

Effective Multicultural Learning in Iterative Cycles; Language Learning Breaking Gender Barriers in Doing Craft

Eeva-Maija Lappalainen

Myths prevail on craft, culture and language and in multicultural learning environments. In multicultural education teaching, I explored the learning language in craft learning environments and in learning situation the myths' effects on gender gap. Basic terms and conceptions are 1.) The Ha-La-Cu - method and learning style: language and textile material and colour impression (craft) learning in doing, 2.) Reflecting the process, generating interpretations of textile material and colour impression (design), producing and processing analysis in textile material and colour impression learning and 3.) Multi-scientific and multicultural education, interactive language and craft learning in doing -pedagogy: in craft activity, the analyses contain elements that are challenging learners in an active and innovative dialogue with a cultural awareness process. This is a tool for transcending the prevailing gender gap. Gathering the material, I used the (Ashman & Conway, 1989) classroom integration model, a cognitive verbalizing method; the contextualized notes I made by partial parallel and phased coding. Analogies and associations were linked to the vocabulary, increasing it in a sensitive creative manner. This multicultural pedagogy and didactics, in various contexts, is effectively breaking the gender gap.

Keywords: crafts learning in doing, content analysis, gender gap, Ha-La-Cu –method, multicultural learning

Preface

In Finland, we are proud to inform that as a heritage of Uno Cygnaeus' educational achievement all the citizens were to be equally educated. The grammar school system (achieved and established by Cygnaeus in 1857) was offered to every child in Finland, in spite of gender or social status; and also the first in the world, craft learning became a subject in school. This enhanced people's physical and mental growth. The subjects were, in addition to learning reading and writing, also mathematics, religion and physics. Among the others, the practical subjects like handicrafts and gymnastics were of utmost importance. Education with crafts learning utilized a diverse range of abilities, increasing human knowledge and welfare, particularly in the agrarian society of the time. Boys were to learn wood - and metal works, girls learned feminine subjects, more precisely serving the needs at home: weaving, knitting, and sewing. (Cygnaeus 1910; Lappalainen, 2010, p. 151–155). Teaching handicraft (textile material and colour impression design) at school is still bound by gender (Lahelma, 2002).

Humanity has defined separate responsibilities, habits, jobs for men and women, mostly driven by cultural needs. The gender roles are culturally strong. Because of the long tradition of gender-based divisions the contents of textile and technical crafts syllabi have been constructed in a certain way to maintain traditional gender stereotypes. Teaching craft at school is still bound by gender (Lahelma, 2002), and many class teachers teach despite not having handicrafts/sloyd teacher qualifications. Teaching, they tend to copy former schemes. Only a few of them have created something new and

train the pupils to do the same (Kananoja, 1989, p. 6). Furthermore, the books like *Iloa tekstiilityöhön* - series (the 1st ed. 1984) give examples of how boys and girls shall be taught craft, and about the various kinds of techniques and patterns to be learned. They highlight quick advancement, starting from hobby with glue and paper to reach nearly tailoring skill (Suojanen 1994). I agree with Lahelma's (2002) argument that on the comprehensive school curriculum, learning crafts is strongly integrated with techniques and is not concerned to the (defined) textile craft (FNBE, 2004; Lappalainen, 2005.)

Setting the roles of men and women in balance always has been problematic: the culture of gender has clearly been separated since ancient times, and so it remains in most of the countries where multicultural people come from. There are countries where men weave and sew while women twist and twine material for walls and make huts and houses. Often there the written language is insignificant (Lappalainen, 2005). The attitude to gender in basic and vocational education in Finland is mostly different from the general attitudes of many people from less economically developed countries where women are mainly illiterate and confined to roles of maintaining the family and having children; and men (many of them may also be illiterate) rule the society. People think that women are not supposed to need education the skills of writing and reading, in the roles that they have been assigned. Nevertheless, women's multi-faceted roles in the field of crafts, life experience and work is perfect for gathering a diversified intellectual capital (Carroll, 2007; Lappalainen, 2014). We need to search for, find and inspect cultural similarities, resemblances and differences. An ethnic factor is a point of comparison (Kaiser, 1996.) Whether the culture of an immigrant is of a basic or high technology he/she still has to adapt to the Finnish society and information technology. From the standpoint of cultural interaction learning, we can see a transfer here: the trans-actionable affect and the theory of trans-actionable learning (Van Lier, 2004).

In learning, the multicultural people must consider their relationship with the use of the Finnish language. The textbooks contain vocabulary and exercises suitable for learning environments. The examples hide the grammatical elements for the language learners to find. There are gaps in text for the learners to fill in. It is not easy for them to comprehend the learning, because it may seem too abstract and complicated for them. The grammar forms are difficult to adopt, especially if the illiterate multicultural becoming people do not even understand the concept of a verb or a nominative case in their own language (ibid). I have constructed and introduced the *Ha-La-Cu - method* in my doctoral dissertation in 2005. The method is an independent tool, facilitating learning a language in a learner-friendly way, a natural learning style, uniting handicraft (Ha) teaching with the promotion of language (La) and cultural (Cu) teaching and learning in contexts. Then we also can substitute the use of textbooks. When the teacher is guiding the group creatively and sensitively the multicultural people learn by repeating, testing, and checking meanings and content they have learned, and link the found and analyzed analogies and associations to the vocabulary to be learned (Lappalainen, 2005). Expertise can be tacit knowledge (Polanyi, 1958) personally gathered from body kinaesthetic experiences and skills and still not be routine. Considering the tacit knowledge, we can compare it to explicit knowledge: although it is possible to distinguish conceptually between explicit and tacit knowledge, they are not separate and discrete in practice. The interaction between these two modes of knowing is vital for the creation of new knowledge. The tacit knowledge was applicable to (and useful for) conversationally interactive gender-neutral learning groups, evading the preserving gender gap. In the 1980s, I entered the first steps on this path observing the breaking gender in craft activity process. I was teaching knitting and weaving to young North American Finns, young men and women that were descended from Finnish immigrant families. This also was the beginning of my way towards teaching multicultural groups craft and language (Lappalainen, 1994; 2003.) The students regardless of gender were willing to interpret the craft learning as a process and product, in spite of the fact that in America they had never studied crafts or learned weaving or knitting. Their roots in Finland

enhanced their desire to learn. Teaching those people awoke realization of education in breaking the gender gap (ibid). This idea progressed further when I later was studying several multicultural groups. My studies and material 2011–2012 and 2014 reflect this progression continuing to this paper where I also present previous multicultural handicraft and language-learning groups.

Introduction

People observe the world according to their knowledge and emotions constructed by their personal experiences. Uniting the mental, artificial and material culture comprises verbal, visual and kinaesthetic memories. It also involves the interactive analysis of knowledge and skill, values, attitudes and will. The differentiations uniting these cultural fields are part of craft learning studied by interpretation. They subsume the multi-scientific and multi-sensory elements. In addition, they are realized without gender omission behaviour as being gender-neutral. My studies demonstrate breaking the gender barrier by learning language in doing (craft). The handicrafts with all the variants and dimensions belong to the cultural activities. Cultural heritage easily engenders guidelines to follow; and finally the guidelines may grow into myths. In process working, just on some fading moment a person may experience the essence of craft's activity. The fading moment is a period in action processing the artefact with others in group: a person briefly can experience and feel the sensible touch of materials and colours, emotions but the feelings not become interactively interpreted or narrated for enhancing the common integrated (crafts and language) learning process. The learning culture usually prefers just techniques, action and making the artefacts ready. Many details (verbally, visually and in body movements) during the process remain in our memories. The moments of learning may fade away but they can reveal the intersections and glimpses of understanding between the participants. The moments may spin a web that knits together the past and present, the self and the other and create new visions emitting the essential things. Every engagement changes one's idea of the world (Siikala & Uljašev, 2011). From these engagements, new levels of understanding may emerge and insight can be found on breaking the social gender gap.

The teacher sensitized to dimensions in craft can be multi-scientific: educational pedagogic, faculty fellow in cultural research, ethnographer. The cultural research is in connection with education research when the aim is of bringing about fleeting moments and even analysing them (Lappalainen, 2005.) Siikala (2011) refers that a researcher observing fading moments resembles a journalist who according to intuition creates visions of essential things. Researchers must be aware of the orientation, perspective and scope where the penchants lead the vision. The scope must be scientifically enlightened, systematic and persistently serving the searching mind. Brain research has examined how the hands cooperate with the brain-like adaptors and accordingly affected by the hands' activity the brain activates itself (Hari, 2012). Craft (learning and working) causes positive energy and raised endorphins. It is engrossing, engendering gratification. Euphoric experiences and feelings possess people. In the process, people usually forget the sensitized effects of body movements (hands, skin feelings, movements of body and fingers) (Saramago, 2003). Creativity also appears in a cultural context: people share their ways of acting and thinking, they learn from each other and value the results on the grounds of certain assessments (Csikszentmihályi, 2005). The myths remain and actively they not will be construed. Mainly the undefined craft if not analysed, keeps on constructing sustaining and cherishing myths, retarding and chaining the human mind and cognition. Carroll (2007) considers valuing the arts as an investigation, authentication and knowing the origin. In addition, we need to become trained and practiced in recognizing these categories. Linguistically understanding the learning-to-do and the ready-made product is an active process. It is producing implications and meanings; it is a sense producing interpreting act as Carroll says, "*When we ... speak ... we mobilize the resources of available membership categorization devices. These are in relation to sense-making*

strategies, producing means of thinking in arts” (Carroll, 2007, p.140–141). Relations between intelligence and creativity are seen to be overlapping and meeting.

In craft working process the participants make notes connecting to language learning; the notes in craft learning situation become material for language learning. This is spontaneous creativity, observing and making one observe, encountering and making one encounter. The experience is subjective and leads to supportive self-guidance. Then, during training the development of skills in craftwork leads to a deeper understanding of the culture. From a professional standpoint, we can see that fascinating features of craft have been left aside and unused in training multicultural people. The Ha-La-Cu - method is reciprocally helpful. It promotes the language learning which can raise the standard of vocational learning (Csikszentmihályi, 2005). This widens into cultural connotations in which strong subjectivity may be reduced. In picture analysis, the relationships between matters and phenomena can be interpreted as signs and signals which can bring unity between craft (design) learning and language (Van Lier, 2004). There are a variety of representations emitted through textile material and color impression representing skill and expertise linked to the diversity of craft (De Grandis, 1986).

The main questions

1) What kind of craft is gender-neutral in multicultural learning environments? 2) Can we break the myths or does the gender gap with myths remain? 3) Do the “gendering” myths affect the unfinished or ready-made artefacts and interpretation of craft? 4) And if the myths can be broken how can transcending the gender gap and the gender-neutral multicultural learning environment benefit the craft learning? Can the language interpreting and verbalizing with craft learning process enhance the theoretical and practical language learning and vice versa: can the craft learning (as more concrete and sensible activity) work for serving learning a language and diminishing the gender gap?

Participants and Context

Among the several multicultural groups that I have trained the first step breaking the learners’ gender gap I had in the 1980s and 1990s in a high school in Reisjärvi, Finland. I was teaching knitting and weaving to young North American Finns who were mostly descended from Finnish parents. That was the initial point for developing the Ha-La-Cu - method and learning style (Lappalainen, 1994; 2003). The participating learners were in the groups (w=58 and m=37). Over a year ago I was working with a group of young immigrants (n=10) and asylum seekers (n=2) aged 16–22 from Afghanistan, Ghana, Iraq, Congo, Somalia. They had come to Finland without their parents, and their native languages were Dari, Kurdish, Somali, French, Badin and Lingala. They had been in Finland for anywhere from eight months to three years. From autumn 2012, the group participated in a course arranged by the Settlement Institute in Oulu for young multicultural people. This was a preparatory course for completing the comprehensive school studies. In addition to Finnish language learning, they studied mathematics, social studies/civics, history, communications technology. I arranged demonstrations on two days; there were six men and six women participating, of the 12 of them I interviewed ten (n=10), six men and four women. The next group I guided was in winter 2013. The group was attending the “*Suomen askeleet*” (Steps to Finnish language) intensive course. There were five (n=5) multicultural people participating, aged 38 – 61 years, two women from Russia, (n=2); and three (n=3) men from Egypt, Ireland, and Great Britain They had stayed in Finland for time periods ranging from nearly a year to almost three years. I also concentrated on studying the gender in all the groups: was there a visible gap? How did it appear? Could we break the gender barrier, and if we can, how can we? Can we find and develop in education pedagogy that is breaking gender barrier?

Method and Analysis

The Ha-La-Cu Method introduced in my doctoral dissertation in 2005 is an independent tool uniting craft (design) teaching with the promotion of language and cultural learning. It is related to suggestive learning as an immersion of language and contextual learning. It is an independent and self-supervised learning style (Lappalainen, 2005). The immediate sense perceptions all of the human senses are in use to serve the language learning. The teacher is guiding the student groups (Finnish speaking - and immigrant) in their learning process for actually to notice and pick out, evaluate and verbally interpret elements of textile material and colour impression (design). The concrete process is manifested in a flexible learning situation by means of choosing materials, forms, models and the working method. Co-operation between the subjects and the actualities of craft learning is the natural context enhancing language learning. The interactive communication process begins. We create language with images and picture the feelings and imaginations; the concrete becomes abstract. We interpret the phenomena and learn language: finding a word to have a general meaning is a result of a creative process. I have studied what was the sensed touching experience of the unfinished and ready-made work: how did it feel? Can we see a gender gap there? Are we forgetting the senses of ongoing moments in craft processes, the feelings that we then had in our body memory? Are the fading moments loosening away from the ready-made artifact? (Siikala and Uljašev, 2011). On the basis of case study, I observed the participants learning how they experienced the interaction of colors, materials, methods, kinaesthetic movements and objects. Group members (students) reported the results of their learning process in essays and interviews that I have analysed. Collecting the material, I have used the Ashman and Conway (1989) classroom integration model: Using cognitive methods in the classroom: partial, parallel coding, verbalizing, making and using notes. The method is adaptable for a wide range of different groups and levels. This learning method is an effective tool transcending the cultural barriers of gender. The method clarifies the cultural awareness process where the elements of multicultural pedagogy are in interaction. Instead of passively contributing, the elements challenge the learners into active innovative dialogue. As an aiding supplementary element with craft science I use also the cultural sciences. The multiculturalism is natural in craft science and a perquisite in this paper: I need the multicultural context to explain the outcomes and report of my study.

The language and the material reality with textile material and colour impression design learning

The language and the material reality usually are considered as separate and distinct areas. How can the language engage with and meet the material reality? The interpretative language and artifact (the readymade and workable one in process) are acting in a complex relation. There is an attitude espoused by scholars that *language* does not at all belong to *textile material and color impression design, handicrafts making and design* - experiences and - environments. We may ponder why the speech and words the *language itself* was seen as unfit, clumsy and unacceptable for describing and analysing the world of handicrafts and its material and visual reality. Why the interpretive language was seen unsuitable for use in the craft making and learning process? (De Grandis, 1986; Johansson, 2006; Lappalainen, 2005.)

On a *manifestation expression level*, a language strictly builds and categorizes symbols. Their meanings do not compose a homogenous set in our experienced environment. (Carroll 2007). We meet at the *interpretative level*: the metaphors occur aiding the verbalizing of the material reality, opening the way to understanding an area of experience via conceptions of another. It is a rating of classifications between meanings, based on the *notions of analogue, same-likeness, instead of sameness, alike (identical)*; the metaphors depict the joints between different areas of conceptions expressing wider relations between areas (Van Lier, 2004.) The expression, naming the conceptions is language using. Examining the language separately leads to an interpretation of language's categories

and the craft activity by its own categories. Uniting and interpreting the analogies and associations demand a multileveled symbolic and metaphoric conception about the mutual interactive field. People in general become sensitized by the material interaction in handicraft activity via professional expertise (Carroll, 2007; Lappalainen 2003.) Instead of the language and the material reality being separately influencing, the case is experiencing the language and the material reality together and making it to be experienced. This is the site of the inseparability of reality and language (ibid, 140–141). The cultural sensitivity is prevailing supported by the teacher's professional expertise (Lappalainen, 2005).

In Diary Books (2005), I have made notes about situations where the participants eagerly learned Finnish language during the felting learning process: *“There is a course of Finnish language for immigrants going on. ... They are pricking the felting wool on the foamy plastics (foam rubber).”* I had discussed the process with the teacher and she allowed me to describe and observe what the uniting of language craft and culture really means. In an interactive verbalized learning situation the students' vocabulary rapidly increased, the concrete became abstract and the meanings of several Finnish words of general importance became learned-in-doing. In addition, some verbs also were conjugated, nominative grammatical cases written on the blackboard and they found some words' opposite meanings, too (sharp/blunt =“terävä”/“tylsä”). They repeated denotations of colors, and a woman was listing the names of fruits and vegetables she learned. In a short period, they really had learned new elements of the Finnish language, grammar and at the same time, felting.

Teaching immigrants the Finnish language is carried out in the same way as any other foreign language teaching. The textbooks contain the most meaningful language. The vocabulary, the words, meanings of the language in use, as well as grammar is packaged in the context of the sentences. In learning a language, exams rule, they become the models in general, dictating the style of language teaching processes. Exercise books and workbooks are used in addition to the active learning. There are associations and analogies, multiple examples of grammar use (Van Lier, 2004). Still, for an immigrant the exact clarification of these associations and analogies is better provided when the language is spoken in an everyday action, and when the phenomena of the learning contexts are made concrete. In promoting the meeting and encountering of cultures, a teacher has to be well aware of his/her own culture in use with heritage and elements as well as of the immigrants' foreign culture. He/she guides the language-learning immigrants to find words in various contexts during the craft-learning situation (Lappalainen, 1994; 2005). I have an idea of a teacher in a learning environment as being a kind of a host in the context of uniting craft and language teaching by seeking for associations and analogies.

Analogies and associations and the connections in the multicultural context

It is a general opinion that learning handicrafts in Finland is a process learning manufacturing methods. People learn techniques and processes for preserving them for later use. This is a functional: we need actual things in our everyday life (Lappalainen 2005; Dewey 1910/1960). Still, every artifact both mirrors and expresses the importance of different craft aspects like style, structures or patterns. Having the competence of a teacher, handicrafts professionals are multi-sensitively sensitized to know the elements and manufacturing methods.

In cultural heritage, words sentences and structures gathered in learning situations, bring to the immigrants whether male or female, the fabric and material for exercises and lessons. Textile material and colour impression is equally useful for both genders and all ages, both nationally and multi-culturally. There are common levels and sections to adhere to and depart from when we are experiencing and analysing similarities and differences (Lappalainen, 2005). Teaching languages, Van

Lier (2004) supports the idea of a group of three A's: awareness, autonomy and authenticity. These already are a part of the culturally sensitive Ha-La-Cu –method and multicultural pedagogy encountering cultures. The emphasis is on cultural awareness with analogue, associability and analysis. The *connections between universal and individual* and vice versa are obvious. Method is reliable, and reasoned as argument. I have condensed the use of the Ha-La-Cu - learning style by expanding on Van Lier's three A's to *sixteen (16) A-pedagogy*. This enables more impressions that are detailed; they build narrative frame stories in craft contexts, language and culture learning with anchoring, aims and ambitions, agency, affections, annotation, articulates attention, artefacts, and attributions of all days. This is active, authentic and autonomous learning, constructed according to the immigrants' different learning situations.

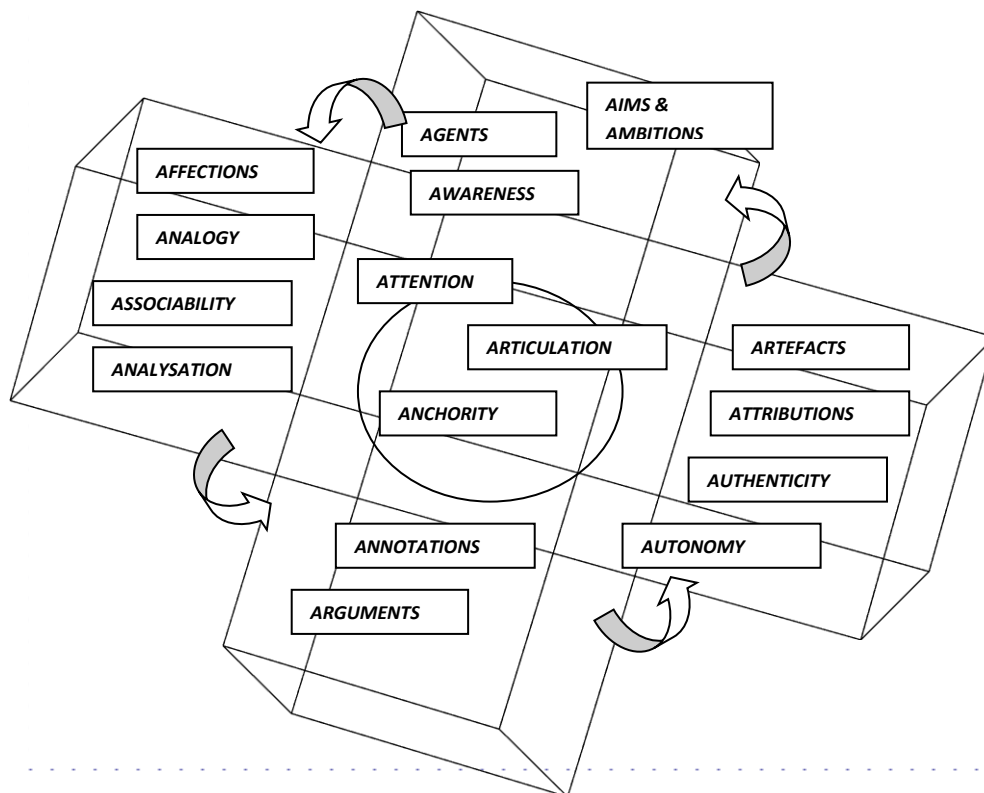


Figure : The sixteen effective core elements (16 A) for culturally sensitive, multicultural pedagogy and use of the Ha-La-Cu - learning style: 1. Aims, 2. Ambitions, 3. Affection, 4. Analogue, 5. Associability, 6. Attention, 7. Agency, 8. Action, 9. Awareness, 10. Autonomy, 11. Authenticity, 12. Articulates, 13. Arts and craft design of action, 14. Annotation, 15. Analyses, and 16. Anchoring (Lappalainen, 2014.)

Learning language in doing textile material and colour impression

In a multicultural context, generally the (learning) groups in handicraft consist of immigrant women. The language learning groups are gender-separate. Usually textile craft is considered as women's work. Merging the language and craft groups/subjects is rare. Nonetheless, it also enables the transfer: male immigrants learning the Finnish language. As the results of my thesis display, this means *learning the language in doing*, in this case *in the textile material and colour impression (craft) working and learning context*. When men and women learned craft and the (Finnish) language and culture at the same time together, we were able to break gender boundaries by verbalizing the process of doing and learning, and interpreting the artifact, material and colour. In learning, there was a concrete dimension. Applied to teaching immigrants, the concrete makes a human being through

analogies and associations understand the connections, the differences and similarities between matters.

A teacher needs skills knowledge and practice and new sensitive ways to meet the immigrants' needs in providing a cultural encounter and avoiding gender prejudices. How then could the emotional and mental experiences that during a lifetime (physically) were embedded in a person's body mentally turn into verbal/literary expressions? Some adult immigrants had never even used a pen. Mostly the women were illiterate and tied by their roles. By uniting craft and language learning, I was able to come closer to the immigrant's own culture. In learning language, I often used recordings as a supplementary factor for altering the speech into written texts. We may wonder how the archetypes that overcome racial and cultural boundaries can resemble metaphors. When the teacher was guiding (with creative and sensitive touch) analogies and associations were linked to the vocabulary to be learned (Lappalainen, 2005). Is an immigrant able to read a teacher like an open book or dictionary, a teacher crawling under weaving looms or otherwise actively moving and demonstrating? In this natural context, people learned a language; they repeated, tested and checked the newly learned meanings and contents. In this way, we also could substitute the use of exercise books. The vocabulary and the structure of the language in use became linked into written and oral expression: the action was effective. This is the orthography and phonology of the language (Lappalainen, 2005). The course called *Suomen askeleet* "Steps to Finnish language" was arranged in 2012 and 2013 for a multicultural group learning Finnish in doing (felting) at a high school. The theme was the Aurora Borealis' - phenomenon with colors. It was the latest multicultural learning situation and learning environment that was indicating the breaking of gender barrier; I made an inquiry that was one of the sources on which this article is based.

Questions according to the inquiry sheet; Myths and breaking the ingrained gender barriers

1. Is the reason for breaking gender barriers because of the learning situation being advantageous? Should the teaching situation and method prefer opportunities for the people to concentrate on analysing the learning process and product and not just keep on doing?
2. Are the gender barriers broken because the immigrant is in a situation that completely differs from his/her own environment in the native country?
3. Are the gender barriers broken because a person (a young American Finn) wants to learn the textile material and color impression (craft), which is part of the heritage from ancestors in Finland?
4. Can we consider it breaking gender barriers if this material encourages some men to have a deepening interest in interpreting the learning process of craft? Has there been research carried out on Finnish groups in similar situations, and were there men that depicted such a breaking of gender roles?
5. How does the gender myth affect craft making and the learning process? How do myths or the breaking of myths have an influence on multicultural people and students' learning in their essays?

Results

Human hands in action work at handling, grasping. At the very least, working requires tools and material to work with; yarn can be twisted, wound and rolled, etc. We learn how the object is manifesting and what are its use and characteristics, we must test. We must touch and sense the material with hands and skin, and there is always some designated colour to see. We feel emotions in the work, senses of the body (movements) and tools in the process and experience how it progresses (Hari, 2012; Saramago 2003). How did men and women feel when reflecting on the artefact; were they

equal experiencing and understanding the multi-sensory essence of textile material and color impression? The answers to my questions I found in the contribution of this study that was to convey the experiences of language learning through multicultural people's situational observations and comments. Instead of Dewey's model of learning (learn something by doing), this *method in doing* worked perfectly in exploratory groups (Dewey, 1910/1960). The *handicraft* as a concept carries the mythic burden, entwined with gender from the beginning of elementary school. In spite of gender roles, the learning-in-doing environment facilitated the learners to go deep into the process. The associative reflectivity, concentration and associability opened the way to interpretation. In spite of gender, the non-Finnish speaking immigrants benefited from the textile material and color impression aiding their language learning because working with their hands and minds together opened new ways to comprehending the language (Lappalainen, 2005).

The literary objects and my lessons together were reflecting in the process. Instead of common working and doing, the differentiations were more enlightening. The realized outcomes brought about multi-scientific coding, based on special education pedagogy. Regarding the question of how the theme Aurora Borealis (with lively colours) was connected to the idea of co-operationally learning language and craft together, the students and multicultural group participants expressed many feelings on topics: personal, material, visual and haptic touch. The impression of sensitivity was obvious. In addition, they had absorbed the knowledge that this was useful in building interactions with their native friends and Finns, too. Concerning the material in the groups' learning environments, there always were men that really went deeply into exploring the craft elements, its phenomena and essence. Encountering cultures in the process, they together and individually analyzed and articulated their ideas. Observing them, I can say they successfully learned how to place, understand, and multi-sensibly focus their doings.

The language and craft activity, (textile material and color impression) with culture are joined like a sort of active chiasmus. The object to be sensed and turned into language may seem to be just a common everyday thing. However, when considered in a new context it may turn into a widening source of inspiration. The ability to sense and make object sensing possible in a learning-in-doing environment has an essential mission: to perceive and make perceivable, observe and make observed. It is guiding people to observe dimensions of phenomena, matters and things, the sensuous elements and forms (design) of environments in connection with knowledge, skill, values, attitudes and will.

The reflections gathered from the inquiry and interview: multicultural men and women learning together in groups

1. For women with an everyday life point of view, interpreting the process and product of craft making may have seemed strange. Women's priority concerning craft was not to contemplate, analyze or interpret the craft process and colors or material. They just often only saw the aim and meaning of the process: to make something ready for use. Men were more flexible, adopting language learning in this regard and they tried to think the conventions of the craft. The gender roles were broken down from the perspective of the men; the women, on the other hand, did not show wide change of attitudes.

2. In Finland, the craft courses for multicultural becoming people usually are arranged for learning traditional techniques, working methods, making and gaining artifacts - and for bringing forth and presenting their own culture, for comparison. In multicultural training and education, this turns into an ongoing mythic gender gap. This leads to the idea of craft for mere function, and to an idea about men and women having different aims and sectors in the textile material and color impression. The Ha-La-Cu - method and learning style was useful and needed in facilitating multicultural integration: a multicultural person could adopt means, which helped him/her to adapt to the new living environment.

A trainee on the other hand mentioned: “...on a course ... the professional worker just showed how to do the activity... we did not learn language”. Gender roles mostly stayed the same but some men were inspired by the new way of learning a language. The new learning environment impressed them and led to a change in gender attitudes.

3. There was a short period in Finland’s history when the interpretation of handcraft flourished. This period was approximately 100 years ago, when many Finns immigrated to the Americas for work and a better standard of living. This interpretative attitude has recently bloomed with Americanized families. The young North American Finns have maintained the ability and sensitivity to interpret the craft, maybe because they cherished the idea and memory of Finnish craft, carried as tradition, an inheritance from their ancestors back in Finland. On the other hand, in America craft making was new for them. Under guidance, they found and opened the interpretative senses evident in the studies (Lappalainen, 1994). The heritage and need to sense the old roots in Finland had a strong influence on this group. Many boys became very interested in learning traditional Finnish craft. The inspiring new situation in learning craft broke the gender divide. Things and objects symbolizing Finland are also associated with the working process and cultural awareness, regardless of whether the young North Americans are women or men. One of the boys even weaved the Finnish flag in loom. Thus, I can conclude the gender-barrier was broken in connection with the learning of ancestors’ skills, weaving and knitting (Lappalainen, 2003).

4. As far as we know, research on Finnish groups in similar situations in Finland and questions about whether there have been men that depict the gender-barrier breaking is lacking. However, according to these exams, in certain conditions men seemed to be more uninhibited concerning the textile and color impression and the related speech practices: they were more sensitive to adopting the language learning process by craft making. Men found the idea of abstracting the concrete and dimensions between phenomena and things easier. In a *learning-in-doing* environment, men annotated and articulated the theme and process.

5. Women, too, could see the connections; they were not much less proficient in sensing things. On the contrary, they were finding associations but unfortunately, their old (gendered) manners and eagerness in doing craft were hindering them from analysing and interpreting the process. Women prefer being together chatting; they create social networks in craft joining in sewing clubs etc. That is why women (in groups) do not always concentrate on observing the sensory elements in the textile material and colour impression (craft). They disregarded the fading moment of experience, the inner core of the impression where they could see and analyse the essential colors, materials and shapes. The women needed more time to concentrate on these additional analyses and understand the idea of associations. One adult female commented expressing her gradually learned interpretation that she gained when analysing the elements in learning process on the course (spring 2013). She also mentioned how the Finnish society tends to guide immigrants in craft: “*There I was told only that here is a needle and thread ... no language learning at all, I think this could have been a good way to learn a lot!* “ The consequences of craft analysing joined to learning language: we must study, we must learn and practice.

The gender gap in textile material and color impression was obvious in society, and the subject “handicraft” at school was gendered too (Lahelma, 2002), but when the technology improved and brought the use of (sewing) machines in to classrooms, it seemed that the gender barrier was starting to break (Kananoja 1989; Kaiser, 1996). Usually a machine in the classroom could attract men even more than women; it also made labouring more intensive and tasks easier and the process quickened. The learning process as just making something functional emphasized the reflection in *learning, planning and manufacturing*. Then the *process and product* (that belong together) became understood

as separate. The reflection became differentiated: technical, practical and critical reflection (Suojanen, 1994, p. 76–77).

Associative reflection was put aside or hidden. Suojanen (1994) has itemized the supportive actions in handicrafts: professional, social, cultural, symbolic and mental health and safety associations. Because of the scarce number of studies on this topic, the message did not become better understood. Suojanen emphasizes that the concrete factors the elements of a single textile-work of art may be mentioned in adjectives (for quality) experiences and memories (ibid). It is interesting that the affecting matters and senses concerning the psyche and connective associations are impressions from material, colors, model and pattern. In addition, De Grandis (1986) paid attention to these elements. My studies developing the Ha-La-Cu -method and learning style for learning the (Finnish) language contribute to the subject. Here I found the area for unwinding the gender knot repeatedly. It is only limitedly examined in craft education as everywhere how to break the gender barrier further (Lappalainen 2005).

The questionnaire made evident the students' reflections and associations. One of the questions refers to the gender attitudes: Were there gender roles in craft and did they disappear? If so, why did they disappear in these groups? The answers were essential for this theme: enlightening examples. According to citations, the answers reported on language and culture learning. In addition, they were representing the gender myth and breaking the myth. The next chapters present a summary of myths contemplating the myth in gender role division and possibility to breaking gender barriers in learning a language in doing and learning craft. We picked out the elements of inner memory stored in body language and mind from connections in everyday life. The process was dynamic taking into consideration the emotions and affections. It was to take the entirety of cultural context into play, uniting it with the vocabulary of the grammar book and linking it to orthography and phonology. The analogies had to be naturally picked out, so the usage of creativity was a prerequisite. Using the Ha-La-Cu -method and learning style we could make learning rhythmical (Lappalainen, 2005). It was also vital that we gave up the traditional language learning methods and along with this the traditional methods of learning the handicrafts (ibid). Old gender roles that were the custom in multicultural immigrants' past no longer were predetermined: along with textile material and color impression (craft) and culture, the groups of multicultural men and women learned languages together. The process and tasks led to joined goals; the learning situation and environment were interactive and culturally sensitive. The integration had begun, so the vocational training and education also was bringing the multicultural men and women closer to their new country and society. Furthermore the induction–deduction method and vice versa worked well in defining creativity and the use of it.

The gender barriers are breaking because the language learning process is deeply interactive: it is the use of “the not-yet-known”. Words and sentences, texts and textiles, merge in the textile and colour impression process. Encountering cultures is preceded by *locating partial, phased and parallel socio-cultural contextualization*. When the multicultural men and women are trained to be sensitively reflexive in their language learning in craft learning situation the gender barriers break in the learning-in-doing process. Encountering cultures in learning language and interpreting the textile and colour impression process and product create new empowering ways for integration for both genders. According to my experiences as a teacher, *the textile material and colour impression* (design) supported the immigrants' (women as well as men) learning language and culture, by means of craft activity (Lappalainen, 1994).

Learning language and culture, the connection between language culture and manual skills enhanced wide range of abilities: 1.) Utilizing a learner's own culture, 2.) Harmonizing learning, 3.) Learning language in doing, 4.) Progressing the interactive skills, 5.) Progressing the skills for individual, pair and group work, 6.) Learning verbalizing skills, 7.) Giving variability, inspiration, creativeness and a

therapeutic view to the learning process, 8.) Opportunities for special teaching, 9.) Discreet breaking of gender role-division, 10.) Promoting self-esteem, 11.) Promoting activity and independence, 12.) Simplifying the substance of learning, 13.) The cultural awareness of one's own and foreign cultural heritage in the use of language, knowledge of the society, laws, history and human artefacts, 14.) Preferences and ethnic loyalty connected to the vocabulary of the language to be learned. (Lappalainen, 2003). The traditional craft teaching and learning lack the sensitive, interpretative and interactive element. The Ha-La-Cu -method opened new ways by uniting men and women in the learning context. As a result of my study, 25% of the people did progress to interpretation and analysing, itemizing. The gender barrier broke down in the functional process: the groups *studied language in doing*. Words, sentences and structures that were picked up in daily situations gave the multicultural people regardless of their gender material for the exercises and lessons. The learning was authentic and autonomous in different learning situations. This was active and associative learning. Using this method, the concrete became abstract, connotations in real situations and images of imaginary visions opened phrases, words and meanings to become understood. Moreover, the situation provided a cultural encounter. The Ha-La-Cu – Method and Learning style, being sensitive textile material and color impression (design) learning in general, is fortifying the interpretative interactive craft learning.

I have come to conclusion that in breaking the gender gap there also is the matter of observing the basis of cultural thinking and material, not just directly but multi-scientifically and multi-sensibly (Rajander, 2010). If the craft learning does not profile the conventional “sewing club”- session then even Muslim men may become interested in interpreting and associatively reflecting on the craft. The learning process (craft and language together) may start beginning the fruitful narration leading to interpretation and association. The narratives can only be verbalizing a color impression, theme like the Aurora Borealis, but the theme (vicinal environment) was beforehand carefully considered. The result that some of the men started to interpret the craft while working revealed their learned and sensibly unobstructed touch to the material. They were reflecting on the haptic touch associatively. They also noticed useful new elements in the planning, working, and interpreting processes: 1) touching the material, 2) haptic sensing, 3) joining colors to objects, 4) commenting on the texture and structure, and 5) being tuned for beginning the narrations. Co-operationally they experienced the colour and haptic touch etc., and the contextualization produced interpreted words and expressions. The men were more able to work in an unprejudiced manner than the women were. They were acting without the pressure of feminine craft culture, (where the attitude concerning craft making is more like attending a sewing club, craft hobby circle or other typical women's craft making situation). Women feel that they are more on duty in craft processing and thus preserving the gender gap.

Conclusion and Discussion

The myths were breaking because people realized the meaning of interpretation. Narrations were considered as useful means in interpretation and analysis; still the teacher-myth strongly affected the attitudes. Many of the participants in learning groups proceeded without interpretation in case; they were continuously seeking and waiting for new variations to make/learn craft. Myths remained and metaphors were rejected. The techniques-myth remained strong. The gender-myth was gradually being broken when people were in learning environments which differed from conventional environments: learning language and craft together in gender-neutral groups. Most of the interviewed people expressed their opinions of gender-neutral learning situation: craft, the textile material and color impression was as suitable for men as for women, especially in language learning situations.

It is important to raise conversation about multi-scientific and multi-sensory elements in the learning process. Human skills in analysing and interpreting artifacts their appearance, patterns etc. have

narrowed indeed that almost have faded. The ability to gain and differentiate the relationships of the elements in deepest essence of the matters of craft is lacking. These elements make intersections where multi-scientific knowledge will be constructed empirically and scientifically. How the associations in human artifacts – be they different or similar – reflect our culture and become interpreted? Sensibly interpreting these aspects belong to the professional vocational craft. We need this multi-scientific and multi-sensory reflection for successful analysis and interpretation. Hence, my work will be a continuation of the analysis of this matter. The multicultural pedagogy and education in our schools is challenged to provide more interactive dialogue. The main purpose is to see how the acting hand is interactively utilized and joined with an interaction of material and immaterial and of the brain and the senses.

I have an idea about relations between language and material reality that metaphors clarify the relationship. This occurs most genuinely when evoking the experiences: the metaphors and analyses will enlighten and strengthen the unity of craft and language. This can also break the prevailing myths. Fundamentally, metaphors' value is seen in associative reflections and interpretations constructing narrations of process and product, in *the verbalizing process of learning in doing* in general. Enhancing the encountering of cultures and breaking gender barriers is a slow and unsteady process. I urge the craft teachers to come out of their shells. In addition, the teachers of languages as a second language should extend their views. Which group of teachers would take and use this Ha-La-Cu – method and learning system? In encountering the pedagogy of meeting the cultures, we need a multicultural pedagogy and didactics that will bridge gender and other cultural gaps in an environment of creativity. For creating the new information technology we also need women's energy in our society. Therefore, women's work can lead men and women together to the new multicultural information society.

This article and my studies and experiments open the new concepts, knowledge and terms in craft activity. I think that I have found a lacking element in craft learning and teaching process and studying science of textile material and colour impression design. Craft not only is making artefacts by using certain techniques, models and methods, it is far more an element deep in human body and soul that can enhance the mental and social cohesion.

Renaming craft as subject for wider conception

With the establishment of grammar schools, the women's equal rights to education spread throughout Finnish society. The vocational craft education rests on handicrafts teaching in the school system (Johansson 2006). In the beginning, the title for the subject was *handicrafts* (Kansakoulun käsityönopetus, 1912). The public teaching and learning has been a gender-divided subject for boys and girls: at grammar school. The title of the subject has remained the same like a main-headline. It was named *girls' craft* and *boys' craft*. Equal rights no longer confined only to the school institute. The educated women began climbing the social ladder and holding positions in society (ibid; Kaiser, 1996). In craft education, the myths still grew on. Since the comprehensive school stabilized and techniques in craft became stronger the names of the subjects changed to *textile craft*, and *technical works* (FNBE, 1970). Different methods, techniques, materials used were highlighted by words different, separate, and special (Kananaja 1989; Suojanen, 1994). Technology seems to be even more emphasized in handicrafts teaching. There is at least a sewing machine in textile craft class. The expensive new embroider-sewing machines are becoming common. The subject was named *textile - and technical works* in 2004, (FNBE, 2004, 156–157.) In the craft process, the hand making remains a hobby craft with glue, paper etc. (Lahelma, 2002).

The term “handicrafts”/ “craft” in my studies onwards will be “*The textile material and colour impression*” because myths in “handicrafts” bring forth new myths. My expression oversees the mythic attitudes, lowers the gender barriers and leads to reflective advancing interpretations over and above just making a product by working and using techniques. Textile and colour impression could widen the aspects of human growth as already expressed by Uno Cygnaeus’ words about teaching pointing to the importance of *clarifying the essential meanings*; (learning to read precisely does not develop the *understanding* of what has been read). This refers to a perceiving of the *association* (Cygnaeus, 1910). Clarifying the meanings created associations, connections between phenomena and matters became understood (Lappalainen, 2005). These facts concerning bridging the gender gap have been overlooked in comprehensive school curriculum (Lahelma, 2002; Paechter 2006). Just renaming the subject may bring new more open attitudes and wider dimensions to the matter. Today in spite of gender, we discuss about enhancing the picture-reading skills; this may evolve a new vision on “handicrafts”: associative insight in textile material and colour impression (design) and most of all the ingrained myths about gender in “handicraft” vanish. As a result I found the fact that in the multicultural learning groups this Ha-La-Cu –method with widened conception of textile material and color impression (craft) was effective, and men (even more than women were) became interested in the new insight of textile material and color impression.

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Eeva-Maija Lappalainen is University Lector and research Doctor of Arts and Crafts design at the University of Oulu teachers' education. Her background includes PhD in education. Her research interests focus on the relationship between education, art and craft design education, combined with language and culture and on the structural design.

ATTACHMENT 1

Enquiry

Mieslahti 18.3.2013–8.5.2013 Course “Suomen askeleet”, “Steps to Finnish language”

Name _____

Native country _____

Age _____

Profession _____

Education _____

How long you have been in Finland? _____

Previous Finnish language studies _____

1. What do you think about studying Finnish? In your mind, what is it like?
2. What do you think about possibilities, facilitating learning the Finnish language, and how could it be made?
3. About learning, what comes to your mind about learning the crafts / textile and colour impression?
4. Before the course “Suomen askeleet”, what was your idea about learning language by learning textile and colour impression/crafts?
5. What was your idea about learning language, and having the crafts/ textile- and colour impression as tool for learning in “Suomen askeleet” -course, spring 2013?
6. What did you learn about Finnish language by learning the textile and colour impression in Suomen askeleet “-course, spring 2013?
7. How did you think about the idea, connecting the learning textile and colour impression and learning the Finnish language by making the “Easter eggs” like Aurora Borealis -coloured felted “stones”? How did they work together? Other words: the theme Aurora Borealis and joining the language learning -situation together, did you find any associations about the theme?
8. How did you feel about joining the idea about co-operationally felted wool (like Aurora Borealis) with learning language and learning textile and colour impression? How did they work together: The theme Aurora Borealis, and learning the language with learning the textile and colour Impression together?
9. Watching, seeing and observing the aurora borealis and the towel: how did you feel about working with the theme about Aurora Borealis and impression with Polar night (“kaamos”) -season connected with learning Finnish language and crafts? How did they work together, the Aurora Borealis theme, crafts learning and language learning? Did you find any association, what kind of?
10. How did you feel about handling the “rag flower” -theme united, with learning Finnish language and crafts together? How did they work together: how did the rag flower -theme, learning language and crafts work together? What kind of associations did you find?
11. What words, impressions, and holophrases did you find and learn in learning process, uniting the crafts learning and language learning? Write down, for example:
12. How can you enhance learning Finnish language by using the crafts learning as a tool?
13. How can you interpret the textile and colour impression in Finnish during and after the working process?
14. Interpreting the process, how can you use the words: nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs?