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Abstract

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Developing the craft student teachers' competences in elderly care

The aim of this study is to investigate how craft student teachers develop their professional vision during their applied teaching practice in elderly care in Finland. As part of their practice in spring 2016, students will design craft workshops which they will be teaching in a care home. The research question is: *How do the students build their professional vision during teaching practice with the elderly?*

Although the Finnish craft teacher education focuses on the pedagogy needed in the comprehensive school, exploring the possibilities for teaching crafts in various contexts is important to broaden the students' professional competence. Research has revealed that many aspects of crafts are supporting wellbeing: cognitively demanding and bodily act of making with different materials and colours gives pleasure and enriches mental life; purposeful activity gives the feeling of validity and being useful; engagement in crafts promotes communication and participation in a wider society.

Worldwide, the proportion of persons over 60 is expected to double between 2007 and 2050, and there is a need for focusing on the wellbeing of the elderly. The overall aim of this study is to develop an educational model to coach craft professionals to design and carry out craft activities that meet the special needs of the elderly and promote their wellbeing through crafts. This aim is reached through several overlapping stages of which the one concentrating on the possibilities of craft teacher education is presented in this paper.

Several methods for producing the data are used: student group interviews before and after the training practice; the learning diaries which the students write along the process, and their learning portfolios. Analysis focuses on what the students have learned, what changed in their way of thinking and what triggered, or hindered the learning. The preliminary findings of the analysis will be introduced in this paper. The findings will add to the theory about the development of the students' professional vision during teaching practice, and about teaching crafts in welfare sector, especially among the elderly.