TAKING THE FIRST STEP OF A SERVICE DESIGN PROCESS

Understanding Russian Tourists

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TAKING THE FIRST STEP OF A SERVICE DESIGN PROCESS – UNDERSTANDING RUSSIAN TOURISTS

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Abstract

The research was conducted for Jyväskylä Regional Development Company Jykes Ltd. and the purpose was to study the travelling habits of Russian families with small children and thus completing the first step of Service Design process; gaining customer understanding. This knowledge would then enable Jykes ltd. to proceed with the Service Design process concerning Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region! –concept.

The theoretical background of the research was built from the literature of experts in Service Design and Cross-Cultural issues, such as Stefan Moritz and Geert Hofstede. The research data was collected in April and May 2012 by executing ten semi-structured interviews accompanied by visual tools, which were produced by the researchers. The research data was analysed by the means of coding and grouping.

The results revealed that Russian families have some specific habits and needs regarding travelling, ways of booking and purchasing and using services whilst on holiday. These habits and needs should be taken into consideration when designing services for them. For clarification and supplementary suggestions concerning Service Design, an illustrated summary of the results and a list of recommendations were made.

Keywords
Service Design, customer understanding, culture, Russians, qualitative research, semi-structured interview, theme interview, visual tools
Miscellaneous

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Tiivistelmä

Opinnäytetyö tehtiin Jyväskylän seudun kehittämisyhtiö, Jykes Oy:lle. Tavoitteena oli tutkia venäläisen, pienten lasten kanssa matkustavan perheen matkustamiseen liittyviä tapoja ja tarpeita, ja näin ollen toteuttaa palvelumuotoilun ensimmäinen vaihe; asiakasymmärryksen keruu. Jykes Oy voi käyttää tutkimuksesta saatua tietoa hyväkseen Lasten Löytöretket – paketin uudelleenmuotoilussa.

Tutkimuksen teoria rakennettiin palvelumuotoilun ja monikulttuurin osaajien, kuten Stefan Moritzin ja Geert Hofsteden, kirjallisuuden pohjalta. Tutkimusmateriaali kerättiin huhti – toukokuun 2012 aikana teemahaastattelun keinoin, jota tukemaan luotiin visuaalisia työkaluja. Kerätty materiaali analysoitiin koodaamalla ja ryhmittelemällä.

Tuloksista kävi muun muassa ilmi venäläisten pienlapsiperheiden matkustamiseen liittyvät osto- ja varaustavat, palveluiden käyttötavat, sekä käytetyt informaatiokanavat, jotka tulisi ottaa huomioon palveluita muotoiltaessa. Tutkimustulokset tiivistettiin visuaaliseksi kokonaisuudeksi, joiden pohjalta pystyttiin listaamaan suosituksia palvelumuotoilun seuraavia vaiheita ajatellen.

Avainsanat (asiasanat)
Palvelumuotoilu, asiakasymmärrys, kulttuuri, venäläiset, laadullinen tutkimus, puolistrukturoitu haastattelu, teemahaastattelu, visualisointi

Muut tiedot

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1 INTRODUCTION

Tourism from Russia to Finland is rapidly increasing and there are only few areas of business that can match the kind of growth that this phenomenon has brought to the Finnish Tourism industry. Especially the Finnish trade, restaurant and hotel industry have benefited from this boost. Finnish tourism service providers need to respond to this demand and adapt the supply to meet the Russians' needs. One has to remember that Finland is not the only option for its eastern neighbours planning their trips. Finland's service culture has room for improvement, the Russian language skills of the service industry employees should be invested in and the cultural differences appreciated and seen as a positive challenge. After all, good service experiences are crucial for the success of a holiday. A good benchmarking example for Finland is Estonia and how it tailors products and service experiences for Finnish tourists. (Venäläiset turistit ansaitsevat hyvät palvelut, Demari.fi 2011.)

Even though the tourism from Russia to Finland has grown significantly and still continues its growth, there is only little that has been done to better understand Finland's single largest tourist group. However, in a recent study, Rucola – Russian Customer Latent Needs, conducted by OSKE, the Centre of Expertise Programme, the Russian tourists' needs, wants and desires were investigated.

The assignor of this bachelor's thesis, Jyväskylä Regional Development Company Jykes Ltd., is working with the nine service providers of the Voyages of Discovery for Kids in Jyväskylä Region! in order to re-design their concept with Service Design tools to better meet the needs of their Finnish target group. Jykes ltd. had also recognised a potential new target group of Russian families with small children travelling to Finland. Even though Rucola provides a general overview of the most common Russian tourist profiles, it does not offer detailed information about the needs, wants and desires of the target group of the Voyages of Discovery for Kids in Jyväskylä Region!: families with children aged ten and younger. Without having the sufficient

information, these nine service providers feel unsure about re-designing their services to better meet the needs of this new, potential target group.

The first stage of the Service Design process is to understand the customer. If one does not do this, designing new services - or re-designing existing services - is futile. In Service Design, this understanding is commonly gained by implementing different kinds of qualitative research methods. The purpose of this bachelor's thesis is implementing the first stage of Service Design.

The qualitative research method chosen for this bachelor's thesis is the semi-structured interview. The theoretical background is built from the books written by experts in the fields of Service Design and Cross-Cultural differences, such as Geert Hofstede and Stefan Moritz. Moreover, further research on Russians was done to achieve the deepest possible understanding concerning the target group.

2 THE IMPORTANCE OF TOURISM

Finland

Before examining the importance of Russian tourists for Finnish tourism, it is worth looking into the overall meaning of tourism to Finland's national economy. According to the Finnish Ministry of Employment and Economy (2012), the economic impacts of tourism are researched through national and regional tourism accounts (matkailutilinpito) that are based on internationally agreed standards and measure the financial importance of tourism. As a result of these international standards, the accounts of various different countries can be compared with each other. Statistics Finland assembles Finland's tourism accounts at the approximate intervals of three years. The latest provided statistics are for the year 2007. The account for 2010 will be completed during 2012. (Finnish Ministry of Employment and Economy 2012.)

In 2007, €11 billion was consumed on tourism in Finland, of which the share of foreign was 29% (i.e. €3.1 billion). The most significant tourist demand item was transportation services with €3.4 billion, whereas the account of the use of restaurant services was €1.7 billion and accommodation services €1.5 billion. The overall added value generated by tourism in 2007 was €3.6 billion, which equals 2.3% of Finland's Gross Domestic Product. (Official Statistics of Finland 2009.)

The total employment of the Finnish tourism sector in 2007 was approximately 64 000 people which indicates a total of 11.7% increase to the employment in 2000. These figures include all full or part-time jobs in catering, accommodation, travel agencies and other equivalent areas. (Ministry of Employment and Economy 2012.)

Out of all the foreign visitors to Finland in 2011, the number of Russians tourists was the largest with a share of 23.4% i.e. 1.3 million tourists. Finland's western neighbour, Sweden, accounted for only 10.0% and Germany 9.8%. Furthermore, the amount of Russian tourists in Finland in 2011 was 21.8% higher than in 2010, which is more than double the amount in 2001, only a decade earlier. Even though there is no complete data for the current year of 2012, the recordings already at hand indicate a steady increase when compared to previous years. (Finnish Tourist Board 2012.)

Jyväskylä

Even though the amount of overall recorded overnights in registered accommodation establishments of Jyväskylä region decreased by 2.9% in 2011, the amount of foreign overnights increased with 2.3%. According to statistics gathered for the first five months of 2012, this growth is continuing and the statistics show a 42% increase in foreign overnights for January – May 2012 when compared to January – May 2011.

The largest visitor group in 2011 was the Germans with 19 000 overnights, Russians following right behind with 17 200 overnights, which is a 4% growth when compared

to 2010. The third largest group came from Britain with only 6 800 overnights, which is a 17% growth when compared to 2010. However, the amount of overnights from Russia in January – May 2012 was 15% more than during the same period of time in 2011. (Jyväskylän Seutu, Matkailun Tunnuslukuja 2012.) From this we can deduce that the overall number of Russian overnights in 2012 will be significantly higher than in the previous year, providing that the increase continues as steadily as it has done so far. This knowledge makes it even more vital for the service providers in the Jyväskylä region to invest in the understanding of this potentially very lucrative group of travellers.

3   JYKES LTD.

As a business promotion and development company Jyväskylä Regional Development Company Jykes Ltd. aims to create a favourable business environment and to improve cooperation between the public sector and companies in the Jyväskylä region. Jykes ltd. was established in 1996 by the City of Jyväskylä and its three neighbouring municipalities: Laukaa, Muurame and Uurainen. Jykes Ltd. provides various different services to small and medium sized companies. These services include fundamental business counselling, growth and development services, networking, internationalisation and ownership change and relocation services. (Jyväskylä Regional Development Company Ltd. 2012)

Jykes Ltd. was originally established to combat the effects of recession by developing the overall attractiveness and wellbeing of Jyväskylä region and boosting the competitiveness of the local companies. Jykes Ltd. is a good example of how the initiative and common views of different municipalities can create positive development. Today Jyväskylä region is one the fastest growing regions in Finland. (Keski-Suomen Yrittäjät 2011.)

3.1 Rucola

From 1st of June 2011 to 31st of May 2012 The Centre of Expertise Programme, OSKE, coordinated a project called Rucola – Russian Customer Latent Needs, together with Jyväskylä innovation Ltd., which is partly owned by the research's assignor Jykes Ltd. The project received financial support from The Ministry of Employment and Economy, Regional Council of Central Finland, Jyväskylä Innovation Ltd., Culminatum Ltd., Turku Touring, Savonlinna Region Federation of Municipalities and Rovaniemen Kehitys Ltd. Other partners in cooperation were Palmu Inc., a pioneer in Service Design in Finland, and Infokone Ltd. (Viritä Palvelusi Venäläisille Matkailijoile, Rucola workshop material 2012.)

The Rucola -project was established for achieving deeper understanding of the needs of Russian tourists travelling to Finland, particularly those from St. Petersburg. The project was conducted by using semi-structured interviewing and quick interviews in St. Petersburg. Additionally, campaigns in social media as well as monitoring of blogs, forums and communities were done in order to learn about the pre-travel views about Finland, reasons for travelling or not travelling to Finland and experiences whilst travelling in Finland. All the obtained knowledge can be used for the benefit of developing travel and tourism in Finland and it has already been used in Jyväskylä Region to create workshops for the local companies. (Viritä palvelusi venäläisille matkailijoille, Rucola workshop material 2012; Matkailun ja elämystuotannon klusteriohjelman Vuosijulkaisu 2012, 6-7.)

3.2 The Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region! – Concept

Currently tailored to fit the needs of Finnish families with small children, Voyages of discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region! consists of a collaboration between nine local tourism service providers in Jyväskylä area; Kallioplanetaario (a planetarium located inside bedrock), Spa Hotel Rantasipi Laajavuori, Panda Factory Shop, Viherlandia Garden Centre adjoining with Peukkula Adventure Park, Craft Museum of Finland, Päijänne Cruise Hildén, Nokkakivi Amusement Park and Hilarius Mouse's Village (Jyväskylä Region Tourist Guide 2012). These providers' services are well suited for families with small children and Jykes ltd. is interested in targeting them to Russian families with small children too.
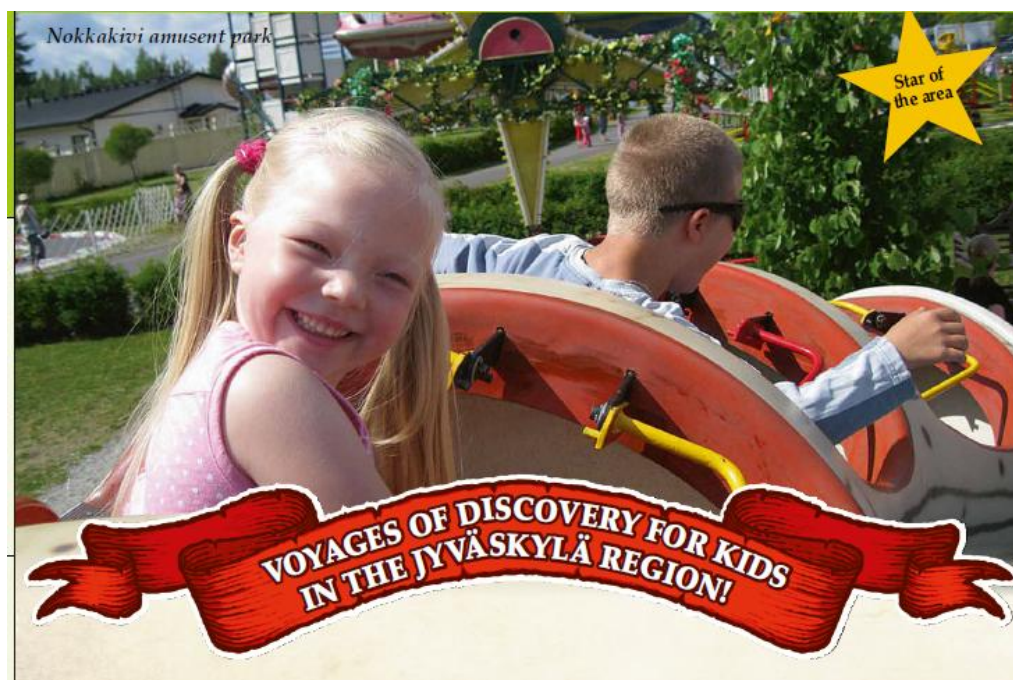

Figure 1. Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region! (Jyväskylä Tourist Guide 2012.)

4 HOW TO DESIGN SERVICES?

What is design?

> *Design has always been involved in change. Without changes design would not be that necessary. The changes that we are facing have resulted not only in new designs. They have resulted in a re-designing of design. (Moritz 2005, 35.)*

Traditionally, the concept of design used to be reserved for certain areas that dealt with the appearances of already developed concrete items for example in the fields of graphic design, product and fashion design. However, today's' design is no longer restricted only to the physical appearance of different items, but additionally it extends to the design of customer experiences that can include all the aspects of products, services, spaces or a mix of them all. Furthermore, design can be used for incorporating systems and processes, which are vital to producing the customer experience. Commonly, the new design is seen as a holistic concept that combines the expertise of different parties influenced by the design process. (Moritz 2005, 32-34.)

What is service design?

Mager (2009) defines Service Design as following:

> *Service Design addresses the functionality and form of services from the perspective of the user. It aims to ensure that service interfaces are useful, usable, and desirable from the client's point of view and effective, efficient, and distinctive from the supplier's point of view. (pp. 34.)*

According to Tuulaniemi (2011), Service Design helps organisations to see the strategic possibilities of their services in their business operations and to create new innovative services while improving their already existing services. Service Design is not a new innovation, but rather a new way of combining old matters. (Pp. 24)

During the past 25 years, a shift from industrial economy towards service revolution has created a need for a new way of thinking about creating services. The main drivers behind this change are the booming service economy, saturation of the product market, new technological tools and the simple fact that humans have individual needs. Nowadays, service economy dominates the Gross National Products of the world's most developed countries with its share reaching as high as 70% in the United States of America and Japan as the world's leading countries. As the products have started to resemble each other, integrating products and services has become a way of differentiating from one's competitors' service or product. The rapid development of technology has created new service enablers such as the Internet, portable wireless devices and telecommunications, which all offer limitless possibilities concerning the creation of new service systems. Since customers are humans and no two humans are alike, everyone has their own individual needs that cannot be standardised; these needs can change depending on the context and situation in question. Service Design takes these changes in to consideration and helps companies to find their way in this changing economy. (Moritz 2005, 23-27.)

4.1 Product vs. Service

According to Moritz (2005), services have unique characteristics that differentiate them from products (see figure 2). These characteristics also represent some challenges, which are addressed by Service Design. Generally, services are intangible, i.e. they cannot be seen or touched and hence the challenge for service providers is to create ways of converting the value of the service to their customers. Due to this intangibility, a service cannot be stored or owned and it consequently loses its value

when left unused, e.g. an empty seat on a plane at the moment of departure. Moreover, services are delivered and consumed simultaneously, which causes difficulties in planning customer participation. Other challenges facing the service providers are the facts that each service is an experience and each customer experiences it differently. This leads to difficulties in measuring the quality of a service. All of these unique characteristics dictate that the service will differ according to who the customer is and how they value the service. (Pp. 29-31.)

PRODUCT

→ Produced

→ Material

→ Tangible

→ Can be stored

→ Usually without client

→ Consumption after production

→ Defects in manufacturing

SERVICE

→ Performed

→ Immaterial

→ Intangible

→ Can't be stored

→ Interaction with client

→ Consumption = production
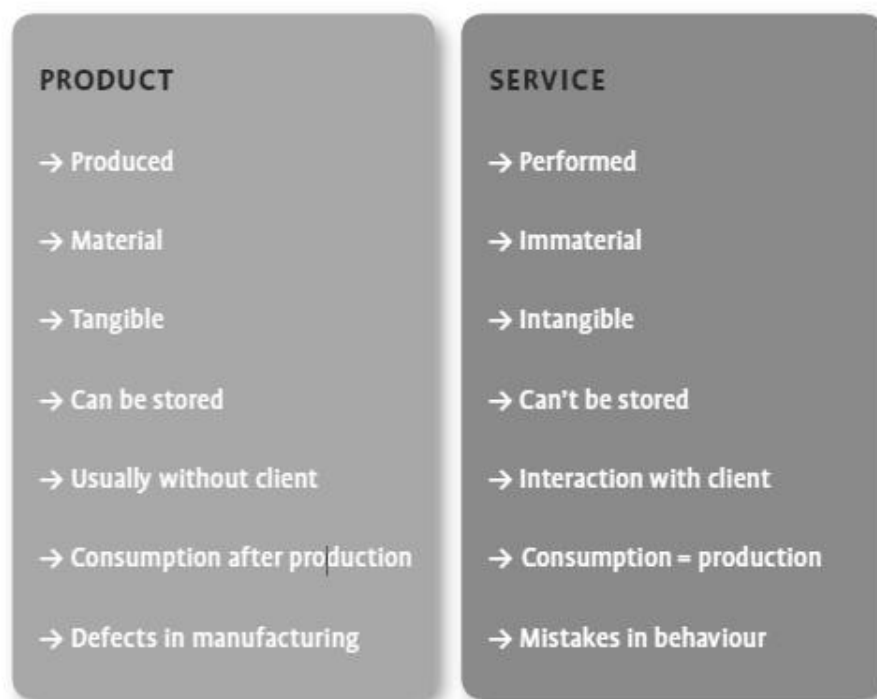
→ Mistakes in behaviour

Figure 2. Key features that differentiate a service from a product (Moritz 2005, 30).

Moritz (2005) continues by stating that due to the unique characteristics of services, the design, its research and implementation need to be approached in a special way:

A. The conscious and latent needs of the customer need to be understood and taken in to consideration.

B. The unique features of services need to be taken into account.

C. Expertise from all fields needs to be integrated to produce a quality service experience.

D. The interactive nature of services needs to be taken into account during the design process.

E. Services live, keep changing and are on-going by nature. (Pp. 43-47.)

Service design takes these features into account and combines them in its multi-disciplinary process. In many businesses, these facts have already been taken into account when designing or re-designing services, but the term Service Design is not yet commonly used. (Moritz 2005, 48-49.) The Service Design process begins with gaining understanding about the customers' needs, dreams and wishes. Service Design is a part of a broader occurrence and in it the focus of the product development process has shifted towards creating new ideas together with the customers through creative efforts. (Miettinen 2011, 18-21.)

4.2 The Service Design Process

According to Lockwood (2010), there are plenty of tools connected to Service Design. This is due to the fact that Service Design is practical expertise instead of formal science. The use of these tools differs according to the type of project, the objectives of the project and the resources available during the project. This might also explain the lack of consensus in finding mutually agreed upon frameworks and the fact that the existing frameworks are developed independently by different consultancies or academics. (Pp. 161.)

Moritz (2005) divides the Service Design (SD) process into six categories, in which each category is an intermediate step that needs to be taken in order to reach the

objectives that have been set for the Service Design process (see figure 3). First category, *SD Understanding*, is about researching latent and conscious needs, wants, motivations and contexts of companies and their customers. This creates insight into what the company should be doing in order to reach a new customer segment, or how to improve the relationship with an existing one. The tools and methods used in the first category include for example benchmarking, client segmentation, focus groups, interviews, observation, probes, shadowing, user surveys and many more. (Pp. 123-127.) This particular category is the core of this research that focuses on discovering knowledge about Russian families with small children. The gained knowledge will then be provided to the assignor of the bachelor's thesis, Jykes Ltd., who can utilise it in the further stages of Service Design.

The second category, *SD Thinking,* distinguishes criteria and builds strategic frameworks by identifying the direction of the Service Design process. This category gives the Service Design process guidelines by using mind maps, priority matrixes, system thinking, touchpoints or think tanks. (Op. cit. p. 128-131.)

SD Generating as a third category is all about doing, producing and coming up with relevant and innovative ideas and solutions. Work in this category is based on information gained from the previous categories and it is produced for example by brainstorming, experience sketching, parallel design, and by creating a think tank. (Op. cit. p. 132-135.)

Next, and the fourth, category is *SD Filtering* which is about selecting the best and most suitable solutions, or ideas, from the ones that were generated in the previous categories. Additionally, for further improvements, all of the service components are evaluated. The tools and methods used in this category can be for example character profiles, cognitive walkthroughs, diagnostic evaluation, feasibility check and SWOT analysis. (Op. cit. p. 136-139.)

The fifth category is called *SD Explaining* aiming to give the team, the stakeholders and the decision makers a clear view of the future concepts and possibilities. To be

able complete the fifth category, one has to have a detailed understanding of the ideas or solutions found during the previously executed steps, e.g. categories, of the Service Design process. This category provides shared understanding by using for example empathy tools, experience prototype, mock-ups, moodboards, role play or visioning. (Op. cit. p. 140-143.)

The final category, *SD Realising,* is the phase or step when the actual service or an experience prototype is made to happen. This category contains everything necessary for planning, specifying and implementing the service including the business plan and guidelines. Though this may be the final defined category, a service is never perfect since the environment and situations change. Therefore, these six categories represent an on-going and inter-linked process (see figure 3). Each category can be used simultaneously, even multiple times, and not necessarily in the order they were described above. (Pp. 144-149.)
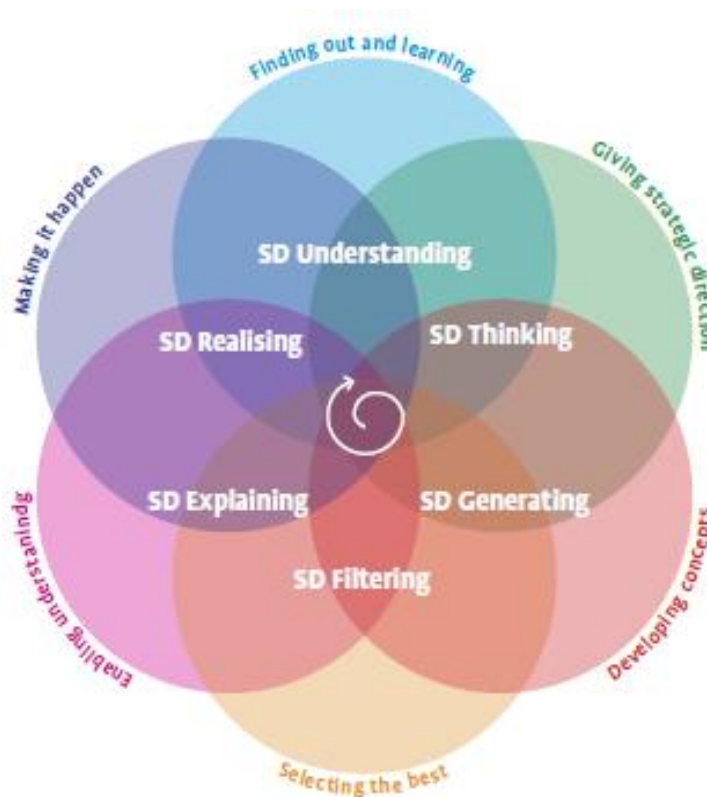

Figure 3. Service Design Categories (Moritz 2005, 149).

5 THE EASTERN NEIGHBOUR

As the process of Service Design starts with understanding the customer, it is good to explore what is already known about the sample group of the research. Considering Russia it should be remembered that it is the largest country in the world spreading from the Baltic Sea to The Pacific Ocean. In this enormous country there lives an approximate of 150 million inhabitants of which about 80% lives in the area that belongs to Europe. About 120 different nationalities are found among the entire population. (Kulttuurit Kasvokkain 2005, 13; Vihavainen 2006, 13.) During the past centuries the Mongols, Vikings and Byzantine have left their marks on the Russian culture, not to forget how the historical changes from the tsarist autocracy to socialism and the reforming society of modern Russia have coloured the Russian customs, individual identity and ways of communication. Nonetheless, one can talk about Russianness and common cultural characteristics that are predominant all over the Russian Federation. (Kulttuurit Kasvoikkain 2005, 51.)

5.1 Cultural Foundation

This chapter studies how the formation of culture explains why representatives of different cultures resemble to and differ from each other. On the other hand, Richmond (2003) states that when trying to define the characteristics of a nation, risks like unfairly stereotyping this nation cannot be overlooked. There are exceptions to the rules, though it is hard to deny that for example the German and the French, or the German and the Poles, differ from each other regardless of having been neighbouring countries for a significantly long time. (Pp. xvi.)

Tylor (1871) defines culture as "that complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, art, morals, laws, customs and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society" (pp. 1). Being on the same line with Tylor's definition, Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) depict culture as a collective phenomenon that is at

least partly shared with those in the same social environment, where it is also learnt in. As culture stems from this social environment, not from the genes of the individual, it should be separated from human nature and an individual's own personality. In other words, it is "the collective programming of mind that distinguishes the members of one group or category of people from others". (Pp. 4.)

Mental Programming

Hofstede and Hofstede (2005) state that within each individual exists a set of patterns for thinking, emotions and possible action chains, which have been formed during their entire lifetime. A grand share of these patterns is formed during childhood when humans are most receptive to their surroundings. They are called as "mental programs" or "softwares of the mind"; once something is learned for the first time it must be unlearned in order to acquire a different skill or knowledge to replace it. This is considerably challenging. Additionally, it means one's behaviour can be predicted up to an extent, given their past. (Pp. 2-3.)

The Mental Programming consists of three unique levels built on top of each other like a pyramid (see figure 4). All mankind shares the base, universal level, and as it is inherited from genes it is a so-called biological "operating system" of the human body. The middle level is the *collective level*, which is shared among many and consists of features learned from the social environment one grew up in. This level includes language, general physical distance maintained between individuals, everyday activities such as eating and sleeping, and the general level of appreciation towards one's elders. The most unique of all the levels is the *individual level,* which is specific to each and every person. This level consists of characteristics and features that are both inherited and learned. It is the level where the individual personality surfaces differentiating one – even identical twins - from everyone else. (Hofstede 1984, 15; Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 4-5.)
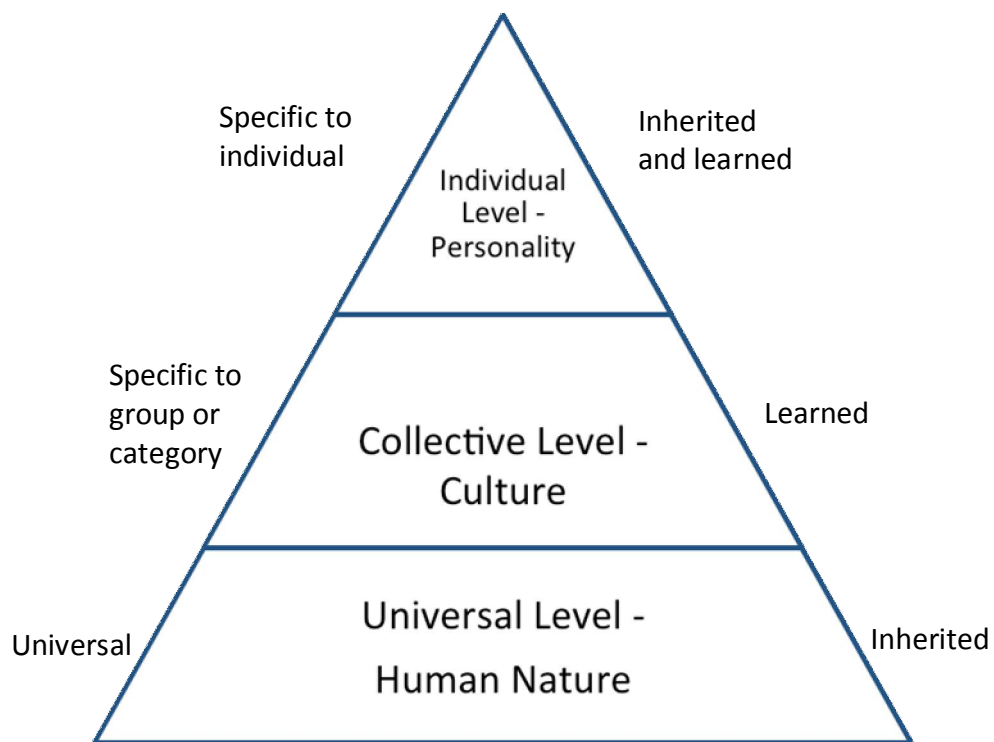
Figure 4. Three levels of uniqueness in Mental Programming (Hofstede 1984, 15; Hofstede & Hofstede 2005, 4-5. Combined).

5.2 Cultural Characteristics

This chapter describes the common cultural characteristics of Russians and the history behind them. These specific features were chosen from the vast pool of unique characteristics as they strongly link with the research topic.

Collectivism

According to Vituhnovskaja (2006), one of the most important characteristics of Russians is generally known to be collectivism and the habit of solving problems in groups. This phenomenon has been observed for example after the Winter War by Finnish War Executives, who noticed Russian soldiers to be at their best when

operating in a large group, whereas Finnish soldiers performed the best as individual fighters. The roots of Russian collectivism derive from the ancient times when peasants fought for their existence in extreme conditions under the threat of tribal attacks. The dangers led to combining resources and hence the importance of the community increased. Usually these communities consisted of peasants from one or more villages. In these communities hardships considering economic problems such as land and taxation were solved. Large workloads were divided and peasants from other villages came to help, especially when someone needed work force when building a house or clearing a field. Work like this was never paid for. However, those who came to help were always given similar favours in return. (Pp. 114-115.)

Russian collectivism was exploited by communists, which resulted in the creation of kolkhozes, collective households, and later on sovkhozes in which the economies of the peasants were combined and where people worked together. As another result of the communist collectiveness policy was the so-called communal houses built in 1920. These houses accommodated several families who therefore never had the possibility to live their everyday lives, for example cook or do their laundry, in private. (Op. cit. p. 115-116.)

Personal Space

Even now, Russians are not fond of being alone and thus seek the company of family and friends with whom they share feelings, thoughts and events of life (Venäläinen Tapakulttuuri 2005, 4). In public places, Russians tend to place themselves closer to each other than what is appropriate in Western Europe, or for example in the United States. Moreover, when queuing, people habitually stand so close to each other that they can feel the touch of the person next to them. The fondness of touching can be observed during conversation when the parties often touch intentionally. It could be said that the Russian "personal territory" is much smaller than for example the Finnish or German ones. (Vituhnovskaja 2006, 117.)

Emotions, Language and Sociability

Russians are exceptionally loquacious and tend to fill quiet moments with speech even though they might not have anything proper to say. Conversation is a way to maintain the social contacts and create a nice atmosphere; humour is appreciated and in fact stories and jokes are commonly told in assemblies of friends and relatives. Body language is a strong part of the conversations, though smiling is reserved for being around friends and is as a result considered disrespectful in official situations. (Kulttuurit Kasvokkain 2005, 51-52.)

How Russians use language in different situations is defined by the relationship between the participants of the conversation; elders are generally addressed with respect and it is commonly polite and advisable to use the name of the other party instead of plain personal pronounces. General politeness and well-spoken language is considered as a measurement of civilisation. (Op. cit. p. 52.)

On the other hand, this politeness is mostly used with those who they are familiar with and thus service personnel can treat strangers discourteously. As mentioned before, smiling is reserved only for familiar faces as it is something that represents the true feelings towards the others, and thus should not be used as a tool. Emotionality and openness are what Russians are well known for, though these features start to surface mainly only after the connection between people is established and strangers become familiar faces. Their emotionality can reach the extreme when the positive or negative feelings are expressed effusively. (Vituhnovskaja 2006, 94.)

Family and Friends

Even though the high divorce rates, crime, and lack of privacy have had their effects on Russians, family and children are considered important. Moreover, the family of a visitor is a topic that genuinely interests the hosts. (Richmond 2003, 119.) Russians consider their own families to be extended, as they do not only include the parents and their young children, but grandparents, aunts, uncles and cousins, too. Grandparents often live together with their children and grandchildren, and are strongly involved in looking after the youngest of the family. Furthermore, they believe they have a say over their adult children's decisions and a responsibility to monitor their actions and affairs. Especially the grandmothers want to be strongly involved in everything considering their children's lives. When age makes grandparents' everyday life harder, they are looked after by their children instead of being sent to nursing homes, which often lack quality. Additionally, using the services of nursing homes is often regarded as shameful. In addition, older people are generally highly respected in Russia, which can be noticed for example on the subway and trains where the seats are always offered for the elders. (Venäläinen Tapakulttuuri 2005, 11; Vituhnovskaja 2006, 129 – 131.)

The relationship between Russian men and women is very traditional. Although the women's appearance and behaviour is commonly very feminine, they still have a great deal of responsibilities in addition to their working lives: raising the children, taking care of the household, being an exemplary hostess and a mother, and looking after the husband. The Russian woman is undoubtedly devoted to her family. Usually the family's financial affairs are unbeknown to the woman since the men consider it to be their business. However, nowadays the equality of genders has become a hot topic in the Russian society, and the men's passive role in the family causes bitter criticism. (Kulttuurit Kasvokkain 2005, 52-53.)

A friendship stands for a special relationship that does not happen overnight and is not easy to establish. (Richmond 2003, 116 – 117. Venäläinen Tapakulttuuri 2005, 4.) The Russian language has different words to describe the state of friendship. Words

can be found for example for an acquaintance, someone to have fun with, member of an ideological group, and the closest friend; a "bosom buddy" who is treated like a member of the family. (Vituhnovskaja 2006, 118; Richmond 2003, 116.)

Social Networks

A close network of family, friends and co-workers is relied upon among Russians as a protection against the unpredictable daily life. In addition, despite the great size of the country, most matters run on the basis of these close networks that also extend to business life where personal contacts are used in exchange for favours or items. (Richmond 2003, 114 – 115.) During the Soviet time these networks were commonly used for gaining items and services beyond the bureaucracy and queuing for goods. E.g. a teacher was able to obtain quick medical care to their child if the doctor's child received special attention at school. (Vituhnovskaja 2006, 118.)

Kosonen (2008) states that the utilisation of social networks is mundane in organisations that are active in Russia. These networks reach to all relations of the organisations, especially employees, public sector and other organisations. Unofficial networks were a solid part of the Soviet economy when the organisations were forced to rely on multidisciplinary personal connections, unofficial trade of goods and services and the black market in order to be able to ensure the daily operations and to implement the state production plans. These networks solved various problems and therefore it is not unheard of that this utilisation is still blooming after the collapse of socialism. (Pp. 93.)

Concept of Time

Unlike the ever so punctual Finnish one, the Russian concept of time is more flexible. When it comes to for example a bus scheduled to depart at 2:00PM, it departs approximately at that time, maybe five minutes earlier or 10 minutes later. What is important is the fact that in the end the departure happens. (Venäläinen Tapakulttuuri 2005, 5.) According to Richmond (2003), communism had its effect on the Russian concept of time: when employees could not be fired the motivation to execute their tasks promptly, or on time, did not exist. On the other hand, if an issue is sufficiently important to be completed within a certain time limit it will be done, although time is not a commodity in the country. Time is often measured more in days, weeks or months than in minutes and hours. Patience is considered as a virtue over punctuality. (Pp. 134.)

With Russians it is rather frequent for arrangements to not to go as planned. For example, the government claims to rate planning as a highly important function, albeit issues are still executed without a plan and on the last minute. Even the best plans can easily end up unused or are carried out differently regardless of the amount of details that have been put down on the negotiated agreements. (Op. cit. p. 163.)

6 AIMING FOR UNDERSTANDING

At the beginning of the bachelor's thesis process, the following research question was formed to guide the research project and to ensure that the end product, i.e. bachelor's thesis report, will meet the assignor's needs:

What are the travelling habits of Russian families with children aged ten and younger? And what are their general desires concerning services when travelling?

- *How can the attained knowledge be utilised when designing tourism services for the target group?*

As mentioned previously, the Service Design process has various phases. Due to the wishes from the assignor, Jykes ltd., this bachelor's thesis concentrates on the first category of Service Design process, which Moritz (2005) calls *SD Understanding* as it focuses on discovering the latent and conscious needs of the desired target group. Furthermore, Tuulaniemi (2011) identifies customer understanding as an important part of the Service Design process. Customer understanding is obtained by collecting and analysing information concerning the customers. This information will then guide the rest of the Service Design process. Since the services will be designed to match with the needs and desires of the end users, it is highly important to distinguish and recognise their real needs and motives. Service Design often uses a qualitative approach, as it is better suited for gaining customer understanding, though quantitative methods are taken along when they fit the purpose. (Pp. 142-144.)

According to Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara (2004), the kind of information that is needed, from who the information is needed, and where it is searched from, guide the decision-making regarding research methods. The qualitative approach aims to understand the target of the research, and to reveal the reality of a phenomenon

rather than to verify already existing statements. (Pp. 170-173.) A few most common features of qualitative inquiry favour humans as the instruments of information gathering, using an inductive analysis that aims for revealing unexpected matters, implementing qualitative methods in data collection like semi-structured interviews that raises the target groups' "voice", choosing the target group appropriately without unsystematic sampling, being able to modify the research plan according to the circumstances, and seeing each case as unique and therefore interpreting the data accordingly (op. cit. p. 155). Additionally, Merriam (2009) states that "qualitative researchers are interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their world and what meaning do they attribute to their experiences" (Pp. 5).

Due to the mentioned aspects, qualitative approach to the research serves the purpose of this bachelor's thesis.

6.1 Chosen Qualitative Methods

According to Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara (2004), interviewing has been the main research method in qualitative research. Interviewing is a unique form of data collection since the interviewer is in direct verbal interaction with the subject of the research. One advantage of using interviewing as a data collection method in comparison to other data collection methods is its flexibility in gathering data and that it is an excellent way to gain information about the needs, wants and motivations of the research subjects. Interviewing also has some characteristics that can be seen as problematic issues for data collection, i.e. a time-consuming process. Moreover, in order to conduct a proper interview it requires careful planning and training. (Pp. 193-194.)

Semi-structured Interview

Hirsjärvi and Hurme (1991) state that semi-structured interview can be called by many different names. Some refer to it as semi-standardised interview or the non-schedule standardised interview. It is also frequently referred to as the third interview option among the other two common interview types, structured closed answer form and open ended interview. (Pp. 35.)

Semi-structures interview has different variations and the form chosen for this thesis is called theme interview. Theme interview is a form of semi-structured interview, since the interview themes that the interviewer would like to discuss with the interviewee are known but, as typical for a semi-structures interview, the exact form and order of the actual questions are unknown. Other central characteristics of theme interview are the existence of example questions, rather low amount of interviewees, a large amount of data to analyse and that the gained information is very in-depth. (Op. cit. p. 35-36, 38.)

The planning process can be divided into three phases: First, the general planning of the goals for the research, the forming of the research question and the planning of the gathering of knowledge needed to solve the problem. Second, the planning of how the actual interview situation will be organised, and third, planning the steps that need to be taken after the interviews are completed. (Op. cit. p. 39.)

As stated before, the interview themes that the interviewer would like to discuss with the subject are known and the example questions exist beforehand. Since planning these questions prior to the actual interview is especially important, it is advised for the interviewer to make an interview guide in advance. The interview guide states the themes chosen according to what the interviewers wish to explore, and the example questions for each theme. It acts as a checklist during the interview and helps to guide it along smoothly. The themes chosen should be sufficiently broad to allow for the interviewees to offer as much information as possible and permit the

interviewer to go deeper according to the interviewees willingness to participate. (Op. cit. p. 41-42.)

A Picture is worth a Thousand Words

Service Design uses visual methods as tools for communicating the Service Design process as well as new service visions and ideas to the client organisations, to distil the customer understanding and for example to create customer profiles (Jäppinen 2012). Even though there are multiple ways of using visualisations in Service Design, the most common ones are blueprints, customer journeys, desktop walkthroughs, personas/profiles, storyboards and system maps, which are all conducted after the initial research part of the Service Design process (Segelström 2010, 21-22).

Drawings and photographing are mostly linked with probes and especially design probes where a selected sample group performs tasks based on the instructions given to them. Mattelmäki (2006) describes design probes as "an approach of user - centred design for understanding human phenomena and exploring design opportunities". (Pp. 39.)

This research applied the visual tools from Service Design as part of the primary methodology. Instead of having the sample group to draw pictures, the researchers produced a set of illustrations themselves and linked them with certain interview themes. Each visual tool had two illustrations describing different settings or situations (see figure 5). From these two options the interviewees chose the one that supported their views the best. This was done in order to gain a deeper insight to certain phenomena having a notable importance for the purpose of the study. Additionally, a document of the Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region! was shown during the interview to gain information about the quality of the brochure and information provided about the services (see appendix 1).

Figure 5. Visual Tool Example

6.2 Research Process

An interview guide with seven different themes was formed based on the theory, Jykes Ltd.'s wishes, and the research question. (See Appendix 2.) These themes represented the most relevant areas that needed to be discussed with the target group: Family concept and decision making, language, holiday schedules and ways of transportation, planning, distribution/the ways of purchasing, services and the concept of Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region!, and a perfect family holiday.

Since the target group of the research was Russian tourists with children aged ten year and younger, the researchers felt that for the quality of the data, and for the comfort of the subjects, it was necessary to execute the interviews in the mother tongue of the target group. For this reason, three Russian interpreters were recruited among first year Facility Management students of JAMK University of Applied Sciences. During several meeting in March 2012, the recruits were familiarised with the purpose and aim of the study, trained for interviewing with the help of the interview guide and a mock interview. The interview guide and the sample questions were studied together with the interviewers in order to deepen their understanding even further.

The chosen research method being the semi-structured interview, which allows a rather small sample group, ten interviewees were considered as sufficient number to obtain the required data. Due to the research being executed outside of the time frame of Russians' general holidays, obtaining the needed amount of interview subjects from Jyväskylä, Finland, proved to be challenging. Therefore, the interviewers aided in the process and eventually obtained all the required interviewees from among their friends and acquaintances. On that account, the ten interviewees that agreed to take part in the research were located around St. Petersburg and Moscow, Russia, and the interviews were implemented with the help of the Internet and Skype software application.

The ten theme interviews were conducted during April and May 2012. The authors and the three interpreters were all present during each interview. When one was interviewing, the two other interpreters took notes of the situation and made sure that the interview guide was followed. Meanwhile, the authors observed the interview situation and were available for help and support. The interviews were recorded lasting approximately 30 minutes.

Analysis

The analysing process started after receiving the translated and transcribed interviews from the interpreters. After that the authors read the interviews through multiple times and colour coded them according to the themes of the interview guide. This was implemented for the sake of an overview, and to ease the further analysing process. After the division into the themes, the results were coded again in order to separate the differing answers from each other. This enabled the researchers to study each theme in detail, to identify the similarities and differences and finally to make their conclusions.

6.3 Credibility

This chapter studies the issues regarding research credibility in general. Furthermore, issues that might have had an effect to the credibility of this research are studied, as well as are the actions that were taken during the research process to ensure the best possible level of credibility.

6.3.1 Reliability and Validity

Hirsjärvi, Remes and Sajavaara (2004) state that during each research the researchers aim to avoid all mistakes and errors but the reliability and validity of the findings vary. This is the main reason why each research aims to evaluate the overall credibility of the research with measuring reliability and validity of the findings. The reliability and validity of a research can be described as follows: Research reliability refers to the level of which the research results can be later replicated, and therefore are not random. Research validity refers to the research methods' capability to measure what the researchers wish to explore. E.g. For example the interviewees can understand the interview questions differently than how they were intended by the

researcher. If the received data is then processed according to the researcher's original ideology, without acknowledging the possible interpretation differences, it will lead to the research lacking validity due to errors in the data. (Pp. 216-217.) According to Hirsjärvi et al. (2004), Wolcott (1995) states that evaluating qualitative research with these measures can be challenging as it looks into events regarding people and culture, which differ from one another. Furthermore, the concepts of reliability and validity are vague by nature and can therefore be difficult to apply to qualitative research; yet each research needs to be evaluated in some way. (Pp. 217.)

The reliability of a qualitative research can be improved by conducting a very precise report about each phase completed during the execution of the research, e.g. deciding themes/topics for the interviews, the conduction of the interviews, the analysing of data and the presenting of results. If the presenting of results is supported with the use of direct quotations or other authentic documents, it will also add reliability. (Op. cit. p. 217-218.)

Reliability and Validity of Theme Interview

Hirsjärvi and Hurme (1991) state that when assessing the credibility of a theme interview as a research method, one has to evaluate all of the stages of the research and assess the different issues that can have an effect to the overall credibility. Analysing only the credibility of the conducted interviews is not sufficient. As mentioned earlier on, reliability refers to the level of which the research results can be later replicated. Theme interview has special features that have an effect on the overall credibility of a research. For example:

A. The interview situation is unique; interviewing the same person again would make it artificial.

B. Inability to pinpoint the main characteristics of the research phenomenon or to derive the central concepts from the theoretical base, which often leads to

inadequate planning, which can surface for example as a poor interview guide.

C. Even if one succeeds in the pinpointing of the main characteristics, one can be unsuccessful in drawing up the preliminary questions and the interview guide, e.g. the questions fall short in providing in-depth data.

D. The more there are interviewers, the more there are mistakes. It is very unlikely that all of the interviewers understand the preliminary questions in an uniform way, and even more unlikely that the meaning of the questions remain the same throughout the interviewing process; there is always an additional risk considering the research credibility when using more than one interviewer.

E. The selection of interviewees can fail if the researchers are unsuccessful in identifying the most appropriate research group.

F. Using more than one person for transcribing the interviews from audio into written form can damage the credibility of the research as different transcribers interpret information in different manner. (Pp. 128-130.)

6.3.2 Risk analysis

Certain risks considering the credibility of the research were recognised from the very beginning of the process, whereas others came apparent during later phases. Some of the risks mentioned above about the credibility of theme interview in general are similar to those that were recognised as risks for the credibility of this research. Choosing a topic that would require interviewing people with a different native tongue was a risk itself, which lead to the creation of additional threats:

A. Interviewing in Russian language and using intermediaries, e.g. three translators, to conduct the interviews and transcribing can produce distorted data. It is likely that the researchers understand matters differently than the intermediaries. This corresponds with the theme interview related risks mentioned previously about the amount of interviewers and the amount of transcribers.

B. The transcribed interviews partially lacking information due to the translation and transcribing processes. The intermediaries conduct the first stage of analysing and thus researchers are forced to analyse information that is already once processed. This information can be influenced by the intermediaries' writing styles. This corresponds with the theme interview related risk mentioned previously about the amount of transcribers.

C. Lacking the benefits of a face-to-face situation due to physical distance between the interviewers and subjects. Using Skype software applications for executing the interviews obligated the researchers to rely on the Internet and its possible connection problems.

Actions taken in order to reduce the risks that might have a negative influence on the credibility of the research results, were producing an elaborated interview guide, meeting the intermediaries several times and training them with a mock interview before starting the interview process and both the researchers and intermediaries being present during the interviews.

7 RESEARCH RESULTS

In this chapter the results of the research are categorised according to the main themes identified in the interview guide, which was used through the implementation of the research. In addition, quotations from the interviewees are meant to highlight the most significant findings of the research.

7.1 Family Concept and Decision Making

Family Concept

The most respondents understood family as extended including grandparents, cousins, uncles and other relatives. However, they considered a family holiday to be spent only with the closest family members, e.g. mother, father and children.

Visual Tool: Family Concept

Half of the respondents chose option A., which shows an illustration of a nuclear family, and the other half chose option B. illustrating an extended family (see figure 6). One respondent, who described a family as extended, still chose option A. for the reason of spending less time with the grandparents than with the nuclear family. According to this, the visual tool fully supports the received verbal answers.

Figure 6. Family concept: nuclear versus extended.

Decision Making

Families' everyday decision making lies on the shoulders of the mothers, though children and fathers are often consulted. Two respondents mentioned that the fathers were made to believe that they were making the final decision, even though in reality it was the mom.

> *"Father is making the decisions, or actually mother who makes it looks like it was father's decision."*

The mother, who again consults the children, usually makes decisions concerning the family's holidays. Eight out of ten interviewees stated that the father did not take part in the decision making concerning the family holidays:

> *"Child suggests something and I decide. His opinion is taken in to consideration because he is a member of the family."*

> *"Father wants us to have a good time together so he sacrifices his opinion"*

"I make the decision because I know more than my husband and I have more experience in travelling."

Visual Tool: Decision Making

Option A. depicts a situation of the mother as the main decision-maker and the leader of the situation, whereas option B. depicts an opposite situation (see figure 7). The responses were divided equally between options A. and B. with four picks on both of them, additionally two respondents had great difficulties with choosing between either of the options. No matter which option was chosen, option A., B., or neither, the reasons given for the decisions revealed that all of the respondents take the children's opinion to consideration in their decision making.

"I can't say that my child directs me, but I ask him what he would like; he participates in making decisions concerning his life. "

"Childs opinion taken to consideration, but if it is crazy then the decision is made by mother or father."
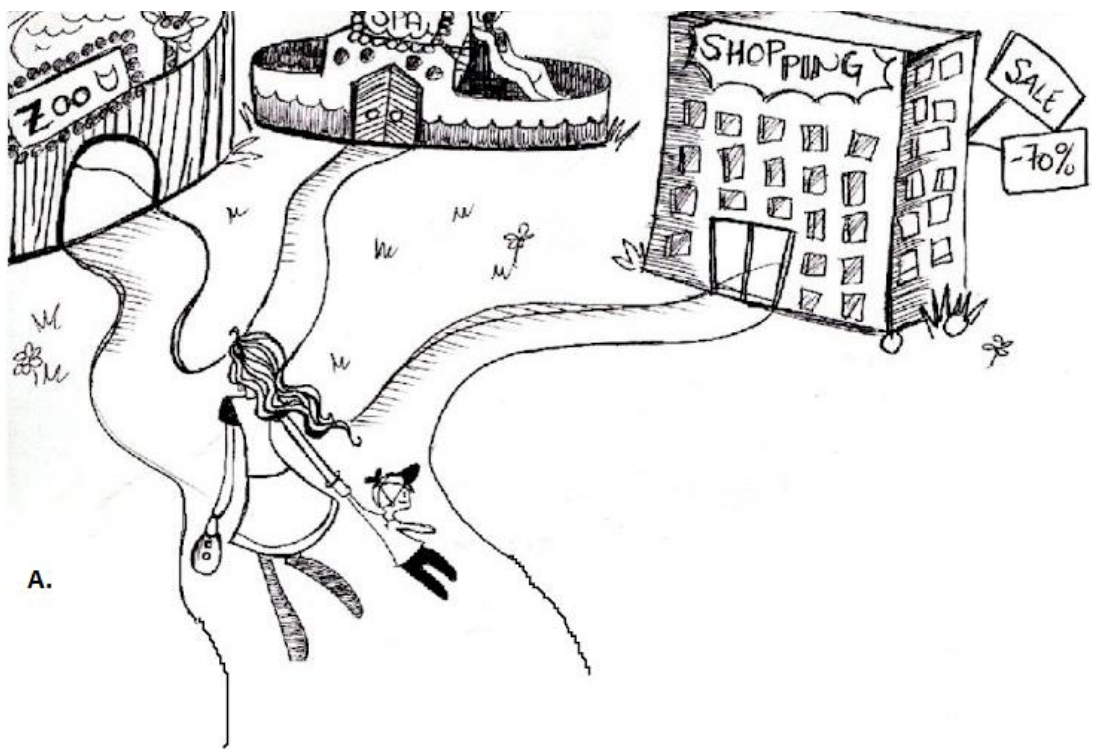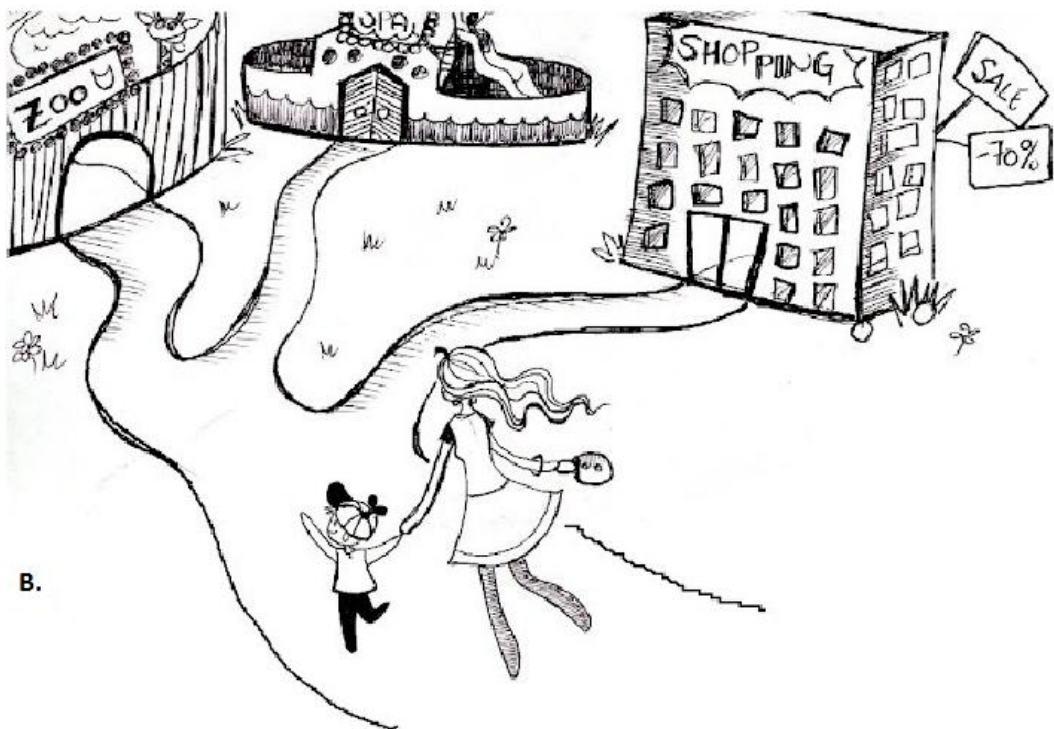
Figure 7. Decision Making

7.2 Language

When the interviewees were asked about their attitude towards using a foreign language in service situations, a vast majority of them stated it to be generally neutral, but when asked about their preferred language, also considering written information, the same respondents preferred to use Russian especially concerning crucial information. Furthermore, all the respondents seemed to have understood foreign language as the English language.

> *"My attitude to using English is normal, but we prefer Russian as we are not very confident with our English."*
>
> *"I like using foreign language for fun, but I need a Russian guide to provide information in Russian. I can speak English when on a walk in the city, but at the hotel it would be better to get information in Russian."*
>
> *"Main information is better to be provided in Russian, but I would like to improve my English too."*

Two respondents did not prefer Russian to English, as their English language skills were sufficient or fluent. One of these two felt strongly about the issue.

> *"It does not matter to me which language the services are provided. I think that a country should not adjust to the need of Russians who do not speak any foreign language because of their laziness."*

7.3 Holiday Schedule and Ways of Transportation

Scheduling

When the interviewees were asked about how they use their time during holidays, most of them preferred to have an eventful holiday and spend their time in various kinds of activities provided at the destination. This, though, did not affect the

scheduling of the holidays, which can be seen in the respondents' positive attitude towards last minute arrangements, apart from one exception. Even though the families often had preliminary plans, they did not hinder the respondents' readiness to alter these plans especially if they discovered a more attractive option.

> *"We plan in advance and don't like last minute arrangements."*

> *"We can change plans if we see something more interesting. Holiday is about lack of any plans. If we don't plan we can do whatever we want."*

> *"We don't plan our holidays. We come to the place together with our family, and decide at the destination what we are interested in. We can change our plans easily if we find something more interesting."*

Flexibility during travelling and holidays was understood as the ability to change ready-made plans concerning activities at the destination. Accommodation and means of travel were the only concretely scheduled matters. Moreover, it is clear that last minute arrangements and flexibility during holidays are both understood to occur in a similar context.

Visual Tool: Scheduling

The congruence between the verbal responses and chosen options is evident as there were only two respondents who chose for option A., which illustrates an extremely planned holiday schedule (see figure 8). Furthermore only one of the two felt strongly about scheduling everything on a holiday and the other mentioned the need for scheduling only to cover certain aspects, such as dinner. Half the interviewees chose option B. that portrays the lack of a holiday schedule. Again, the remaining respondents had difficulties in choosing between either of the options mainly due to the fact that schedules they had usually prepared for their holidays ended up falling apart, which has led to the general decrease of scheduling.

> *"My parents always plan but it has become more difficult due to their work. So now they don't plan so that things will fold out as they are. "*
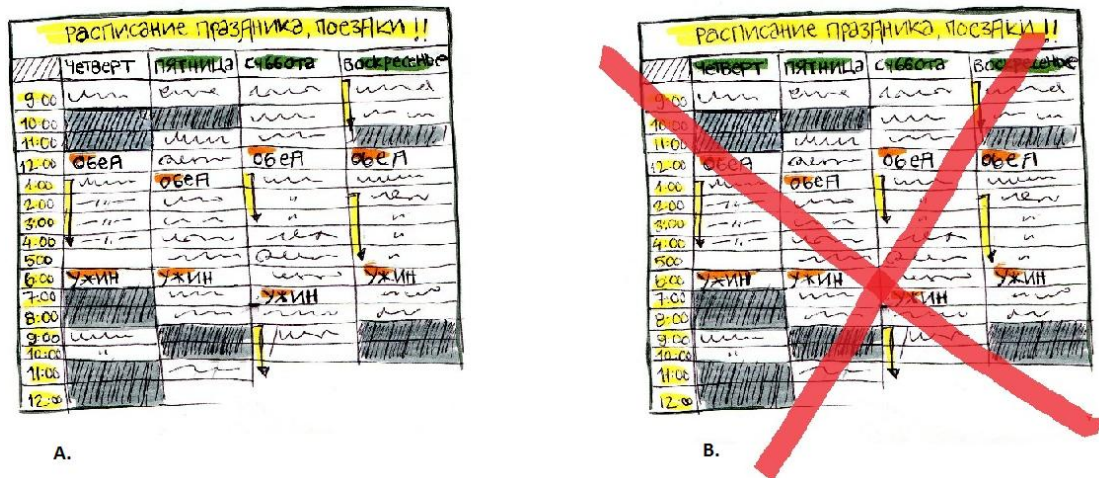
Figure 8. Scheduling

Transportation

Transportation-wise, using a plane was preferred for long distances but all the respondents liked using their own car. Driving by car was said to be convenient especially when travelling with children since it provides freedom to do as they please.

> "If the destination is not too far, we prefer to go the by car. Otherwise we use plane."

> "I like using a car because it is convenient; sit and drive where ever you want not depending on anything or anyone."

Visual Tool: Transportation

All the interviewees preferred option A., private transportation to option B., arranged group transportation (see figure 9). This supports the verbal responses when the preferred way of holiday transportation was inquired. This decision was

mostly based on the convenience of travelling by car, which enables the freedom of having breaks, desire to spending time with the family, and the dislike towards buses or travelling with crowds.

> *"Father hates busses."*
>
> *"We don't like to travel with the crowd, especially with Russians."*
>
> *"As we have a little baby, using car is much more comfortable; you're free to stop when and where ever unlike on excursions."*
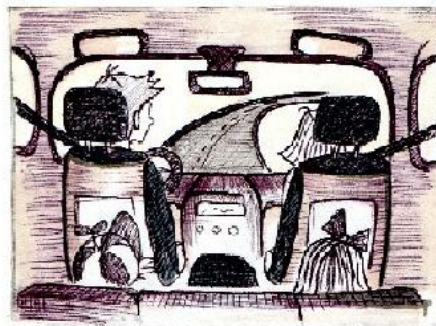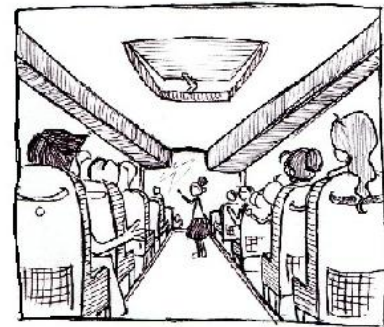

A.

B.

Figure 9. Transportation

7.4 Planning

To search information about the destination, its accommodation possibilities and services beforehand, all respondents mainly use the Internet. Furthermore, recommendations and advice from friends and relatives was mentioned, though general word of mouth was not the only information source. The Internet was chosen for the main source for its convenience and easiness for booking accommodation and flights, but also for the great amount of information available. Only one respondent said having used travel agencies for booking hotels, thought flights were again booked individually through the Internet.

Concerning planning of one's holiday beforehand, the pattern is to book flights and hotels well in advance and buy services spontaneously at the holiday destination. The most respondents research and tentatively plan their holiday activities beforehand, but the final decisions on purchasing the services are done after arriving to the holiday destination.

> *"In the beginning we used to search information with the help of friends as everything was unusual. But now it is of course from the internet, not only in the country's language but everything you can find in English. "*

> *"We search information with the help of internet; you can read a lot of different opinions from there. Think through advantages and disadvantages and find a lot of information in general. "*

When asked about the respondents' need for information about the services provided at the destination during their holiday, most mentioned needing information about activities, restaurants, excursions and different kinds of shops, spas and water parks. One interviewee said they needed information about where childcare facilities can be found.

Visual Tool: Planning

Option A. refers to booking holiday activities well beforehand, for example via the Internet, while option B. is an image of spontaneously deciding to purchase a service during the holiday (see figure 10). Half of the respondents chose option A., four chose option B., and one respondent was indecisive. However, comments received concerning the illustrations partly supports the knowledge gained from the verbal responses, which depict the fact that most respondents book or buy particular aspects of the holiday beforehand e.g. accommodation and transportation, and leave certain decisions to be made during the holiday e.g. activities like excursions.
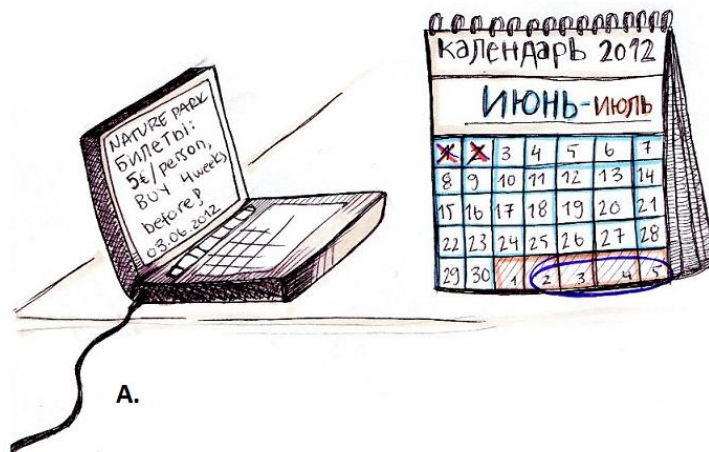
Figure 10. Planning versus spontaneity

7.5 Distribution, the Ways of Purchasing

According to the interviewees, the most common activities and services used during holidays were water parks, excursions, shopping, zoos and sports activities, general sightseeing, observing historical places, children's attractions and spending time on the countryside. According to the respondents, these types of activities are most often purchased at the destination instead of booking them before the holiday.

During an inquiry on the interviewees' attitude towards buying many service for one price, e.g. package tourism, seven out of ten respondents clearly stated their dislike towards packages as they prefer buying the services one by one instead of having fixed sets for their holidays. Reasons mentioned for not purchasing package solutions were an increase in travel experience, limitations on the variety of the services that can be included to the package and the possible time limit within which they should be used in, and a general preference to plan everything themselves. One respondent mentioned that in their experience packages are more expensive than buying the same service individually, especially when the package is purchased from Russian travel agencies.

> *"We prefer doing everything by ourselves."*

> *"A good idea but doesn't suit us. We buy everything separately since usually packages don't have enough variety to choose from and in my opinion a package also mean to use certain services within a time limit, which often don't fit the schedule. "*

> *"We used to buy the packages by nowadays we book and buy hotels and flights by ourselves as we have more experience in travelling."*

All differing opinions favoured package tourism, as it does not require putting a great deal of effort or time into the decision making process.

> *"I like it very much as you need to do nothing. You just lie and you will be fed, you do nothing yourself and your head doesn't hurt."*

7.6 Service and Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region!

Service

The following was mentioned as criteria for good service: friendly, respectful and qualified staff, overall cleanliness of premises and especially the importance of reality matching with received information, e.g. advertisements, promotions as word of mouth about previous experiences, as this information creates expectations about the service or experience.

> *"Good service is friendly staff, good communications and full information about the service."*

> *"Friendly staff, everything is right and our expectations are met."*

On the contrary, bad service was described as dirty rooms, rude and boorish staff, the lack of information provided about the local attractions and the mismatch of reality and expectations. Moreover, inequality towards the customers was mentioned.

> *"Disrespect full staff and a dirty room. And in reality everything was different from what was written in a brochure."*

> *"It is unfriendly staff, no information available about local attractions and activities (brochures), bad quality of food, general untidiness."*

As criteria for choosing between two similar services in the area, the most important ones were differences in prices and opening hours with half of the respondents mentioning them. As other important factors location of the venue, amount of information provided about the service and word of mouth were brought up. Overall quality and the appearance of the venue played a smaller role in the decision making.

"Price and information provided about the places. We would like to ask the advice of people who have been there and then go. If the opinion are completely similar, the price becomes a general criteria; where is cheaper there is better."

"Price, quality, opening hours, and as we have a small child the working hours are very important."

The concept of Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region!

When the interviewees were shown the Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region! – brochure and asked about what they thought about it in general and especially information-wise, all respondents considered it to have a sufficient amount of information about services. Few wanted more information about the prices of the services and what they actually consist of. In addition, pictures were generally liked and the amount of them was sufficient, although few respondents would have wanted to see even more of them for the sake of visual importance.

"It is nice and attractive, good pictures appeal to children."

"The information is quite good, everything is clear but I would prefer to have more information about prices and what is included to it."

"Plenty of information: there's too much text and only little pictures. The main factors I need to know are price, quality, opening hours and addresses..."

Interviewees were asked to choose services that appealed to them and their family the most and the least based on the Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region! – Brochure. For their favourite services most interviewees chose Panda factory shop and Kallioplanetaario. Nokkakivi amusement park and Craft Museum of Finland were mentioned only a couple of times, Viherlandia and Hilarius Mouse's Village both got one vote. The remaining attractions in the Voyages of Discovery in the Jyväskylä Region! – brochure, Rantasipi Laajavuori Spa hotel, Peukkula adventure

park and Päijänne-Risteilyt Hildén - cruises were not mentioned as any of the interviewees' favourites, though one interviewee considered all the services interesting and highlighted the Craft Museum of Finland to be especially interesting to both parents and children.

The least favourite options from the Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region! – brochure were Craft Museum of Finland that was listed by half of the respondents and Viherlandia with three mentions. Nokkakivi amusement park was mentioned twice with one respondent describing it as dangerous and fearful. Hilarius Mouse's Village was mentioned once. The one respondent who considered all the services interesting for their family naturally did not mention a least favourite options. Once again, some of the attraction from the Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region! – brochure were not mentioned at all. All in all, Rantasipi Laajavuori Spa Hotel, Päijänne-Risteilyt Hildén – cruises and Peukkula were not mentioned as the favourites or least favourites.

> *"My least favourite is Viherlandia, I don't' think it is very interesting for children; the description talks about buying garden things and there's only one fairy-tale hero. This is not very attractive."*

The most interviewees would rather buy tickets to services like the Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region! from their hotel instead of the venue. This is due to that it is more convenient for not needing to queue and the fact that the information concerning the services would be gained in advance without having to travel to the venue. One of the respondents mentioned that they would most likely purchase tickets from the hotel unless it is more expensive there, than when bought from the service provider, and one would not buy any tickets from the hotel at all.

> *"We first need to have some information about the service but we will buy tickets straight from this place where are going because in this place there's more information about whether it is really suitable for us to go there. So we prefer to buys tickets and stuff right there."*

Visual Tool: Participation in activities

This visual tool was used individually without corresponding interview questions to determine how the families generally participate in activities targeted to children during their holiday, and the results gained from using the visual tool can also be applied to Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region.

Option A. describes a situation where kids are attending an activity without the parents and under the care of an activity guide, and option B. describes the entire family attending the activity together (see figure 11). Option A. was chosen only by two respondents whereas majority chose option B.

Those two who chose option A. did so with the condition of them being sure that it would be safe to leave their child with the activity guide. Moreover, one respondent who chose option B. mentioned that once their child grows older they would be willing to leave the child under the care of the activity guide if it was safe.

> *"Children will go alone as parents want to have time alone, but only if they know it is safe."*

> *"Everyone goes together because everything is also interesting for the parents."*

Figure 11. Participation in activities

7.7 A Perfect Family Holiday

As an example of what is important in a perfect family holiday, a few respondents mentioned participating in everything together with their family members and having a positive general atmosphere. Most brought up different kinds of activities such as going to zoos, water parks, sports activities and various children's attractions, except for one interviewee who preferred absolute inactivity on a holiday. Two children who responded to the question wanted to spend their holidays actively as well.

> *"Going everywhere together as it should be exiting for kids and parents both, having a good atmosphere and happiness."*

> *"To have and active holiday: lying on the beach and doing nothing is boring. We like excursions, aqua parks and sports."*

7.8 Illustrated Summary of the Results

These following illustrations depict a successful family holiday of a travelling Russian family with small children, i.e. this shows how the target group would want their family holiday. It has seven chronological stages that fully base on the results of this research.

Valentina Petrov searches for information about the destination of their family holiday: Jyväskylä, Finland. Luckily all the *pages are in Russian,* too! *She browses the services,* sells the idea to her husband Boris and *books the accommodation online* at hotel Rantasipi Laajavuori.


When it is time to leave for the holiday, family Petrov packs their bags and says a warm goodbye to the *grandparents who will stay at home* waiting for souvenirs.

Since the birth of Julia and Viktor, the Petrov family have travelled all around using their **own car**; They need the **freedom to come and go as they please,** since when travelling with kids one never knows what might happen!

The Petrov family likes an **activity filled holiday**, so when they arrive at the hotel in Jyväskylä, Boris goes searching for **brochures about all the services provided in the area.** The brochures are usually **found in the reception area**, just like now. He is happy to find them **in Russian**, though English would have sufficed too.
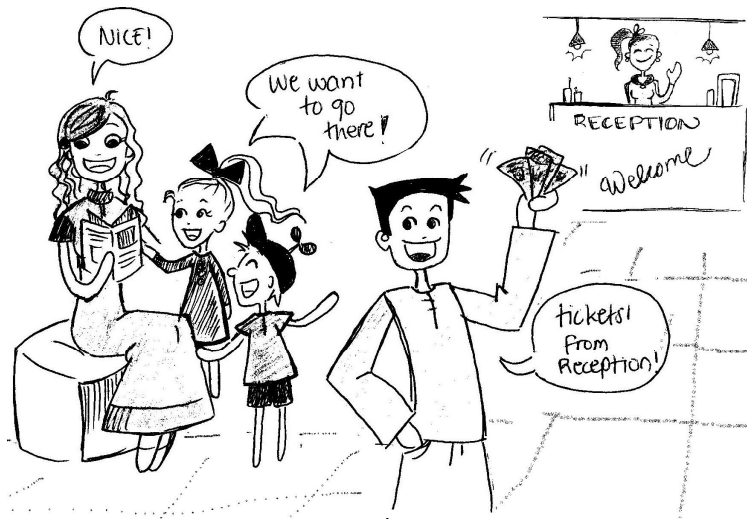
"Mommy! We want to go to Panda, Nokkakivi, Craft Museum, Peukkula ,and Kallioplanetaario!" say Julia and Viktor. **Valentina says yes** to Panda and Nokkakivi to start with. "Boris, please go **buy the tickets at the reception!**"

"Kids, isn't it nice to drive around with our own car?" Says Boris. "Yes it is, and it was very nice to have **the freedom** for a long lunch after visiting Panda." Answers Valentina. "And we will still make it to Nokkakivi too." squeaks Julia enthusiastically.

The Petrov family is delighted to find out that the amusement park *is exactly what the brochure promised.* "Mommy! Daddy! The Ferris wheel is so much cooler than in the photos!" shouts Viktor with the biggest smile. Boris is content for he *received what he had paid for*.

In conclusion, the authors recommend that the following matters should be taken into consideration when designing services for Russian families.

A. The web pages should be provided at least in the English language, though Russian language is even better.

B. Brochures are important and they should be available in English and Russian. These brochures should be easy to find for example in a reception area of a hotel.

C. The information in web pages and brochures needs to be precise, accurate and include the exact prices and what is included in them, as well as the opening hours and addresses. Pictures are appreciated, but should not give a false impression about the service.

D. Tickets for the services in the area should be available for purchase at the hotel.

E. Offer individual services as they are preferred over packages

F. If a service runs on a certain schedule, plan it so that it allows flexibility, tardiness and changes

G. It is not necessary to offer transportation for this particular target group, but instead, pay attention to provided driving instructions and parking areas.

DISCUSSION

Since this research looks into the target group's general behaviour, needs, wants and desires, the results can be utilised in many services, like the ones that are part of Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region!. In order to find precise information regarding one specific service, further researches would have to be conducted. For example, if the Nokkakivi amusement park wished to know more about the latent needs of Russian Families concerning their services, they would need to conduct a further survey of their own.

Generally, the information discovered regarding the target group matches the theoretical basic knowledge about Russians: women still seem to be in charge of the everyday decision making, children are highly important, plans and preliminary schedules are constructed up to some extent even though they most often change or end up unused, and the family concept is extended. What is peculiar though that regardless of this certain family structure, the members of the family attending a family holiday seem to be only the most central ones: father, mother and their children. This could be a sign of a change from the traditional structure of Russian families with younger generations moving on from the influence of collectivism. On the other hand, it can also reflect the limited area of Russia from where the respondents originated, and if the interviewees had been from all across the country the results might not show this change at all.

When comparing the findings of this research with the findings of Rucola – Russian Customer Latent Needs, the correspondence is clear. What is stated about Russians in the Rucola workshop material, is the importance of family and especially the children, the existence of traditional gender roles among them, their spontaneous nature and dislike towards strict schedules, their fondness for activity filled holidays, them preferring travelling with their own car to public transport and planning and booking their trips on their own to using readymade packages (Viritä Palvelusi

Venäläisille Matkailijoille, Rucola workshop material 2012). In conclusion, it is apparent that the Rucola findings, the findings of this research and the theoretical background of this research all support each other.

Regardless of the risks that were mentioned earlier on, the author's consider this research reliable since the collected data does not appear random due to the patterns discovered among the ten responses. Moreover, interviewing and using visual tools can be considered suitable for the purpose of the study since the results answer the research question. Even though some of the interview questions were understood differently from how they were meant to be understood, it does not have an effect on the validity as the authors took this phenomenon into consideration during the analysing process. Therefore, the research can be seen as valid. Additionally, in the authors' opinion the overall credibility of this study is sufficient because of the correspondence between the theoretical background, the findings of the research and Rucola and the measures taken during the process in order to ensure this credibility.

Service Design is obviously something that companies need to embrace now and especially in the future. Is Service Design a field where the lack of a uniform frame work can be considered negative? Or does the various frame works make it easier for different companies to implement Service Design as there are many frame works to choose the most suitable from? The authors chose Moritz's frame work for this bachelor's thesis as it had been referred to by various experts in the field. It was also clearest and in the authors' opinion suits the needs of Jykes ltd.

The entire bachelor's thesis process has taught the authors the importance of customer understanding in general and how complicated both gaining and utilising it can be. Yet, in the end investing in obtaining customer understanding is beneficial to any type of business. Furthermore, the knowledge gained about Russians is valuable to the authors and can be considered as an asset in the authors' future endeavours. Cultural awareness and understanding are important especially in the professional fields, such as hospitality and services, where encounters with representatives of

different cultures are likely. As a result of completing the first step of the Service Design process, the authors' interest towards the rest of the steps arose and hopefully they will get an opportunity to be part of completing all the steps of Service Design.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Voyages of Discovery for Kids in the Jyväskylä Region!

Планетарий в скале «Kallioplanetaario»

Сильные ощущения круглый год
Это невозможно объяснить
– это нужно почувствовать
самому! Единственный в
мире вырубленный в скале
планетарий предлагает острые
ощущения для людей всех
возрастов! Планетарий в скале
– интересный объект для
посещения и прекрасное
место для проведения
совещаний и банкетов.
Под куполом планетария
устраиваются панорамные
сеансы с обзором
в 360°, начиная от

мультипликационных фильмов
и кончая суперфильмами и
музыкальными программами!
Кафе, ресторан с питанием
по заказу, кабинеты для
совещаний, сауны в скале, во
дворе идиллическая стоянка
лопарских чумов. Летом
для детей устраиваются
приключенческие походы.

Адрес: Vertaalantie 419,

Palokka, Jyvaskyla
(20 км на север от Ювяскюля)
Тел. +358 10 470 7200
www.kallioplanetaario.fi

СПА-гостиница «Rantasipi Laajavuori»
Адрес: Laajavuorentie 30, Jyvaskyla
Тел. +358 14 628 211
laajavuori.rantasipi@restel.fi
www.rantasipi.fi

Фирменный магазин шоколадной фабрики «Panda»

В Ювяскюля обязательно стоит
заехать в фирменный магазин
шоколадной фабрики ⯀Panda⯀,
и если считать в килограммах,
то это самый большой магазин
конфет в Финляндии! Ароматы
лакрицы и шоколада, а также

партии конфет по выгодной
цене, гарантируют посетителям
магазина приятную поездку!
Фабрика расположена

автотрассе 4 в Вааякоски в 7 км от Ювяскюля, всего в 500 метрах от кругового перекрестка в сторону Леппявеси (Leppavesi). Добро пожаловать!

Работает: пн-пт 9-17 и сб 9-15. В июне, июле и декабре также вс 12-16. Для групп также по предварительным заказам.

Адрес: Asematie 2, Vaajakoski, Jyvaskyla
Тел. +358 20 785 4362
www.panda.fi

Музей ремесел Финляндии

В полумраке цокольного этажа Музея проживает барашек Пякя, который очень хочет заполучить красные рукавички. Но где растет шерстяная пряжа? Идите по следам барашка Пякя и прислушивайтесь к звукам вокруг вас. Пякя приведет вас в особую комнату, где к вещам можно прикасаться, их можно также нюхать и пробовать на вкус. На втором этаже Музея находится художественная мастерская, где каждый может

заняться поделками. Мастерская Paja **открыта** вт-вс 11-18. Взимается минимальная плата за материал. Вход бесплатный до 18 лет, по пятницам вход свободный для всех посетителей. В остальное время взрослый билет 6 €.

Адрес: Kauppakatu 25, Jyvaskyla
Тел. +358 14 266 4370
craftmuseum.info@jkl.fi
www.craftmuseum.fi

АО Круизы «Päijänne-Risteilyt Hildén Oy»

Тел. +358 14 263 447, +358 14 618 885
eija.hilden@prh.inet.fi
www.paijanne-risteilythilden.fi

Парк отдыха «Nokkakiven huvipuisto»
Парк отдыха для всей семьи на лоне живописного садового госпожа Койпелиини. В деревне можно также послушать и разучить песню, позаниматься аэробикой и весело поиграть на игровой площадке. На лимонадном заводе можно приготовить лимонад по своему вкусу, а в фирменном магазине - приобрести на память сувениры мышонка Хилариуса. Деревня находится на территории курортной гостиницы Пеурунка. Новый тематический курорт с горками, рестораном и пляжем расположен рядом. Приобретя

дневной ремешок, после обеда Вы можете вернуться в деревню мышонка. Захватите с собой купальные принадлежности! Зимой мышонок Хилариус бывает в Пеурунка в период школьных каникул. В продаже специальные турпакеты для отпускников. **Работает** в летний сезон.

Адрес: Peurungantie 85, Laukaa
Тел. +358 20 751 6300
www.peurunka.fi
www.hilariushiiri.fi
пейзажа. В парке много аттракционов также для маленьких любителей острых ощущений. В зале игровых автоматов циркового музея можно бесплатно играть на старых игровых автоматах хоть целый день, купив одноразовый билет или специальный ремешок. Парк расположен на трассе №9, рядом с Лаукаанхови (Laukaanhovi) в 20 км от Ювяскюля. Рядом большая бесплатная автостоянка, подходит также для больших автомобилей. В парке можно хорошо устроиться на пикник.

Работает: 9.-22.6. вт-вс 11-17, 24.6.-12.8. вт-вс 11-18. Закрыто по понедельникам, а также 23.6. Подробные часы работы в Интернете. На территорию парка вход свободный. Дневной ремешок 22 €, одноразовый билет на аттракцион 3,50 €.

Адрес: Ruuhimaentie 3,
Lievestuore, Laukaa
Тел. +358 46 887 6071

info@nokkakivi.fi, www.nokkakivi.fi

Парк отдыха
Nokkakiven huvipuisto

Деревня мышонка Хилариуса

Войдите в чарующий мир танца, песни и игр! Захватывающая музыкальная пьеса мышонка Хилариуса для всей семьи идёт в деревне каждый день. Кроме Хилариуса, в пьесе участвуют мышонок Хиппу Хиири, болтушка Лииса, Лаури и госпожа Койпелиини. В деревне можно также послушать и разучить песню, позаниматься аэробикой и весело поиграть на игровой площадке. На лимонадном заводе можно приготовить лимонад по своему вкусу, а в фирменном магазине - приобрести на

память сувениры мышонка Хилариуса. Деревня находится на территории курортной гостиницы ⬚Пеурунка⬚. Новый тематический курорт с горками, рестораном и пляжем расположен рядом. Приобретя дневной ремешок, после обеда Вы можете вернуться в деревню мышонка. Захватите с собой купальные принадлежности! Зимой мышонок Хилариус бывает в ⬚Пеурунка⬚ в период школьных каникул. В продаже специальные турпакеты для отпускников. **Работает** в летний сезон.

Адрес: Peurungantie 85, Laukaa
Тел. +358 20 751 6300
www.peurunka.fi
www.hilariushiiri.fi

Appendix 2. Interview Guide

NOTE: This is a semi-structured interview, ONLY open and guiding question should be asked. NO "what is…?"

Minimum of one example (from the interviewee) per theme required!

AIM: To find out and understand the personal perspectives of Russian families on following themes of family concept, language, concept of time (and the ways of transportation), planning, distribution (purchasing), service (and the service concept of Voyages of Discovery for Kids in Jyväskylä Region - VoD), the "perfect family holiday" and for the end a visualised approach to likes & dislikes. All this concerning when travelling with children.

Why? Why? Why? Why? Why? – Principle adapted in all stages

Demographic information

- Number of children in your family and their ages:

- Home city:

- Occupation/profession:

- Have you ever visited Finland? If yes, where? And how many times?

Theme 1: Family concept

AIMS: Find out the meaning of family to the Russian interviewees; numbers of people, habits, preferences etc. In order to distinguish the possible differences between

Finnish and Russian family concepts and for realizing what needs to be taken in to consideration when designing services.

- Could you describe what do you consider as a family?

- How would you describe a family holiday?

- Could you describe how the decisions (in general) are made in your family?

- Could you describe how the decisions about holidays are made in your family?

https://docs.google.com/open?id=0BxdP392E3JFEd0ljNFlwaGdNMmc

https://docs.google.com/open?id=0BxdP392E3JFEd2IyMl80VGl6Wmc

Theme 2: Language

AIMS: Use of language in all situations: internet, leaflets, instructions, signs, personnel, everything…

- Please describe how does it make you feel to use a foreign language in a service situation?

- Could you describe us your language preferences when on a holiday?

Theme 3: Concept of time/Holiday Schedules and ways of transportation

AIMS: Concept of time: what does it mean to the interviewee, usage of it during the holiday? Scheduling, flexibility, spontaneity, third party (service provider) arrangements…

Preferred ways of transportation to the services/activities: Included to the services and thus arranged by the provider, using your own car, using local public transport…

- Could you describe how your family uses time when on a holiday?

- Could you explain your opinion about last minute arrangements? E.g. plan as you go –mentality?

- Please describe your understanding about flexibility when travelling

- Could you describe your preferred holiday schedule?

- Could you explain your family's preferred way of transportation while on a holiday?

https://docs.google.com/open?id=0BxdP392E3JFEZ3R6SDN3cVVqQWc

https://docs.google.com/open?id=0BxdP392E3JFEdDRtMVdGOXZNb1k

Theme 4: Planning

AIMS: *To find out the degree of planning before going on the holiday e.g. are the services and activities chosen before going (even booked before going) or chosen spontaneously on the spot?*

Information channels: Where and how they would search information about the services in the destination? (Internet, WOM, travel agencies…)

- Please explain your holiday planning process? / Could you describe your family's buying/booking/reserving process for holidays?

- Could you describe how do you search information about holiday destinations/accommodation/activities/services etc.?

- When on a holiday, can you describe your need for information about the provided services in the area?

  https://docs.google.com/open?id=0BxdP392E3JFERnBOLVlLVlpHMWc

Theme 5: Distribution, the Ways of Purchasing

AIMS: To understand the ways of purchasing services during the holiday (distribution channels); from where, how, what catches the interest? (From the hotel, straight from the service provider, travel agency, tourist information…?)

- Could you describe your family's buying/booking/reserving process for activities/services?

  o For example do you prefer to.....

- When on a holiday, please explain what kind of services your family usually uses?

- When on a holiday, could you describe what kind of services your family **would like** to use?

- Can you describe what do you think about package tourism (several services with one price)?

Theme 6: Service & the service concept of Voyages of Discovery for Kids in Jyväskylä Region

AIMS: *To get explanations on what is good and bad service in the interviewees' opinion, tying the "Voyages of Discovery for Kids in Jyväskylä Region"(VoD) leaflet's tour information to these preferences:*

➢ *What do they consider attractive based on the information about the services in the leaflet?*

➢ *What would put them off of using the service and why?*

➢ *How they would use the described services?*

- Please define what is good service?

- Please define what is bad service?

- Can you describe the kind of activity that is a nice holiday activity for your family?

- If there are two similar services in the area, can you describe the criteria for your family's decision between these two? (Location, price, opening hours, level of information…)

Here we show the map for VoD and pages for it from 2012 JKL region tourism guide – ask them to go through it and answer the following questions

https://docs.google.com/open?id=0BxdP392E3JFEMW01eEJWN0dUY1U

- Please describe how does the information package about VoD appear to you?

    o Is there enough information, does it make you want to use the services, etc?

- Could you choose your favourite and least favourite options? (Could you describe) Why these? What would you change in them?

- Could you please share your feelings about the information package?

- Could you describe your preferred way to get tickets to services like this?

https://docs.google.com/open?id=0BxdP392E3JFEaDZvdXkzMHo1cXc

Theme 7: The perfect family holiday

Considering the matters we have discussed, can you give a short description of a perfect *family* holiday? Desires, fantasies, dreams... about service situations, booking, everything...

Example from before, make up a story…