Social integration of unemployed immigrants
A comparison of integration programs in Jyväskylä and Reykjavík

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Jyväskylä and Reykjavík

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Social integration of unemployed immigrants

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Preface

I would like to thank the Employment and Economy Development Office of Jyväskylä, the Palapeli2-project, the city of Jyväskylä and Mímir símenntun for allowing me to use their services in order to conduct this research. I am grateful for all the persons working in those facilities for offering me help and being my contact between the integration programs. I would especially like to thank the teachers and students of the integration programs in Jyväskylä and Reykjavík who allowed me to follow the classes and shared their experiences with me.

I am grateful for the guidance and advice from my supervisor, Hanna Ragnarsdóttir, which has helped me tremendously in conducting this research. In addition, I like to thank Unnur Dís Skaptadóttir and Hildur Blöndal Sveinsdóttir for their recommendations.

Thank you Caitlin Wilson and Siru Laine for your contribution in proof-reading, offering good suggestions and providing me translation aid.

Finally, thank you to my family and friends for your support and warm thanks to my Viking, Sæþór, for just being there.
Abstract

People have always migrated to different countries but their motivations vary. Whatever the reasons are for immigration, everyone has to face the difficult task of integration. Integration is not an easy process, especially if one is from a culture completely different from the host country’s. The purpose of integration is to become a full member of a host country’s society, which means that one needs to know the language and the culture in order to function fully within the society. To ease this process, many countries have developed special programs for immigrants where they teach the language that is spoken in the country and basic knowledge about the society such as the majority’s culture, educational system, welfare system and so on. With the tools offered by the integration programs, immigrants are supposed to be able to find jobs for themselves or a job that is suitable for their education. Both Iceland and Finland offer such courses.

The purpose of this study is to explore and compare immigration policies and the integration programs in Jyväskylä, Finland and Reykjavík, Iceland to find out how unemployed immigrants are aided in their integration process in a new society. The study compares and contrasts the immigration policies and integration programs in Finland and Iceland. The two towns were chosen for the study because of their similarities; language skills in Finnish and Icelandic are highly emphasized and unemployment rate is currently high in both places, further necessitating good language skills.

Findings suggested that type of immigration and integration policies and hence integration programs are quite different from each other. Finland has formed its integration programs to fulfil the needs of unemployed immigrants, integration process is considered to be long and language and culture are taught together. Iceland sees integration process as a short event because it has formed the courses for employed immigrants. Culture and language were also taught separately.
Ágrip

Fólk hefur alltaf flutt til mismunandi landa en ástæður fyrir því geta verið margvíslagar. Þó ástæður þess að fólk flytur séu ólíkar þurfa allir að takast á við aðlöggun að nýju samfélagi. Aðlöggun eða sampætting er ekki auðvelt ferli, sérstaklega ef upprunamenning fólkis er ólík menningu nýja landsins. Tilgangur sampættingar er að verða fullgildur aðili og virkur þátttakandi í samfélagi gestalandsins, en í því felst m.a. að kunna tungumál í og þekkja menninguna. Til að auðvelja þetta ferli hafa mörg lönd próað sérstakar áætlanir fyrir innflytjendur þar sem þeir kenna tungumál sem er talað í landinu og undirstöðu þekkingu um samfélagið, svo sem um menningu meiri hlutans, menntakerfi, velfari, þekkingu um samfélagið, svo framvegis. Ásamt námskeiðum sem í boði eru fyrir innflytjendur þurfa þeir að geta fundið störf fyrir sjálfa sig eða starf sem hentar menntun þeirra. Slík námskeið eru til bæði á Íslandi og í Finnlandi.

Tilgangur þessarar rannsóknar er að kanna og bera saman innflytjendastefnu og samþættingaráætlanir í Jyväskylä í Finnlandi og í Reykjavík í því skyni að finna út hvaða aðstoð atvinnulasir innflytjendur á við aðlögunarferli í nýju samfélagi. Ég vil komast að hvers konar innflytjendastefnur og samþættingaráætlanir eru í Finnlandi og á Íslandi og á hvaða hátt þær eru frábrugðnar. Þessar tvær borgir voru valdir til rannsóknar vegna þess hve likar þær eru á margan hátt; áhersla er lögð ákunnátta í finnsku og íslensku og hlutfall atvinnuleysis er hátt í báðum borgum, sem undirstrikar enn frekar nauðsyn góðrar ungumálakunnáttu.

Niðurstöður rannsóknarinnar benda til þess að stefna í innflytjendamálum og aðlögunarnámskeið sér mjög ólík í lóndunum tveimur. Finnland hefur próað aðlögunarnámskeið sín til að koma til mótis við atvinnulasir innflytjendur, aðlögunarferlið er langt og tungumál og menning kennt samhliða. Á Íslandi er aðlögunarferlið stutt þar sem aðlögunarnámskeið eru ætluð innflytjendum sem hafa vinnu. Menning og tungumál eru kennd í áskildum námskeiðum.
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1 Introduction

People have always migrated to different countries but their motivations vary; some flee from their countries' unstable political atmosphere while others might leave in search of better income for themselves or their families. Some people, like me, move to a different country to have new experiences. They might try to “find themselves;” likewise finding love is another explanation for moving or staying. The world has indeed become smaller and thanks to different kinds of agreements among countries, e.g. the Schengen agreement\(^1\) in the EU\(^2\)- and EEA\(^3\)-countries, moving has become easier than ever before for some residents within the EU area but simultaneously more difficult for others.

Whatever the reasons are for moving, everyone has to face the difficult task of integration. Integration is not an easy process, especially if one is from a culture completely different from the host country’s, or if one was forced to move, as in the case of refugees. The purpose of integration is to become a full member of a host country’s society, which means that one needs to know the language and the culture in order to function fully within the society (Spiecker, Steutel & De Ruyter, 2004). To ease this process, many countries have developed special programs for immigrants to learn the country’s language and learn about the society, culture, educational system, welfare system and so on. Both Iceland and Finland offer such courses.

Besides offering aids for integration, the goal of the integration programs\(^4\) is to teach enough language skills to get immigrants employed. Unfortunately it seems that immigrants have often difficulties finding employment or finding a job that corresponds to their education. The obvious reason for such situations is that they might not know the language of the country and that makes it difficult for them to start or continue their

---

1 Schengen agreement guarantees free movement within countries, such as Iceland and Finland, that have have accepted it (Europa, 2009).
2 The European Union (EU) is a political and economical partnership between 27 European countries (Europa, n.d.a).
3 The European Economic Area (EEA) is an agreement that allows non-EU-countries, Iceland, Liechtenstein and Norway, to participate in the EU's internal markets without an EU membership (Europa, n.d.b).
4 I use the term “integration programs” to refer to courses which are established to offer information about the host country’s language, culture, society and so on and that are meant for adult immigrants.
careers. The other more unfortunate reason could be that they are foreigners, especially if the host country is a rather homogenous society where there is little immigration. The unemployment rate among immigrants is rather high in Finland and Iceland as both countries’ employment markets are quite difficult at the moment due to the global economic downturn. About 20% of immigrants are unemployed in Finland even though the employment situation has improved during the last five years (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, 2008). The unemployment rate for immigrants in Iceland is about 18%, of which the biggest group is Polish immigrants who worked in construction before the recession (Vinnumálastofnun, 2012). One of the reasons for the great number of unemployed immigrants in these countries is the recession, but also significant is the importance of languages spoken in the countries. Language skills are emphasized greatly in both countries; Finnish and Icelandic are seen as the key to society and employment (Kujanpää & Laine, 2008; Pikkarainen, 2005; Ragnarsdóttir, 2010; Pórisdóttir, Síavarsdóttir & Bernburg, 1997). This being the case, integration programs are especially important for unemployed immigrants as they lack the social support networks that they could gain access to through employment.

1.1 Description of the countries

Finland and Iceland share similar characters compared to other Nordic countries\(^5\): both are republic countries whereas others are monarchies and both have been under the rule of different countries for a long time\(^6\). Both countries have also quite special location, Iceland in the middle of Atlantic and Finland being the connection point of west and east.

Compared to other European countries in the point of view of immigration, Finland and Iceland had their first immigrants quite late and the number of them is quite little. Finland, especially, used to be a country of emigration where people migrated to other Western countries,  

\(^5\) The Nordic countries consist of Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden.

\(^6\) Iceland was under the rule of Norway and Denmark and became independent in 1944 (U.S. Department of State, 2011). Finland used to be part of Sweden and later Russia before becoming independent in 1917 (U.S. Department of State, 2012).
especially to Sweden, after labour (Similä, 2003). The situation of Finland however changed in the late 1980’s when immigration exceeded emigration and Finland became country of immigration. Although Iceland has an image of being an isolated, homogenous country, it was and still is also a country from which people moved to other countries, for example traditionally to Denmark for higher education and after the financial collapse to Norway for work (Loftsdóttir, 2009; Hagstofa Íslands, 2012). The emigration of Iceland, however, was not as big as in Finland.

Table 1: General information about Finland and Iceland

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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Finland</th>
<th>Iceland</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Population</td>
<td>Ca. 5.4 million</td>
<td>Ca. 320 000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Official language/s</td>
<td>Finnish, Swedish</td>
<td>Icelandic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Capital</td>
<td>Helsinki</td>
<td>Reykjavík</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Immigrants from total</td>
<td>3.4%</td>
<td>6.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>population</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type of migration</td>
<td>Refugees, return migration, family ties</td>
<td>Labour migration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>EU-membership(^7)</td>
<td>EEA-membership(^8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though there are similar qualities in both countries, there are also significant differences. Iceland is particularly smaller than Finland by its population and size but Iceland, on the other hand, has bigger immigration groups (Hagstofa Íslands, 2012a; Tilastokeskus, 2012; Statistics Iceland, 2011a). What also is different between the two countries is the timing of immigration. Finland’s immigration number has had a steady grow from the end of 1980’s until today but in Iceland, immigration happened suddenly and fast (Statistics Finland, 2011; Statistics Iceland 2011a). The type of immigration is also different in Finland and Iceland: people immigrate to Finland based on family ties, being a refugee or they are

\(^7\) Finland became member of the EU in 1995 (Europa, n.d.c).

\(^8\) Iceland became a member of the EEA in 1994 and Iceland has applied for membership in the EU in 2010 (European Comission, 2012).
return migrants\textsuperscript{9} but in Iceland the type of immigration has been mainly labour migration.

### 1.1.1 Description of the towns

Jyväskylä, though situated about 270 km north of Helsinki, and is the capital of Central Finland, has relatively few foreigners. The population of Jyväskylä was 130,816 in the end of 2010 making it the 7th largest town in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2011). It is known as a “student city” because about 34% of its population are either pupils or students in different levels of education (Jyväskylän kaupunki, 2011). The unemployment rate in Jyväskylä is one of the highest in Finland because of lack of big employers (Keski-Suomen ELY-keskus, 2012).

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Table 2: General information about Jyväskylä and Reykjavík</th>
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<td><strong>Jyväskylä</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immigrants from total population</td>
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<tr>
<td>Unemployment rate</td>
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Reykjavík, which is the capital of Iceland, is bit smaller by its population than Jyväskylä but it has more immigrants (Hagstofa Íslands, 2012b). The unemployment rate is better compared to Jyväskylä (Vinnumálastofnun, 2012).

### 1.2 The goal and benefit of the study

Immigration has recently become a hot debate in Finland, especially when the True Finns, which is a populist party against immigration and opposed to the EU, became the third biggest party in the parliamentary elections of 2011. The party has had its scandals in the media during the whole year of 2011, many of which have to do with their strong opinions about immigration or other minorities, such as homosexuals and their rights. One of the party members and assistant to one of the Members of Parliament was also a member of the Finnish Nazi party. According to different blogs about immigration and immigrants, refugees are especially accused of not

\textsuperscript{9} See chapter 2.1 Immigration to Jyväskylä.
integrating into Finnish society and authorities are accused of pampering them by supporting them too much financially. The recent economic crisis in the EU, which has affected Finland as it is one of the countries in the Euro zone, has also raised worries about global cooperation that has, in my opinion, resulted in viewing foreigners as a negative matter or as extra expenses for the Finnish society. In Iceland, the discussion about immigration has calmed down a bit since many of the labour migrants left when the economic crisis hit the island. Icelandic Member of Parliament Amal Tamimi\(^\text{10}\) claimed in her speech at the Alþingi, the Parliament of Iceland, that Icelandic teaching for foreigners is not satisfactory enough due to the cutbacks that were done after the financial collapse (“Íslenskukennska fyrir innflytjendur ekki fullnægjandi”, 2011, November 15). According to her, Iceland should take action to offer Icelandic and also mother tongue teaching for foreigners to avoid similar problems that other countries have had recently.

The purpose of this study is to explore and compare immigration policies and the integration programs in Jyväskylä, Finland and Reykjavík, Iceland to find out how unemployed immigrants are integrated into the societies. By integration programs, I refer to such language courses or programs that are mentioned in the Icelandic and Finnish immigration laws whose goal is the integration of immigrants. I aim to answer the following questions:

- How are the immigration and integration policies in Iceland and Finland alike and how do they differ?
- What are the Finnish and Icelandic integration programs like?
- What is being taught in the programs and how?

With a holistic view over the different programs that are offered in Finland and Iceland, we could try to understand them as a whole and then perhaps try to improve them so that the majority in Finland and Iceland would not feel threatened by immigrants, but also to offer good quality education for immigrants.

\(^{10}\) Palestinian born Amal Tamimi is the first foreign-born woman, who has been elected to Icelandic Parliament. She was one of the establishers of Women of Multicultural Ethnicity Network (W.O.M.E.N.), which one of the aims is to increase the visibility of the immigrants in the Icelandic society (Allan, 2012, January 23).
1.3 Personal reasons for the research

I could say I have tried to integrate into both Finnish and Icelandic society. Even though I am Finnish and consider myself Finnish, I was born in Sweden and spent my early childhood there. This has probably had an effect on me of feeling “rootless” and not being satisfied living in one place for a long time but instead wanting always to explore something more. Another reason for feeling rootless could be that my family and I moved around a lot in Central Finland and as my friends talk about their childhood home I can talk about my childhood homes in different buildings or all the different schools that I have attended. This was also one of the reasons why I decided to move to Iceland. I was one of the people who moved here to work but also to “find myself,” to have my head straight about what I would like to do with the rest of my life. Little did I know in the beginning of 2007 when I came here that I would still be here almost five years later writing a thesis about social integration and living with an Icelandic Viking.

I came here to work as a volunteer with the scouts through a program established by the European Union. I received a small amount of money once a month, free food and accommodation by the scouts of Iceland. The year of 2007 felt like a long holiday because I was not really a part of the Icelandic society as I did not need to have to worry about paying bills or other responsibilities part of normal life. Because I had planned to be here only a year I did not bother to learn Icelandic. I took part in one Icelandic course taught in Selfoss that the scouts paid for but I found the course disappointing. The students of the course were from all around the world and some of them did not speak any English. Some of the students had lived already many years in Iceland but could not speak much Icelandic, just a few of the most common phrases. Because I knew Swedish and had learned German for eight years in compulsory and upper secondary school, I learned the basics of Icelandic quite fast by myself and was quite bored in the classroom where the teacher was teaching the most common and simple phrases.

During the year, I sort of fell in love with Iceland and decided to stay here because it was so easy to have a job and I had already made friends here. After having a “real job” in a pre-school and finding that people were not that thrilled having a foreigner working with their children, my love for Iceland started to fade away a bit. There were so many issues in Icelandic society that I did not have a clue about, for example the structure of trade unions or taxes. I felt rather frustrated that there did not seem to be any
information available in a language that I understood because it sometimes felt that the only available languages were either Icelandic or Polish.

I did not attend any courses in Reykjavík for learning Icelandic because I thought I had to pay for them myself as I was not aware that my trade union would give me financial support for them. Likewise my previous bad experience in the language course in Selfoss discouraged me from pursuing more courses. I did, however, think in retrospect that maybe taking part in some sort of course could have made some of the issues that I faced here easier, for example a frustrating moment at the tax office where I was looked down on because of my lack of Icelandic skills.

I personally feel I have become part of Icelandic society though by no means have I become Icelandic. My Icelandic skills are not excellent, but I am able to cope in all cases even though I did not take part in any integration program. I am therefore interested in investigating the programs, their structure, the themes that are being taught in the classes and how they are taught.
2 Background about immigration

Immigration in Europe has changed in the last couple of decades (Turton & Gonzáles, 2003). Different agreements, such as the Schengen agreement or agreements among the Nordic countries, have made moving a lot easier for residents dwelling in those areas. At the same time, the widening gap between undeveloped and developed countries has increased the number of asylum seekers that has in turn led to more stringent controls, making it more difficult to receive asylum. Essentially, agreements in Europe have made moving easier for some European countries but more difficult for the rest of the world.

Different political and economic factors have impacted on European immigration throughout history (Triandafyllidoy, Gropas & Vogel, 2007). After the destruction of most parts of Europe during the Second World War, people moved to different European countries to work as reconstruction of Europe required plenty of work force. Most of the workers were men and they were considered to be temporary work force who would return back to their home countries later on (Geddes, 2003). For example, Germany invited many Turkish people to work in the 1970’s who, instead of moving back to their home country, decided to stay in their new home (Turton & Gonzáles, 2003). The oil crisis in the 1970’s had an impact on Western-Europe and its economic growth started to slow down hence having an impact on the type of European migration turning from labour oriented to migration based on family unifications. Before the economic downturn in the 1970’s, men had been the primary ones to immigrate but after the economic changes women started to migrate more as Geddes (2003) point out.

Refugees or asylum seekers are not a new phenomenon in Europe but according to Boccardi (2001) Western-European countries started to focus more on the issue after First World War when many had had to flee from their homes to seek protection elsewhere. It took 30 more years and another World War before the newly formed United Nations and its specialized agency, the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) formed a tight definition for the concept of refugee (Whittaker, 2006). According to 1951 Geneva Convention a refugee has a
well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2010, article 1, p. 14).

Geddes (2003) claims that deviation of Europe to west and east after the Second World War until beginning of the 1990’s had an impact on how refugees and asylum seekers were considered. For example, asylum seekers who fled from the previous communist countries of Eastern-Europe to west, were openly welcomed because it was considered to be a fight between totalitarianism and democracy. After the collapse of the Soviet-Union and ending of Cold War, the attitudes towards asylum seekers became more negative.

According to Triandafyllidou et al. (2007) different European societies have some many issues regarding to immigration in contemporary world. As the borders of Europe has open countries within the EU, they have tighten for others leading to increase number of illegal immigration, which is partially due to unclear definition of asylum seekers and persecution, Triandafyllidou et al. (2007) claim. Globalization and modern technology has open gateways to parts of people to migrate but on the other hand different incidents, such as the attacks of 9/11 and the bombings in Madrid in 2003 and London in 2005 have raised worried about national security in different societies.

2.1 Immigration to Jyväskylä

Compared to other European countries, the number of foreigners in Finland is small, though it is constantly increasing. Figure 1 shows the development in numbers of foreign citizens in Finland from 1981 until 2010.

In figure 1, one can see how immigration has been constantly increasing since the 1990’s. The starting point of the increase in number of immigrants in the 1990’s occurred when it was declared that Ingrian-Finns, who lived in Karelia, an area in the east of Finland that was lost to the Soviet Union after the Continuation War (1941-1944), were considered to be return migrants
(Similä, 2003). This meant that Ingrian-Finns, even though they had lived for decades in the Soviet Union and later on in Russia, were considered Finns and were allowed to return to Finland under special policies (Työministeriö, 1998).

Figure 1: Number of citizens of foreign countries living in Finland from 1981-2010 (Statistics Finland, 2011)

Immigration is mainly to the southern parts of Finland because there are jobs available and also close connections to foreign countries as the international airport is situated there as well as harbours by the Baltic Ocean.
Finland has two official languages, Finnish and Swedish, but most of the Swedish-speaking Finns are situated in the coastal areas of Finland. Jyväskylä is a rather homogenous town where the majority speaks Finnish as their mother tongue. Figure 2 shows the number of Finnish speakers and foreign citizens in Jyväskylä in 2010.

Figure 2: Population of Jyväskylä according to language (Statistics Finland, 2011)

In figure 2, one can see the number of Finnish citizens that are Finnish, Swedish and Lappish speakers. The number of people who use Finnish as their mother tongue is ca. 127 000, Swedish speaking Finns are 305 and Lappish speakers are only 8 in Jyväskylä. It also reveals that the vast majority of people are Finnish speakers in Jyväskylä. From the population of ca. 130 000, only 2.4% were foreigners. In the number of foreigners, however, is not listed those who have received Finnish citizenship or those who might have dual citizenship, therefore the number of people of foreign origin could be a bit larger.

The main reasons for immigrating to Jyväskylä are being a refugee, return immigrant or because of family ties. Immigrating to Jyväskylä based on family ties means that one member of the family has already gained permits to live or work in Jyväskylä and wants to have their family with him or her or that a Finn has a foreign spouse (Elinkeino-, liikenne- ja
The largest immigration groups in Jyväskylä are Russian speakers, Kurdish people, Thai people, Persian speakers and Turkish people (Seppänen, 2010).

2.2 Immigration to Reykjavík

Iceland has the image of being an isolated island in the middle of the Atlantic whose culture and society is quite homogenous (Loftsdóttir, 2009). This image is however misleading since Icelanders have moved back and forth to different countries for work or education, for example. It is true, however, that immigration from other countries to Iceland started fairly late and it could be connected to the economic growth in the middle of 2000 since there were jobs available in various fields. Figure 3 shows the development in numbers of foreign citizens in Iceland from the year 1950 until 2011.

Figure 3: Foreign citizens in Iceland 1950-2011 (Statistics Iceland, 2011a)

One can see the rapid increase in number of foreigners in 2005 that started to drop in 2009 in figure 3. The decreasing numbers of foreigners have however steadied in 2010 and the numbers reveal that even though the recession started, there are many foreigners still in Iceland.
The biggest reason for immigrating to Iceland was because of work and Iceland attracted young people but also middle-aged men due to work that was available in construction of power plants and in the fishing industry, for example. (Government policy on the integration of immigrants, 2007). In Iceland, immigration has been scattered in various places and not just focused on the capital area because, for example, fishing industries and construction sites for power plants are in the countryside. The majority of foreigners live still in the capital area. Figure 4 shows the number of Icelandic and foreign citizens in Reykjavik in the 4th quarter of 2010.

The population of Reykjavik in the end of 2010 was 118 900 of which 7.9% were foreign citizens. The statistics of foreign citizens includes everyone that does not have Icelandic citizenship and excludes those immigrants with foreign origin who have gained it and those with dual citizenship. The biggest immigration groups are from Poland, Lithuania, Germany, Denmark, the Philippines and Thailand (Statistics Iceland, 2011c).
3 Theoretical background

The theoretical background is divided into three chapters. The first chapter explores social integration and former integration policies. The second one focuses on culture in second language acquisition and finally the third one explores Finnish and Icelandic research on immigration and integration.

3.1 Social integration

When people migrate to a new country, they might notice that they are considered to be different from the natives. As Penninx and Martiniello (2004) point out, in such cases newcomers are often considered to be “the others”, strangers or aliens, who do not belong to the specific area. This sort of confrontation could possible lead to hierarchy of cultures where the culture of the majorities is more appreciated than the minor ones. Because the attitudes towards migrants are often this, societies might have difficulties to find measures of including the immigrants in their social structure (Heckmann & Schnapper, 2003).

The issue with the concept of integration is that it is quite difficult to define. Martiniello (as cited in Penninx & Martiniello, 2004) claims that “there as many definitions and conceptions of integration as there are writers on the subject” (p. 141). The conceptions of integration, such as assimilation policies, multiculturalism or social integration, have similar goal, which is to include immigrants to a host society but how the process is done or how different cultures is considered, vary in different definitions. Integration is also a long process and not just a short event and as Penninx and Martiniello (2004) say, the ending of it is difficult to determine because the whole integration process is different among individuals. In simple form, the concepts and definitions of integration are “fuzzy”.

Former policies on integration of immigrants were to abolish differences so that the host country’s population would have a homogenous culture and therefore common national identity (Grillo, 2007). Many countries considered that the best way to ensure the integration of immigrants would be to abandon the original culture and change it to a new one or conform to the culture of the majority. In Iceland, foreign origin was seen as
different and negative; for example, until 1997 foreigners who wanted to have Icelandic citizenship had to change their names to Icelandic ones (Kjartansson, 2005).

In a policy of assimilation of immigrants, different ethnic and cultural groups “melt” together to become more homogenous (Kivisto, 2002). Kivisto (2002) explains assimilation policies of the USA in the beginning of 1900’s, when the goal of the process was to achieve a “melting pot”, a union of different cultures to form an American culture (p. 28). Gordon (as cited in Williams & Ortega, 1990, p. 701) defined a model of seven types of assimilation in order to form a melting pot of cultures.

1. Cultural or behavioural assimilation, in which an immigrant chooses to follow the cultural patterns of the majority
2. Structural assimilation, in which a person is able to access the primary group level, such as forming interethnic friendships
3. Marital assimilation
4. Identificational assimilation, in which people have formed a shared sense of belonging
5. Attitude receptive assimilation, which refers to the lack of prejudice
6. Behavioural receptive assimilation, which refers to the lack of discrimination
7. Civic assimilation, which is the final stage of assimilation characterised by a lack of power and value struggles among different cultures

In Gordon’s assimilation model, the basis was that minority cultures would be absorbed into the core culture or the majority’s ones, which he considered to be the Anglo American culture. The issue with forming the melting pot was that it never happened and different cultural and ethnic groups continued to exist (Kivisto, 2002).

Policies have shifted to embrace and celebrate the differences within nations in contemporary times and the main thought is that all cultures can live side by side. Simply put, the point of multiculturalism is that the host society’s people should accept all cultural differences and the people belonging to minorities should accept the host culture but still at the same time celebrate his or her cultural background (Modood, 2007). In other words, multiculturalism is a two-way action in which all parties should
coexist with one another regardless of their differences and form through interaction a common sense of identity.

Grillo (2007) investigates the multicultural policies in the UK and he argues that the concept of multiculturalism and integration are too “fuzzy” and regards them as “vague ideas or impulses” (p. 994). The UK used to have different colonies around the world that lead to the British Empire consisting of many different cultures, languages and religions. The multicultural polices in the UK aimed to cherish the differences among cultural groups, but the definitions of different groups were too simplistic and they failed to include all. Rather, individuals within different cultural groups were thrust to fit the profile of the group, for example all Muslims were considered to be “just Muslims” regardless of their country of origin, gender, social class and so on. By trying to define the differences within the UK, the policies failed to develop a common national identity that, according to Grillo, led to huge gaps among different cultural and ethnic groups. Even though Grillo criticises the lack of clarification of the concepts within integration of immigrants, he does not offer any alternative definitions.

Multiculturalism does not only emphasize the importance of tolerance and accepting of differences, it also emphasizes integration into a host society. All humans have similar desires, actions and nature, but how they perform or conduct these actions are different because of their different cultures (Parekh, 2000a). No culture is above another but because a host society belongs to a certain cultural district and follows the cultural and behavioural patterns based on it, one cannot simply exclude him or herself from it. All human beings have however a common set of values for defining a good life, such as equal opportunities and freedom of expression, and therefore different cultural parties should find values that are reachable for all and find measures for forming consensus (Parekh, 2000a; 2000b).

According to Spiecker et al. (2004) the purpose of social integration is to become a full democratic member of society and be able to work fully to secure the existence of it. A person should be able to take part in the happenings within society in order to be a democratic member of it, which requires language skills and cultural competence. To secure its existence one should work, pay taxes and obey the law.

Bosswick and Heckmann (2006) claim that there are four forms of social integration, which are connected to each other.
In structural integration one should have access to the core institutes of a society, such as the economy and labour market, welfare systems, health care, education and so on. Cultural integration is the dimension in which one can only gain access and a position in a society if one has some sort of information and competence in the host society’s language and culture. This does not mean that one should abandon his or her own culture but it is required to have some cultural competence in order to be accepted by the natives. Interactive integration means the acceptance of an immigrant to a host society by forming different types of social circles like friendships. Identificational integration means that an immigrant has a sense of belonging to a new society. Boswick and Heckmann (2006) define social integration as a two-way process that occurs through interaction between the immigrant and the host society. The immigrant’s process is to acquire new language and culture, form social circles, gain access to positions and acquire obligations and rights, whereas the host society’s process is to grant access to the core institutes and to create equal opportunities for immigrants (p. 11). Even though both parties in social integration have their own processes, the power balance is always in favour of the host society hence making how they use their power important.

To achieve the goal of integration of immigrants, one needs to have education about the society, knowledge of the native’s culture and
language so that he or she would be able to work efficiently in the society (Banks, 2007). So to be able to integrate successfully into a new society one needs to have some information about it. One of the issues in educating new citizens is the form of education or the ultimate goal of it. The issue is whether a host society wants to retain a homogenous society by educating immigrants to behave like natives or wants to form a multicultural one, in which an immigrant learns about host society but also ways to balance it with her or his own culture. The position that a host society decides to take for their goal of integration has an impact on the integration process and on judging whether it has been successful.

3.2 Culture in second language acquisition

Language skills are highly emphasized in integrating into a new society and into labour markets (McKay & Tom, 1999). It seems to be a common belief that if one learns just the language, integration happens by itself because one has a tool to communicate. The issue in believing that after acquiring the language integration happens on its own is that without culture, which influences how to use the language, one is not able to operate fully in a social context (Byram & Morgan, 1994). Therefore, language and culture are inseparable concepts (Hinkel, 1999).

Culture in second language learning is often considered to be the superficial aspects, such as traditions, folklore or public holidays of the target language’s country. Therefore second language teachers might teach the subject on the surface (Hinkel, 1999). Culture is actually a wide concept, of which core aspects are values, skills, attitudes and contacts that reflect on how individuals act in a social context (Odé & Veenman, 2003). Culture is the set of learned dispositions from everyday life that form an individual’s habitus (Bourdieu, 1977).

Culture does not only make individuals behave in a certain way but it also influences them by forming their identities (Abbinnett, 2003). Peters (2003) claims that culture comprises two different identities that are closely connected to each other: individual and collective identity. Individual identity is, as the name suggests, the definition of oneself that replies the questions “who I am” or “what kind of a person I am”. This identity is formed by reflecting one’s attitudes and values with others that eventually form one’s identity, or how she or he sees him or herself in a social context. Collective identity is a set of individuals that share common identities or some common characteristics that make them feel part of a group, for example ethnic groups, sports groups or group members in the same
occupational field. Instead of focusing on the individual level, collective identity strives to answer the questions “who we are” or “what has brought us together”. According to Peters, collective identity is not an antonym with cultural differences because a group can have collective identity regardless of members’ countries of origin, religions or ethnicities. For example, my closest friends in Iceland are immigrants from around the world because we share the common experience of being a foreigner in some country and therefore feel more at ease interacting with each other. A society cannot, however, work properly with different groups who have different collective identities. Rather, through cooperation and negotiation among different groups in a state, integration of different groups is possible to achieve and hence form a national identity (Sunier, 2003). Negotiations among different groups cannot happen without intercultural communication skills (Stalpers, 1987). Intercultural communication skills only focus on the linguistic aspect, meaning that both parties of the negotiation state know the language but it also expands to cultural aspects. According to Stalpers (1987), words have their own symbolic values based on the negotiators’ cultures hence making conversations and talking sometimes difficult even though both parties from different cultural backgrounds use the same language. Education plays a key role in enhancing cultural awareness (Byram & Morgan, 1994).

The point of second language teaching is to teach students to be able to use a language authentically, which requires cultural competence in how to use a language (Hinkle, 1999). Authenticity in language use means that an individual is able to use it properly in everyday life and knows how to react properly in different social contexts, for example in formally addressing elderly or people with higher social status. Formal second language learning happens, however, in language classrooms and therefore, language teachers have great responsibility to find suitable methods to achieve authenticity.

In school, learning happens through social interaction and therefore it should be kept in mind that both parties of the process have their own personal experiences about schooling, languages and cultural competence (McKay & Tom, 1999; Nieto, 2002; Niżegorodcew, 2011). When the teacher and learners step into the classroom, all of them bring their own cultures with them. Different attitudes, values, skills and connections have an effect on how the learning process happens. Furthermore, language teachers have their own opinions and attitudes towards different cultures and, like anyone else, find some cultures more fascinating than others depending on the person (Nieto, 2002). These attitudes have an impact on social
interactions in the form of showing more interest to some cultures or stereotyping individuals. For example, English teachers might focus on teaching British and American English and culture as the norm and neglect the fact that English is a lingua franca including many different types of cultures and ethnic groups (Niźegorodcew, 2011).

3.3 Icelandic and Finnish research on immigration and integration

Icelandic research about multicultural society focuses on the following themes (Jakobsdóttir, 2007):

1. Integration, circumstances and position of immigrants
2. Research focusing on the point of view of Asian or Polish immigrants and refugees
3. Icelanders’ attitudes towards immigrants
4. Research focusing on students of foreign origin at different education levels
5. Immigrants in work life

Many studies focus on the integration and schooling of immigrant children and consider their position in the Icelandic educational environment or on the teacher-foreign parent relationship (for example, Daniélsdóttir, 2009; Schubert, 2010; Þórarinsdóttir, 2009; Þorleifsdóttir, 2009). One can also find research about adult immigrants in work life and their struggles to integrate into Icelandic society (for example, Ásgeirsdóttir, 2008; Guðjónsdóttir, 2010; Kristjánsdóttir, 2010).

Integration in Icelandic society is not similar for everyone since individuals have different cultural backgrounds, support networks like possible family members living in Iceland and working situations. Ragnarsdóttir (2007) studied 10 immigrant families and their children’s experiences in Iceland. The families were from all around the world, from Asia to Europe. All the families’ parents except one couple had low-paid jobs by Icelandic standards and none of them appeared to have connections to Icelanders. The parents wanted their children to learn Icelandic and integrate into Icelandic society and many of the children had good progress in learning the language and getting along in schools except the older ones, the teenagers, had difficulties in learning the language.
The collapse of the economy in Iceland in 2008 had an impact on the entire Icelandic society. Many of the workers in construction were Polish and when the collapse started, many of them lost their jobs (Wojtyńska & Zielińska, 2010). The collapse raised mixed emotions among Polish immigrants depending on their situation. The ones who had moved to Iceland to earn money for some time were more likely to move back to Poland or to immigrate to other countries, such as Norway or Canada or they had plans to immigrate but did not want to face the integration process again. Some decided to stay and did not consider the collapse to be that negative even if they had lost their jobs, because they had their families in Iceland, had an Icelandic spouse or had settled in Icelandic society (Wojtyńska, 2011).

Because unemployment among immigrants is a recent phenomenon in Iceland, there has not been much research done about the integration of unemployed immigrants. Einarsdóttir (2011) focuses on young unemployed immigrants’ opportunities in the Icelandic labour market and describes their position after the economic collapse in relation to work, financial and social aspects. Einarsdóttir found in her study that the requirements for entering the labour market have changed due to the economic collapse. Before the economic crisis, Icelandic skills were not that highly emphasized and an immigrant could manage to work with basic knowledge, but after the collapse “even in advertisements for simple cleaning jobs this demand for good Icelandic skills came up” (Einarsdóttir, 2011, p. 63). The financial collapse led to more competition for available jobs in the labour market that has possibly had an effect on how Icelanders consider immigration. The generally positive attitude of Icelanders towards immigrants started to become more negative with increasing numbers of immigrants as well as in light of the economic collapse which led to more competition in the labour market (Önnudóttir, 2009).

After the collapse, Icelandic skills became one of the requirements for gaining access to the labour market and therefore it created a need for foreigners to take part in Icelandic language courses. Some immigrants are not happy with the level of Icelandic teaching. Einarsdóttir (2011) claims that immigrants did not feel they learnt Icelandic efficiently in the language courses and that the teaching was too focused on structure and neglected usage. As a result, immigrants experienced low self-esteem because they considered themselves too stupid to learn the language. Working among Icelanders or having an Icelandic spouse were considered more efficient ways to learn how to use Icelandic than the Icelandic language courses or
workplaces in which there were many foreigners, such as cleaning jobs (Skaptadóttir & Ólafsdóttir, 2010).

Finland has developed similarly to Iceland; the economic collapse in the beginning of 1990’s led to mass unemployment and the increase in immigration started rather late. Most Finnish studies focus on three different themes:

1. Finns’ attitudes towards immigrants and immigration,
2. Employment of immigrants, and
3. Immigrants’ attitudes towards integration, employment and living in Finland.

When immigration started in the early 1990s, Finns’ attitudes were not that positive as there was a recession and mass-employment and immigration was seen as a threat to social welfare. Immigrants were considered to increase competition in the labour market resulting in discrimination against immigrants in their daily lives (Marjeta, 1998; Valtonen, 1999). More recent studies show that immigrants are not considered as one group anymore, but that different groups are more appreciated than others, such as highly-educated immigrants from China or India or immigrants from Western countries over refugees from Somalia (Jaakkola, 2009; Reuter, Jaakkola & Mannila, 2005). The reason why attitudes towards immigrants with education have changed is because Finland faces a shortage of labour in the near future when the baby boom generation of 1945-1960 retires, leaving many vacant work places as well as many elderly people to be taken care of (Pikkarainen, 2005). There seems to be conflicting information between research and polls conducted by news agencies. Even though research shows that Finns’ attitudes towards immigrants and immigration have become more positive, according to a poll conducted by Yle in 2009, the reality is not so (Salminen, 2009, August 22). According to the poll by Yle, which was conducted in the eight largest towns in Finland, discrimination and racism has increased due to the economic downturn. Finnish young males’ attitudes towards immigrants and immigration have especially become more negative (Tilastokeskus, 2011).

In almost all cases immigrants are unemployed at first because of insufficient knowledge of the Finnish language and most foreign university degrees are not seen as valid enough to gain employment in the field of their education. That is seen as an obstacle in integration because social
integration and employment go hand in hand (Hämäläinen, 2010). Studies in which immigrants themselves talk about their experiences with integration, employment and living in Finland have similar themes. Finnish is emphasized greatly as the key to society, integration and employment, as is willingness to educate oneself either to add to completed education or to enter a completely new field to be more suitable for the Finnish labour market (Manejuun, 2011). Most of the immigrants seem to have similar experiences and feelings towards living in Finland, such as how horrible their first Finnish winter was, cultural clashes in bringing up children, education, values and morals. Ones who were extremely religious or belonged to some other religion than Christianity had more problems integrating into liberal Finland (Marjeta, 1998; Manejuun, 2011; Hämäläinen, 2010).

As the language seems to be a major factor in integrating into Finnish and Icelandic society, it is crucial to learn it. Interestingly, many Finnish studies show that neither immigrants nor natives are satisfied with the level of integration programs (Marjeta, 1998; Manejuun, 2011). Language teaching is especially criticised for being too superficial to communicate outside of the educational settings. Study groups were considered to have too many different levels of students such that more experienced language learners did not learn anything (Marjeta, 1998, p. 36).

3.4 Summary of theoretical background

The definitions of the concept of integration are “fuzzy”. As Martiniello (as cited in Penninx & Martiniello, 2004) points out, there are as many definitions as there are researchers studying integration. The many definitions and ways to integrate immigrants to a new society could be because of different situations that each society has, such as type of immigration, how culture is viewed and so on.

I agree with Spiecker et al. (2004) that the purpose of social integration is to become a full democratic member of society and be able to work fully to secure the existence of it. This definition of social integration is used as the goal of it in this research. The process of how that goal is achieved is considered to be the four dimensions of social integration by Bosswick and Heckmann (2006). According to them social integration has four dimensions (structural, cultural, interactive and identificational integration) that are achieved through cooperation between the immigrant and the host-society.
Bosswick and Heckmann emphasize that social integration is a two-way process that requires active participation of the both parties of the integration process.

The measures to achieve the integration process are language courses or integration programs as I refer to them in this research. I believe the same as Hinkel (1999) that culture and language are inseparable concepts because language is a tool and culture is the information of how to use the tool. Therefore theories of culture, its position in power struggles and intercultural communication skills are used to understand integration programs (Abbinett, 2003; Hinkel, 1999; McKay & Tom; 1999; Nieto 2002; Niżegorodcew; 2011; Odé & Veenman, 2003; Peters, 2003; Sunier, 2003; Stalpers, 1987).
4 Methodology

This study is a qualitative study whose purpose is to find out how unemployed immigrants are aided in their integration process in Jyväskylä and Reykjavík. The integration process is based on the four dimensions of Bosswick and Heckmann (2006):

- Structural integration, in which an immigrant has access to the core institutes
- Cultural integration, in which an immigrant acquires information about the culture and language of the host-society
- Interactive integration, in which an immigrant is accepted into the host-society and forms social circles
- Identificational integration, in which an immigrant has a sense of belonging

This theoretical framework will be used to explore the following questions:

1. How are the immigration and integration policies in Iceland and Finland alike and how do they differ?

2. What are the Finnish and Icelandic integration programs like?

According to Bosswick and Heckmann (2006), “integration is an interactive process between immigrants and the host society” (p. 11). Therefore it is a two-way process that requires negotiations among different groups in order to achieve successful integration (Parekh, 2000b; Stalpers, 1987; Sunier, 2003).

This research focuses on the host-societies, which are in this case Finland and Iceland, and how they grant access to the core institutes and offer equal opportunities for immigrants. Because immigrants’ integration process is to learn the host-society’s language and culture in order to achieve other dimensions of social integration and as employment is emphasized as an important part of integration, this study focuses on the two core institutes of education and the labour market (Bosswick &
Byram and Morgan (1994) claim that education is a way to enhance cultural competence that eases intercultural communication. Integration programs in Finland and Iceland are meant to offer immigrants tools for integration. However, as the learning process involves negotiation among different groups, enhancing cultural competence should not only be aimed at the immigrants. The teacher also requires information about possible differences in order to be able to teach his or her students (Hinkel, 1999; McKay & Tom, 1999; Niżegorodcew, 2011). The cultural competence of the teacher and how she or he refers to cultural differences has a huge role in how the immigrant students consider themselves as part of the host-society (Einarsdóttir, 2011; Marjeta, 1998).

As Nieto (2002) refers to the power struggle of minority cultures against the dominant culture:

How differences are taken into account when educational reform takes place is a central question for researchers and practitioners to consider because cultural diversity is often either ignored or assumptions about the appropriateness of particular policies or pedagogical strategies are primarily based on the dominant culture of the society (p. 57).

Studies about teachers’ roles and the power positions of different cultures in second language classrooms introduced above will be used to answer the following question:

3. What is being taught in the programs and how?

4.1 Research methods

The study is based on three forms of data: 1. observations, 2. interviews and 3. documents. The most suitable methodology to explore and understand my topic is qualitative research because it involves rich data that are gathered by interviewing, observing and using other sources of information, for example pictures or recordings (Lichtman, 2006). The three forms of data will be discussed more below.
4.1.1 Observations

Observations are a good way to see how participants behave and interact in their natural settings (Lichtman, 2006). Not only is the observer able to see how participants behave or interact, but observations and interviews could be used together to produce a rich amount of data (Creswell, 2008).

Lichtman (2006) claims that a researcher should be well prepared before the observations take place. One should gain access to the desired observation group beforehand and one needs to determine what he or she is observing so that the right behaviour or phenomenon is being observed. Lichtman (2006) also emphasizes that a researcher should consider what kind of role she or he takes in the observed situation. The role of the observer depends on different situations, such as whether he or she is part of the group that is observed, for example.

I observed three classes in Finland, of which two were Finnish language classes and one was a social studies class. The social studies class did a field trip during my observations to the nearby library and one of the language classes had a special day in the time of observation making it not a typical class. Two of them took place in autumn 2010 and one in autumn 2011. Each class lasted about 6 hours. My role as an observer in the classes observed in autumn 2010 was passive because I wanted to see how the classes were in a normal day. I took field notes and took pictures of the classrooms, blackboards, teaching materials and learning situations. I had an active role in the language class in autumn 2011 and participated in the class activities. The teacher of the class asked me before the observation if I could have a small talk about my life as an immigrant in Iceland and have a small presentation about Iceland, its nature, society and culture. Therefore, I had to rely on my memory after the class because during the presentation, the special day and class activities, keeping field notes was difficult.

In Reykjavík, I visited four different classes at service provider for adults Mímir, of which two of them twice in the spring and summer 2011. The four observed classes were Icelandic for foreigners from levels 2-3 and the rest of the two classes at Settler’s school that is a course meant for foreign adults in the labour market. Each class lasted two to three hours. I tried to be a “fly on the wall” to not cause any disturbance but also to follow the education in natural settings. One of the language groups I visited twice; on the first time half of the group were ill and the teacher had also been ill and therefore, the class was not a typical one. The teacher asked me to come later on but yet again, I ended up observing not a typical class since Mímir were moving on that day to new building and therefore, there was chaos.
around the whole building. I also observed the same class twice at Settler’s school, where the first one was an Icelandic class and the second one was a social studies class. While observing I took field notes and pictures that were later coded and analysed.

4.1.2 Interviews

The interviews were semi-structured interviews that were conducted in two countries, Finland and Iceland, between the years 2010 and 2012. The questions can be seen in Appendix A - semi-structured interviews for service providers and Appendix B – semi-structured interviews for teachers.

In Finland, overall 6 people were interviewed for the study. Three individuals of the participants worked among service providers that were the Employment and Economic Development Office, at Palapeli2-project and at the Immigrant Services of Jyväskylä. The other three were teachers of the observed integration program classes, of which two of them were language teachers and one of them a social studies teacher.

In the case of Finland, the interviews were conducted in autumn 2010 and autumn 2011. In the first field trip in 2010, persons working at the Employment and Economic Development Office were interviewed for an hour. Two teachers, one of them a language teacher and the other a social studies teacher, were interviewed also during the observed classes during coffee breaks or after the classes if the teacher did not have other engagements or classes. The teacher interviews lasted approximately 15-20 minutes. In autumn 2011, I interviewed a person working at the Palapeli2-project and at the Immigrant Services of Jyväskylä; the first one lasted approximately an hour and the later one 30 minutes. One language teacher of observed classes was interviewed during the class and after the class. The interview lasted only 10 minutes because of two other observers in the classroom and because of special circumstances that were happening on that day in school.

In Iceland, I interviewed five teachers during the classes or coffee breaks that I observed. Four of the teachers were language teachers and one a social studies teacher. The interview times lasted from 15-30 minutes depending on the class and when the teacher was available to have a short conversation.

Creswell (2008) points out that interview in qualitative research has its advantages and disadvantages. Advantages are that through interviews, a researcher is able to find out information that one is not able to observe, such as personal information about the participants. Interviews also give a
qualitative researcher the opportunity to control the type of information because researchers can ask specific questions about some phenomenon that could have come up during the observations. Disadvantages of interviews, as Creswell (2008) argues, include that “interviews provide only information ‘filtered’ through the views of the interviewers” (p. 226). According to Creswell (2008), the interview situation should also be carefully planned by the researcher. One should check if the recorder works before the interview and write down emotions or nonverbal gestures that one cannot hear from the recorder because they might give another meaning to what the interviewee said.

From the 12 interviews, three were recorded, transcribed and coded. The recorded interviews were the ones done in Finland by the service providers. The teacher interviews were not possible to record as the interviews took place whenever the teachers were able to speak and in all the cases, the short interviews happened in noisy classrooms or cafeterias. The teacher interviews were written down using short notes and coded.

During the observations in the classrooms, I also talked to the students. These were casual conversations to give me an objective view about the structure of the program, the methods the teacher used and the general opinion and attitudes towards integration programs, their host-societies and their position as immigrants.

4.1.3 Documents

Because the research focuses on immigration and integration policies that are stated in laws and regulations by the states of Finland and Iceland, documents were a vital source of data. Documents’ advantages as data resource include that they are rich with information, availability is guaranteed and their truth value is good (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011).

4.2 The research site

I purposefully chose to compare Reykjavík, Iceland and Jyväskylä, Finland for the following reasons:

- Similar town characteristics
- High emphasis on language
- High unemployment among immigrants
- Similarities in economic situation
- Personal interest
Jyväskylä and Reykjavík are similar in size and they both have a similar number of residents. Both towns highly emphasize Finnish and Icelandic skills, without which access to labour markets is difficult (Einarsdóttir, 2011; Pöyhönen, Tarnanen, Kyllönen, Vehviläinen & Rynkänen, 2009). I also needed to find an area in Finland in which only one of the official languages of Finland was represented, therefore immigrants must learn it. Jyväskylä was a good candidate for this because 96.5% speak Finnish as their mother tongue, 0.2% Swedish and the rest are foreign languages (Tilastokeskus, 2010).

The unemployment rate among immigrants is high in both towns (Työ- ja elinkeinoministeriö, 2008; Vinnumálastofnun, 2012). The reason for the high unemployment rate among immigrants in Iceland is the financial collapse in 2008 (Wojtyńśka, 2011). Although Finland had a similar financial collapse in the beginning of the 1990’s, I found out during my interview at the Employment and Economic Development Office that Jyväskylä, which lacks big employers, has not been able to recover from the recession of the 1990’s (S. Kiesiläinen, personal communication, October 20, 2010). Not only is the unemployment high among immigrants in Jyväskylä but it is also high among the natives due to the lack of big employers, fast economic movements in the global markets and the recession of the 1990’s. Finally, I have a personal interest in these two towns. I used to live in Jyväskylä and I am personally an immigrant in Reykjavík at the moment. My own experiences of immigration have made me interested in the position of immigrants in my old hometown in Finland and also in my new hometown in Iceland.

Within Jyväskylä and Reykjavík, I chose to focus on specific organizations which offer integration programs. In the case of Jyväskylä, I chose the integration programs run by the Employment and Economic Development Office because the unemployed immigrants have to list themselves as jobseekers in order to access the integration training program and to receive financial benefits (Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers, 439/1999). In Reykjavík, I chose the Icelandic courses offered by Mímir because many of the immigrants that I know have taken part in their courses and I was interested in exploring them more. Unlike in Finland, the unemployed immigrants do not have to be listed as jobseekers in order to attend courses at Mímir, but everyone who is interested in taking part of learning Icelandic is able to access them. The classes themselves were chosen based on my limited time schedule in Jyväskylä and what was taught during the spring and summer semester in Reykjavík.
4.3 Data analysis

Three of the interviews were recorded, transcribed and coded. The field notes during observations and short interviews with the teachers were coded also. Lichtman (2006) suggests the following steps for analysing data:

Step 1. Initial coding. Going from the responses to some central idea of the responses.

Step 2. Revisiting initial coding.

Step 3. Developing an initial list of categories or central ideas.

Step 4. Modifying your initial list based on additional rereading.

Step 5. Revisiting your categories and subcategories.

Step 6. Moving from categories into concepts (themes) (p. 168).

The themes that resulted from the first part of the research on immigration and integration policies are presented below following the format of Finland vs. Iceland, i.e. the first part applies to Finland whereas the second part applies to Iceland.

- Bureaucracy vs. simpler and clearer structure
- Integration seen as two-way-process vs. one-way process
- Integration process is long vs. integration process is short
- Integration training program’s variety of subjects vs. Icelandic language teaching

The themes that resulted from the second part of the research, i.e. on the integration programs, were similar even though the integration policies have their differences. The themes of teaching a second language for foreign adults are:

- Flexibility
- Self-esteem
- Cultural conflicts and differences
- Various methods to negotiate
4.4 Ethical issues

Ethical issues should be considered in every step of research (Creswell, 2008). The unfortunate fact is that everyone who takes part in a research project is at some risk. The harm could be disturbance of everyday life, disturbance in a classroom or it could be a harmful impact directly on the participants, for example their identity could be revealed or someone might recognize them based on a description.

The American Educational Research Association (AERA) in the foreword of their code of ethics reminds that (as cited in Strike, 2006):

Educational researchers come from many disciplines, embrace several competing theoretical frameworks, and use a variety of research methodologies ... Education, by its very nature, is aimed at the improvement of individual lives and societies. Further, research in education is often directed at children and other vulnerable populations. A main objective of this code is to remind us, as educational researchers, that we should strive to protect these populations, and to maintain the integrity of our research, of our research community, and of all those with whom we have professional relations. We should pledge ourselves to do this by maintaining our own competence and that of people we induct into field, by continually evaluating our research for its ethical and scientific adequacy, and by conducting our internal and external relations to the highest ethical standards (p. 57)

The researcher’s role is to minimize harm that his or her research causes to the participants. One way to consider ethical issues is to follow standard ethical principles of educational research (AARE the Association for Active Educational Researchers, n.d.).

1. Informed consent where the researcher describes his and her research by explaining the major points of it including the purpose of the research and what the data is used for. It should also be included in informed consent that the participant can withdraw at any time.

2. Minimizing harm where the researcher should find ways not to cause any harm for the participants taking part in the research. This includes that the researcher protects the identity of the participants by giving them anonymity.
3. Cultural sensitivity that is required especially if the research focuses on multicultural settings. A researcher should consider differences that cultures have and that some actions might be against some culture’s values or morals and it might cause harm for the participants by not respecting their cultural identity.

4.4.1 Informed consent

The process of finding participants and gaining access started well before the interviews and observations. In Jyväskylä, I contacted the head of the Employment and Economic Development Office of Jyväskylä by asking permission to interview a staff member working in the integration services for immigrants and also to observe the integration program classes. When I received the permission, I contacted the staff member working in the department of integration services for immigrants and she was the contact person between me and the teachers of the integration training program and she provided me the phone numbers of the teachers so I could contact them myself. I contacted the project manager of Palapeli2 and the head of Immigrant Services of Jyväskylä and they agreed to be interviewed. To all the participants in Finland, I offered information about my study, the purpose and goals of it.

In Reykjavik, I contacted the head of the multiculturalism and leisure activities department at Mímir who gave me permission to take part in the Icelandic for foreigners’ classes and Settler’s school. She and the project manager of the same department were the contact persons at Mímir who either talked to the teachers of the classes in which I would be present or gave me the phone numbers of the teachers so I could contact them myself. I offered them similar information about the research as I did in Finland.

4.4.2 Minimizing harm

The ethics of not causing my participants any harm or discomfort had to be considered gravely before the observations in the classroom. One thing is for sure: when one agrees to be part of research as a participant, there will always be some sort of harm or discomfort (Lichtman, 2006). I was aware that my presence in a classroom would cause some disturbance to the teachers and students.

I tried to minimize the harm by “acting in an open, warm, unpretentious matter” (Lindlof & Taylor, 2011). This meant that I introduced myself and talked a bit about what my purpose in the classroom was and also about myself as an immigrant. I noticed that revealing some personal information
about myself formed a sort of trust between me and the students in the Icelandic classrooms really quickly. After hearing that I was an immigrant like they were, I was accepted into the group even though I tried to be “a fly on the wall”. This did not happen in some of the classrooms in Finland even though my role was more active, in the form of having a presentation about Iceland and even taking part in the class activities. I still did not become a part of the group but was an outsider.

4.4.3 Cultural sensitivity

Because the research focuses on integration programs, one can safely assume that the educational settings were multicultural. Liamputtong (2008) emphasizes that research focusing on multicultural settings or being cross-cultural by nature, have to be culturally sensitive. Being culturally sensitive “is referred to as knowing the cultural context of the group with whom the researchers wish to work” (Liamputtong, 2008, p. 4). Cultural competence therefore guides the researcher when he or she works with participants from different cultures. The researcher tries not to cause them any harm or make them feel uncomfortable with the questions he or she asks. She or he avoids asking them to do tasks that are against their morals and values deriving from their culture. For example, a male researcher could have issues observing Muslim females without presence of their male family members.

I could expect for this study that the teachers of the integration programs and persons working for the service providers would be natives of Finland and Iceland. I did not, however, know from where the students would be beforehand, except I could assume that the students in Finnish classes would be from “around the world” (S. Kiesiläinen, personal communications, 20.10.2010). To consider this issue, I decided to assume that the statistics of the largest ethnic groups in Iceland and Finland would compose the student population of the classes that I would observe and prepared myself accordingly (Seppänen, 2010; Statistics Iceland, 2011c).
5 Findings

The findings are divided in two parts. The first part focuses on immigration policies in Iceland and Finland, and the immigration and integration policies are defined and explained. The second part is dedicated to integration programs, and description of service providers, curriculum and educational settings of the integration programs are given.

5.1 Immigration policies

Because people tend to move from countries to countries from various reasons, different states have had to develop ways to control the moving. Immigration policies deal with the transition of an immigrant from borders to a country (Cornelius, Martin & Hollifield, 1994). They are hence a method to control the amount and type of immigration to a country by setting different types of rules, laws and regulations. Besides controlling the number of immigrants, immigration policies also declare a state’s and general public’s opinion towards immigration and reflect its social integration policies (Cornelius et al., 1994). In other words, a state can, for example, desire to increase labour migration to the country and therefore define measures so that goal can be achieved.

An immigrant is a person who moves to another country (Räty, 2002). As a concept it is large and it includes everyone regardless of the reason for moving or staying in the country. Immigrants, however, are not a homogenous grey mass even though they are all under the same name. Immigrants are members of different sub-groups based on the region where they are from and the reason for moving to a new country. These distinctions are made for political reasons to determine what permits are needed to enter the borders of a country. For example a student within the Schengen-area does not need to apply for the same permits as a student from outside of the Schengen-area.

Immigration policies have an impact on integration programs. The point of view that a state has on immigration control informs integration policies, and thereby the integration programs. The point of integration programs is to provide tools for immigrants to integrate into a new society, mainly by providing them courses to learn the language that is spoken in a country and information about the society and culture.
5.1.1 Migration and integration policies in Finland

Immigration to Finland started in the beginning of 1990’s when immigration policies were changed to allow people from the former Soviet Union, whose ancestry were Finnish, to migrate to Finland under special regulations (Sisäasiainministeriö, 2011a). The return migration of the so called Ingrian-Finns was based on a queue system where an individual had to sign in for a queue for the Finnish authorities to process the immigration application. Meanwhile waiting for the process to be completed that could take a long time, Ingrian-Finns had to take part a yearlong return migration training that consisted of learning Finnish and information about the Finnish culture and society. The Ministry of the Interior announced in the beginning of 2011 that the return migration of Ingrian-Finns will be changed from its previous policies (Sisäasiainministeriö, 2011b). The queue-system was stopped in July 2011 and the ones who are in the queue have to be processed through before 2016. At the same time, the pre-integration course that was offered before immigrating will be stopped also. Ingrian-Finns are now considered like any other immigrants. The Ministry of the Interior justify the change of return migration of Ingrian-Finns by claiming that these methods help to expedite immigration to Finland as the queue-system was time-intensive and that the new system will favour the ones who are active and who already know Finnish.

A few years earlier, in 1985, Finland had taken part in UNHCR’s resettlement program in which Finland agreed to accept certain amount of quota refugees annually that meet the characteristics of a refugee set by the 1951 Geneva Convention relating to the status of refugees (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2010). Since 2001 the annual amount of quota refugees has been 750 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2011a).

Besides these political changes, Finland will face, according to the authorities, a lack of work force in the near future when the baby boom generation born after the Second World War until the beginning of 60’s will retire. Therefore labour migration should be increased. Thirdly, Finland is one of the border countries in the EU, and therefore has a big responsibility to control migration from the east and keep an eye on the border of the EU. It also has to consider the common sets of rules of the EU. All of these factors have impacted on the structure of Finnish immigration policies.

Finnish immigration policies are stated in government migration policy, in which their values on migration policy are defined, desired goals are set and actions to take to achieve those goals are stated (Hallituksen
maahanmuuttopoliittinen ohjelma, 2006). The government migration policy is formed following the guidelines of basic human rights and its purpose is to enhance and clarify the bureaucracy related to migration but also to the state actions of preventing possible threats to national security.

Part of immigration policies is also to control immigration. The purpose of alien act (2004/301) is to control migration to Finland. The act is also used to advance desired migration, including international engagements or human rights. The act applies when an immigrant enters, leaves or stays in Finland and it also applies in bureaucracy-related employment.

The alien act defines all terms related to immigration, such as alien, refugee, Schengen-area and so on. The act explains carefully what sort of permits or visas are required when entering Finland and what sort of permits are required when one is an employer or a student. Besides claiming the rules in permits and visas, the alien act also states the rights that an alien has in the jungle of bureaucracy, for example, the right for a translator or an interpreter. It also states the punishments for breaking the rules and outlines possible outcomes.

The basis of the Finnish government migration policy is reacting to the future lack of labour. Employment is greatly emphasized: its two main goals are to increase labour migration and to expedite the employment of immigrants. It consists of many definitions of policies from which the most relevant to my study is “guiding foreigners and fostering the integration of immigrants” (Hallituksen maahanmuuttopoliitiinnen ohjelma, 2006, p. 18). In this section, integration of immigrants is defined as

the personal development of immigrants with the aim of enabling them to participate in working life and society whilst preserving their own language and culture. Integration is a two-way acclimatisation process involving the participation not only of work communities and other local organisations, but also society as a whole (Hallituksen maahanmuuttopoliittinen ohjelma, 2006, p. 18).

One can see in the definition of integration of immigrants that being employed is key to integrating into society. To achieve this goal the section suggests that these following policy guidelines should be followed:

1. A guiding system shall be created taking into account personal needs with the aim of helping foreigners to cope in working life and society during their stay in Finland.
2. Steering of the integration system shall be made more effective, especially by the introduction of a broadly prepared framework programme preparing for migration, ethnic relations and integration.

3. The integration of persons moving to Finland on humanitarian grounds shall be promoted from the general points of departure for integration. Preparation shall be made for lengthy integration times and safeguarding support services for special groups in a vulnerable position.

4. Training and guidance fostering the integration of adult immigrants shall be developed so that it effectively meets personal training needs.

5. The opportunities for immigrants to study shall be improved, taking into account the special services required.

6. The relationship between Finland’s residence-based social security system and taxation of foreigners shall be clarified.

7. Housing policy shall be developed to adequately take into account the diverse housing needs arising from work-related immigration. (Hallituksen maahanmuuttopolitiittinen ohjelma, 2006, p. 20-28).

The guiding system, which is the first policy guideline, is meant for all immigrants wanting to move to Finland regardless of the reason for their moving. It starts by dividing immigrants into two different groups based on whether they are employed or not, Then the permissions and visas they need to apply for before moving can be determined. Before immigrating, the guiding system suggests that everyone should have some sort of pre-departure training or orientation where everyone receives basic knowledge about Finland as a country, Finnish and its culture and society. Because employment is greatly emphasized as the goal of integration, the ones who immigrate to Finland because of their work are not considered to need particular measures in their integration process but authorities will provide them guidance in different opportunities in learning Finnish or Swedish if an employed immigrant wishes so. The focus is more on the unemployed ones who have to take part in integration measures after moving to Finland. The guiding system is presented in the figure 6.
These integration measures are defined and described in the act on integration of immigrants and reception of asylum seekers (493/1999). The purpose of the act is to advance the integration of immigrants, to secure the livelihood of asylum seekers and to help the victims of human trafficking. The act defines what is meant by the word integration\(^\text{11}\):

1. The personal development of an immigrant that aims to act in work life and to be an active member in Finnish society while preserving their own culture and language

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\(^{11}\) The word integration is translated into Finnish as either “kotoutuminen” or “kotouttaminen”. “Kotoutuminen” is the personal development of an immigrant whereas “kotouttaminen” refers to the measures taken and services provided by Finnish authorities to aid the integration process.
2. The measures taken and services provided by different authorities to immigrants to aid their integration process (2§)

The act also describes the distribution of responsibilities for taking measures and providing services. The Ministry of the Interior\textsuperscript{12} is responsible for planning, conducting and superintending integration measures. It is also responsible for reception of refugees and asylum seekers, but the actual conducting of measures among refugees and asylum seekers is delegated to the Finnish migration service. The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment (ELY Centre) is the local authority in different areas in Finland that follows the measures set by the Ministry of the Interior, but adapts the measures to circumstances of their area of Finland. ELY Centres supervise the local Employment and Economic Development Offices whose responsibility is to be a service provider of integration programmes together with the authorities of the appropriate municipality (Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers, 439/1999).

The act suggests that Employment and Economic Development Offices and municipalities should fulfil the following measures or provide the following services:

1. offer information and guidance
2. offer information about Finnish society and how it works
3. offer Finnish or Swedish courses
4. offer labour market training
5. offer basic education about writing and reading and services to complete compulsory education
6. translation or interpretation services
7. conduct measures enhancing equality
8. take care of refugees who are minors and offer them services that they need
9. offer proper services for those who need special treatment or actions

\textsuperscript{12} After 1.1.2012 the responsibility of integration measures transferred to the Ministry of Employment and Economy.
10. offer some services whose goal is to enhance immigrants’ active participation in integration (7§)

Every immigrant who is 1. listed as an unemployed jobseeker at the Employment and Economic Development Office or 2. receives a supplementary benefit by a municipality’s social services is able to take part in an integration programme (10§). The Integration programme is a 3-5-year long programme where an immigrant, along with the proper authorities, forms a programme that is suitable for his or her needs to reach the goal of employment. During this programme, an unemployed immigrant is entitled to have an integration benefit to cover living expenses (12§). In addition to being one of the service providers and supervisor of integration, municipalities are also responsible for preventing discrimination and racism.

![Integration training process diagram](image)

**Figure 7: Integration training process (Act on the Integration of Immigrants and Reception of Asylum Seekers, 1999)**

The integration training programme starts by creating a picture of the unemployed immigrant’s former education, language experiences, experiences from schooling and personal conditions, such as health conditions. This information is then compared to future plans of employment. Based on that, an integration training programme is formed that consists of language programs, IT education, social studies as well as labour market training in a field of choice. Figure 7 shows the integration training process in graphic form.

In the case of Jyväskylä, the integration process starts by taking part in a project called Palapeli2 that is funded by the European Social Fund and the municipality of Jyväskylä (“Projektin historia”, n.d.). Palapeli2 is run by the ELY
Centre of Central Finland but it is executed by the Employment and Economic Development Office of Jyväskylä. The purpose of Palapeli2 is to be the starting point of the integration training process where the picture of immigrants’ needs is created (Pöyhönen et al., 2009). The project strives to start the process of integration of immigrants within three months of moving to Jyväskylä to enhance fast and effective integration. The project offers Finnish language teaching, in which social studies are integrated, in order to introduce Finnish society but also Jyväskylä and its services and possibilities simultaneously with language teaching. Besides offering basic language teaching, guidance counselling is also offered where one can find out possible future occupations and different options for education. After Palapeli2 and with the information that is gathered there starts the formation of the actual integration process. This is followed by taking part in different levels of Finnish teaching and labour market training that the Employment and Economic Development Office provides. The Employment and Economic Development Office does not only cover Jyväskylä but also smaller municipalities surrounding Jyväskylä (Työ- ja elinkeinotoimisto, 2012).

5.1.2 Migration and integration policies in Iceland

The starting point and the circumstances that formed migration and integration policies are complete opposites in Iceland than Finland. Finland had increased migration during the time of the financial crisis in the beginning of 1990’s whereas most immigrants moved to Iceland for work before the financial collapse in 2008 (Einarsdóttir, 2011). As the starting point and the circumstances for migration are different in these two countries, the emphasis and goals of their governments’ migration policies are different, except that Iceland is also part of the UNHCR’s resettlement program. Iceland took part in the resettlement program in 1996 by accepting 25-30 quota refugees annually, though at the moment the number is being revised (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2011b).

The means to control immigration are stated in the act on foreigners (96/2002) and foreign national’s right to work act (97/2002). The act on foreigners gives power to authorities to control all aspects of migration of foreigners to the country, staying and leaving the country. It states all the necessary permits and visas for different foreign nations and it also explains who is considered a refugee and on what grounds one can apply for asylum in Iceland. The foreign national’s right to work act (97/2002) focuses on granting work permits but it also defines and protects the rights of foreign workers.
Before the increase in number of immigrants in the middle of 2000 in Iceland, there was no clear regulation including all aspects of immigration and integration. There was no clear distribution of responsibilities about immigration issues or clear legislation of integration measures, especially considering adult immigrants. The purpose of the Parliamentary Resolution on an action plan on immigrant issues (2007) was to form a clear immigration and integration policy that would improve reception of immigrants in order to achieve better and faster integration into Icelandic society in which they would be able to be active members (p. 4). By integration and being an active member is meant in the Icelandic case having similar opportunities to take part in Icelandic society as the natives.

The Government policy on the integration of immigrants (2007) defines integration and explains the measures of integration. According to it, Icelandic society’s core values are democracy, individual freedom, human rights and protection of the Icelandic language (p. 6). To become integrated into such a society, one needs to learn Icelandic and have information about Icelandic society. However, as a democratic society where personal freedom is appreciated, integration does not mean forgetting or abandoning one’s own culture. Iceland has rather special circumstances in which almost all immigrants are active in the labour market compared to other countries. However, it is not enough for a society just to appreciate that fact; all aspects of society are influenced by immigration, especially as many immigrants also have their families with them (p. 2). Therefore integration legislation covers all different organisations within society, such as different levels of education, health care services and so on.

Icelandic skills are highly emphasized as the key to integration and therefore everyone should have access to good quality teaching. This requires that a curriculum is formed that is flexible and considers the different needs and learning methods of immigrants. Some have more experience in learning languages than others, some might have already some sort of knowledge about a language related to Icelandic and all learners have different motivations to learn Icelandic. The government policy on integration of immigrants (2007) emphasizes that special actions should be made for individuals who have little or no experience in education.

The Ministry of Education is responsible for offering grants to different organizations to offer quality Icelandic language courses. It is also responsible for monitoring language teaching and providing suitable teaching materials. The policy guidelines for Icelandic language teaching are the following:
1. Adult immigrants on the labour market as well as outside it shall have access to good education in the Icelandic language

2. Social studies shall form a part of Icelandic language education for immigrants

3. Ensure the availability of educational material appropriate to the goals of the course curricula

4. Icelandic language courses shall be subject to quality assessment and monitoring (Government policy on the integration of immigrants, 2007, p. 4)

These guidelines are achieved by forming a 200 hour course that fulfils the needs and requirements of learners irrespective their origin (Government policy on the integration of immigrants, 2007, p. 8). Social studies, which mean introducing the basic values of Icelandic society and culture, should be integrated into Icelandic teaching and also to the materials used in teaching. As the learning happens among different companies and educators, immigrants have to pay for the courses themselves but the costs should be minimal as everyone should have access to it. In Finland some of the language courses for foreigners are for free depending on the service provider and the situation of the immigrant.

Unlike Finland where integration measures include language teaching, guidance counselling and labour market training, Iceland has separated language teaching and guidance counselling to two separate subjects. The Ministry of Education is responsible for offering grants to companies and organizations so that they are able to offer quality Icelandic teaching. They are also responsible for producing suitable materials and monitoring teaching. No one is clearly responsible for guidance counselling or delivering information about Icelandic, but it is stated that “It is the policy of the authorities to ensure that immigrants receive thorough information about Icelandic society and the rights and obligations of Icelandic citizens in order to encourage their successful integration into Icelandic society” (Government policy on the integration of immigrants, 2007, p. 10). This information is not integrated into language teaching, rather it is available on the internet or in a pamphlet called Your first steps in Iceland, which is translated into various languages (Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, n.d.). To receive information about basic rights and about Icelandic society requires activity on the immigrant’s part to find these paths. In addition to offering information, gathering information about immigrants’
issues and sharing that knowledge with different counterparts, such as different organisations or municipalities working among immigrants, are part of integration legislation.

The starting point of integration programs in Reykjavík depends on the status of the immigrant in question. If the immigrant is employed, according to the foreign national’s right to work act (97/2002)

> Employers and trade unions shall provide an employee who holds a temporary work permit with information about basic courses in Icelandic for foreign nationals, information about Icelandic society and information about other teaching on offer to foreign nationals and their families (Article 14).

Employed immigrants can choose among different companies in the capital area, for example Multicultural and Information Centre (Fjöllmenningararsetur) provides a list of possible places that offer Icelandic courses in all of Iceland and on the internet (Fjöllmenningararsetur, n.d.). One needs to pay for all the courses but the employed immigrant can apply for student benefits that would cover some part of the costs of the courses from the trade unions’ funds to which the employed immigrant belongs, for example Efling (Kjarasamningur Reykjavíkurborgar og Eflingar – stéttarfélags, 2011).

Unlike Jyväskylä where the assumption is that most new immigrants are unemployed, unemployed immigrants in Reykjavík can list themselves as jobseekers at the Directorate of Labour but they are only able to receive the unemployment benefits if they have worked a minimum of 25% for at least three months of the past year (Vinnumálastofnun, n.d.a). Unemployed individuals are entitled to take measures together with guidance counsellors at the Directorate of Labour to form a plan to enhance opportunities for employment (Vinnumálastofnun, n.d.b). The plan is formed similarly to the first stage of the integration training program in Finland: an unemployed individual together with a counsellor at the Directorate of Labour maps the former education, skills and experiences to future plans and based on that information, measures for enhancing employment opportunities are formed (Lög um vinnumárskasögerðir, 55/2006). For foreigners, such courses could be Icelandic courses (Einarsdóttir, 2011).

Because Iceland is part of the UNHCR’s resettlement program and has agreed to an annual quota of refugees, it is required that regulations on the
reception and assistance of asylum seekers are established (Velferðarráðuneytið, 2009). Through cooperation among the Ministry of Welfare, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, municipalities and the Icelandic Red Cross, the reception and assistance of asylum seekers are conducted (Rauði kross Íslands, n.d.). Refugees are allowed to receive accommodation, benefits to cover daily expenses, medical care, aid in job seeking, counselling and interpretation/translation services, places in pre-school for children and Icelandic language teaching, mother tongue teaching and social studies (Velferðarráðuneytið, 2009). The education is free and the responsibility for providing it is given to the municipalities, for example in Reykjavík Icelandic teaching for adult refugees is taught at the school Námsflokkar Reykjavíkur (Harðardóttir, Jónsdóttir & Jónsson, 2005; Reykjavíkurborg, n.d.).

5.2 Integration programs

The term integration program is used to refer to classes or courses whose purpose is to offer tools for integration of immigrants. This part focuses primarily on the service providers of integration programs in Jyväskylä and Reykjavík, followed by an introduction of suggested curricula for use in integration programs. Finally, the findings from observations of integration programs are presented.

5.2.1 Service providers of integration programs

As is determined in the immigration policy, Employment and Economic Development Offices are responsible for offering integration programs in Finland. The trend at the moment in Finland is however to have public bids on providing services to reduce expenses. The Centre for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment that administers integration programs is asking for bids on providing integration training. A list of demands and requirements is set for what should be taught and how it should be taught. Educational organisations that meet the requirements set by the ELY Centre are eligible. In the time of my research, services were bought from two providers: Jyväskylä Educational Consortium and Jyväskylä Adult Education Centre. The ELY Centre buys a package for a whole year that consists of 34 000 days of study divided between the two educational organisations. Then the education providers form a study plan with the Employment and Economic Development Office that should include all the aspects mentioned in laws and regulations as well as what the curriculum suggests. They also strive to form different levels of courses to ensure
something is offered to all immigrants, who are on different levels in learning themselves.

Iceland relies on private companies to offer integration programs. Mímir is one of many service providers in Reykjavík. It is a private organization owned by L.O. and its purpose is to offer courses to improve adults’ positions in the labour market (Mímir símenntun, n.d.). Mímir offers courses in language and job development as well as career counselling. There are five stages in Icelandic for foreigners at the moment. Each student needs to take a test before attending

![Diagram](image)

Figure 8: Service providers of the integration program in Jyväskylä

the courses to find out the level of their Icelandic language skills. Mímir also offers specific courses about Icelandic society in which the students learn its basic structure by taking field trips. The use of the internet is emphasized in the courses because computer skills are necessary in contemporary working markets. Before the students can attend the courses about Icelandic society
they have to complete a certain amount of Icelandic language. There are two speeds in the language courses; the normal pace has 60 classes and the intensive one 30. Each course costs from 20,000 to 30,000 crowns but employers, trade unions and the Directorate of Labour finance them in part or in full.

The courses were filled before the recession but since the number of students has dropped dramatically, some of the language courses have been cut from the syllabus. The students used to be divided based on their Icelandic levels but the groups are more mixed now. The Directorate of Labour requires that unemployed immigrants take part in the language courses in order to find a job or else they will not qualify for unemployment benefits.

5.2.2 Curriculums

The curriculums used in the integration programs in Finland and Iceland considers few aspects differently: the duration of integration process and the position of culture. Finland considers integration process to be long that could last years whereas Iceland thinks of it as an event that can be achieved in few months. Finnish curriculums also consider culture and language inseparable concepts but Icelandic curriculums have separated them to two different subjects.

The Finnish national board of education has developed two different curriculums that are recommended for use in teaching. The first one is meant for educating illiterate adult immigrants that includes those who are not familiar with the Latin alphabet and the second one is meant for those who can write and read in the Latin alphabet (Opetushallitus, 2006; 2007). In both curriculums integration does not mean only learning Finnish or Swedish and having information about Finnish society but it is a larger concept that includes aspects of everyday life, such as knowing the surroundings of the municipality, knowing where the most important public services are as well as being aware of different possibilities for entertainment and hobbies. Part of integration programs is also to teach different ways of personal learning and how one can develop to have the best performance in learning. Because integration programs are meant for unemployed immigrants it is relevant that they receive information about the labour market, for example laws and regulations that apply to the area and rights as an employee. In addition to learning these in the classroom, labour market training is also integrated into teaching, which means that a person does a practical training in some field that interests the person.
Table 3: Teaching content of curriculum for adult immigrants (Opetushallitus, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integration program</th>
<th>Pre-training</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Finnish language teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge about everyday life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>knowledge about learning methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>social studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>labour market training</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>optional studies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Pre-training is the stage in which an overall picture is created together with authorities and the immigrant to develop an individual learning plan. The factors that have an effect on the learning plan are previous education and school experiences, language learning, as well as future plans for employment field. Based on future plans authorities at the Employment and Economic Development Office are able to guide suitable learning programs in order to achieve the immigrant’s goals. Almost everyone takes part in the Finnish language education. Finnish language education has three levels from basic to good language proficiency.

It takes up to 45 weeks of study for which one week corresponds to 40 hours of learning in order to complete all levels of language teaching. Each level has its own requirements for four aspects of language learning, i.e. writing, speaking, reading and listening. The curriculum recommends that the teaching materials used in the classrooms should be as authentic as possible and the language teachers should connect teaching to real life situations in order to achieve the goal of authentic use of Finnish. Even though the teaching content of integration programs is diverse, the curriculum recommends that all teaching should be integrated into the language teaching.

The curriculum for illiterate adult immigrants is intended for individuals who cannot write nor read or who cannot write nor read the Latin alphabet (Opetushallitus, 2006). It defines illiteracy with two different meanings: 1. primary illiteracy includes everyone who has never learnt to read or write in their mother tongue and 2. secondary illiteracy that includes everyone who can read and write but not with Latin alphabets. The curriculum is formed
after “Towards a European qualifications framework on lifelong learning” developed by the European Commission (Opetushallitus, 2006, p. 8). It states that there are eight basic skills that every citizen should be able to acquire in a modern society: mother tongue, foreign language/s, mathematics, information technology, learning about learning, social skills, entrepreneurship and expressing oneself via culture (p. 8).

Figure 9: The structure of Finnish language teaching (Opetushallitus, 2007)

The main goal of the curriculum for illiterate immigrants is to educate them so that they are able to continue their integration program for adult immigrants. Particularly those who are primary illiterate probably lack education, which is an obstacle for employment because Finland appreciates education highly. In fact, one of the purposes of the curriculum is to offer them a chance and the ability to complete their education. The integration program for illiterate immigrants lasts a whole academic year, which means 7 hours of studying for 200 days. The teaching should consist of 4-5 hours of daily on site learning and 2-3 hours of distance learning, which teachers should supervise.

The goal of language education is to gain proficiency in basics so that the individual is able to continue the integration program. The language teaching does not focus as much on grammatical structure as on practical writing and reading and understanding words and simple phrases. One of the teaching methods could be using arts and crafts in order to learn by doing. Besides Finnish language teaching, an immigrant who cannot write in her or his mother tongue receives education in that if there is available a person who knows the language because learning ones mother tongue is considered to be a basic right that everyone should have.
Mathematics is also included in the integration program for illiterate adults. Basic mathematic skills are needed in our daily lives, for example by forming a budget and calculating our expenses to make sure that the monthly benefit is enough for a whole month. If an immigrant later on wants to educate her or himself more for some occupation, basic mathematic skills are needed almost in every field.

Table 4: Teaching content of curriculum for illiterate adult immigrants
(Opetushallitus, 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integration program</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Finnish language teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Hearing comprehension and speaking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Reading and reading comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about everyday life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Familiarizing to a new surrounding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Arts and crafts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Home economics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Mathematics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• IT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Health education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about the labour market</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge about learning methods</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There always exist special groups that either need more guidance because of physical or mental health or because of their special circumstances and these cases should be considered when establishing their individual integration training program, but the educators should also be flexible to ensure successful integration. Such groups are, for example, housewives, the disabled, highly educated immigrants and elders. Youth who have not finished their compulsory education are also considered to be a group with special circumstances because lack of basic education makes further procedures in integration training quite impossible. Educators should be willing to be flexible and imaginative to find suitable ways to include everyone in the class activities, for example by forming a special schedule for women who cannot take part in the classes for the whole day if they have young children. In the case of highly educated immigrants, the
first task should be to find out if their previous education and licenses are acceptable in Finland and to find ways to make them transferable to Finnish ones if they do not meet the requirements. To ensure that all special groups can be part of integration measures, it requires cooperation among different authorities from various fields.

The Icelandic Ministry of Education published its curriculum on teaching Icelandic for foreign adults – basic education in 2008 (Menntamálaráðuneyti, 2008). The framework of the curriculum is adapted from the European framework of reference for languages. They also used the European Language Portfolio as a model for assessment (Menntamálaráðuneyti, 2008, p. 2). The goal of the curriculum is to offer efficient language skills for adults so that they could be active members in Icelandic society. According to the curriculum, offering a structure that educators could shape to their needs guarantees good quality education everywhere as all the companies that offer such courses for foreigners would follow a similar curriculum. The use of a curriculum also guarantees good quality education for learners if they decide for some reason to change places of study because part of the European Language Portfolio is to collect the works of the students, assessment by the teachers and from the students themselves. Therefore if a student changes places, he or she has a portfolio to show to the new educators what he or she has accomplished and learned at the previous place. The students can also monitor their own progress with the portfolio during the different levels of education. In order to achieve this they have established a framework consisting of four different language levels.

Basic education in Icelandic consists of four different levels that each last 60 hours of learning for 240 hours total. Each level has its own goals and content but
the overall emphasis is on oral skills and comprehension in every section. Writing skills are not as stressed, but there is a recommendation that some writing exercises be used if they are as relevant as possible.

The curriculum highlights flexibility because of the different needs of the students. It should be used as a guide to offer educators the possibility to form content that responds to the different needs of the students based on their former experiences in schools, abilities and the language group of their mother tongue. The basic requirements are however that in Icelandic levels 1 and 2 learning Icelandic vocabulary should be the main objective followed by grammar instruction in levels 3 and 4. Culture and social studies are completely separated from the concept of integration and the focus is solely on language skills.

To offer a possibility for even more learning the Icelandic Ministry of Education has also published a follow-up to the curriculum of Icelandic for adults, basic education (Menntamálaráðuneyti, n.d.). The Icelandic for foreigners: advanced education expands the concept of integration to cultural and social studies but also increases Icelandic education by changing the teaching content of the language part to cover all four skills of language use: speaking, reading, writing and listening comprehension. The curriculum of Icelandic for foreigners: advanced education is not meant to replace the basic education but to offer a possibility to continue studies and to increase everyone’s possibility to integrate faster.

The biggest change in the advanced education compared to the basic one is that it deals separately with culture. Even though the main focus is still on language abilities, the advanced studies recommends teaching to be more relevant so that learners understand Icelandic culture in everyday life. That provides learners a feeling of security and increases their self-esteem so they are more active in mingling with natives. The teaching goals cover now all four aspects of language use so that the learners know how to use them in their daily lives. As the goal of the advanced learning is to provide really useful skills, the teaching material should contain more examples from daily life.

As in basic education, every level is 60 hours for a total of 300 hours of study. Together with the basic education, a learner has overall 540 hours of studies. The different levels in the curriculum does not tie education providers to form courses for all levels and the companies have a choice for how many levels they provide. Mímir offers five levels for learning Icelandic
for foreigners that cover the whole basic education and the first level of the advanced education.

Both curriculums also offers measures that should be taken with special groups whose learning might take longer than the standard amount of time. Such groups are, for example, illiterate and people whose mother tongue is in a different language group than Icelandic and those who are not familiar with Germanic languages. In the case of those who are illiterate, the curriculum suggests that educators offer them the possibility to learn how to read and write first and then start to actively learn Icelandic. This could require, as in the case of slower learners, flexibility in the timeline of one language level, such as expanding the time or completing the level twice.

In addition to basic Icelandic language teaching, Mímir offers a course that consists of culture and social studies teaching (Mímir símenntun, n.d.b). The course is the Settler’s school and it has its own curriculum established by Mímir together with the trade union Efling and it is funded by the Ministry of Welfare (Fræðslumíðstöð atvinnulífsins, 2006). The Settler’s school is similar to the integration programs in Finland and it offers more all-inclusive content about the integration process. The Settler’s
school is specifically intended for foreigners in the labour market and therefore it expands teaching of Icelandic to include social studies and business. It focuses on building knowledge in the use of IT, making résumés and learning communication skills with different kinds of people in the labour market.

The course is 120 hours of learning total and it corresponds to 10 ECTS that are transferable to upper secondary education. The content of the Settler’s school aims to increase knowledge that a learner requires in the labour market. Therefore the content should be closely connected to each other to enhance Icelandic skills while expanding knowledge of Icelandic society and labour market. This requires all sorts of different ways of learning, from working individually to work in groups, gathering information from the internet or other sources as well as writing short summaries or major facts in Icelandic. The curriculum of the Settler’s school encourages teachers to be flexible and innovative in achieving the goals of the course. According to the curriculum, students all have different backgrounds and experiences that have an impact on performance and motivation and a good educator should understand the differences based on culture, mother tongue and education and try to form a close, trusting relationship in order to offer them the best quality education (p. 2).

Table 5: Structure of the Settler’s school (Fræðslumiðstöð atvinnulífsins, 2006)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Content</th>
<th>Hours</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icelandic</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social studies</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Résumé</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication skills</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The teaching content is wide and focuses greatly on the labour market. Icelandic skills are greatly emphasized and students are encouraged to use Icelandic in every content so they practice it constantly in different situations, but other languages are also allowed if the subject is so difficult that there are problems in understanding. The goals and teaching of Icelandic is quite similar to the curriculum of Icelandic language for foreigners: to enhance Icelandic skills, especially oral skills, by providing different types of exercises suitable for the level of the students. The curriculum also emphasizes computer skills as they are so important in the contemporary labour market. Using the computer to find information, knowing basic programs and learning how to write Icelandic is used in every subject. The labour market also requires good social skills as many work places emphasize group work with different kinds of people. Cultural differences might cause problems in communication because every culture has its own values, morals and habits that influence how we behave in different circumstances or what kind of language is suitable to use. The Settler’s school teaches communication skills as well as methods to identify one’s strengths and weaknesses and to use this information to communicate with others in the Icelandic labour market.

5.2.3 Teaching authentic use of language

I visited and observed three classes in Jyväskylä and four different classes in Reykjavík, of which two classes twice. Two of the classes in Jyväskylä were taught at the Jyväskylä Adult Education Centre; one of them was a Finnish class, the other one a social studies class. The third class was a Finnish language class that was taught at the Jyväskylä Educational Consortium.

Three of the classes in Reykjavík were Icelandic for foreigners from levels 2-3. One of the Icelandic classes was specifically meant for Thais. These classes were taught a bit further away from centre of Reykjavík, in an industrial area. I visited one Icelandic for foreigners’ class twice because on the first time, half of the class was ill and the teacher had just returned to work after being ill and therefore the class was not a typical class. I also visited the Settler’s school twice: the first class was Icelandic and the other one was social studies. The Settler’s school classes were taught close to centre of Reykjavík.

The common themes in the classrooms in Finland and Iceland were:

- Culture in teaching and cultural conflicts
• Various methods to negotiate in teaching
• Flexibility
• Self-esteem

5.2.4 Culture in teaching and cultural conflicts

The teachers of the integration program classes were all natives of Jyväskylä or Reykjavík. They were all either language teachers or had some other education in teaching. The teachers had worked among foreigners for some time except one, who had just graduated from the school of education in Jyväskylä and started her career teaching Finnish as a second language. One of the language teachers focused specifically on teaching Thai people because she had lived in Thailand for many years, knew Thai and had a personal relationship with the Thai community in Iceland.

Culture was a big theme in all the classrooms on two levels: first, enhancing cultural competence by introducing the students to a new culture and language, such as using Finnish or Icelandic magazines, newspapers, television programs or web pages as teaching materials, and second, in the form of some cultural conflicts because people with different cultural backgrounds were learning together.

To my surprise, culture seemed to have a different meaning in Jyväskylä and Reykjavik even though the teachers in both countries were using quite similar styles of teaching methods and materials. Integration programs in Jyväskylä integrated all the subjects into each other and, for example, culture and customs are always taught along with the language.

One of the classes that I observed in Jyväskylä was a Finnish class. They were going through the 55 most common Finnish words and had some grammar as Finnish is quite a grammar-filled language. The teacher spoke Finnish the whole time to her students even though the level of the students varied from basic to developing language proficiency. Throughout the class, the teacher made small notes to the students about how some phrases look different in spoken Finnish or how the emphasis of the word might give a new meaning to the sentence.

The students also spoke Finnish to the teacher and with each other, sometimes mixing in English if they did not know the word in Finnish. The teacher, however, kept strictly to using Finnish and even explained grammar in Finnish. The teacher was constantly asking her students if they understood her and if they did not, she tried to find ways to explain the subject differently. She integrated teaching Finnish customs and values into
language teaching, for example one of the students came late to the class and she explained how it is important to apologize for being late as Finns appreciate punctuality greatly. She encouraged her students to take an active part in class but I assume that my presence in the classroom intimidated some as the teacher pointed out during the break that her students were not normally so quiet.

When I asked the teachers in Finland how culture is integrated into the language teaching, the common reply was that they teach some of it, referring to the superficial level of culture including folklore, traditions and public holidays, but most comes from going on field trips to see and experience it themselves.

Field trips indeed had a huge role in the Finnish integration program’s classrooms. A teacher in Finland who was teaching everyday life skills gave an example of how field trips are not only a good way to introduce students to typical Finnish life but they also offered her perspective on what should be taught. She referred to an earlier experience in the course. The teacher had organized a cooking evening with her students where they all gathered to cook their favourite dishes. Before the cooking, they had made a shopping list for groceries in the classroom and then went all together for a field trip to the grocery store nearby to buy the necessary products. Some of the students asked the teacher by the vegetables and fruits section of the store where they could see the price of the products. The teacher told me that she was a bit surprised by this because above every fruit and vegetable is a small label with the price. The students, however, pointed out that there were many numbers in each label for one fruit or vegetable and wanted to know which one was the price. It is a custom in Finnish grocery stores that customers weigh vegetables and fruits themselves. The label with many numbers states the kilo price and also the number that one needs to push to receive a price tag from the weighing machine. The teacher told that this was such an obvious custom to her that she did not even realize to mention it to her students.

The cultural aspect was quite different in Iceland. While I asked the Icelandic for foreigners teachers about integration of culture into the language teaching, the common reply was that they teach the language and the Settler’s school focuses more on Icelandic culture and society. According to the teachers of the Icelandic for foreigners, their courses focused only on the language aspect and culture and social studies were separated from the main core of teaching.
Some of the teachers, who taught the Icelandic for foreigners’ classes, claimed that they just taught language and not culture. Their teaching, however, had some aspects of culture integrated into language teaching. On one occasion, the theme of one of the Icelandic for foreigners’ classes was travelling and the whole class used laptops to plan their hypothetical trip in Iceland where they had to decide the destination, the way to travel there, the accommodation and different options of what was possible to do in the destination. The teacher reflected greatly on her experiences and opinions about travelling in Iceland making comments on how many Icelanders liked to travel with camper vans. Many of the students reflected with their own remarks about travelling in Iceland and some were really interested in going to the countryside. Besides this, all the teachers of the Icelandic for foreigners course made similar small comments as in the Finnish classes about how natives use the language in spoken form or how some word, even though it appeared to have the same meaning, had different values based on the circumstances. The teaching materials also contained exercises that focused on some level on Icelandic culture and had some remarks about Icelandic society.

The Settler’s school, which was said to be the “culture course” is located in the centre of Reykjavík and had services at close range. Field trips were part of the studies and the class had already visited earlier in the course the Alþingi (the Parliament of Iceland), and during the time of my visit, the class were planning to go to the theatre.

In the Settler’s school, culture seemed to be a synonym for social studies. The social studies class that I observed in the Settler’s school focused on the Icelandic health care system. The teacher spoke Icelandic the whole time but asked her students to stop her and ask questions if they did not understand her. She presented the Icelandic health care system with slides explaining the different districts that Reykjavík had, where the hospitals were located and what to do when one gets suddenly ill or injured. They also talked about other services closely connected to health care, such as the Red Cross or whom to contact if one has experienced sexual or physical assault. She connected her teaching to the experiences of the students by holding a conversation about their experiences. Most of the students seemed to be familiar with how the Icelandic health care system works but were quite eager to point out different points within the concept. Besides the health care system, they were also getting to know a play that they would go and watch that same week. The teacher used the internet as her aide in this. They looked at the trailer of the play and talked about different Icelandic actors and actresses, movies and plays that the students
had seen or what they knew. Even though the class was social studies, the teacher decided to have a little pronunciation practice as many of the students had difficulties pronouncing some of the Icelandic sounds that could make conversations with natives problematic.

Grammar is highly emphasized in the Finnish and Icelandic languages making it difficult to teach individuals whose language is based on other forms. In Reykjavik, one of the teachers claimed that her students were not learning the right level even though the students had taken the entrance test before attending courses at Mímir to check their level of Icelandic skills. She specifically mentioned that her students from Asia had difficulties in phonetics and grammar. According to the teacher, she knew that the mother tongue of the Asian students was quite different from Icelandic but she did not have sufficient knowledge about how to teach them or she did not always know if the students were able to follow the pace of the class since they did not speak much English either.

The Icelandic for foreigners that was specifically for Thai people was similarly structured as the other classes; they used similar material and followed a similar structur to the other classes. The reason a class was established specifically for Thai people was to accommodate significant linguistic differences between Thai and Icelandic. From the teacher of the class I learned that Thai, as many Asian languages, is not based on the grammar that is found in Indo-European language groups, but is an analytic language, which means that the words do not conjugate in form, case or number. Icelandic, however, is based on conjugating words in form, case and number. Therefore learning to speak a language that is constructed completely differently from the mother tongue is an extremely difficult task. The teacher of the class had lived in Thailand for several years and was closely connected to Thai culture and knew the difficulties of learning a completely different language. She taught grammar completely differently than the other teachers. Instead of saying that some certain verb follows with accusative or dative she used examples of common verbs that received the accusative or other cases and tried to make connections with the use of the grammar. She also repeated several times that even though a noun might look different because of the different cases it was still the same word and had the same meaning. For example, the object of the class was to learn the accusative and the teacher used verbs that were connected to food or cooking that would receive the accusative, like to cook (elda), to buy (kaupa), and so on. The class made a list of different nouns in the accusative form and just tried to learn by memorizing that with different verbs a noun might look different but it would still have the same meaning.
The teacher spoke Icelandic, also mixing Thai on a few occasions into her speech. An interesting point was that the teacher emphasized often how important it is that the women who had children speak their mother tongue at home. When I asked her about the reason for this, she told me that she had met a lot of Thai women in Iceland who preferred Icelandic over their own culture and language and their children did not know how to speak Thai and instead spoke “broken” Icelandic. According to her, she thought this was because some of the Thai women considered their own culture inferior compared to the new one and wanted to be more part of the new culture instead of embracing both cultures.

5.2.5 Various methods to negotiate and to teach

The teaching methods and materials were quite similar in both countries; the teachers and students used books or hand-outs provided by the service producer, had access to the internet, read Icelandic and Finnish magazines and newspapers. The classes in Jyväskylä though used more electronic materials, such as television, and a large part of the Finnish integration program was based on field trips.

In the Finnish integration program and at the Settler’s school in Reykjavík, all the different subjects had their own teachers whereas Icelandic for foreigners had the same teacher throughout the whole course. In Finland, the different subjects of the integration program were integrated into each other to form an ensemble for the integration process. The Settler’s school in Reykjavík had many subjects as in the Finnish integration programs but they were more separated from each other even though during my observations the social studies and Icelandic classes had quite a similar theme, which was health, but according to the Icelandic teacher of the class, it was a coincidence.

One issue came out in all of the classes; misunderstandings or not understanding what the teacher meant. Finnish and Icelandic teachers dealt with this issue differently. Finnish teachers constantly used Finnish to describe the issue that was not understood and they explained the issue from various aspects until it was understood. Icelandic teachers used a wider variety of methods to explain themselves. If Icelandic was not enough to explain some issue, they might explain it by using English or having practical exercises to enhance the use of some taught issue in Icelandic. Some teachers used flashcards that had different pictures about some theme. The flashcards were specifically used when the teachers were using new vocabulary. Flashcards are an efficient way to teach new words.
because the students have to make connections with a picture and a word and therefore, it can be remembered more easily (Witthaus, 1999). All the Icelandic teachers used games developed by Jill Hadfield and many praised them to be good. The games were cards that had either pictures on them or different phrases with the right grammatical form. The purpose of the game was to connect the right picture to the right phrase, for example a picture of pink sweater needed to be connected with the phrase “I have a pink sweater”. The goal of the games is to enhance fluency of the language and to make a connection between the classroom and the world outside of educational settings (Hadfield, 1990).

Teaching materials had an important role in enhancing cultural competence to start the integration process. The Icelandic teachers criticised the lack of suitable teaching material. The book that was used in teaching was considered to be dull and unstructured but one of the teachers told me that Mímir would soon start to use a new version of Icelandic for foreigners that she was pleased as the examples, pictures and exercises gave more everyday life examples compared to the old version that gave examples that seemed to be outdated and not useable anymore. For example, the new book had small fact sections that had facts about different rights that everyone has in Icelandic society, like who has a right to apply for the housing allowance and how to apply for it or how to apply for a loan to buy an apartment. The teachers were quite pleased with the card games from Jill Hadfield but one of the teachers complained that she had difficulties to find suitable material for her students. She said that practicing reading comprehension was difficult because magazines and newspapers could be too much for beginners but the teaching book itself was not enough for practicing reading. She had used children’s books but said that she did not find them appropriate for adults and used herself as an example that she would be bored and offended to learn a foreign language from children’s books as an adult. Some also thought that the different departments within Mímir could start cooperating with each other. One teacher told that she taught only one course and did not know anything about what was happening outside of her area at Mímir and could therefore not offer any guidance to her students if they wished to know more about different courses at Mímir.

In Finland, I witnessed how the teacher had the role of negotiator between her students and Finnish society and the school where the teaching of the course took place. A Finnish integration training program’s course, which was taught at the Jyväskylä Educational Consortium, was a specific course for learning Finnish for entering the labour market and it
therefore had six weeks practical training at some field that the students were interested in to work in the future. Before I entered the classroom with the teacher of the course, I asked her what the language level of the students was. She replied to me sarcastically that according to the Finnish employers it is not enough. I was a bit surprised by the answer but understood her remark when I started to talk with the students and heard them speak. They all spoke really good Finnish and were able to use it even when talking about laws and acts used in the labour market. The only thing that made me realize they all were foreigners was their accents. Even though they all spoke Finnish really well and managed even to speak it grammatically correctly, Finnish employers were repelled by their accents.

The day when I observed was not a typical day for the class as mentioned above. Besides me being a visitor in the classroom, there were also two others observing but our presence did not intimidate, rather the students were really social and curious about our purposes there. There was also the Finnish Red Cross’s food aid collection in which all the international students had taken part by establishing a cafeteria and a market for that day to collect money for the Finnish Red Cross that would sent food aid to East Africa.

The class started first with the teacher catching up what the students had been doing with other teachers during the time she had been ill. The students replied that they had gone over collective bargaining and they had a talk about that for a while. They talked about various subjects in the beginning of the class and the teacher asked us, the visitors, to introduce ourselves and to explain why we were observing the classrooms. The students actively asked us questions and they were really interested to know about Iceland when they heard that I lived there. Then the talk started to take forms of comparing different countries and their habits and culture with each other. After this started the Red Cross food aid collection and during that time some of the students were taking care of the cafeteria while others were selling products at the market. This event lasted for an hour and after that everyone returned to the classroom. First they talked about how successful the event had been and then they continued the class by watching a short Finnish documentary on the internet. The documentary had been on television the day before and was about a Finnish pre-school teacher in her 70’s who had continued working a bit even though she was entitled to be retired. After watching the documentary, the class talked about it together. The teacher asked questions and the students replied and commented about the documentary. Finally, the teacher paired everyone, including us visitors, with the students to go through a conversation that was on hand-outs she gave to us. The theme of the
conversation was to ask questions about everyone’s daily lives in Finland and opinions about living in Finland and mark them down on a piece of paper. Afterwards everyone presented the partner of the conversation to others.

5.2.6 Flexibility

All the teachers both in Finland and Iceland praised the flexibility of the curriculums. According to them, the curricular structures in both countries were well balanced in giving goals for what should be achieved in the courses and on different language levels but it also left space for teachers to use teaching methods suitable for the students and to follow the pace of the students.

Time was one of the factors that had an effect on flexibility. The pace of the Icelandic classes and the Settler’s school were faster than the Finnish ones, hence there was not so much space for doing multiple different ways of teaching on one particular subject or theme. The classes in Jyväskylä had more time to do different things with one subject and they could focus on the theme from various aspects because the classes were specifically intended for unemployed immigrants. The classes at Mímir, however, were originally meant for employed individuals. Therefore the classes at Mímir were taught only mornings or evenings and the immigrants had the opportunity to choose whichever was more suitable to their working schedule. After the financial collapse, however, the classes became more blended in terms of nationality, Icelandic skill level and employment status.

The financial aspect and location of teaching influenced flexibility. The Icelandic for foreigners’ classes did not enjoy as much freedom compared to the Settler’s school or the classes in Jyväskylä because of their poor location and because of lack of money. The students of the Icelandic for foreigners class only paid for language teaching which included only teaching materials in the classroom, and they had to pay for the field trips or other possible events by themselves.

An example of the advantages of financial resources and good location was a social studies class at the Settler’s school. The class ended with surprise field trip to the new concert hall in Reykjavík, Harpa. According to the teacher, field trips are a crucial part of the Settler’s school and were easy to organize as the students did not have to pay anything extra as the cost of the trips was included in the overall course price. She also mentioned that the good location of the Settler’s school in the city centre offered many possibilities for field trips and they could easily walk to different places.
In Jyväskylä, the teacher of the social studies class told me the same thing as the teacher at the Settler’s school. The location of the service provider in Jyväskylä was brilliant as all the services were so close by that they did not have any difficulties to get to them. While I was observing her class, the class went to visit the library. The students were introduced to all the services that the library offered, for example the possibility to read different magazines and newspapers in Finnish and in some foreign languages or how to find some specific item from the library database. She also helped together with other students to get a free library card for everyone that was interested to have one. The teacher spoke Finnish all the time to her students and used signs to complete her speech. When asking about teaching materials from her, she said that she preferred to do field trips with her students as books or just explaining about different circumstances did not offer good enough information. She added that many times during a field trip some issue appeared that she did not even anticipate, as in the case of grocery store. All the field trips, for example to the swimming pool to get to know Finnish sauna culture, were free for the students.

5.2.7 Self-esteem

Self-esteem turned out to be one of the major topics in the integration programs in Finland and Iceland. Some people are shy about using a language that they cannot use perfectly and prefer to keep in a language that they know or limit their communication. All the teachers in both towns were constantly encouraging their students to speak and take an active part in class by asking questions or commenting. They all emphasized that perfect grammar did not matter as much as using the language in order to learn to speak it.

One of the teachers pointed out that raising the students’ self-esteem was one of her goals as some of the students had become recently unemployed and after trying to find new jobs they had heard from different places that their language skills were not good enough to have the job that they were applying for. Understandably if one hears this from many places, confidence in using a language can diminish quickly. One other teacher pointed out that she had some students who had been in the country for several years and knew the language already quite well but were too shy to use it and thought therefore that they could not speak it. She tried to encourage them in particular to open up more and start to use it by pointing out that no one speaks a language perfectly, not even the natives, and aiming for perfection should not prevent language use.
To my surprise, quite a few of the teachers commented that their students could not use the language. They meant by this that they used Finnish and Icelandic only in the classrooms but not outside in society they preferred using English or their mother tongue. The students also quite often used their mother tongue in the classrooms with other students from same country and on a few occasions teachers had to ask the students to speak Finnish or Icelandic as they were trying to learn those languages in the classroom.

One of the teachers of Icelandic commented that even though her students had completed the entrance test for Mímir they did not have the skills and abilities for the level in which they were placed. Therefore most of the students felt really frustrated in the classroom as they did not understand what the teacher was talking about. The teacher mentioned that she also felt frustrated as she was told to teach to a certain level and after preparing classes, she found out that most of the students did not have the skills that were taught in the previous level. According to her she had faced a problem that was difficult to solve: the students were disappointed to find out that they did not fulfil the requirements of a certain level but they needed to complete that level to continue in their Icelandic learning, or the next level would be extremely difficult if they lacked the skills. The teacher realized that this issue had caused her to focus only on what the students were lacking and not on what they already knew. She tried to change that to support the students’ self-esteem more because the students had started to give up on language learning because it seemed to be too difficult for them. Another issue in the same class was that even though the majority of the students were not on the right level, some were and the teacher had to balance constantly with teaching the previous level and their level to engage everyone in the classroom.

5.3 Summary of findings

Below is a summary of the findings in which Finnish and Icelandic findings are presented separately. The findings of both parts of the study, i.e. immigration and integration policies and integration programs, are presented in the same section.

5.3.1 The findings of Finland

Finland has formed its immigration and integration policies to anticipate the future lack of work force and therefore employment is highly emphasized as the goal of social integration. However, the majority of immigrants are unemployed in Finland due to the economic downturn and
their lack of language skills and education, which is highly emphasized in Finnish culture.

The responsibility for integration measures was under the Ministry of the Interior until 1.1.2012 when it changed to the Ministry of Employment and Economy emphasizing the importance of employment as the way to integrate in a new society even more. ELY Centres are the responsible agencies for running integration measures but the Employment and Economic Development Office is the organisation that established them.

The integration process is considered to be 3-5-years long and it starts with creating a picture of the situation of an immigrant where the abilities and skills are considered, the level of Finnish is found out and previous education and language bibliography. In Jyväskylä, Palapeli2 project is responsible for creating the profile. With that information an integration training program is formed specifically for each immigrant. The training starts by taking part in the integration programs established by the Employment and Economic Development Office. ELY Centres, which run the programs, buy the educational services from different organisations and at the moment the service providers are Jyväskylä Adult Education Centre and Jyväskylä Educational Consortium. The service providers follow two curriculums for teaching adult immigrants based on their literacy skills. Working with the Employment and Economic Development Office they form a suitable structure for those who are unemployed.

The purpose of the integration programs is to offer tools for integration, which means to enable immigrants’ authentic use of language. The content of the integration programs is wide and it does not focus only on Finnish language skills but covers a wide aspect of subjects to offer the best tools for integration and employment. The teachers of the programs used Finnish as their language for teaching and no other languages were used. Cultural aspects were integrated into every subject to ensure the authenticity of language use by including field trips outside of the educational setting and practical training.

5.3.2 The findings of Iceland

The common purpose of the immigration and integration policies of Iceland was to offer tools so that immigrants can be active members of Icelandic society. Iceland had a unique immigration history, with a relatively late beginning and the main reason for moving to Iceland was labour related. Therefore immigrants had already achieved one goal of integration, which is employment. Immigration and integration legislation was established in
2007 for the first time and based on the assumption that immigrants are employed and formed services and measures to meet their needs. Though the situation has changed, the measures and services are still the same.

The Ministry of Education is the authority that supervises integration programs as well as is responsible for offering grants for companies and organisations to provide the integration programs for immigrants and teaching material suitable for enhancing language skills.

As a means to monitor good quality education, the Ministry of Education has formed curriculums that should be used by all the service providers. The curriculums for teaching Icelandic for immigrants greatly emphasize Icelandic skills and consider language and culture as separable concepts. However, advanced education and the curriculum of the Settler’s school consider the concepts as integrated and integral to be able to use language authentically.

At Mímir I visited two different types of courses; Icelandic for foreigners and the Settler’s school. Icelandic for foreigners focused solely on language abilities and culture was considered as another matter. The emphasis was on language and therefore the teaching methods were planned in a way to enhance skills such as grammar and vocabulary skills. Teaching materials varied from the course book to games and hand outs. There were no field trips. The Settler’s school taught a wide range of subjects and it also emphasized employment greatly as a goal for integration. Culture was integrated into all subjects in the form of social studies and field trips were part of teaching to ensure authentic use of language.
6 Discussion

The research strived to gain a holistic view of immigration and integration policies Jyväskylä and Reykjavik. I wanted to find out how unemployed immigrants are aided in their integration process in a new society by finding answers to these following questions:

- How are the immigration and integration policies in Iceland and Finland alike and how do they differ?
- What are the Finnish and Icelandic integration programs like?
- What is being taught in the programs and how?

While I was exploring theories about social integration and analysing Finnish and Icelandic immigration and integration policies, I was a bit confused about the extent of the concepts. As Grillo (2007) said, multiculturalism, immigration and integration policies are indeed “fuzzy.” The concepts are so wide and include so many influential factors within the concept that they are quite difficult to comprehend.

The initial step in understanding the concepts is to take a closer look at the type of host societies because the “fuzziness” of the contents could be rooted in differences among host societies. Host societies often strive for different things and therefore one concept might look completely different and have another meaning in different circumstances. In other words, different states want different things from their immigrants and have different resources to offer them and therefore the same concepts can be used differently in different countries.

6.1 Comparison of the immigration and integration policies

Iceland and Finland are quite different from other European countries because the immigration started rather late compared to other European and Nordic countries. It could be because of the cold climate, difficult languages and dark winter times that are not very tempting factors. Many Western countries have a long experience with immigration and have formed their own means for integration or to form multicultural societies with various successes, such as the strict and one-sided definition of different cultural groups of the UK, the melting pot of the USA and the
Turkish immigrants in Germany (Grillo, 2007; Kivisto, 2002; Turton & Gonzáles, 2003). Finland and especially Iceland are in quite fortunate positions because they have an opportunity to enhance their already existing policies by using examples from other countries to try to avoid similar mistakes that some countries have made or solve some issues differently.

Because Finland and Iceland are in Europe and furthermore Finland is part of the EU and Iceland the EEA and both countries are party to the Schengen agreement, Europeans have free access to the countries. Immigration control focuses on the regions outside of Europe, from which educated people are favoured. Controlling immigration is not only an evil mean, but it is a way countries have an opportunity to protect themselves (Cornelius et al., 1994). Spain and Italy, for example, have moved recently from countries from which people emigrated to countries of immigration (Turton & Gonzáles, 2003). This issue has caused a lot of pressure on the Spanish authorities and worries have risen about common identity and the nation. In order to ensure their existence, countries need to be able to offer services, to have taxpayers fund social systems and facilitate mutual understanding among different groups of people within the borders to maintain peace and order. If everyone would be allowed to move to a country, it might have difficulties maintaining its ability to provide measures (Cornelius et al., 1994).

Iceland and Finland have quite a lot of similarities on the surface; they both emphasize language skills greatly yet both have been criticized for not offering efficient language courses for immigrants, in both immigration started quite late and both used to be countries from which people moved away (Einarsdóttir, 2011; Hämäläinen, 2011; Loftsdóttir, 2010; Manejuun, 2010; Marjeta, 1998; Similä, 2003; Skaptadóttir & Ólafsdóttir, 2010).

Considering immigration, there is one difference that has had an effect on integration policies—type of integration. Finland received its first group of immigrants when there was recession and unemployment resulting in immigrants being more likely to be unemployed also. Some parts of Finland, like Jyväskylä for example, are still trying to reach a similar state of welfare that existed before the recession of the 1990’s and their attempts are quite difficult because of the global market and the sudden changes within it that have global effects. Even though the number of immigrants is increasing every year in Finland, it does not allure the ones that Finnish authorities would prefer, which would be labour immigrants. Iceland however received its immigrants because of an abundance of working opportunities on various fields. The immigration to Iceland was quite sudden and late and
Icelandic authorities had not prepared themselves by forming legislations for them that would decide how they should help integration into Icelandic society. I have to admit that I found it rather odd back in 2007 when I went to a grocery store that workers did not speak any Icelandic but their own mother tongues or some English. The Icelandic authorities reacted by forming legislation that would cover all aspects of immigration and all levels of society to include everyone in it. The legislation was formed during the time before the storm and the legislation and integration policies were meant for people in the labour market and it seems that the possibility of an unemployed person entering Iceland was not even considered.

The starting point of forming immigration policies is quite different in Finland and Iceland. Finland aims at increasing labour migration to the country because of the lack of work force in the near future by simplifying immigration legislation as well as laws for different sections of society, such as taxation or legislation for entrepreneurship. The main immigrant groups are however not the labour force desired by Finnish authorities, but refugees, return migrants or those with family ties. In order to receive financial support from the state, unemployed immigrants have to take part in the integration programs. Integration programs give unemployed immigrants an opportunity for employment. Even though one of the goals is to increase labour migration by simplifying the permit system and taxation, reality seems to be different. The Finnish Immigration service has a certain set of rules for working permits where they state how much an immigrant needs to earn per month in order to receive the permit.

Iceland, on the other hand, had employed immigrants during the time when immigration and integration legislation were formed and therefore one of the goals of integration was already fulfilled. To take part in the Icelandic integration programs was optional and it was more a recommendation to learn basic Icelandic skills to be able to speak with the natives in their mother tongue. When the times changed and there started to be more unemployed immigrants, the legislation of immigration and integration was still the same and there were no mention of what to do in case the immigrant is unemployed and what would be suitable services for him or her. In contemporary Iceland taking part in the integration programs, however, is not optional anymore. All the unemployed persons who receive unemployment benefits have to take part in some courses to enhance their chances to get a job. Unemployed immigrants are mostly guided to Icelandic classes because good Icelandic skills are now quite emphasized in every job position. If they refuse to take part in the courses, they will lose their benefits.
As Spiecker et al. (2004) argue, the point of social integration is to become an active member of a host society but the process of social integration is not simple or one-sided, rather it contains different levels or dimensions that have an effect on each other. Bosswick and Heckmann (2006) claim that to become an active member of a society one needs to integrate in four different dimensions but the society has to work simultaneously to offer access to the core institutes of the host-society. To achieve those dimensions, language and cultural competence is crucial and it is offered in the form of integration programs. Structural and cultural integration, which are the form of access either to the core institutes of a society or to the society itself and to the surrounding cultural group, can be achieved with the information and knowledge received in integration programs. The other dimensions identificational and interactive integration, which consider becoming part of a new society without neglecting one’s cultural background, can be more difficult to achieve and they require more than just sitting in a class.

Finland has developed a detailed structure for its integration program that does not just consider language important but expands to include culture, social studies and other subjects that are used in educational fields. The integration process is not considered to be simple or fast but the authorities have realized that it is unique in every situation as everyone has different circumstances in their lives. Even though the policies are quite detailed and well-prepared, an immigrant also has his or her voice in their integration process and they have responsibility to form their own goals and intentions for their future lives in Finland. When I referred to the concepts of multiculturalism, integration and immigration policies as “fuzzy” I was not the only one. The Finnish authorities that are responsible for running the integration programs in Jyväskylä also complained that they were incomprehensible. One of the authorities criticized Finnish legislation and policies for being too bureaucratic, which made her work problematic as she had sometimes difficulties understanding them. She told me that she had faced problems with trying to find an organisation to rent a kitchen for the groups of integration programs. The building where they were situated did not have kitchen facilities and they had earlier rented those places from other buildings but the cooperation contract had ended and she needed to find a new place. She had found a new organization that would have been willing to rent their facilities a few times a week but making a contract turned out to be problematic because of Finnish bureaucracy. The other organisation received funding from the state and it is forbidden to make a rental contract between two different organisations that receive funding from the state or from a municipality. Besides these examples of Finnish bureaucracy, another authority complained about the division of responsibilities for different fields. She claimed that there were quite many actors working among immigrants as the police dealt
with permits, the Employment and Economic Development Office dealt with unemployment issues, the Social Insurance Institution of Finland dealt with the benefits, social services had responsibility for specific groups of immigrants and so on. She elaborated, saying that this system worked well in Jyväskylä because it is quite a small town and their familiarity with one another made their cooperation quite easy and they knew where to guide the immigrant with their different issues. In a bigger city this cooperation could turn out to be difficult.

The Jyväskylä municipality also received plenty of criticism from the people working among immigrants. Jyväskylä has undergone cutbacks from quite many places and the workers among immigrants were not satisfied with the cutbacks. One of the workers called them short-sighted and that they were saving money in the wrong places. Even though they might save it, it would backfire in the long run by introducing new sets of problems that made the savings pointless when money would be required to solve the new issues.

Immigration and integration policies of Iceland seem to be simpler compared to the Finnish ones. Of course we need to keep in mind that the policies were formed lately and they have not been enhanced after that even though the situation in the society has changed. One remarkable difference is the lack of bureaus in the model of the integration process. Where Finland has divided the responsibilities of monitoring, establishing and providing services among governmental sectors, municipalities and within them to many different organisations, Iceland does not have so many middlemen. The Ministry of Welfare is responsible for forming integration policies and legislation and the Ministry of Education is the responsible agency for monitoring good quality education by forming the curriculum, offering grants and teaching materials. The responsibility to offer the actual integration program services is given to different companies and organisations in the third sector. Companies in the third sector have the responsibility to provide measures for immigrants but I cannot help but wonder how the Ministry of Education monitors if the quality of education is good. In Jyväskylä, an integration program is taught by the service providers from different companies or organisations but there the Employment and Economic Development Office who is responsible for establishing the integration programs actively cooperates to form the different levels of integration programs. In the curriculum of Icelandic for foreigners, the Ministry of Education stated that establishing a curriculum offers everyone a good quality education but I do not believe that this is enough. It needs to be considered that the service providers of the integration programs in Iceland are private companies and organisations that might receive funding from the state and they need
money to run their business. I would imagine that the economic crisis of 2008 had an impact on the service providers, for example, by cutting down course offerings or limiting funds for teaching materials that might have an effect on the quality of education.

The final difference between the immigration and integration policies in Finland and Iceland is the goal of the future society, or what kind of society the governments want to form with their policies. According to the Finnish government migration policy, integration is a two-way process where both parties have to work on their attitudes towards differences, enhance cultural competence and intercultural skills (Hallituksen maahanmuuttopolitiikka, 2006). The Finnish government suggests that education is an answer for the two-way integration process where immigrants attend integration programs and natives receive information about different ethnic groups to enhance their cultural competence, therefore being able to live together regardless of their differences. Iceland, on the other hand, relies greatly on Icelandic skills as the integration policies focus on enhancing Icelandic (Government policy on the integration of immigrants, 2007). Indeed, I got the impression from the observations and interviews that if one acquires some Icelandic, integration to Icelandic society happens by itself when one can communicate with the natives. Iceland seems to see integration as a process where immigrants are the only active members in the process. In my opinion, Iceland’s way of integrating the immigrants resembles Gordon’s (as cited in Williams & Ortega, 1990, p. 701) model of seven types of assimilation more than the four dimensions of social integration by Boswick and Heckmann (2006).

Table 6: Gordon’s model of seven types of assimilation (as cited in Williams & Ortega, 1990)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cultural or behavioural assimilation</th>
<th>To follow the cultural patterns of the majority’s</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Structural assimilation</td>
<td>To access the primary group level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Martial assimilation</td>
<td>To form inter-ethnic marriages</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identificational assimilation</td>
<td>To form shared sense of belonging</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitude receptional assimilation</td>
<td>Lack of prejudice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioural receptional assimilation</td>
<td>Lack of discrimination</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civic assimilation</td>
<td>Lack of power and value struggles of different cultures</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As I mentioned earlier in the findings, the Icelandic teacher who specifically taught Thai people, talked about the issue of how some Thais considered their own culture inferior to Icelandic and spoke only Icelandic with their children even though it was not their mother tongue. The teacher, besides teaching Icelandic to them, emphasized the importance of one’s own culture and tried to change the behaviour pattern from undervaluing it to start to embrace it together with Icelandic culture.

Finland and Iceland seem to have two different ways of integrating immigrants and though Finland, especially, sees integration as a two-way process where everyone should be accepted and live together, the sad reality is that negative attitudes towards immigrants, discrimination and racism do exist (Jaakkola, 2009; Marjeta, 1998; Reuter et al, 2005; Salminen, 2009, August 22; Tilastokeskus, 2011; Önnudóttir, 2009).

A country needs to have a common national identity in order to work (Spiecker et al., 2004; Sunier, 2003). Every group has their own sense of morals, values, goals and objectives for life and so on and if all these groups act on their own ideas in one country it would pretty soon cease to exist. Another problem of multicultural society is that in many cases everyone focuses solely on the differences that different groups have and neglect the aspects that unite them (Parekh, 2000a). If one takes a look at the integration policies in Finland and Iceland, one is able to see that both countries focus on differences of people and cultures and not on the factors which are common to all different cultural identities, such as love, hope for a good life and so on. Parekh (2000a) argues that all people have similar characters but how they are expressed differs from each other.

To form a multicultural society or any other society requires cooperation among different identity groups (Modood, 2007; Peters, 2003). Achieving this goal of different cultures or other groups living together with a national identity that is not threatened by their collective or individual identities requires negotiations in which different groups identify goals that are achievable to all (Parekh, 2000a; 2000b). Unfortunately, in the cases of Finland and Iceland, this has not seemed to have happened yet.

6.2 Comparison of the integration programs

The purpose of the integration programs is to offer tools for the learners in their integration process. The tools are the language and culture of the host-society and information about the core structure of society that includes education, health care and labour market, to mention a few. Language skills and employment are highly emphasized in the integration
process because then one is able to communicate with the natives of the host-society (McKay & Tom, 1999). Iceland’s integration policies and curriculums for teaching Icelandic for foreigners greatly emphasize Icelandic skills; this could also be seen at Mimir where they had established courses for immigrants that specifically taught the language and separated the cultural aspect to the subjects of the Settler’s school. Finland’s integration policies, on the other hand, considered language and culture as unified content that should be taught together, integrated into various subjects within the integration programs. These two different ways to deal with the cultural aspect in integration programs makes me wonder about the definition of culture. What actually is culture?

Hinkel (1999) argues that culture is often considered to be the superficial aspects of concepts such as folklore, traditional holidays, celebrations, music, literature and so on. Culture is actually more than that. It exists anywhere people socialise and communicate with each other or form their identities (Abbinnett, 2003; Odé & Veenmand, 2003). Culture is a set of symbolic values that are given to different factors in a social context. Individuals behave and act according to those values, for example, how people greet their elders or prepare food. Words also have their own symbolic value derived from culture (Stalpers, 1987). It is common that though two people from different countries use the same language, misunderstandings occur. These misunderstandings occur because two people from different cultures do not have similar symbolic values for words. Therefore culture and language are inseparable concepts where language is a tool and culture is the knowledge of how to use the tool, together forming authentic use of language (Byram & Morgan, 1994; Hinkel, 1999).

If we return back to the question of what culture actually is, we might see that definition of culture is different in Finland and Iceland. In Finland, the concepts were considered to form a union for reaching good language skills. The learners of Finnish are taught the superficial aspect of culture including describing holidays and folklore, but also deeper aspects not just focusing on language skills of the official languages of Finland but also including work culture, communication skills with the natives and different minority groups and information about oneself. In Iceland, culture seemed to be confined to the superficial aspect and information about the society. The Icelandic teachers, however, showed with their examples and side remarks how to use the language outside of the educational setting. It could be that because the definition of culture seems to be the more “obvious aspects” in the Icelandic context; the teachers did not think to teach culture together with language.
Both Icelandic and Finnish curriculums aimed for authenticity in language use, which means that one has competence in using a language and reacting properly in different situations naturally and not only in rehearsed conversations. The fact is that learning just in the classrooms does not mean that the students learn authentic use of the language. Learning in classrooms is quite planned where the teacher offers structured instructions on how to react in different circumstances but as we all know, life is not planned and different situations require different reactions that are quite impossible to predict. Authenticity could be seen as a form of intercultural communication. As Stalpers (1987) points out, every word has its own symbolic value that can make a conversation between a native speaker and second language speaker problematic because the symbolic values are not familiar to both parties of the conversation. One can only learn these symbolic values through experience in the real world, not solely in classrooms (Byram & Morgan, 1994). Therefore field trips outside of the educational settings are quite an important factor for teaching authentic language use. That fact was mentioned by some of the teachers of integration programs in Jyväskylä and Reykjavík. Field trips gave a chance to introduce the students to governmental offices of the host-societies, to cultural events and situations of everyday-life, such as how to act in grocery stores, what the bathing culture is like or how to access different services in the surrounding areas of Jyväskylä and Reykjavík. Unfortunately, the possibility of having field trips as part of the studies depended on money and the location of the buildings where the teaching took place. The integration programs in Jyväskylä and the Settler’s school were fortunate to have enough money that their students did not have to pay anything extra and their locations were close to different services. The Icelandic for foreigners’ classes lack all these qualities as well as inconvenient timing of the teaching, being early in the mornings or late in the evenings.

In a multicultural setting, one should remember that there are many individuals with their own cultural background learning together (McKay & Tom, 1999). As many different cultural groups come to work together, intercultural communication skills are required for interaction to happen. Teachers especially have an important role in the integration process as negotiators among different groups, as individuals with cultural competence having an impact on their attitudes towards different cultures or finding suitable teaching methods that include all regardless of their previous experiences and cultural background. Finnish and Icelandic teachers could also be one of the few members of the host society that the immigrants meet. This came up in the Settler’s school when the social
studies teacher asked her students if they knew any Icelanders or had any Icelandic friends. Some students replied that they had Icelandic spouses or they had some friends but few claimed that they did not know any Icelanders or they did not have that much interaction with the natives.

In Jyväskylä and Reykjavík, one of the teachers’ roles was to be a negotiator between employers and immigrants. Employment is highly connected with integration in Finland and Iceland and one of the integration programs’ goals was to enhance employment opportunities for the immigrants. In Iceland, the financial collapse has resulted in Icelandic language skills being highlighted in job advertisements unlike before the collapse. In Finland, employers shun foreign accents even though the language skills are otherwise good. The teachers’ role in these cases was to raise the low self-esteem that some of the students had from not being able to speak Finnish or Icelandic sufficiently enough. In Jyväskylä, service providers were able to conduct matters which enhanced the working cultural competence by offering the students the possibility of vocational training.

It is quite interesting that teachers could both raise the self-esteem of their students as well as bring it down. Teachers, like any other people, have their own attitudes and opinions about different cultures and also of what they consider the goals of teaching to be (Nieto, 2002). Some teachers might be more familiar with some cultures than others and they might therefore engage with those individuals more easily. Some of teachers in Jyväskylä and Reykjavík felt that their students were not in the right language level that the course had or that they were not using the target language as much as the teachers hoped for. In Reykjavík, one teacher claimed that some of her students had difficulties following the classes because they did not have enough information about the basics of Icelandic that was required for the course and had therefore low self-esteem in learning the language. Another teacher had difficulties including Asian students in teaching and finding suitable ways to teach them because of differences in the structure of the languages. In Jyväskylä, one teacher was a bit dissatisfied with the weak position of Finnish language in some of her students’ daily lives.

Not only do the teachers’ attitudes towards cultures and cultural competence reflect on their students but it also has an impact on how and what aspects of culture are introduced in the classroom (Niźegorodcew, 2011). First of all, teachers’ opinions about culture in second language acquisition in the integration programs of Jyväskylä and Reykjavík were quite different; Jyväskylä considered culture widely, including different
aspects of society and social interactions, whereas in Reykjavík, the focus was more on teaching the superficial level and on social studies. These different treatments of culture were reflected in how culture was seen as part of authentic language teaching in Finnish and Icelandic classrooms. Secondly, teachers’ attitudes towards different cultures reflect what kind of culture is taught. Niżegorodcew (2011) claims that in many English classrooms, teachers only focus on the English cultures of the UK and the USA even though English is the official language in many countries all around the world and it is used as a second language almost everywhere. This is because teachers have their opinions and attitudes of different cultures and they value some of them more than others. This made me wonder, especially in the integration programs of Jyväskylä, what kind of culture is introduced to the foreign students. Based on the observations, the introduced culture was the Finnish culture who spoke Finnish as their mother tongue, which is the dominant culture in Jyväskylä. I found this a bit strange since the point of integration besides getting employed in the Finnish context is to offer tools to integrate in Finnish society. There are minority groups with their own culture living in Finland, such as Finns whose mother tongue is Swedish, Romas, Samis and different ethnic groups, but these groups were not mentioned during my observations.

Opinions and attitudes towards different cultures of the teachers and authorities working among immigrants show the power balance of the host-society’s dominant culture and the minority ones. It seems that Finnish and Icelandic cultures are quite narrow-minded in the integration programs. The power of the dominant culture of the host-society over the minority ones could possibly lead to consideration that integration is one-way process where the immigrant is the only active member and not the host-society as well. This idea was visible when I asked the service providers and the teachers when one is integrated. All of them had similar definitions that focused solely on the immigrant’s point of view; i.e. he or she has enough language competence to cope with everyday life tasks. As Parekh (2000a; 2000b) claims, no culture is above another one regardless of the differences in symbolic values. To achieve social integration both parties of the process, which are the immigrant and the host-society, should find balance between cultures that could eventually form a national identity. The point of integration programs in that process is to offer measures that could be expanded to everyone in the society to find measures to achieve the balance.
7 Conclusions

When I started to plan my research, I thought that I had some kind of idea of how the integration programs are or the factors behind the measures, but it surprised me how wide the concept actually is. There are so many factors affecting integration programs that no wonder the concepts are considered “fuzzy”. Clearly, how different states consider immigration affects integration programs.

Integration programs are a good way to aid newcomers because one cannot assume they can function similarly to the natives. The only concern that I have with integration policies and programs is that some might consider that it is enough to take part in them and find employment, and then the integration process is finished. Social integration in a new society is not just having a job, which seems to be the biggest goal for offering such courses in the cases of Iceland and Finland. Even though one would have a job or know the basics of the language, one can still feel they are not part of the society.

A successful integration process in which one has gone through all four dimensions of social integration can be achieved with integration programs but it also requires more. Natives also have a role in integration processes because the feeling of being part of something requires that the majority of the group accepts one among them. This is unfortunately not achieved completely in Finland or Iceland where there are many who do not feel immigrants are part of the same society. Therefore integration policies and programs could be expanded to cover the natives because it is not just the immigrants who need to adapt in new circumstances; natives need to also. More research is needed on the issue, especially on natives’ point of view, to cover all possible factors behind the complex concept of social integration.
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Appendix A – Semi structured interview for service providers

Breaking the ice

- Could you tell me bit about yourself? How long have you worked at this position? What is your education?

Understanding the bureaucracy

- What is this facilities’ position in integration process?
- What kind of authorities is involved in integration of immigrants? How is the cooperation between different authorities involved in this issue? Is there possible gaps in the chain of communication?
- How do you consider the integration system to be in your facilities’ point of view?

The function of the service provider

- What do you actually do? Could you give me an example of your typical working day?
- What kind of immigrant groups do you work with?

Views on integration

- When is person integrated? When is the integration process finished?

Final words

- Do you want to add something?
Appendix B – Semi structured interviews for teachers

Breaking the ice

- Could you tell me a bit about yourself? What is your education? How long have you worked in this position? Have you worked for long with immigrants?

General description of the classrooms

- What is the topic of this classroom? What are you doing at the moment?

- Could you describe your classroom a bit? Where are the students from and what level are they on?

Teaching content

- What is being taught in the classrooms/courses? What aspects do you focus on? Language: grammar, phonetics, vocabulary, culture?

- How do you teach your students? For example, what kind of materials are used?

Integration

- When is one integrated in a new society?

Final words

- Do you want to add something?