Integration of Russian Speaking students at HAAGA-HELIA,
Case Porvoo Campus

Opinnäytetyö
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Tämän tutkimuksen tarkoituksena oli selvittää, miten venäjänkieliset opiskelijat ovat integroituneet Haaga-Helian Porvoon yksikköön. Tutkimus käsittelee Porvoo Campuksella venäjänkielisten tutkinto-opiskelijoiden kokemuksia opiskelusta ja opiskelu-ympäristöstä sekä heidän sosiaalista asemaansa ja tulevaisuuden suunnitelmiaan.


Tutkimuksemme teoreettinen viitekehys perustui kirjallisuuteen kulttuurisesta sopeutumisesta, Venäjän ja Suomen kulttuurien käyttäytymisistä sekä Venäjän ja Suomen opiskelujärjestelmien eroista.


Työssämme selvisi, että venäjänkieliset opiskelijat ovat tyytyväisiä Suomeen ja opiskeluun Porvoon Campuksella. He haluaisivat kommunikoida enemmän suomalaisista kanssa ja suomalais-opiskelijoista tuntua samalta. Opiskelijat toivovat opettajia olla aktiivisempia ja sekoittaa ryhmiä useimmten. Tandem-kurssia sekä stereotypioiden pois jättämistä kehotettiin myös venäjänkielisten ja suomalaisen opiskelijoiden vuoroavautumisen parantamiseksi.
The aim of the study was to find out the level of academic and social integration of Russian-speaking students studying on Porvoo Campus. We wanted to find out why they had chosen Finland and Porvoo Campus for their place of study, what they thought about their lives and studies in Porvoo, how they interacted with Finnish students, what they thought about stereotypes and whether they believed they would stay in Finland after graduation. To make our research more reliable, we also included Finnish students’ and teachers’ opinions.

This topic is quite important nowadays, since the number of Russian-speaking people visiting Finland is increasing all the time. Finnish Universities need more specialists with knowledge of Russia. That is why it is important to survey experiences of Russian-speaking students already studying in Finland.

The theoretical framework of the thesis is based on literature on key concepts related to the subject: immigration, adaptation to new cultures, acculturation, integration, stereotypes, cultural differences between Russians and Finns, Russians in Finland, current Finnish-Russian relations, education systems in Finland and Russia, and the differences between these.

The research method applied in this thesis is qualitative based on semi-structured in-depth interviews. The main reason for choosing this method was because we wanted to have the respondents’ own experiences on the topic. The target group of our research consists of ten Russian-speaking students, ten Finnish students and five teachers who studying and teaching on Porvoo Campus.

In general, Russian-speaking respondents were very satisfied with living in Finland and studying on Porvoo Campus. They would like to communicate more with Finnish students and Finns feel the same way. Students wish teachers to be more active and mix groups more. Tandem courses and a will to leave stereotypes and prejudices behind were also recommended means for further improving interaction between Russian-speaking and Finnish students.
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1 Introduction

Haaga-Helia was the most famous University of Applied Sciences in Finland in 2012 according to the Economic Research. It strives to be strongly involved into international co-operation and the huge amount of foreign students is a good prove of it. The life of foreign students is not always easy in a new environment and culture, especially in Finland, where people might seem cold at first sight. It has been often argued that it is hard for Finnish people to accept diversity and divergence. Own culture has had always a great value and we tend to keep it better than others. There is nothing bad in it, but we should, however, recognize ethnocentric nature of our behaviour while facing foreign cultures. (Alho & Raunio & Virtanen 1994, 89-111.)

Our research is focused on Russian-speaking students studying at Haaga-Helia, Porvoo Campus. To make our work more reliable we decided to include also Finnish students’ and teacher’s perspectives into our research.

The aim of our research was to explore, how well Russian speaking students, studying at Porvoo Campus, have integrated into Finland and study environment at Haaga-Helia and also what do they plan after graduation. One of Haaga-Helia’s aims is to be international that is why it is important to attract more international students. In our research we want to get the whole picture of the integration of Russian speaking students at Porvoo Campus.

This topic is quite important nowadays, since the amount of Russian speaking people visiting Finland is increasing all the time. We have to mention also that Russia is a very fast growing country and an important partner for Finnish companies. This is why Finland is going to need Russian speaking and Russia-knowing people more than ever. Moreover, in addition to this, a lot of employees in Finland are retiring in the near future which makes Finland interested in multilingual young specialists with High Degrees even more.

It was important to survey experiences of Russian speaking students who have been already studying in Finland. With their help we can get answers to question like:
1. Why they have chosen Finland and Porvoo Campus to come to study?
2. What do they think about social and academic environment here?
3. How well do they interact with Finnish students?
4. What can they say about stereotypes?
5. Do they believe in staying in Finland after graduation?

In the theoretical framework of our study we are showing key concepts related to our subject: immigration, adaptation to a new culture, acculturation, integration, stereotypes, culture differences between Russians and Finns, Russians in Finland, Finnish-Russian relations nowadays, education systems in Finland and in Russia and the differences between them.

1.1 Background

The choice of our topic was influenced by the fact that we were Russian speaking students studying at Haaga-Helia, in Porvoo ourselves. Before we get further into our research, we would like to introduce Haaga-Helia and Porvoo Campus in particular.

1. Haaga-Helia

University of Applied Sciences Haaga-Helia was found in 2007 after fusion of two Polytechnics Haaga (1991) and Helia (1992). The main principals of educational politics at Haaga-Helia are strongly based on real working and business world concepts. Haaga-Helia has six campuses around Finland: four of them are located in Helsinki (Pasila, Haaga, Vallila and Malmi), one in Vierumäki and one in Porvoo. (HAAGA-HELIA 2013.)

There are such fields of education at Haaga-Helia as business, hotel, restaurant and tourism management, information technology, journalism, management assistant training, sports management and vocational teacher education. Students can get Bachelor, Master, MBA Degrees and also specialization studies at Haaga-Helia. (HAAGA-HELIA 2013.)
Haaga-Helia offers such Bachelor Programmes in English: Business, Management Assistant studies, Hotel, Restaurant and Tourism, Tourism, Sport and Information Technology (Figure1). International Business and Tourism Programmes in English are available at Porvoo Campus. (HAAGA-HELIA 2013.)

Figure1. Bachelor Degree Programmes in English at Haaga-Helia (HAAGA-HELIA 2013.)

As we can see from the Figure 2 there are 10500 students, 450 teachers, 1000 Foreign Degree students, 350 outgoing exchange students, 330 incoming exchange students and 250 other workers at Haaga-Helia.

Figure 2. Haaga-Helia in a nutshell (HAAGA-HELIA 2013.)

Being an International University of Applied Sciences Haaga-Helia has over 170 partner universities all over the world. Students have excellent opportunities to make international connections by participating in offered exchange programs and projects.
There are students from 90 different countries in Haaga-Helia, who are studying in English programs. All these facts together make Haaga-Helia a very multicultural and international Polytechnic. (HAAGA-HELIA 2013.)

2. Porvoo Campus

The objectives of our research are geographically limited to Porvoo. The city is situated on the way from St. Petersburg to Helsinki and is the second oldest city in Finland. Tourists come from all around the world to enjoy its unique historic Old Town. There are many interesting historical places in Porvoo, for example Runeberg’s museum and Porvoo cathedral, which was built in 1200. Besides historical places, Porvoo has a wide variety of conditions for shopping: you are not going to find brands like Zara or Mango, but you will be pleasantly surprised with small and original boutiques of Finnish products located in the very heart of the Old City. These shops are very interesting and reflect personal features of owners. (Region Porvoo ja Loviisa, 11.)

Porvoo is for everyone. Families can find the peace and good condition for rising children. Students have great opportunities to study at brand new Porvoo Campus. Food lovers will find tasty meals from Winstar café with homemade food to modern fine dining in restaurant Wanha Lamaani. Shopaholics will find places for them too. However, if they will feel that there are no enough shops in Porvoo, they can always go for example to Itäkeskus Shopping Centre, which is just 30 minutes by car or bus from Porvoo. For those, who love nature, there are a lot of things to do also: starting from archipelago cruises and fishing trips in summer to skiing at Kokonniemi Ski Centre in winter. (Visit Porvoo 2013.)

Porvoo Campus located on the West Coast of Porvoo was opened in 2011. There are two Polytechnics operated under the same roof at Porvoo Campus: University of Applied Sciences Haaga-Helia and University of Applied Sciences Laurea. Built by architecture Siren and designed by Sistem Oy new educational centre represents a new concept of thinking and space using. (Porvoo Campus 2013.)

At Porvoo Campus students can get Bachelor of Business Administration and Bachelor of Hospitality Management Degrees in English, Finnish and Swedish languages.
However, we have to mention, that starting from autumn 2013 there is not going to be Swedish study program in Porvoo and Haaga-Helia in general. According to new Educational Law, study programs in Swedish can be held only at the University of Applied Sciences Arcada after autumn 2013.

All together there are about 1300 students and 100 staff persons working at Porvoo Campus. (Porvoo Campus 2013.)

Porvoo Campus is a really good choice for Russian speaking students, especially for ones coming from St. Petersburg. It has all compatibilities as for example Pasila Campus, but gives students better opportunities to integrate into Finnish culture due to the fact that it is smaller.

1.2 Research Problem, Purpose and aim of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to find out the level of integration experienced among Russian speaking students, who are currently studying in Porvoo. One of the desired results of the study is to find out, why people have chosen to study in Finland, Porvoo Campus in particular. We want to discover, what kind of experiences have Russian speaking students had while living and studying in Finland and how do they see themselves as students at Porvoo Campus. Furthermore, how Finnish students and teachers get along with Russian speaking students.

The aim of the study is to provide information and enlightenment into the situation of Russian speaking students in Finland and specifically in Porvoo. Furthermore, we want to find out, how Russian speaking students find their integration into Finnish academic community and Finnish society themselves and to figure out factors affecting their integration.

1.3 Research methodology

As a method of our research we chose a qualitative analysis including in-depth interviews. The main reason, why we decided to make a qualitative research instead of basic quantitative one is that we wanted to get more detailed and personal pointes of views.
It is quite common and flexible method, which suits different kind of researches. During interviews you can get more detailed facts and for example ask your respondent additional questions if needed. This is what you cannot do, if you use questionnaires. In addition to this, you can motivate your respondent to give more describing information about something.

1.4 Structure of the Thesis

The structure of our thesis is represented in the Figure 3 below.

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Figure 3. Structure of the thesis

The first chapter of our thesis describes our main research problem, purpose and the aim of this study, research methodology, which we will use and shows, that our thesis is limited to Porvoo Campus.

In Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 5 we will introduce theoretical framework of our research, in which we will become familiar with concepts related to moving to foreign country, understanding Russians and education in Finland and in Russia as well as qualitative research.

In the Chapter 6 we will describe results of our interviews and in the Chapter 7 we will analyse these answers and make conclusions. In the last Chapter 8 we will introduce the reflection on the aim and our research and future recommendations and suggestions.
2 Moving to a foreign country

It is always difficult to move to a new country. Moving to the place, where people’s values, traditions, habits and customs can be quite different from your own requires adaptability skills.

First impressions after moving to a new country can be described as “Honeymoon”. Its deepness depends for example on how well the person knows new country and its culture. Unfortunately not only positive experience and emotions come across after moving to a new place, but also negative. Basic everyday things have to be learned in different language and in different ways. Homesick and even loneliness are quite common for someone just moved to a new country. A good thing to remember is, that nobody will wait for you, that is why you have to be active yourself to find new friends and hobbies. (Saviaro, M. & Helaniemi, M. 2009, 62-64.)

2.1 Immigration

Immigration (immigro - latino) term is used when someone is moving from one country to another for temporary or permanent residence. (Wikipedia 2013.)

There are many reasons for immigration, also the reasons can vary a lot during different times and depend on destination country. The labor migration is not the only reason for immigration, many people move from own countries because of the war or persecution. Some immigrants quite often have dreams of better life behind their moving while young people usually go abroad just for experience and for fun. (Wikipedia 2013.)

Generally we can say some people had to move somewhere because of economic reasons. Others move because of political reasons. There are for example alias political immigrations, when someone runs from harassments of political, ethnic, racial or religious grounds. Among the next immigrants there are refugees - people, who moved to some country with more stable political situation. (Wikipedia 2013.)
There were always flows of immigrants from one country to another, but the majority of immigrants came in sight after 1990th after the end of the “The cold war” and the disintegration of USSR, exacerbation of ethnic conflict and the emergence of civil wars in Kosovo and so on. (Wikipedia 2013.)

2.2 Adaptation to a new culture

One of the basic elements in people’s lives is adaptation. It does not matter, if it is about adapting to a new school or working place, the process of adaptation is still have to be done. Moving to a new country and culture is a huge change in life and some concrete things might change radically. Even though it is pretty hard to generalize people’s behaviour on changes, there is still a possibility to find some common things of dealing with changes. At some point so many similarities were found, that generalization could be made. Stages of adaptation have been explored from different perspectives and within different theories, but four main stages were found in each theory. Previous experience and personal features influence the length and intensity of each stage. (Saviaro et al. 2009, 64; Alho et al. 1994, 77-79.)

These four stages of adaptation are: honeymoon stage, culture shock, recovery and adjustment. (Figure 4.)

![Figure 4. Four phases of adaptation (Marx 1999, 10.)](image)

1) Honeymoon phase
The first stage can be described as fascination: everything about new place is amazing and interesting. It is also called “touristic stage”, when a new environment is seen in a very positive way. Exchange students in particular stay at this stage during their time in a new country. (Saviaro et al. 2009, 64.)

A famous psychologist Elisabeth Marx in her book “Breaking through culture shock” (1999, 8) describes this phase as “exciting, positive and stimulating, when the new life is viewed as providing endless opportunities”.

The new environment is pleasantly inviting and desire to explore everything becomes stronger. Motherland seems to be far away and forgotten. Things, which you remember about own country, are rain and dust. During this phase basic language skills (greetings, numbers and short dialogues) can be improved quite quickly. “Everyday life” is still far away. (Saviaro et al. 2009, 64.)

2) Culture shock/ Frustration

As we all know honeymoon unfortunately does not last forever. During the phase of frustration a new culture and its difference might feel quite oppressive. Communication problems begin. The difference is not fascinating anymore. People start to remember the best things about their homeland. (Saviaro et al. 2009, 65.)

This stage is often known as a “cultural shock”. The author of Thesis “Ennakkoluulot suomalaisten ja venäläisten välillä” Irina Matrosova refers in her work to American anthropologist F. Bock (Matrosova 2010 refers to Bock 1970) described cultural shock as culture in the broadest sense. When you leave your home, you become an outsider. Culture in his opinion consists of all believes and expectations, which are expressed and shown to other people. When you are inside your own cultural group, you do not need to think or plan your words and actions, you know, what to expect from others. But when you come to other society, difficulties can start. You can feel that you are powerless and even lost- this can be described as culture shock.

Culture shock’s symptoms are individuals and can vary with age, gender, experience,
personality and principals. In some occasions culture shock can include also very negative symptoms like stress, insomnia, problems with eating, bad feeling about new country and people, etc. (Saviaro et al. 2009, 64; Marx 1999, 8.)

![Image of the Culture Shock Triangle](Marx 1999, 12.)

Figure 5. The Culture Shock Triangle (Marx 1999, 12.)

As we see from the Figure 5 above, Elizabeth Marx has described culture shock as a process, which involves thinking, emotions, and social skills and identity. (Marx 1999, 12.)

3) Recovery

The third stage usually starts with admitting the problem and looking forward to solve it. During recovery phase feelings and emotions both from the honeymoon and culture shock phases are involved. Expectations from the first stage and reality from the second stage meet. (Marx 1999, 8.)

When an immigrant finally admits the fact, that new environment is not going to change, but he has to change his thoughts and habits: the phase of recovery will start. Immigrant will be aware of own identity and what is relevant. (Saviaro et al. 2009, 65.)

4) Adjustment
During the last phase, adjustment, a person starts to enjoy foreign elements and can work effectively again. New culture has formed a new, different way of living for him, which he considers as good as in his own culture. However, during the “adjustment” stage feelings can be still quite anguished, since own skills feel still quite insufficient. Step by step situation becomes stable and we start to enjoy a new environment. The person who has experienced all transitions of adaptation knows even better about his cultural background and its impact on him. (Saviaro et al. 2009, 65; Alho et al. 1994, 87-88; Marx 1999, 8.)

### 2.3 Acculturation

A term “acculturation” is widely used in anthropology and sociology circles. According to a famous Canadian scientist John Berry (1997, 7) “Acculturation is a change, which happens when individuals from different cultures continuously interact with each other.”

Berry divides acculturation process into cultural and psychological levels, where the first one is typical for groups and the second one for individuals. When something changes on one of the levels it affects automatically the second level. According to Berry (2011, 378) we can talk about acculturation only if someone is in continuous and direct contact with different cultures (not during some short vacation for example).

![Figure 6. Berry’s four acculturation strategies (Berry 2005, 705-706.)](image)
According to John W. Berry there are four ways of dealing with immigration and acculturation depending on, how deeply immigrant wants to keep his own culture and how badly he wants to explore new culture. These are assimilation, separation; marginalization and integration (Figure 6). The best choice for an immigrant is integration, during which immigrant accepts new culture and is looking forward to get into a new culture keeping his own culture the same. (Berry 2005, 705-706.)

Kim said (2011, 15-16) “The term assimilation has been used by many to emphasize the process of a more comprehensive change whereby immigrants become “absorbed” into the native population through convergence in cultural values and personal traits as well as economic and occupational “mainstreaming”.

Assimilation happens, when a person totally accepts a new culture forgetting about his own one. Separation is opposite to assimilation– it is denying a new culture and keeping own culture. We can talk about marginalization, when a person does not want belong to a new culture and to his own culture anymore either. (Maneejun 2011, 12.)

2.4 Integration

The term “integration” is used in many different contexts to describe different types of things. According to the dictionary, definition integration means “unification”. “Latin origins for the word "integration" means a coherent, different materials and events to the merger into a single entity. It is also explained by the words "integration, unification, and thus the reform”. (Grundtvux 2013.)

Integration is possible, when minority group is given a chance to keep their own culture and learn their mother tongue. A good example is Finland, where the official law about immigrant’s integration exists. (Grundtvux 2013.)

A succeed integration process brings positive experiences to the student, who starts to believe more in adapting to a new culture and life in a foreign country compared to the student, who has had some negative experiences during integration process.
In our research we tried to figure out, why Russian speaking students come to Finland, which kind of expectations they had before coming here and have they integrated into Finnish culture. If expectations differ from the reality, students’ own negative experiences can slow down his integration process. In this case student probably does not want to stay in Finland after graduation. But if student’s expectations even partly come true and he is satisfied with a new country, he will more likely stay in Finland after graduation.

2.5 Stereotypes

“Stereotype” is a generalized image of a social group, person, event or phenomenon. Despite of general expectations stereotypes are quite indispensable. Stereotypes help us to see the world, predict and explain behaviour of other people. Integration into a new culture becomes easier especially if we know about them. However, we should mention, that stereotypes have also bad sights. Situations, in which stereotypes can cause more harm than good, are the ones, when stereotypes are hidden ones (people do not know about them) or have exaggerated positive or negative values. This kind of stereotypes can be also called “prejudices”, especially the ones including negative aspects. (Salo-Lee et al. 1998, 16-19.)

If we take a closer look at problematic stereotypes, we can see that they are rather overgeneralized or oversimplified. All members of certain groups are believed to have similar positive or negative features (“All Germans are workaholics, “All Russians are alcoholics”, etc.) In this kind of situations, facts like “all people are different” and “there are negative aspects in all cultures” are simply not paid attention at. (Salo-Lee et al. 1998, 16-19.)

Stereotypes and prejudices affect both groups of people and individuals. Negative attitude and prejudice can cause uncertainty and tension and even lead to negative results and behaviour. Unfortunately in many cases it is hard to change some prejudices, since people are trying to maintain them even when they meet someone who differs from their prejudices. This kind of person is often considered as the “special one”. For the long time it was believed that prejudices decrease with the growth of contacts and information about different cultures. In order to change this way of thinking, it is needed
to get people to do something together in a positive environment (for example school project). (Salo-Lee et al. 1998, 16-19.)

According to Salo-Lee (1998, 16-19) positive attitude, knowledge, skills and motivation provide a good cross-cultural communication. We need fundamental information about another culture, its members and the person, we are communicating with. However, the knowledge without any skills is basically useful. We can know a lot about some culture and at the same time not be able to function in that culture at all. That is why we need to observe the situation and try to adapt our own behaviour into environment. In addition to this we need a real motivation: we need to be open minded, willing to explore new things and feeling a desire to create new social contacts.

There is a good joke describing stereotypes:

Finn, Swede and Russian went to the restaurant to eat. Swede ordered steaks for everyone. After some time a waitress came back and said: “My apologies, but we do not have steaks today”. Swede asked: “No steaks?” Russian asked: “What are these “steaks”?” Finn asked: “What do you mean by “my apologies?”

We can see typical stereotypes about these nations:

- Stereotypes about Swedish people: wealthy and healthy
- Stereotypes about Russian people: the lack of all things
- Stereotypes about Finnish people: their speech can be “impolite”, in Finnish communication style “Excuse me” words are not used so often

We would like to pay attention to the fact that this book “Me ja muut” was written back in 1996. During almost 20 years a lot of things and changes have happened, including changes in stereotypes. For example Russians are not seen as poor ones anymore. (Salo-Lee et al. 1998, 16-19.)

We can see from the Figure 7 below most common stereotypes about Russians nowadays.
The whole world while thinking of Russia thinks definitely about cold and snowy winter, gloomy people, Lenin and Stalin, communism, Russian people drinking vodka, eating borscht and pelmeni and playing balalaika every day and so on. Are there more things we have to know about Russia and Russians to be able to understand them? We will find this out in the next chapter. (Russian Culture Blog 2013.)
3 Understanding Russians

Finns and Russian have been neighbours for more than thousand years. Russia is a Finnish destiny, rather they want it or not. Russians and Finns are not the only neighbour countries, whose relations are not so good sometimes. Even more problems accrue, when one of the countries represent a huge nation and another one a small one. Finnish life close to the “big bear” is compared to the Irish position in the shadow of England. No wonder, that Russia is a huge problem for Finland. According to the author Salo-Lee one of the ways to deal with this problem is to forget about all these negative things and concentrate on the fact, that Finland has a neighbour with such a rich culture, which affects also Finnish life. (Salo-Lee et al. 1998, 151.)

Finland is interacting with Russian culture now more than ever. Due to tourism and globalization Finns are dealing more often with their neighbours. A lot of people have clients, colleagues, schoolmates or neighbours from Russian speaking country. That is why it is extremely important to know, from which culture he or she is coming from, because culture differences can cause misunderstanding and even bad consequences sometimes. (Parikka 2008, 7.)

Because a person is always a product of some community and culture, it is important to study, which kind of culture made him or her this way. Russian culture is different in many things from the Finnish one, which might be the beginning of conflicts. (Parikka 2008, 14.)

3.1 Culture differences between Russians and Finns

In the process of intercultural communication it is not so crucial, how do you look like or what do you say, but how the people see and hear it. (Salo-Lee et al. 1998, 21.)

Intercultural communication plays as important role during adapting to a new culture. The more similarities and fewer differences your cultures have, the more chances your integration process will succeed.
Russia and Finland are neighbours, but there are so much difference in culture, habits and people. Finnish suspicion of Russians has not come from nothing and it is not only because of the Winter War traumas, even though they still exist. The reasons for this kind of suspicion are in a nature of two nations. On the boarder of Finland and Russia two completely different nations meet. (Salo-Lee et al. 1998, 151.)

Even though there are a lot of negative pictures about Russians, author of the book… thinks that Finns might without even knowing envy their eastern neighbours. Russians are optimistic, they have a childlike belief and trust in “tomorrow” and they know how to celebrate even small joys in life. Russian’s public life looks severe, rough and even scary, private Russia is soft, with a very human-centric and warm society. (Salo-Lee et al. 1998, 152.)

It is typical for Russians to love and respect their motherland. While travelling abroad it is quite common, when Russians make their own communities there. We do not need to go far away to see it, since there are strong communities of Russian speaking people all over Finland. (Seppänen 2002, 158.)

Compared to their East neighbours Finns are way more modest in communication. That can cause sometimes misunderstanding while interacting with Russians, because the last ones can feel it impolite and even insulting in some cases. Finns are used to hide their feelings and it is totally strange for Russians. They talk a lot and can be very emotional in explaining something, opposite to quiet and modest Finns. It is disturbing for Russians, when Finns do not express any emotions on their faces while talking and have huge pauses in conversation. They feel sometimes even like talking with a “mummy”. When you are going to communicate with Russians (especially during very first times) it is impossible not to notice, how their emotions influence their behaviour, speech and the whole environment. It is typical for Russian soul, when people talk, laugh, celebrate and even cry together. One German noticed that Russians do not need any “own space”. Russians can feel sympathy, empathy and antipathy; neutral, not so strong feelings are strange for them, because they are not “we-feelings”. Russian soul is emotional, artistic and very spontaneous.
Their mood can change radically even in a short time sometimes, which makes it difficult to understand for Finnish people. Finns respect honesty and that is why they talk straight and really mean, what they say. Words like “sorry” and “please” can be sometimes forgotten, while Russians use them all the time. That can cause a small misunderstanding between two nations. However, Russian’s attitude towards Finns in general is very positive, even though their Northern neighbours are not so talkative and emotional. (Buuri & Ratschinsky 2000, 30 – 37; Seppänen 2007, 63–74; Parikka 2007, 321 – 322.)

3.2 Russians in Finland

“The past is not dead, in fact it is not even over yet” - William Faulkner’s famous quote reflects our today’s reality, particularly when we speak about relations between different countries and nationalities. The relationship between Russia and Finland is a good example of the power of the past nowadays.

The fate of the Russian population in Finland contains many tragic twists and turns since 1917. However, it had been always hard to be “Russian in Finland”. Russians in Finland had lived in some cross-pressure situations according to historical and cultural changes in Finland. The nuances of integration and assimilation had been varied. Examples can be found in the total assimilation, denying of past and roots or even changing of the name. (Vihavainen 2004a, 331 – 355.)

Author of the work “Russians and Russian culture in Finland” (Venäläiset ja Venäjän kulttuuri Suomessa), Veronica Shenshin (2008, 123-124), wrote that Finland should switch from the old “Enemy-Friend”- way of thinking about Russians to neutral one, based on reality. In this case, humane and equal attitude towards Russians could become also an option. A lot of Finns think that Russians had positively affected Finnish culture and economics.

The position of Russians living in Finland is unique, because we cannot consider it separately from the historical, political, cultural, religious or atheistic perspectives. In integration process it is important, how host country and immigrants encounter and interact with each other in social and cultural levels. (Shenshin 2008, 123-124.)
The threat from the East began in early 1930\textsuperscript{th}. Thus, the beginning of the Second World War in 1939 did not come as a surprise to Finland. The Soviet-Finnish Winter War has strongly affected attitude towards Russians among Finnish nation. Finland’s own image and vision of Russia had only strengthened after the war and the majority of people started to feel “Russian anger” (Ryssäviha). (Vihavainen 2004a, 331 – 355.)

The author of the book “Itäraja häviää”, Timo Vihavainen (2011, 10, 290) thinks that the main term to describe Finnish-Russian relations should be “difference” instead of “anger”. Despite of some conflicts between two countries, he sees Finland and Russia as good neighbours, who are important to each other.

In the immigration of Russians to the west Finland was mainly a “passing through” station. On the Swedish-Finnish and Finnish-Russian borders Finns, Karelians and Russians had been interacting with each other under different circumstances. Although wars are the most remembered thing, there were also contacts between two nations including commercial, cultural and educational ones. (Shenshin 2008, 32.)

Just after 1980\textsuperscript{th} immigration rank became higher than migration one in Finland (Figure 8). Even though there are more than 200 000 people living in Finland who were born abroad, it is still not a huge rate compared to many other countries. (Tilastokeskus 2013.)

![Figure 8. Immigration, emigration and net migration in 1971-2012](Tilastokeskus 2013.)
In the end of 2012 there were 266,949 people speaking foreign language in Finland, which is 4.95% of population. The first group included Russian speaking people (62,554), the second group- Estonian speaking (38,364) and the next ones were Somalia’s (14,769), English (14,666) and Arabs (12,042) (Figure 9). (Tilastokeskus 2013.)

Figure 9. The largest groups by native language 2002 and 2012 (Tilastokeskus 2013.)

As we can see from the picture, most of immigrants come from Russia. This is why it is very important for Finnish people to know how to communicate with Russians and maybe even try to understand the mysterious “Russian soul” and “Russianism”.

### 3.3 Russianism

“You will not grasp her with your mind
Or cover with a common label,
For Russia is one of a kind-
Believe in her, if you are able…”

Fyodor Tjuchev 1866, translated by Anatoly Liberman, published in “Russian Life in the United States”

What is Russianism (“Venäläisyys”)? Russuanism is not only about genetic, racial, linguistic and cultural factors, but also much more. It is a combination of history, land,
people and their mentality, moral values, culture, religion and traditions. “Russianism” can be seen both in Tšaikovsky’s “Swan Lake” and in disgusting toilet smell. Russianism is about what you can see, feel and hear; it is about decisions and choices of Russian people. It is extremely mysterious and exotic. It is often described as “otherness” comparing for example to western countries. Russian soul is often seen as a very wide one. (Seppänen 2002, 21 – 22.)

Already in XIVth century in Europe attitude towards “Russianism” was quite negative. Russian difference was seen as unusual and mysterious, that made Europeans suspicious and negative towards Russians. People were describing Russians as deceptive, drunks and uneducated. Real information about the nation was quite limited, and businessmen and tourists image gave afterwards more varied and realistic facts. In XVIIIth century Russian literate (including writers such as Tolstoy, Dostoevsky and Chekhov) started to spread into Western Europe that helped people to start seeing Russians from different, more sophisticated, perspective. (Seppänen 2002, 27 – 30.)

3.4 Finnish-Russian Relations nowadays

Russia’s economy is growing and integrating more closely with Europe every day. Finland has all the potential to benefit from Russia’s economic power and growth, says Dr. Pekka Sutela (Kansanuutiset 2013). “Russia is becoming more and more a part of Europe”: the Russian economic expert, Doctor of political science Pekka Sutela says. Retired Bank of Finland’s leading advisor Sutela estimates that Russia will integrate Europe even more in the near future. ”There is no other way”: he admits.

Sutela believes that Finland has all geographical and cultural opportunities to benefit from Russia’s powerful growth of economy. Logistic advantages and knowledge of culture of Russia are better in Finland than in other Nordic countries or Central Europe. (Kansanuutiset 2013.)

“These days Russians do not have any problems with going abroad. We are having excellent opportunities to meet young Russians, which is very important to our future together”- says the author Karppinen (Formin 2013). 80-years old writer had been
serving Foreign Service since 1954. He had worked in Soviet Union and was working as an ambassador in Prague and Bonn.

An equal employment opportunity is one of the factors of successful integration. Russian population in Finland makes a valuable potential for the country. The knowledge of cultural principals of “Old Russia” had become more important in Russia these days. In the author’s opinion Finland could take the same example to be able to understand Russians living in Finland more. (Shenshin 2008, 123 – 124.)
4 Education

Our research is based on Russian speaking students studying at Porvoo Campus. This is why it is important to have some picture about Finnish and Russian education systems before getting to our results to understand Russian speaking students more.

In this chapter we will describe Finnish and Russian education systems and the main differences between them.

4.1 Education system in Finland

“The welfare of Finnish society is built on education, culture and knowledge. The flexible education system and basic educational security make for equity and consistency in results.” (Minedu 2013.)

According to the new global league table, produced by the “Economist Intelligence Unit” (Business Insider 2013), education in Finland is the best in the world. Here are some facts, how, according to the authors of this article, Finland makes it:

- 66 per cent of students go to college, which is the highest rate in Europe
- 93 per cent of Finns graduate from the high school
- the school system is 100 % state funded

The education system in Finland consists of four stages (Figure 10). The first stage includes preschool education, which is organized in kindergartens and primary schools. The second stage, known as “Basic Education”, is compulsory and lasts for nine years. After that stage students can continue their studies at Upper Secondary School (“Lukio”) or Vocational /Professional Schools (“Ammattikoulu”). The higher level of education is possible to get at Universities (“Yliopisto”) or Universities of Applied Sciences/ Polytechnics (“Ammattikorkeakoulu”). Adult education is available at all levels. It is also necessary to mention that all education in Finland starting from preschool to higher education is free of charge. (Opetushallitus 2013.)
The stages of Finish education are represented in the Figure 10 above.

Figure 10. The structure of the education system in Finland (Tampereen Yliopisto 2013.)

Altogether there are 27 Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland, including one located in the Province of Åland and Police Academy. (Tampereen Yliopisto 2013.)

Universities of Applied Sciences were created in order to improve educational system in Finland. The main difference between Universities and Universities of Applied Sciences (Polytechnics) is that in Polytechnics students get closer to the real working life. (Ammattikorkeakoulujen rehtorineuvosto 2013.)
4.2 Education system in Russia

Now we are going to introduce you the education system in Russia (Figure 11).

As we see from the Figure 11 above in Russia the kindergarten begins at the age of three, usually kids less than three years old stay at home with their mothers or professional nannies. It is still strongly believed in Russia for a child under three years old it is better to be at home than in kindergarten. (Voronezh State University 2013.)

Some kids before going to primary school are having pre-school education for about one year to learn how to behave at school, how to use a pen or to sit forty-five minutes at the desk. Preschool studies are often organized in kindergarten. (Voronezh State University 2013.)

Normally children in Russia start school at the age of seven, but sometimes already at the age of six. Primary school lasts four years. There is a secondary school after prima-
primary school, which lasts from 5th till 9th grade. At the age of fifteen some students continue studying at the same school and go to high school, while others go to vocational professional school. (Voronezh State University 2013.)

Being seventeen or eighteen years old students graduate from high school and go to universities to get their higher education. Bachelor Degree lasts usually four years and after there is possibility for students to go for two years to get a Master Degree. The other option is to go after high school for five years specialist diploma program. This is quite similar to Finnish higher education, where students after high school (lukio) can go to University of Applied Sciences or University. (Voronezh State University 2013.)

After University some students continue their postgraduate studies (PhD). It takes usually three years. For study lovers there is also a two years program after PhD: advanced postdoctoral studies. (Voronezh State University 2013.)

**4.3 The differences between Finnish and Russian education systems**

Now we are going to introduce main differences between Finnish and Russian education systems.

In Russian schools teachers have structured and routine methods of teaching. They are more severe and consistent in their actions. A teacher is the boss, if he or she says that something has to be done- students must do it. However, on the same time teacher loves his or her class and sometimes even acts like a “mother figure”: taking care of students, celebrating their birthdays, making some jokes with them. But strict discipline is remaining on the first place. (Parikka 2008, 358 – 363.)

That is why after moving to Finland, a lot of Russian students experience some shock at Finnish schools. It is quite unusual for them that teacher instead of threats and using power, is trying to get along with students by negotiation. However, they get quite quickly used to the new system. (Parikka 2008, 358 – 363.)

The next difference is educational programme. Russian teachers have more systematically methods of teaching using a lot of theoretical knowledge. Unlike in Finland
teacher wants students to understand the subject deeply and helps them to use all the knowledge in practice. This explains why Russian-speaking students are sometimes weaker in team works, where they have to use their theoretical knowledge in practice. (Parikka 2008, 358 – 363.)

Normally in Russia parents get used that schoolteachers cooperate with them very close and they miss that kind of relation here, in Finland. But in spite of that Russian speaking parents love their children to study in Finnish schools. (Parikka 2008, 358 – 363.)
5 Qualitative research

As a method for our work we had chosen qualitative research and semi-structured in-depth interviews. The main reason for choosing this method was because we wanted to hear respondents own experiences about the topic. Qualitative research is recommended, when researchers are studying people’s own experience.

We were interested in specific themes in our research. That is why we had divided questions into topics already before our in-depth interviews.

5.1 Research methodology

A basis of qualitative research is a describing of real life. The data is collected in natural and real interviews. According to Varto: “Qualitative analysis is the life-world researching. This method includes collection of analysis and interpretation by watching what people say and do”. (Kvalitatiivisten tutkimusmenetelmien oppimisympäristö 2013.)

Michael Mayers says: “Qualitative research methods are designed to help researchers understand people and what they say and do, because context can be best understood by talking with people”. Mayers compares researchers’ work to police work. He asks us to imagine, if police could use only quantitative data and would not have a chance to talk to the suspects and witnesses. In that case it is very possible, that crimes would not be solved at all. What he tried to say, that in some cases we just need to talk to people to get desired answers and this is what qualitative research is. (Mayers 2013, 5 – 6.)

Qualitative research consists of numerous different traditions, methods of approach and data collection; consequently it does not belong to any particular scientific field. The qualitative methods gather information in free-form, not focused on static measurements, but based on understanding, explanation and interpretation of empirical data. (Denzin, N. & Lincoln, J. 1998, 5 – 7; Hirsjärvi, S., Remes, P. & Sajavaara, P. 2004, 151 – 157.)

A qualitative method - a term, that means in the study was obtained some information, which is not possible measure in quantitatively or at the analysis not possible to use quantitate methods.(Denzin et al. 1994, 3.)
There are many ways to classify different types of research. However, the most common comparison is between qualitative and quantitative researches (Figure 12).

**COMPARING QUALITATIVE & QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative Research</th>
<th>RESEARCH ASPECT</th>
<th>Quantitative Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Discover Ideas, with General Research Objects</td>
<td>COMMON PURPOSE</td>
<td>Test Hypotheses or Specific Research Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observe and Interpret</td>
<td>APPROACH</td>
<td>Measure and Test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unstructured, Free Form</td>
<td>DATA COLLECTION APPROACH</td>
<td>Structured Response Categories Provided</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research is intimately involved. Results are subjective</td>
<td>RESEARCHER INDEPENDENCE</td>
<td>Researcher uninvolved Observer. Results are Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small samples –Often in Natural setting</td>
<td>SAMPLES</td>
<td>Large samples to Produce Generalizable Results [Results that Apply to Other Situations]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 12. Main differences between Qualitative & Quantitative Researches (Shaya’a Othman Research 2013.)

Qualitative research focuses on text while quantitative research on numbers. In qualitative research it is all about ideas and research objects while in quantitative about text hypotheses or specific research questions. The method of approach in qualitative research is often unstructured or semi-structured; researcher is approaching data by observation and own interpretation. In quantitative research the method of approach is always structured; researcher approaches data by measurements and results of the survey. Researcher is intimately involved in qualitative analysis and results are subjective. In quantitative analysis researcher has a role of uninvolved observer and results are objective. Samples in qualitative research are usually small, but carefully chosen by a researcher while in quantitative research they are large, but might be random. (Mayers 2013, 7 – 9; Shaya’a Othman Research 2013.)

The most important thing in qualitative analysis is reliability: to avoid any misunderstandings and incomprehension. The dependability can be check with various tools of measurement. The concepts in evaluation of the study are reliability and validity. Both
of terms came from quantitative analysis and both can be used in measurement. However, in qualitative analysis these terms can be interpreted in a different way. (Hirsijärvi et al. 2004, 216–217; Hirsijärvi, S. & Hurme, H. 2001, 185–186.)

5.2 Semi-structured interview

During semi-structured interviews respondents are asked the same question in almost the same order. Sometimes the order of questions can be changed if needed during the interview. In practice, semi-structured interview can be named as a theme interview: for example, when the researcher is using detailed questions on specific themes. However, there is a chance that not all the questions are represented to all of the interviewees. (Hirsijärvi et al. 2001, 47.)

Semi-structured interview gives significant flexibility for both interviewer and interviewee. This kind of interview can bring out such things and questions, which were not thought about before interviews. However, the amount of work during analyzing data got from semi-structured interview increases notably. (Virtual Statistics 2013.)

Thereby, main advantages of semi-structured interview are its flexibility (order of questions can be changed) and the fact that respondents can answer questions in much detail. Many researchers prefer semi-structured interviews, because they can prepare questions and themes ahead, so they can guide interviewees to the right direction during interviews. The main disadvantage of this kind of interview is that it is time-consuming one. Interviews can last hours and data analyzing weeks or sometimes even months. (Qualitative Research Guidelines Project 2013.)

5.3 Analysis of the content

As a method for analysing our data we have chosen an analysis of the content. It is a quite common method for qualitative researchers. We have divided our questions into groups before our interviews, so it helped us a lot during our data analysis. We have also reviewed our theoretical framework during data analysing.

Analysis of the content is the analysis of the text in the discourse way, when researcher is checking finished text materials. This is quite typical especially for social sciences. This method includes making observations and analysing them systematically. Re-
searcher is selecting text objects from collected data. Researching material can be taken from any books, diaries, interviews, conversations or speeches. It is typical during this method of analysing data to search for similarities and differences in text and form topics after. (Tuomi, J. & Sarajärvi, A. 2002, 105.)

The process of analysing data using this method is quite complex: first text is divided into small parts, which are examined by the researcher (similarities and differences are found) and then it is collected back in the new entity. The analysis of the content can be done in many different ways: inductively, deductively or theoretically. (Tuomi et al. 2002, 109 – 116.)

5.4 Reliability and validity

The main concepts of reliability and validity are based on a thought, that researcher can reach objective reality and truth. The way questions about reliability and validity are set in quantitative and qualitative analysis is different. In qualitative research systematic analysis and interpretation’s reliable criteria are emphasized as most important ones. (Hirsijärvi et al. 2008, 185; Ruusuvuori, J., Nikander, P. & Hyvärinen, M. 2011, 26 – 27.)

1) Reliability

We can talk about reliability, when repeated test shows the same result over some time. Another way of defining reliability is, when two evaluators come to the same conclusion. The third typical way to prove reliability of the research is, when using two different methods of analysis researcher gets the same result. The possible difference between two different methods of analysis should not be seen as a weakness, but as a result of changed situations (Hirsijärvi et al. 2008, 186.)

Also author of the book “Tilastolliset menetelmät” Holopainen describes reliability as a meter, which produces results, which are not random. Reliability is high, if researcher gets the same result from the same material by different measurement times (Holopainen, M. & Pulkkinen, P. 2004, 15.)
2) Validity

Due to the fact that we are doing a qualitative research we have checked validity of our research by observation. In addition to this we made our research in pair, which also increased a validity of our study.

Validity means a measure that is supposed to be measured, in other words is the research done properly and the results and conclusions are “the right” ones. There could be such mistakes in research like if researcher interprets results in a wrong way, asks wrong questions or interviewees can understand the question in another way. This means that the indicator can also bring wrong results. That is why it is very important for researcher to explain to readers very precisely: what was the purpose of the research and how the results were made. (Qualitative Research Guidelines Project 2013.)

Also it is very important to describe step by step the process of the research, how much time was spent on interviews and on research in general, potential interference of work and researcher’s own assessment about his research. If all these things are done, the validity of the research increases. (Qualitative Research Guidelines Project 2013.)

5.5 Triangulation

Michael D. Mayers (2013, 9) describes triangulation as “the idea, that you should do more than just one thing in a study: you should use more than one research method, use two or more techniques to gather data, or combine qualitative and quantitative research methods in the one study”.

According to the many books about qualitative research, triangulation is one of the most favourite criteria of validity. Jouni Tuomi in his book “Laadullinen tutkimus ja sisällönanalyysi” (2012, refers to Denzin, who divided triangulation into four types (Figure 13). (Denzin 1978, by Tuomi 2012, 141.)
We can talk about data triangulation, when data is collected from many different groups of people (for example Russian speaking students, Finnish students and teachers in our case). Investigator triangulation happens, when there are more than one researcher. Theoretical triangulation refers to using different theoretical point of views during analysis. Methodological triangulation refers to using many different methods for gathering data. (Tuomi et al.2012, 141.)
6 Implementation of the survey

6.1 Target groups

The target groups of our research consist of ten Russian-speaking students, ten Finnish students and five teachers who are studying/teaching at Porvoo Campus. Altogether we have interviewed twenty-five people (Figure 14).

![Diagram showing target groups]

Figure 14. Target groups of our interviews

6.2 Interviewing process

As a method of approach we chose depth-interviews (see Appendices 1, 2, 3). It is quite common and flexible method, which suits different kind of researches. Hirsijärvi (2008, 34 – 40) refers to Robson’s words: “When we are exploring people, why not use the great advantage we have, and give them a chance to tell facts about themselves”. During interviews you can get more detailed facts and for example ask your respondent additional questions if needed. This is what you cannot do, if you use questionnaires. In addition to this, you can motivate your respondent to give more describing information about something.

However, we have to mention that there are also some disadvantages in interviews: it cannot be anonymous and it takes much more time.
One of the reasons, why we decided to make interviews instead of “basic” questionnaires’ is that we think it suits Russian culture and soul more. As we described in the Chapter 3: Russians are open-minded and like to talk. There were more chances that our Russian speaking respondents will come to our interviews than fill out questionnaires. Russians prefer to deal face-to-face. During interviews they could express their feelings and emotions way better, which was a perfect advantage for our research.

According to Denzin (2008, 351): “Most qualitative research probably is based on interviews. There are good reasons for this. By using interview, the researcher can reach areas of reality that would otherwise remain inaccessible such as people’s subjective experiences and attitudes. The interview is also a very convenient way of overcoming distances both in space and in time; past events or faraway experiences can be studied by interviewing people who took part in them.”

We will introduce results we got from our interviews according to the thematic order we had during interviews. One of our aims was to bring out respondents voices, so for this purpose we will use a lot of citations. We believe that citations give the best possible picture about respondents’ points of view. To keep the anonymity we do not use any names.

During data analysis we did not have any special text analysis program: we were reading materials, we got from our interviews, systematically and were trying to search for similar and emerging themes. After this operation, we copied different respondents’ citations related to the same themes sequentially.

### 6.3 Interviewing Russian speaking students

We have started our interviews with Russian-speaking students. Altogether we have interviewed ten Russian-speaking students. Each interview was about 1h-1, 5h long. Our interviews happened in Russian language. It was more natural way for us to do in Russian and we wanted our respondents to focus on their answers instead of English grammar (if interviews would happen in English). Despite of the fact that our Russian-speaking students speak English fluently, it is still always more reliable to speak your
mother tongue. We had translated the data we got from these interviews into English afterwards.

### 6.3.1 Background information

We have asked our Russian-speaking respondents basic questions about their gender, age and how long they have lived in Finland.

As we can see from the Table 1 below, three of our respondents were male and seven female. Nine of ten came from Russia and one from Estonia. Five of respondents have Finnish citizenship, four Russian and one Estonian. Seven of Russian speaking students are less than twenty-five years old and three are over thirty. We think that it was an advantage for our research: since we are all almost the same age. Five of our respondents have lived over ten years in Finland (the ones with Finnish citizenship). They moved to Finland with their families and were aware of Finnish culture before studies. Others have lived in Finland less than four years.

**Table 1. Background information**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>Country of origin</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Citizenship</th>
<th>Years lived in Finland</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>&gt;30</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>&lt;4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Russia</td>
<td>&gt;30</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Finnish</td>
<td>&gt;10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Estonia</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>Estonian</td>
<td>&lt;4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 6.3.2 Immigration to Finland

As we wrote in Chapters 2 and 3 “Immigration (immigro-latino) term is used when someone is moving from one country to another for temporary or permanent residence. The reasons for immigration can be different for everyone.” There are over 60 000 Russian speaking people living in Finland. Their position in Finland is very special due to historical, political, cultural and religious perspectives. During immigration process it is important, how immigrants and people from the host country interact with each other. (Shenshin 2008, 153 – 154; Wikipedia 2013.)
We have asked Russian speaking students if the University was the main reason, why they moved to Finland. Half of our respondents moved to Finland mainly because of the studies, another half for family reasons.

For all the students one of the main factors influenced their decision to take degree in Finland was possibility to study without tuition fees. High standard of living and education and also possibility to study in English were almost as important as the first factor. The next important motive for Russian speaking students for choosing Finland was its location (Figure 15).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main reasons, why Russian speaking students chose Finland to come to study to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Studying without tuition fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>High standard of living and education in Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Possibility to study in English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Location</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Free education might have attracted to Finland also such students, who had some other primary reasons to move here. According to the minister of the Green Party in Finland Outi Alanko (Vihreät de Grönä 2013): “It is economically worthwhile investment to give an education without tuition fees for international students. According to CI-MO and Statistics Centre about half of graduated international students stay in Finland to work after graduation. If even every fourth of international degree students stays in Finland after graduation, it is economically reasonable to give a free University education for them. They will pay back for their free education in taxes afterwards.” (Outi Alanko-Kahiluoto, de Grönä 2013.)

We have asked Russian speaking students, if they had visited Finland before and for what kind of reasons. In addition to this, we asked our respondents to describe their first impressions of Finland.
All of the students had been in Finland before, mainly on holidays with their families. Among next reasons for their visits were friends and family members living in Finland. They all agreed that Finland seemed as a very quiet and clean place with nice people.

Respondent 1: “Beautiful Christmas lights, felt like in the fairy-tale.”

Respondent 2: “Quite country, smiling people, clean streets.”

Victoria: “First time I came to Finland when I was twelve years old. We came for summer holidays with my mom and her husband, Pertti. We had visited his family in the Northern Lapland. Pertti’s family lived near lake surrounded by forest. Nature was just stunning there. It was fantastic: I had never felt myself so peaceful before. People were really nice and polite there. Pertti’s family greeted us well and I had never felt as a foreigner there (even though I did not speak Finnish and my English skills were not so good). I would like to notice that all our neighbours, acquaintances and Pertti’s family’s friends had never hurt us. There was no racism at all. I simply felt in love with Finland.”

Additionally some of respondents had some school trips, language courses and summer schools in Finland. However, some of them had no pictures about actual living and studying here before their arrival. They have heard that it is safe and quiet and “everything is good” in Finland.

6.3.3 Choosing Haaga-Helia, Porvoo Campus

While applying to study abroad, student has to choose not only the country, but also the place, where he or she would like to study (University of Applied Sciences in our case).

We have examined student’s experience in the academic society by questions related to education and learning environment. The high educational level in Finland was the main reason, why Russian-speaking students came to study to Finland.
For all of the students we have interviewed there were two main factors for choosing Haaga-Helia, Porvoo Campus in particular: good reputation and geographic location. The next important reasons were possibility to study in English and opportunity to study a specialized field (International Business and Tourism) (Figure 16).

![Diagram showing reasons for choosing Porvoo Campus]

Figure 16. Reasons for choosing Porvoo Campus

One of our respondents, who is from Saint-Petersburg, said:

> Respondent 1: “Porvoo was an excellent choice for me, because on the one hand it is very close to Helsinki (if I want to go shopping or participate in some cultural events, etc.), but on the other hand it is near Russian boarder, so I can visit my family more often.”

Porvoo has a great location for Russian speaking students: it is situated between Russia and Helsinki. It is the second oldest city in Finland with unique old city, which attracts tourist from all over the world (Russians too). Porvoo has really rich history and a lot of museums, nice little shops, fantastic nature and delicious food: these entire things make this city worth visiting, living and studying. There are around 50 000 people living in Porvoo nowadays and this number grows fast. (Porvoo 2013.)
Porvoo’s new brand Campus brings a lot of students to the city: Finnish and foreign ones. There is a great sentence about Porvoo, which explains its uniqueness: “All Finnish cities are nice by summer. Porvoo also is nice by winter, because of the Campus students, who make the city a vibrant.” (Porvoo 2013.)

As we wrote before due to its location the Porvoo Campus has all chances to compete with even Pasila Campus. It will take you only 30-40 minutes by car and an hour by bus to get from Helsinki to Porvoo. Porvoo Campus has free parking, which is perfect for those, who have cars. For example in Pasila students cannot even dream of having own parking place.

Porvoo Campus was opened in 2011, so it is still really new. It has nice and modern classes, good and quite areas for team working, nice library and computer classes. All these things motivate students to be a part of something new, big and nice. (Visit Porvoo 2013.)

6.3.4 Studying at Porvoo Campus/ Academic integration

As we see from the Figure 17 below four of our respondents were studying LIIPO Program (Business in Finnish), three International Business Program and three International Tourism Program.

![Figure 17. Study Programs of Russian speaking respondents](image-url)
Five of our respondents speak Finnish fluently and other five, who have lived in Finland less than for four years, can communicate in Finnish a little bit, but do not speak Finnish too well.

In order to get a picture about Russian speaking students’ studying at Porvoo Campus, we have asked them questions related to their studies at the Haaga-Helia. Our questions included respondents’ opinion about health, students and library services, computer labs, help they have/ or have not get, information about studies, availability of courses in English at Porvoo Campus, methods of exams, teaching methods, course contents and quality of teaching.

As we can see from the Figure 18 below all of our respondents were very satisfied with library services and computer labs. Due to the fact that Porvoo Campus is a new and modern studying place with living labs concept, students have a great opportunity to use new computer classes. “A Living Lab is an open innovation area for user centred innovation in real life scenarios which helps promote user-driven methods and tools for improving the real-world development of products and services. A Living Lab is also joint development, learning and sharing of best practices.” (Porvoo Campus 2013.)

Respondent 1: “Library and computer labs are really great.”

Eight of ten were satisfied with course contents. However, they have paid attention to the fact that course content depends on a teacher.

Respondent 2: “Course content depends on a teacher; some courses are very interesting while others do not please students.”

Six of our respondents were quite satisfied with teaching and exam methods. However, some improvements might be done in methods of exams and teaching methods. One of our Russian speaking students thinks that teaching methods at Porvoo Campus could be more interesting and exams can be sometimes different.
Respondent 1: “Exams can be partly oral also.”

This leads us back to Russian education system. As we wrote in the Chapter 4, system of education in Russia is different and it is quite common, when students are having not only written exams, but also oral.

Six of our respondents were generally satisfied with quality of teaching and four quite dissatisfied. The ones, who were not satisfied, explained that some of the teachers seem not to be interested at all in progression of students’ studies that is why they think that quality of teaching at Porvoo Campus needs some improvements. Education system in Finland differs from the one Russian speaking students got used in Russia. We cannot say which one is better. It is obvious that teaching methods are different in Finland and Russian speaking students have to integrate to the Finnish ones. However, it might cause some problems sometimes.

Respondent 1: “At school in Russia teachers are very strict with discipline. Here, in Finland everything is opposite: a Finnish teacher can recommend you something, but is not going to demand anything from you. If you do not do something, it is your own problem here. This democratic way of teaching may be a bit hard for Russians in my opinion.”

Respondent 2: “Finnish education is more concrete and even narrow compared to Russia’s, where students are given a lot of theoretical information.”

Respondent 3: “I really like independent way of studying in Finland. I can even choose courses I like, which is almost impossible or really difficult in Russia.”

Respondent 4: “The studying is really good, not the same as in Russia, more practice than theory.”
Nine of Russian speaking students were satisfied with English courses, which is quite an incredible result. They have pointed out that for someone coming from Russia; an opportunity to study in English is just incredible.

Respondent 1: “In Russia you cannot even dream about studying in English, Finland gives excellent opportunities for students.”

Most of our respondents were fairly satisfied with health services.

Respondent 1: “I am OK with health services here.”

The ones, who were dissatisfied, had moved to Finland only few years ago and were not so familiar with health services here.

Respondent 2: “Health system in Russia is very different. Doctors examine you way better in Russia than in Finland.”

Our respondents wish more information about studies. One of the students on the question about help to international students asked us, where she can get, so it shows us that international students need more help from Haaga-Helia.

Figure 18. How satisfied are Russian speaking students with following aspects of academic environment

![Bar chart showing satisfaction levels for different aspects of academic environment]
We have also made a worksheet, where we collected Russian speaking students’ answers on questions introduces above (see Appendix 4).

The next things we were interested at were what Russian speaking students think of help receiving from teachers, foreign fellow students, Finnish fellow students, student organizations and tutors.

We can see from the Figure 19 below that students were not really satisfied with guidance at Porvoo Campus. It seems like none of respondents were satisfied with student organization (like Helga): eight out of ten were very dissatisfied with it, one fairly dissatisfied and only two fairly satisfied. Same situation is about student tutors: eight of our respondents were very dissatisfied with tutors at Haaga-Helia and only two fairly satisfied.

Respondent 1: “Quite disappointed with student tutors and student organizations.”

Most of respondents wanted student organization to help them to familiarize Finnish culture and traditions more. Also they would love to get more help with their studies, job-hunting and a chance to practice Finnish from student organizations and tutors. Russian speaking students missed more useful things from student organizations and tutors, connecting for example with Finnish culture and language, not only parties.

Respondent 1: “Seems like all that tutors are organizing some student parties and selling jump suits of the University and that is about it.”

A situation with help from teachers is quite better: six of ten Russian speaking students were satisfied with it. We have to mention that of course there are always some students, who might be also dissatisfied with teachers’ work.

Respondent 1: “Some teachers do not help at all in classes. You have to do everything by yourself and at this case, why do we need a teacher? Some of our teachers just read from their slides during the lecture.”
Respondent 2: “Teachers can be more active.”

However, the best help most of them got from other foreign students.

Respondent 1: “I have great foreign friends here. If I have some problems or just a bad day I know that I have friends to come to talk to.”

Half of our Russian speaking respondents were quite dissatisfied with the help they get from their Finnish fellow students while other half was pretty satisfied with it.

Figure 19. How satisfied are Russian speaking students with guidance received from students’ organizations, foreign students, Finnish students, teachers and tutors

We have made a worksheet, where we collected Russian speaking students’ answers on questions introduces above (see Appendix 5).

In addition we have asked Russia speaking students, if they have ever felt they have been excluded or treated as outsiders within academic community. In all of our respondents’ opinion, they have never been treated as outsiders. They have all pointed out that Haaga-Helia is very international and teachers treat every single student the same way regardless of the skin colour, place of birth, language you speak, etc.
Among some other comments about studying at Porvoo Campus, four of our respondents noted that there could be more parking places at Porvoo Campus.

Respondent 1: “I come to Porvoo from Helsinki by car and sometimes I do not find any free parking place. Would be nice if they can make the parking place bigger”

6.3.5 Social integration

The process of cooperation between different classes and social groups is called a social interaction. (KV-Tietopankki 2013.)

Interaction between students is a part of informal learning environment. As all we know, University is not just a place to study, but it is a perfect place to build the future, career, friendship and future business contacts. In order to achieve all this, students have to be a part of social life at the University.

During our deep-interviews it has emphasized the positive experience particularly while communicating with international students and their common free-time activities. Social integration is about, how international students adapt and how they are treated in the academic environment.

In our case it was very important for Russian speaking students to integrate into Finland, especially in social way. A person, who moves to Finland, has not only take the Finnish culture, but at the same time try to keep own culture and not to be ashamed of showing it. This is what integration is about. As we have mentioned in the Chapter2, John W. Berry divides ways of dealing with immigration into four: assimilation, separation, marginalization and integration. For Russian speaking students, who study at Porvoo Campus, the best way is obviously integration. (Berry 2005, 705-706.)

Communication between Finnish and international students is held one of the challenges for school to go international and at the same seen to be need to provide development of interaction between students from different countries. (Taajamo 2005, 95-96.)
We have asked Russian speaking students, in which kind of situations they have met and been in contact with Finnish students both in social and study environments.

All of our respondents meet Finnish students every day both at school and during their free time. However, five of our respondents are interacting with Finnish students only during their school projects. These five students study in English Programs. Three answered that they use to go out on Wednesdays and weekends with Finnish students, but are quite distant at school.

Respondent 1: “Finns must learn to speak to each other and everybody else without having a beer for that.”

Just two of our respondents admitted that they are friends with Finnish students both at school and during their free time. These two are from Finnish Programs and have lived in Finland for over ten years. They have been integrated to Finnish culture pretty good already before their studies and speak Finnish fluently.

Respondent 1: “It was difficult for me in the beginning due to the language barrier. I did not have any Finnish friends. After ten years I can say that I love this country and my Finnish friends. There are two countries in my heart now: Russia and Finland.”

Respondent 2: “I am very satisfied and want to thank all my Finnish friends for a wonderful time in Porvoo. Some foreign students say that Finns do not contact them anyhow, but I do not think so. If you are open minded and friendly, you will make friends with Finnish people. Just try it.”

We tried to examine possible problematic situations and cultural conflicts. Thus, we asked our Russian speaking respondents, if they have had some bad experiences or conflict situations during their studies at Porvoo Campus and living in Finland in general.
Some cultural problematic situation or “misunderstanding” is a quite common and normal thing, when you move to a new culture. When you come to a new society, you might not always be aware of what others might do or say. That is why some difficulties might start.

Eight of our respondents had no conflicts or just did not want to share their bad experiences with us.

Respondent 1: “I did not have any problems with Finns. All the people were very friendly and have helped me a lot.”

Respondent 2: “You need to want learn new things and get to know new people.”

Respondent 3: “You have to respect Finnish culture and do not think that your own culture is better than others’. Every culture is different, not better or worse than your own, just different.”

Two of our respondents remember some conflicts during their stay in Finland.

Respondent 4: “Once we had a group project at Porvoo Campus and we were dived into five groups. Our group consisted of two Finnish students, me and another Russian speaking student. We had to go to one company outside Porvoo and one of the girls took the entire group with her. Finnish students were talking between each other about their own topics on the way there. We started to speak in Russian with another girl. One of the Finnish girls made a comment that since we live in Finland, we have to speak in Finnish. I found it a bit offending.”

Respondent 5: “I was working at the grocery shop in Porvoo. Once an old Swedish speaking lady came to my cashier and started to talk in Swedish with me. I answered politely in Finnish that unfortunately I do not speak Swedish. She started to yell at me and asked to call a manager. She
told him that since Swedish is the second national language, every single person knew it. It was an offending situation for me.”

However, in the second case, the problem is not about Russian speaking students in Finland, but about Swedish language in Finland, so we are not going to discuss it at our research.

We wanted to know, if Russian speaking students have other friends here than Russians among their best friends. Two of our respondents are best friends with Finns; four think that they have some Finnish buddies, but only buddies, not the best friends.

Respondent 1: “The first year here was very difficult for me. I was crying almost every day and just wanted to go back to Russia, where I had my amazing friends and family. It was so different here; people were different and cold. It took me a year to start to know and understand Finnish culture. Now I know that Finns are not so cold, they are just different. I do not cry anymore (laughed).”

The rest four do not have Finnish friends at all, they communicate most of the times with their Russian friends and other international students. However, they would like to change this situation and make friendships with Finns also.

Respondent 2: “We came here not only to study, but to live. It is really nice, when you have some Finnish friends and not only international friends at school.”

Our next question was about opinion of Russian speaking students of what can be done to improve communication between Russian speaking and Finnish students.

All of our respondents agreed on one thing: they would like more common group works with Finnish students. Most of the times students can make their groups themselves and in this case it usually goes this way: Finns doing projects with Finns, Chinese with other Chinese, Russians with Russians, etc. Russian speaking students wish teach-
ers to be more active and for example try to mix groups more. If groups would be mixed, Finnish students would have to talk in English more and Russian speaking students in Finnish.

Two of our respondents recommended participating in Tandem course. This course gives an incredible opportunity to learn other culture, practice languages and make new friends. Jaana has also participated in this course and was very happy with it.

Jaana: “I participated in Tandem Course on my first year of studying in Porvoo. I had a German girl as my partner (but for someone not so familiar with Finnish culture it could be a Finn), because I was already integrated into Finnish society quite well, I decided to learn about German culture and practice my German. I could describe in million words, how incredible experience I’ve had, but it would take a lot of time. That is why, I just want to point out that with help of this course I got a new friend, who lived in another students dormitory, so I got to know all of her friends from other dormitory and she got to know mine. This is what I call a real social and also academic integration.”

6.3.6 Stereotypes

We wrote in the Chapter 2 that by “stereotype” we usually mean a generalized image of a social group, person, event or phenomenon. Stereotypes have good and bad sights. Knowing already about the nation or country while moving abroad can help to integrate into society. However, if stereotypes have exaggerated positive or negative values, they can cause misunderstanding and even problems. Negative stereotypes are usually called “prejudices”. Unfortunately in many cases it is very hard to change people’s prejudices about some nations. It is believed that when people from different nations start to interact with each other more, they start to learn about new culture and their prejudices decrease or totally vanish. (Salo-Lee et al. 2008, 16-19.)

First, we asked Russian speaking students, what kind of images they had about Finland, Finnish people and studying in Finland. All of our respondents had pretty same images about Finland and Finnish people. In Russian media and books Finland is quite often
represented as “a safe, quiet and most of the times cold place” and Finns as “not so talkative, friendly and shy people”.

Respondent 1: “I do not know a lot of Finns, but I think they are a bit shy.”

Respondent 2: “Finnish people are calm, do not talk a lot and do not show their emotions the way Russians do it.”

Then we asked our respondents, what in their opinion Finns think about foreigners in general and about Russians in particular. Three of our respondents think that Finns do not really like foreigners and even less they like Russians.

Respondent 1: “I have noticed that, when you are Russian, stereotypes arise automatically. People start to expect that all Russians are “this and that”. Why they have to generalize everyone?”

Four of our respondents think that Finns are in general fine with foreigners and with Russians.

Respondent 2: “I think that Finns, especially young once, are used to foreigners and Russians. They can make friends with Russians equally like with other Finns.”

Three of our respondents have never actually thought, what Finns might think about them, because they have lived in Finland for so long. In their opinion Finns, who know them, do not see them as Russians anymore.

Our last question about stereotypes was: “Do you feel yourself different from Finnish students? How? What kind of situations have you had, when you felt different?” Half of our respondents have never felt different from Finnish students. It might refer to the Haaga-Helia’s politics of being an international University of Applied Sciences and be equal to all the students. However, one of these respondents mentioned that she had not so pleasant situation one time, when she felt different from Finnish students.
Respondent 1: “Once one of my Finnish friends told me that his grandfather hates Russians, because of what they did during the Winter War. I do not think that he wanted to hurt me on purpose, but I was hurt. I had not killed anyone and not all Russians are bad.”

And another of these respondents admitted that despite of the fact that she has Finnish friends, she has some unpleasant situations sometimes.

Respondent 2: “I’ve lived in Finland for many years and have Finnish friends. But sometimes when I speak somewhere in Finnish language and people notice that I have a little ascent, it makes me feel like I came to Finland last month. Sometimes feel like I am between Russia and Finland: not belonging to Russia anymore, but not in Finland yet. Sometimes I feel not comfortable to tell Finns that I am from Russia, because many of them have already some images of Russia and Russians. I am not ashamed, but sometimes it takes me more time to make impression to new people.”

Three of Russian speaking students say that they feel different all the time. It might be because of their clothing, behaviour or culture in general. These students have not lived in Finland for a long time, so we believe that this situation will be different someday.

Two of our respondents were not sure about their feelings. In their opinion they have not noticed any differences from Finns. However, they have not really thought about it.

6.3.7 Summary questions

In the end we have asked Russian speaking student, which are good and bad things they are going to tell about Finland, Finnish people and studying at Porvoo Campus. Our respondents will tell very positive thing about Finland and Finnish people. Despite of the fact that Finns were sometimes a bit hard to approach, Russian speaking students still like them and think that they are generally very nice and polite.
Respondent 1: “Going to tell that it is really quiet country, citizens respect each other and their country, environment, traditions.”

Respondent 2: “I feel like at home in Finland. I still have a so-called “honeymoon phase”. I am simply in love with Finland and Porvoo.”

All of our respondents said that they are going to tell only positive things about Porvoo Campus. Porvoo campus is new and modern; there are nice classes and places for group works and projects. It is smaller than Pasila, which makes it more cozy and homey.

Respondent 3: “I really love the time I have spent in Finland studying at Porvoo Campus. The studying environment is just perfect: you hardly find more modern Campus anywhere else.”

We have asked Russian speaking students about their plans for future (whether they are planning to stay in Finland after graduation). All of our respondents want to stay in Finland. The ones, who have lived in Finland more than ten years, are naturally speaking Finnish and having work here already. The ones, who came to study here, will try to find some work and stay in Finland. Nobody wants to go back.

Our last question was about the best experience of our respondents during their studying at Porvoo Campus. All of Russian speaking student think that meeting new people from different countries was an incredible experience for them. They have also mentioned that they really liked company visits during their studies. There is nothing like this in Russia. Another thing, for which they were really grateful, was Porvoo itself. Everyone said that due to the fact that Porvoo is a quite small place, it was easier to get to know new people and students were like a “big family”. It could be impossible for example in the place like Helsinki. Two of our respondents have been on Erasmus Exchange and they think it was the best experience they have ever had. They thank Haaga-Helia for this opportunity (Figure 20).
Finally we have completed the most important things about Russian speaking students in the table. We have shown positive and negative things and also suggested improvements in this table (see the Appendix 6).

### 6.4 Interviewing Finnish students

We have interviewed ten Finnish students from International Business, Tourism and Finnish LIIPO Programs. The language of our interviews was Finnish for the same reasons as with Russian speaking students. We had translated their answers from Finnish into English afterwards.

#### 6.4.1 Background information

We have asked our Finnish respondents also basic questions about their gender, age, place, where they live and study Program at Haaga-Helia.

As we can see from the Table 2 below, four of our respondents were male and six female. Two out of ten live in Helsinki and eight in Porvoo. All of our Finnish respondents were between eighteen and twenty-five years old. Five of our respondents were from LIIPO Program (Business in Finnish), three from International Tourism and two from International Business.

| 1  | Meeting new people |
| 2  | Company visits     |
| 3  | Porvoo as a place to live and study |
| 4  | Erasmus Exchange Programs |

Figure 20. The best things in Porvoo according to Russian speaking students
Table 2. Background information Finnish students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents</th>
<th>City, you live in</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Degree Program</th>
</tr>
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<td>18-25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>LIIPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Porvoo</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>LIIPO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>International Business</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Porvoo</td>
<td>18-25</td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>International Tourism</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Porvoo</td>
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<td>18-25</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>International Business</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6.4.2 Getting to know Russian speaking students

We have asked Finns if they see a lot of foreign students at Porvoo Campus. Our respondents admitted that there are a lot of foreign students at Porvoo Campus (Russian, Chinese, Spanish and German-speaking) and all of our respondents have met Russian speaking students at some point.

It is normal nowadays that Finns see foreign and especially Russian speaking students at their Universities. Internalization has been already for a long time one of the main aims of Finnish University politics. The strategy of Universities for 2009-2015 includes target to get 20 000 international students by the end of 2015. The amount of international students has been grown exactly as Universities wish it to grow. According to CIMO’s statistics Finland attracts students from all over the world. 40% of international students come from Asia, 40% from Europe and 14% from Africa. The most common countries, where students are coming from, are Russia, China, Vietnam, Nepal and Nigeria. (Euroopan Muuttoliikeverkosto 2013.)

Usually students meet each other during some school teamwork/subjects. Some of Finns were feeling a bit grip on the first time, but afterwards that feeling went away. However, most of Finnish respondents were very satisfied with Russian speaking students straight away.
6.4.3 Interacting with Russian speaking students

University it not just a school place, it is also a great place for mutual relations between Finnish and foreign students.

We have asked our respondents, if they have Russian speaking friends. Four of respondents said that they have Russian speaking friends and of course as friends they have all kind of possible conversations friends can have: they talk about hockey, shopping, weather, girls and boys, school, world news, etc. However, six of Finnish students admitted that they had talked only about school stuff with their Russian classmates (Figure 21).

Figure 21. How many Finnish students have Russian speaking friends

Some of students have heard some funny stories from their classmates and their flatmates. Nobody has heard anything about racism experience, maybe partly because their foreign friends were not willing to share these bad experiences with them.

Some of our respondents said that some Russian speaking students take apart at school activities. In general Finnish students think that Russian speaking students, who speak Finnish, understand Finnish culture. However, Russian speaking students without Finnish skills seem sometimes not to be so interested in Finnish culture. These students might have some misunderstanding about Finland and Finnish culture.
We have asked, what Finnish students think about Russian speaking students. Finnish students from International Business and Tourism Programs in English think that most of Russian students work hard to get good points.

Respondent 1: “Sometimes make extra work in team works, even if the teacher did not ask”

However, they are always in their own groups and are difficult to be approached. Some of Finns think that foreign student have brought something new and interesting into Porvoo Campus and they would like to make a friendship with them. Respondents mentioned that there is a huge difference between Russian speaking students, who are studying permanently and exchange students, who come for one or two semesters. The last ones are mostly just having fun in Porvoo with other international students. Finnish students have also mentioned that there is a huge difference between Russian speaking students, who have not been living in Finland for many years in the way their dress.

Respondent 2: “Russian dress up in different way: girls are wearing high heels and short skirts all the time. I find it a bit out of class”

In generally our respondents were ok with Russian speaking students; they did not have anything against them. They think that Porvoo Campus needs foreign students to have an opportunity to practice English and Russian. Going international and having a great relationship with the closest neighbour were also seen as positive things of Russian speaking students being in Porvoo. Finnish students think that it would be nice if some of Russian speaking students stay in Finland after graduation.

It was also important to take a look at, how Finnish students rate Russian speaking students. Thus, Finns think that Russian speaking students are less sociable. Foreign students in general (including Russian speaking ones) represent some organized groups and try to stick in their own groups.

Respondent 1: “They stick in own group and speak just Russian, and sometimes it does not feel nice to understand nothing”
As we have mentioned in the Chapter 3 it is quite typical for Russians to make their own communities in places, where they live. According to the statistics there were 62 554 Russians in Finland in the end of 2012, so it makes it even easier for Russians to make their own communities in Finland. (Seppänen 2002, 158.)

However, some of our Finnish respondents have notices that some Russian speaking students are very friendly, polite and open for communication.

Respondent 2: “They are good friends, ready to help any time.”

Respondent 3: “I think they are very friendly people in general, but sometimes too emotional and talk too fast (laughed).”

As we wrote before, the difference between mentalities and cultures can sometimes cause some small misunderstandings among the people. In our case, we speak about the difference between Finns and Russians. In the Chapter 3 we described main differences between Russian and Finnish people. Russians are very emotional and talk a lot while Finns are used to hide their feelings and be more modest and quite. Russians are influenced by their emotions and feelings. It is hard not to notice this while communicating with Russians. (Buuri et al. 2000, 30 – 37; Seppänen 2007, 63–74; Parikka 2007, 321–322.)

We can see that communication between Finnish and Russian speaking students is going in different ways: for some students it is easy and natural, while for others more difficult. Although there are some difficulties in communication (lack of knowledge of Finnish culture among Russian speaking students, Finnish “coldness”), most of our respondents would like to communicate with Russian speaking students more.

6.4.4 Stereotypes

We have already described Russian speaking students’ stereotypes about Finland and their thoughts about, what Finnish students might think of them and rather they have some stereotypes about Russians. Now we are going to examine Finnish students’ opinion on the same subject.
First we asked Finnish students, if they had stereotypes about Russian speaking students. All of our respondents said that in the beginning there are always some stereotypes about different nations, no matter Russians or other ones. However, when you start to communicate with someone from different country step by step your stereotypes change and can be gone forever.

Respondent 1: “When our studies at Porvoo Campus began, I honestly had some stereotypes about Russians (that they are very emotional, loud and even disrespectful). I had not known any Russian in personal that time. When I moved to Porvoo I got a Russian girl as a flatmate and my journey to Russian culture began. I do not have so strong stereotypes about Russians anymore.”

Some of respondents answered that they had some stereotypes about Russians. The whole world knows “who Russians are”, or at least thinks knowing. We should mention that Finnish students from Finnish LI IPO had fewer stereotypes about their Russian classmates. One of the main reasons for this is probably Finnish language skill of Russian students studying there (they study in Finnish language, speak Finnish perfectly).

Some of our Finnish respondents also mentioned that if the person comes to Finland for studying and working and pays taxes here, he or she is more than welcome. However, the ones who just make crimes, do not work or better say do nothing in Finland; can go back to own country.

Our next questions were about Finnish students’ opinion of what Russian speaking students might think about foreigners in general and Finns in particular. The first question was quite hard for our respondents, since nobody really knew, what Russian speaking students think of foreigners. We got only one suggestion about this question.

Respondent 1: “Russian speaking students might think that foreigners are more open-minded that for example us, Finns”
As for the second question: all of our respondents said that Russians’ stereotypes about Finnish students depend on how long they have been in Finland. If a Russian speaking student has recently moved to Finland, he or she might see Finns as very calm, shy and quiet ones. However, Russian speaking student who has lived for many years in Finland might not have stereotypes about Finns anymore. This can be said about any nation: if you are new in some country, your stereotypes about the people living there might be stronger compared if you have already lived in that country for years.

We have asked our Finnish respondents’ opinion of how well Russian speaking students know Finnish culture. The students, who study in Finnish Program LIIPO, said that their Russian classmates were quite aware of Finnish culture, probably due to the fact that they have lived in Finland for many years. Finns from English Programs (International Business and Tourism) could not really answer this question, because most of their Russian classmates do not speak Finnish well. That is way they were not sure about, how well their Russian speaking fellow students know Finnish culture. There is nothing strange in it: the longer you live in some place and communicate with other nations; you get to know other culture better.

We wanted to know, how Russian speaking students and Finns meet: for that reason we have asked Finnish respondents, how they meet Russian speaking students, how they interact with them and what can be made to improve the interaction between them. Finnish students said that usually meet Russian speaking students at school during some project. They admitted that they would like to interact more with Russian speaking students, but they are afraid to make first steps. Sometimes it seems like endless circle, where both Russian speaking and Finnish students are afraid to make these first steps and start talking to each other.

Our respondents suggested Tandem Course and participating in other school project to improve the interaction between Finnish and Russian speaking students. Everything starts from school projects.

Respondent 1: “I think it is very important to make some group projects in mixed groups. When I do something for example with Russian speak-
ing student at school, it is much easier to start communicating also outside school.”

One of our respondents suggested making some optional course for foreign students (something like “Getting to know Finland”) guided by Finnish students. It could have an idea of Tandem Course: when two students have some meetings together. However, the difference from Tandem Course is that there must be one Finnish student in a pair, who will introduce Finland to a foreign student. It can be a very easy and interesting way to increase communication between Finnish and Russian speaking students. Our respondent believed that it could be interesting for Finnish students at least because of extra points they can get if not for other reasons.

Finally we have completed the most important things about Finnish students in the table. We have shown positive and negative things and also suggested improvements in this table (see the Appendix 7).

6.5 Interviewing teachers

We have interviewed five teachers from the Porvoo Campus. All of our interviews were 1-1, 5 h. long. With four of our teachers we spoke Finnish and translated their answers afterwards to English. One of the teachers spoke English; so we have used his citations without translations.

We have asked teachers to describe general Russian speaking students at Porvoo Campus: where they came from, what do they study here and why they have chosen Haaga-Helia and Porvoo in particular. According to teacher’s answers we can divide Russian speaking students studying at Porvoo Campus into four groups (Figure 22).
Teachers think that in general Russian speaking students are involved more in English than in Finnish Programs, especially the ones, who come to Finland because of their studies.

Our next questions to teachers were about, how satisfied are they with Russian speaking students and do they have any problems with them. Teachers at Porvoo Campus were quite satisfied with Russian-speaking students. They said that there are hardly any problems with Russian speaking students in Haaga-Helia. Russians’ good mathematical skills were also pointed out.

Teacher 1: “Russian speaking students have usually good mathematical skills, which help them in their studies.”

Teacher 2: “When Russian speaking students are motivated, they do an incredible work.”

However, teachers have mentioned also some problematic situations. One of the worst problems slowing down integration process is that Russian speaking students unfortunately most of the times try to stick in their own circles and speak in Russian.
Teacher 1: “They prefer to speak Russian and hang out with their Russian classmates, because in my opinion it is the easiest way.”

Teacher 2: “When we are having some group works, Russian speaking students are always trying to be in the same group with other Russian speaking students. Let’s imagine if there are three or four group works at the same time and Russian speaking students stick together: they do not communicate with Finnish students at all in that case.”

Teacher 3: “If I have more than one Russian speaking student at my class, they will communicate with each other only in Russian.”

One more time the problem of “Russians being in own circles” came across. Finnish respondents have already mentioned the same problem. This problem is obviously existing at Porvoo Campus and slowing down Russian speaking students’ integration into Finnish society and academic environment at Porvoo Campus. This might unfortunately lead even to separation.

As we wrote in the Chapter 2: when people from different nations are continuously interacting with each other, we can talk about acculturation (in our case Russian speaking students and Finnish people). According to the famous Canadian psychologist John W. Berry there are four possible ways of dealing with the process of acculturation: assimilation, separation, marginalization and integration. During assimilation process people accept a new culture, but forget their own culture. The process of separation is about keeping your own culture and not accepting a new culture at all. Marginalization process includes denying both your own culture and a new culture. The best option is integration, during which people accept new culture, but keep their culture the same time. (Berry 1997, 7; Berry 2005, 705-706; Maneejun 2011, 12.)

One of the aims of our research was to find out, how well Russian speaking students have integrated into Finnish society. Unfortunately, what we can see from teachers’ responses: most of the Russian speaking students at Porvoo Campus try to be in own circles and not mix with Finnish students. This means that instead of integrating into
Finnish society, Russian speaking students (maybe not even knowing it) are trying to separate from Finnish culture. They try too hard to keep their culture, forgetting to learn about a new culture.

However, teachers admitted that this problem does not affect only Russian speaking students, but international students in general.

Teacher 4: “One of the worst problems with Russian speaking students is that they try to stick in own circles, talk in Russian and hang out with their Russian friends most of the times. However, I would like to notice, that this problem is about all of our other international students also. When for example Chinese student comes to Finland without any Finnish skills and finds other Chinese in his class, they start easily to communicate with each other. If we think about it, it is a normal way for all the people.”

Among other problematic situations two of our teachers mentioned Russian speaking students’ ability to try to find the easiest way in studying sometimes.

Teacher 1: “I have noticed that sometimes my Russian speaking students use copy-paste techniques too much.”

Our next questions for teachers were about Russian speaking students’ experiences in Finland and possible rumours about their life in Porvoo. All the teachers admitted that they have not heard any concrete rumours from Russian speaking students about their life here. However, teachers heard that students are generally very satisfied with their life in Finland and studying at Porvoo Campus.

Teacher 1: “I have heard from my Russian speaking students that they really like Finland, Porvoo. In their opinion Porvoo Campus is a very nice place to study, the one they could not even dream of in Russia.”

Teacher 2: “One of my Russian speaking students told me once that she really enjoys her staying in Finland, because she feels safe here. She said
that living in Porvoo is so different from living in Russia, where she had to worry about many things all the time.”

According to teachers Russian speaking students have mostly positive emotions and feelings about Finnish people also. The only one problem, which affects also integration of Russian speaking students into Finnish society, is a language barrier. Teachers have heard that Russian speaking students, who have lived in Finland only for few years, have problems with Finnish language and as results with communication with Finns.

Teacher 3: “I do not think that Russian speaking students do not want to integrate into Finnish society, but sometimes lack of Finnish language skills stops them. Students, who moved to Finland for studying, usually do not speak Finnish at all in the beginning. This makes it much harder for them to communicate with Finnish fellow students and takes more time to integrate into Finnish society.”

This is a quite normal thing while immigrating to a new country. We wrote in the Chapter 2 about four stages of adaptation, which are honeymoon, culture shock, recovery and adjustment. The length of each stage depends on personality: for someone it could last years, while for others few months. (Saviaro 2008, 64.)

Teachers’ answers show us, that we can clearly divide Russian speaking students into two groups: the ones, who have been living in Finland for more than ten years and speak Finnish perfectly, and the ones, who have been living less than for four years with quite weak Finnish skills. First ones have had already all stages of adaptation and the second ones are still inside these stages.

We have asked teachers, in which kind of situations Russian speaking students and Finns might interact and are there any stereotypes involved. All teachers agreed that students usually meet at school, especially during some group projects, and of course during their free time. However, teachers could answer only about communication between students happening at Porvoo Campus. In their opinion there are not so
much strong stereotypes about Russian speaking students for example comparing to
the past.

Teacher 1: “There are some stereotypes about every nation and it is nor-
mal. But I do not think that our Finnish students have any strong stereo-
types about Russians anymore. We have so many international students
nowadays that people are used to communicate with different nations on
daily basis.”

Stereotypes are part of our lives, but when we start to communicate with someone
from the different nation, we forget about stereotypes and start to see every person as
a personality. School projects for example is a good way to make people from different
nationalities interact with each other and learn about each other in a natural way, with-
out generalizing or in other words- stereotyping other person.

In the end teachers gave us some examples of what can be done to improve interaction
between Russian speaking and Finnish students and also to improve Russian speaking
students studying at Porvoo Campus (Figure 23). The first thing on which every teach-
er agreed that teachers, Finnish students and Russian speaking students: all of us have
to forget prejudices and be open to new people. The second thing, which can be made
by teachers, is group mixing. When teacher give some project work, they could mix
their students themselves. The next suggestion was Tandem Course. This course gives
students a perfect opportunity to learn new culture and find new friends. Russian
speaking students can integrate into Finnish society better participating in Tandem
Course.

In addition to this one of the teachers gave very interesting and useful ideas. The im-
portance of Russian language and knowledge of Russian culture are growing. There
are a lot of Russian tourists visiting Porvoo every year. That is why our teacher suggested
having more courses and projects about Russian culture, business concepts and lan-
guage. Courses like “Russia-knowing” could be very useful for Porvoo Campus and
will give a good opportunity for Finns and Russian speaking students work together.
Figure 23. Things, which can improve communication between Russian speaking and Finnish students according to teachers

- Forgetting prejudices
- Group mixing
- Tandem course
- Courses like "Russia-knowing"
7 Conclusions

The aim of our research was to find out the level of academic and social integration of Russian speaking students studying at Porvoo Campus. We wanted to find out, why they have chosen Finland and Porvoo Campus to come to study, what do they think about their life and studies in Porvoo, how they interact with Finnish students, what do they think about stereotypes and do they believe in staying in Finland after graduation. To make our research more reliable, we included also Finnish students and teachers’ opinions.

All of our Russian speaking respondents had been in Finland before moving here. They came here mostly for holidays with their families and their first impressions of Finland were very positive. Half of our respondents moved to Finland mainly for studies, another half for family reasons. The ones, who moved to Finland because of the studies, told us that free education, high standard of living, possibility to study in English and Finland's location (close to Russia) were the main reasons, why they chose Finland.

While applying to study abroad students have to choose also the place, where they want to study. Our respondents chose Haaga-Helia’s Porvoo Campus for its location (between Russian boarder and Helsinki), good reputation and possibility to study specialized fields in English.

Russian speaking students in general were pretty satisfied with their studies at Porvoo Campus. They love study environment, new Porvoo Campus with its brand new computer labs and library. Most of them were also satisfied with course contents and English courses. Among things, which some of Russian speaking students would like to improve, were teaching and exam methods and quality of teaching. In their opinion these things depend mostly on a teacher and some teachers seem to be not so interested in lessons. However, we have to mention that student’s might just compare too much Finnish education system to Russian one, where teacher has a strong influence on students. This is why Finnish education system is new for Russian speaking students and they just have to get used to it. Our respondents were quite dissatisfied with
information about studies and help to international students. They would like more information and help in general. Russian speaking students were also fairly satisfied with health services here.

Most of our Russian speaking respondents were very satisfied with help and guidance they receive from other foreign fellow students. As for help of Finnish students and teachers: half of respondents very satisfied while other half dissatisfied. The ones, who were not satisfied with it, wished teachers and their Finnish fellow students to be more active. In the opinion of Russian speaking students, they do not receive any guidance or help from student tutors or student organizations. This is the thing that needs to be improved at Porvoo Campus.

According to Taajamo: “Communication between Finnish and an international student is held as one of the challenges for school to go international and at the same seen to be needed to provide development of interaction between students from different countries.” That is why we tried to get a clear picture of how Russian speaking and Finnish students interact with each other at school and outside school. In order to achieve this aim we had asked questions related to social integration of Russian speaking students not only them, but also Finnish students and teachers.

According to all of our respondents (Russian speaking students, Finnish students and teachers) communication between Russian speaking and Finnish students happens mostly at school, during some common projects. Russian speaking students think that Finns were a bit cold, especially in the beginning, and hard to approach. Finnish students admitted that they might be cold with new people in the beginning. However, they think that Russian speaking students do not make communication and approaching them easier being always in own group and speaking in Russian. Teachers have also noticed that Russian speaking students spend their time mostly with other Russians. Even Russian speaking students admitted that it is easier for them to hang out with their Russian friends (or with other foreign students) than with Finns. However, both Russian speaking and Finnish students in general like each other and would like to communicate more. Some of our Russian speaking and Finnish respondents were al-
ready being friends with each other. Finns added that it is much easier to communicate with Russians, who speak Finnish and have lived in Finland for many years.

Finnish students and teachers think that Russian speaking students enjoy their life in Finland and like Porvoo and Haaga-Helia. Their thoughts were exactly right ones, since all of our Russian speaking respondents said that they really like to live in Finland and to study at Porvoo Campus. Teachers admitted that some of Russian speaking students might have some problems with communication due to the language barrier (the ones, who do not speak Finnish). However, our Russian speaking respondents had not mentioned problems, caused by lack of their Finnish skills, but one of our respondents had some problems at work because of the lack of Swedish skills.

It came across during our interviews that Russian speaking students, who had just moved to Finland, had in the beginning some stereotypes about Finns. They thought that all the Finns are cold, distant, quiet and do not show their emotions. It is partly truth, but our Russian speaking respondents, who have lived in Finland for a long time, found out that it depends also on personality. Finnish students, who we have interviewed, had the same thoughts about typical stereotypes about Finns: shy, quiet, a bit cold nation.

There were also some controversies about Russians in Finnish students’ eyes. Some of Finnish respondents had strong stereotypes about Russia and Russians in the beginning while others admitted that after getting to know some Russians their stereotypes were gone. And they have noticed that Russian can be very warm, open minded and good friends. Some of our Russian speaking students thought that Finns are still having strong stereotypes about Russians in general (due to the Winter War). However, most of Russian speaking respondents said that in their opinion Finns do not have any strong stereotypes about Russians. Teacher thought the same: due to the fact that Haaga-Helia is a very international place, there are no more strong stereotypes about any nation.

Communication between Russian speaking and Finnish students starts at school. That is why all our interviewees suggested the way, how to improve this communication:
teachers can mix groups more often (try to make sure, that for example there are not only Russian speaking students in some group). Our respondents paid also attention on the importance of Tandem Course. One of our Finnish respondents suggested to make a new course “Getting to know Finland”, where Finn will introduce Finland and its habits to a foreigner (Russian speaking student in our case). Coincidently one of teachers recommended making a course “Russia-knowing”, where Finnish students can get more information about Russia, Russian language, Russian people and doing business in Russia. This is an interesting idea for Haaga-Helia and Porvoo Campus to think about.

In addition, all of our Russian speaking students said that they would love to stay in Finland after graduation and we are hoping that they can make it happen.

Finally we have completed all the conclusions in the table (see the Appendix 8).
8 Summary

8.1 Reflection on aim and research questions

The objective of our thesis was to find out the level of integration of Russian speaking students at Haaga-Helia, Porvoo Campus. We wanted to find out, how Russian speaking students feel themselves at Porvoo Campus: their experiences of learning environment and future plans.

Our main research questions were:

1) Why Russian speaking students have chosen Finland and Porvoo Campus to come to study?
2) What do they think about social and academic environment here?
3) How well do they interact with Finnish students?
4) What can they say about stereotypes?
5) Do they believe in staying in Finland after graduation?

We wanted to find out also, how Finnish students see Russian speaking students from Porvoo Campus and how they interact, and what teachers from Haaga-Helia’s Porvoo Campus think about it.

In our opinion we found answers to all the questions we had and accomplished our aim pretty well. We believe that Russian speaking students, Finnish students and teachers: all will benefit from our research. We found suggestions, how to improve interaction between Russian speaking and Finnish students and how to make first ones even more welcomed to Finnish academic and social society.

8.2 Reliability & Validity

When we were writing our work, we had asked ourselves such questions as: “Is there enough reliability in our research? And validity?” Every researcher might have the same feelings, while doing his research.
Also our objectivity as researches had been tested many times while we were doing our thesis. How not unconsciously let our own conclusions and thoughts influence our research? How will we provide our answers? Will we have useful answers? Are we going to be satisfied with our final results?

Sometimes indicators and methods of research do not correspondent “the reality”, which research thinks he is doing. For example, when a respondent fills the questionnaire, he might understand questions in different way compared to researcher. In this case answers are not going to have validity in them. (Hirsi̱järvi et al. 2009, 231-232.) In our case we have interviewed students, met them face to face and they had a chance to ask us about any question they did not understand. This is one of the factors that make our research valid. Another fact, which increases validity of our thesis, is a use of triangulation. We had even two types of triangulation in our research: data and investigator ones. There were three target groups in our research: Russian speaking students, Finnish students and teachers. This gave us an excellent opportunity to investigate our problem from three different perspectives and made our work more valid. The fact that we made our research in pair also increased validity of our work. We would like also to pay attention that we had a rather small sample and therefore our results are valid.

As we wrote before in the Chapter 5 reliability can be found in many ways: one of them then when two researchers while doing one project have the same result in the end. In particular, we see that our thesis has enough reliability: since we did it on the one hand by our own and on the second hand together. We came to the same conclusions in the end, so it makes our research dependable.

We have used a lot of citations taken from our interviews to let the readers get the most truthful picture of our analysis. Also we would like to emphasize the importance of phrases, because with their help our readers can see interviewees’ thoughts themselves and check whether our conclusions were correct.
8.3 Recommendations and future research

The most important thing about your research is that we have found some problems in integration of Russian speaking students at Porvoo Campus and at the same time found some solutions, which can solve these problems.

In prospective it would be interesting to expand our research and for example study Russian speaking students’ experiences in the whole Haaga-Helia using quantitative methods of analysis. It would be interesting to follow whether the results will be the same as in our research.

8.4 Reflection on the thesis process

Our thesis is based on qualitative research. Data was collected during in-depth semi-structured interviews and analysed by the analysis of the content. The follow Figure 24 shows the process of progression of our research.

![Figure 24. The process of progression of the research](image)

Back in the autumn 2011 we decided to do our Bachelor Thesis in pair. The first thing we had to do was to choose the topic of our research. Being Russian speaking students, who had studied at Porvoo Campus, we decided to make our final thesis for Haaga-Helia. As a topic we chose “Integration of Russian speaking students at Haaga-
Helia, case Porvoo Campus”, because we wanted to explore, how Russian speaking students integrate into school and social environment in Porvoo.

Haaga-Helia strives to be a very international University of Applied Sciences. There are a lot of international students at Haaga-Helia and according to statistics Russian speaking group is one of the biggest there. For that reason we believed that Haaga-Helia will be interested in our research and we were right. We made a mandate with Haaga-Helia in autumn 2011.

At first we were thinking of making a quantitative analysis for the whole Haaga-Helia. However, we ended up with Porvoo Campus and qualitative research. The reason, why we decided to do a qualitative analysis instead of quantitative was that both of us had made quantitative analysis as a part of our Marketing course, so this time we wanted to try something new and more interesting for us- qualitative analysis and interviews. We understood realistically that it is impossible to start interviewing Russian speaking students from the whole Haaga-Helia and for that reason we limited our research to Porvoo. When we think about it afterwards, it was a very smart idea.

When the topic for our research was chosen, we started to think of possible theoretical framework for our study. It was a bit challenging in the beginning, because we were not sure about questions for our interviews. However, during our search for theoretical background, we found Matti Taajamo’s academic dissertation “Ulkomaiset opiskelijat Suomessa” made to the University of Jyväskylä. He described foreign students’ experience in Finland. The thing that caught our eye was that he had interviewed not only foreign students, but also Finnish students and teachers. It made his work more reliable and gave a chance to see this situation from different perspectives. Needless to say, that we decided to make the same, even though we understood that this kind of research will take much more time.

Thus, we started to write our theoretical framework and get ready for interviews. We had used a snowball sampling in searching for our interviewees. According to Wikipedia snowball sampling “is a non-probability sampling technique where existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances.” (Wikipedia 2013.) We
knew some Russian speaking and Finnish students from Porvoo Campus, they knew more students: this is how we got our interviewees.

We started our interviews from Russian speaking students. All of ten people we had contacted accepted to be interviewed. We had eight of our interviews in Porvoo and two in Helsinki. All of our interviews happened in Russian language and lasted around 1-1.5 hour. We were very grateful that our respondents were fine with spending so much time on this. If we think for example about surveys: people are sometimes so busy, that do not have even a few minute to fill in some questionnaires. We were very lucky to get proper interviews: respondents were very opened, positive and helpful.

After interviewing Russian speaking students, we started to interview Finnish ones. All of interviews went the same way like with Russian speaking students: very nice. We had less questions for Finnish students that is why interviews with Finns were around one hour. This time we had to come to Porvoo only six times for interviewing Finnish students, since we had four interviews in Helsinki. Two of our respondents live and two work in Helsinki: for that reason it was easier for them to have interviews in Helsinki. This time our interviews happened in Finnish language.

Among the last, but not least group of people, we had interviewed, were our teachers from Haaga-Helia’s Porvoo Campus. This time we had not arranged interviews in advance, but came to Porvoo during ONT-leiri (Thesis Camp). Five of teachers had answered our questions. Each of the interviews lasted approximately one hour. Four of our interviews happened in Finnish and one in English.

After having interviews, we started to analyze data. We did not have any special text analysis program, so we started to read materials systematically searching for similar themes. Due to the fact that we divided our questions into topics before interviews, it was easier to find similar themes while analyzing data. After this operation, we copied different respondents’ citations related to the same themes sequentially. During data analysis we were also restudying our theoretical framework.
In end after having everything done and written, we started to write conclusions, summary and abstracts in Finnish and English languages. After so many months, our huge and interesting research was finally done.

In the end we would like to mention that we think that making this Thesis in pair gave extra value to our work. We were planning, discussing and implementing our research in dialogical process. We did not have always same opinion about some things, but we always found a consensus, sometimes after long discussions. We had added text both individually and collectively. However, the final version of our thesis is checked and approved by both of us.
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Appendices

Appendix 1. Questions for Russian speaking students

A. Background information

1. Where are you from?
2. Year of birth
3. Gender
4. Citizenship
5. How many years have you lived in Finland?

B. Immigration to Finland

1. Were University studies your primary reason to move to Finland?
2. How did you become interested in studying in Finland?
3. Had you visit Finland before deciding to move here (if yes, what for)
4. Your first impression of Finland

C. Choosing Haaga-Helia

1. Why you decided to study in Finland?
2. Reasons why you chose Haaga-Helia to study (Porvoo Campus)

D. Studying at Porvoo Campus/Academic integration

1. Which study program do you attend and in which language?
2. Do you speak Finnish?
3. Are you satisfied with the following (if not what can improved) (from 1 to 5)

(1=dissatisfied, 2= fairly dissatisfied, 3=fairly satisfied, 4= satisfied, 5= very satisfied)

a) Quality of teaching
b) Course contents
c) Teaching methods
d) Methods of exam
e) Availability of courses in English
f) Information about studies
g) Help to international students
h) Computer labs
i) Library services
j) Health services

4. How satisfied are you with guidance received from (if not what can improved) (from 1 to 5)

(1= dissatisfied, 2= fairly dissatisfied, 3= fairly satisfied, 4= satisfied, 5= very satisfied)

a) Students tutors
b) Teachers
c) Finnish fellow students
d) Foreign fellow students
e) Student organization (Helga, etc.)

5. Within the academic community, do you feel you have been excluded or treated as an outsider because you are a foreigner?

6. Other comments about studying at Porvoo Campus

E. Social integration.

1. What are those situations when you have met/been in contact with Finnish students?
2. Have you ever encountered cultural conflicts? Which kind of problematic situations you have had?
3. Who are your best friends here (Russians, Finnish, others)?
4. What do you think could be done to improve communication between Russian speaking and Finnish students?
F. Stereotypes

1. Which kind of images and opinions you personally have about Finland, Finnish students and studying here in Finland, Porvoo Campus?
2. What do you think Finnish students think about foreign students?
3. What do you think Finnish student think about Russian speaking students?
4. Do you feel yourself different from Finnish students? How? Which kind of situations have you had when you felt different?

G. Summary questions

1. Which are the good and bad things you are going to tell about Finland/Finnish people/studying in Haaga-Helia, Porvoo Campus to your friends from home country?
2. Your plans for future (are you planning to stay in Finland, if yes what are you planning to do here, etc.)?
3. Best experience you have had while staying here and studying at Porvoo Campus?
Appendix 2. Questions for Finnish students

A. Background information

1. Year of birth
2. Gender
3. Where do you live?
4. Degree Program at Haaga-Helia

B. Getting to know Russian speaking students

1. What kind of foreign students do you see at Porvoo Campus?
2. Have you met Russian speaking students at Haaga-Helia? If you had, how?
3. How do Finnish and Russian speaking students meet each other?

C. Interacting with Russian speaking students

1. Do you have any Russian speaking friends? If you do, what kind of conversations do you have?
2. What have you heard about Russian speaking students here? (living in Finland, funny stories, conflict situations, bad experience, racism, angry feelings)
3. Do you think that Russian speaking students take part in school activities? In which?
4. How do you feel and what do you think about Russian speaking students at Haaga-Helia? Do you think they should come to study at Porvoo Campus and why?

D. Stereotypes

1. Have you run into stereotyping? / Do you have stereotypes about Russians?
2. What do you think Russian speaking students think about foreign students in general?
3. What do you think Russian speaking students think about Finnish students?
4. How do you think Russian speaking students understand Finnish culture, do they already know it?

5. What is associated with interaction, when Finnish and Russian speaking students meet? What would you do to improve interaction between Finnish and Russian speaking students?
Appendix 3. Questions for teachers

1. Which kind of Russian speaking students come to Porvoo Campus? Who are they? What do they study?

2. What kind of experience do you have with Russian speaking students?

3. Have you had any problems with them?

4. Have you heard any rumours about Russian speaking students (some unpleasant situations for example)?

5. Have you heard about Russian students experience in Finland, at Haaga-Helia (living in Finland, funny stories, conflicts, culture shock, etc.)?

6. How Russian speaking and Finnish students interact with each other? In which kind of situations? Are there any stereotypes involved?

7. What kind of improvements towards Russian speaking students’ studying at Porvoo Campus are made?

8. How it is possible to improve interaction between Russian speaking and Finnish students?
Appendix 4. How many Russian speaking students were dissatisfied-satisfied with following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you with following</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Fairly Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Fairly Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Health services</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Library services</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer labs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Help to international students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information about studies</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availability of courses in English</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Methods of exams</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teaching methods</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course contents</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of teaching</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 5. How many Russian speaking students are dissatisfied-satisfied with help received from:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How satisfied are you with help received from:</th>
<th>Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Fairly Dissatisfied</th>
<th>Fairly Satisfied</th>
<th>Satisfied</th>
<th>Very Satisfied</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student organizations (Helga, etc.)</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foreign fellow students</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Finnish fellow students</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tutors</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 6. Summary of Russian speaking students’ answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you think of following:</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Studying at Porvoo Campus</strong></td>
<td>Library and Computer Labs</td>
<td>Health Services</td>
<td>More oral exams</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English Courses</td>
<td></td>
<td>Information about studies</td>
<td>Some teachers can be more active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course contents</td>
<td></td>
<td>Teaching and exam methods</td>
<td>More information about student organizations and tutors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers and other foreign students</td>
<td></td>
<td>Quality of teaching</td>
<td>More information about studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tandem course</td>
<td></td>
<td>Communication with Finnish classmates</td>
<td>Teachers can mix groups more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Porvoo Campus</td>
<td></td>
<td>Student organizations and tutors</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling a bit excluded in the beginning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Social Integration</strong></td>
<td>Finnish students (outside the school)</td>
<td>Russian speaking hang out with other Russian speaking</td>
<td>Communication between Finnish and Russian students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No conflicts with Finnish students noticed</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stereotypes</strong></td>
<td>Images about Finland, Finnish students and Haaga-Helia</td>
<td>Finns are not so opened for foreigners</td>
<td>To break through stereotyping</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Feeling lonely in the beginning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other</strong></td>
<td>Finland is a nice and peaceful country</td>
<td>Finnish people seem to be a bit cold in the beginning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finns are nice and calm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Porvoo is a very nice city</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>All of the students plan to stay in Finland after graduation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 7. Summary of Finnish students’ answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you think of following:</th>
<th>Positive</th>
<th>Negative</th>
<th>Improvements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Getting to know Russian speaking students</td>
<td>All have met Russian speaking students at Porvoo Campus</td>
<td>Half of respondents have talked with Russian speaking students only at school</td>
<td>Forget about stereotyping and start to communicate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never heard about racism experience of Russian speaking students</td>
<td>Had strong stereotypes about Russians</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Students from LIIPO Programme had Russian speaking friends at Porvoo Campus</td>
<td>Finns were a bit “cold” in the beginning with their Russian classmates</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interacting with Russian speaking students</td>
<td>Russian speaking students work hard</td>
<td>Russian speaking students are always in their own groups</td>
<td>Teachers could mix groups more often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russian speaking students bring something new and interesting into Porvoo Campus</td>
<td>Difficult to approach them sometimes</td>
<td>Participating in Tandem Course</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finnish students want to be friends with Russian speaking students</td>
<td>Russian speaking students who have lived just for few years or less in Finland are not aware of Finnish culture yet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Keeping a good relationship with the closest eastern neighbour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Russian speaking students who have lived already in Finland know about Finnish culture very well</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8. Summary of Russian speaking students’, Finnish students’ and teachers’ answers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you think of following:</th>
<th>Russian speaking students</th>
<th>Finnish students</th>
<th>Teachers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Interaction between Russian speaking and Finnish students</strong></td>
<td>Communication with Finnish students happens mostly at school, during some projects Russian speaking students think that Finns are a bit distant Two of Russian speaking respondents are best friends with Finnish students at Porvoo Campus Russian speaking students think that Finns are very nice, but communicate more with other foreigners or Russians Russians want to be friends with Finnish students</td>
<td>Communication with Russian speaking students happens mostly at school Finns were a bit “cold” in the beginning with their Russian classmates Students from LIIO Programme had Russian speaking friends at Porvoo Campus Finnish students think that Russian speaking students are nice, but are almost always in their own groups Finnish students want to be friends with Russian speaking students</td>
<td>Russian speaking and Finnish students communicate at school, during some projects Teachers think that their Russian speaking students are nice, but are mostly in their own groups and try to speak in Russian if possible Russian speaking students really like Finland and Porvoo Russian speaking students enjoy studying at Porvoo Campus Russian speaking students feel safe in Finland Some of Russian speaking students have some problems in communication because of language barrier</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Life of Russian speaking students in Finland, in Porvoo</strong></td>
<td>Russian speaking students think that Finland is a nice country Russian speaking students love Porvoo and Porvoo Campus Porvoo might be a bit difficult city to work in, because of Swedish language</td>
<td>Finnish students have not heard about problematic situations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stereotypes about Finnish people</strong></td>
<td>Russian speaking students thought that Finns are shy, calm, do not show their emotions</td>
<td>Finnish students think that Russian speaking students who just have moved to Finland might think that Finns are calm, shy and quiet</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stereotypes about Russians</strong></td>
<td>Three of Russian speaking respondents think that Finns have strong negative stereotypes about Russians</td>
<td>Finnish respondents had some stereotypes about Russians in the beginning</td>
<td>Teachers think that there are no more strong stereotypes about Russians nowadays</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The rest of our Russian speaking respondents think that nowadays Finns do not have any</td>
<td>After communicating with Russian speaking students stereotypes disappear</td>
<td>Haaga-Helia is so international that teachers believe that students forget about stereotypes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>strong stereotypes about Russians</td>
<td>Finnish students suggested teachers to mix groups more often</td>
<td>Teachers suggested to mix groups more often</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian speaking students suggested teachers to mix groups more often</td>
<td>Participating in Tandem Course</td>
<td>Students can participate in Tandem Course</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating in Tandem Course</td>
<td>Courses like “Getting to know Finland”</td>
<td>Forget prejudices</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Courses like “Russia-knowing”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>