

## Developing the craft student teachers' competences in elderly care

The aim of this study is to investigate the professional development of nine craft student teachers during their teaching practice in a care centre for older people in Finland. As part of their practice in spring and autumn 2016, students will design and deliver craft workshops for older people in a care home. The research question is: *How does the professional vision of craft student teachers develop during teaching practice in a care centre?*

Finnish Craft Teacher Education focuses on the pedagogy needed in the comprehensive school and the teaching practices are mostly conducted in schools, teaching children and teenagers. However, exploring the possibilities of teaching crafts in various contexts is important to broaden the students' professional competence, because not all craft teachers choose to work in comprehensive school. Some are employed in e.g. adult education instead. In the future, they will probably teach more senior students in adult education because worldwide, the proportion of persons over 60 is expected to double between 2007 and 2050, and there is a need for focusing on services that increase the wellbeing of the older people. 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; and engagement in crafts promotes communication and participation in a wider society.

Craft teachers and other craft experts may also increasingly be employed in challenging community engagement areas to work in cooperation with other experts in specialist fields, especially wellbeing and health-related services. This provides new employment opportunities for them as well. However, these are areas outside their traditional education and core skills. Abilities to work in care sector with different target groups, such as older people, in cooperation with experts of other fields are needed.

The overall aim of my study is to develop ways 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. To understand the educational needs of craft student teachers, it is important to investigate their experiences of teaching older people in a care centre, which is a new environment for them.

Several methods for producing the data are used: student group interviews before and after the teaching practice; the learning diaries which the students write along the process, and their learning portfolios. Analysis focuses on what the students have learned and what changed in their way of thinking regarding teaching older people. 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.