• Pre-made emotion cards by students</li> <li>• Crayons, Paper, Scissors</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES
<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain a holistic view of the children's knowledge and understanding of anger</li> <li>• Create meaningful discussions together with the children</li> <li>• Understand the skills of empathy towards another person feeling angry <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the skills of using empathy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pedagogical documentation</li> </ul>	<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fifth dimension: Introducing the emotion through Piipa-Penguin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa borrowed a toy for a friend who accidentally broke it</li> <li>• Piipa is angry with the friend but also with themselves for lending the toy</li> <li>• Expressing Piipa's emotions with emotion cards</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Leading the discussion about anger <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it looks</li> <li>• How it feels</li> <li>• How to deal with it</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Showing the children one of our previously made anger-emotion card and explain that they will be making their own <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining that this is how "my anger" looks like, "yours" can be completely different</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain more of a holistic understanding of anger, and how it may look different on other people</li> <li>• Learn different ways of expressing empathy towards others</li> </ul>	<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to the story</li> <li>• Discussing about the emotion and how to deal with it</li> <li>• Doing one's own emotion card</li> </ul>

Session 3
<p>OVERALL THEME: Joy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Introducing the emotion of the session with an activity with Piipa</li> <li>Discussing with the children about the emotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How it can be described</li> <li>How does it look when someone is happy</li> <li>What to do in order to maintain the happiness</li> <li>How to share your happiness with others</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>EQUIPMENT   MATERIALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Piipa-Penguin and emotion cards</li> <li>Pre-made emotion cards by students</li> <li>Crayons, Paper, Scissors</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES
<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain a holistic view of the children's knowledge and understanding of joy</li> <li>Create meaningful discussions together with the children</li> <li>Understand the skills of empathy towards another person feeling joy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the skills of using empathy</li> </ul> </li> <li>Pedagogical documentation</li> </ul>	<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fifth dimension: Introducing the emotion through Piipa-Penguin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Piipa and friend fixed the broken toy together</li> <li>Fixing the toy brought them even closer together</li> <li>Sincere apology and communication after the accident made Piipa feel better</li> <li>Expressing Piipa's emotions with emotion cards</li> </ul> </li> <li>Leading the discussion about joy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How it looks</li> <li>How it feels</li> <li>How to share joy</li> <li>What makes you happy</li> </ul> </li> <li>Showing the children one of our previously made joy-emotion card and explain that they will be making their own <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Explaining that this is how "my joy" looks like, "yours" can be completely different</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gain more of a holistic understanding of joy, and how it may look different on other people</li> <li>Learn different ways of expressing empathy towards others</li> </ul>	<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Listening to the story</li> <li>Discussing about the emotion and how to deal with it</li> <li>Doing one's own emotion card</li> </ul>

Session 4
<p><b>OVERALL THEME: Dislike</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing the emotion of the session with an activity with Piipa</li> <li>• Discussing with the children about the emotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it to recognise dislike</li> <li>• How to deal with dislike</li> <li>• How does it look when someone dislikes a thing or an activity</li> <li>• What to do in order to make the thing or activity more pleasurable for someone else</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>EQUIPMENT   MATERIALS   ENVIRONMENT:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa-Penguin and emotion cards</li> <li>• Pre-made emotion cards by students</li> <li>• Crayons, Paper, Scissors</li> <li>• Kindergarten group room</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES
<p><b>FOR STUDENTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain a holistic view of the children's knowledge and understanding of dislike</li> <li>• Create meaningful discussions together with the children</li> <li>• Understand the skills of empathy towards another person disliking a thing or an activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the skills of using empathy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pedagogical documentation</li> </ul>	<p><b>FOR STUDENTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fifth dimension: Introducing the emotion through Piipa-Penguin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa dislikes cleaning after themselves, but realises that it makes mom's and dad's life easier</li> <li>• Expressing Piipa's emotions with emotion cards</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Leading the discussion about dislike <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it looks</li> <li>• How it feels</li> <li>• What do you dislike</li> <li>• How to deal with it</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Showing the children one of our previously made dislike-emotion card and explain that they will be making their own <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining that this is how "my dislike" looks like, "yours" can be completely different</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>FOR CHILDREN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain more of a holistic understanding of dislike, and how it may look different on other people</li> <li>• Learn different ways of expressing empathy towards others</li> </ul>	<p><b>FOR CHILDREN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to the story</li> <li>• Discussing about the emotion and how to deal with it</li> <li>• Doing one's own emotion card</li> </ul>

Session 5
<p>OVERALL THEME: Sadness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing the emotion of the session with an activity with Piipa</li> <li>• Discussing with the children about the emotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it can be described</li> <li>• How to deal with sorrow</li> <li>• How does it look when someone is sad</li> <li>• What to do in order to make someone feel better</li> <li>• How to acknowledge somebody's sadness</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>EQUIPMENT   MATERIALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa-Penguin and emotion cards</li> <li>• Pre-made emotion cards by students</li> <li>• Crayons, Paper, Scissors</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES
<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain a holistic view of the children's knowledge and understanding of sadness</li> <li>• Create meaningful discussions together with the children</li> <li>• Understand the skills of empathy towards another person feeling sad <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the skills of using empathy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pedagogical documentation</li> </ul>	<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fifth dimension: Introducing the emotion through Piipa-Penguin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa's friend went back to Lapland to visit his parents</li> <li>• Piipa misses him dearly</li> <li>• Expressing Piipa's emotions with emotion cards</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Leading the discussion about sadness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it looks</li> <li>• How it feels</li> <li>• How to deal with it</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Showing the children one of our previously made sadness-emotion card and explain that they will be making their own <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining that this is how "my sadness" looks like, "yours" can be completely different</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain more of a holistic understanding of sadness, and how it may look different on other people</li> <li>• Learn different ways of expressing empathy towards others</li> </ul>	<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to the story</li> <li>• Discussing about the emotion and how to deal with it</li> <li>• Doing one's own emotion card</li> </ul>



Session 6
<p><b>OVERALL THEME: Fear</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing the emotion of the session with an activity with Piipa</li> <li>• Discussing with the children about the emotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it can be described</li> <li>• How to deal with fear</li> <li>• How does it look when someone is afraid</li> <li>• What to do in order to make someone feel safer</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>EQUIPMENT   MATERIALS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa-Penguin and emotion cards</li> <li>• Pre-made emotion cards by students</li> <li>• Crayons, Paper, Scissors</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES
<p><b>FOR STUDENTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain a holistic view of the children's knowledge and understanding of fear</li> <li>• Create meaningful discussions together with the children</li> <li>• Understand the skills of empathy towards another person feeling afraid <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the skills of using empathy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pedagogical documentation</li> </ul>	<p><b>FOR STUDENTS:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fifth dimension: Introducing the emotion through Piipa-Penguin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa is afraid of monsters</li> <li>• Piipa thinks a monster is living under their bed, and is afraid of going to sleep</li> <li>• Expressing Piipa's emotions with emotion cards</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Leading the discussion about anger <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it looks</li> <li>• How it feels</li> <li>• How to deal with it</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Showing the children one of our previously made fear-emotion card and explain that they will be making their own <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining that this is how "my fear" looks like, "yours" can be completely different</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>FOR CHILDREN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain more of a holistic understanding of fear, and how it may look different on other people</li> <li>• Learn different ways of expressing empathy towards others</li> </ul>	<p><b>FOR CHILDREN:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to the story</li> <li>• Discussing about the emotion and how to deal with it</li> <li>• Doing one's own emotion card</li> </ul>

Session 7
<p>OVERALL THEME: Love</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introducing the emotion of the session with an activity with Piipa</li> <li>• Discussing with the children about the emotion <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it can be described</li> <li>• How does love look like</li> <li>• How to express and share love</li> <li>• What does love feel like</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>EQUIPMENT   MATERIALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa-Penguin, Kalevi-Bear and emotion cards</li> <li>• Pre-made emotion cards by students</li> <li>• Crayons, Paper, Scissors</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES
<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain a holistic view of the children's knowledge and understanding of love</li> <li>• Create meaningful discussions together with the children</li> <li>• Understanding the meaning of love <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop the skills of using empathy</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Pedagogical documentation</li> </ul>	<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fifth dimension: Introducing the emotion through Piipa-Penguin <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa's friend came back from Lapland and Piipa realised how they love him</li> <li>• Piipa realised that they have not expressed it before to their friend</li> <li>• Expressing Piipa's emotions with emotion cards</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Leading the discussion about love <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How it looks</li> <li>• How it feels</li> <li>• How to deal with it</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Showing the children one of our previously made love-emotion card and explain that they will be making their own <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explaining that this is how "my love" looks like, "yours" can be completely different</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gain more of a holistic understanding of love, and how it may look different on other people</li> <li>• Learn different ways of expressing empathy towards others</li> </ul>	<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listening to the story</li> <li>• Discussing about the emotion and how to deal with it</li> <li>• Doing one's own emotion card</li> </ul>

Session 8
<p>OVERALL THEME: Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussing about the emotions of the workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How they describe the emotions now</li> <li>• Do they feel different about the emotions than they did in the beginning of the workshops</li> <li>• Are there any other emotions that they would have wanted to go through</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Feedback from the children <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was most memorable emotion or activity</li> <li>• Which emotion or activity did you dislike the most</li> <li>• What did you learn from these workshops</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>EQUIPMENT   MATERIALS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Piipa-Penguin</li> <li>• Emotion-cards made together with the children</li> </ul>

OBJECTIVES OF THE ACTIVITY	DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITIES
<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Receive feedback from the children</li> <li>• End the workshops with positive note</li> <li>• Gain understanding of the children's possible development of empathy skills</li> <li>• Pedagogical documentation</li> </ul>	<p>FOR STUDENTS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask the following questions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the most memorable emotion we went through</li> <li>• Was there something you disliked, if so what and why</li> <li>• What did you learn from these workshops</li> <li>• Was there an emotion that we did not go through, that you would have wished that we did</li> <li>• How are you feeling right now</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Lay out the emotion cards made by the children and go through them once more <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recognise the differences between the emotion cards</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revise the contents of the workshops</li> <li>• Revise the emotions</li> <li>• Acknowledging the importance of empathy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Everybody has the possibility to develop their skills of empathy</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<p>FOR CHILDREN:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss the emotions we went through</li> <li>• Recognise the differences between each of their emotion cards</li> <li>• Give feedback about the workshops</li> </ul>

### Emotion Cards

Anger

- 9 children



Joy

- 9 children



Dislike

- 12 children



Sadness

- 12 children



Fear

- 12 children





Love

- 12 children

