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INTERCULTURAL COMMUNICATION DAY PROJECT FOR 1ST
YEAR ENGLISH DEGREE PROGRAM STUDENTS IN SAMK –
PRACTICAL PART

Degree Programme in Physiotherapy

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The purpose of this Bachelor's thesis was to plan and implement the practical part of an Intercultural communication day project. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out students experiences and thoughts about the physical part of the project.

The thesis was carried out as a part of a project which was organized for first year English degree program students who study in Satakunta University of Applied Sciences. Intercultural communication day project was held to introduce Finland to students and students to each other. Practical part of the day gave students a chance to be active and to get to know each other through physical activity.

The results showed that students found this kind of project enjoyable and useful for meeting new people and possibly making new friends. The results also showed that they did not experience difficulties with understanding instructions, communicating with group members or participating in activities.

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1 INTRODUCTION

Since the Second World War a large number of students have started their studies abroad. Governments and different foundations have provided financial support for students living and studying in a foreign country. (Ward, Bochner & Furnham 2001, 21.) In the last 10-15 years students going abroad to study have become an important part of the global higher education landscape. Number of students studying abroad has increased nearly 61 % since 1991. In 2005 the number of international students was estimated to have reached more than 2.7 million. The changes in infrastructure and capacity of higher education systems across the world have increased the amount of students who go to study abroad. Another reason is that the large majority of national governments have added more funds to higher education to improve the quality of education. (Verbik & Lasanowski, 2007.)

In Finland the number of international students in higher education institutions is increasing steadily. In 2009, there were over 14,000 foreign degree students in Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences and almost 9,000 exchange students. Most of the students come to Finland from China and Russia. However, during the 2000s the biggest growth rate of international students came from Nepal, Vietnam, Ethiopia and India. Among international students the most popular fields of education are engineering, technology and business. In the university sector it is also popular to study natural sciences, social sciences and the humanities. (CIMO, 2011; Study in Finland.)

There are about 6500 students in Satakunta University of Applied Sciences, and about 300 of them are international students who study in SAMK campuses every year (SAMK, 2011). There are 22 Bachelor Degree Programmes at SAMK and 6 Master's Degree Programs (SAMK, 2010). Studying takes place in three different faculties: Business and Culture; Social Services and Health Care, and Technology and Maritime Management (SAMK, 2011). Studies are offered in fields of Culture and Arts; Social Sciences, Business and Administration; Natural Sciences; Technology and Transport; Social Services, Health Care and Physical Education; and Tourism, Catering and Business (SAMK, 2010) Degrees are being taught in nine different campuses in four different cities (SAMK, 2011). Satakunta University of

Applied Sciences offers five degree programs which are taught completely in English. There are four Bachelor's Degrees: Environmental Engineering, Innovative Business Services, International Business and Marketing Logistics, and Physiotherapy. A Master's Degree is offered in Business Management and Entrepreneurship. (SAMK, 2010.)

The purpose of this thesis was to plan and carry out the practical part of the Intercultural Communication day for the English bachelor degree programs taught at Satakunta University of Applied Sciences. The aim of the day was to introduce Finland to foreign students and all the English degree students to each other. The first section was a theoretical part where the students received information about culture, culture shock and Finland. The second section of the day was a practical part where they could work together and get to know each other through physical activity.

2 CULTURAL SHOCK, STAGES AND ADAPTATION

Oberg introduced the term "cultural shock" already in 1960. Cultural shock was explained as a negative, passive and noxious response to dealing with a change in a new country. (Oberg 1960, 142.) Culture shock is a shock caused by something new and the experience of a new culture and a situation which is an unpleasant shock or surprise. It is caused by expectancy and a possible negative evaluation of a person's own culture compared to the new. It is also a stress reaction to not being able to understand, control and predict other people's behaviour and a lack of familiarity of the social environment (ritual, etiquette, etc.) and physical settings (shops, restaurants, traffic, etc.). (Furnham & Bochner 1986, 47-49.) Culture shock can also be named acculturation stress which is a response to life events which happen during intercultural contact. Acculturation stress level depends on education, age, gender and primary experience between cultures. Compared to men, women have higher stress levels. A person's stress level depends also a lot on education. Good education gives more resources (intellectual, economical and possibly also social) to adapt with change. (Kadõkova 2001, 14.)

A tourist is a person who enters a new country for a short period of time for a holiday. A sojourner is a person who enters a country for some period of time for example between 6 months to 5 years for studying or working. Both tourist and sojourner expect to return home at the end of their stay. An immigrant is a person who enters a new country to study or work but fully expects to stay in the new country. Culture shock is likely a response after entering a country as an immigrant or a sojourner. Unless the person is familiar with the new culture or prepared for it, the new situation can be very stressful. Studies have shown that 30 % to 60 % of people in this kind of situation experience serious culture shock, whereas about 20 % have no difficulty to adjust to the situation. (Jandt 2010, 291-292.)

Oberg has divided culture shock into 4 periods. The duration of the culture shock depends greatly on an individual and how much the culture is different from the culture the person is from. The stages of the cultural shock are a honeymoon stage, crisis stage, recovery stage and an adjustment stage. (Oberg 1960, 142-144.)

2.1 Honeymoon stage

The first stage of a culture shock is sometimes also called a “honeymoon stage” (Jandt 2010, 292; Oberg 1960, 143). In this stage people often feel as they are in a tourist holiday where everything is new and exciting. Tourist attractions, beautiful nature, new culture and people, and interesting cuisine creates admiration and curiosity. Homeland is forgotten and only good things are noticed about the new country. Basic language is learned fast and a day routine has not yet developed. Differences between the native country and the new culture are seen very clearly. The “honeymoon stage” can last from a few weeks to a few months and in severe cases even until a year. It can also be absent if the person has not entered the country by herself but for example came with a spouse. (Oberg 1960, 143; Pajupuu 2000, 25.)

2.2 Crisis stage

In the second stage the beginning enthusiasm has faded when a normal day routine begins. Studying language is not as easy as it was with the basic language and studying requires effort. A lack of language skills causes difficulties in everyday communication. In the situation where men work and women stay home, women experience disappointment earlier than men. In this stage a person regresses to be same level as a child who has to learn everything from the beginning. It causes disappointment, feelings of helplessness and often anger towards the new environment. Disappointment starts because a person cannot understand the unwritten rules of a new culture. People stay as bystanders until they start to understand other people's way of thinking. The best solution would be to gain knowledge about the new culture but instead people often use defence mechanisms. They start to avoid situations and actions which require contact with the native people. People begin to be more alone, sleep and read more. Some people might start to abuse alcohol and drugs. It requires a lot of energy to use that kind of a defence mechanism and there might not be enough energy for other everyday activities. They might feel tired all the time which is seldom caused by intense work or studying. Tired people get ill easily which is caused by stress. Disease will disappear when people change their environment, for example when they return to home. Many students start to think during this period that studying or working in another country was a mistake and they return back home. (Oberg 1960, 143; Pajupuu 2000, 25-27.)

2.3 Recovery and Adjustment stage

Third stage of cultural shock is the recovery stage and accepting the situation. Recovery from culture shock starts with acknowledging that the environment cannot be changed, they need to change themselves. Learning more language gives them a chance to communicate more, to understand others and to make others understand them. Difficulties are not over in this stage but people start to think positively again. In this stage people sometimes try to identify with the environment: copying local customs at home, in their clothing and eating and also now they start to communicate more with local people. (Oberg 1960, 143; Pajupuu 2000, 27-28.)

The fourth stage is Adjustment stage. In this stage a person starts to feel comfortable in the new culture. He or she has learned to enjoy and accept the other cultures many customs such as eating and drinking, art, communication etc. There might still be difficulties once in a while but feelings of distress and most of the symptoms are passing. If people return home after reaching this stage they might even take things and new customs with them back home, and usually they miss the people and the country to which they have got used to. (Oberg 1960, 143; Pajupuu 2000, 28.)

2.4 Cultural learning

Culture learning is a process where sojourner learns about the new culture's social knowledge and skills in order to manage and grow in the new society. Arriving in a new culture sojourners might lack knowledge about customs of the culture which might include how to express feelings, emotions and attitudes; understanding body language and posture of the people they are in contact with; how to greet or leave; knowledge about etiquette, bodily contact and personal space; how to accept or deny an offer or how to make an offer by themselves. These kinds of simple and everyday common customs are important to settle in, in the new society and to make new friends and build up new relationships. (Ward et al. 2001, 51-59.)

Culture learning is the part of adjustment which means that sojourners should learn the new culture's salient characteristics. This task may not be so easy for sojourners because they may face new customs which they may not approve of and usually they abandon those customs as soon as they change cultures. One way to become acquainted with the new culture is finding information about the new culture. It is quite easy to find information about certain countries or regions' climate, food, religion, customs etc. General information is easy to find about countries but often the facts are too general and more about tourist sights than about everyday situations e.g. how to buy a bus ticket. More popular destinations might have booklets for travellers where is information about certain situations foreigners might experience and what would be correct behaviour and what should be avoided. One good option to learn about a new society and culture is to talk with someone who has visited or lived there earlier. Those people can pass on their knowledge and experiences

because they come from the same culture. These kinds of contacts are also good for support. (Furnham & Bochner 1986, 235-244.)

3 CULTURAL SHOCK SYMPTOMS AND EFFECT ON HEALTH

The symptoms of culture shock are common and vary in intensity, duration, and severity among people. The experienced symptoms can be both physical and psychological. Physical symptoms are over concern about cleanliness of food, bedding and dishes, missing food from one's own culture, feeling homesick, fear of being cheated, robbed or injured, fear and avoiding physical contact with anyone who is native, great concern about minor pain and skin wounds, abuse of alcohol and drugs, and a decline in work quality, and concentration problems. Psychological symptoms are sleeplessness, fatigue, flu symptoms (fever, cough and cold, no appetite, nausea, pain, etc.), frustration, nervousness, irritability, depression, loneliness, isolation, criticism of the new country and culture, anger, self-doubt, and emotional and intellectual withdrawal. Sojourners may experience also feelings of loss, bereavement, grief and mourning. Grief is an extremely stressful reaction to a loss of a person, object or a role. Sojourners might experience those feelings while moving abroad because they are deprived of family, friends, occupational status but also everyday life such as culture, food weather etc. These are big changes in a person's life so they might have a feeling of loss which will be followed by grief and mourning. (Furnham & Bochner 1986, 48-163; Jandt 2010, 293-294; Oberg 1960, 142-143.)

Depression is a common mental health problem the symptoms of which are a depressed mood, loss of interest or pleasure, feelings of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, low energy and poor concentration. These symptoms and problems might become chronic and affect a person's everyday life and ability to take care of oneself. In the worst case it can lead to a suicide. (World Health Organization, 2011.) Depression is one of the most common mental health problems in the world (Azar, Ball, Salmon & Cleland 2008, 82). According to World Health

Organization depression is affecting about 121 million people worldwide and it occurs in persons of all genders, ages and backgrounds. Depression is one of the leading causes of disability worldwide. (World Health Organization, 2011.)

People with depression often have more health risk behaviors, such as smoking, sedentary lifestyle, and over-eating which can cause diabetes and heart diseases. Depression also increases the risk of mortality and morbidity with patients who have coronary heart disease or diabetes. (Carney, Freedland, Miller & Jaffe 2002, 897; Katon 2003, 216-223.) Research has shown that there is also a connection between depression and neck and low back pain and depression is complicating the treatment of back pain (Carroll, Cassidy & Côté 2004, 134-139.) Chronic back pain combined with depression has been found to be connected with socio-economic disadvantage and disability. The effect is bigger when the two conditions are combined. (Currie & Wang 2004, 54-59.) Major depression can influence the ability to get used to the chronic medical illnesses symptoms, for example pain (Katon 2003, 216-223). Treatment for depression usually consists of antidepressant medications and psychotherapy which are effective among 60-80 % of affected (Health Organization, 2011). Research has found that physical activity also reduces symptoms of depression and gives better mental health and even a short time of physical activity can be helpful (Azar et al. 2008, 82-87; McKercher, Schmidt, Sanderson, Patton, Dwyer & Venn 2009, 161-164; Teychenne, Ball & Salmon 2008, 397-411).

4 STUDENT AS A SOJOURNER

Student sojourner is a person who goes abroad voluntarily to study but has a plan to return home after the studies which can take from a few months to a few years. International education has a long history and it dates back to ancient times. After Second World War the number of students going abroad to study started to grow. One of the reasons for the number starting to grow was that the students were usually sponsored by the country they were studying in. These kinds of sponsoring programs

were found in different countries all over the world. (Sam & Berry 2006, 186-187; Furnham & Bochner 1986, 112-113; Ward et al. 2001, 21.)

Students experience many difficulties while studying abroad. They experience emotional problems such as misunderstandings and loneliness, homesickness, racial discrimination, not knowing how to take care of themselves, worries about problems in the home country, etc. They might have problems also with accommodation, financial problems, dietary restrictions, separation reactions. Studies have shown that upper-class students have fewer difficulties than middle-class students and younger students (under 26 years old) adjust better than older students. Students experience social problems because they are lacking social skills in new the cultural social situations. Students are expected to study really hard so they have also academic problems and stress while adjusting into the new culture. They experience difficulties in student-teacher relationships, language problems with complex material, especially in oral expressions. Foreign students experience problems that also native students might experience such as becoming productive, emotionally independent, self-supporting, and responsible. Students from a different country might feel stressed also because they are put into a role of representing their country. All these aspects explain a foreign student's decreased level health and bigger stress and depression than a native student's experience. (Furnham & Bochner 1986, 120-125.)

Research has shown that the amount and quality of the contact with the host culture has a significant effect on sojourners' adjustment. Students, who are taking part in the local community more, do better in their studies, seem to be more satisfied with their residence, are less anxious and depressed, and report to having higher self-esteem. Having a host friend helps to become more knowledgeable and learn more about local culture, customs and traditions. However, even after many years of living in a new culture, many international students do not have any host-country friends. (Sam & Berry 2006, 188-189.) Bochner et al. (1977) have divided sojourner social network into three, each serving a particular psychological function. First is a primary, monocultural network which consist friendship with other sojourners. This gives sojourner a chance to rehearse and express their own nation cultural values with co-national sojourners. Second is a secondary, bicultural network. This network consist friendship between sojourners and people connected with university as other

students, academics, advisors etc. The main function of this network is to support sojourners adjustment into the environment of the university. Third network is multicultural network. In this network there is friendship between sojourner and native acquaintances. The function of this network is to provide communication and support with non-cultural and non-task oriented activities. (Furnham & Bocnher 1986, 128.) Many studies which have been made have shown that foreign students who have close friends with native individuals experience less problems. (Furnham & Bocnher 1986, 128.) Help and support from host-national individuals is important because from them the sojourner can learn social skills of new culture. In addition it is important to have a co-national contact because through that the sojourner can maintain the culture of origin. The well-being of the foreign student depends on the access to host-national and co-national networks. (Furnham & Bocnher 1986, 129.)

Negative life-events have negative consequences and have been associated with stress, depression, coronary heart disease, skin diseases, tuberculosis and cancer. Positive life-events have positive consequences such as increased mental and physical health. However it does not mean that all positive changes have positive results and all negative changes have negative results. Positive or negative results can have serious negative effects on health and well-being if social conditions are not arranged to prevent them. (Furnham & Bocnher 1986, 179-180.) Social support has been associated with increased psychological well-being and lower possibility of physical and mental illness. Moving abroad to study or work often involves separation from family, friends, neighbours, and from colleagues. Sources of social support are narrowed which increases the risk of physical and mental illnesses. Therefore it is important that sojourners would have access to a supportive group whether it is monocultural network (friendship with other sojourners), bicultural network (friendship between sojourners and people connected with university or work place) or multicultural network (friendship between sojourner and native acquaintances). (Furnham & Bocnher 1986, 184-189.)

5 THE AIM AND THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to design and implement a practical part for Intercultural communication day where first year English degree program students in SAMK could meet and be introduced to each other. Students would meet their peer students who are in the same situation which would make their adjustment easier to a new culture. The aim of the questionnaire was to find out what they thought about the practical part, if the students find this type of day useful, should it be continued in the future and what they think could be done differently.

Research questions:

1. How are the activities in the afternoon experienced?
2. How did the physical part feel?

6 THESIS PROCESS

The practical part of the Bachelor thesis was part of the Intercultural communication day. Planning started in 2010 in June and continued in August and September. Implementation was carried out in October 2010 at Satakunta University of Applied Sciences at faculty of Social Services and Health Care.

6.1 Planning the day

The process of planning the practical part of the Intercultural communication day can be seen in the Table 1.

Table 1. The process of Intercultural communication day.

Date	Action
May 2010	First contacted regarding the project.
June 2010	First meeting with one of the organisers of the project. Agreeing to participate in the project
June-August 2010	Preparing for the project
September 2010	Meeting with all the degree program coordinators, receiving final information about the project
13 th of October 2010	Intercultural communication day

First contact regarding the Intercultural communication day project was carried out in May 2010 when the general information about the day was provided. The first meeting about the project took place in the beginning of June with one of the project organisers. In the meeting more information was received about the day and what was expected to be planned and carried out. In the middle of June an agreement was made to participate in the project and after that nearly all the information required for planning the practical part was received. July and August were spent becoming familiar with the topic and planning the practical part of the project. Due to the lack of some important information about the number of the students and the exact day of the project only a basic plan could be drawn up. In the end of August 2010 a meeting was held with one of the organisers of the project to share the ideas of the project and agree on some matters. Information about the content of the first part of the Intercultural communication day was provided. A meeting was held In September 2010 with all the degree program coordinators where the content of the practical part of the Intercultural communication day was introduced. All the final information about the exact number of participants and the date was provided. The Intercultural communication day was held in 13th of October 2010.

6.2 Implementation

In the morning of the Intercultural communication day the participants had a theoretical part about being international students, Finland, culture and cultural shock. The number of participants in the morning was smaller than the number who

was supposed to participate in the day. After lunch students gathered up near the school gym and at 12.30 we started our practical part of the day. The number of students had reduced to 51 participants after lunch. They were welcomed to the practical part and the physical part begun after the upcoming activities had been introduced.

The physical activity section had four activities with a different purpose and one extra activity because the time schedule moved too fast. The number of student was supposed to be at the beginning around 100. To be able to control that big group of students, 6 physiotherapy students were asked to participate and help to carry out the practical part. Between the activities students were asked about the activities and they were able to share them with everybody.

6.3 Research methods and participants

In the end of the practical part students received a questionnaire in English which they were asked to fill in. Questionnaire consisted of open and closed questions about the students background, activities of the physical part and about the Intercultural day. (Appendix 2). All the students received the questionnaire and all the questionnaires were also given back therefore the rate of responses was 100 percent. All the closed questions received answer and only closed questions were analysed. Data was entered into Microsoft Excel-program and Excel-based Tixel-program was used for analysing. All the open questions were listed into Microsoft Word-program and examples were added into the result part.

In the practical part there were a total of 51 students, from the 51 there were 61 % Finnish students and 39 % foreign students. From all the students 41 % (n=21) were women and 59 % (n=30) were men. Participants were from 17 different countries, majority of the students were from Finland. When divided into continents, the most students were from Europe 75 % (n=38 students), followed by Asia 14 % (n=7 students), Africa 10 % (n=5 students) and North America 2 % (n=1 student).

Table 2. The nationality of participants in numbers and percentages.

Nationality	Number	%
Finnish	31	61
Foreigner	20	39
Total	51	100

Table 3. The age of the participants.

Age	Number	%
-20	19	38
21 - 25	22	44
26 - 30	3	6
31 - 35	4	8
36 - 40	0	0
41 - 45	0	0
46 - 50	2	4
Total	50	100

Students were from all 4 Bachelor degree programs, the most were from Innovative Business Services 51 %, followed by Physiotherapy 20 %, Environmental Engineering 18 % and International Business and Marketing Logistics 12 %.

Table 4. The degree programs of participating students.

Degree	Number	%
1=Environmental Engineering	9	18
2=Innovative Business Services (IBS)	26	51
3=International Business and Marketing Logistics (IBML)	6	12
4=Physiotherapy	10	20
Total	51	100

To a question if students knew anyone from Pori before they started their studies, 53 % (n=27) students answered yes and 47 % (n=24) students answered no. From the participants only 18 % (n=9) students knew someone from their class before they started their studies when 82 % (n=42) of the students did not know anyone from their class.

7 RESULTS

The first list of students which was received had 94 students' names who were supposed to participate in the day. In the morning there were about 70 students participating but after lunch there were 51 students left who took part in the practical

part. All of them answered the questionnaire they received in the end of the practical part. The questionnaire was written in English and included some background information such as questions about age, gender nationality, closed and open questions about all four games but not about the extra game and closed and open questions about the day generally.

7.1 The experiences of the activities

From the 51 students 96 % (n=49 students) found Intercultural communication day useful for meeting new people while 4 % (n=2 students) did not. During the day 44 students which make 86 % answered that they made new friends but only 12 % from all the participants think that they will stay in contact with the people they met during Intercultural communication day. When only 12 % of the students think they will stay in contact with the newly met students then 67 % of the students think that they might stay in contact and 22 % of the students think that they will not stay in contact with students they met during the day.

Table 5. If you made new friends do you think you will stay in contact with them?

10th question	Number	%
yes	6	12
no	11	22
maybe	34	67
Total	51	100

From the participants 90 % had no difficulties to understand the instructions of the first activity whereas 10 % answered they did not understand the instructions. From the 5 students 3 answered that they did not hear the instructions well enough and 2 answered that they did not understand because of the language or cultural differences.

Table 6. Was it difficult to understand the instructions?

11th question	Number	%
Yes	5	10
No	46	90
Total	51	100

From the students 96 % thought that the activity was not difficult but 4 % thought it was. One of the explanations was that it was difficult to understand and second explanation was that he or she could not make that specific animal noise.

Table 7. Was the game difficult?

12th question	Number	%
Yes	2	4
No	49	96
Total	51	100

From the students 92 % thought that it was not hard to communicate with each other during the activity but 8 % thought that it was. Shy people, poor English and different culture were mentioned as a reason why the game was considered difficult.

Table 8. Was it difficult to communicate with others during the game?

13th question	Number	%
yes	4	8
no	47	92
Total	51	100



Picture 1. Students gathering together to gym for the second part of the day.



Picture 2. First game where students are divided into groups.

“Didn’t know how monkeys sound but recognized others.”

“Good but maybe sometimes try something more of physical like introducing ballgames like basketball, tennis or anything.”

“Like, it’s interesting to see how different ways people solve problems.”

“Maybe too easy cause we had so small group. Good that we couldn’t use words.”

“It seems to be a problem at first that we are shy but then we overcome it.”

From all the participants 94 % found instructions of the second game easy and understandable but 6 % found them difficult to understand. Explanation for not understanding the instructions was that those were not clear enough or they just could not hear it well enough.

Table 9. Was it difficult to understand the instructions?

15th question	Number	%
yes	3	6
no	48	94
Total	51	100

To the question if the game was difficult answered yes 20 % of the students and no 80 % of the students. The reasons why students found the game difficult were that they do not like math, picture was too difficult, team did not function well and Sudoku was difficult.

Table 10. Was the game difficult?

16th question	Number	%
yes	10	20
no	41	80
Total	51	100

From the participants 86 % found that it was not difficult to communicate with other students during the game but 14 % found it difficult. For the reasons why it was difficult was mentioned that some students did not participate, different nationalities understand things and tasks differently.

Table 11. Was it difficult to communicate with others during the game?

17th question	Number	%
yes	7	14
no	44	86
Total	51	100



Picture 3. Becoming familiar with the tasks.



Picture 4. Solving the tasks of second activity.

“Requires team work, co-operation and intelligence.”

“There were too many questions connected to math. I don’t like math.”

“We learned that when working as a team we can work much faster and easier.”

“Some of the tasks were a bit difficult but with group it was easier.”

“We found out that there is different kind of skills in a group.”

From all the participants 94% from the people who answered did not find the instructions of the third activity difficult when 6% did find it difficult to understand. For the reasons why the instructions were difficult to understand were mentioned that it was hard to hear and the rules were confusing at first.

Table 12. Was it difficult to understand the instructions?

19th question	Number	%
yes	3	6
no	48	94
Total	51	100

To the question if the game was difficult 88% answered no it was not and 12% answered that yes it was. Why the game was difficult was said that it was hard to explain and understand others explanations without speaking, team did not function well enough together, different cultures makes it more difficult.

Table 13. Was the game difficult?

20th question	Number	%
yes	6	12
no	45	88
Total	51	100

From all the students 80% answered that it was not hard to use their body language during the game when 20% answered that it was difficult. Students' answers why it was difficult were that some pictures were too difficult; people have different body language which was difficult to read. Participants thought about the third game that it was fun, they liked it, and some thought that pictures could have been harder some thought that a few pictures were too hard.

Table 14. Was it difficult to use body language to communicate during the game?

21st question	Number	%
yes	10	20
no	41	80
Total	51	100



Picture 5. Using body language for explaining a picture.



Picture 6. Explaining a bird.

“This was in a close connection with intercultural communication. People understand things differently.”

“It was good because it showed how one can convey information without words.”

“One has to rely on the person from whom he/she gets information and he/she needs good perception skills.”

“Body language is useful to myself. I can understand the meaning without speaking.”

“It was not difficult, but there was a difference in body language between people which was hard to read at times.”

To the question if the instructions of the fourth activity were difficult to understand 86% answered no and 14% answered yes. The reasons why it was difficult were mentioned that they did not understand instructions or could not hear those well enough.

Table 15. Was it difficult to understand the instructions?

23rd question	Number	%
yes	7	14
no	44	86
Total	51	100

From 51 students, 53% did not find this game difficult but 47% did find it difficult. Reasons why they found it difficult were that there were too many persons in one group, language problem, and team did not work so well together, they did not know what or how to carry out the task.

Table 16. Was the game difficult?

24th question	Number	%
yes	24	47
no	27	53
Total	51	100

Students answered to the question if it was difficult to communicate with others during the game that 98% answered no it was not and 2% answered that it was difficult. The student explained the difficulties with her poor English skills.

Table 17. Was it difficult to communicate with others during the game?

25th question	Number	%
yes	1	2
no	50	98
Total	51	100

Overall students thought about the fourth game that it was fun, they liked it, it needed good team work and they needed to work close to each other. Some exact comments from students were:



Picture 7. Turning the sheet over.



Picture 8. Close contact.

“Special game, needs a good teamwork.”

“Quite difficult, yet fun.”

“Liked it, you really needed to go close to each other.”

“Good in breaking lines, getting physically close.”

“To see how we all come together and work together was nice.”

“It was difficult at first but once we got really started, it was fine.”

“Good way to lower the threshold to be close and laugh to my mistakes.”

7.2 Communication through physical activity

In the end of the questionnaire students were asked whether communication was easier through physical activity and 75% agreed and 25% disagreed. Reasons why they thought it was easier were that they could concentrate on games, all team members had to work together, there were many people in the group with whom they had to communicate, people are more relaxed during games and it is easier to communicate, it was good to use body language when you cannot use your native language, because they could also use non-verbal communication to explain themselves.

Table 18. Was communication easier through physical activity?

27th question	Number	%
yes	38	75
no	13	25
Total	51	100

“I really want to say that this is a good way to communicate with others.”

“We had to actually participate. No one could stay to him/herself.”

“It is always more simple to make up conversation if you have something in common (tasks).”

“It is always good to have more body language involved when you are not using your native language.”

“Brings people together, there are more things to talk about, not as awkward as just sitting behind table.”

“Equally important. If not words describe something you can fill your sentences through motion.”

“Everyone had to chip in to do their part, and all were happily doing the games.”

“When you do something you don’t have to think about the things to say so much. And joint fun of course.”

In the end of the questionnaire students were asked two open questions and given a chance to give feedback. The open questions were that what did they gain from the physical part of the day and what could have been done differently with the physical part of the day. Most of the feedback was positive. Most people mentioned that they

liked the games, enjoyed the day, met new people and it was a nice way to meet them, and it was a nice experience. Some also mentioned that they got nothing from the day, could have had more activities, and more physical games for example basketball or football.

Students' exact comments what did they gain from physical part of the Intercultural communication day:

"I can communicate with other people who doesn't know each other before."

"Understanding of body language between people from different countries."

"Friends."

"Get to know some people and had fun."

"New friends, good ideas for future."

"New experiences."

"Team work pays off."

"I learn some funny physical activities."

"Met different people in interesting situations."

"Fun activities you can do with friends."

"Not everything is about words."

Students' answers to a question what could have been done differently with the physical part of Intercultural communication day:

"We could have changed the groups more often in order to get to know more people."

"I think the games are meant for little kids..."

"Not only being with one group."

"Some actual physical games, like basketball."

"More games and activities."

"Less math stuff and more group activities."

"Optimize the ratio of fins and foreigners."

"Maybe counting the people first before doing the sharing so there wouldn't be so big differences in group sites."

"Perhaps do some more active games."

“There are smarter ways to communicate also...”

“There could be real sport game like real street basketball, you know real men game.”

“There would have been more games for all the groups not only in the little groups.”

“I would not change anything since it is better than spinning and men game (much more creative).”

In the end students had a chance to give feedback which was mainly positive.

“Nice afternoon with good activities.”

“All the process is very interesting and helpful.”

“It is all good and fun.”

“Play part was really great, fun to make them and watch too.”

“This could be earlier and longer than the morning lecture.”

“I had fun and made more friends.”

“Hope this is organized most of the time.”

“It is good way of getting people together.”

“It was educational.”

“Nice day, though the beginning was a bit tiring.”

“The whole day was good and had a lot of fun, thank you.”

8 CONCLUSION

The results showed that 51 students participated in practical part of the Intercultural communication day. There were participants from all the bachelor degree programs and the most participants were from Innovative Business Services. More men than women and more Finnish students than foreigners participated in the practical part and the average age of the participants was 23 years old.

From the students' answers and comments I could read out that most of the students did not experience difficulties with understanding instructions, participating in the

activities or communicating with group members. Most of the students' comments revealed that they were happy about the day, they liked it and enjoyed it and they found it useful. A small number of students were not happy with the activities and thought those were too simple or could have been more sport games. Most of the students did point out that it could be held again and they did find new friends.

9 DISCUSSION

In May 2010 I was contacted about the Intercultural day project and if I could organize the practical part of it as a project for my Bachelor thesis. The reason why I accepted the offer was that I had been an international student twice and I was familiar with cultural shock and being in a foreign country where I did not know anyone. It was also interesting because in physiotherapy we often have to work with groups and I have not had a chance to work before with such a big group.

Planning of the project started in the summer 2010 but it was difficult at first because I did not receive all the necessary information at the beginning. I did not know exact date or not even amount of students participating. General plan was made in June and July and in autumn it was improved and corrected as I received more information. One of the organizers gave me an idea to make a questionnaire which students could fill in the end of the day. The questionnaire was made only about the second part of the day because I was not connected with first part. The idea came quite late and in the end of planning and therefore I had only short time to plan it.

My plan for the practical part was to have games where they need to communicate with each other instead of sport games. The idea of group activities and games where they need to solve tasks and work together because in that case they can communicate with each other more than just playing for example football. At the beginning the plan was to hold the second part of the day outside but because it was already in the middle of October the weather was too uncertain. Weather in Finland in the middle of October is unsteady and it turned out to be quite cold at the time so

the practical part of the day was happening in SOTEPO school gym. Outside there would have also been a problem of controlling the groups because there were many people attending. In a smaller space it is easier to control big number of people. Taking into consideration also that the first part of the day was kept in the school of social services and health sciences plus all the other facts it was decided to also hold the second part there. In the beginning I had to plan a 3,5 hour program of activities for some number of students. During the last meeting before the project in September I was asked to decrease it to 2,5 hours. I was also told that there will be about 100 students attending. It was very difficult to plan activities for a 100 students because I had no former experiences with such a big group and I had no idea how long the activities would take.

There were many students going to attend the Intercultural communication day and it would have been too much work for me to handle them alone. At first I was told that some exchange students can come to help me but then it turned out that everyone except one has lessons at that time and they are not able to help. After that I asked my classmates from physiotherapy to help me. In the end there were six other physiotherapy students helping me with this project.

The first game was the “dividing the students into groups”. Most of the students understood the task but they seemed slightly shy at first to carry it out. After some time the students became more comfortable and actively involved. When all the groups were formed there was one group who had only 4 members compared to other groups who had about 10 students. It was one of the problems that could have happened during this kind of dividing. The solution for that problem was that every group had to send a few of their members into the smaller group which gave almost an even number of participants in every group. I had many ideas how to do this game but all of the games had some weak point and in the end there might have still been the same result. The idea of the game was to divide them into groups and do it funny and relaxing way so it would take the pressure off from them and they could feel more relaxed. In physiotherapy there are often groups with whom physiotherapists need to work with. Commonly people in a group are not familiar with each other. This game is one of the ways how to introduce people with each other. It is funny, humorous and relaxing and it would be suitable for both children and adults.

Second game was the “group tasks” They all seemed to understand the idea of the game well and they started to solve the tasks. With this game one of the problems could have been that some groups might be too fast and some faster than others. There were six different groups which made the chances of different speed of working very realistic. One of the groups was too fast, one of those was too slow and others were about equal. The idea of the game was that they could communicate with each other and they really needed to talk to solve the tasks. It was also meant that they concentrate on the tasks and they don't need to come up with subjects to talk about.

The third game was “drawing-telephone” game. The idea of the game was to introduce to the students a different way of communication where they cannot make sounds. At the same time they had to work together and trust each other to get to the finish. There were not any problems with that game. Everybody was almost equally same speed and the students seemed to enjoy it.

The fourth activity was a play which they had to carry out about the animal their group was representing. It was one of the backup games, in case the schedule goes too fast. Because that game was an extra it was not included into the questionnaire and because of it there is lacking analysis of it. That game gave groups a chance to communicate and everybody had to participate. It gave people a chance to be creative and active. It went nicely, groups were active and doing the plays very well and everybody seemed to enjoy themselves.

The last game was “turning the sheet over”. It was the last game and at that time they should have been familiar with each other. They have worked together for last two hours so teamwork should go well also. In the last game I wanted them to be closer to each other physically. They had to be in a small area really close to each other. It worked well in a game because they did not have to think about it they just act. All the groups were concentrating on the game and strategy.

After the last game they received a questionnaire which they needed to fill before they could leave. They were not told that it is the last task they have and they can leave after it. The reason for it was that I wanted them to answer the questionnaire

and do it calmly without a rush. I received all the questionnaires filled in the end of the day.

One of the hardest part was to write analysis. The reason for it was that I did not have time enough to think the questionnaire through and what exactly I want to find out with it. At the time when I was doing the questionnaire I thought that everything was clear and well made. When I started to analyse it became quite difficult to actually make research questions for it because the previous questions were not suitable. Because of that my thesis analysing part became reverse. I first made questionnaire and then started to think about what I want to find out and what exactly I can ask. Even though it went in wrong order I do not think I could have made it better even with more time. Reason for that is that I did not have an experience like that before. Even after reading all the theoretical information I have realised that it would have not helped me with questionnaire.

For further suggestions this day could be held again and there could be for example two questionnaires. One of the questionnaires could be given right after the project and second one for example month later to assess if the students have stayed in contact with each other. Students also pointed out that this kind of day could be held more often so one of the options would be that the project is not only one day but more days divided in a longer period of time.

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LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: Games which were used in the practical part

APPENDIX 2: Questionnaire which students had to fill in the end of the practical part.

APPENDIX 3: Tasks which were used during the second game

APPENDIX 4: Instructions the assisting students received

GAMES

3.1 Dividing into groups

Students entered the gym and formed a big group. Each one of them took a paper from a hat that they were allowed to look at but not show to others. On the paper there was one animal name, in the hat there were six different animal names: monkey, chicken, cow, frog, sheep, and horse. After receiving the paper they had to perform that animal sound and find their group mates. The idea of the game was to divide them into a group with a funny game to take the pressure off and make them feel relaxed.

3.2 Communication game

Groups have been divided and they are sitting in a circle. They have one physiotherapy student with them to give them the tasks and help them with instructions if they require help. There were 5 different tasks that they had to solve. They have to solve a task correctly to receive a next task. The game is over when all the tasks are completed correctly. Every group received 3 papers about every task to give more people a chance to see the task and to solve it.

In the first task they had to write every group member's first names on a paper and put those into alphabetical order.

Second task was a logical task where they needed to solve an exercise: „how to measure 4 litres of water when you can use 5 litre and 3 litre bucket? “

Third task was a picture which they needed to divide into 4 equal parts.

Fourth task was a Sudoku which they needed to solve.

Fifth task was a mathematical task: „In the family there are 4 kids: Tom (boy), Liz (girl), Mark (boy) and Kelly (girl). Children's ages are 5, 7, 9 and 11 years. How old is every child, if we know that one boy goes to kindergarten (younger than 6), Liz is younger than Tom, and the sum up of the girls' ages is divisible by 3. “

The idea of the communication game was to encourage group members to communicate with each other. In the game they had to solve the tasks and while working together as a group they could solve the tasks faster. Concentrating on the tasks gives them a topic to talk about and they already get to know each other better.

3.3 Drawing-telephone game

Groups are standing in a line, behind each other. Last person in a line will see a picture, then he or she will knock on the person's shoulder or back who is standing in front of him or her. Person in front is then allowed to turn around and face the first person in the line. The person who saw a picture has to explain that picture with her or his hands or body language but cannot use speaking or voice. He or she can show it many times to the person in front, as long as the other one has understood the picture. If the second person understood he or she has to try to explain the same way to the next person in the line. The whole line goes through the explaining and the last person in the line has to draw the picture on a paper. After drawing the picture on the paper, the picture will be evaluated by the student physiotherapist and shown to the whole group and also the original picture. The last person in the row has to change a place and will go to be a first person in the row and the game continues as long as all the pictures are explained.

The idea of this game was to introduce the students with different types of communication where they cannot speak or use their voice.

3.4 Extra game, play

Each group received a task to perform a play about an animal their group is presenting. They had 10 minutes time to prepare the play and then they had to perform it to each other.

This game was an extra if the time schedule goes too fast. It gave every group a chance to work together and every member of the group had to participate.

3.5 Turning sheet upside down

Every group received a sheet which they had to place on a floor. Every member of the group had to stand with both legs on the sheet. The group needs to turn the sheet upside down without anyone stepping off from the sheet or touching the floor. After they have accomplished once they had to fold the sheet together so it would be half smaller than the first time and try again.

The idea of this game was again to make the group work together to finish a task. They have been working together and getting to know each other by now so the last game required them to be close to each other and trust each other to accomplish.

Questionnaire

Background information

- | | Female | Male |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Gender | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Age_____ | | |
| 3. Nationality_____ | | |
| 4. Where are you from (country) _____ | | |
| 5. What do you study (degree) _____ | | |
| 6. Did you know anyone in Pori before you started your studies here? | | |
| | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 7. Did you know anyone from your class before you started your studies? | | |
| | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 8. Did you find Intercultural communication day useful for meeting new people? | | |
| | Yes <input type="checkbox"/> | No <input type="checkbox"/> |

If yes, why?

9. Did you made new friends?
- Yes No
10. If you met new friends do you think you stay in contact with them?
- Yes No Maybe

Questions about the games:

First game (Dividing into groups)

11. Was it difficult to understand the instructions? Yes No

If yes, why?

12. Was the game difficult? Yes No

If yes, why?

13. Was it difficult to communicate with others during the game? Yes No

If yes, why?

Comments about the game

Second game (Communication game)

14. Was it difficult to understand the instructions? Yes No

If yes, why?

15. Was the game difficult? Yes No

If yes, why?

16. Was it difficult to communicate with others during the game? Yes No

If yes, why?

Comments about the game

Third game (Drawing – telephone game)

17. Was it difficult to understand the instructions? Yes No

If yes, why?

18. Was the game difficult? Yes No

If yes, why?

19. Was it difficult to use body language to communicate during the game?

Yes No

If yes, why?

Comments about the game

Fourth game (Turning sheet over)

20. Was it difficult to understand the instructions? Yes No

If yes, why?

21. Was the game difficult? Yes No

If yes, why?

22. Was it difficult to communicate with others during the game? Yes No

If yes, why?

Comments about the game

Questions about the physical part

23. Was it difficult to communicate with new people during the activities?

Yes No

If yes, why?

24. What did you gain from the physical part of the Intercultural communication day?

25. What could have been done differently with physical activity part of the Intercultural communication day?

Comments

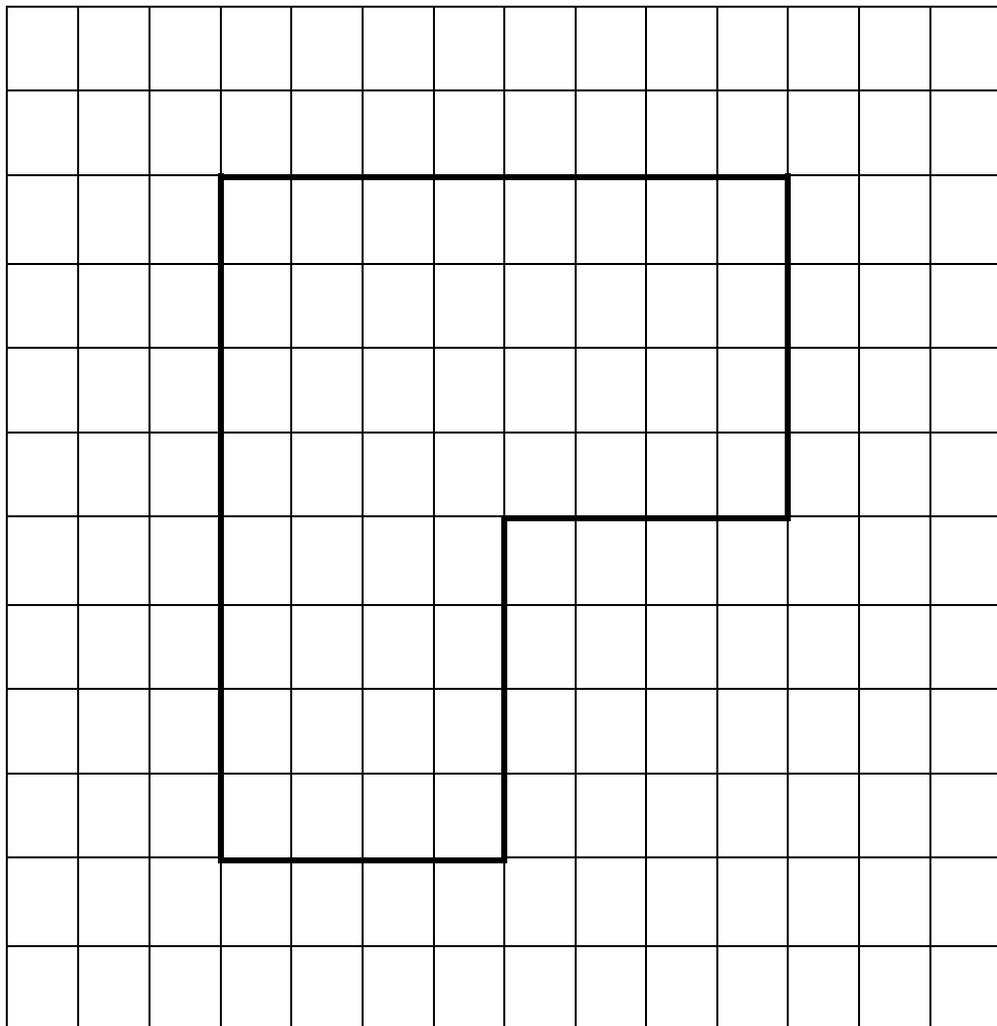
Thank you very much for answering!

APPENDIX 3

TASK 1: write everybody's first names on a paper and put it into alphabetical order.

TASK 2: how to measure 4L of water when you can use 5L and 3L bucket?

TASK 3: divide the picture into 4 equal parts



TASK 4: solve the sudoku task

the same single number may not appear twice

- in the same 9x9 playing board row
- in the same 9x9 playing board column or
- in any of the nine 3x3 subregions of the 9x9 playing board.

		6	5		2	4		
	2			7			6	
7				3				8
		2	9	5	8	7		
	3						1	
		9	3	4	1	6		
6				8				2
	1			9			4	
		5			6	9		

TASK 5: In the family there are 4 kids: Tom (boy), Liz (girl), Mark (boy) and Kelly (girl). Kids ages are 5,7,9 and 11 years. How old is every kid, if we know that one boy goes to kindergarten (younger than 6), Liz is younger than Tom, and the sum up of the girls ages is divisible by 3.

Games

1) Dividing into groups

When students come into gym they take a piece of paper where is written an animal name (dog, cat, sheep, chicken, cow, frog). After taking the paper they need to find their group members by making that animal sound.

2) Communication game

Groups are sitting in a circle and get 5 different tasks one by one which they need to solve.

- First task is that they need to write their names on a paper and put them into an alphabetical order.
- Second task is a logical task „how to measure 4L of water when you can use 5L and 3L bucket?“.
 - Answer: You fill 5L bucket and pour into 3L bucket as much water to fill it. Then there is 2L left in the 5L bucket. You empty 3L bucket and pour the 2L of water into 3L bucket. You fill again 5L bucket and pour as much water into 3L bucket as needed to fill it (1L). After that there will be 4L of water in 5L bucket.
- Third task is a picture which they need to divide into 4 equal parts.
- Fourth task is a sudoku what they need to solve.
- Fifth task is a mathematical task „In the family there are 4 kids: Tom (boy), Liz (girl), Mark (boy) and Kelly (girl). Kids ages are 5,7,9 and 11 years. How old is every kid, if we know that one boy goes to kindergarten (younger than 6), Liz is younger than Tom, and the sum up of the girls ages is divisible by 3.“
 - Answer: Tom is 9, Liz is 7, Mark is 5 and Kelly is 11.

Can use table to solve it.

	5 a.	7 a.	9 a.	11 a.
Tom	-	-	+	-
Liz	-	+	-	-
Mark	+	-	-	-
Kelly	-	-	-	+

Because of one boy goes to kindergarten who is 5 years old, then we can put minuses in front of girls names for age 5. Because the sum up of girls ages is divisible by 3 and only numbers 7 and 11 are for that, then we can put minuses for boys ages for 7 and 11. Because Liz is younger than Tom, then Tom cannot be 5 years old. Tom is then 9 years old, Mark is 5 years old, Liz is 7 years old and Kelly is 11 years old.

3) Drawing-telephone game

Groups are standing in a line, behind each other. Last person in a line will see a picture and if he or she is ready then he or she will knock on the persons back who is standing in front of him or her. Person in front will turn around and he has to explain the picture to next one by drawing or using body language but cannot speak. Last person has to draw it on a paper and who has the closest answer will get a point. Details matter.

4) Turning sheet upside down

Every group will receive a sheet which they place on a floor. Every member of the group needs to stand on a sheet and they need to turn the sheet upside down so they would stand on a other side of the sheet. While turning it they cannot step on the floor. If they step on a floor they need to start over again.

5) They will receive a questionnaire which they fill there and give back when it is filled.