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A Study of Student Mentoring Relationships in a Finnish University
Context

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ABSTRACT

In Finnish universities, tutoring programmes are set up to help new students to start their university life. This research studies the international tutoring programme of the University of Vaasa. The research aims to discover the factors leading to different relationships and how to sustain a good relationship during the official duration of the programme.

A qualitative approach is used and semi-structured interview is chosen as the method of data collection to investigate the motivation of the tutors, how they see their self-identity as a tutor, their cross-cultural management and diversity management skills, the influence of the organization and other factors affecting the relationship between tutor and tutee.

The results show a fluid construction process of both the motivation and self-identity of the tutors, and the relationship between tutors and tutees throughout the semester. It is found that the first two weeks of semester are the most important stage to determine the relationship for the rest of the semester. The research points out the importance of the hybrid construction process of the motivation and self-identity of the tutors.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In each new semester in the university, more than 100 new international students arrive as new members and start their exotic cultural and studying experience. In some universities, there are student tutors, the more experienced students who have studied and lived in the city for at least one year, to guide and support the new international students to start their university life in the new environment. This research studies the effectiveness of such student tutoring programme, the factors of the effectiveness and how to improve the programme.

Student tutoring is said to be beneficial to the students as the more experienced students will act as a social role model and provide in-depth guidance to less experienced students, as a means to support them in the new environment and increase their motivation to continue their studies (Hughes 1994:4).

There are abundant literature and research about tutoring and mentoring. Tutoring is mostly used to describe peer tutoring among students and how it enhances the academic learning of the tutee; whereas mentoring is employed in work situation and used as a means to develop the career and psychological aspect of the mentor and mentee. Very little literature has studied the tutoring relationship between a local student tutor and an international tutee in the university context, and focuses on the social growth and assistance on the participants other than the academic aspect. Also, research has seldom empirically examined how much the tutoring programme benefits the tutors, how the quality of the relationship is supervised, and how is the programme maintained sustainable. There is insufficient research to investigate the factors and outcomes of the negative and ineffective tutoring relationships (Eby et al., 2000 in Hamlin and Sage, 2011:756).

This research studies several tutoring relationships between the Finnish student tutors and the international tutees in the University of Vaasa. The official duration of the tutoring programme lasts for one semester. Different relationships are found, depending on the personal characteristics of the tutors and tutees (Allen 2003:135), the motivation of tutors (Allen 2003:140 and Qureshi et al., in Cox, 2000:202), the organization and other predetermined factors.

This research considers tutoring relationship as a form of mentoring relationship, since tutoring and mentoring share a great number of similarities, and the concept of mentoring suits more the purpose of this study. The research aims to examine what the tutors have experienced in mentoring, the factors behind different kinds of mentoring behaviour that lead to different mentoring relationships, and the effectiveness of the relationships, as well as how to improve the programme.

1.2 Previous studies

Most literature about tutoring is relevant to academic and school-based settings (Hughes 1994:4). It studies how student tutoring can enhance the teacher's teaching and students' learning, and investigates how much tutoring can benefit the tutees, for instance the tutees may get a positive role model, and increase motivation to continue studies (Ibid:4).

Self-identity construction theory is relevant to this research, as a person makes choices and takes actions about a specific object according to his value and attitude to the object (Schwartz 2006:778). Traditional self-identity construction research lacks guidance on how people can make their way in life (Ibid:778). There has been a demand for a coherent and flexible sense of self-identity to guide people to make self-directed life choices and decisions in Western society (Ibid:778).

A student tutor takes care of a group of tutees from different countries, of different cultural backgrounds, at different ages and with different personal experiences. This is

definitely a diverse group. Diversity management is one of the theoretical concepts in this thesis. Previous research has shown that diversity in a group can bring negative impact on the group performance, as it is difficult to negotiate consensus among the group members (Thomas and Inkson 2009:139). On the other hand, previous studies also state that cultural diversity can bring more creativity and higher quality group decision, especially compared to a group of an identical age, gender, education background, and work environment culture. It is because a diversity group provides a greater variety of viewpoints, and those minority opinions will not be neglected because the cultural difference in the group is noticed and accepted (Ibid:141).

There is abundant literature and research about mentoring. Many of them study mentoring in an organizational setting, and focus on the antecedents, outcomes and benefits of mentoring (Hamlin and Sage 2011:753 and Allen 2003:135), the factors leading to positive and effective mentoring (Allen, 2003:135, Noe et al., in Hamlin and Sage, 2011:755), suggestion on improving the mentoring programme (Hughes, 1994:8), such as enhancing the career development and performance of the management level employees (Douglas and McCauley, 1999 in Hamlin and Sage, 2011:752) and the guidelines to develop formal mentoring programme (Coley, 1996 in Ibid:753). However, there is a lack of literature on negative mentoring, which is an important reference to avoid repeating the mistakes that cause ineffective relationships. Quality of mentoring is seen as the key to successful mentoring (Gray and Smith, 2000 and Liang et al, 2002 in Ibid:753). Regarding the literature of negative and ineffective mentoring, research studies how interpersonal relationships negatively influence mentoring, and what kind of behaviours from the mentor and mentee can result in relationship problems, including fights, conflicts, jealousy and selfishness (Marshall, 1994 in Eby and McManus 2004:256). Literature also suggests the negative experiences of a mentors include betrayal and dysfunctional relationship (Eby and McManus 2004:257), and discusses the possible examples of dysfunctional relationships between the mentor and mentees (Scandura, 1998 in Ibid:256).

Regarding the predetermined factors which affect the quality of mentoring, research shows that mentor is more likely to have stronger commitment and provide higher

quality mentoring if they have a more positive perception on the benefits from the mentoring programme (Parise and Monica 2008:228). For example, recent research suggests greater involvement from the mentor in the selection of mentee process can positively improve the later participation of the mentor in the programme, as it increases mentor's commitment and understanding of the programme, and improves the mentor's perception the benefits from the mentoring programme that the mentoring relationship will be of higher quality and hence gives better career mentoring (Allen et al 2006b and Allen et al 2006a in Ibid:228). Greater participation in the programme also means higher quality mentoring relationship and learning (Allen and Eby 2003 in Ibid:228). On the other hand, Allen et al (2006b in Ibid:228) suggest that training can enable the mentor to produce higher quality of mentoring and it gives the mentor better understanding of the progamme, and helps them derive higher commitment to the mentoring relationship and more positive perception on the benefits from the programme.

On the other hand, certain aspects on mentoring have been found underexplored. For example, the suggestion on mentoring development is usually based on only a few organizations and not empirical (Wentling, 2004 in Hamlin and Sage 2011:753). Also, very few research has empirically studied if the opportunity costs of the mentor, his time and effort can pay off, as literature has been stating that mentoring can bring career and psychological benefits to the mentor (Allen et al 2004 in Allen, Lentz and Day 2006:273) In addition, little work has been done on how to guarantee the quality of mentoring process and effectiveness of the mentoring relationship despite quality is seen as a key to successful mentoring, (Hamlin and Sage 2011:753). Insufficient and sparse literature is available on the variables on the mentors, such as how the mentors' personal differences (Allen 2003:135) and willingness (Covin, 2007 in Smet, Keer, Wever & Valcke, 2010:1168) lead to different mentoring behaviour and affect the quality of mentoring (Fagenon-Eland et al, 1997 in Hamlin and Sage, 2011:753), the dynamic relationship between the mentor and mentees (Wanberg et al., 2003 in Ibid:753), how best the mentor and mentee know to take advantage out of the relationship can improve the mentoring relationship (Hamlin and Sage 2011:753). Moreover, more research should be done on the factors of negative and ineffective

mentoring (Eby et al., 2000 in Ibid:756), potential problems of mentoring (Eby and McManus 2004:256) and the impact of having a poor mentee (Feldmen, 1999 in Allen, Lentz and Day 2006:281). Last but not least, more research is needed on the specific mentor and mentee behaviour in order to make the mentoring relationships the most supporting, satisfying and effective to both parties (Hamlin and Sage 2011:753).

1.3 Research questions

Q1: What happens to a student tutor after mentoring the international students?

Q2: What determines the relationship between a Finnish student mentor and international students – a mentoring relationship?

1.4 Purpose of research

This research aims to examine what the international tutors have experienced and gained after being an international tutor. It will study what has happened, the positive and negative influence of being a tutor, and various factors that account for the success or failure of the relationship. The personal characteristics of the Finnish tutors, the behaviour of the international tutees, the cultural differences and interaction between both parties, the tasks of the tutors, the organization and the selection and training process of the tutors, all contribute to the effectiveness of the tutoring relationship and the programme.

After studying a range of factors that explain the effectiveness of the tutoring relationships and the tutoring programme, this research aims to discover how to keep a mentor motivated throughout the relationship, and what is needed to sustain a successful and positive tutoring relationship. An effective and successful tutoring relationship benefits both the Finnish tutors, international tutees, and the organization. Yet, a successful relationship does not come easy and is difficult to maintain, since all

relationships never stay static, and so does the motivation of the tutors, their reflection of self-identity, their interaction with the tutees and their behaviour during the programme (Star 2007 in Nollaig, 2011:17).

As the research on the mentoring programme between local students and international students in a university context is rare, hopefully the findings of this research, such as the factors of the positive and negative mentoring, and how to improve a mentoring programme, can serve as a reference and a starting point to develop other similar kinds of mentoring programme.

2 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Student tutoring is considered as mentoring relationship in this research

Tutoring and mentoring share a number of similarities. In both relationships there is a more knowledgeable and experienced member to pass the knowledge to the less knowledgeable and capable member (Kram 1985 in Hoffmeister et al. 2011:674; Topping, 1996 in Smet, Keer, Wever & Valcke 2010:1167), aiming to sharpen the tutee's or the mentee's work competence and performance. Both relationships aim to benefit the organization and their participants - tutoring aids teachers' teaching and students' learning, and mentoring promotes career development and gives psychological support to the participants (Kram 1985 in Hoffmeister et al. 2011:674). Also, both tutor and mentor serve as a role model to give aspiration, in-depth guidance and support to their tutee and mentee to continue either their studies or work (Hughes, 1994:4; Hamlin and Sage, 2011:756).

This research studies how the more experienced and knowledgeable university students help the less knowledgeable international students in the new environment. Since tutoring is more of a connation relevant to the academic field as an aid to improve students' academic learning (Hamlin and Sage, 2011:755), the term 'tutoring', its relevant literature and previous research do not fit exactly the interest of this research. Instead, the wording of 'mentoring' and its relevant studies suit the purpose of this research, which aim to look in depth what the mentors have undergone in the mentoring relationship in terms of their social and personal development, the various factors behind different mentoring behaviours, and the factors leading to a sustainable mentoring relationship.

Here, you need to become more precise: What is the aim of a mentoring in a firm? The aim is, basically, to make the mentee a better performer, meaning s/he works more efficiently, etc, with respect to the company. Tutoring is differently oriented. You need to untangle this still a little but further.

2.2 Tutoring

Tutoring can be easily found in everyday life. If you help someone who cannot print in the computer room by demonstrating how to open the machine and get rid of the paper jam in the tray, you are already engaged in tutoring. The tutoring relationship consists of the tutor and the tutee(s). The former refers to a peer who has more experience and knowledge and gives support; while the latter means the less experienced and capable peer who gets assistance from the tutor (Topping, 1996 in 2010:1167).

Tutoring is often linked to education activities in an academic setting (Hughes 1994:4), where tutoring is used as a strategy to aid teacher's teaching and students' learning. Student tutoring is an asymmetrical solution where a student volunteers to help a peer in a continuous and systematic manner (Ibid:4). Student tutor refers to a more knowledgeable and capable peer who helps the less capable tutee to learn by tailoring the lesson knowledge according to the tutee(s)' needs, interests and abilities (Chin, Rabow & Estrada 2011:26). Student tutors may also act as a positive role model to the tutee(s), giving them aspirations and motivation to continue studies and training (Hughes, 1994:4).

Learning that takes place in a peer tutoring setting is considered as a type of collaborative learning (Griffin & Griffin, 1998 and Topping, 1996 in Smet, Keer, Wever & Valcke 2010:1168). Bandura (2000 in Ibid:1169) finds out that high self-efficacy within the team, or high collective efficacy, can bring stronger motivation to the team to make effort in learning, greater strength to handle setbacks and failures, and better learning result. Similarly, Fresko (1996 in Ibid:1169) points out that in the university tutoring setting, if both tutor and tutees are happy with their participation, they are more likely to carry on their roles and contribute to make the peer tutoring beneficial to each other.

2.3 Mentoring

A mentoring relationship involves individuals to provide support to others (Hoffmeister et al. 2011:674). It usually exists as a small group relationship (Hughes 1994:4). It is also a form of developmental and supportive relationship (Kram 1985 in Hoffmeister et al. 2011:674) in which the more experienced and knowledgeable mentors give assistance to the junior organizational members, or the mentees (Kram, 1985 in Ibid:674 and in Allen 2003:134). The mentor can help the mentees to achieve higher competence and better performance by transferring both formal and informal knowledge, such as the technical knowledge and the organization's politics respectively, to the mentees (Allen et al. 1984 in Ibid:675). Modern literature about mentoring stresses that mentoring is an ongoing relationship between the mentor and mentee in the specific context, which summarizes the mentor as an image of an experienced teacher, whose behaviour and activities are to support, encourage, counsel and befriend the less experienced person, aiming to promote the mentee's professional and personal development (Anderson and Shannon 1988 in Orland 2001:77).

Mentoring is often associated with the idea of role model (Hamlin and Sage 2011:756; Hughes 1994:4; Hoffmeister et al. 2011:675). Hughes (Ibid:4) specifically describes that mentoring is a social role model which provides in-depth guidance. Mentoring also goes with concepts such as higher self-satisfaction and self-respect (Allen et al., 2004; Underhill 2006 in Hoffmeister 2011:674), as well as stronger commitment to organization (Donaldson et al. 2000 in Ibid:674).

Mentoring serves a number of key functions. First, it enables the transmission of formal and informal knowledge within the organization, such as technical knowledge and the politics within the organization, and such continuation of knowledge within the organization can benefit the new members (Kram and Hall 1996 in Allen, 2003:134; Allen et al 1997, Burke, 1984 in Allen, et al. 2006:272). Second, it enhances the personal development of both mentors and mentees. For example, mentors can obtain a sense of accomplishment (Allen et al. 2006:135) and provides the mentees with coaching and exposure (Kram 1985 in Parise and Monica 2008:226); while the mentees

can start their new life in Vaasa easier from the mentor's role modeling, guidance and protection (Hamlin and Sage, 2011:756), and gain more visibility and learn from from the mentor (Kram 1985 in Parise and Monica 2008:226). Third, mentoring provides positive psychological support to both the mentors and mentees. Mentors derive intrinsic satisfaction (Levinson et al 1986 in Allen et al 2006:135) via mentoring, and the mentees benefit from personal development, affirm their identity in the new foreign environment and increase self-worth value by getting the acceptance and confirmation, counseling, friendship and role modeling from the mentors (Hamilton 1942 in Hoffmeister et al, 2011:675; Kram 1985 in Parise and Monica 2008:226). Fourth, mentees may also gain a more positive self-image and less stress in a foreign country (Underhill 2006 in Ibid:675). Scandura (1997, in Ibid: 675) further argues that mentoring equips the mentees with stronger security as an experienced student mentor in the university and greater knowledge about the procedures and justice within the university.

Despite the massive positive outcomes of mentoring, Wanberg et al (2007 in Hamlin and Sage 2011:756) remind that we have to be cautious about mentoring relationships, which can be difficult and problematic when the mentors and mentees have no knowledge of each other, and it is not guaranteed that they can develop a good relationship and make the most out of relationship within the limited duration. Also, the outcome of mentoring may not come to effect at the end of mentoring, as it always takes time to build up and develop a relationship (Weigle and Nelson, 2004:222-223) in a work place setting. Furthermore, a motivated and competent mentor can be negatively influenced by mentoring as the programme takes away his or her time and distract the attention away from his or her career development (Allen et al. 2006:281).

It can be seen as a formal relationship if the matching of mentors and mentees are done through organizational assistance (Ragins et al 2000 in Parise and Monica 2008:226). Formal relationship usually lasts for an assigned duration, for example one year or one semeseter (Parise and Monica 2008:226). Formal mentoring aims to improve the personal development of the more experienced students, and to facilitate the knowledge transmission within the university (Scandura and Williams 2002 in Ibid:226)

2.4 Self-identity construction

Schwartz (2006:778) explains that self-identity is a set of attitudes and values that one adopts when making life choices (Erikson 1950, Ibid:778) For the influence of self-identity, Erikson suggests as follow: a healthy and positive identity enables one to have clear ambitions, coherent attitudes and values to make life choices; whereas a vague and negative self-identity may cause intervention to one's decision making, and may result in a higher risk of drug abuse, aimlessness or other undesired developmental outcomes (Jones, Hartmann, Grochowski & Glider, 1989; White, 2000, in Ibid:778).

Schwarts (2006:779) points out that 'goals, values and beliefs' make up self-identity. Li and Barnard (2011:139) further state that a person's self-identity, composed by the personal 'knowledge, beliefs and goal', is reflected by the personal attitude. Accordingly, in a student mentoring relationship, the student mentor's attitude can be seen from his or her action – the student mentor interprets and evaluates the mentoring activities according to his or her knowledge, beliefs and goal, makes meaning out of it gradually when interacting with the tutees, and also evaluates the situation (Chin, Rabow & Estrada 2011:27). The notion of positioning suggests that people revise their position in the context from time to time, depending on the dynamic interaction and dilemmas with other members, and the new rules and practices (Hallway 1984 in Orland 2001:79). In short, tutors may adjust their attitude and performance from time to time depending on how they make sense of the tutoring relationship, and their interactions and dilemmas with the tutees.

In addition to knowledge, goals and values, there are also many potential variables to affect tutors' behaviour and how they perceive their role and identity as a tutor, for instance gender, personality, language background and previous personal experiences, which influence the interactions between the tutors and tutee(s) (Weigle and Nelson 2004:204). In short, a wide range of factors can pose significant effect on how the tutors see their roles and self-identity, and how they negotiate the meaning of successful tutoring in their own perception (Ibid:219).

Greater understanding on the construction and influence on self-identity can strengthen identity consolidation (Schwartz 2001 and Schwartz & Montgomery 2002, in Schwartz 2006:780), which is an important concept to be added in the training of the international tutors, as a clear self-identity of international tutors can help the student mentors to value their significance and make use of their role to enhance personal development.

2.5 Cross cultural relationship

In our everyday communication, we unconsciously follow a set of cultural norms and behave in a specific way of our own culture (Thomas and Inkson 2009:45). These norms facilitate our communication with the people who share the same culture, but can also affect our communication with the groups of other culture, since we rely too much on our own norms to give our reactions (Ibid:45). We may also have selective perception or stereotyped expectations on a specific group or culture, which lead us to misjudge the behaviour of others from a different culture (Ibid:60-61). In a nutshell, cultural differences can lead to ineffective communication as the differences bring new and unknown communication codes and conventions to the sender and receiver (Ibid:87).

To avoid that our own cultural norms hinder us to communicate with the group of another culture, we may bear a sense of mindfulness and cultural intelligence. Mindfulness refers to the ability to read and evaluate the verbal and nonverbal behaviours in a different cultural context, such as the comments of the person from a different culture, his or her facial expressions, reactions, and the actual situation (Thomas & Inkson 2009: 22, Ang & Van Dyne 2008: 243). Cultural intelligence helps people to stay mindful of how their behaviours influence the perceptions and responses of the counterparties from other cultures (Ang & Van Dyne 2008: 243). High cultural intelligence people can change their behaviours in appropriate ways when interacting with parties from various cultures (Peterson 2004: 93). Cultural intelligence can be fostered by setting programmes at home, schools or peer groups, so that members can learn new rules or new social norms from a different culture or subculture (Thomas &

Inkson 2009:48). Increasing self-awareness of own perception and behaviour in the own culture can help people become more open to the social norms and ideas that are different from their own culture, and lead to successful interaction with people from different cultures (Peterson 2004: 92-93). Awareness of cultural difference, mindfulness and the cross cultural skills help people to build up cultural intelligence (Ibid:45).

In conclusion, we can communicate better with other cultural groups by being aware of cultural differences, and see these similarities or differences across cultures as nothing too special (Thomas & Inkson 2009:54). Tolerance for uncertainty, empathy and adaptability are needed to develop such appropriate attitude on cultural differences (Ibid:60).

In addition, regarding the communication between the native speakers and second language users, a native speaker can facilitate the communication by speaking carefully, avoiding spoken language and slangs, repeating the key points or using easier expressions, employing active clause instead of long compound sentences, or pausing more frequently to encourage the second language user to participate in the communication and hence facilitate the interaction (Ibid:91).

2.6 Diversity management

A group with members different from each other, for instance different cultural backgrounds, ages, genders, and experiences, it is a group with diversity. Thomas & Inkson (2009:139) argue that the diversity inside the group can bring both benefits and disadvantages to the group. In the positive aspect, diversity mean a greater variety of ideas and opinions, as different cultures, work experiences or ages can bring different viewpoints. On the negative side, diversity of ideas and opinions can cause more conflicts and mistrust in work.

Diversity management refers the skills to manage a diverse group. The origins of diversity management aimed to produce a fair and equitable environment, reduce discrimination, and promote the recognition of cultural differences (Wrench 2007:28).

Successful diversity management includes being able to make quality decisions by understanding personal and the organization's mission, vision and strategy; and being capable to respect diversity and diverse needs and avoid being overwhelmed by diversity (Thomas & Roosevelt 2005: 103-104).

Various examples of diversity management can be used to tackle the difficulties arisen from group diversity. First, building a sense of understanding and respect of mutual difference among the group can help the group members to respect each other's own solution to deal with different kinds of situations (Thomas & Inkson 2009:149). Second, an agreed goal and group process among the members makes it clear for everyone what is next step, despite of different opinions, paces, and expectation of work process (Thomas & Inkson 2009:148). Third, encouraging group members to be mindful in group interactions and modifying own behaviour according to the cultures of others can develop cultural intelligence for the group members and strengthen mutual trust among the members (Ibid:149-150). In short, cultural knowledge of the group members, knowledge of the group task, group structure and members' abilities will be the keys for effective management of a diverse group.

The leader of a cross-cultural group should adopt 'diversity management' (Thomas & Inkson 2009:123). If the leader can behave in a way that can adapt to different situations and cultures, he or she can have a better understanding on the different expectations of the members from a diversity of cultures or background. The leader can achieve this goal by taking the organizational norms into consideration, being culturally intelligent and aware of others' reactions, and adjust personal behaviours when necessary (Ibid:126).

2.7 Different mentoring relationships

In a positive and effective mentoring relationship, mentors feel comfortable to share goals and interest, provide creative ideas and help mentees to come to their own solution of problems (Cull 2006 in Hamlin and Sage 2011:754). The mentors are also

active in listening and questioning (Devojine and Harris 2001 and Klasen and Clutterbuck 2002 in Sage 2011:754), listening without judgment and being able to accept differences (Devojine and Harris 2001). Successful mentors can build and maintain a close relationship through trust, empathy and empowerment (Klasen and Clutterbuck 2002), they are 'approachable, friendly, understand, patient, honest', and skillful to give honest feedback to their mentees (McDowall-Long 2004 in Ibid:755).

Poor or marginal mentoring that results in negative experiences and outcomes for the mentees (Scandura 1998 and Feldmen 1999 in Hoffmeister et al. 2011:685) can be defined as negative mentoring. In such negative relationship, literature lists several types of phenomenon. In the most extreme negative mentoring, one or both parties have serious problems and they have bad intention to each other, and the consequences are damaging to the person (Scandura 1998 in Eby and McManus 2004:257). In other forms of negative mentoring, problems that avoid the happening of desired outcomes, those that can lead to early termination of the relationship, and those that give feelings of disappointment or regret can be found (Eby and McManus 2004:257). Also, relationship satisfaction decreases when problems of the negative mentoring increase (Ibid:255).

A mentor whose behaviour causes the mentee doubt his or her ability and commitment to the role as a mentor, regardless of the frequency of occurrence, is seen as an ineffective mentor (Eby et al. 2000 in Hamlin and Sage, 2011:761). Examples of ineffective mentor behaviour include frustrating the mentees (Ragins et al 2000 in Ibid:756), whose personal characteristics hinder the ability to guide and support the mentee effectively (Eby et al. 2000 in Ibid:756), and unable to meet the developmental needs of the mentees (Hoffmeister et al:2011: 685).

Negative and ineffective mentoring can result in destructive mentoring relationships, in which the mentor may feel hurt and reject to enroll in a new mentorship (Feldmen, 1999 in Allenet al., 2006:281).

2.8 Impacts of being a mentor

A positive and effective mentoring relationship can benefit the mentor in a number of ways. First, mentors can gain personal satisfaction after providing guidance and role-modeling to the mentees),and witnessing the improvement of mentees due to their contribution (Chao et al 1992 in Hoffmeister et al 2011:675 and Parise and Monica 2008:226). Such satisfaction can encourage mentors to continue to perform well, and give them feelings of accomplishment (Kram and Hall 1989 in Ibid:226). Second, mentors can perform better and acquire new information from the mentees, such as new knowledge and perspectives about new cultures (Lankau and Scandura 2002 in Ibid:226 and Chao et al 1992 in Hoffmeister et al 2011:675). Third, mentors can earn recognition among peers and superiors when providing support to the individuals in the organization (Kram 1985 and Allen et al 1997 in Parise and Monica 2008:226). Fourth, the mentors can experience immortality, and revise how they achieve their former success and make failures when the mentees mirror themselves through the mentoring relationship (Kram 1985 in Parise and Monica 2008:226).

In a negative and ineffective mentoring relationship, mentors may have undergone a number of impacts, including conflicts, jealousy, selfishness, negative relations, malevolent deception, sabotage, harassment, difficulty, spoiling, and submissiveness (Eby and McManus 2004:256-259). First, if the mentees was more demanding and dependent than expected, this can trigger a negative reflection on judgment and competency for the mentor (Kram 1985 and Ragins and Scandura 1999 in Parise and Monica 2008:226). Second, the mentor may experience sabotage, for instance the mentees may harm mentor by revenge, such as speaking the ills of the mentors, and damage the mentor's reputation and draw doubts on the mentor's ability (Eby and McManus 2004:258), and in result place the mentor in an uncomfortable position of a need to defend his or her competence and credibility (Ragins 1997 and Ragins and Scandura 1994 in Parise and Monica 2008:226). Third, deteriorated association causes dysfunctional relationship, which can be unhealthy to the mentor, and make them worried being taken revenge or exploited by the mentees (Ragins and Scandura 1999 in Ibid:226). Fourth, ineffective mentoring relationship makes up a negative perception

about the time and effort spent of being a mentor are not worth, and the opportunity cost of joining the programme is too high (Allen 2003 and Ragins and Scandura 1999 in Parise and Monica 2008:226). Such negative perception decreases the enthusiasm of the mentors currently taking the duties, and discourages the potential mentors who may consider spending time and effort in other alternative options. Fifth, mentors may experience other negative relations such as bullying, exploitation or egocentric (self-centered) behaviour (Eby and McManus 2004:258). Deception includes harming others due to ingratiation (Ibid:259) or revenge (O'Hair and Cody in Ibid:258).

Deteriorating relationship are usually caused by different opinions or mismatched expectations of the relationships, which lead to conflicts and disagreements (Ibid:259) in the mentoring relationship. Spoiling can also be found when a good relationship becomes sour, for example the relationship goes too intense or ineffective after a period of time, and brings disappointment or disloyalty (Eby and McManus 2004:259). Submissiveness may take place when the mentees are over-dependent (Ibid:259) on the mentors.

The impacts from a negative and ineffective mentoring relationship can reduce the mentor's emotional attachment to the relationship (Eby and McManus 2004:269), bring emotions of disappointment and regret, and lead to possible early termination of the relationship (Ibid:257).

2.9 Factors of a positive mentoring relationship

The mentoring relationship between the international tutor and the international students varies, depending on the motivations of the mentors and how they define their roles (Allen 2003:135). Such motivation and role construction also depends on their perception of the benefits gained from being a mentor (Parise and Monica 2008:226). Different mentors have various motives and levels of willingness to engage as s mentor (Allen et al. 1997 and Kram 1985 in Ibid:135). An effective and successful mentoring

relationship depends on the personal characteristics and motivations of the mentor and mentees, the organization and other predetermined factors.

2.9.1 Factors from the mentor

The prosocial personality of a mentor influences his or her motivation to help others (Allen 2003:140). The willingness to help derives from the mentor's empathy and helpfulness, from the mentor's previous experience as a mentor and mentee, self-confidence and self-efficacy (Allen 2003:140, Allen et al. 1997 and Ragins and Scandura 1999 in Ibid:142 and Penner et at. 1995 in Allen 2003:148). Less confident individuals are willing to help, but may be morehesitant to take real actions to offer help (Ibid:148).

Other personal characteristics of the mentor can influence his or her mentoring behaviour. Being supportive, knowledgeable, resourceful, willing to share and give, and a pleasant attitude in the interaction with the mentee are the most valuable characteristics of a successful mentor (Hoffmeister et al. 2011:675 and Hamlin and Sage 2011:757). To enhance the mentor's communication with the mentee, some characteristics are important, including listening without judgment (Hoffmeister et al:676 and Hamlin and Sage:754), patience, ability to appreciate differences (Hamlin and Sage 2011:754), giving up presumed expectation (Chin et al. 2011:31), and ability to read and understand others (Hoffmeister et al:676). The last characteristic is specifically useful in the communication with the international students: an affective support from the sympathetic mentor is largely helpful to sooth the homesickness and culture shock that the international students might experience (Weigle and Nelson 2004:222). Hamlin and Sage (2011:753) further suggest that a mentor who knows to take advantage out of the mentoring relationship is more likely to establish an effective relationship.

The motivation to mentor also determines the success of the mentoring relationship. The motivation derives from many sources, for example the intrinsic personal satisfaction

from mentoring others, by witnessing the mentee to establish their own life and even develop own social circle (Hamlin and Sage 2011:757; Allen et al. 2006:274), by ensuring the knowledge and skills has been passed on to the mentee (Allen, Lentz and Day 2006:273; Allen 2003:142), and by being stimulated by the new ideas of the mentees (Allen et al. 2006: 274). The mentor gains new motivation to continue mentoring when they earn increased visibility among the organization, greater respect, loyalty and support from the mentees (Allen 2003:142), reputation among the peers and superiors and a more positive self-image from mentoring others (Hunt and Michael 1983 in Allen et al:273; Underhill, 2006 in Hoffmeister et al.,2011:675). In addition, the motivation can come from the mentor's desire to help others and serve the organization, personal pride and personal gratification to see others to grow and improve (Allen:142). Chin, Rabow & Estrada (2011:31) further point out that a genuine interest to develop the mentor-mentee bond will bring extra pleasure, joy and satisfaction out of the experience.

Quality feedback from the mentor, mentor's willingness to give solutions to the mentoring problems, and mentor's ability to build up mutual trust with the tutee are other key factors to form an effective relationship (Hamlin and Sage, 2011:758). Also, trust, empathy, congruence, empowerment, response to the request of help from the mentor are essential for him or her to manage the relationship and keep it effective (Ibid:754-755).

It should be noted that it takes time to gain the trust from the mentees and establish mutual respect, since the mentors and mentees know nothing about each other from the beginning, and both parties can be different from what they have been expected (Chin, Rabow & Estrada 2011:162). If the mentor is aware of the differences between him or her and the mentee, bears a sense cultural intelligence and adjusts own behaviour, it will be easier for the mentor to handle the frustration in the mentoring relationship, or in an deteriorated relationship which was well established before (Ibid:162).

Last but not least, if the mentors volunteer to become a mentor, such perception strengthens their idea of the programme is worth making effort to provide guidance to

the mentees, and is cost effective to their personal development within the organization. The recognition of the programme's benefits encourage them to get more involved in the programme (Parise and Monica 2008:226) and further devote more attention and effort to develop the relationship with the mentees (Lee, Dougherty and Turban 2000 in Ibid:226).

2.9.2 Factors from the mentee(s)

Mentees can contribute to a positive, effective and successful mentoring relationship by showing commitment to the relationship including being willing to devote time and attending meetings, being able to express needs and set goals, valuing confidentiality, understanding the roles in the mentoring relationship, making realistic and clear expectations from the mentor, being confident to bring out issues and worries and giving the mentor constructive feedback (Klasen and Clutterbuck 2002 and Cranwell-Ward et al. 2004 in Hamlin and Sage 2011:755). In addition, it is also important to consolidate and sustain the relationship if the mentee can be open to build up mutual trust, make continuous effort to take responsibility of the solutions for the mentoring relationship and constantly work for the goals and desired outcomes (Ibid:758).

2.9.3 Factors from the organization

The effectiveness of a mentoring relationship also depends on the organization. The mentoring programme is more likely to succeed if the organization fosters a conductive organizational culture and provides top-level support to the programme, in which the members collaborate, developmental opportunities are available, the layered hierarchy of members can be found and the cross-functional teams are present (Hegstad and Wentling 2005 and Wanberg et al. 2003 in Hamlin and Sage 2011:757).

Also, if the management can provide visible and enormous support to the mentoring programme, this can spread a message that the programme is useful and worthwhile and

recognizes the importance of mentoring within the organization (Parise and Monica 2008:229). For example, the support from the International Office in the University helps to guarantee available resources, and leads to higher possibility of success of the programme (Ibid:229). Greater support from upper management also gives a more positive perception to the mentors that their effort and time will be likely to pay off and achieve the objectives of programme (Nadler and Lawler 2001 in Parise and Monica 2008:229), and they will probably obtain benefits from the programme (Ibid:229). Enormous management support encourages the mentors to participate in the programme with passion and initiatives, as the support shows a signal that they care about the process of mentoring and the performance of mentors (Ibid:237). This can also reduce unfavourable comments on the mentors from the mentees (Ibid:237).

2.9.4 Other predetermined factors

In addition to the effort and personal characteristics of the mentors and mentees, and the support from the organization, there are some other predetermined factors to influence the success of the mentoring programme. The selection and matching of mentor and mentee(s), the impact of the personal characteristics of the mentor and mentee to each other in the dynamic relationship, the objectives of the programme and frequency of meetings can all make a difference in the effectiveness of the mentoring programme (Hamlin and Sage 2011:755).

Regarding the selection procedure of mentees, the matching processes can affect the mentor's perception on his or her benefits from the programme (Parise and Monica 2008:228). Allen et al (2006b in Ibid:228) suggest that if the mentor can take more control of the mentor/ mentee relationship, for instance participating in the process of selecting the mentee, he or she may have a more positive perception of his or her benefits from the programme (Lee et al 2000 in Parise and Monica 2008:228). Byrne (1971 in Ibid:228) argues that individuals are attracted to those who are similar to themselves based on the similarity-attraction paradigm. Hence, the right to choose own mentees allows the mentor to match with those who shares a range of similarities and

deemed compatible, for instance similar goals, languages, background, and previous experiences, and the shared similarities can give the mentor a perception of easier communication with the mentees, and a more enjoyable mentoring relationship (Lee et al 2000 in Parise and Monica 2008:228). A perception of more benefits and fewer costs in the programme can help to produce higher quality relationship and learning (Allen and Eby 2003 in Ibid:228), and increase the effectiveness of the programme (Allen et al. 2006b in Ibid:228). Increasing the mentor's involvement in the selection procedures of mentees can reduce his or her perceived costs in participating in programme, it can done by matching the mentor and mentee according to the mentor's preferences provided in advance (Ibid : 228).

Effective training can improve the mentor's perception of the benefits from the mentoring programme (Lee et al in Parise and Monica:229) and increases his or her participation in the programme, hence providing higher quality mentoring (Allen and Eby 2003 in Ibid:229). Since formal mentoring programme usually only lasts for a short duration, such as one year or one semester, mentors need to function according to the programme objectives immediately (Ibid:229). Therefore, training of the mentors is important as it helps the mentors get started (Scandura and Williams 2002 in Ibid:229), especially to those who become mentors for the first time. Training enables mentors to understand their responsibilities, adjust their expectations (Finkelstein and Poteet 2007 in Ibid:229), and improve their personal competency and self-efficacy (Bandura 1995 in Ibid:229). In short, training is an important vehicle to explain the benefits of programme to the mentors and help them set realistic expectation (Lee et al 2000 in Ibid:229). In addition, the perception of an effective training allows the mentors to increase understanding of the programme, and positively adjust their perceived effectiveness to the programme, which encourage them to provide more psychological mentoring, and results in a more rewarding mentoring experience, higher quality of performance and stronger commitment as a mentor (Allen et al 2006 in Ibid:229).

2.10 Factors of a negative mentoring relationship

2.10.1 Factors from the mentor

A range of mentor behaviour has high tendency to harm the mentoring relationship, for example the mentor being overly critical, demanding or manipulative (Hoffmeister et al. 2011:685), lacking competence to guide the mentees for instance insufficient interpersonal or technical skills (Hamlin and Sage 2011:756-757), neglecting or intentionally excluding the mentee, and showing bad attitude or personal problems that makes the relationship dysfunctional (Ibid:757). Turner (1993 in Cox 2000:203-204) also concludes that people who have strong opinions, extreme beliefs or narrow lines of thinking, and those who demonstrate unsupportive styles, such as control and power are not suitable to become a mentor. In addition, different values, work-style or personality of the mentor and mentee can lead to mismatch between them and result in negative mentoring. When the mentor feels disappointed, dissatisfied or annoyed by the mentee, the negative emotions can influence the mentor's reputation negatively (Ibid:758).

On the other hand, some people may not be ready to become a mentor. If they bear too much emotional baggage in their training, such as they are undergoing unhappy happenings in their life, it can mean they also need support and help for themselves, and they are not ready to mentor and support others yet (Cox 2000:203). In other words, people who are not ready to become a mentor may not be able to fully function as a capable mentor, as they may not have an optimal level of self-control, self-confidence and ability to help and mentor others (Cox 2000:203). This can also be the case of novice mentors, who are inexperienced and have not fully developed their leadership and guidance skills.

In addition, there are insufficient students showing interest to become a tutor voluntarily, some may participate for the purpose of helping friends, or some are assigned to fill the vacancies of tutors. Forced, or mandatory participation can trigger resistance to the participation of the programme (Gibb 1999 in Parise and Monica 2008:226). Those who are forced and not voluntarily become a tutor are more likely to

perceive the task will incur higher cost than those who join the programme voluntarily (Parise and Monica 2008:226). As a result, they may be unwilling to give up their time to perform their duties, which are unwanted (Allen 2003 in Ibid:226). They may also feel over-occupied by the tutoring duties and perceive that they participation will negatively affect their other responsibilities (Scandura and William 2002 in Ibid:226), and such perception will eventually hinder their productivity and performance (Allen and Eby 2003 in Ibid:226). Moreover, involuntary participation can also cause the feeling of anger about their involvement (Kram and Hall 1996 in Ibid:226), and negatively influence the quality of their performance (Allen and Poteet 1999 in Ibid:226), as it can lead to heightened stress and indifference (Boyatzis, Smith and Blaize 2006 in Ibid:226), which violates the original purpose of the international tutor programme.

2.10.2 Factors from the mentee(s)

A mentee can damage the mentoring relationship by being difficult to communicate with, unwilling to learn (Hamlin and Sage 2011:757).

2.10.3 Factors from the organization

A mentoring programme is difficult to gain the acceptance of other staff (Sontag et al 2007 in Parise and Monica 2008:229), attracts doubts on its sustainability and hence falls short of interested mentors if it is without strong management support (Ibid:229). In other words, lack of strong management support can negatively affect the mentor's perception of his or her benefits from the mentoring programme, and give them an idea that the participation in programme does not recognize the effort of the mentors, triggers extra opportunity costs and is not worthwhile (Ragins and Scandura 1994 in Parise and Monica 2008:229) and his or her superior does not show support to the programme (Ibid:237). This perception may also lead to negative reputation of the mentor if he himself is uncertain of the value of the programme (Parise and Monica 2008:229).

2.10.4 Other predetermined factors

New situations can bring intense insecurity, fear, and anxiety, such as when both mentor and mentee first meet as strangers or when the mentor takes up the role for the first time (Chin, Rabow & Estrada 2011:30). Great challenges, high expectation from any party or complex social background, for example different race, gender, age, religion, ethnicity or socio-economic status can also create fear and anxiety (Ibid:30), and lead to doubt of the mentee on the competence of the mentor.

If the mentor estimates it as a less effective mentoring relationship, he or she can see a higher opportunity cost, and results in resentment (Kram and Hall 1996 in Parise and Monica 2008:228), causing poorer quality of mentoring from the mentor (Allen et al 2006a in Ibid:228). A chance for the mentor to be involved in the selection procedure allows the mentor to minimize the possibility to pair with those deemed incompatible and avoid them to perceive extra costs in participating in the mentoring programme (Lee et al 2000 and Ragins and Scandura 1999 in Ibid:228).

In addition, insufficient training of mentors can trigger frustration of the mentors and lower the quality of mentoring if it is only a superficial mentoring relationship (Kram and Hall 1996 in Parise and Monica 2008:229). Inadequate training gives mentors an impression of extra costs in joining the programme, as they are not clear and about their roles and responsibilities (Eby and Lockwood 2005 in Ibid:229), and become less confident to handle the difficult problems arisen (Ibid:229). The perception results in lower possibilities of achieving the objectives of the mentoring programme. After all, adequate training for mentors are necessary and significant to explain the objectives of programme, introduce the career and psychological functions of mentoring, and make realistic advice on individual goal setting. The trainings are also important for giving guidance on the frequency on meeting the mentees, how to develop effective communication and establish personal relationship with the mentees (Finkelstein and Poteet 2007 in Parise and Monica 2008:229).

2.11 Improving mentoring programme

There are various means to improve or sustain the mentoring system. A clear structure of the programme, stable meeting time between the mentor and mentee, such as two hours in every week, systematic screening and matching of the mentor and mentee according to their experiences, expectation and personal characteristics, training and monitoring of mentors and the close relationship between the programme coordinator and the mentors are some examples to enhance the programme (Hughes 1994:8). In addition, the organization can encourage more individuals to become mentors by rewards, including monetary rewards and the non-monetary ones (Allen, Lentz & Day 2006:281).

3 BACKGROUND OF RESEARCH

3.1 Settings of research

3.1.1 Vaasa

Vaasa is a comparatively international city in Finland, due to its intense concentration of eight universities and polytechnics, and some international energy and engineer companies in the city. Description about the Vaasa city from the webpage of University of Vaasa, provided for researchers, can be seen as a reliable description (University of Vaasa, http://www.uva.fi/en/sites/vmi/about/researchers/, accessed on 13 March 2013):

'…Vaasa has been ranked as the third best place to be internationally and first in Finland by the CIMO international student barometer 2010. Finland is constantly ranked high in quality-of-life and competitiveness studies.…Vaasa is an international town of about 60 000 inhabitants, 12 000 students and well connected to the rest of the world...'

The Regional Council of Ostrobothnia (2013), for which Ostrobothnia is a region where city Vaasa belongs to, further provides information on the provision of tertiary education in Vaasa:

'Knowledge and Skill
The level of education in Ostrobothnia has for a long time been rising steadily. Within eight universities and polytechnics about 12,000 students, in more than 30 different study programmes, make their way towards the professions of tomorrow. The University of Vaasa, the Åbo Akademi University and the Swedish School of Economics and Business Administration offer education and scientific research able to withstand any international comparison. ….'

In short, the two extracted pieces of information from the websites of University of Vaasa and The Regional Council of Ostrobothnia have given evidence that there is a

rather high number of universities in Vaasa, which can explain international environment in Vaasa, due to the coming of international students in these universities, in addition to the staff from different nationalities in the energy companies.

3.1.2 University of Vaasa

University of Vaasa embraces themselves with three characteristics: a business-oriented institution, with a genuine international composition of members, in addition to its successful provision of tertiary education. Such image building can be traced in the latest General Brochure of the University, in which the University states its vision as (University of Vaasa 2013: 3):

'*As a business-oriented institution, the University of Vaasa is an internationally and nationally successful, widely networked, multidisciplinary institution for education and research.*'

As this research studies the international tutors of University of Vaasa who work with the international students, the following sections will cast attention to the internationalization aspect of the University: how international the University actually is, and how it perceives its internationalization.

According to some facts (University of Vaasa 2013) on the University's webpage, they received 221 and 255 international degree students in years 2010 and 2011 respectively in the master's degree and doctoral level, as well as 202 and 184 incoming exchange students in years 2010 and 2011 respectively. Among the total students, approximately 5000 in number, 12% of them are international, while 18 % of academic staff is international (University of Vaasa 2013:11).

Regarding its international members, the University puts high value to equality of its every member regardless of their nationalities and background (University of Vaasa 2013: 8):

'*Free, equal education for all*

We have one of the world's most advanced education systems, which guarantees the same education opportunities for everyone regardless of social or economic background.'

In addition, according to the Equality and Diversity Plan of the University of Vaasa (2012), the University places high value to the internationalization and equal rights among different nationalities:

'*The University of Vaasa aims to offer everyone equal opportunities to be part of the University community independent of their nationality or language background. The University and Student Union organize advice, information and support services for the exchange and degree students from abroad in order to guarantee them similar possibilities for study and involvement in the academic community to those the Finnish students have. In order to ascertain equality and diversity, directions and materials in English are available if needed.*'

3.2 Who are tutors?

In the University of Vaasa, in each autumn semester, there are about 800 of new Finnish students, and 300 of new international students, including both exchange and degree students. To guide the new students in their way in the new learning environment, or even the different culture of a new country, there are tutors, who are more senior and experienced students, to take care of the new students.

There about 100 Finnish students as tutors to take care of the new Finnish students. On the other hand, there are about 60 Finnish students to help the new international students, namely International tutors in the university.

Almost all tutors are Finnish students, except one Italian guy, whose Bachelor education was Finnish language, has been an international tutor in the recent years. One reason that the tutor has to be fluent in Finnish language is that the tutoring training activities and materials are available in Finnish only. More importantly, Finnish students are assumed to have deeper knowledge in Finnish culture, such as how to do proper Finnish sauna, ice swimming and food. In addition, it has been found that international students show rather little enthusiasm to become an international tutor, according to the international tutor coordinator.

3.3 Duties of international tutors

International tutors are most needed during the time before and two weeks after the new students arrive in Vaasa. About one or two months before the official arrival dates of students, for instance 31st August and 1st September for the fall semester, the international tutors have to contact their students, usually each international tutor has a list of 13 to 14 new students. They will contact their students via email, reminding students to provide arrival details once the air tickets are booked, so as to arrange possible pick-ups, and answer students' concerns about Finland, such as the weather, possible living cost accrued, complexity of Vaasa city, and so on. In short, before students come, the international tutors may need to send and reply two to three emails to about 10 new students. Usually one or two students could not be reached, due to malfunctioning email addresses, no replies, or declination of the studies' opportunity for family or visa reason.

On the arrival days of new students, the main responsibility of international tutors is to give the apartment keys to the students. Usually they will wait in front of the apartment buildings according to the arrival time given by the new students. For pick-ups, some tutors may be responsible to do pick up themselves, and the situation varies in different years. In the fall semester 2012, it was the tutor coordinators who arranged most pick-ups. They stationed at the airport of Vaasa, and drove students to the city center when they arrived at the airport. For other international tutors, they paid for gas themselves if

they did the pick-up, which cost five to six euros per trip. Some tutors might have to do some pick-ups if they had their own cars, and most of whom were willing and would love to help.

After the new students arrive, the international tutors remain busy in the first week. They may need to take turns to lead the computer workshops for the new international students. They are usually three in a group, one of them is the main speaker, the other two help as assistants. Their task is to teach students to use the different web portals of the university, such as the email system (Webmail), the course registration system (Weboodi), online course material system (Moodle) and the timetable of different courses (Lukkari).

In addition to the computer workshops, other optional duties for the international tutors include showing the new students round the university campus and the city center. International tutors arrange the campus tour by themselves. They contact their own list of students. For the city centre tour, new students will be informed the meeting time and place by their own tutor via the original contact email. The meeting venue is the City Market in the city centre. New students find their own way to the city centre, and meet the tutors there.

After the first two weeks, the contact between the international tutor and students becomes rather unconstrained. It depends on the personal wish for the international tutor to organize get-to-together home gathering, birthday parties, school lunch meetings, or social activities like going bowling. It will be the international tutors' passion, personality, relationship with his or her students and other factors to influence the meeting frequency between the tutor and the students. Different international tutor has different kinds of relationship with his or her students.

In addition, each international tutor will need to help in organizing two activities for all students in the semester. They will form in a group of three to four, and design two activities, for instance a weekend trip in Helsinki, ice fishing, sports tournament, sauna,

the cultural party 'Sitsit Party', arranging ticket selling and help with transportation for ice hockey game, and so on.

3.4 Systems of international tutors

3.4.1 Recruitment

The international tutors team are part of the Student Union of University of Vaasa (VYY). When recruiting new international tutors for the next semester, intranet message will appear on the school's intranet, the webpage of VYY and on the social media (Facebook) page of VYY and that of the international tutors. The international tutors may also set an information table in front of the biggest restaurant, Matilda, in the University, to attract students' attention, give out application forms, and answer possible queries of students.

The intranet email message and message on the social media page are rather concise, asking people to send application form to a certain email address, '*VYY is looking for an international tutor coordinator. Apply by 11th of November.*'(Appendix 1). The webpage of VYY is the most detailed but only in Finnish. It lists what is expected from an international tutor and what a tutor can get in returns, such as the desired qualities, possible tasks and suggested benefits of the position. With reference to the message (Appendix 2), the desired qualities of international tutors are being energetic to the responsible group and English skills, their possible tasks will be relevant to the guidance and activities that VYY provides to the international students, and the benefits as an international tutor include experience to work with international students, participation in organizing meetings, three academic credit points, free entrance to some paid parties, tutor uniform and an unforgettable experience (VYY 2012:np).

In the summary of the recruitment message of the VYY, they define the international tutors as international, leaders, sociable, a team player and a valuable experience. The tutors are seen as international as they need to speak another language than the mother

tongue and work with the international students. The tutors are defined as leaders as they help to facilitate the guidance work and activities held by VYY and organize activities. The tutors need to be sociable since they need to be energetic to their group of tutees and participate in social gatherings such as parties. The tutors are considered as a team player as every one of them gets a tutor uniform which is a symbol of a team member. Such tutoring experience is unforgettable because it is special and once in a life time.

3.4.2 Selection and training

When applying for the position of international tutor, applicants have to state their motivation in the application form. The applications will be first screened by the international tutor coordinators. The selected applicants will attend an interview by the tutor coordinators and the staff responsible from the International Office of the university. During the interview, the applicants can express preference on the nationalities of the future students. For example, an applicant may want to meet some Chinese students if he or she is planning to go to China for exchange after the tutoring semester. The preference is not guaranteed.

After the interview, the selected 20 tutors will undergo both formal and informal training. The first is a formal training, which goes like a lecture before summer, in which the new international tutors are told what they need to know as a tutor. The information includes the procedures on the international students' arrival dates; the housing agent, VOAS, and the policies of the student accommodation; the healthcare services available for the international students, the bank account opening process, and so on. The informal gathering is scheduled in the end of summer right before the arrival of international students. The tutor coordinators chat and share past experiences with the new international tutors. They also brainstorm and discuss possible activities to be held in the coming year, and may continue the discussion in greater details in small groups in sauna in the venue. According to the international tutor coordinators, it is a tradition and special culture of Finnish students to discuss and brainstorm ideas in sauna.

3.4.3 Number of students for each international tutor

Despite seven students is perceived as the optimal number for each international tutor, each of them actually has 13 to 14 on the original list for fall semester, and about 10 to 11 as an actual number, as there are about 300 international student in the fall semester, both degree and exchange students, when are only approximately 20 international tutors. In spring, there are about 20 international tutors and about 60 exchange students. Hence, each international tutor takes care of about four to five students.

3.4.4 Promotion system

International tutors can become international tutor coordinators, after one or two semesters as an international tutor. There are two tutor coordinators in each semester, can be two girls, two boys, or one girl and one boy. The coordinators do not have their own international students. Rather, they supervise and assist the international tutors to work their role well.

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Qualitative approach

This study is qualitative aiming to find out how people think (ten Have 2004:75). The researcher will need to study people's characteristics, values, attitudes, motivations, experiences, and relations with the surrounding environment (Ibid:75). The purpose and interest of this research are to study the minds of the international tutors, about how they think, their motivation of participation, personality and other personal differences in relation to their mentoring behaviour with the international students, the mentees.

4.2 Interview

In this research, interview is used as the method of data collection. Interview is chosen as it can gather information and is easier for the researcher to take control of the content of conversation based on her research interest (ten Have 2004:84). The interview is carried out in a structured format and the conversation is planned, research-relevant and purposive (Nollaig 2011:23; Kalve 1996 in Ibid:23). Respondents can recount their experiences in their own language and give meaning to the discussion topic (Ibid:22). The conversation in the interview becomes the evidence in the study of the mentoring relationship in this research and ideas elaborated are considered as the representation of social life (Ibid:73).

Semi-structured interview is used in this research. In a semi-structured interview, the questions can be quite specific, the sequence can be changed and so as the wordings. The interview format aims to extract the views or experience of the participants relevant to the research topic instead of merely the factual information (Drew, Raymond and Weinberg 2006:29). Participants are not restricted to give only yes/ no as answers, they are encouraged to give lengthy response with stories or accounts (Ibid:39). This enables the researcher to have deeper insight into the personal experience of the participants (Ibid:31). Although semi-structured interview allows greater chance for participants to

elaborate their opinion and experiences, it is unavoidably 'more formal and constrained than everyday conversation' (Drew, Raymond and Weinberg 2006:39). Yet, the accounts in semi-structured interview can be considered as the collaborative products of social interaction between the researcher and participants, that the research guides the participants to give relevant accounts to attend to the topic, while the participants provide reflection of inner experiences and opinion as data (Ibid:48).

4.3 Why group interview is used in this research

Interview is an asymmetrical task. The interviewer sets the agenda and asks questions, the respondents are responsible for answering questions, but not getting back anything in return (ten Have 2004:73). This is not reciprocal, but is a rather hierarchical relationship (Ibid:74). Also, it is possible that the evidence produced in the interview is at risk of being the personal stories guided by the interviewer (Ibid:76). Nevertheless, group interview takes place in a multi-informant setting, the discussion depends more on the different kinds of group process than just the one-to-one interaction between the interviewer and respondent (Ibid:71). Hence the evidence produced in a group interview can be seen as a collaborative construction, not an individual expression of mind (Ibid:77), and it is more actively constructed by the respondents and less affected by the interviewer. Similarly, Drew, Raymond and Weinberg (2006:32) argue that the presence of other participants with similar experience can encourage the participants to disclose personal experience in greater details, although other participants can hinder 'free and frank participation' at the same time.

On the other hand, literature (Ibid:50) has explained that focus group is nowadays widely used as a social research method, in which the 'focus' of this group refers to the topic of the researcher's interest and is elaborated according to a set of questions. During the discussion, the researcher acts as a 'moderator' to ask questions, facilitate discussion and ensure the conversation to go on track, and the participants do not talk too much or too little (ten Have 2004:50-51) The focus group usually involves a small number of people, who are gathered to discuss the research topic, and they are the

representatives of a specific group (ten Have 2004:51). The discussion process is recorded, the data is transcribed and analyzed as qualitative data . (Ibid:50)

In this research, focus group interview is adopted as the means of data collection, aiming to help the participants to recall traces of memories for one and other, as some of their tutoring experiences occurred one or two years before the interview took place.

4.4 Method of interpretation: Grounded theory

Grounded theory describes a phenomenon in a narrative form, the interviewees may do so by recounting their own experiences (Weigle and Nelson 2004:208). Grounded theory analyzes action and interaction, and the meaning behind them (Nollaig 2011:16). Grounded theory sees action derived from the relationships between people and as an ever-changing and ongoing social fact (Star 2007 in Ibid:17). The theory builds up understanding retrospectively based on consequences instead of antecedents (Star 2007 in Ibid:17). The theory also assumes that humans make meaning out of their behaviour in terms of activities, and form relationships according to their roles and identities (Ibid:18). In addition, knowledge is derived through comparison which demonstrates the data via the similarities and differences, that the similarities can form categories, whereas the differences allows extension for the analysis through further analysis (Ibid:19).

Grounded theory is used in this research. The researcher has conducted interviews with six international tutors. In the interviews, the participants recounted their experiences on what happened between them and their students, how they built up the relationship, how they saw their role as an international tutor. The researcher aimed to explore how the tutors make meaning out of their relationship with the students, according to their actions in the programme. The researcher has been inspired by conversation analysis to try to understand why the participants would be more active or passive at some particular point when conducting the interviews.

4.5 Conversation analysis

Drew, Raymond and Weinberg (2006:55-56) point out that conversation analysis (CA) helps to build up understanding of a large amount of ideas of the social life, the understanding should go beyond the content and frame of interaction in the focus group interview, and should consider also that participants' action in a discussion aims to 'challenge, boast, emphasize, and tease' their experiences. Hence, CA enhances the researchers' understanding on why participants tell such particular details in the particular point of discussion. For instance, participants may show no interest to give opinion; or put a gap between him- or herself to the opinion by adopting a generalization phase of 'I have heard', 'some people say'; defensing themselves during the discussion -- these are some tricky situations in a discussion and researcher should pay attention to why participants make such statement at such particular point (Ibid:61). To summarize, CA concerns how participants sequence their utterances to attend different settings, for example, how a doctor makes use of his turn-taking in the conversation with the patient to assist his diagnostic work (Ibid:33)

It is common that the researcher overlooks the interactional dimensions of the participants during the interview, which makes the language merely "a passive medium of the transmission of information", and omits the influence of a range of variables to the content of discussion, such as the participants' relationship, gender, status and so on (Drew, Raymond and Weinberg 2006:33).

In the analysis of the interview discussion, the researcher pays attention to the interaction between herself and the participants, in addition to their conversational content, in order not to omit some interesting information on how the participants saw themselves as an international tutor and recounted their own experiences.

4.6 Participants

This research studies the tutoring experience of six international tutors. They take up the tutoring duties for different numbers of semesters. All of them are Finnish students, they have only been a tutor for the international students, namely the 'international tutor', and have not taken duties as a tutor for Finnish students. In the researcher's opinion they all speak fluent English, clear and easy to understand. They are identified A, B, C, D, E and F.

Tutor A had been an international tutor for two times before becoming a coordinator in the spring and fall semesters in 2013. He was an international tutor in fall semesters, 2011 and 2012. He had an exchange semester in Shanghai between these two semesters. He was a Bachelor degree student when he was an international tutor for both times. He can speak three languages fluently, Finnish, Swedish and German, he knows little Chinese as well.

Tutor B became an international tutor in the fall semester, 2011, in her second year of Master's degree studies. She has completed some courses in the Open University before she started her studies in the University of Vaasa. She then went for an exchange semester to Beijing, China in 2012. In the following fall semester, 2012, she came back and took the duties of the chairperson for the Erasmus Students Network (ESN) in Vaasa, a student union organizing activities for the international students in the whole Vaasa city. She can speak Finnish, Swedish and English fluently, and she has taken courses in German, Italian and Chinese. But she does not converse with the latter three languages.

Tutor C started his international tutoring experience in his last year of Bachelor degree studies, after his 8-month exchange experience in Turkey, in the fall semester, 2011. He then became the tutor coordinator in the following year of studies, in the fall semester, 2012 and spring semester, 2013. He can speak Finnish, Swedish, English and Turkish fluently, and he feels his German skill is rusty.

Tutor D completed his international tutor experience in fall semester, 2012, in his second year of Master's degree studies. It is his first experience of such kind. Before his tutoring experience, he has done an exchange semester in the Netherlands in 2009, when he was doing his Bachelor education in another university in Vaasa. He speaks Finnish and English, and a little bit of Swedish and German according to him.

Tutor E has been an international tutor two times, the first time in spring semester, 2010 and the second in fall semester, 2012. He has done an exchange semester in the United States in between his tutoring experience, in autumn semester, 2011. He can speak Finnish and English, as well as some Swedish and French.

Tutor F acted as an international tutor in two consecutive semesters, spring semester, 2011 and fall semester, 2011. He was in his fifth and sixth year of university studies during the time he was an international tutor. Before he was a tutor, he has been in Denmark for exchange in spring semester, 2010. He can speak Finnish, Swedish, English and a little bit French.

4.7 Procedure

The six participants have been informed about the research topic for about one semester before the interview, and they were confirmed they would stay anonymous in the research. The researcher originally planned to have two participants in each of the interview, which can be seen as a small scale of the focus group interview, provided that she only has six participants in her research in total. Yet, in one of her interviews, one of the participants informed that he was sick and could not attend the interview only 10 minutes before the interview. Thus, she has done four interviews at the end, two pair interview as originally planned, and two 1:1 interview due to the sudden absence of one participant.

Both pair interviews lasted for about an hour and both 1:1 interviews took about 45 minutes. All of them were conducted in English, audiotaped and transcribed. All

interviews followed a semi-structured format, all the same 15 questions were asked, but maybe with some different wordings in each question in every interview. Participants needed to give background information in the beginning, including number of semesters they have been an international tutor and their language abilities. Then they were asked to give own accounts of personal experience as an international tutor, and their opinions about their experience and the systems of international tutors. 14 out of 15 questions are open-ended questions, which allow the participants to give unconstrained answer. The last question is partly a yes/no question, asking if they want to be an international tutor again, and they have to give reasons for their choice.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Background of participants

5.1.1 Cultural and education background

The six participants are all Finnish students. They have grown up in Finnish culture and speak Finnish as their first language. Four participants started their first tutoring when they were doing the Bachelor degree studies. For the other two, they were both doing second year of Master's degree studies when they were an international tutor for the first time. For the language of studies, four participants study their major in Finnish programmes with Finnish students, yet half of their courses are taught in English. Two participants study their major in English with the international students.

5.1.2 Language proficiencies

All the six participants speak two languages fluently: Finnish and English. On top of that, they know two to four additional foreign languages, they do not use them often and some feel rusty to their third to sixth languages. The other extra language skills include most commonly Swedish, then another European language, such as German, French, and also Turkish and Chinese. In conclusion, the language ability of the international tutors is regarded as very good, since all of them speak fluent English, which is the medium of communication when they work with the international students.

5.1.3 Abroad experience

All the six participants have been going abroad before being an international tutor. They have all traveled in other European cities. Four of them have been an exchange student abroad. Two did so in the United States, one in Copenhagen, one in Turkey. The remaining two were exchange students in China after the tutoring semester, yet one of them has been abroad one month in U.K for language enhancement programme in high

school time, he commented '*, there were only three Finns, besides me. And then I had the opportunity to speak a lot, and that was a very opening experience*' (Interview one, lines 40-42). In summary, all the participants had been exposed to other cultures before their tutoring experience; four of them knew how it felt like as an exchange student, while the other two prepared to be an exchange student when they were the international tutors.

5.1.4 Previous tutoring experience of the international tutors

Three participants have been an international tutor for two times and two of them have become tutor coordinators. Three participants had been an exchange student in another country before they became an international tutor.

When tutor D was in exchange semester in Holland, he had some student ambassadors, He described, '*… we had tutors, but they were not like we were, I mean they were just showing us around the city and something like this. So they aren't really help us in the beginning, when we met them the first time we have already found out place and we get there and we get to school…*' (Interview three, lines 93-96). He thought those ambassadors were different from the international tutors, '*It's not the same at all here, we helped them from the beginning.*' (Interview three, line 96).

Tutor E said, '*Actually in the States for me there were not any tutors*' (Interview three, line 92). He added '*Ha. So nice here, in Finland.*' (Interview three, line 371), when comparing the transportation arrangement for new students in his exchange in the States to that in Finland. In the States, the van came every eight hours from the school and students had to pay for the ride; in Finland, for the University of Vaasa in autumn, 2012, international tutor coordinators took shifts in the airport and picked up students to the city center with their cars.

Tutor F told about his exchange semester in Denmark, '*There was this kind of exchange buddy, there was this Danish guy that was really nice that I arrived there on Sunday*

and he let me into his apartment for one night, so on Monday I picked up the keys for my flat that was kind of organized by the school. That helps a lot actually' (Interview four, lines 144-146). He commented the situation in other countries and in the University of Vaasa, '*...in most countries, that's of course less than what we in Finland do but, in most countries they don't do anything, just come on empty ground and you don't know anything. So ..so I was actually surprised that they have that much there. So they have something, but much small minor scale*' (Interview four, lines 144-146).

5.2 Motivation as an international tutor

5.2.1 Getting international experience

Tutor A applied as an international tutor to prepare himself in an international environment before starting his exchange semester in China. Tutor C made the application because he would like to continue his Erasmus experience, to have fun, interact with the international people, as well as learn languages. Tutor D wanted to meet new people and volunteered to help the new students. After being in Vaasa for some years, he thought it would be nice to see people who came to Finland for the first time. Tutor E did not know many foreign people before his first application as an international tutor. Also, he thought knowing more international people would make for travel planning in Europe easier. Tutor F wanted to be an international tutor and meet more international people as a way to continue his good experience of the exchange semester.

Tutor E saw it as a chance to enhance language skills by being an international tutor. He expressed preferences to have French students in the interview of international tutor, as he has been learning French.

5.2.2 Getting more social contacts because Finns are not sociable

Tutor A found international people very nice in his previous one-month abroad experience in another European city, so he would like to continue such experience as an international tutor. Tutor E would like to meet more international people, he explained, '*Maybe they were like more social than Finns and so, nice to meet some, and other nationalities too*' (Interview three, lines 169-170).

5.2.3 Getting to know people who do not behave like normal Finns

In his previous exchange experience in the States, tutor D found it interesting to meet people who are not Finns, '*maybe it's interesting to meet people of different cultures that you are not used to…*', (Interview three, lines 178-179), because '*…when I was in U.S. we have people from all kinds of background but Finnish people are all so similar…*' (Interview three, lines 180-181) On the other hand, '*We* (Finns) *are not like we are different races and background and, so in that sense it was interesting to have some other influences also.*' (Interview three, lines 183-184) He applied as an international tutor when his friend, tutor E, suggested applying together.

5.2.4 Becoming a member of a group of Finns

Tutor B was an international tutor and a committee member of the Erasmus Students Network (ESN). She thought international people were more open minded, and, '*Finnish people tend to form cliques, like certain groups*'. (Interview two, lines 264-265), and '*when they form this group, it is very, very difficult to fit the criteria, in the sense that, there's not more possibilities to go this through and be one of them*' (Interview two, lines 267-268). She felt it difficult to enter an already existing group of Finns as a new member. Tutor B started in the University of Vaasa later than her classmates as she has completed quite many courses in the Open University already, and she felt such difference made it harder to join the existing groups of her classmates. In

comparison, she did not have problems in the international tutor group even they studied in different major and in different years.

In the same interview, tutor C agreed with tutor B's statement. After getting back to Finland from exchange, tutor C felt some significant changes. He found that other Finns seemed to be insecure, as '*Finns they try to clique as soon as possible to feel safe and comfortable by having a group around them, by having their phone ringing by someone. And all the new people try to enter the group are kind of a threat there, like who he or she is going to take from this group if he or she enters the group*' (Interview two, lines 274-277) and '*What's gonna be happen is like, is gonna be imbalance again. So they don't do it often*' (Interview two, line 279). Tutor C believed that he shared a similar value with other international tutors, '*That's why we see, we become good friends with other tutors, we know about the tutors, and actually I feel my group I hang out with is mostly, they almost all of them have been tutors.*' (Interview two, lines 279-281).

5.2.5 Motivated bycareer and personal studies

Tutor D hoped being an international tutor would benefit his future career, '*…I want to get the experience of responsibilities actually, cos I was also thinking it from a career perspective that having in my CV that I have been a tutor, and the international experience, maybe these are useful for my CV…*' (Interview three, lines 155-158). Tutor E needed more learning credits, and he found it a rather easy way to get more credits by being an international tutor.

5.3 Activities between international tutors and students

In the first tutoring, tutor A invited students for home parties and contacted them via email. He also asked some of his students to his home for Finnish dinner and was a guest in his students' home for Chinese dinner. In the second tutoring, he arranged a home party for his group for making pizza and playing games. He commented, '*That*

was very successful., because then the group members will meet, and it's not the bar, because bar is a bit different situation, at home people are more open' (Interview one, lines 69-70). On another weekend during the first weeks, tutor A went with his students to somewhere in the city to play games. When meeting his students in campus, they greeted each other.

Tutor B joined some parties of the international students, some were her students and some were her friends' students.

Tutor C He accompanied his students to buy daily necessities on the first days, such as pillows and blankets, and picked up some students from airport. When students arrived on separate days, these trivial matters could occupy him the first study week of the semester. For social gatherings, tutor C was in almost every party of his students. They also formed a group of friends and travelled to another city, Tampere, spending a nice weekend there.

Tutor D went to some parties of his students, but he felt he was in more contact with them on 'Facebook'. He had an internship at the same time, so he could not afford to too many parties and stay up too late.

Tutor E had more parties with his students in his first tutoring. He invited some of his students to party and go sauna in his parent's place in Vaasa in both times. He also picked up some of his students and one of tutor D's student from airport and from the train station.

In the end of semester, the International Office in the University would organize a closing event and invited the international tutors and students. It depended on the individuals for participation. The Erasmus Student Network (ESN) also held an end-of-semester party.

5.4 The experience as an international tutor

5.4.1 Strongest impressions throughout the experience

When being asked about her unforgettable experience, tutor B replied, '*Oh God. There were so many. At first it was a huge responsibility, because during the autumn the University of Vaasa has so many exchange students, I am kind of a stressful person*' (Interview two, lines 88-89). Several examples showed how she took her responsibility seriously. First, one of her students arrived in Finland at 2:30 am. She wanted to be nice. She stayed up till the student arrived and called her, so that the student could have the apartment key and stay in own accommodation. Second, she helped her Vietnamese student to pay for the deposit for the apartment rental, since she was not able to transfer money to the Finnish bank account of the housing agency VOAS. Tutor B recalled, '*Yeh yeh like 200 something, the deposit for their apartment, so I decided to trust her, you know, I paid myself*' (Interview two, lines 161-162). She got her money back when this student arrived in Finland. Third, she met an Italian student on the way collecting the apartment keys for her students in VOAS. She was not the tutor of this girl, but she tried to comfort her, as this girl looked so upset. Tutor B told, '*... that autumn there were not enough apartments for exchange students, so this girl had to go and live with, I think somebody employed by the University of Vaasa. And that family lived quite far and she was in a terrible cultural shock, I think the office, the VOAS office was already closed, and you know the family was so totally different and the cultural shock was so bad that she started to crying…*' (Interview two, lines 169-173). Tutor B called the tutor of this girl but no one answered. Tutor B also showed the girl the Italian food in the City Market. When she met this girl in school campus during the semester, she chatted with her. She described such greetings as '*something more personal that normally a Finnish person asks*' (Interview two, line 217)

Tutor B expressed disappointment on her students, '*after the Orientation days, um, it was kind of disappointing that, you know that, especially the Asian students, my tutees, they don't need me anymore. They are so independent. You know, I never heard of them after their arrival days, or orientation days*' (Interview two, lines 95-97). On the other

hand, she felt frustrated for one of her exchange students who caused her a negative feeling of being an international tutor, '*Sometimes I felt frustrated because she did call me about three times a day, on her own cellphone, SIM card from Poland, so it was costing me a lot and sometimes I'm a little bit annoyed of all the calling and everything like this.*'(Interview two, lines 233-236). Her feeling was, '*I find uncomfortable doing the tutoring thing. It wasn't always.*' (Interview two, lines 240-241). It seemed a right amount of attention is the key to please her.

Tutor C remembered he was really active being an international tutor, '*There was about 20 something tutors and I believe I was the three most active tutors and I heard it from other people as well*'(Interview two, lines 105-106). He recalled, '*...I felt like a continuation period of my exchange in Turkey...*' (Interview two, line 104).

Tutor D had a Turkish student who did not have accommodation on the first days. Tutor D was stressed because he felt he wanted to help this student even it was not his responsibilities. Also, he did not communicate with this student effectively. He was confused as the student was shy and always said 'yes, '*...this guy I had some communication issues, I don't know if it was his bad English or he was abroad or something, I didn't get any response from him*' (Interview three, lines 221-222). The communication was difficult also because the student did not have local phone card of Finland on the first days.

Tutors D and E organized the event 'International Olympics', which set different events for the participants, for example rubber throwing. The researcher commented it was good. Tutor E agreed '*It was a good idea*' (Interview three, line 441). Then tutor D added, '*Idea was good but execution didn't really work because nobody came there*' (Interview three, line 443). They had only one participant who gained the champion prizes. They were not so certain about the reason of the low attendance. Tutor D said, '*We don't know if it was because of the weather and the timing that other people have been just...*' (Interview three, lines 446-447), tutor E added '*hangover*' (Interview three, line 448). The attendance might be also due to it was on the date when the international students returned to Vaasa from some trip, and too exhausted to attend the event. They

could not get a good date since no more than one event should be on the same date. They did the preparation for the event, tutor D sounded a bit disappointed for the attendance, '*That was quite easy still because we didn't need all the equipment or something. So ice hockey was successful but this other one was…*' (Interview three, lines 461-462). Tutor E comforted him, '*It doesn't matter*' (Interview three, line 463). Tutor D concluded, '*Yeh we just have to do these two things and that's it.*' (Interview three, line 464).

Tutor F said, '*Well first days are probably the challenging probably you won't forget. This is like a lot stuff going on.*' (Interview four, lines 26-27) and '*I don't remember anything I'd be too unhappy.*' (Interview four, line 39). He had one French student asking him where to get public service and if it was reliable in Finland. He guessed maybe tutor coordinators had reminded students some limits with the international tutors, so nothing very negative happened to him. Most students would not call him by phone, and these only happened on the first days when not every international student had a free SIM card, which came late to the Student Union.

5.4.2 The first two weeks of the semester as the most important time

Tutor A mentioned the importance of the first weeks, '*I would say the first week, maybe the week and a half, determines the relationship of the tutors and the tutees, will develop. Let's say tutor only meets the person, and then no more contact that's very bad beginning*' (Interview one, lines 53-56) and '*… I would say for successful tutor semester, the tutor has to be very active for the first week and a half or two weeks, go to parties, create events, tries to connect with the people.*' (Interview one, lines 58-60). In the beginning of semester, he organized get-together activities at his home, '*That was very successful, because then the group members will meet, and it's not the bar, because bar is a bit different situation, at home people are more open*' (Interview one, lines 69-70). He also arranged social gathering in the city center for his students. He added it was more difficult to create event in the end of semester, when the students had their own smaller groups and events to go.

Tutor B suggested '*after the first couple of weeks, if you don't take the initiative to get to know them personally and keep in contact, they also form their own group. The exchange students themselves they get, very close to each other*' (Interview two, lines 350-352). She remembered when she was an exchange student after the tutoring semester, she became good friends with other exchange students. She did not have such close relationship to her 'tutor', a young18 year-old Chinese boy.

Tutor C agreed that the first weeks are the most important, '*I mean that being a tutor the most important thing is just the first a couple of weeks. After a week it was like they can handle their things. And if they can't reach you they can reach over someone. And they just have friends by them*' (Interview two, lines 324-326). For the time devoting to the parties with students, he said '*Like it's what you want, like if you have time to have fun and enjoy parties, well, then Erasmus students are not a big job for you. You just join them and enjoy,*' (Interview two, lines 138-140) Tutor C described it was a state of mind as an international tutor and he was just always in an international environment.

Tutor D felt most needed in the first week or so, as students did not have the information regarding their studies, such as the location of lecture rooms. For information irrelevant to the studies, '*I guess concerning the norms of living in Vaasa, they* (the international students) *don't need that much help I would say*' (Interview three, lines 114-115).

Tutor F recalled, '*Well first days are probably the challenging probably you won't forget. This is like a lot stuff going on. You have to get the key, you are not sure if someone is coming or not, and they are coming and where they are gonna be*' (Interview four, lines 26-28), especially in the autumn semester, he had twice as many students than his previous spring semester. He added, '*That's not too much being international tutor, that's the, most work has been done during the first days.*' (Interview four, lines 30-31). He borrowed his father's car to pick up a few students, because '*it'd be easier for everybody to do something like that*' (Interview four, lines 35-36).

Regarding the relationship with students, tutor F suggested '*It really depends on the people. Especially like first time when I was the tutor maybe I am more active, and I was organizing more. There was always like in both semesters there was some people that I was more close to…*' (Interview four, lines 59-60). Tutor F' thought a good experience would be, '*Bad to say, but best experience came when you don't do school that much, and you do more about this* (tutoring), *then you get to know the people, and that is the best part of it*' (Interview four, lines 73-74).

5.4.3 Benefits of being a tutor

Tutor A organized the big event, the weekend tour to Helsinki, which involved a lot of small work such as promotion, booking accommodation and designing sightseeing activities. He had a chance to use his subject knowledge, '*Well I study Management and Marketing, so it fits very well to my major. I can arrange the hotels. Right now I know this marking shift for this hotel chain, it's a very good experience of holding events*' (Interview One, lines 168-170). The mental concept of 'we want to do it' supported him and his partner to work it out. He had a lot of challenges, responsibilities and satisfaction after being the tutor, '*this* (Helsinki Tour) *was a new thing, it was never done before. It was a very successful event*' (Interview One, lines 165-166).

Tutor A recommended Finnish students who want to enrich international experience to become international tutors before or after the exchange semester, '*I'd highly recommend the university to recommend those on the first year who apply exchange, in the second year to be a tutor in the autumn before they go to exchange.*'(Interview one, lines 243-245), because '*Then you can basically be abroad for six months, but you feel you have been exchange for one year becos you are doing whole international experience in Vaasa, so it's a way to continue your international experience*', (Interview one, lines 243-245). and '*Or the other way round, you go for exchange, and then you back and as a tutor*' (Interview one, lines 243-245).

Tutor B '*recently discovered what is useful for being a tutor, or international people, you get to learn about yourself as well*' (Interview two, lines 463-465). She realised '*I am bad in delegating responsibilities to others, and sometimes my communication skills aren't that good*' (Interview two, lines 465-466). She believed the increased self-understanding could benefit her future career, '*because this is, you cannot get so much (partners) to improve your (career), and you learn about your leadership skills or something else*' (Interview two, lines 467-468).

Tutor B told some international tutors continued the experience by being an international tutor coordinator or a chairperson of another international students group, such as Erasmus Student Network (ESN) or Degree Student Club. The experience with the international students or the responsibility carried on even after the tutoring semester. Tutor B also pointed out different people made different changes on the tutor. She was not so close to her students, but after the following exchange semester, she was closer to the international students, '*when I was a tutor, I wasn't that close with my tutees. But last autumn, one of my good friends, she was a tutor, I kind of a "shadow tutor". So whenever I went to parties and get-together with her international tutees, and it goes on. Yes so in that sense I didn't have the responsibilities but I could have the fun. And most of her and the exchange students they came to the ESN cruise and events and that might you know, it continues and it doesn't end with the tutor one semester.*' (Interview two, lines 365-370).

Tutor C agreed tutoring helped develop his leadership skills, when he needed to tell people what to do and being the leader of his group. After organizing the Helsinki tour, tutor C commented, '*I am still in touch with some of the people who left home before Christmas 2011. And I met people and I found it as a valuable and good experience*' (Interview two, lines 1069-110). His remarks of his tutoring experience were very positive, '*Well um I got a lot of things I mean. like good time, I mean in general, my free time was more colourful. I felt better in life, because I have new, exciting friends, and obviously the girlfriend, of course*' (Interview two, lines 383-385).

Tutor D concluded, '*Well I think it's a good experience, and it was quite what I thought and it was fun to meet people and everything, so I wouldn't say that somehow it is different than I have expected so…*' (Interview three, lines 201-202). Tutor E commented '*I get a lot of good memories, in both times. And new friends, around the world*' (Interview three, line 255).

5.4.4 Neutral comments

Tutor E did not recommend it in a busy semester, as tutoring could be quite stressful in the beginning. One might have to skip the first lectures, as there was some work to do with the students when they arrived. Tutor E found '*The first time was a little bit harder, the second time of cos a little bit easier, cos I know all the stuff and, yes and it was nice to hear from the students for the first time*' (Interview three, lines 54-55). It was mostly a positive experience and there had been nice parties. The only difficulties included some students called him at 1am to ask what to do after locking themselves outside bedroom, so he gave them the number of the key man. Similar incidents did not occur often in his second tutoring, probably because he had reminded the students many times about those situations. He guessed it could also because of a better orientation talk for the international students in that semester.

Tutor F commented, '*I don't know if I learn anything that much cos I already learned in Denmark, but I still got what I wanted cos I got to meet new people and stuff but I think I learned those in Denmark so*' (Interview four, lines 231-233).

5.4.5 Increased understanding on cultures

Tutor A said '*I have learnt a lot about the cultures. Of course I have my stereotype about cultures A, B, C, and I have met several people from this culture, so I have got rid of the stereotype.*' (Interview one, lines 127-128)

Tutor B believed people could have cultural shock due to different reasons, '*people act differently. There are cultural shock, you know, for most students it was the thing they live so far away, but for her* (the Italian girl that Tutor B helped), *she lives in a family, that maybe wasn't so culturally involved she said that they didn't have food that would suit her or anything. And their habits and everything was so different that she felt like a woman, who's the family she's staying in was cold person or something like that'* (Interview two, lines 204-208).

5.4.6 Increased understanding of the job of international tutors

Tutor A suggested that the number of tutoring experiences changed one's impression on things. An international tutor had a view of one semester; then a tutor coordinator had a picture over two to three semesters; and the staff in charge in the International Office had a view of 14 to 15 semesters. The number of experiences shaped a different view on how an international tutor should be like and how to work with the international students.

Tutor C commented '*Like people realize what is being a tutor after they are a tutor, to have been a tutor*' (Interview two, lines 479-480). Tutor B agreed with him They portrayed being an international tutor could be '*It's like all about challenging yourself*' (Interview two, line 545), such as speaking a lot of English which they might not do before.

5.4.7 Other experiences as an international tutor

Tutor F had organized ice swimming in both semesters, as his father was a swimming club member, and could give him some free passes for students to do ice swimming and nice sauna there. Participants included both boys and girls.

Both tutors A and D had students who arrived in Vaasa earlier than them, in early August for summer Finnish course. So they did not necessarily need to worry about them who had already started their life in Vaasa by themselves

5.5 Relationship between international tutors and students

Tutor A became good friends with some of his students, '*I would say one or two exchange students in each semester, comes to my very close circle, for this period of time, like six months. But then because of physical distance or something else, it's not possible, but they still remain as good friends. So my point is there is no space for all the 15 students. So depends on the person, depends on me, so who comes to my close circle*' (Interview one, lines 312-316). He liked making friends with the international students, '*I am a very global person so I like to have friends from global level. I don't see my friendship as material. Friends, I can help them, they can help me if I need something*' (Interview one, line 327-328). He thought it he would meet his students again in the future, for instance, in his future exchange semester.

Tutor B did not have so much contact with the students, '*You know, I never heard of them after their arrival days, or orientation days. And I didn't take it as a commitment, you know, all the exchange students as a personal level, or be friends, because apparently, you know, it takes a lot of drinking time.*' (Interview two, lines 96-99). She quoted the statement from one international tutor '*I know all of them personally because I have been drinking with them every day*' (Interview two, line 101). She said, '*I may be Facebook friends with the exchange students, but I never send them messages or talk to them that much because I didn't do that when they were in Finland either*' (Interview two, line 373-375). She did not keep in touch with them but she recognized them. In the Erasmus Students Network (ESN) events, she was the committee member of the ESN, '*I hugged with the international, friends, but I don't keep in touch with my tutees*' (Interview two, lines 375-376), as a gesture to express gratitude for their participation.

Tutor C saw it more of a personal interest to go to parties with international students, and did not find it time consuming or demanding if someone enjoyed the interaction. It was fun and the time was not a great deal. When being asked his relationship with his students, tutor C replied '*Very deep*' (Interview two, line 372). Tutor C was active with the international students, he described their relationship and explained, '*well, I was quite, well, friends with my tutees and also I'd like to network myself with other groups as well*' (Interview two, line 103-104), and he felt the connection with the international students like a continuation of his exchange semesters. He also became friends with his students and their friends. After the tutoring semester, he said, '*I don't feel like that it's completely over*' (Interview two, line 324), because '*since some falls semester people like come here and they stay for a two years, or one year, or half a year, there are a lot people who are still here and they are still actually. Like Christmas I got a phone call from one of my tutees, asking about Finnish culture. Like as I was answering as a tutor so yeah I kind of been there still*' (Interview two, lines 78-82).

Tutor D thought '*We* (he and his students) *were pretty, I mean sometimes maybe contact more on Facebook more*'(Interview three, line 79). It was because he had an internship, '*Yeh I mean helpful but not like, I mean not so close. I was helping like every time I could when I was needed but I was doing internship, I didn't have so much time for* ' (Interview three, lines 108-109), '*Yeh to parties as I have to work every day…* ' (Interview three, line 111). He thought he was not the same as other international tutors, '*Some tutors might be, that they go to every party, they hang out with them and they go to their place and stuff like this but I was not so close to them I would say*' (Interview three, lines 104-106). For the relationship with his students, '*I guess, I had a good relationship, of cos I am not so close friend with anyone but the relationship, I don't know how to describe it*' (Interview three, lines 378-379). He gave an example that his Czech student invited him to stay at his place if he traveled there. He suggested it depended on how students saw him as a person for inviting him to parties. He recalled he was mostly helping them with official stuff, and students did not see him much due to his internship.

Tutor E said '*Well, I get a lot of good memories, in both times. And new friends, around the world, we've been keeping in touch, most of them*' (Interview three, lines 255-256). When being asked if he was connected to his students on 'Facebook', after tutor D said '*Yes, with most of them*' (Interview three, line 381), tutor E added, '*Yes, same here, apparently. And I am friend with them on Facebook except one who doesn't have Facebook*' (Interview three, lines 382-383). In summer 2012, he visited two of his students in Prague.

Tutor F was close to Czech and Slovak students in his first tutoring in spring semester, and they invited each other to home parties. He was closer to Czech students, '*when I think about it also one of the friends group in Denmark was um from Hungary*' (Interview four, lines 229-230). In his second tutoring in autumn semester, he had a lot of school work and wished he could have more time to party or contact with the students. He met one of his closest international students by coincidence in the study room. They went to the same study room in school, and they had some common friends, so they hang out together later. He suggested maybe the closer relationship depended on the chance to meet, not necessarily the tutoring relationship, '*It's the same like all relationship, let's say serious relationship with a man and woman. Can you say where it happens? It can happen to a tutor, or happen in the workshop, or in the bar, in a party or Tritonia Cafeteria*' (Interview four, lines 209-211). He concluded '*Nah not too specific, like any other person. Cos after a week, you don't need help you know. When you came, everything was weird, but probably you have other group of people who arrived on the same day. And after arrival, it's like you have your own group you can always ask, which is easier to ask than like somebody who is outsider*' (Interview four, lines 218-221). In his opinion, the international students can be very independent, '*You don't need a helper*' (Interview four, line 223).

5.6 How international tutors see their role

Tutor A said, '*I see myself, I don't know, I could be a friend, I don't try to be a boss, I just try to help them. Definitely not mothers*' (Interview one, lines 215-217).

Tutor B saw herself as a big sister or '*comfort blanket sometimes'* (Interview two, line 232). She thought she might be a bad tutor, as she felt she was more involved in the events of Erasmus Students Network (ESN) than being as an international tutor. After expressing disappointment of not being needed by her students, who were independent, she added*,' And I didn't take it as a commitment, you know, all the exchange students as a personal level, or be friends,'* (Interview two, lines 97-98). For being an international tutor and also a chairperson of ESN, tutor B commented '*We are kind of like…in the ESN we are kind of tutors, we just hold different positions. For example, now since I am ESN president, I feel kind of the tutor for Åbo Academy students. I was having presentation for their new exchange students and we have this 'Get to know ESN in Vaasa' get together.'* (Interview two, lines 331-334). Tutor B was happy that she had made new friends with other international tutors, if not the international students.

Tutor C told, '*I saw myself as a, some kind of, in some level, I like to think that I was, in a way leader with another tutor, in many things. We organize, well this guy now is another coordinator, which kind of is logical if you think. We organize a lot of events, we were really active. I think everybody knew us by name at least. We were also helping, this kind of personal help, with everyone'* (Interview two, lines 221-225). He recounted other students always found him for anything, '*People call me for, even that tutee of other tutors, sometimes call me for help. Well I had a girlfriend whose friends were calling me, and they were international, so for whatever reasons'* (Interview two, lines 226-228). He remembered, '*So I'd like to think that I was quite helpful, that was no time I would not answer a phone that even though it was some time in the night.'* (Interview two, lines 228-229)

Tutor D recounted, '*I guess I was more formal than some of the tutors.'* (Interview three, line 98), and tutor E agreed, '*Ha we called him the professional too, because he was always with the paper and everything'* (Interview three, lines 99-100). Tutor D added, '*I was just at the beginning'* (Interview three, line 101). In the rest of the semester, tutor D seemed to think something had changed, '*but after that I had an*

internship, and I didn't have so much time to hang out with them. So I would say that my role, I wasn't like, I was of course friendly and I met them sometimes but I may not be friendly in the sense that maybe as the other students (tutors) *were'* (Interview three, lines101-104). He compared himself with other international tutors, *'Some tutors might be, that they go to every party, they hang out with them and they go to their place and stuff like this but I was not so close to them I would say'* (Interview three, lines 104-106). He also saw himself as a volunteer, *'I guess I want to just to meet some new people, just be a volunteer and help them…'* (Interview Three, line 153), *'…it's nice to see some people who were their first time in Finland, and to help…'* (Interview three, lines 154 - 155).

Tutor E tried to be a friend to his students in his second tutoring, and to be more relaxed. In the first time, he was more like a 'professional', saying 'this and this' to his students. When being asked 'what kind of relationship do you have with your tutees?', he questioned, *'Tutees? The Students?'* (Interview three, line 374). This showed he did not see a tutoring relationship between himself and the students.

Tutor F saw himself *'For some of them, they probably forget me in one month, if cos I am not too much in touch to. But for those who I have closer with, they think, I don't know. Maybe friend, maybe an idiot too'* (Interview four, lines 87-88) and *'Just like Finnish buddy, last friend, depends on the person'* (Interview four, lines 214). He took it easy to be an international tutor, *'That's not too much being international tutor, that's the, most work has been done during the first days. And you have to organize a few things, that's more up to you. If you want to be like more active and more stuff like that'* (Interview four, lines 30-33). Tutor F believed international students would find their own friends after the first week, and it might be easier for them to ask their friends if they needed anything than asking the tutor. *'People can take care about themselves. You don't need a helper.'* (interview four, lines 222-223).

5.7 Possible stereotypes before being an international tutor

Tutor A described it as a rewarding experience when knowing more about cultures. He remembered he might have stereotypes on certain cultures, and he changed his perception after getting along with students of those cultures. His previous stereotypes of different nationalities included, '*French are very sophisticated and calm, and some alcohol and very wild'; while people from the Mediterranean area tend to find each other, like Italians will find Italians, but that is 'how it works'; German usually find other* (people from other) *countries; and Chinese usually act in a group and do things together.* (Interview one, lines 129-132).

When tutor D was applying as an international tutor, he expressed preferences to have students from Europe and North America because, '*if I am honest why I would rather have some students who are fluent or relatively fluent in English because the communication you can have them, and it's more comfortable if people can speak good English*' (Interview three, lines 511-513). For his two Finnish students, who were taking international programmes and became his students, he commented, '*You don't really meet Finnish students because they don't need you at all.*' (Interview three, line 331)

5.8 Impression of the international students after having been an international tutor

5.8.1 Impression of degree students

Tutor A found degree students usually more independent, and could go on their own way after the first two weeks. They socialized with students in the same or previous years of their programme. He described, '*…for degree students, I understand they are usually older than me, but I have noticed that the majority, or some of them want to be very independent.*' (Interview One, lines 121-122). '*So they respond like 'I am ok' 'I don't need your help' 'I'm already here'. But that's ok, I mean they are no problems, so that's ok*' (Interview One, lines 123-124).

Tutor C described, '*in general I'd say like that the degree students, I think you could agree me, are less active in everything. They are studying, they are home, more than the Erasmus students*' (Interview two, lines 140-142), but this was not something negative. Degree students had two-year time, so they might not be so active, they could take their time. Degree students were in general more mature and the exchange students were younger.

Tutor F stated, '*degree students were mostly like outsider of Europe, for example, and they usually. If they come outside of Europe, it's probably more bit of deal for them and they are taking school more seriously*' (interview four, lines 167-169) and '*maybe they are older because usually if they have done their bachelor*'(interview four, lines 171-172).

Although the participants shared a perception that degree students were independent, able to take care of themselves, and might not need international tutors anymore, it might not be a same picture from international students, that they did not need their international tutors anymore, and did not wish to socialize with their tutors continually.

5.8.2 Impression of exchange students

Tutor A commented, '*exchange students maybe party more, they stay in a tighter group*' (Interview one, lines 87-88) and '*Exchange students they stay with very tight group because they have no previous exchange students, they only have their group*' (Interview one, lines 89-91).

Tutor B compared the degree and exchange students, '*maybe Erasmus students are younger, and because they are here for shorter time, their prioritizing are totally different. They want to get, you know, party experience, or something like this. But the degree students, they want to take studying and everything like this so they don't necessarily want to, or need to party...*' (Interview two, lines 145-148).

Tutor C commented on exchange students, '*…I couldn't distinguish, but we may have to go one deeper analysis whether they are more easy the degree students.*' (Interview two, lines 137-138) and '*the Erasmus students they come here to have fun, and experience the country in a short period*'(Interview two, line 343).

Tutor F recalled, '*exchange students were really…*' (Interview four, line 163) and '*Yeh maybe having fun, definitely*' (Interview four, line 167)

5.8.3 Impression of specific cultural groups

Tutor A found Asian students usually asked more questions than European students before coming to Finland, but it was understandable, '*it's not like you go from Germany to Finland, these are very similar places. China and Finland are very different, you don't know the culture*' (Interview One, lines 118-120).Tutor A also observed, '*Chinese come here together usually. They come here as a group. Right now we have four girls and one guy who came, and probably they did the Visa together so now they have a problem, because they did it in the same way, and they have the delay, they came here one week later, and they are still not here. That's a very good sign of collectivism, so they do things together*' (Interview One, lines 135-138). Tutor A further suggested that the social ability of international students depended on the English ability. If the level was above average, it was easy to connect with other new students and further improved the English skills. In contrast, if the student needed to learn more English, this could limit the social ability, and a vicious circle to stay more often with the same nationality, and fewer opportunities to make new friend and practise English.

Tutor B said Asian students were easy and very independent, one of her Vietnamese students managed to get a Finland phone card right after she landed in Finland, while she had another Polish girl who could did not do so after one month. She had a good impression of the Finns in the international groups, '*for international Finns, you can just go there and you all share something similar, there are no other criteria, if you are*

an international minded person, that you are interested in this' (Interview two, lines 268-270).

Tutor C observed a mutual want to know each other between Finnish and international students, '*Nevertheless, the problem that both of them they want that, but both of them they feel it's too difficult, the other group is so clique, or somewhat closed, that we cannot get in to them we cannot break in, and the difference in culture is one of the reasons that Finns don't like to push them to know the other people, or groups I would say. Because they think that is impossible to get in, because in Finland it's almost impossible'* (Interview two, lines 526-530). Tutor B agreed with him and gave an example as a support, '*for example, the Joint Sitsit Party, Finnish people. I think there was the question it may be difficult to get Finnish people to come to the party at all. Because if there is only one Finnish person, they might feel that they are too (awkward), they may not have the courage to come there. And if we sit there an international person and a Finnish person, an international person and a Finnish person, it's too much'* (Interview two, lines 533-537). She explained, '*And sometimes it might be a language issue as well, even though all the Finnish people we, in my opinion we speak very good English'* (Interview two, lines 539-540) and '*English all the time, there might be barriers to speak it'* (Interview two line 542).

Tutor D commented, '*Sometimes it's almost easier to meet foreign people than Finnish people, maybe they are more talkative, and then there is you don't need to have something common already, like with the Finnish person you need to have the same hobby or something but foreigners you can just talk about uh your own countries or habits or what is going on, there are so many things to talk in a way'* (Interview three, lines 46-50) and '*Definitely not harder than meeting Finnish people, yeh I would say'* (Interview three, line 52). He also added, '*I guess it's pretty big difference if the person has been traveling before, or if it's first time you go abroad, and you go to live in another country'*(Interview three, lines 531-532), because '*If your English is not so good, and you have never been abroad, then of cos it's huge thing'* (Interview three, line 534). He put his Turkish student as an example, '*Yeh that's what exactly I was thinking about, the Turkish guy'* (Interview three, line 536). He spotted some changes on this

Turkish student in the end of the semester, '*in the end he became a bit more talkative, maybe it was just in the beginning maybe he was first time abroad or something so*' (Interview three, lines 280-281).

Tutor E remembered his Vietnamese student, '*the Vietnamese girl actually pretty shy*' (Interview three, line 521), because '*when I picked her up from the train station, she was really quiet and so*' (Interview three, 523), and one outgoing Chinese girl whose English was quite good, he guessed, '*Maybe she is older*'(Interview three, line 527). Tutor E had a Finnish student, but had never seen her. '*I wanted to see her*' (Interview three, line 329). His memory to his French students was, '*And the French don't speak really, strong accent, I try to understand* (their English) *sometimes*' (Interview three, lines 515-516).

Tutor F did not have preference on students, '*I think it is just interesting if people come from Afghanistan or Chili, just interesting to hear about the new, they are the interesting types*' (Interview four, lines 292-293) and '*Spain and France you are more familiar with those*' (Interview four, line 295).

5.9 Training and support as a tutor

Tutor A disclosed that the international tutors had less funding than the Finnish tutor team. One reason is that international students are of a smaller size than the Finnish students. The different amount on funding effects different training resources for the two groups of tutors. The Finnish tutors can go through an overnight weekend informal training in the summer cottage, which makes the new tutors to communicate and get along with each tutor. Such weekend is effective to build up understanding for the tutors to understand each other, and fosters a stronger team spirit. For international tutors, they do not have budget for an overnight training, so they spend a night in a place to have discussion and sauna instead. In the opinion of tutor coordinators, less informal training time results in a less strong team spirit among the international tutors, compared to the Finnish tutors, in the beginning of semester.

Tutor B suggested it was important to attend the training and meet international tutors before the arrival of students, '*because I haven't been in the training weekend, which is also a place you get to know and see everyone's faces and who. So when the orientation days came, I was kind of worried, and I was concerned, because I have to reply on people I have never met, or didn't even know their phone numbers or their faces or anything like that with this*'(Interview two, lines 482-485).

Regarding the support, tutor C described the international tutor coordinators were a safety net. They shared their past experience, and gave advice to the tutors what to do. He also pointed out that international tutors acted like a group, they had the phone numbers of others and could help each other. For example, if one international tutor could not go to somewhere with the students on the Orientation Days, he or she could ask other tutors who were in that place to take care of the students; or one could help others collect the apartment keys, when another one was doing pick-ups for new students on the arrival days.

Tutors D and E agreed that a good orientation talk for the new international students could ease the work for international tutors. In the informal meeting of international tutors just before the arrival days, the tutors met for a night for experience sharing and form groups of three to four to organize activities for the semesters. Tutors D and E chose to stay in the same group, as they knew were friends and each other better. They commented the tutoring training was sufficient.

In tutor F's opinion, the tutoring talks of his first and second tutoring went too long, like the one for autumn semester was about five hours, although he agreed it helped a lot. In addition to the basic information, like health care knowledge, he remembered it was reminded in the talk that Finnish humour could be sometimes pretty black, people might not understand it and someone could get hurt and hated the tutor. They also got checklists and papers during the talk. For the informal training, tutor F said that it would not have been a good experience for everyone if they did not know each other better. He described such gathering was kind of necessary. He found the training was pretty solid

like a conclusion, which let the new tutors know what happened before or the complaints. He had a positive impression on the International Office, '*International Office they are actually doing a great job cos they are doing a full document.*' (Interview four, lines 271-272). He further compared the International Office with what is usually seen in other countries, '*I don't know if it's the same in Finland, definitely other countries are not the same you know, they don't put this one several on, making it better all the time like, or we have made this list that we progress within the year like perfect memory for everything. You basically know everything from that list, and they continue on the lecture you know*' (Interview four, lines 273-277). His comments suggested that it was important to keep a record of the happenings and evaluation to avoid repeating the old mistakes.

5.10 The wish to be an international tutor again

Tutors A, B and C shared similar opinions of wanting some kind of promotion rather than being an international tutor again. Tutor A said, '*Well this system is like in a company. You go in the company, and you start as an assistant. Then you move as manager, or you want to become a manager, and you don't want to go back as an assistant. So I want to be like in the tutor community, but not as a tutor anymore*' (Interview one, 432-434). Tutor C's opinion was, '*For me that was, I am over, I am done with that, I have to move on in that sense. I have to move on by getting the kind of promotion if you can think in that way. Moving back will be like, well backward. And that not being the only reason, I have already got everything from the tutoring that I think I would like to have. Never say never, but I believe I am not gonna to apply again for the international tutor.*' (Interview two, lines 593-597). Tutor B seemed to enjoy her work in ESN more than being an international tutor, '*we have different positions but we have moved like up and forward, so to speak, and what I like about my position in ESN for example I don't have to take what I felt more stressed and exhausted about the arrival days. So in my position now in ESN, I just get to enjoy all the good parts, about organizing all the events and not to be stressful about their apartments. For just simplyhood*' (Interview two, lines).

Very likely tutors D, E and F would not make application again for different reasons. Tutor D said he would be busier in the following semester with the thesis. He said '*I think maybe I didn't want to do it again maybe in spring because I am more busy, and maybe one time is enough for now*' (Interview three, lines 202-204) and suggested '*it's fine to do it every second year*'(Interview three, lines 204-205), as it could be a stressful during the beginning of semester, especially if some of them did not have an accommodation. Tutor E stated, '*I don't think I would have a chance, because I try to do my thesis as quick as possible, so hopefully next semester I'll be gone*' (Interview three, lines 558-559). Tutor F had more or less the same reason, '*I think about it to go there for the third time, and I quickly thought about maybe coordinator, or applying for it*' (Interview four, lines 155-156) but he did not do so, because '*I thought I had, I have been in school for so long time I want to get graduated and I have to take school like really seriously*' (Interview four, lines 156-157).

5.11 The tutor system

5.11.1 Extra support needed from the organization

The participants have expressed a lack of resources in various aspects. Regarding the arrival of the new students, tutor C recounted, '*…for picking up the tutees from the airport with their own cars, which is a really great thing, can be costly. And those costs are not covered, because we are organizing a lot that transportation service.*' (Interview two, 515-517). Tutor D observed that international students might have problems getting accommodation in autumn semester before arrival, '*That's why it is stressful that was really not our business to get the apartments, it's VOAS, the job of VOAS, but we have to do it*' (Interview three, lines 237-238). Tutor F agreed it would be good to have a smaller size of students for an international tutor, and he added, '*but I understand that it takes so many resource*' (Interview four, lines 301-302).

Tutor E told the situation for the international tutors varied in different years. He recalled that computer training for international students in the beginning of semester went better and less chaotic in his first tutoring, autumn 2010 than autumn, 2012.

5.11.2 Influence of the International tutor coordinators

Tutor A found out an interesting fact that the gender of international tutor coordinator affected the gender ratio of the international tutors: two male coordinators brought in turns more girls in the international tutor team; vice versa if there were two girl coordinators, and one male and one female coordinator led rather equal male and female proportion of international tutors. He further suggested that if there are both male and female as the coordinators, then they can understand better the need and feelings of both the male and female international tutors.

Concerning the mutual want of knowing each other between the Finnish and international students, tutor C disclosed that the international tutor team now tried to be more visible so that more people would start to discuss about them, '*now you have noticed as I speak on the view of the coordinator of the student. We have started a campaign, like marketing campaign kind of, we bring ourselves out, we do PR, we people can see us more in university. And also a site of this, there is like the Helsinki tours for three days, and people usually, they get to hear of this, what they are doing in the trip there, they see posters, they see people talking about, and they see pictures. So we try to get more visibility so that we also become more approachable.*' (Interview two, lines 551-556) He suggested it might be interesting if both Finnish and international students could be international tutors, but international students were not enthusiastic about it, '*Cos I have actually been running for like, make it possible for foreign students, it simply lacks applicants in it*' (Interview two, lines 576-577).

6 DISCUSSION

6.1 Self-identity construction of the participants

The self-identity construction of the international tutors is considered as a hybrid process. It can be divided roughly into three stages: stage one, during the training and before the arrival of the new students; stage two, in the first week of semester when the new students are arriving; stage three, after the first two weeks, in the rest of semester.

In stage one, all participants shared almost the same self-identity, all of them expecting the arrival of the new students. Their actions were more or less identical, contacting the students via emails, attending training and collecting the students' apartment keys from VOAS. In stage two, their individual self-identities started to have slight variations. In terms of actions, participants were helping their students to start their life in Vaasa and giving them the information of the studies of the University. Most participants have expressed that the first week is the most important, after that, they believed students could take care of themselves, or solved the problems themselves with their own friends. During this stage, some of them had social gatherings with their students, some did not.

In stage three, the actions and attitude of the participants varied a lot. Some of them were busy doing internship, studies, other extra-curricular activities, or started to have negative feeling being an international tutor, due to dependent student or feeling not needed by students who seemed very independent. They did not have time and chances to contact their students anymore. They might think they were doing the duty of international tutors only when they were organizing the two assigned activities for all the international students in the semester. The lack of connection with the students fostered the perception that they were no longer in the position to mentor, or to take care of their students. Their self-identity of being an international tutor might become vague during this stage. On the other hand, some of them had been keeping personal contact with the students in home parties, pre-parties or other social gatherings, and were also seen as the most active tutors in the eyes of the students, who continued to approach

them for help or social gathering. The feeling of being needed reinforced the participants' self-identity of being an international tutor.

In short, those who gained satisfaction, consistently involved in their students' circle attained continual enthusiasm throughout the semester. They might set a new goal amid the tutoring and carried on the tutoring job in similar nature in the following semesters. Those who did not have chance to meet their students often showed reduced passion in engaging social activities with the students, and bore a self-identity of being unimportant to their students in the rest of the semester. Unsatisfactory response from the students could discourage the tutors, and further decay their passion in participating in tutoring events. For tutors who were too busy with other work than socializing with the students, it could show that they placed a higher priority on their internship, studies, and extra-curricular activities, than their role being an international tutor.

Many participants reflected the first two weeks of semester is the most important period, after that, there is not much with the tutoring work. This suggests that participants bore a strong self-identity of being a tutor of their students only in the first two weeks.

Other potential variables seem to have influence on the participants' behaviour. For language background, all participants spoke fluent English, which is not a must for every Finn. Their English ability enabled them to express ideas to the students. One participant expressed preference to have European and American students as he perceived they spoke better English, and fluent communication was important to him. Also, the previous tutoring experiences could influence the participants to think foreign students did not need so much assistance, as they could start their life by themselves without much help from student ambassadors.

6.2 Cross cultural relationship among the participants and their students

Participants have showed self-stereotype of Finns. Some of them thought Finns are less sociable and less easy going than the international people. Finns are more conservative

in accepting new member in social groups, Finns require certain criteria to accept new members, such as common hobbies and common studies background. In comparison, international people, or Finns in the international circle are perceived more open minded and socially welcoming, everyone can enter their social circle, and the international people do not require criteria to accept someone as their new friend.

Participants might have possible stereotypes on other cultures. For example, some cultural groups are seen as less capable with their English abilities, some are seen as practicing collective group among themselves, some are seen as sharing a similar culture of Finns.

Participants observed small differences between degree and exchange students. Degree students were perceived as more mature, more serious with studies and less interested in going partying. Exchange students were thought to be more easy, more interested to go parties and enjoy easy life in Vaasa.

As most of the obligatory tasks of the international tutors took place the first two weeks of semester, the participants might not have sufficient time and chance to understand the expectation of international students. Their understanding would increase only if they continued to socialize with their students, which led to a longer, closer and stronger relationship. Participant might have a limited understanding to their students' expectation if their contact with the students stopped after the first two weeks, and ended in a short, distant and superficial relationship.

If the perception of the international tutors was different from the expectation of international students, who were of a different nationality and followed different sets of cultural norms, such cultural differences between the tutors and students could result in ineffective communication, for example misunderstanding or prejudice. The assumption of international students could take care of themselves, and were not necessarily interested to socialize with their tutors, could reduce the tutors' passion to take initiatives and keep in touch with their students, and possibly lead to a

misunderstanding from the international students of their tutors did not care about them, and were uninterested in getting along with them.

6.3 Diversity management of participants

All participants had a group of diversity: students of different nationalities from or outside Europe; degree students and exchange students who are older or younger than them, students of different levels of English; and different life experiences- some were married, some Master's degree students had exchange and full time work experiences already, and some exchange students just started their first semester abroad, with no work experiences.

Each participant had ten to eleven students, yet he or she did not necessarily perceive such group and his- or herself as a team due to different reasons. Students came to Vaasa on different dates, some arrived in early August and managed to start their life before the mentors were in Vaasa. Since participants mainly built up the relationship with the students from giving apartment keys, pick-ups, computer training, city and campus tour, participants did not have much contact with these early arrived students if they did not need to perform the official tasks for them. For students arriving on the official arrival days or the days after, the participants met them on separate days to give them the apartment keys. After that, the participants did not necessarily meet all their students in the later days, if they did not help in the city tour, not organize social gatherings for their own group of students, and not help in the specific computer training workshop which their students attended. In short, participants met individual students for various frequencies. Since the whole group of students did not need to work together as a team to achieve some goals, the participant would not have to demonstrate the skill of diversity management, such as to build up the mutual trust, develop agreed goal, and integrate the skills and abilities between the students.

6.4 Tutoring and mentoring

Every participant developed a different kind of relationship to each of their student, depending on: the frequencies of a chance to meet in the beginning and the rest of semester, and if the occasion allowed them to build up a stronger understanding and relationship, and mutual personal interest to each other.

A higher frequency of meeting in the beginning of semester resulted in a higher chance for them to open themselves and build up mutual understanding and a closer relationship in the rest of semester, and increased the mutual personal interest to continue the relationship. In contrast, if the participant and the student did not have a chance to meet, or they met just once in the beginning of semester, it was less likely for them to open themselves to get to know each other better, and the new student would develop own social circle, which give an impression to the participant that they were not needed anymore, and further decreased the mutual interest to carry on or develop the relationship.

Although the participants were literally tutors - a more experienced student than the new student, they might not be in the role of mentor and demonstrate mentoring skills: giving advice, listen to the mentees and so on. If the participants did not have such a chance to become a mentor in the relationship, they would be only a new Finnish friend for the student, and not necessarily form a mentoring relationship with the student.

6.5 Different kinds of mentoring and the impacts

Participants all told that they had achieved their goals: they had known more international people, increased understanding on different cultures, and maintained a good friendship with some of their students – some participants even met their students again in their own country when doing exchange or traveling. Some participants stayed in the international circle after the tutoring semester, by being an international tutor again, or moved on to higher position to organize events for the international students.

Some of them have obtained great satisfaction after holding big events, and strengthened their leadership skills after tutoring. All participants shared their goals and interest, helped mentees to come to their own solution in the living in the new country, accepted differences, and capable to build and maintain a close relationship through trust and empowerment. Their performances are in line to the literature about the characteristics of positive mentoring. It seemed that three participants demonstrated strong positive mentoring, and the other three showed mild positive mentoring. Those who showed increased passion and had the aggression to move to higher positions were considered to show strong positive mentoring, as they enjoyed performing mentoring skills and desired for greater challenges. Those who felt comfortable and would like a break after the tutoring experience were considered as showing mild positive mentoring. They achieved their goals, but they seemed to be fed up with the responsibilities to mentoring others again, and rather look for better alternatives.

All participants also had students that they lost contact after the first two weeks. Some encountered negative feelings throughout the tutoring, some could not keep up their enthusiasm, and some felt stressful in the beginning of semester. These individual relationships were considered as negative mentoring, as termination of relationship and feelings of disappointment were reported.

6.6 Factors resulting in different kinds of mentoring relationships

6.6.1 Factors from the mentors

The participants' willingness to take new students to a personal social level affected their interaction with the students. For example, one participant liked to have friends on a global level, and another participant liked to network himself to different people. The other four participants saw themselves as a Finnish friend to help people first arrived to Finland, and no need to take the students to a personal level necessarily. In addition, if the participants liked partying and could afford the time, they had a higher tendency to

get involved in the same social circle with the new students, by creating or attending events, and had more chances to hang out with them and became real friends in the end.

Some participants saw being an international tutor as a chance to enter the circle of Finns, the international Finns who seemed more easy-going and open-minded. They found it difficult to join the existing groups of Finnish students, for example for a Business Studies student to join the group of the Industrial Studies students, or for a latecomer to join a group set up for one year. By being an international tutor, they wished to make belonging possible, when they did not fit, or felt they did not in the average student body.

All the participants wanted to meet more international people, who seemed to be different from Finns, more open minded and sociable. Some would like to have more friends from the world to benefit future traveling planning. Some found it interesting to know people of different backgrounds whereas Finns were rather identical in comparison. Some would like to continue their international experience. The participants' motivation of being an international tutor changed throughout the semester. Some of them increased and sustained their motivation after organizing successful events and building up friendship with the students. They even had a new motivation to move forward to higher position in the similar kind of work. Some participants encountered negative feelings during the tutoring, such as stress, frustration and disappointment, and lost their motivation to do tutoring in the rest of the semester. The findings are similar to the literature: intrinsic personal satisfaction from mentoring others gave success to their mentoring. Also, some of them gained new motivation to continue mentoring when they increased visibility among the international people, earned respect and support from the students.

All the six participants applied as an international tutor voluntarily as they wanted to meet new friends, received more credits or had enjoyed the previous experience as an international tutor. Their voluntary participation can be interpreted as they saw being an international tutor as a means for personal development, satisfaction and challenge.

6.6.2 Factors from the mentees

Some participants have been actively socialized with their students when they seemed to be always needed by their students. Some participants felt not needed by the students, or felt annoyed by the student. Their experiences were in line with the literature: mentees' commitment to the relationship by devoting time and attending meetings supported a positive and successful relationship; difficult mentees contributed to a short, distant and ineffective relationship.

6.6.3 Factors from the organization

Layered hierarchy is found and developmental opportunities are available among international tutors – to be the tutor coordinator, or the chairperson of other student union, such as the Erasmus Student Network. The experience as an international tutor equipped and helped them to move forward.

6.6.4 Other predetermined factors: selection

In the interview of international tutors, applicants could express their preference of the nationality of their students. This allowed the mentors to take more control of the mentor/ mentee relationship. For example, one participant would like to have Chinese students as he was planning to go for exchange to China, and when he had the Chinese student during tutoring, they went to dinner in each other's home and became good friends. Another participant wanted to continue speaking Turkish after his exchange in Turkey, and he later made friends with his Turkish students and their friends. One participant expressed preference to have students from Europe and North American, who he considered to have better English abilities, and made him feel more comfortable since communication was important to him. These examples were in line with the literature, that the opportunity to express preference gave a more positive perception that they could have more benefits and fewer costs in the programme.

7 INSTEAD OF A CONCLUSION - SOME SUGGESTIONS

It is recommended to introduce the concept of self-identity construction in the trainings of international tutors, in order to help new tutors to negotiate the meaning of successful tutors before they start tutoring the students. The concept can portray how much the contact with the students can influence the self-identity construction of their role of being an international tutor, as well as their participation of the tutoring work throughout the semester.

It is also important that experienced tutors share their experiences in the training. First, the sharing can explain the expectation of international students, and help new tutors to take care of the needs of international students better. Second, it can illustrate a more concrete idea of the significance and influence of the continual participation and passion as an international tutor. Third, it can foster a sense of mindfulness of the cultural differences between Finns and the international students, in terms of language ability, studies and work experiences and abroad experiences, so that new tutors can increase understanding of the international students' behaviour, and prepare better to take care of their needs and expectation. Fourth, it can avoid repeated mistakes, for instance, the mistakes made in autumn 2011 would not be forgot and happen in spring 2013 again.

In addition, the quality of the programme can be improved by requiring a certain amount of contact time between the international tutors and students; revising or lengthening the training, self-evaluation of tutoring, and revised goal setting; allocating more staff to monitor and supervise the international tutors; offering different rewards to the tutors, such as allowances in terms of coupons to the international tutors for brilliant performance proved by the positive feedback of tutees or increased learning credits in recognition of the tutor's contribution.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Email with international tutors recruitment news

4/11/2012 23KB
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Jäsentiedote, viikko 44/2012
Member Newsletter, week 44/2012
VYY:n jäsentiedote julkaistaan viikoittain suomeksi ja englanniksi.
This is VYY's member newsletter, published weekly in Finnish and in English.
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[1] VYY hakee KV-tutorkoordinaattoria.
http://www.vyy.fi/uutiset/vyy-hakee-kv-tutorkoordinaattoria-2
[2] KV-tuutorihaku avattu!
http://www.vyy.fi/uutiset/kv-tuutorihaku-avattu
[3] Edunvalvontavaliokunnan kokous 15.11.
http://www.vyy.fi/uutiset/edunvalvontavaliokunnan-kokous-1511-0
[4] VYY:n hallitushaku vuodelle 2013 on avattu!
http://www.vyy.fi/uutiset/vyyn-hallitushaku-k%C3%A4ynniss%C3%A4-0
[5] Maija Niinioja –stipendien haku on avattu.
http://www.vyy.fi/uutiset/maija-niinioja-stipendien-haku-auki-0
[6] Tilaa 2 kk:n Pohjalaiset ilmaiseksi ja voita iPad!
VYY tarjoaa tänä syksynä kahden kuukauden ilmaiset lehdet VYY:n jäsenille.
Etusi on 32 euroa! Toimi heti ja tilaa nyt oma Pohjalainen.
Jos sinulla on tällä hetkellä voimassa oleva maksettu opiskelijatilaus, ilmoita asiasta ja saat
tilausjaksollesi kahden kuukauden hyvityksen.
Voit tehdä tilauksen
Tekstiviestillä: Lähetä tekstiviesti TILAUS VYY nimesi ja osoitteesi numeroon 13522. 38
(Tekstiviestin hinta on 0 e. Palvelu toimii kotimaisilla operaattoreilla) Sähköpostitse: Lähetä
yhteystietosi osoitteeseen tilaukset@pohjalainen.fi . Kirjoita aihekenttään otsikoksi: "VYY 2kk".
Liitä sähköpostiin seuraavat tiedot: nimi, lähiosoite, postinumero ja -toimipaikka, sähköposti ja
GSM-numero.
Tarjous on voimassa 20.11.2012 saakka ja koskee Pohjanmaalla olevia talouksia, joihin ei tule
Pohjalaista. Tarjous on tarkoitettu päätoimiselle omassa taloudessa asuvalle VYY:n jäsenille.
Taloudessa ei saa asua ansiotyössä olevia. Vain yksi tilaus/talous. Arvomme kaikkien tilanneiden
kesken yhden iPadin (arvo 499 €) ke 21.11.2012. Voittajille ilmoitetaan henkilökohtaisesti.

Tilauksen yhteydessä annetut henkilötiedot kerätään Ilkka-Yhtymä Oyj:n ylläpitämään Cirixlevikkijärjestelmän

asiakasrekisteriin. Lisätiedot rekisteriselosteesta www.pohjalainen.fi

[1] VYY is looking for an international tutor coordinator. Apply by 11th of November.

[2] VYY is looking for international tutors. Apply by 7th of November.

[3] Meeting of the Committee for student interests in Domus Bothnica on Thursday 15th of November at 2 PM.

[4] VYY is looking for members of the board of student union for the year 2013. Apply by 16th of November.

[5] Order newspaper Pohjalainen for free, you might win an iPad!

Members of VYY can order the local newspaper Pohjalainen for a period for 2 months for free (normal price: 32 €)!

How to order?

SMS: Send a message with "TILAUS VYY" + your name + your address to 13522. (The price of the message is 0 €. The service works only with Finnish teleoperators!)

E-mail: Send an e-mail with title "VYY 2kk" to tilaukset@pohjalainen.fi.

The message must contain your contact information (name, full address, e-mail address and phone number).

The offer is valid till 20th of November 2012. The offer is only for full-time students who currently

live in Ostrobothnia. Only 1 order per household. The winner of the iPad will be announced

personally. The given contact information will be saved to the customer register.

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Krista Koski

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Kulttuuri- ja tiedotusvastaava

Vaasan yliopiston ylioppilaskunta

Culture and Communications

The Student Union of the University of Vaasa

Yliopistonranta 5

65200 VAASA

tiedotusvastaava@vyy.fi

+358 44 324 8960

http://www.vyy.fi

Appendix 2. International tutors recruitment on VYY's webpage

"KV-tuutorihaku avattu! (3op)
Vaasan Yliopisto toivottaa vuosittain tervetulleeksi noin 300 kansainvälistä opiskelijaa, joille ylioppilaskunta VYY järjestää opastusta ja aktiviteetteja. VYY etsii nyt kevätlukukaudeksi riveihinsä reippaita ja englanninkielentaitoisia opiskelijoita kokemaan
kansainvälisyyden eksotiikkaa Vaasassa. KV-tuutorin tehtäviin kuuluu:
-Kansainvälisten opiskelijoiden Suomeen sopeutumisen edistäminen ja käytännön asioissa
avustaminen
-Tapahtumaorganisointiin osallistuminen
…ja he nauttivat seuraavista etuuksista:
-Kolme opintopistettä
-Ilmainen sisäänpääsy useisiin maksullisiin tapahtumiin
-Tuutoritodistus ja asiaan kuuluva paita
-Mieleenpainuva kokemus
Lisäksi kansainvälinen ympäristö tarjoaa sinulle helpon tavan ystävystyä sekä oppia lisää
kielistä ja kulttuureista. Lähetä vapaamuotoinen englanninkielinen hakemuksesi osoitteeseen tutorcoordinators@vyy.fi 7.11.2012 mennessä. Kevään 2013 KVopiskelijoiden saapumispäivät ovat 3.-4. tammikuuta, jolloin tuutoreiden läsnäolo on välttämätöntä. Ole osa suurta maailmaa – hae KV-tuutoriksi!"

_____

 "International Tutors application is open!" (3 learning credit points)

University of Vaasa welcomes about 300 international students every year, and Student Union VYY gives guidance and organizes activities to them. VYY is now looking for tutors for the spring semester, who are energetic and possess English skills to experience the exotic international culture in Vaasa. The duties of the International tutors include:
- Assisting international students to get adapted to Finland and helping them with practical matters
- Involving in organizing events
… and they enjoy the following benefits:
- Three learning credit points
- Free entry to some paid events
- A tutor certificate and the tutoring team shirt
- Unforgettable experiences

In addition to providing you an international environment, tutoring is an easy way to meet friends, as well as to learn more languages and cultures. Send your free format application in English to tutorcoordinators@yvv.fi the latest by 7.11.2012. On the arrival days of the international students in Spring 2013, 3-4 January, the presence of the international tutors is compulsory. Be a part of the big world – apply for international tutors!

Appendix 3. Interview questions

1. Can you tell me some of your background information, such as your name, major, year of study, the language(s) you can speak, previous overseas experiences..?

2. Is it your first time as an international tutor? Or how many times have you been a tutor?

3. i. What was your experience working as an international tutor?

   ii. In case the tutors have difficulties: (How do you deal with these difficulties?)

   iii. (How do you know how to tackle these difficulties?)

4. How do you see yourself as an international tutor? What is your role?

5. Why do you have such feeling that you are a …(e.g.friend/ mentor/ local guide…)?

6. What activities have you been doing with your international tutees ?

7. Why did you want to be an international tutor at the beginning?

8. How do you feel after being a tutor?

9. What do you think about your tutees? Do you want to give some comments?

10. In your opinion, what kind of relationship do you have with your tutees?

11. Did you gain anything from these relationships?

12. Is there any kind of training or support to for the tutors? Do you think it is useful? Do you need any more training to prepare yourself better as a tutor, what will it be?

13. If you have a choice, do you want to choose your own tutees, or do you have any preferences on your tutees, such as languages or the countries they are from? Do you want to your preferences be included before they match you with the tutees?

14. Is there anything you think can be improved in the programme?

15. Do you want to be an international tutor again if you have the chance? Why or why not?