

HENNA JUUSOLA

# Perspectives on Quality of Higher Education in the Context of Finnish Education Export



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in the Context of Finnish Education Export

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION

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*“A person can find anything if he takes the time, that is, if he can afford to look. And while he’s looking, he’s free, and he finds things he never expected.”*

*Tove Jansson, The Summer Book*

A doctoral dissertation can be described as a journey; a story of growth in which the doctoral student comes to look at the world from new and sometimes unexpected perspectives, ultimately finding something that they may not have initially considered. My completion of this doctoral dissertation and, above all, the establishment of my identity as a researcher, have been made possible by the support of several people, to whom I wish to express my appreciation.

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Myllypuro, Helsinki, August 2020

Henna





# ABSTRACT

The aim of this doctoral dissertation is to describe quality-related initiatives, characteristics and principles that are produced and maintained in the context of Finnish higher education export at the national, institutional and programme levels using triangulation of data, method and theory. As such, this study contributes to the analytical and empirical understanding of the multifaceted concept of quality in the context of Finnish education export. In this study, education export denotes the international and for-profit actions that cross national borders either through the mobility of individuals and groups or through the mobility of programmes and other educational services.

Previously conducted research shows that ‘quality’ in the context of education export has been subject to several expectations, principles and regulations that have exerted intense pressure on higher education institutions to consider the project locations and needs of students and customers without abandoning international comparability. Thus, involvement in education export actions can oblige higher education institutions to reflect on their traditions and processes from multiple perspectives and foster institutional aims to attain legitimation in various regimes.

This research consists of four sub-studies and a summary that stress the different perspectives of quality in the context of Finnish higher education export at the national (macro), institutional (meso) and programme (micro) levels. The data used in this research included national policy documents, institutional audit reports, interviews (students and staff members), personal notes from participant observation and data from the online questionnaire (teachers). National policy documents were analysed and interpreted using Fairclough’s critical discourse analysis (sub-study I). Institutional audit reports (sub-study II) and interviews (sub-study III) were explored using convention theory and qualitative content analysis. Data from the online questionnaire were analysed by qualitative content analysis and interpreted from the perspective of Mezirow’s transformative learning (sub-study IV). Personal notes recorded during the participant observation (sub-studies III and IV) were used to explain the context of the exported programme (sub-studies III and IV) and to refocus the research questions.

This doctoral dissertation's findings suggest that quality is formulated within the complex network of political, social, contextual, geographical and situational dimensions. At the national level, quality embodies the responsibility and resources that justify education export; Finnish education's national reputation is a shared myth that sustains the widely held perception of Finnish education as superior. At the institutional level, education export is still a relatively new and fragmented action, which benefits from its international reputation but continues to seek a more strategic direction. The results also suggest that education export implementation is embedded in the temporal and local dimensions as well as in interaction among the students, teachers and representatives from the provider and receiver institutions. Therefore, higher education institutions are expected to consider quality from multiple perspectives and to justify quality of education for different stakeholder groups. Moreover, for education export providers, supporting teachers' engagement in education export action is essential, as maintaining education quality throughout the process of knowledge creation requires trust-based interaction among providers and receivers.

# TIIVISTELMÄ

Tässä väitöskirjatutkimuksessa tarkastellaan koulutusviennin laatuun liittyviä aloitteita, ominaispiirteitä ja periaatteita, joita tuotetaan ja ylläpidetään suomalaisessa korkeakoulukontekstissa. Tutkimuksessa koulutusvienti tarkoittaa kansainvälistä ja voittoa tavoittelevaa toimintaa, joka ylittää kansalliset rajat joko yksilöiden ja ryhmien liikkuvuuden tai ohjelmien ja muiden koulutuspalveluiden liikkuvuuden kautta. Aiempi aihetta käsittelevä tutkimus osoittaa, että koulutusviennin laatuun kohdistuu useita odotuksia ja säädöksiä, jotka vaikuttavat korkeakoulujen koulutusvientitoimintaan. Korkeakoulujen on esimerkiksi huomioitava opiskelijoiden ja asiakkaiden tarpeet, mutta samalla korkeakoulujen on huolehdittava, että koulutusvientinä toteutetut ohjelmat ovat vertailukelpoisia kotikampuksella järjestettävän koulutuksen kanssa. Tämän johdosta koulutusvientiin osallistuminen voi edellyttää, että korkeakoulut tarkastelevat koulutuskäytänteitään ja prosessejaan useasta näkökulmasta siten, että koulutusvientitoiminta tukee institutiionaalisia tavoitteita erilaisissa sosiokulttuurisissa konteksteissa.

Tutkimus koostuu neljästä osatutkimuksesta ja yhteenvedosta. Tutkimuksessa sovelletaan teoria-, metodi- ja aineisto triangulaatiota. Tutkimuksen analyttinen huomio kohdistuu laatuun liittyviin näkökulmiin kansallisella (makro), institutionaalisella (meso) ja ohjelma (mikro) tasoilla. Tutkimuksen aineisto sisältää koulutuspoliittisia dokumentteja, korkeakoulujen auditointiraportteja, haastatteluita (opiskelijat ja henkilökunnan jäsenet), osallistuvaan havainnointiin perustuvia henkilökohtaisia muistiinpanoja ja online-kyselyn (opettajat). Koulutuspoliittiset dokumentit analysoitiin ja tulkittiin soveltamalla Faircloughin kriittistä diskurssianalyysiä (osatutkimus I). Korkeakoulujen auditointiraportit (osatutkimus II) ja haastattelut (osatutkimus III) tulkittiin soveltamalla konventioteoriaa ja laadullista sisällönanalyysiä. Online-kyselyn kautta hankittu aineisto analysoitiin laadullisella sisällönanalyysillä ja tulkittiin Mezirow'n transformatiivisen oppimisen näkökulmasta (osatutkimus IV). Osallistuvaan havainnointiin perustuvat henkilökohtaiset muistiinpanot kohdentuvat osatutkimuksiin III ja IV ja niitä hyödynnettiin osana aineiston analyysiä ja kontekstin kuvaamista.

Tutkimuksen tulokset viittaavat siihen, että laatu muodostuu kompleksisessa poliittisessa, sosiaalisessa, maantieteellisessä ja tilannesidonnaisessa kontekstissa.

Kansallisessa koulutusvientiä koskevassa koulutuspolitiikassa laatua ei määritellä erikseen, vaan ”laatu” näyttäytyy itsestään selvyyttenä, joka yhdistyy vastuuseen ja toimii koulutusviennin oikeutuksen resurssina. Tällöin suomalaisen koulutuksen hyvä PISA-maine edustaa kollektiivisesti jaettua myyttiä, joka ylläpitää käsitystä suomalaisen koulutuksen erinomaisuudesta. Instituutiotasolla koulutusvienti on kuitenkin edelleen verrattain uusi ja hajanainen toimintamuoto, joka hyötyy suomalaisen koulutuksen kansainvälisestä maineesta, mutta jota korkeakoulut pyrkivät kehittämään strategisempaan suuntaan. Tulokset viittaavat myös siihen, että koulutusviennin käytännön toteutuksissa on huomioitava paikalliset lähtökohdat, jolloin vuorovaikutus eri toimijoiden välillä, kuten opiskelijoiden, opettajien, koulutuksen tarjoajien ja koulutuksen tilaajan välillä, korostuu. Tämän johdosta korkeakoulujen on tarkasteltava laatua monesta eri näkökulmasta. Lisäksi tulokset osoittavat, että opetushenkilökunnan sitouttaminen koulutusvientiin on eräs keskeinen laatuun liittyvä tekijä, sillä koulutusvienti tietointensiivisenä ja oppimista stimuloivana toimintana edellyttää luottamukseen perustuvaa vuorovaikutusta koulutuksen tarjoajien ja vastaanottajien välillä.

# CONTENTS

1	Introduction .....	15
1.1	The context of Finnish education export .....	19
1.2	Objectives and research questions .....	26
1.3	Structure and scope .....	29
1.4	Researcher position .....	30
2	Conceptualising and contextualising quality .....	34
2.1	The concept of quality in higher education .....	34
2.2	Quality in higher education from the perspective of education export .....	38
2.3	Quality in higher education from the Finnish perspective .....	45
3	Epistemological and ontological premises .....	49
3.1	Abductive reasoning .....	51
3.2	Pragmatism .....	53
3.3	Social constructionism .....	55
4	Theoretical considerations .....	58
4.1	Discursive approach to higher education policy .....	58
4.1.1	Critical discourse analysis as a theoretical framework .....	60
4.1.2	Fairclough's CDA and the concept of hegemony .....	61
4.2	Convention theoretical approach to explore higher education and quality .....	64
4.2.1	Convention theoretical premises .....	65
4.2.2	Plurality of conventions .....	68
4.2.3	Quality conventions .....	74
4.2.4	Investment in forms and legitimation .....	75
4.2.5	Actors engagement in public regimes .....	77
4.3	Domain of teachers in the multifaceted education export action .....	78
4.3.1	The teaching profession in higher education .....	80
4.3.2	Teachers in education export action .....	82
4.3.3	Teachers' engagement in education export regimes from the perspective of transformative learning .....	84
4.4	Summary of the theoretical perspectives .....	86

5	Data and methods .....	89
5.1	Critical discourse analysis as a method.....	90
5.2	Qualitative content analysis.....	92
5.3	Semi-structured interviews .....	93
5.4	Participant observation .....	95
5.5	Online questionnaire .....	97
6	Results of the sub-studies I-IV.....	99
6.1	Sub-study I: Critical discourse analysis on national debate of education export in Finland .....	99
6.2	Sub-study II: Quality conventional perspective on the quality assurance of education export in the case Finland.....	101
6.3	Sub-study III: Quality of education in the education export implementation.....	102
6.4	Sub-study IV: Domain of the teachers' engagement in the education export implementation .....	104
6.5	Credibility, limitation and ethical concerns in sub-studies I-IV .....	105
7	Discussion.....	110
7.1	Dynamics of quality of education export in national, institutional and programme levels.....	110
7.2	Theoretical contributions: hypothetical framework for quality assurance.....	114
7.3	Practical implications for quality management.....	117
8	Conclusion.....	120
	References .....	123
	Appendices.....	147
	Appendix 1: Interview guide for student-participants.....	149
	Appendix 2: Interview guide for teacher/staff-participants.....	150
	Appendix 3: Request for permission to conduct research .....	151
	Appendix 4: Plan for participant observation.....	152
	Appendix 5: Online questionnaire (experiences of teachers and staff members).....	153
	Publications.....	159

## *List of Figures*

Figure 1. Main education export strategies and amendments to the Universities and University of Applied Sciences (UAS) Acts.....	21
Figure 2. Application of CDA in this study .....	63
Figure 3. Triangle of the theoretical perspectives.....	88
Figure 4. Perspectives on quality in the context of Finnish higher education export.....	111
Figure 5. Hypothetical framework for development of quality assurance in the context of education export .....	116

## *List of Tables*

Table 1. Sub-studies, research questions and articles .....	28
Table 2. Epistemological and ontological premises of the sub-studies I–IV .....	49
Table 3. Conventions, higher common principles and tests as applied in this research .....	71
Table 4. Outlines of the methods and data.....	90

# ABBREVIATIONS

AACSB	Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business
ARENE	Ammattikorkeakoulujen rehtorineuvosto (The Rectors' Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences)
ECTS	European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System
EEA	European Economic Area
ENQA	European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
ESG	Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area
EU	European Union
EQUIS	European Quality Improvement System
FINEEC	Finnish Education Evaluation Centre
GATS	General Agreement in Trade on Services
INQAAHE	International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education
MINEDU	Ministry of Education and Culture
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OKM	Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö (Ministry of Education and Culture)
OPH	Opetushallitus (Finnish National Agency for Education)
OPM	Opetusministeriö (Ministry of Education)
PISA	Programme for International Student Assessment
QAA	Quality Assurance Agency
SAMOK	Suomen opiskelijakuntien liitto (Union of Students in Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences)
SYL	Suomen ylioppilaskuntien liitto (National Union of University Students in Finland)
TENK	Tutkimuseettinen neuvottelukunta (Finnish National Board on Research Integrity)
UK	United Kingdom
UM	Ulkoministeriö (Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Finland)



UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNIFI	Suomen yliopistojen rehtorineuvosto (Universities Finland)
US	United States of America
WTO	World Trade Organization

# ORIGINAL PUBLICATIONS

- I Juusola, H. (2016). Lukukausimaksujen hegemoniaa ja myytti PISAsta. Diskurssiivinen analyysi kansallisesta koulutusvientikeskustelusta. *Tiedepolitiikka*, 41(3), 23-34.
- II Juusola, H. (2018). Quality conventional perspective on the quality assurance of education export in the case Finland. In V. Korhonen, & P. Alenius (Eds.), *Internationalisation and Transnationalisation in Higher Education* (pp. 100-124) Peter Lang.
- III Juusola, H., & Rähä, P. (2019). Quality conventions in the exported Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia. *Higher Education*, 79(4), 675–690. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00430-3>
- IV Juusola, H., & Rähä, P. (2018). Exploring teaching staff's experiences of implementing a Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 13(2), 342-357, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745499918775208>

# 1 INTRODUCTION

Higher education is a key arena for domestic political initiatives as well as national and international transformations (Chou, Kamola, & Pietsch, 2016). In recent decades in particular, ‘Western models’ of higher education have become part of the global mainstream, indicating the transnational flows of institutions, faculties, students, teachers and money (Ibid). Transnational flow of this nature shapes organisations’ local, regional and global dynamics (cf. Marginson & Rhoades, 2002), reinforces international knowledge transfer (Waters & Leung, 2017) and stimulates institutional isomorphism, for example, by global rankings (Erkkilä, 2016).

However, supranational forces do not self-evidently lead to the same kind of results (Chou et al., 2016). Rather, social dynamics in higher education go beyond the transnational (cf. Waters & Leung, 2017) and are also bounded in historical, geographical and cultural dimensions (cf. Välimaa & Nokkala, 2014). Indeed, higher education systems vary from country to country (Clark, 1983), and each higher education institution has different traditions and occupies a different status position in the global educational arena (Marginson, 2006). This complex mix of global-national-domestic traditions and rationales that underlie knowledge creation can be identified in the various modes of action in the field of higher education. One example of this is quality in the context of Finnish education export, which is the topic of this research.

From the perspective of internationalisation of higher education, education export is not a new phenomenon. International mobility of scholars has been a key aspect of European universities since the eleventh century (Pietsch, 2016). However, the increasing global flow of people, knowledge and information (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Goldblatt, Held, McGrew, & Perraton, 1999; Machin & Murphy, 2017) as well as the interlinked trends of commercialisation (Marginson, 2006), new managerialism (Deem & Brehony, 2005) and massification of higher education (Hornsby & Osman, 2014; Trow, 1999) have reinforced the multiple demands placed on higher education institutions (HEIs). While HEIs are required to educate skilled workforce domestically and nationally, they are also assumed to participate in international competition with respect to knowledge transfer and production (Pietsch, 2016). In

addition, technological development has strengthened the global accessibility of knowledge, and consequently, HEIs no longer enjoy the same monopoly on knowledge production that they once had (Pietsch, 2016, p. 33).

In general, education export is interlinked with the globalisation process, which binds to HEIs that are more engaged in internationalisation (Altbach & Knight, 2007). According to Goldblatt et al. (1999), globalisation process(es) denotes the ‘transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions – assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact – generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power’ (Goldblatt et al., 1999, p. 16). In the field of higher education, one expression of globalisation is the global education market, in which the key players include the United Kingdom (UK) (Caruana & Montgomery, 2015), Australia (Sá & Sabzalieva, 2018) and the United States (US) (Duderstadt, Taggart, & Weber, 2008). Furthermore, from the perspective of education export and education overall, globalisation can foster connectivity with respect to people (Goldblatt et al., 1999) and knowledge production (Duderstadt et al., 2008, p. 273). At the same time, globalisation can ‘shift positionality between societies’ as observed by Caruana and Montgomery (Caruana & Montgomery, 2015, p. 7), reinforcing the complexity of the changing interdependency of host and home and provider and receiver as well as the institutions, staff and students that are engaged in education export implementations (Caruana & Montgomery, 2015; Sheppard, 2002)<sup>1</sup>. These interdependencies are determined by their relationships with one another (Sheppard, 2006; Sheppard, 2002), and therefore the globalisation process is neither one-dimensional (Beerens, 2003, p. 135) nor linear; rather, it involves supranational tendencies that flow simultaneously (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002) and are interlinked with space and location (Caruana & Montgomery, 2015; Sheppard, 2002), resulting in place-bound diversity (Sheppard, 2006, p. 61) but also promoting wider access to knowledge (Duderstadt et al., 2008, p. 274).

Earlier studies have explored education export from a wide range of perspectives, such as the analysis of domestication (Waters & Leung, 2017) and social dynamics among different actors (Caruana & Montgomery, 2015; Ding, 2019; Sidhu, Ravinder & Christie, 2015) as well as researching programme design and management (Healey, 2018; Shams & Huisman, 2012; Stafford & Taylor, 2016; Wilkins & Neri, 2019), teaching and learning (Hoare, 2013; Jais, Smyrniotis, & Hoare, 2015; Levatino, 2017; Nawaz, 2018; Smith, 2013; Smith, 2014) and quality of education (Bentley,

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<sup>1</sup> Similar notions of globalisation and the effects of globalisation is also stressed by Giddens (2000, p. 24-33).

Henderson, & Lim, 2017; Borgos, 2013; Castle & Kelly, 2004; Datta & Vardhan, 2017; Healey, 2015; Stella, 2006). For example, ensuring quality of education in education export projects is considered a crucial aspect of education export implementation (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Healey, 2015; Kosmützky & Putty, 2016; Stella, 2006), which nonetheless assumes different forms in a complex spatial, temporal, social and political context (Sidhu, Ravinder, & Christie, 2015). Correspondingly, the importance of strategic leadership and the integration of education export activities into the HEIs' institutional structures are emphasised in programme design and management of the education export projects (Stafford & Taylor, 2016), by taking into account localisation (Healey, 2018; Shams & Huisman, 2012) in sustainable and ethical way from the perspectives of both provider and receiver (Wilkins, 2017). However, ethics and sustainable development can vary in different socio-cultural and political settings; this variation can create moral dilemmas for HEIs (Wilkins, 2017, p. 1388). At the same time, societal impact on the project location and the enhancement of trust among the local communities are under-researched yet crucial topics in education export implementations (Ding, 2019). Furthermore, less attention has been given to power relations in knowledge creation (Caruana & Montgomery, 2015) and knowledge production with respect to what knowledge is valuable and how it should be produced in terms of teaching and learning (Waters & Leung, 2017).

Overall, existing research has approached education export from the perspectives of major English-speaking Western countries (Kosmützky & Putty, 2016), such as Australia (Bentley et al., 2017; Levatino, 2017; Sarkar & Perényi, 2017; Stafford & Taylor, 2016) and the UK (Bennell, 2019; Caruana & Montgomery, 2015; Healey, 2018; Healey, 2015; Waters & Leung, 2017). In addition, other regions, such as China, have been the subject of research from the perspective of the education export importer (Chen, Vanclay, & Zhang, 2019; Ding, 2019; He & Liu, 2018; Mok & Xu, 2008) and recently also from the viewpoint of provider (Yingfei & Ruby, 2017). This trend is understandable, as many countries (such as China) have a strong political (national) interest in education export (Chen et al., 2019; Mok & Xu, 2008). On the other hand, traditional education exporters, such as Australia and the UK, have been engaged in education export markets for a relatively long period, enabling researchers to gather rich empirical data from a range of sources. Conversely, in the international research literature, less attention is given to the host's perspective (Chen et al., 2019) and the education export opportunities openings of small countries, such as Finland, which have traditionally relied on non-neoliberal policies (cf. Aarrevaara, Dobson, & Elander, 2009).

One particular challenge that is well recognised in the field of education export studies is the multifaceted definition of education export and the significant variations in the relevant terminology (Caruana & Montgomery, 2015; Knight, 2016; Kosmützky & Putty, 2016). According to Knight (2016), a lack of robust category and coherent terminology cause a ‘chaos’ that complicate the data comparison and communication (Knight, 2016, 36), and therefore unclear definition of education export phenomenon can have implications to quality assurance of education export activities (Knight & McNamara, 2017; Knight, 2016). Such notions are also evident in the Finnish education export debate as it is described in the sub-study I (Article 1).

In this study, the concept of education export refers to market-driven action that stresses the institutional or national incomes from international education (Lewis, 2011; Schatz, 2016a). Sources of revenue may include tuition fees (Lewis, 2011) or other commercial activities that bring an extra financial resource to the provider (Schatz, 2016a). Internationalisation in this context includes the internationality of the target market (Lewis, 2011; Schatz, 2016a), the international mobility of persons, equipment, (school) concepts, curricula, programmes or other educational services (Knight & McNamara, 2017; Kosmützky & Putty, 2016), but also the HEIs’ efforts to become increasingly integrated into global (knowledge) production networks by modifying their international actions in a for-profit direction (Kauppinen & Kaidesoja, 2014; Kauppinen & Cantwell, 2014).

In highlighting this market-like behaviour, education export is shown to implicitly connote broader changes in higher education whereby the market logic occupies a stronger and more dominant position than perhaps ever before (Lewis, 2011; Marginson, 2004; Marginson, 2011; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997). Change of this nature can stimulate the external social and political pressures that increase for-profit educational actions and the internal transformation of HEIs towards more entrepreneurial and market-like behaviour (cf. Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Indeed, HEIs themselves also actively maintain and enhance their actions by implementing education export activities (Ibid) and “extending their own status, power and resource base” (Kauppinen & Cantwell, 2014, p. 162). In the long term, this may lead radical changes in educational paradigms, particularly in countries where education is offered on a free-tuition basis (cf. Aarrevaara, Dobson, & Elander, 2009).

While other terms are used, such as ‘transnational education’, which refers to a similar phenomenon (e.g. cross-border education, transnational education), in this study, I will use the term ‘education export’ based on two aspects. First, I consider

education export to be an international market-driven activity that consists of a wide range of actions that include, in one way or another, mobility that crosses the national borders. Second, I consider education export to be part of the broader transformation where HEIs are increasingly involved in the for-profit action regardless of the location. The latter is considered as a combination of the external political, economic and social pressures and internal motivation. This trend represents a contradictory approach compared to the Finnish educational tradition where education has been seen primarily as a public good that enforces the national welfare and is mainly funded by the public resources (Cai & Kivistö, 2013; Cai, Hölttä, & Kivistö, 2012; Välimaa, 2002). In addition, the term education export ('koulutusvientti' in Finnish) is widely used in Finnish education policy documents and public debate (Article 1). Thus, using the term education export, this study contributes to the national debate, while acknowledging that there are international variations in terminology describing the phenomena of education export (Knight, 2016).

## 1.1 The context of Finnish education export

Education export has been a critical issue in Finnish higher education policy since 2010, when the national strategy for education export was launched. The strategy aimed to make Finnish education a successful export product that would bring significant economic benefits to the entire nation (MINEDU, 2010). In addition, HEIs were particularly considered to represent the driving forces of education export action (MINEDU, 2010), which maintained the HEIs' strong status in the political discourses aimed at internationalisation to ensure national competitiveness in the global setting (Kauko & Medvedeva, 2016; Nokkala, 2007). Therefore, the national strategy for education export also supported Finland's country branding strategy that was also launched in 2010 (Schatz, Popovic, & Dervin, 2017). Subsequently, the national priorities set for education export were supplemented by other policy documents, including an implementation plan for education export actions (2013) that suggested amendments to the legislation, including tuition fees for foreign students, and the road map (2016) stressing the product design of education export actions (OKM, 2013; OKM, 2016). In the new 'Road map of education export 2020-2024', launched in 2020, it is emphasized, among other things, the changing geopolitical situation, stimulated (at least partly) by the global pandemic, the importance of international networking, the opportunities offered by

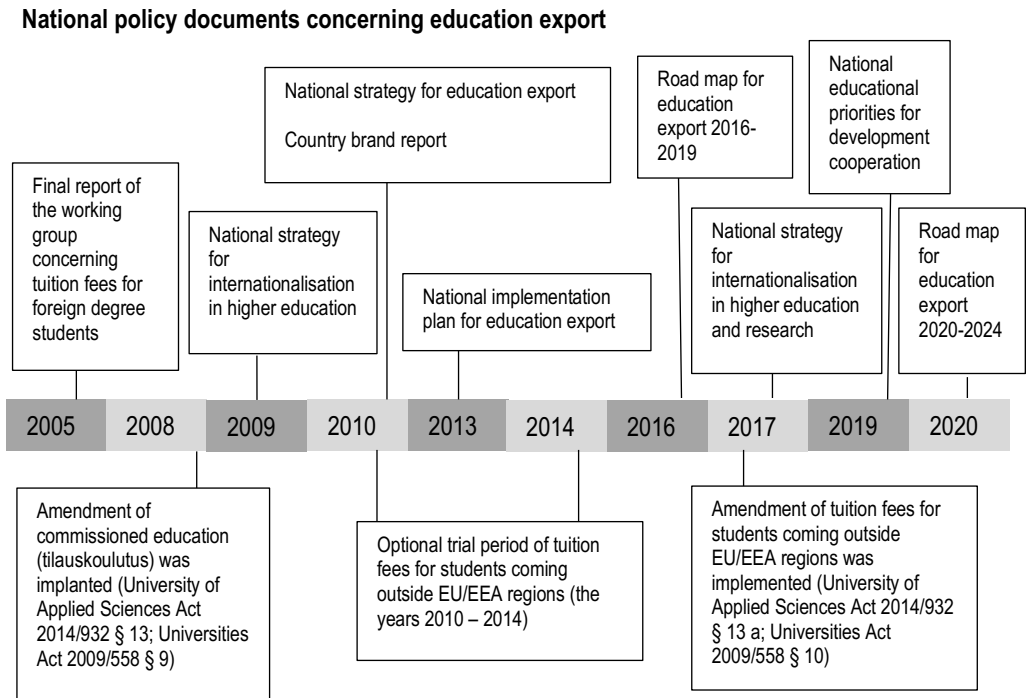
educational technology and the potential for expanding education export activities, including in the early childhood education sector. (OPH, 2020.)

Recently, the national starting points for education export were also combined with the development policy goals. Consequently, in the national development cooperation policy recommendations, Finnish education export is seen as one of the solutions to the 'global learning crisis' (UM, 2019; OPH, 2020). On the one hand, this reflects a blurred mix of the nationalism and the social integrity by reinforcing an international flow of knowledge (Marginson, 2007). On the other hand, it may refer the ethically accepted for-profit action that maintains the eurocentrism and hides the potential imbalance of power in north-south relations as Khoo (2011) has pointed out.

Even though national priorities for education export have only been set during the last ten years (see the figure 1), education export can be seen as a continuum of commercialisation, privatisation and internationalisation of higher education for a longer period of time (Kauppinen & Kaidesoja, 2014). As an example, tuition fees for foreign students have been seen as one solution to increase university funding already in couple of decades ago: in 2005 ministry of education established a working group to clarify the possibilities to gather tuition fees from students coming outside EU/EEA area (OPM, 2005). In its final report, the working group recommended the introduction of tuition fees for foreign students and included the proposal of commissioned education that would be targeted for a group of students (not individuals) and would be funded by the someone else than individual persons (such as states). These proposals were seen as an opportunity to increase additional revenue. (OPM, 2005.) At the same time, the new universities act was implemented in 2009, which strengthened the autonomy of universities and enabled universities to increase collaboration with the private companies (Kauppinen & Kaidesoja, 2014, 30). Moreover, in the 2000s, European-level education policy trends, such as the Bologna process and Lisbon strategy increasingly influenced Finnish higher education by stressing the idea of the knowledge-centred competitiveness (Moisio, 2014). On the one hand, these national and supranational trends supported commercialisation and higher education institutions' cooperation with the private sector (Kauppinen & Kaidesoja, 2014; Ylijoki, Lyytinen, & Marttila, 2011). On the other hand, they emphasised the role of national higher education institutions in strengthening international competitiveness (Nokkala, 2007).



**Figure 1.** Main education export strategies and amendments to the Universities and University of Applied Sciences (UAS) Acts



**Education export related amendments to the universities act (2009/558) and UAS act (2014/932)**

Considering Finnish non-neoliberal traditions in higher education, it is not surprising that the political objectives priorities set for education export are considered rather ambitious (Schatz, 2016a) and that HEIs have expressed doubts about education export action (Cai et al., 2012). Moreover, Finnish HEIs lack experience in marketing and implementing for-profit international activities abroad (Cai et al., 2012; Schatz, 2016a), and the internationalisation of Finnish higher education developed at a slower pace compared to the other Nordic countries (Nokkala, 2007). The latter may also have influenced the fact that, despite their good national reputation—largely attributed to Finland’s success in the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA)—Finnish HEIs are not particularly well known globally (Cai, 2011), though, for many current international students, a Finnish higher education degree may be an attractive option (Lönnqvist, Laihonen, Cai, & Hasanen, 2018). This trend is also evident in international statistics; for example, in 2017, the share

of international student enrolment out of total enrolment in higher education was already higher in Finland than in Sweden or Norway (OECD, 2019, p. 228).

In the national debate on education export, particularly regarding HEIs' inability to gather tuition fees from individual students coming from outside the EU/EEA regions is regarded as one of the main barriers to the improvement of education export actions from the perspective of HEIs and national policymakers (Article 1). This is in spite of the fact that education export also concerns other types of action and frameworks, such as commissioned education (*tilauskoulutus*) (University of Applied Sciences Act 2014/932 § 13; Universities Act 2009/558 § 9) and the national qualification framework that is regulated by a qualification framework act (Act on the Finnish National Framework for Qualification 93/2017). However, in 2016, the legislative situation with respect to tuition fees was changed, and amendment concerning tuition fees was implemented in both the Universities and University of Applied Sciences Acts. Based on current legislation, HEIs must collect at least 1500 EUR in annual fees from students participating in bachelor's or master's degree education provided in a foreign language (i.e. in a language than Finnish or Swedish) and who come from outside the EU/EEA region (University of Applied Sciences Act 2014/932 § 13 a; Universities Act 2009/558 § 10). Typically, the amount of annual tuition fees charged is higher than 1500 EUR (OKM, 2018).

Tuition fee-based education that is organised in Finland is not the country's only education export product. Rather, education export covers a wide range of different actions (Schatz, 2016b) as Finnish forms of education export are not (nationally) classified or limited per se. Instead, it seems that Finnish education export activities can equally represent consultation projects, tailor-made degree programmes, degree or non-degree programmes organised abroad in co-operation with a local partner, tuition fee programmes held in Finland, school concepts, online courses or other educational solutions.

Furthermore, the network of education export actors is fragmented. For example, the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs have each established their own priorities for education export actions (see e.g. MINEDU, 2010; UM, 2019). In addition, Education Finland, which operates under the Finnish National Agency for Education, aims to improve national cooperation in the context of education export and enhance international marketing (Education Finland, 2020). At the local level, variation among education export providers appears to be even greater; for example, members of Education Finland represent different types of educational institutions (e.g. HEIs, vocational education institutions), education export consortiums owned by HEIs (e.g. EduCluster Finland, EduExcellence), small

start-up companies and larger furniture and publishing companies (such as Isku, Otava) (Education Finland, 2020). Therefore, the national network of education exporters is in flux and difficult to define.

Despite the strong national interest and political pressure to improve education export actions, no publicly accessible annual national statistics are available that would include the main providers, the main types of education export action and annual income gained from education export industry overall. However, this may be due to the fragmentation of the field of actions and actors. What seems to be still evident is that education export contributes to Finnish education as an integrated part of the global knowledge market (Hasanen, 2020), wherein its desirability increasingly represents the quality of education and the international status position matters more than before (cf. Marginson, 2006). In this context, the national PISA success justifies Finnish education export (see e.g. Schatz, 2016a), and Finnish education's good reputation is a preliminary promise of good quality. However, in the long term, education export as one expression of wider transformation (e.g. new public management), may have a fundamental impact on the HEIs' action, such as to the quality assurance mechanism and changes in working conditions of the teaching staff (cf. Altbach & Knight, 2007; Debowski, 2003; Jais et al., 2015).

From the perspective of existing research, Finnish education export is still a relatively new phenomenon. However, recent policy initiatives and increased education export implementations have also increased the number of studies conducted in the field of education export. In particular, the number of master's and bachelor's theses relating to education export has increased significantly during the last ten years (Juusola & Nokkala, 2019).

In general, earlier studies on Finnish education export have focused on the higher education sector (Cai & Kivistö, 2013; Kauko & Medvedeva, 2016; Lindberg, 2011; Rytivaara et al., 2019; Schatz et al., 2017; Schatz, 2015; Xing, 2019; Hasanen, 2020), stressing the HEIs' reaction to national and global policy initiatives (Cai et al., 2012; Kantola & Kettunen, 2012; Lönnqvist et al., 2018; Schatz, 2016b) and considering HEIs' readiness and motivations for further implementing education export actions (Cai et al., 2012; Schatz et al., 2017). Few studies have emphasised the perspectives of the individuals and groups participating in education export action (Hölttä, Pekkola, & Cai, 2009; Rytivaara et al., 2019).

One key concern in earlier studies has been the dynamic between the novel mode of education export actions and (earlier) traditions of higher education in Finland (Kauko & Medvedeva, 2016; Schatz, 2015; Schatz, 2016a). In these studies, the national policy goals set for education export have been considered to be over-

ambitious (Schatz, 2016a), representing a rather top-down approach (Schatz, 2015) that is supported by recommendations from supranational organisations, such as the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) (Kauko & Medvedeva, 2016; Schatz, 2015). According to existing studies, one specific characteristic framing the Finnish education export brand has been Finland's PISA success (Schatz et al., 2017; Schatz, 2015; Simpson, 2018), which has not only increased the international interest in Finnish education but also influenced how Finns perceive their own education (Schatz, 2015). On the one hand, the success in PISA has, above all, been instrumental in uniting the national understanding of education, and therefore can be considered a myth (Article 1). On the other hand, it can involve the risk of simplifying the values associated with Finnish education, such as quality and democracy, which drive Finnish education export activity as 'culturalist market-making' (Dervin & Simpson, 2019, p. 53) and can result in the 'othering' of the clients involved in educational export activities. Therefore, it challenges the localisation of education export activities that could be supported by giving teachers and students opportunities for critical reflection (Simpson, 2018).

Finnish education export has also been studied from the perspective of tuition fees (Cai & Kivistö, 2013), which has been on the agenda of national education policy from the beginning of the 2000s (cf. Kauko & Medvedeva, 2016) and has dominated the national debate on education export in recent years (Article 1). In general, studies concerning tuition fees in the Finnish context have stressed the challenges to implementing fee-based education in Finland due to its different education traditions (Cai & Kivistö, 2013). For example, Cai and Kivistö (2013) stated that the lack of knowledge on the employment of international students 'can become a bottleneck for marketing Finnish higher education' (Cai & Kivistö, 2013, p. 67). Kauko and Medvedeva (2016) also pointed out that the tuition fees trial<sup>2</sup> had only a minor impact on internationalisation of HEIs in Finland (Kauko & Medvedeva, 2016). It is fair to state that, by implementing tuition fees for international students (in 2016), national government policies have enabled HEIs to promote more educational export activities more strongly and therefore to introduce tuition fees, which has been instrumental in developing the HEIs' internationalisation. However, education export activity is often organised separately to the other international activities of Finnish HEIs, resulting in challenges to the strategic management of internationalisation of HEIs (cf. Cai & Kivistö, 2013) and to the development of

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<sup>2</sup> Finnish HEIs were able to participate in the tuition fees trial between 2010 and 2014. The trial covered master's degree students coming from outside the EU/EEA regions in programmes that were provided in a foreign language (i.e. a language other than Finnish or Swedish) (OKM, 2014).

effective intercultural teaching and learning practices (cf. Kauko & Medvedeva, 2016).

Recent studies have also highlighted the reciprocity of education export activities by stressing the intellectual capital perspective which aims to achieve and consider mutual benefits between education export providers and receivers (Lönqvist et al., 2018). Simultaneously, participants' experiences have been seen as an essential factor by indicating a broad understanding of the local context and commitment from foreign partners to ensure the best possible impact of the education export activities (Rytivaara et al., 2019). While the crucial roles of student selection and the education export 'readiness' of the receivers have been stressed when considering the success factors in education export activities (Lönqvist et al., 2018), academics' commitment has also been considered pivotal (Lönqvist et al., 2018; Article 1). As Lönqvist et al. (2018) stated, HEIs should also consider education export as a social benefit rather than purely as a market-oriented activity.

The Finnish education export phenomenon has also been examined in studies relating to the general internationalisation of HEIs (Nokkala, 2007) and academic capitalism (Kauppinen & Kaidesoja, 2014), wherein education export is part of the broader development (OKM, 2014) of higher education. From the perspective of the internationalisation of HEIs, education export represents a "new" policy that does not necessarily replace the more traditional mode of internationalisation (e.g. international academic collaboration); rather, different forms of internationalisation can exist in parallel, or they may overlap or even blend (Nokkala, 2007). At the same time, Finnish HEIs may be considered to play a dual economic role by promoting national competitiveness and making profits for organisations themselves (Kauppinen & Kaidesoja, 2014; see also Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). Development of this nature is improved by adopting the EU and OECD policies (Rinne, 2004), which can indicate a shift towards academic capitalism (Kauppinen & Kaidesoja, 2014). For example, Kauppinen and Kaidesoja (2014) stated that academic capitalism in the context of Finnish higher education may result in increasing numbers of start-up companies established by individual researchers, market-led activities supported by rectors of HEIs and various innovatory activities introduced by corporations and governmental initiatives with the aim of improving collaboration between HEIs and private actors (Kauppinen & Kaidesoja, 2014). Similar to the parallel existing "new" and "old" internationalisations, the regime of academic capitalism also does not signify the replacement of the public good regime; different systems may coexist, overlap and blur (Kauppinen & Kaidesoja, 2014).

Based on earlier studies, the role of HEIs in the implementation of national education export policies is contradictory. First, HEIs per se play a dual role in fostering and maintaining higher education (Kauko & Medvedeva, 2016) as a 'community of scholars' and an 'instrument for national political agendas' (Olsen, 2007, p. 30). Consequently, the implementation of national education export initiatives in Finland represents a top-down policy (Schatz, 2015), and therefore education export policies have not been particularly efficient at the institutional level (Schatz, 2016b) because HEIs do not necessarily share the national goals set for education export (Cai et al., 2012). Thus, HEIs' commitment to improving and increasing education export activities has been rather weak (Cai et al., 2012; Schatz, 2016b). Second, Finnish HEIs do not have a long tradition of acting in the global marketplace, and therefore, most HEIs have no experience of international marketing or coordinating education export activities (Cai et al., 2012). In this regard, the improvement of national education export policies may be more efficient if the institutional agency is given greater emphasis (Schatz, 2016b).

As the overview of earlier studies has shown, Finnish education export activities are still relatively nascent, although the education export phenomenon reflects a broader trend in higher education. Development of this nature is activated by external trends (such as adoption of OECD policies) and internal actions (such as setting market-driven strategical priorities). Earlier studies have been particularly interested in understanding this change and in identifying the specific features that explain the potential changes. At the same time, less attention has been given to other key themes in higher education policy, such as quality assurance, although quality-related issues (such as the reputation gained through PISA) have been stressed. Equally, research-based information is still narrowly available from the perspective of the education export receivers and everyday practices with respect to education export activities.

## 1.2 Objectives and research questions

In this doctoral dissertation, quality in the context of education export is considered from the perspective of Finnish higher education. In the national higher education policy, HEIs have been considered as "pioneers" in the further improvement of Finnish education export, despite their lack of long-term experience of participation in the international education export industry (Cai et al., 2012). Furthermore, the primary foci of this research are those education export actions that are organised

abroad. Therefore, this research contributes to our understanding of quality as it pertains to the education export phenomenon as a complex set of political, social, cultural, historical, temporal and spatial dimensions (cf. Caruana & Montgomery, 2015) from the perspective of a novice actor, which remains largely unexplored in international higher education research.

In this study, I will focus on the concept of quality and its various modifications, using triangulation of theory, method and data. This type of approach provides an analytical framework within which to consider quality, which has often been explored untheorised and based on empirical understanding (see e.g. Krause, 2012). Therefore, this study seeks to adopt a systematic approach to elucidate the complexity of quality that would not have emerged without multiple theoretical and methodological approaches.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, this study stresses quality-related aspects in the Finnish education export context, an aspect that has not been the primary focus of any existing studies with the exception of individual master's theses (Juusola & Nokkala, 2019).

This study's main research question is

*What types of quality-related initiatives, characteristics and principles are produced and maintained in the context of Finnish education export?*

This question is addressed in four empirical sub-studies (Articles 1–4) (see Table 1) along with the following sub-questions:

- What kind of role(s) does quality play in the national debate on education export?
- What factors describe quality in institutional quality assurance and education export implementation?
- What kinds of underlying conventions steer the quality factors?
- What is the role of teachers in maintaining quality in education export implementations?

The research questions have become more specific during the research processes, as new questions have emerged based on the preliminary findings. Moreover, during

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<sup>3</sup> Similar application of triangulation has been used, e.g. by Garro (2000). See also Natow's (2019) notions of triangulation in qualitative research.

the last five years, the educational export activities of HEIs have expanded, and consequently the number of educational export policy documents and studies have increased. These trends also affected the ultimate formulation of the research questions.

**Table 1.** Sub-studies, research questions and articles

Sub-study	Research question	The level of analysis	Article
<b>Sub-study I: National debate on education export in Finland and the role of quality</b>	What kind of role(s) does 'quality' play in the national debate on education export?	Macro	Juusola, H. (2016). Lukukausimaksujen hegemoniaa ja myytti PISAsta diskurssiivinen analyysi kansallisesta koulutusvientikeskustelusta. <i>Tiedepolitiikka</i> , 41(3), 23-34
<b>Sub-study II: Quality assurance of education export in institutional audit reports</b>	What factors describe 'quality' in institutional quality assurance and what kinds of underlying conventions steer the quality factors?	Meso	Juusola, H. (2018). Quality conventional perspective on the quality assurance of education export in the case Finland. In V. Korhonen, & P. Alenius (Eds.), <i>Internationalisation and transnationalisation in higher education</i> (pp. 100-124) Peter Lang.
<b>Sub-study III: Quality of education in education export implementation</b>	What factors describe the quality of education in education export implementation and what are the underlying conventions that steers the quality factors?	Micro	Juusola, H., & Rähkä, P. (2019). Quality conventions in the exported Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia. <i>Higher Education</i> , 79(4), 675–690. <a href="https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00430-3">https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00430-3</a>
<b>Sub-study IV: Domain of teachers' engagement in education export implementation</b>	What is the role of teachers in education export implementations?	Micro	Juusola, H., & Rähkä, P. (2018). Exploring teaching staff's experiences of implementing a Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia. <i>Research in Comparative and International Education</i> , 13(2), 342-357.



## 1.3 Structure and scope

This doctoral dissertation includes four independent empirical sub-studies and a summary. The sub-studies provide complementary analytical perspectives on quality-related initiatives and characteristics that are produced and maintained in the context of Finnish education export. In this study, the overall approach to the consideration of quality as it pertains to the education export phenomenon is conducted from the perspective of Finnish higher education at three analytical levels: macro, meso and micro. The findings from each sub-study are presented in published articles (Articles I-IV).

Sub-study I considered the education export debate regarding the national higher education policy by clarifying the education export concept and identifying the meanings assigned to education export. The role(s) of quality in the identified meanings was also analysed. Sub-study I enhanced the contextual understanding of the education export policies as pertaining to the (national) institutional environment in which HEIs operate. Based on the critical discourse analysis, sub-study I stressed the hegemony of tuition fees-discourses and emphasised the PISA success as a shared source of national pride. This PISA-myth, together with the national aims to increase financial resources, supported the justification of education export action. Quality and quality assurance were principles of responsibility discourse (*vastuullisuusdiskurssi*). However, a detailed description of what “good quality” means in the case of education export was lacking.

Sub-study II focused on two institutional audit reports that include the education export as an optional target of the audit. This study illustrated the institutional quality assurance practices pertaining to education export and the Finnish national approach to quality assurance of HEIs in the context of education export. Sub-study II provided a supplementary perspective on the quality of Finnish education, which has been considered one of the engines for Finnish education exports, but which has not been the primary concern of national education export debate. The result of the qualitative content analysis shed light on for-profit action carried out by a public HEI that blurs the steep division between private and public in the higher education context. However, the analysis revealed that quality assurance of education export was not fully institutionalised.

Sub-study III approached ‘quality’ as it was done in one commissioned degree programme that was provided by a Finnish HEI. Sub-study III also went beyond national and institutional quality assurance by demonstrating the underlying principles (quality conventions) from the perspective of students and staff. Based on

the data analysis, quality was linked to the situation, context and actors, indicating a multi-linear process of knowledge production. As a result, institutional practices and established procedures required more application in a novel education export implementation, in which the quality was framed in a cultural, political, historical and social context.

Sub-study IV focused on the motivation and experiences of teaching staff participating in a novel education export implementation. The study emphasised the teachers' professional development in the frame of internationalisation, but it also stressed the importance of having appropriate human resources when implementing education export. Moreover, the systematic support of the institution in reflecting the experiences of teaching periods abroad was considered essential as this can be a key factor in maintaining the quality of education in education export activities.

The summary part of this doctoral dissertation synthesises the key findings of sub-studies I-IV and presents the theoretical framework as well as the methodological premises that were applied in sub-studies I-IV. The summary is structured as follows. In Chapter 1, the education export phenomenon is explored, and the structure and primary purposes of this doctoral dissertation are introduced. In Chapter 2, quality concept and quality assurance are explored. This will include an overview of earlier higher education studies on quality and quality assurance as well as the characteristics that are emphasised in the education export action. The Finnish approach to quality assurance in higher education is also briefly explained. In Chapter 3, the ontological and epistemological choices of this research are explored, particularly from the perspective of abductive logic, pragmatism and social constructionism. In Chapter 4, the theoretical frameworks applied in sub-studies I-IV are explained by focusing on critical discourse analysis, convention theory and teachers' engagement in the education export implementations. Chapter 5 covers the empirical data and applied methods of sub-studies I-IV. Chapter 6 includes the main findings of sub-studies I-IV as well as reflections on the validity, reliability and ethical considerations of this research. In Chapters 7 and 8, the main findings and contributions of this research are explored and discussed in relation to earlier studies and theoretical frameworks. Recommendations for further study are also presented.

## 1.4 Researcher position

Higher education research (in Europe) is based on the interdisciplinary traditions and practical expertise of the field (Teichler, 2000; Teichler, 2005). Therefore, a

detailed description of the methodological and theoretical premises is essential (Kehm, 2015) and can be further supported by reflexivity that emphasises the researcher position in the research process (cf. Pillow, 2003). In this chapter, I will explore my position in this research by applying Pillow's (2003) approach to reflexivity in qualitative research.

According to Pillow (2003), reflexivity critically considers the research process. In general, it includes reflection on the researcher's position and acknowledgement of the researcher's earlier experiences (Burr, 2003; Hibbert, Coupland, & MacIntosh, 2010; Pillow, 2003), research situation(s) and context (Burr, 2003; Hibbert et al., 2010). Thus, reflexivity is also concerned with the researcher's position as an insider/outsider, the validity of the research and the researcher's relationship with the 'others' (Burr, 2003; Pillow, 2003).

Pillow (2003) identified four trends commonly observed in reflexivity: reflexivity as recognition of self; reflexivity as recognition of the other; reflexivity as truth; and reflexivity as transcendence. Reflexivity as recognition of the self and others are both embedded in the researcher's previous knowledge of the research subject. Consideration of 'the others' also indicates the researcher's methodological and theoretical choices (Pillow, 2003); from what perspective does the researcher consider the research topic? What kind of 'otherness' does the researcher create in his/her research? What does the described 'otherness' reveal about 'us' (Nygren, 1997)? Moreover, the adoption of reflexivity as transcendence encompasses all three aspects—recognition of self, recognition of others and reflexivity for gaining the truth (Pillow, 2003)—and can support the researcher's analytical ability to explore different stages of research processes, such as theoretical and methodological choices, collection and analysis of the empirical data and consideration of one's own position (Denzin, Norman & Lincoln, 1998).

My engagement in international education and higher education policy included a one-year student-exchange period in Germany as a master's student in cultural anthropology, active participation in the international action of the Student Union of the University of Oulu and the Union of Students in Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences (SAMOK). I also worked as an international coordinator and later as a coordinator in the commercial services at the University of Applied Sciences. In particular, during my term in student politics (covering the years 2005–2010), first as a board member of the local student union and later as international officer at the national student union, commissioned education (*tilauskoulutus*) was slowly but surely becoming one of the main priorities in Finnish higher education policy. Later (from 2010 onwards), when I was working at the university of applied sciences, the

political initiatives on commissioned education were implemented, and consequently, some HEIs begin to set strategic goals for education export activities.

As my previous experiences are related to the internationalisation of higher education, first from the student representative's perspective and then from the employee's perspective, I have gained information over a decade at the local, national and European levels from policy planning to practical implementations. Moreover, at the beginning of my doctoral studies, I had to adopt a new role as a doctoral researcher in the field that I was already familiar with, but from the different position(s); I had to challenge myself to reflectively re-consider my previous understanding of education export. This self-reflection was continuously processed and became particularly relevant already in sub-study I, which focused on the national debate on education export as the empirical data of the sub-study included statements that were prepared by my previous employer (SAMOK). However, adopting critical discourse analysis as a theoretical framework gave me a robust tool with which to consider the debate from an analytical perspective. Furthermore, limiting the empirical data to cover the years 2009–2015, ensured that I did not analyse any text the production of which I had personally participated in.

Consideration of 'the others' in this research was particularly relevant for sub-studies III and IV, which focused on the implementation of education export abroad. Prior to the data collection (interviews, participant observation, questionnaire), I familiarised myself with the academic, geographic, socio-cultural and political contexts of the project location to gain a full contextual understanding. However, while these aspects were relevant, after the first interviews (in Indonesia in 2016), I began to re-consider the socio-cultural aspects in greater detail. For example, the way in which I considered 'quality' was based on the conceptual and theoretical framework developed mainly by Western researchers more or less in the Western context. Moreover, my understanding of higher education was based on my personal experiences of studying and working in HEIs. The way in which I considered the purposes of the master's degree programme was also based on experiences that differed from the local situation in Indonesia. At that point, the question was not only whether I was capable of recognising 'the others' but also in what way I recognised myself and the others (cf. Pillow, 2003).

Correspondingly, the methodological and theoretical choices I have made in this research are interlinked with my previous knowledge of the research topic, my disciplinary backgrounds (as a doctoral student in administrative science who holds a master's degree in cultural anthropology) as well as the research problem(s), the availability of the potential empirical data, and the findings of sub-studies I-IV. The

knowledge created in this research is processed as a dialogue between with the various above-mentioned factors (Pillow, 2003). For example, the decision to apply Fairclough's discourse analysis was based on two aspects. First, my aim was to achieve research-based clarification on the education export concept and to understand the meanings constructed in the national debate. Second, as a result of my personal experiences of engagement in education policy, I considered education export primarily as a political phenomenon that is embedded with power relations. Likewise, participant observation applied in sub-studies III and IV was a natural choice for me because of my previous studies in cultural anthropology.

In conclusion, my personal educational and cultural background, previous experiences in the higher education sector and the doctoral research process have all influenced the way in which this research has been conducted. Moreover, all the informal and formal discussions in and outside academia that I have had during my doctoral studies have modified my understanding of 'quality' and 'education export'. Therefore, it is easy to agree with Pillow (2003) and Nygren (1997), who have both emphasised that reflexivity is an ongoing process that takes place in different temporal and spatial events.

## 2 CONCEPTUALISING AND CONTEXTUALISING QUALITY

In this chapter, the quality concept is considered from the three perspectives. First, a general overview of quality in higher education research is explored to illustrate the wider conceptual framework. Second, the specific characteristic of quality in education export activities have been introduced. Finally, the Finnish approaches to quality in higher education and quality in education export activities are explained. These aspects will establish a conceptual and contextual framework for quality in education export as it is described in this research.

### 2.1 The concept of quality in higher education

Quality in the context of higher education is a fragmented (Harvey & Green, 1993) and political concept (Saarinen, 2007). It relates to the questions of what is ‘good’ or ‘valuable’, and that makes it a value-laden term (Segers & Dochy, 1996). Quality is also connected to particular situations: what is relevant and worthwhile today might not be so tomorrow (Krause, 2012). The concept of quality, while being related to subjectively understanding of ‘good’ and ‘valuable’, is also often associated with the idea of judgement of quality (Baird, 2008). This approach has been widely adopted in the field of higher education. For example, increasing strength of new managerialism, (Deem & Brehony, 2005) stress the accountability and effectiveness (Leihy & Salazar, 2017; Wright, 1989) that lead to the establishment of multilevel mechanisms aimed at managing the performance of HEIs (Deem & Brehony, 2005; Leihy & Salazar, 2017) as well as assuring the quality of education (Beerkens, 2015).

However, the massification of higher education (Kivinen, Hedman, & Kaipainen, 2007) and increasing demands for public accountability (Leihy & Salazar, 2017) have impacted on the quality of education and the relevance of higher education. At the same time, HEIs have faced political pressure to serve society more effectively (Harvey & Green, 1993) despite the fact that public funding is decreasing year upon year in many countries, including Finland (cf. Kwiek, 2012). The playing field in which HEIs are active is also becoming more global and multifaceted. For example,

the internationalisation of higher education has become diversified, covering both individual mobilities as well as the mobility of the programmes, concepts and services that cross the national borders (Kosmützky & Putty, 2016). Moreover, the domestic and international activities of public HEIs are increasingly funded by external funding sources and conducted in collaboration with the industry (Rhoades & Slaughter, 2006; Slaughter & Leslie, 1997; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). This trend has impacted higher education in multiple ways. On the one hand, society expects HEIs to produce new skilled employees according to the labour markets' needs (cf. Harvey, 2001). On the other hand, HEIs are assumed to provide new innovative and research-based knowledge that will contribute to national competitiveness (Kwiek, 2012; Marginson, 2011) and strengthen the national economy (Schatz, 2016a). In addition, HEIs are considered to play a crucial role in fostering domestic, national and global welfare (Kwiek, 2012; Marginson, 2011). These multiple social roles of HEIs (Wright, 1989) and various expectations (Harvey, 2001; Kwiek, 2012; Marginson, 2011) impact national aims and institutional goals of HEIs, which again affects what is considered to be the right and appropriate purpose of higher education and therefore what is deemed 'good quality' with respect to HEIs.

In general, the concept of quality cannot be defined solely based on its subjective, relative and political dimensions. Instead, quality in higher education encompasses different perspectives that often coexist either as complementary or conflicting approaches (Harvey & Green, 1993). An oft-quoted definition of quality in higher education is provided by Harvey and Green (1993): according to them, quality can be seen as exceptional, as perfectionism (or consistency), as fitness for purpose, as value for money and as transformation (Harvey, Lee & Green, 1993). Quality as exceptional indicates that education is something special, desirable and high-class, but it may also refer to HEIs' ability to achieve the set quality standards. Quality as perfectionism or consistency covers the idea of 'doing a right thing well', as stated by Harvey and Green (Harvey & Green, 1993, p.16). Perfectionism requires 'zero defects', actions that achieve accuracy, while consistency assumes that everyone is taking responsibility for doing the right things sufficiently, thus stressing the importance of quality culture. Fitness for purpose, in general, includes the onus on the customer ('whose purpose') and assessment for providers ('how is fitness assessed?'). Fitness for purpose can also include a market approach to quality, and it is closely linked to accountability, effectiveness and performance indicators. Similar elements are also included in the value-for-money aspects that emphasise the benefits for investors (e.g. states or individual) with their financial investments. Moreover, the transformations in the quality framework highlight the idea of an

academic community in which students are considered participants of the learning process, thus emphasising the strong role and status of students (Harvey & Green, 1993.)

Many other researchers have examined similar aspects of quality in higher education (see e.g. Krause, 2012; Leihy & Salazar, 2017; Segers & Dochy, 1996). For example, attempts to achieve excellence can indicate a top result in international rankings, thus emphasising the competition among HEIs to gain the best possible status in the global education market (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Marginson, 2004). Likewise, Segers and Dochy (1996) pointed out that the market-like performance of HEIs increases the demand for accountability and effectiveness, which emphasises value for money and fitness for purpose as primary aspects of quality. Moreover, market-driven action can lead HEIs to increasingly emphasise the service approach in managing quality of education, as quality of education is considered to be based on the student-customer's ability to avail of the promised (educational) services confidently in an appropriate learning environment, but also with individualised attention and prompt services from teachers and other staff members (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Silva, Moraes, Makiya, & Cesar, 2017).

The consideration of quality as comprising value for money and fitness for purpose is embedded in new managerialism, an ideological approach that aims to strengthen the power and dominance of a particular social group (Deem & Brehony, 2005) and emphasises the importance of management in higher education (c.f. Deem & Brehony, 2005; Mintzberg, 1983). In general, attempts to manage quality and ensure the quality of education indicate quality assurance and quality management that are often used in parallel despite representing slightly different aspects. According to Harvey and Green (1993), quality assurance encompasses the processes, instruments and procedures that are necessary to ensure that the desired quality goal is achieved. However, quality management often refers to manageable performance, such as the design of strategies that indicate the desired goals and establishing measurable indicators (cf. Cullen, Joyce, Hassall, & Broadbent, 2003).

Reinforcement of management and implementation of quality systems in higher education indicate the redistribution of power relations. For example, Brennan and Singh (2011) proposed four different quality regimes for quality assurance in which the values of higher education are re-framed and maintained: government, market, academics and managers (Brennan & Singh, 2011). Moreover, the methods and rationales behind quality assurance vary between countries. As Brennan and Singh (2011) state, national quality assurances do not necessarily focus on the quality of



education or accountability related to that; rather, quality assurance derives from ‘the social purposes and goals postulated for higher education by governments and other external stakeholders’ (Brennan & Singh, 2011, 400). Therefore, the criteria used for external quality assurance not only include international similarities but also national priorities (Brennan & Singh, 2011; Leihy & Salazar, 2017; Segers & Dochy, 1996). One way to approach external quality assurance systems is to consider what the external evaluation system can actually measure, what they cannot or do not measure and to what kind of needs they are supposed to respond (cf. Brennan & Singh, 2011).

In addition to a quality management system that emphasises the managerial angle, research has highlighted the importance of quality culture by stressing the importance of shared norms and values (Ehlers, 2009; Hofstede & Hofstede, 2005) as well as the HEIs’ factual commitment to improving their action (Yorke, 2000). In particular, the latter has been considered an essential glue with which to connect institutional quality management systems for the continuous enhancement of education and HEIs’ activities in general (Ehlers, 2009). However, earlier studies concerning quality in higher education have increasingly stressed the ethical issues and the moral aspects. For example, Prisacariu and Shah (2016) stated that ethical and moral questions should be included in the quality concept and quality system as HEIs are increasingly connected to the global economy and HEIs’ activities encompass more diversified interest groups than ever before.

In recent studies on quality in higher education, professional practices (Cheng, 2017) and day-to-day routines (Elken & Stensaker, 2018) have been stressed, though the pragmatic notion of quality is not entirely new in higher education research. For example, Harvey and Green (1993) emphasised that ‘activity to quality may serve to validate or justify it irrespective of what the notion of quality might mean’ (Harvey & Green, 1993, p. 11). Concerning day-to-day activities, one interesting approach is suggested by Elken and Stensaker (2018) and their particular interest lies in ‘quality work’ that emphasises contextual processes and practices that are conducted within the framework of the quality label. As Elken and Stensaker (2018) observe, ‘while there might be some institutionally agreed-upon notions of quality, this is also continuously redefined and mixed with actors’ individual preferences’ (Elken & Stensaker, 2018, p. 198).

In this study, my starting point for considering quality is similar to that adopted by Elken and Stensaker (2018): the purpose is not to provide an alternative definition of the quality concept but rather to focus on those activities, practices and initiatives that aim to maintain, ensure or enhance sufficient outcome. My focus in this research is on the characteristics and factors that together constitute quality of education and

are therefore interlinked with the knowledge-intensive production of HEIs. In general, education is a core activity of HEIs (Clark, 1983). From the perspective of quality, education is formulated by formal (e.g. ECTS credit system) and informal norms (e.g. disciplinary related traditions), institutional structure (academics–administrative staff) and institutional practices (e.g. available services) as well as societal norms in terms of ethical norms that are reflected in education (Elken & Stensaker, 2018; see also Scott, 2008). According to Elken and Stensaker (2018), ‘viewing quality as a desired characteristic of the core processes of higher education as an institution, it also becomes an expression of institutions’ core norms and values’ (Elken & Stensaker, 2018, p. 193). This study emphasises the practices that are embedded in the various and contractual expectations and aims (cf. Elken & Stensaker 2018), thus representing a pragmatic approach to quality. From this perspective, quality in higher education is contextually shaped and interconnected with institutional and societal norms and values. Actors coordinate within the multiple contextual, institutional, national and cross-national levels, aiming to achieve the best possible solutions and thus maintaining, enhancing and changing the quality. These actions and initiatives may lead to success or satisfactory results, but they may as well lead to compromise or even failure.

## 2.2 Quality in higher education from the perspective of education export

Education export, as an internationally shaped for-profit action, encompasses a complex set of different local, national and global regimes, whereby the quality concept is modified by several agencies, such as education export providers and receivers and policymakers (cf. Caruana & Montgomery, 2015; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). Consequently, quality in the context of education export phenomenon is embedded in several different interests and needs but also in different nationally defined regulations and legislations (Bolton & Nie, 2010; Brennan & Singh, 2011). Education export also catalyses the HEIs’ for-profit actions (cf. Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004), and thus the former division between public and private becomes blurred (Marginson, 2004; Marginson, 2006). Market-driven behaviour has also strengthened HEIs’ international marketing and improved aims to attain the best possible position in the global knowledge market (Marginson, 2006). Consequently, the international rankings (Erkkilä, 2016) and a global brand have become factors that are perceived as indicating good quality and institutional

success (Marginson & van der Wende, 2007a), although these elements are not necessarily based on the good quality of education.

Several uncertainties surround the quality of education in the context of education export that differ from the national activities of HEIs, particularly in cases in which education is mainly provided abroad. For example, information asymmetry and goal conflict may occur among education exporters and receivers (Borgos, 2013). Education export is also often provided by Western HEIs whereas the receiver(s) are in non-Western countries. This may include at least seemingly imbalanced power relations in terms of who benefits from the education export and how and who has the power to make decisions (Khoo, 2011).

Moreover, national agencies, such as the ministries responsible for higher education or quality assurance agencies, primarily operate from national perspectives, and thus they do not always prioritise or make decisions pertaining to cross-border activities. These factors may have contributed to the fact that the quality of education in education export has already been a source of concern for supranational organisations over several decades. For example, UNESCO (The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization) and the OECD (The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) launched joint recommendations in 2005 aimed at enhancing international cooperation, capacity building and transparency in education export activities (UNESCO & OECD, 2005). Likewise, the ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education) and INQAAHE (International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education) have launched their own recommendations and stressed the crucial role of quality assurance agencies in providing appropriate information about education export activities as well as minimising the possible duplicate efforts of HEIs to manage several different external quality assurance requirements (ENQA, 2015a; INQAAHE, 2007).

While the recommendations given by supranational organisations have been criticised for representing ideological perspectives on education export without conducting proper risk analysis (see e.g. Blackmur, 2007), they may contribute to international collaboration at least by giving national quality assurance agencies a strategical framework within which to consider education export from their own perspective. However, the actual impact of the international recommendations primarily depends on the national reaction; the implementation of international recommendations varies nationally (cf. Kalló & Semchenko, 2016).

A different approach to education export is offered by the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) provided by the WTO (World Trade Organisation). In

general, the GATS is a multilateral agreement that aims to liberalise trade globally by covering three main sections: the general principles, sector-specified rules (including the education sector) and member countries' commitments. Member countries can choose part or all of GATS' provisions. In the case of the education sector, GATS includes four different types of mobility: cross-border supply (such as franchising arrangement, distance education, etc.), consumption abroad (such as student exchange), commercial presence (such as branch campuses) and presence of natural persons (situations in which, e.g., the researcher temporarily travels to another country to provide educational services). (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Sidhu, 2007; Tilak, 2011.)

The fact that WTO does not address any social agenda, unlike UNESCO, OECD or European Union, for example, for nation-states implementing GATS (in the education sector) can potentially limit their possibilities to legitimate social priorities - that is often intertwined with welfare, equity and providing a capable workforce for the labour market (Robertson et al., 2002). GATS also considers education as a lucrative global services (Ibid) and this is one of the reasons why GATS has faced criticism in the field of higher education (see e.g. Collins, 2007; Knight, 2002). For instance, Robertson (2006) states that GATS set pressure on countries to modify education for commercial purposes through global regulation that significantly changes the nature of education and complicates to achieve the social goals set in the national level. Also, Knight (2002) raised the concern of how quality assurance could and should be organised in the GATS context (Knight, 2002). Indeed, national approaches to quality assurance in higher education or HEIs' ability to consider regional characteristics in quality management may conflict with a globally regulated market-driven framework that is addressed in GATS-framework, although Kinser (2011) stated that no global educational agreement has been made based on GATS. While GATS seemed to provoke debate in international forums regarding quality assurance (Kinser, 2011, 61), in recent years, the GATS agreement has not attracted any special attention in higher education research. One reason for this may be that the GATS agreement allows the exclusion of public services (Sirén & Vuorinen, 2012). As a result, for example, Finland has considered that higher education is part of a public service that is mainly financed by tax revenue (Ibid).

While international recommendations have stressed the concern surrounding education export activities, traditional education export countries have launched their own code of conduct for quality management in education export activities and international education in general. For example, in Australia, The National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students is a legislative

document that establishes national standards for education export activities by covering, for example, marketing, collaboration with agents, students' support services and students enrolments (Department of Education and Training, 2018). New Zealand has a similar instrument that aims to enhance education export activities (see The Ministry of Education, 2016). Likewise, the UK (QAA, 2019) and the Netherlands (The National Commission, 2017) have launched their own national reviews on higher education export actions. As such, national codes and conducts illustrate the complex set of different kinds of arrangements aimed at ensuring the students' legal protection but also at minimising the potential reputational risks for providers. Furthermore, while the national codes of conduct may not capture the actual interpretation and implementation of the given recommendations, they still indicate the certain practicalities and approaches by giving them stronger legitimation over other aspects (Smith, 2010).

In earlier studies, quality in higher education export activities is stressed from the perspective of learning outcomes and comparability of programmes (Altbach & Knight, 2007; Hill, Cheong, Leong, & Fernandez-Chung, 2014; Waterval, Frambach, Driessen, & Scherpbier, 2015) and socio-cultural factors (Castle & Kelly, 2004; Hoare, 2013; Owens & Lane, 2014; Pyvis, 2011), stressing the diverse stakeholder groups (Borgos, 2013; Farrugia & Lane, 2013) and emphasising the growing importance of the market-like behaviour that reinforces status competition in the global knowledge market (Erkkilä, 2016; Marginson, 2004; Marginson, 2006) as well as stressing the student-customers' perception of quality of education (Bhuiyan, 2016; Datta & Vardhan, 2017). These themes reflect the diverse and complex local, national and global dimensions in which the quality of higher education is continuously reshaped (Caruana & Montgomery, 2015; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002).

In general, the learning outcomes and qualifications gained are presumed to be the same regardless of the location. This may indicate a strong emphasis on institutional outputs (cf. Srikanthan & Dalrymple, 2003), which may lead to underestimation of the actual implementation process, although the process may have a significant impact on the output (Beerkens, 2015). Educational output (reflecting, e.g., competencies) may also be connected to the nationally bounded education mission (Brennan & Singh, 2011). For example, education exporters may perceive the aims of education differently to the receivers (Hill et al., 2014; Waterval et al., 2015). Students that participate in exported education may also have different educational backgrounds than students at the provider's home institution (Waterval et al., 2015a). Moreover, the teachers' academic and professional backgrounds may

also vary depending on the arrangement of the education export implementations. As Waterval et al. (2015) have pointed out, in some cases, teachers at the host institution might have a lack of knowledge with respect to the course content and the providers' assessment criteria. One means of ensuring comparative learning outcomes and qualifications is to consider academic standards and learning environment as separate factors in which academic standards are comparative regardless of the location, while the learning environment may include several different socio-cultural dimensions (Sharp, 2017). Moreover, the ownership of the education export programme and courses (cf. Waterval et al., 2015), and the teachers' ability to be involved in course and programme development (Hill et al., 2014) varies. This can impact how committed the academic staff is to the education export implementations, which again can negatively influence students' experiences with respect to the quality of education.

As the education export per se is targeted towards a country or group of people that are different from the provider's origin, it is not surprising that the local socio-cultural dimension of quality is emphasised often (Gift, Leo-Rhynie, & Moniquette, 2006; Hill et al., 2014; Owens & Lane, 2014; Pyvis, 2011). One specific concern has been the appropriate localisation of academic programmes. For example, Hill et al. (2014) have stated that curriculum design is closely linked to cultural approaches. Owens and Lane (2014) stressed the localisation of the curriculum by pointing out that the curriculum can be seen as a tool for capacity building (at the host) together with local actors, rather than aiming (only) for financial benefits for the home institution (Owens & Lane, 2014). The localisation of the programme and providers' abilities to consider the socio-cultural aspects are also mentioned in the national codes of quality assurance in Australia, the US and the UK (Smith, 2010, p. 801). The students' different cultural and academic backgrounds may also influence how students are accustomed to studying and learning (Castle & Kelly, 2004). In some cases, students may be confused by the terms and tasks that are required in the programme since their educational backgrounds are based on different pedagogical approaches, and they might not be used to open dialogue with their teachers (Pyvis, 2011). Likewise, teachers' socio-cultural backgrounds are equally important. As Coleman (2003) states, the unbalanced gender distribution and cultural background might, depending on the case, either support or complicate the students' learning.

Other factors also impact quality in education, particularly if the policy dimension is included. For example, HEIs may be willing (for institutional reasons) or may be required (for regulatory reasons) to go through different national and discipline-specific external quality assurances. This may reflect parallel existing legitimisation

schemes where HEIs seek to shape their activity *to look* as good as possible in the name of accountability to justify their actions locally. However, the labels gained from various quality accreditations or audits are not necessarily focused on quality in education. (Westerheijden, Stensaker, Rosa, & Corbett, 2014). Moreover, managing several different external quality assurance processes in parallel can become a practical challenge for HEIs, particularly if the underlying logics of each of the processes conflict with one another (Borgos, 2013; Kinser, 2011). Such situations can also be problematic from the perspective of allocating work tasks, as managing several quality assurance processes requires appropriate human and financial resources (Hill et al., 2014; Lim, 2010).

To legitimate education export activities and gain the best possible market position, it can be important for HEIs to be recognised in the international rankings (Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009; Marginson & van der Wende, 2007a), which further strengthens the legitimation of their activities, particularly from the perspective of prospective international students and clients (Bergseth, Petocz, & Abrandt Dahlgren, 2014). Thus, well-known international rankings, such as the Academic Ranking of World Universities (a.k.a. Shanghai Ranking) and The Times Higher Education World University Rankings, may stimulate the quality of education, particularly if HEIs begin to improve their activities according to ranking criteria (Bergseth et al., 2014).

However, ranking indicators are based mainly on the top results in research and student selection, which has no self-evident interconnection with the quality of teaching or the quality of degree programmes (Marginson & van der Wende, 2007a). Thus, the image of the quality promoted by rankings is primarily crucial from the standpoint of reputation. However, the global knowledge market is not a single market; rather, it includes multiple market areas that are not only economic but also social, political and cultural (cf. Marginson, 2004). As Marginson (2004) has pointed out: “The “self-regulating market” is an ideological fiction. Markets in all sectors, especially state-regulated higher education, are partly formed by government action and always conditioned by social interests’ (Marginson, 2004, p. 177).

For HEIs, participation in education export activities often presents an opportunity to be involved in a new organisational environment that brings new stakeholders, whose values, expectations and goals may differ from the situation at home (Farrugia & Lane, 2013). As Owens and Lane (2014) have stated, positive domestic development seems to have occurred in cases where local stakeholders and their needs have been taken into account. Therefore, emphasising good collaboration and personal relationships with the key stakeholders can support risk

management in a way that is beneficial for both education export providers and receivers (Borgos, 2013). Moreover, mutual understanding of the goals among the various actors (such as education exporters, receivers, national quality assurance agencies and international agents) is crucial for the legal protection of students legal, which can minimise the dissemination of inappropriate information and unnecessary promises that, at worst, can lead to loss of money for individuals without the promised education (Stella, 2006).

Mutual understanding among different actors is also stressed in the multinational recommendations, such as UNESCO's and OECD's joint Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-Border Higher Education (2005) and the ESG (European Standards and Guidelines) (ENQA, 2015b; UNESCO & OECD, 2005). However, as Smith (2010) has argued, while competition in the global education market is likely to increase, instead of developing a rigid framework for education export, institutions should focus on cooperation that can lead to the development of genuine international programmes. According to Smith (2010), current national codes (in the UK, US and Australia) do not support this idea. Moreover, Kinser (2011) has pointed out that without having a mutual understanding on a global scale, a regulated system of multinational quality assurance cannot become a reality (Kinser, 2011, p. 63).

One of the starting points for education export is to gain a financial benefit for the provider. Therefore, the customers' (clients and students) experience in education can be significant factors that indicate quality (Datta & Vardhan, 2017; Silva et al., 2017). As a result of the increasingly important role of students' perceptions of quality in education, working-life relevance has become a priority in quality management (Datta & Vardhan, 2017). At the same time, the legal status of students in education export activities can differ from that of students studying in their home countries at national educational institutions. As Marginson (2012) has pointed out, international students occupy a political and national grey area, which can hamper their social integration or give rise to practical challenges with respect to accessing appropriate social services (Marginson, 2012).

In conclusion, the quality of education in education export activities is shaped in the global, national and local spheres by multiple institutional (as HEIs) and individual agencies that all re-shape the meanings given to quality in higher education. As Saarinen (2007) has pointed out, 'Higher education policy is legitimated with continuous need for change—but the question is, whose view of change becomes the dominant one' (Saarinen, 2007, 67). The quality of education in the context of education export is often explored from the perspective of traditional education export countries, such as Australia and the UK (see e.g. Hill et al., 2014;



Lim, 2010; Smith, 2010). While some aspects may be similar among different education export implementations, higher education systems are still nationally bounded (Clark, 1983) and unique at a certain level; the systems are embedded in the global but also in the national and local traditions (Välimaa & Nokkala, 2014). Therefore, their reactions to changes are not the direct result of isomorphism (cf. DiMaggio & Powell, 1983); rather, their reactions are a complex set of external factors as well as the situational and traditional aspects. In this research, quality of education in education export activities is considered from the perspective of Finnish higher education. This establishes a specific starting point for considering quality in the context of Finnish higher education export, which is presented in greater detail in the next section.

## 2.3 Quality in higher education from the Finnish perspective

In Finland, the first steps towards a systematic evaluation policy were taken in the 1980s, when demands for accountability were increasing in higher education policy (Ala-Vähälä & Saarinen, 2013). Later on, during the 1990s, the increasing demand for evaluation of Finnish HEIs became more concrete, and first university-level assessment was taking place at the University of Oulu and the University of Jyväskylä (Ibid). During the mid-1990s, the university legislation was changed, and regular evaluation as well as the universities' role of responsibility for the quality of their activities became part of the Universities Act (Ala-Vähälä & Saarinen, 2013). During the same decade, the Europe-wide Bologna Process was launched with the aim of harmonising the diverse higher education areas in Europe by setting commonly agreed goals for European HEIs (Saarinen & Ala-Vähälä, 2007; Saarinen, 2007). From the perspective of quality, the significant milestone was the Bologna ministerial meeting that took place in 2003 in Berlin (Saarinen, 2005; Saarinen, 2008), during which the quality aspect was particularly highlighted (Berlin communiqué, 2003).

In Finland, the establishment of the national quality assurance mechanism began soon after the Berlin communiqué was launched, and by the end of 2012, the national quality assurance agency audited all the Finnish HEIs for the first time in history (FINEEC, 2015). This indicated a new kind of contextualisation for Finnish HEIs as, by implementing the Bologna Process and establishing external quality assurance mechanisms, they were becoming more involved in the global setting (Ala-Vähälä, 2011; Moitus & Pyykkö, 2014; Saarinen, 2008). At the same time, the reforms of the Bologna Process were partly linked to national changes concerning,

for example, degree systems and new management systems of HEIs. Thus, quality work stimulated by the Bologna Process became part of the national reform processes in Finland. (Ala-Vähälä, 2020.) However, at the beginning of 2000 and subsequently, quality assurance mechanisms were established in Finnish HEIs, and quality management became a fundamental function of HEIs (Ala-Vähälä, 2011; Ala-Vähälä & Saarinen, 2013). Moreover, as Saarinen (2007) has stated, acceptance of quality assurance for everyday use also indicates acceptance of the package that comes with it.

In general, the current national quality assurance approach in Finland represents an audit system that follows the ESG (ENQA, 2015b) for quality assurance in European higher education (FINEEC, 2015; FINEEC, 2018). The audit system in the case of Finland represents the idea of continuous improvement and, therefore, the result of the audit does not lead to any direct sanctions (Ala-Vähälä & Saarinen, 2013; FINEEC, 2015; FINEEC, 2018). The national audit approach does not focus on quality of education as such; rather, the external auditing considers the quality of the institutional quality management system.

According to legislation (Universities Act 2009/558, § 87; University of Applied Sciences Act 2014/932, § 62) HEIs should continuously evaluate their performance and the impact of their performance and participate regularly in external evaluation and the results of the external evaluation should be published. The current legislation does not obligate HEIs to use the Finnish national quality assurance agency (Finnish Education Evaluation Centre, FINEEC) for their external evaluation; in practice, however, FINEEC operates regular external auditing for HEIs. FINEEC's audit consists of preparation (selecting the partner and identifying the target for benchmarking, preparing the self-evaluation report), audit team visits, publication of the auditing results and institutional reflection of the auditing results (FINEEC, 2018). For each audit period, FINEEC launch a periodical manual, although HEIs can build quality assurance mechanisms somewhat independently as, in many ways, the audit system allows different models to organise their quality assurance systems at the institutional level (FINEEC, 2015; FINEEC, 2018). As a national auditing approach focuses on institutional quality assurance systems, rather than directly on the quality of education, HEIs may encounter challenges in legitimising the quality of their education in the international context. Therefore, some Finnish HEIs have used international accreditation, such as AACSB accreditation (Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business) and EQUIS accreditation (European Quality Improvement System), to promote the quality of their education in the global educational market.

From the perspective of Finnish higher education, quality assurance generally consists of three different but complementary elements: national higher education policy, national auditing and institutional level quality assurance (Vainio, 2009). The legislative framework for quality assurance is primarily based on the higher education acts (Universities Act 2009/558, University of Applied Sciences Act 2014/932) representing the dual model of the Finnish higher education system. As the primary funding for HEIs comes from the state, the performance-based funding model has an impact on the institution's quality assurance mechanism (Ala-Vähälä & Saarinen, 2013). On the one hand, HEIs are required to improve and maintain the quality of their activities regardless of the location (Kallo & Semchenko, 2016). On the other hand, states expect HEIs to prioritise their actions in certain ways—for example by allocating national funding to specific activities (Ala-Vähälä & Saarinen, 2013, 186).

The national quality assurance approach also indicates the national values that are embedded in education. In the case of Finland, education has played a significant role in building national welfare and enhancing international competitiveness; education has been regarded as a nationally significant value, and public funds have been invested in each educational sector (Ursin & Välijärvi, 2010). Education has also represented a way to create a better future for the entire nation through participation in the Nordic welfare project, as stated by Simola (2015). This has impacted the national goals for improving equal access to higher education (Välilmaa, 2004). However, the current objectives of the higher education policy agenda have become more diverse. One example is the introduction of tuition fees for international students and the increased emphasis on further improving education export activities (Schatz, 2016a). These examples reflect the multiple societal values (Kwiek, 2012) that underlie higher education policy and which can impact higher education in many ways in the long term.

While earlier studies, multinational recommendations and international examples suggest that implementing education export activities will raise challenges and new situations in terms of quality assurance, quality has not been the main concern in the national policy debate on education export. For example, Finland has not taken an active role in implementing the international recommendations regarding education export activities (see e.g. ENQA, 2015a; UNESCO & OECD, 2005). Finland also basically lacks the national codes of conduct for education export activities in the context of Finnish higher education, even though education export activities can include entirely new activities, such as collaboration with international agents, which has been a key concern in previous higher education research (cf. Nikula & Kivistö, 2018; Nikula & Kivistö, 2019).

However, some Finnish HEIs have included education export as an optional target in the FINEEC's external quality assurance, which may indicate that HEIs have at least a strategic interest in improving education export actions. However, in general, education export activities remain largely in the initiatory phase in HEIs, and in the absence of prior experience (Cai et al., 2012), quality work relating to education export action is often conducted through reliance on ad hoc solutions (Campbell et al., 2016; Werner et al., 2016). Internal and external stakeholders' groups at HEIs also seem to be unaware of what actions can be regarded as education export activities, and which cannot (Ibid). These examples emphasise that education export is a new situation for Finnish HEIs but also a new situation for national actors. However, the situation may change in the future when education export is likely to become institutionalised.

### 3 EPISTEMOLOGICAL AND ONTOLOGICAL PREMISES

This study represents a qualitative study that is guided by abductive logic and relies on social constructionism and pragmatism. Abductive reasoning<sup>4</sup> serves in this study as an analytical starting point for the data analysis (sub-studies II–IV), whereas social constructionism represents the underlying premises for the theoretical choices of sub-studies I and IV, and pragmatism represents the underlying premises for the theoretical approaches adopted in sub-studies II and III (see Table 2).

**Table 2.** Epistemological and ontological premises of the sub-studies I–IV

Sub-study/Article	Epistemological and ontological premises
Sub-study/Article I: Discursive analysis of national debate on education export	Social constructionism
Sub-study/Article II: Quality conventional perspective on the quality assurance of education export in the case of Finland	Pragmatism
Sub-study/Article III: Quality conventions in the exported Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia	Pragmatism
Sub-study/Article IV: Exploring teaching staff's experiences of implementing a Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia	Social constructionism

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<sup>4</sup> In this study, abductive reasoning is not the starting point for theoretical consideration. Rather, abductive reasoning is adopted from two perspectives. First, it describes a research strategy and second it has been adopted in the data analysis concerning sub-studies II–IV (see Chapter 5). However, the premises of the abductive reasoning are introduced in this chapter because abductive reasoning is considered to have a strong interconnection with pragmatism.

As illustrated in Table 2, this research adopts methodological and theoretical triangulation, which is considered to strengthen the research result by providing a different aspect on the data and the education export phenomenon (cf. Denzin & Norman, 2012; Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009). At the same time, the triangulation has its danger to harm the coherence of the research, especially if the awareness of epistemological and ontological assumptions for using different methodologies and theories are incomplete (Blaikie, 1991). However, education export in the Finnish context remains an under-researched topic, particularly in terms of quality of education and quality assurance (Juusola & Nokkala, 2019). At the time of this research, Finnish education export has been in constant flux regarding the increasing number of education export projects, changes in legislation and strategic political steering. Therefore, triangulation allowed consideration of the different directions of education export as the research progressed.

Moreover, clarification and even change of the research questions are typical characteristics of qualitative study (cf. Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009), the research tradition that this research follows to a great extent. Therefore, the research questions, data collections and analysis and methodological and theoretical choices have been intertwined, representing triangulation of data, method and theory. One example of the refinement of the research questions and the progress of the research process was the decision to stress teachers' experiences as one of the specific issues of this research (sub-study IV/Article 4), though it was not initially central to this research.

In this research, I have adopted triangulation on the understanding that both qualitative methods and theoretical considerations are embedded in certain epistemological premises and that they may represent multiple disciplinary traditions (Denzin, 2012). I also agree with Denzin (2012), who states that 'objective reality can never be captured' (Denzin, 2012, p. 82). From that perspective, this research represents a postmodernism qualitative study (cf. Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009). I also consider myself a methodological, theoretical and interpretive 'bricoleur', methodologically combining a wide range of different methods (such as qualitative content analysis and discourse analysis), theoretically recognising different paradigms that require a certain belief system and world view and thus cannot be easily synthesised as well as interpretively reflecting research as an interactive and dynamic process that is shaped by multiple social aspects (such as researcher's and participants' biography) (Denzin, 2012). By applying a 'research-as-bricoleur' perspective (Denzin, 2012; Kincheloe, 2001), the triangulation in this study is not primarily chosen for the validity of the research. Rather, I have adopted triangulation

as an alternative to validate the depth and richness of my research (Flick, 2007). In addition, I agree with Kincheloe (2001), who states that ‘knowledge is always in process, developing, culturally specific and power-inscribed’ (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 689). Therefore, this research aims to capture at least a certain perspective of the interconnection and dynamics of different agencies, groups and social contexts that all shape and develop quality in the education export phenomenon. In the following chapters, I will introduce those strategic choices and epistemological and ontological premises that have been at the centre of this research: abductive reasoning, pragmatism and social constructionism.

### 3.1 Abductive reasoning

In this study, the research process follows abductive reasoning covering the strategy for designing the research and referring the analytical approach for generating new knowledge. In general, abduction indicates discovering or searching for the best possible explanations for the phenomenon that is typically unknown or (at certain levels) anomalous (Niiniluoto, 1999; Paavola, 2004). A best possible explanation is often considered justification; researchers have reasons to believe that the conclusion is valid or more valid than the other possible explanations (McKaughan, 2008). Likewise, the idea of discovering a new, speculative explanation has been seen as one of the strengths of abduction (Paavola, 2004), although, at the same time, the logic of the process that leads to new and surprising conclusions can be unclear and appear to be pure guesswork (cf. Hintikka, 1998). Moreover, the angle of the abductive reasoning is the researcher’s previous knowledge and understanding, their ‘instinct’ regarding the research topic (Hintikka, 1998). The latter is useful to consider from a strategic perspective, so that the researcher’s guiding principle of the research phenomenon is seen within a broader context, whereby a single, surprising thing is not isolated but rather explained as part of a larger entity (Paavola, 2004).

Abductive reasoning was first introduced by the American philosopher Charles Peirce (1839-1914), although the traditions of abduction have roots in Aristotle’s work and heuristic methods (Niiniluoto, 1999). Peirce’s views on abduction were strongly linked to pragmatism; to Peirce, abductive logic represented the basis of pragmatism, which emphasises ‘practically grounded comparative recommendations about which available hypotheses are to be tested’ (McKaughan, 2008, 450). Moreover, Peirce’s abductive reasoning may lead to the discovery of something that

has not been noticed, or which would not be based purely on inductive or deductive reasoning (McKaughan, 2008).

According to Maanen et al. (2007), abductive reasoning covers all stages in the research process, and therefore, 'analysis proceeds by the continuous interplay between concepts and data' (Maanen, Sorensen, & Mitchell, 2007, p. 1149). Dubois and Gadde (2002) have also proposed that abductive logic covers 'the possibilities of capturing and taking advantage not only of the systemic character of the empirical world but also of the systemic character of theoretical models' (Dubois & Gadde, 2002, 556). For them, abductive reasoning represents a systematic combination of 'going back and forth' among theoretical premises, data and analysis (Dubois & Gadde, 2002, 555). This notion of abductive reasoning indicates hermeneutic dialogue that covers both empirical aspects and a theory-based approach, which be combined in abductive reasoning (Dubois & Gadde, 2002).

The abductive approach has been criticised—for example, as a question-begging approach (Niiniluoto, 1999), and it has been suggested that in abductive application researchers should seek confirmation of the deductive and inductive logics (Lipscomb, 2012). However, in this research, the abductive approach is regarded as a logic that proceeds from the researcher's observations and previous understanding of the research topic, allowing new perspectives to be taken into account as the research progresses (Niiniluoto, 1999). Knowledge, generated via abductive process is thus combined with new and unexpected perspectives that have guided the research focus to the next stage (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2012). For example, participant-observation and interviews that I conducted in the exported master degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia, invoked me to consider the aim of the teacher education from the different perspective; I realised that my preliminary understanding of the aim of university master degree in teacher education was based on my personal experiences and previous knowledge, such as my involvement in the student union and my own experiences as a master student in the cultural anthropology at the University of Oulu, the research literature (mainly contributed by the western scholars) and my initial assumption teachers' professional role at Finnish comprehensive schools. Nevertheless, these notions were not entirely valid for the implementation of education export in Indonesia. Instead, the local approach to teacher education was based on the different educational tradition, and aim of the exported programme was embedded with the local partner's goal for improving the quality of education by enabling local teachers to attend master degree programme in teacher education. This lead me to consider the role of



contextualisation in education export implementation and the position of teachers for maintaining and enhancing the quality of education in general.

In sum, abductive logic in this study indicates a combination of pre-understanding, empirical notions and conceptual oriented analysis, whereby previous knowledge of the research topic, empirical findings, theories and concepts support analytical thinking. However, the analysis was not only based on empirical observation or theory testing. Rather, the notions based on the researcher's prior knowledge and empirical data overlapped and evolved during the analysis. Consequently, the theoretical and conceptual frameworks were refined and the researcher's previous knowledge improved (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009, p. 96–97).

## 3.2 Pragmatism

In a pragmatic approach, knowledge is linked to practice and action; in principle, knowledge is not distinguished from skills, as truth is considered to be made by experience (Pihlström, 2008). At the same time, knowledge can never be wholly specific or inaccurate; instead, the fallibilism (in scientific and everyday knowledge) is emphasised (Peirce, Burks, Hartshorne & Weiss, 1994b). Therefore, in pragmatism, things should be considered openly from the critical perspective, leaving room for alternative explanations and abolition of the knowledge that has been previously considered to be truth (Pihlström, 2008; Talisse & Aikin, 2008).

In pragmatic thinking, knowledge does not emerge from a vacuum. Instead, knowledge is based on observations made through operation or action (Talisse & Aikin, 2008). In this respect, pragmatists approach the external world that is not independent of humanity, through empirical experience (Käpylä, 2016). Thus, pragmatism has a rationalist dimension, although pragmatists have emphasised the temporal and local dimensions of thought, perception, and action. Correspondingly, traditional pragmatism has been combined with a naturalistic approach that seeks to find a natural explanation for the phenomena. (Käpylä, 2016; Misak, 2013.)

In this research, the pragmatic approach primarily concerns the study's aim to understand novel Finnish education export actions: institutional quality management and the factors that describe the quality and principles beyond them. Despite the institutional aims to manage quality, we may question whether quality can be entirely managed in the fragmented and multifaceted context of education export that is interlinked with local, national and global educational settings (c.f. Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). Therefore, standards and guidelines on education export, regardless

of how well they are prepared, do not self-evidently provide a well-established framework to ensure quality of education if they are not based on the education export action. Thus, in this study, the link between action and experience, which are at the core of pragmatism, may be considered central to the development of quality management.

Pragmatism was initially grounded in the US and the school of ‘metaphysics’, of which James Peirce (1839–1914), William James (1842–1910) and John Dewey (1852–1952) were proponents and are often regarded as significant theorists who originally developed pragmatism further (Käpylä, 2016). To Peirce, pragmatism was particularly associated with abductive reasoning and realism (Peirce, Burks, Hartshorne & Weiss, 1994a). Based on Peirce’s point of view, James and Dewey, in turn, developed the angle of pragmatism further. For example, James emphasised pluralism in his pragmatic thinking—the epistemological diversity of experiences (Aaltola, 1989, 78). Dewey, for his part, extended pragmatic thinking to broader aspects of society, such as democracy and the philosophy of education (Talisso & Aikin, 2008). Similarly, Dewey raised the spatial nature of doubt: ‘it is of the very nature of the indeterminate situation which evokes inquiry to be questionable; or, in terms of actuality instead of potentiality, to be uncertain, unsettled’ (Dewey, Boydston, & Hickman, 1996, 109). Both James’ remarks on epistemological pluralism and Dewey’s view of the uncertainty of the situation reflect the context of education export activities and can be interpreted from a convention theoretical point of view; in situations of uncertainty, the action is based on pluralistic conventions, as outlined in Chapter 4.2.

From the ontological and epistemological perspectives of this study, it is useful to mention Pihlström’s (1996) description of a pragmatic philosophical view, which emphasises human activity in socio-cultural practices where pluralistic goals are still recognisable. According to Pihlström (1996), socio-cultural practical contexts must be taken into account in the philosophical construction to which language is also bound (Pihlström, 1996, p. 9, 33). Pihlström (2018) also states that ‘pragmatism is at its best when it flexibly engages in collaboration with other philosophical orientations—including not only analytical philosophy but also phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical theory, etc.—while maintaining its own identity’ (Pihlström, 2018, p. 265). In this study, pragmatism-based approaches explain the quality of education in education export activities. Accordingly, the education policy context that influences institutional activities is understood from a discursive perspective based on social constructionism. Social constructivism also explains, through

constructivism, the teachers' experiences and transformative learning, which is still acquired through empirical education export activities.

### 3.3 Social constructionism

Social constructionism stresses the social nature of knowledge and reality (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 2003; Elder-Vass, 2012; Gergen, 1999) and the importance of language as one of the critical forms of social interaction through which reality is formed (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 2003; Gergen, 1999). Therefore, reality is constructed through social practices, also encompassing spatial and temporal dimensions (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). At the same time, social constructionism takes a critical view of the objectivity of knowledge and emphasises the formation of knowledge as constructed by humans, indicating parallel existing social realities as stated by Berger and Luckman (1967).

According to Burr (2003), social constructionism encompasses a wide range of different approaches that adhere in one way or another to one or more of the following four perspectives: a critical approach to self-evident knowledge, historical and cultural specificity (i.e. social reality constructed in historical and cultural contexts) and the link between knowledge and social activity (Burr, 2003, p. 2–5). Thus, the construction of knowledge is primarily a social activity that takes place within a particular historical and cultural context. The nature of knowledge is therefore changeable and contextually sensitive—in other words, contingent—and must, therefore, be viewed critically. (cf. Burr, 2003.)

Socially constructed knowledge implies an assumption of choices (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 2003; Hacking, 1999). For example, in the national debate on education export, discourses about tuition fees dominated the arena (sub-study I/Article 1), particularly before the change in legislation that allowed Finnish HEIs to gather tuition fees from students coming outside the European Union (EU) and European Economic Area (EEA).<sup>5</sup> Therefore, the hegemony of tuition fees eclipsed other aspects (sub-study I/Article 1), such as quality assurance of education export, which was highlighted in earlier international studies (see e.g. Altbach & Knight, 2007; Coleman, 2003; Knight, 2016; Smith, 2010), and recommendations provided

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<sup>5</sup> Amendment to the Universities Act (558/2009) and University of Applied Sciences Act (932/2014) concerning tuition fees were implemented 1.1.2016; based on the amendment, Finnish higher education institutions are obliged to gather tuition fees from students who are not citizens of the European Union (EU) or the European Economic Area (EEA) and who commence their degree-based studies from 1 August 2017 onwards.

by supranational organisations (ENQA, 2015; UNESCO & OECD, 2005). However, as Hacking (1999) noted, one of the critical approaches in social constructionism is that things can be collectively constructed differently and thereby different kinds of knowledge and reality can be constructed (Hacking, 1999, p. 6–7). Thus, truth and reality are not seen as stable or absolute. Rather, reality is a historically and culturally bounded product that is constructed in a social process and is therefore linked to human interaction (Burr, 2003, 9–10).

In general, social constructionism stresses the relativist nature of reality and truth (Berger & Luckmann, 1967; Burr, 2003; Bury, 1986). This has been criticised, especially within realism, which, instead of a social interpretation, emphasises the existence of external reality (Elder-Vass, 2012, 5-6). For example, Bury (1986) argued that social constructionism undermines medical reality by treating illness as a social event. Indeed, such criticisms of social constructionism for its denial of objective truth are relatively common (cf. Burr, 2003; Bury, 1986), and within social constructionism radical approaches arise wherein all reality is considered to be socially constructed (Elder-Vass, 2012, 6). However, in this research, my aim is to avoid radical dualism between realism and relativism, and therefore I do not consider that reality is only based on a single ontological premise. Instead, I agree with Burkitt (1999), who argues that reality is neither uniform nor constant but instead is a multifaceted field that recognises multiple natures in discursively and practical approaches of truth, constructed by people. Moreover, social and material entities and conditions establish a framework for various constructions (Burkitt, 1999).

In this study, social constructionism contributes to an understanding of the national education export context and dynamics of education export (sub-study I). Meanings constructed in the national education policy debate on education export, both as a term and as a phenomenon, create the collective social reality of those who act within the institutional environment of Finnish higher education (cf. Berger & Luckmann, 1967). Social constructionism in this research also describes the meaning systems on which national education exports are based by explaining the operational and attitudinal obstacles of education export and the role of quality of education in the socially constructed meaning systems. At the same time, education export as a commercial, global activity represents interpersonal and inter-organisational action that crosses the national borders in plural socio-cultural, economic, political, and technological spheres, which as such are open-ended and can transform individuals, communities, institutions, and nations (Jun, 2006, p. 67–68).

Social constructionism in this study supports the constructivist view of learning new approaches in a different sociocultural working context that is provided in the

education export implementations (cf. Cranton & Carusetta, 2002; Smith, 2009). In this study, individual learning is considered from the perspective of the teachers who participate in the novel education export actions. This kind of learning is seen as a unique and subjective process, whereby knowledge is built based on prior knowledge and critical reflection (Mezirow, 1991). Constructivism directs attention towards the individual's cognitive process, while social constructionism primarily explains social interaction (cf. Guterman, 2014); however, in this study, social constructionism and constructivism are seen to represent similar starting points for truth and knowledge.

## 4 THEORETICAL CONSIDERATIONS

HEIs operate in the multidimensional institutional settings that are embedded within the certain combinations of rules, beliefs and norms that exist within a particular social context (Scott, 2008, 194). Context, in this case, is not a vacuum for change; instead, institutional settings are placed locally, nationally and globally (Marginson & Rhoades, 2002), indicating the dynamic and hybrid nature of institutional action (cf. Siekkinen, Pekkola, & Carvalho, 2019) that are embedded within macro-meso-micro dynamics. Finnish education export, and quality in the context of Finnish higher education export, represent one recently emerged example of that.

In this chapter, theoretical premises combine all the sub-studies (I–IV) that have been included in this research. First, the discourse analytical framework that was adopted in sub-study I is introduced. Second, the convention theoretical approach used in sub-studies II–III to explain the pragmatic approach to quality assurance and quality in the context of Finnish education export is described. Third, the teachers' position and engagement in education export implementation from the perspective of transformative learning (sub-study IV) is explained. In the summary, the triangulation theory is introduced by describing the dynamics of quality in the macro-meso-micro levels that indicate the optimal analytical approach to understand the theoretical triangulation of this study.

### 4.1 Discursive approach to higher education policy

Higher education policy does not emerge from a vacuum. Instead, the meanings given to higher education are shaped through policy debate and decision-making, with temporal, local, political, social and cultural dimensions (cf. Kauko, 2011; Palonen, K., 2008). As such, higher education policy is constructed in relation to external (local, national and/or global) sociopolitical trends and in relation to internal dynamics covering the interaction and different positions of the institutional interest groups such as representatives of universities (Unifi)<sup>6</sup> and universities of applied

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<sup>6</sup> Universities Finland (Unifi) is national non-governmental organisation that includes all Finnish universities.

sciences (Arene)<sup>7</sup> (see e.g. Kauko, 2011). Therefore, the formulation of political initiatives, such as education export-related amendments to legislation, is the result of the internal interaction of the higher education policy system and the favourable external situation (cf. Kauko, 2011).

In this research, higher education policy is regarded from the discursive approach indicating socially bounded knowledge creation (Burr, 2003). In principle, this includes one of the core elements of political action, namely, choosing among different alternatives—what is included in and excluded from the political agenda—and this indicates policy as an contingent action (Crick, 1982; Palonen, K., 2008) that is connected to power relations and possibilities to make decisions and act in a certain way (Weber & Parsons, 1947). In this doctoral dissertation (in sub-study I), particular attention is given to the written documents concerning education export published between the years 2009 and 2015 and created by the key groups in education policy, such as the Ministry of Education and Culture and national representatives of HEIs (sub-study I/Article 1). Selected documents referred to the national framework for education export, in which higher education policy issues are replicated, produced and reformed. Political meanings produced by actors may be concretised in strategic policy-making, legislation-making, and defining the education export concept, which can represent the dynamics of reform in the field of politicised opportunities (cf. Kauko, 2011).

Moreover, in this research, the national debate on education export refers to a national higher education policy context that indicates a socio-political and historical process (Wodak, 2001), and therefore the national debate represents one dimension of the pluralistic organisational field (Frolich, Huisman, Slipersæter, Stensaker, & Botas, 2013). This political field embodies the socially constructed reality of education export, which can change over time as the social reality is unstable (Berger & Luckmann, 1967). From the perspective of social constructionism, the meanings of education export are embedded within a culturally and historically linked social process, which can include taken-for-granted assumptions (Burr, 2003)—for example, regarding the quality of Finnish education or the opportunities offered by internationalisation. This illustrates the link between the linguistic, socio-political and historical contexts, which include the ideological diversity (Fairclough, 2001) and hegemonic struggle (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). At the same time, the policy field relating to education export acts as a channel for the justification and legitimacy of

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<sup>7</sup> The Rectors' Conference of Finnish Universities of Applied Sciences (Arene) is a non-governmental organisation that covers all universities of applied sciences.

HEIs by stressing the socially embedded reality that constructs meanings and shapes institutions and society as a whole (Berger & Luckmann, 1967).

#### 4.1.1 Critical discourse analysis as a theoretical framework

Critical discourse analysis (CDA) is a theoretical and methodological framework that is based on social constructionism (see e.g. Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). CDA focuses on the construction of meanings through the interaction of language, language users and the surrounding social, cultural and political contexts (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). However, the meanings indicating social reality often overlap and tend to be interpreted through broader social entities as well as the researcher's position (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough, 2001; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Consequently, CDA involves the idea of reflexivity, whereby the reliability of the research requires consideration of the researcher's sociocultural background as part of the research process (c.f. Harding, 1991). In the case of this doctoral dissertation, the researcher's position was introduced in Chapter 1.4.

Stemming from the poststructuralist tradition of considering language as a set of signs that 'derive their meanings not through their relations to reality, but through internal relations within the network of signs' (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 10), CDA considers language to be a non-stable, constantly changing phenomenon that may hold structures that are not permanent (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002); the meanings embodying education export in the national education policy debate and how quality is understood in these meanings, can change over time. Therefore, language in CDA does not represent a pre-existing reality (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Instead, language is considered part of social practice, that illustrates the underlying ideologies (Fairclough, 1992; Potter, 1996), and thus discourses may be considered 'socially constructed meaning-systems that could have been different' (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, 21), indicating one form of representation as well as one form of action (Fairclough, 1992).

In CDA, several different meaning systems can exist parallel (Fairclough, 2001; Parker, 1992). In these parallel existing meaning systems, different power relations occur (Jokinen & Juhila, 1999; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Such perspectives reflect the naturalisation of meanings, which is a result of routinising the meanings as part of a 'common sense', an ordinary way of thinking (Fairclough, 1992). Therefore, naturalisation is also about stabilising power relations (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). Moreover, in CDA, the meanings of discourses is socially produced but is also a



factor that impacts discourses. Thus, CDA is often focused on dominant discourses that are designed to influence public perceptions and attitudes (Fairclough, 2003, 9).

CDA has been relatively commonly used in higher education research (Fairclough, 1993; Msigwa, 2016; Nokkala, 2007; Saarinen, 2007; Teo & Ren, 2019) and, in this respect, it occupies a well-established position in the field's multidisciplinary tradition. In general, CDA is considered to provide an analytical tool with which to explore power relationships, taken-for-granted viewpoints, ideologies and dominant voices in the field of higher education (Fairclough, 1993; Smith, 2013). At the same time, CDA has been criticised, for example, for its unclear theoretical premises and the randomness of conclusions (see e.g. Breeze, 2011). However, CDA's starting point of stressing the interaction between language and social practice as part of power relations and ideological struggles provides an analytical approach with which to understand the education export phenomenon from a political perspective and the role(s) of quality in the national debate on education export.

#### 4.1.2 Fairclough's CDA and the concept of hegemony

According to Fairclough (2001; 1992; 1993), discourses represent a social practice that, imitates and changes knowledge, identities and social relationships. At the same time, discourses overlap with other social practices and structures (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough, 2003; Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 65). For example, in the national debate on education export, Finnish education export is combined with economic benefits, that is further supported by a national brand of Finnish education. Therefore, discourses include multiple dimensions; discourses indicate social action and interaction as well as the social construction of reality—that is, the form of knowledge (Fairclough, 1995). On the latter point, Fairclough's (1995; 1992) approach is based particularly on Foucault's earlier studies, for example, by considering the constitutive and political nature of discourse as well as applying the idea of order of discourse (Fairclough, 1992, 37-61).

According to Fairclough (e.g. 1992; 1995), discourse analysis may be summarised in three interrelated dimensions: written or spoken text, discourse practice and social practice (Fairclough, 1992, p. 77). In the case of text (written or spoken), the focus of the analysis is the text's meaning, form and structure as well as those categories, participants and representatives that are missing (from the text). The layer of discourse practice represents the production, consumption and distribution of text

indicating the intermediate role between the text and socio-cultural context. For example, the national strategy documents or statements concerning the changes of legislation represent an institutional process that can, in some situation, act as discourse practice. At the same time, socio-cultural context (i.e. socio-cultural practice) impacts the text via discourse practice, implicating its multiple roles. Accordingly, socio-cultural practice covers economic, political (power and ideology) and cultural (value and identity) aspects, and thus, discourses can illustrate and maintain the ideology or be part of the exercise of power (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough, 1995).

According to Fairclough (1995; 1992) the CDA also includes the concepts of genre, discourse type, order of discourse and discourse representation. The concept of genre refers to language-related activities—types of social action in which the text is presented (e.g. columns, job interviews or statements). The discourse type combines several genres and discourses representing the relatively permanent entity. (Fairclough 1992; Fairclough, 1995.). Order of discourse describes the hierarchical order of discourses and genres in a socio-cultural and societal context; the entities formed by the discourses and genres are not necessarily equivalent (Fairclough, 2001, 23). Accordingly, representation of discourses indicates the presentation or dissemination of speech or text produced by some other(s), such as speech given in the news (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough, 1995).

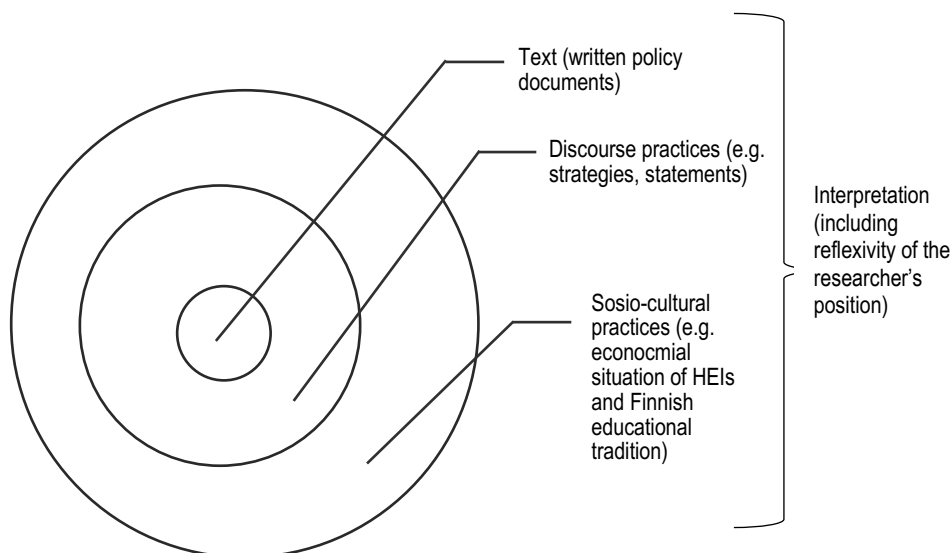
CDA can focus on one layer of Fairclough's three-dimensional module, or the analysis may adopt a holistic perspective by including text, discourse practice and socio-cultural practice. In sub-study I, the analysis was based on intertextual analysis, which focuses on the text and discourse practice, the distinction between genres and discourses. Intertextual analysis takes into account the vertical connection between different texts that indicates the historically linked context that the text is part of. Therefore, intertextual analysis can indicate the order of discourse—the network of different genres, styles and discourses that can be located in the specific socio-cultural settings. (Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough, 1995.)

In terms of order of discourse, Fairclough's (1995; 1991; 2001) approach is similar to Laclau and Mouffe's notion of articulation (c.f. Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Similarly with Fairclough's CDA, also Laclau's and Mouffe's (1985) framework for discourse analysis is based on post-structuralism, though they do not draw a line between discursive and non-discursive matters; for them, the social environment is constructed solely through discourse (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 107). In Laclau's and Mouffe's (1985) theory, hegemony plays a central role. On the one hand, they consider hegemony to be a process by which opposing and mutually reinforcing

articulations (i.e. discourses) build society. On the other hand, hegemony is the result or state that articulation seeks to achieve. (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Palonen, E., 2008). According to Laclau and Mouffe (1985), the articulations are contingent, susceptible to change. Social openness, on the other hand, allows this change, as well as ongoing definitions of the articulation (Laclau & Mouffe 1985, 113; Palonen, E. 2008, p. 213). Thus, society is never complete nor does it repeat itself; rather, it is a product of constant change and articulation (c.f. Laclau & Mouffe, 1985). Later, Laclau (1990) introduced the concept of myth into discourse theory; myths refer to the structures that nurture meanings and maintain communality (see also Palonen, E., 2010). In general, myths are hegemonic in nature and may be based on truth, and therefore myth is not, in principle, a utopia (Torfing, 1999, 115).

In this doctoral dissertation (sub-study I), written text (policy documents), discourse practice (e.g. strategy papers and process of legislative drafting) and socio-cultural practice (e.g. economic aims to increase Finnish export services and success in the PISA survey) indicated the political, ideological and changing nature of the Finnish education export phenomenon from the perspective of key actors in the national higher education policy field (see Figure 2).

**Figure 2.** Application of CDA in this study



In this research, discourse analysis focuses particularly on policy documents and discourse practices, representing intertextual analysis. However, as part of the interpretation process, researcher's position and the wider socio-cultural context have been taken into account. The role of hegemony, followed by Laclau and Mouffe's (1985) tradition, illustrates the dominance of the certain ideology that can be considered a shared myth (Laclau, 1990). A detailed description of the discourse analysis methodological process is included in Chapter 5.1.

## 4.2 Convention theoretical approach to explore higher education and quality

In this research, the theoretical premises concerning quality factors in the institutional audit reports (sub-study II) and education export implementation (sub-study III) are based on convention theory (also known as convention of economics, order of worth, French institutional theory). Convention theory (CT) provides an analytical approach to consider valuation, evaluation and legitimation in the institutional setting (Denis, Langley, & Rouleau, 2007; Esposito, Leemann, & Imdorf, 2019; Leemann, 2018; Mailhot & Langley, 2017; Ramirez, 2013; Schneijderberg & Steinhardt, 2018), particularly in cases of uncertainty (Diaz-Bone, 2018; Eymard-Duvernay, Favereau, Orléan, Salais, & Thévenot, 2003) by stressing the importance of coordination and plurality of conventions (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). In terms of quality in the education export regimes, CT's notions of valuation and legitimation (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006) and quality conventions (cf. Esposito et al., 2019; Ponte, 2009) allows the exploration of the diversification of the different value systems (Mailhot & Langley, 2017; Marginson, 2006) that exist in the commercial knowledge transfer process (Mailhot & Langley, 2017). The heterogeneity of the stakeholder groups (Baird, 2008; Lönnqvist, Laihonen, Cai, & Hasanen, 2018) and variety of the education export products (Knight, 2016) also increase the quality-related institutional and situational uncertainty (Baird, 2008). In the sections that follow, the premises of CT are introduced with special attention given to the plurality of conventions, quality conventional applications, legitimations and actors' abilities to engage in public regimes.

## 4.2.1 Convention theoretical premises

CT was originated by a French sociology-economist research group that focused on statistical classification, labour and economic organisations, products and qualification of products from a multidisciplinary perspective in the early 1980s (Diaz-Bone & Salais, 2011; Diaz-Bone, 2014; Eymard-Duvernay, 2002). Later on, CT was applied in different fields. Among all CT scholars, one of the most often-cited studies is Boltanski and Thévenot's research on justification process and legitimation (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006).<sup>8</sup> The aim of their research was to create a single framework that facilitates the interpretation and analysis of the justification process and actors' mutual aims to reach agreement in cases of the disagreement (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). Another CT perspective is presented in Storper and Salais' (1997) research, which focused on the economic coordination of production and the underlying principles steering production (Storper & Salais, 1997). In the present study, both Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006) justification studies and Storper and Salais's (1997) notions of production provide a starting point from which to explore the quality of education in the context of education export, although other CT applications are also taken into account (see e.g. Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Diaz-Bone, 2011; Diaz-Bone, 2014; Thévenot, 2014).

One of the fundamental aims of CT is to stress the pragmatic view of actions and processes and their integration into a wider socio-cultural and historical sphere (Diaz-Bone & Salais, 2011). Methodologically, this indicates similar premises to those that are typical of pragmatism (see Chapter 3.2.), although initially, CT's standpoint was not to establish a theoretical reference from that. Instead, in the French sociological framework, CT has been regarded as a criticism of Bourdieu's sociology in terms of stressing the actor's competencies (Blokker & Brighenti, 2011; Jagd, 2011), although CT shares certain resemblances to Bourdieu's structuralist constructivism (Blokker & Brighenti, 2011). Indeed, as Thévenot has stated, the premises of CT are primarily influenced by the French sociological and ethnological traditions, such as Durkheim's and Mauss's approaches to social and symbolic categories and classification, but also Bourdieu's sociological considerations (Blokker & Brighenti, 2011). However, in this research, pragmatism is considered to represent the methodological standpoint for CT application, as it sheds light on the plural principles that indicate quality as it is done and perceived in the novice education export implementations.

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<sup>8</sup> Boltanski and Thévenot's book *On Justification. Economies of Worth* was originally published in French in 1991 as *De la justification. Les économies de la grandeur*.

In CT, actors' rationale is considered to be interpretative, situated, argumentative and limited (Bessis, Chaserant, & Favereau, Olivier, Thévenot, Olivier, 2006; Diaz-Bone, 2011), particularly in cases of uncertainty (Eymard-Duvernay et al., 2003). Uncertainty refers here to situations that are located in unfamiliar contexts or situations that can include a heterogeneous group of actors from different backgrounds. In both cases, the circumstances may lead to diverse views on common action (Eymard-Duvernay et al., 2003) Thus, actors base their interpretation on the underlying principles or conventions, as it is unlikely that they will have access to all possible information that would be required for purely rational decisions or actions (Diaz-Bone, 2011).

One of the critical elements in CT is the concept of conventions. In CT, conventions are socio-cultural and cognitive frames that enable interaction between actors in pursuit of a common goal in a given situation (Diaz-Bone, 2011). Conventions also serve as a reference framework for assessing the quality of things and people and guiding related activities related to that (Diaz-Bone, 2016). From the perspective of CT, actors have cognitive ability to consider what constitutes appropriate proof of common good and therefore, conventions are linked to the moral aspects of social life (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006, p. 2–6). In addition, conventions set a frame for justification and legitimation (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). In institutional settings of higher education, strategies and (occasionally ideologically bounded) aims to justify and legitimise the 'fairness' of the institution can be further rooted in the actors' everyday practicalities (Scott & Pasqualoni, 2014). In this research, conventions refer to socio-cultural frames that are embedded with traditions, as Storper and Salais (1997) state:

*Conventions resemble 'hypotheses' formulated by persons with respect to the relationship between their actions and the actions of those on whom they must depend to realise a goal. When interactions are reproduced again and again in similar situations, and when particular courses of action have proved successful, they become incorporated in routines and we then tend to forget their initially hypothetical character. Conventions thus become an intimate part of the history incorporated in behaviors. (Storper & Salais, 1997, 16.)*

In general, CT has been adopted in multidisciplinary studies related to sociology, economics and management studies (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Diaz-Bone & Salais, 2011; Diaz-Bone, 2014; Storper & Salais, 1997). Among CT scholars, conventions are considered a part of justification and legitimation (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Eymard-Duvernay et al., 2003) but also in other contexts, for example, focusing on the quality and valuation of the product

or services (Baird, 2008; Diaz-Bone, 2017; Favereau, Biencourt, & Eymard-Duvernay, 2002; Ponte, 2009; Ponte, 2016), researching economic coordination (Storper & Salais, 1997) or emphasising management changes (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Graß, 2018). In general, these CT studies have applied a pragmatic approach to the production process, coordination or administrative-political activity that is considered to be based on socially produced underlying principles. A wide range of CT studies have also focused on different tensions in situations (between different conventions), compromises and how the action or object and subject of the action is generally valued, justified and legitimised (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Storper & Salais, 1997).

During the past decade, CT has increasingly been applied in English-speaking educational research to explore the multiple underlying conventions that guide policy implementations (Graß, 2018; Leemann, 2018; Verdier, 2016), describing the coordination among the multiple partners in the university degree programme design (Bredillet, Conboy, Davidson, & Walker, 2013), exploring transformation process in the national education system (Esposito et al., 2019), considering collaboration in HEIs' for-profit actions (Mailhot & Langley, 2017) and industrial-scientific collaboration (Lanciano-Morandat, Nohara, & Verdier, 2006) as well as reflecting the quality of education (Baird, 2008; Esposito et al., 2019) and quality assurance (Schneijderberg & Steinhardt, 2018). In general, these studies stress the social dynamics in multiple and complex educational settings, which on the one hand result from coordination and collaboration with the fragmented interest groups sharing different values and aims (Bredillet et al., 2013; Mailhot & Langley, 2017). On the other hand, it describes the current trend whereby HEIs are increasingly involved in the different for-profit actions that can reinforce contextual uncertainty (Mailhot & Langley, 2017).

Esposito et al. (2019) have stressed the interconnection between types of knowledge, quality and evaluation by applying the quality convention approach (Esposito et al., 2019, 343). Likewise, in Mailhot and Langley's (2017) study on for-profit actions by business schools, the valuation of the commercial product is the result of the perspectives of the academics and the actors in the target market. Mailhot and Langley (2017) also pointed out in their longitudinal study that scaling the commercial product in the field of higher education can be productive if synergic compromises are made within the multiple conventions. However, scaling of the product can be challenging if the synergic ecosystem of plural conventions includes local arrangements (i.e. strong position of the civic-domestic-conventions) (Mailhot & Langley, 2017). In some extent, this kind of notion also applies to Finnish

education export implementations, where one of the key factors has been seen the importance of domestic cooperation and localisation of education (cf. sub-study III/Article 3).

On the one hand, CT has been criticised for the somewhat limited attention it has given to power relations (Daviron & Ponte, 2005) and the lack of emphasis given to the role of institutions in micro-level actions (Cloutier & Langley, 2013). Indeed, while CT has contributed a pragmatic approach to economic activity and therefore can be considered a criticism of Bourdieu's structuralism, CT still shares similar interests to those of the Bourdieu school, although in CT the dynamics of conventions do not necessarily constitute any hierarchical entirety (c.f. Suckert, 2017). On the other hand, CT has been applied primarily in the French-speaking research community, which inevitably narrows the international development of the CT. Despite these limitations, in this research, CT provides a fruitful and pragmatic tool with which to consider for-profit educational action from the perspective of quality.

#### 4.2.2 Plurality of conventions

One fundamental standpoint of CT is a plurality of conventions that exist in parallel (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Diaz-Bone, 2018; Eymard-Duvernay et al., 2003; Ponte, 2016; Storper & Salais, 1997) and may activate particularly in situations of dispute or uncertainty, where actors aim to maintain coordination with each other (Eymard-Duvernay et al., 2003), reach agreement or legitimate the action (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). Conventions are embedded with the order of worth that is constituted by a higher common principle (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). This higher common principle defines which characteristics matter the most in certain socio-cultural frameworks, that can be formed as regimes (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). The higher common principle can take several forms, but in each case, it offers a commonly understood sphere for coordination, articulation and evaluation—in other words, the thing or person can be tested and justified by relying on the higher common principle as it provides a framework within which to consider equivalence (Biggart & Beamish, 2003; Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). Tests and justification can stabilise the situation in the sense that they minimise the continuous calculation or defences of the action (Biggart & Beamish, 2003). Indeed, parallel existing different regimes include internally shaped orders of worth that constitute conventions indicating the underlying principles that set preferences for certain qualities and



characteristics of the object (thing or person) over some other objects (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Storper & Salais, 1997).

The plurality of conventions can indicate the challenges in organisational actions. For example, in education export projects, the teachers' perspective on implementation practices may be different than perspectives of management of HEIs or clients of education export. Thus, collective strategical (mutual) actions are not always easily accomplished. Also, the involvement of the several different stakeholder groups may result in over-ambitious strategical goals that are difficult, or even possible, to achieve or implement in practice. (Denis et al., 2007.) In a certain extent, pluralism is typical for every organisation, and therefore, pluralism may be considered a 'natural state of (organisation) affairs and not as a subversive aberration' (Denis et al., 2007, p. 183). This kind of 'natural state' of pluralistic organisation offers an appropriate approach to consider HEIs as complex institutions (c.f. Birnbaum, 1988) that hold multiple, sometimes conflicting goals, various professional groups and different kinds of partnerships that are interconnected with other social entities (Birnbaum, 1988; Clark, 1983). Indeed, as Denish et al. (2007) observed, HEIs may be considered an example of particularly pluralistic organisations.

The plurality of convention may also refer to the incompleteness of the institutions (Diaz-Bone, 2011; Diaz-Bone, 2018). Institutions in this research denote HEIs in particular, as social institutions (see e.g. Nokkala, 2007) that contain norms, values and cultural-cognitive aspects (Scott, 2014) Incompleteness in CT indicates case-specific issues and unclear or fragmented meanings expressed by the institution; in other words, HEIs do not necessarily provide solutions or precise meanings that can be relied upon in all kinds of situations. As a result, actors interpret institutions through cultural-cognitive frameworks, that is, conventions. (Diaz-Bone, 2011, 201).

Moreover, conventions support the various shapes of institutions, coordination between actors and exchange of goods or things (Ponte, 2016). According to Ponte (2016), conventions can also indicate cognitive barriers and power relations. Therefore, changing the status quo of an institution or adding value to a transaction requires actors to be able to use the leverage that relates to conventions (Ponte, 2016). On the one hand, conventions are collective in the sense that actors in the same situation can identify similar conventions and identify the ways it should jointly act towards a common goal (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). A common aim or goal can be, for example, qualities produced from a particular process or product (Diaz-Bone, 2018; Storper & Salais, 1997) or, as in this study (sub-studies II and III), aims to maintain and produce 'quality' in education export projects.

In CT, the plurality of conventions becomes particularly visible in uncertain contexts (Eymard-Duvernay et al., 2003) or dispute (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). Uncertain contexts can be considered typical of economic coordination, such as education export, which includes the actors' (providers and clients) actions and expectations (cf. Jagd, 2011). Conventions establish a frame to recognise the diversity of expectations and intentions; it does not necessarily remove the uncertainty, but shared understanding can stabilise and support economic coordination (Jagd, 2011).

In this research, conventions refer to both economic and non-economic actions indicating a pragmatic situation in which economic actors rely on multiple conventions to coordinate the production activity of education export projects (cf. Storper & Salais, 1997). Regarding this research, Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006) six convention categories have established a basis for considering quality in the education export phenomenon: inspired, domestic, fame, civic, industrial and market conventions. Also other CT studies, such as Boltanski and Chiapello's (2005) notion on project-oriented convention, Storper and Salais's (1997) approach to intellectual and interpersonal conventions and Ponte's study (2016) on the quality of products and services have been taken into account. In the present research, different conventions also include a different higher principle and thus also a different approach to worthiness (see Table 3).

**Table 3.** Conventions, higher common principles and tests as applied in this research (cf. Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Ponte, 2016; Storper & Salais, 1997)

Convention	Higher common principle	Test/(e)valuation
Inspired	Inspiration, creativeness	Are the product/services emotionally provocative; adventurous?
Domestic	Traditions, generations, trustworthiness	Are the product/services traditional; locally accepted? Can it be (locally) trusted?
Fame	Recognition and known in public, reputation	Are the product/services famous or well known to the public?
Civic	Collectiveness	Are the product/services collectively confirmed? Do the product/services support collectiveness?
Industrial	Efficiency, functionality	Are the product/services effective? Can they be measured by standards?
Market	Competition	Are the product/services desirable and/or wanted?
Project-oriented	Networking, being active in multiple projects	Do the product/services involve multiple networks/projects?
Intellectual	Innovation	Are the product/services based on the scientific procedures?
Interpersonal	Personal relations	Is the personal connection and/or interpersonality essential or beneficial to the services/product?

The inspired convention, encompassing inspiration and creativeness, is considered to be a higher common principle. Those factors that support equivalence and stability are missing, and thus worthiness cannot be measured by relying on controls, rules, money or hierarchy. Instead, worthiness can be tested by emotionally provocative and adventurous experiences. In the domestic convention, family relations matter as do trustworthiness, honesty and responsibilities. The higher common principle of the domestic world is reliant on generations, hierarchy and traditions. By contrast, in the fame convention being recognised in public is essential and thus the opinions of others matter, and the higher common principle relies on public opinion while worthiness is based on fame, reputation and being visible and

successful (in public). In the civic convention, collectiveness is regarded as a higher common principle. Worthiness in the civic convention is collectively confirmed, and it is supported by rules, laws and statutes, and it is enacted by elected representatives and delegates that represent a collective interest in the public. (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006)

In the industrial convention, efficiency is the highest common principle. The industrial world is closely related to productivity and capacity to be efficient and functional in the future. This can be tested by measuring efficiency and functionality by relying on objective, measurable evidence (such as standards). The industrial convention also represents standardisation and generation of products; quality can be evaluated according to generic industrial standards. Competition is based on price and production does not include any personal aspects. Products are easily scaled and copied, and workers can be replaced. (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Ponte, 2016.; Storper & Salais, 1997.) In the market convention, competition represents the higher common principle; worthiness depends on how desirable and wanted the good or services is (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Storper & Salais, 1997). However, as Boltanski and Thévenot (2006) have stressed, market convention is not the same as economic relations, as for Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), economic activity is based on at least dual coordination: the market convention and industrial order. Therefore, the market convention relies on standardisation at least to a certain extent. However, the production in the market convention is guided by the customer's demands, which are based on the standards that are possible for a certain product. By relying on standards, customers do not personalise the product nor feel a commitment to any product. This creates a situation wherein products compete with each other, and therefore the competition is based on the price and the producer's ability to respond to customers' demands within a short timeframe. This again leads to the situation whereby it is the producers that face uncertainty. (Storper & Salais, 1997.)

The interpersonal convention is almost the opposite of industrial convention; everything there is personal, and the actors know one another. The activity is based on tradition and personal contacts. The intellectual convention represents intellectual activity that aims to develop something new or to improve already existing services or objects. In this case, the action takes place in an uncertain context since the outcome of the product cannot be entirely ensured beforehand. In the intellectual convention, producers rely on demands of consolidation; the aim of knowledge production is general applicability, rather than tailor-made know-how as is the case with the interpersonal world. In addition, the qualities of the knowledge product must be recognised afterwards. The actors that are involved in this

convention do not rely solely on traditions; rather, they develop the practicalities continuously. (Storper & Salais, 1997.)

The project-oriented convention consists of networks and short-term activities that bring different actors that are working on the same topic together. The highest common principle in the project-oriented world is activity, and the worthiness of the project-oriented world is based on producing multiple versions of different projects—the more they differ, the more valuable they are. What matters in the project-oriented convention is the expansion of different ties and networks. (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005.) In contrast with the industrial world, work is understood as an ongoing and fragmented process that covers paid and unpaid positions and is not a permanent state. Actors that are valuable in the project-oriented world support other actors' improvement by respecting personal differences and creating a secure environment (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Chiapello & Fairclough, 2002).

According to Storper and Salais (1997), both producers and consumers act in the parallel existing conventions. However, the actors face uncertainty about their activities and the activities of others in the process of production and product exchange (Storper & Salais, 1997). This uncertainty is manifested in different ways in different conventions, which creates challenges for actors, who must be able to resolve the problems to facilitate business. Each convention implements its own routines to solve challenges, and hence each convention relies on different principles (the higher common principle). Storper and Salais (1997) emphasise that the conventions as such do not represent standards or practices; instead, conventions consist of cognitive frameworks and routines that can be perceived. Moreover, conventions are not stable. Instead, actors evaluate, interpret and rebuild them constantly (Storper & Salais, 1997). According to Storper and Salais (1997) the categories of different conventions are ideal. Therefore, different conventions can be united, compromised and synchronised in multiple ways (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Storper & Salais, 1997). Despite the parallel existing multiple conventions and actors' ability to interpret situations by relying on conventions, conventions cannot be chosen as wished. Rather, in the institutional setting, the action also depends on the path dependency, which is strongly present in the routines (Storper & Salais, 1997).

### 4.2.3 Quality conventions

One specific approach in CT is that of quality conventions (Diaz-Bone, 2017). One of the fundamental premises of quality convention is that the price alone indicates the quality of the product only in cases where quality is not under any kind of uncertainty. In other cases, actors rely on multiple conventions to clarify the uncertainty of quality (Ponte, 2009 citing Eymard-Duvernay, 1989). In earlier quality convention studies, quality was regarded as a multidimensional concept that depends primarily on the situation. Therefore, different quality conventions that steer the quality vary and are dependent on the different stages of production, distribution and finally consumptions (Daviron & Ponte, 2005; Diaz-Bone, 2017; Larsen, 2014; Ponte & Gibbon, 2005).

Another premise of quality conventions is that conventions provide a socio-cultural and normative framework for the qualification of individuals (such as employees) and objects (such as products) (Diaz-Bone, 2017; Ponte, 2009). According to Ponte (2009) qualification can connect different conventions. In this case, the contractual conventions can form a synergistic entity (cf. Mailhot & Langley, 2017). Qualification in CT refers to the action whereby things or persons (objects) are set to a certain equivalence class (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). According to Biggart and Beamish (2003), ‘equivalence is communal agreement of the quality or character of a product, industry, wage structure, or any other economically meaningful phenomenon. Equivalence is critical to price competition and for market adjustment around prices’ (Biggart & Beamish, 2003, p. 456). Equivalence also requires commensuration in where different options and alternatives are evaluated, related to a particular scale or measured using commonly agreed-upon standards (Lamont & Thévenot, 2000). Commensuration is a culturally bounded social process (Ibid), that relies on collective action (Espeland & Stevens, 1998). The social aspect has also been highlighted by Biggart and Beamish (2003), who stressed that commensuration is not ‘the product of market forces. Market forces work around categories that have been socially established’ (Biggart & Beamish, 2003, 456). Therefore, some products or objects are more socially affirmed and qualified (such as elite universities) and are therefore more legitimate than some others (such as MOOC courses provided by less well-known HEIs) that can be contested and are still in the process of justification (Biggart & Beamish, 2003).

However, market segments from the perspective of CT are considered to be diverse; the quality of the product/services is not defined by singular or homogenous categories and quality attributes, although neoliberal trends in the privatisation of

knowledge (such as in the case of Google Scholar) can result in unclear or inaccessible quantification and categorisation, and therefore the underlying conventions cannot be tested or criticised (Diaz-Bone, 2017). This notion of the privatisation of knowledge has certain similarities with the concept of the academic capitalist knowledge regime, which stresses the privatisation of the research results (c.f. Kaidesoja & Kauppinen, 2018; Kauppinen & Kaidesoja, 2014; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). At the same time, the convention theoretical perspective on unclear and inaccessible information can indicate the transparency of the education export processes from planning and marketing to implementation—for example, the kind of agreement that is made between the provider and receiver, how student selection is organised (and by whom), the kind of information that is documented and compiled (i.e. statistics), to whom the documented data are accessible, and which aspects are generally considered part of the trade secret (and in what terms).

The quality convention approach also indicates that the success of the material product or services is not only the result of the production processes (Biggart & Beamish, 2003). Instead, the success of the product/services or the geographical proliferation of the certain product category (e.g. Silicon Valley) occur through coordination between different actions that are based on commonly shared social conventions (Storper & Salais, 1997; Biggart & Beamish, 2003). However, traditions and the importance of local history also impact the plurality of conventions (Biggart & Beamish, 2003). Therefore, while institutional arrangements can provide appropriate solutions to (economic) challenges (Ibid), pluralism in organisational settings can indicate increasing uncertainty with respect to the grassroots action (cf. Denis et al., 2007). Therefore, quality conventions can reflect the complex dynamics of institutional government (in commercial activity) as they can make visible the role of normative work in education export implementations (cf. Ponte, 2009)

#### 4.2.4 Investment in forms and legitimation

In the field of higher education, the quality concept is closely related to the quality management of HEIs (cf. Harvey, 2006; Harvey & Green, 1993). Thus, establishing and maintaining quality management in HEIs may be considered from the perspective of investment in forms. According to Thévenot (2011; 1984) investment in forms indicates the generalisation of material entities (such as objects, subjects and technologies) and immaterial dispositifs (such as standards, processes and rules) (Thévenot, 1984; Thévenot, 2011). As a result of the generalisation, material entities

and/or immaterial dispositifs are given a conventional form. This generalisation process requires that we limit options; ignore the possible exceptions and alternatives, and therefore, investment in forms may simplify the practical action. (Thévenot, 2011), but also stabilise uncertain situations (Thévenot, 2014, p. 10).

Investment in forms, such as standards and generally acceptable categories, are often accepted as ‘natural’ and are therefore taken for granted (Thévenot, 2014). According to Thévenot (2009), actors will in practice ‘close their eyes’ to the alternative choices that were originally sacrificed in investment in forms (Thévenot, 2009, p. 795). However, investment in forms is not immune to criticism; instead, it can be challenged and criticised, in which case the actors ‘open their eyes’ and recognise other alternatives, and consequently, investment in forms can be reformed (Thévenot, 2009, 795). In this respect, investment in forms is neither permanent nor complete. Nonetheless, investment in forms stabilises the action and supports the trust (Diaz-Bone, 2018; Diaz-Bone, 2017), and thus it can be essential, for example, to HEIs. At the same time, investment in forms can produce power asymmetry, mainly if the individuals or organisations base their activities on some particular standard (Thévenot, 2014), that can steer the focus towards some particular results (Thévenot, 2011). According to Thévenot (2014), such situations are typical, particularly when the organisation bases the action firmly on the ‘benchmarking forms’ indicating the comparative ranking lists.

Quality management and quality assurance in the higher education sector are connected to accountability and legitimation, especially in the case of external quality assurance (cf. Leihy & Salazar, 2017). This is also relevant to the Finnish higher education context, though the external quality assurance approach is based on the audit system that differs from the accreditation. Nevertheless, external audits can still be considered to a tool for HEIs to legitimate their action at home and abroad alongside the professional accreditation that is typically provided by different international organisations. Legitimation from the perspective of CT is often referred to as justification. Justification in CT is a social process that can result in legitimation; during the justification process, actors rely on underlying principles (i.e. conventions) that set a justifiable frame for the actions (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). For Boltanski and Thévenot (2006), justification was originally related to actors’ aims to reach a common good by stressing the moral aspect of the justification and legitimation. In the case of HEIs, external quality assurance can be considered as one way for being accountable and reaching the legitimation in public by stressing the qualities from the normative perspective (cf. Schneijderberg & Steinhardt, 2018, 23). At the same time, the legitimation of the HEIs can include a



moral aspect, that according to Suchman (1995) reflects the commonly constructed value system (“is the action right to do?”) that are embedded with the social welfare produced by the institution (Suchman, 1995, 589).

#### 4.2.5 Actors engagement in public regimes

In CT, actors are often considered capable of relying on suitable conventions in order to accomplish the task at hand. However, over the past decade, CT scholars have also considered the actor’s role from the perspective of the individual (see e.g. Thévenot, 2009; 2014; Leeman, 2018). Indeed, as Thévenot (2009; 2014) and Leeman (2018) have stated, the actors’ engagement in the community’s action is twofold. On the one hand, the individual’s engagement is connected to the dynamics between conflicting communities that reflect the community’s internal selection of certain legitimate approaches and establish an investment in forms (such as standards, statutes etc.) (Thévenot, 2014). At the same time, some other approaches are left out (Thévenot, 2014). On the other hand, actors’ engagement indicates the ‘complex personal identity’, which are connected to ‘policies and management tools associated with neoliberal governance strongly affect the constitution of the self’ by requiring persons to be able to regulate and manage independently the self (Thévenot, 2014, p. 4). Therefore, personal engagement with the community’s action can accomplish a dynamic and complex relationship with the formatted environment and the self (Thévenot, 2014).

According to Thévenot (2009; 2014, also Leeman, 2018), this kind of engagement of regimes—personal engagement in the formatted environment—can be analysed by three different kinds of approach: engagement in an individual plan, engagement in familiarity and engagement in exploration. Engagement in individual plans refers to the actor’s strategic plans, wherein personal interest is linked to the public plan (Thévenot, 2014). Career-related plans aimed at professional development are one example of an individual plan (cf. Leeman, 2018). Engaging in familiarity reflects the easy and comfortable actions in familiar contexts that can consist of personal relations (Thévenot, 2014). Engagement in exploration indicates curiosity and high motivation for emotional and surprising experiences (Auray, 2007; Thévenot, 2014). Such regimes allow individuals to shape their own actions depending on the situation, although the regimes do not purely represent the personal self or private approaches; rather, the regimes are a blurred mix of public and private, as well as

individuals and collectives, but most of all they are social and commonly recognised (Thévenot, 2014).

Despite the fact that the three types of approach to actors' engagement can simplify the individual's action, it can nevertheless complete the understanding of the actor's capacity in the convention theoretical approach; the individual's ability to act in a given situation does not entirely depend on their personal qualities, but rather it involves a complex set of individual personalities and contextual-external factors. Actors' abilities to act may be further supported or limited by various conventions but also by personal commitment (such as career-related ambition) matters (cf. Leeman, 2018). Such notions may also be essential factors to consider in the education export projects, in which the actors (such as teachers, students and administrative staff) are involved in the context that is embedded in the plurality of conventions, the underlying socio-cultural logic that steers the action and indicates the quality of education. Some underlying conventions have been stabilised via investment in forms into institutional regulations and practicalities, which set a stable frame for institutional action and academic work. In the case of the education export phenomenon, the stable frames may include, for example, the provider's own regulations and national legislation, but also the rules related to the education export project location (cf. Kinser, 2011). However, at the micro-level, several uncertainties can occur, as actors (such as teachers) can face new situations or the current regulation does not provide an appropriate way to act. This is particularly the case when the activity takes place in a different socio-cultural context and a heterogeneous group of different actors is involved (Eymard-Duvernay et al., 2003). Thus, quality of education in the education export implementations may, in fact, be strongly connected with the key actors' (such as teachers') abilities to engage with the education export projects.

### 4.3 Domain of teachers in the multifaceted education export action

Based on the findings of the sub-studies III (Article 3) and IV (Article 4), the teachers had a vital position in maintaining and co-creating quality in the education export implementations. Also, in the previous research on education export the link between the human resources and organisational readiness for education export is stressed (Cai, Hölttä, & Kivistö, 2012; Lönnqvist, Laihonen, Cai, & Hasanen, 2018) and the critical role of teaching staff in implementing export education is well

recognised (see e.g. Lönnqvist et al., 2018; Smith, 2009; Smith, 2010). Therefore, in this research, the experience of teaching staff is considered one of the key topics that contributes to HEIs' ability to operate in the global export education market as well as to ensure and maintain the quality of education.

In this chapter, special attention is given to teachers' role in educational export activities. In this case, the diverse roles of the teaching profession are stressed, which again are influenced by contextual situations and the teacher's personal starting points. Quality of education 'as it is done' in the implementation stage of education export is also considered to be intertwined with the teacher's position. Moreover, the domain of teachers is embedded in situation-dependent activities and the social and material environment (Priestley, Biesta, & Robinson, 2015), and therefore it 'denotes a quality' of the actors' engagement with temporal-relational contexts-for-action and not the quality of the actors themselves (Priestley et al., 2015, p. 3). Moreover, fostering changes and innovations is not (only) dependent on teachers' competence—instead, educational settings may enable or complicate educational aspirations (Priestley et al., 2015, p. 7).

As such, teachers' positions and responsibilities in HEIs are interlinked in the national tradition of the teaching profession (Luukkainen, 2004) and the teaching-research-orientation of the institutions (Pekkola, 2014). For example, in Finland, the higher education system represents a binary module consisting of teaching-oriented universities of applied sciences and research-oriented universities, whereby the positions of teaching staff differ somewhat (Pekkola, 2014); in universities of applied sciences, teaching staff are often expected to have pedagogical qualifications (Pekkola, 2014), while at universities, academic staff involved in teaching face multiple pressures to obtain research funding and attain academic merit through research (Siekkinen, 2019). However, in the present research, the potential differences within the higher education system are not a topic of focus due to the limitations of the empirical data and the selected (theoretical and methodological) approaches to the research questions.

The sections below are structured as follows. First, a general overview of the teaching profession in higher education is introduced. Second, the role of the teacher in educational export activities is explored. Finally, teachers' engagement in education export activities is considered from the perspective of transformative learning, which characterised the teachers' experiences in sub-study IV (Article 4). Moreover, quality in higher education settings is understood as a cross-cutting theme that concretises as part of the teaching profession, educational export activities, and transformative learning.

### 4.3.1 The teaching profession in higher education

The teaching profession in higher education is a spatially and temporally embedded (Hunt & Chalmers, 2012) as well as discipline-centred (Clark, 1983) activity that is linked to a broader trend in higher education policy (Arvaja, 2018). In general, the term ‘teaching staff’ encompasses a heterogeneous group of lecturers and academics who have either systematically focused on pedagogy and teaching in their careers or persons who give lectures based on their research and expertise on an occasional or permanent basis (Gerzina & Foster, 2013). In this respect, the teaching profession in higher education represents a wide range of academic identities (Skelton, 2012), that can be based on disciplines (Clark, 1983) or career stage (Siekinen, 2019). The teaching profession is also integrated into broader developments in higher education (Arvaja, 2018; Dian-Fu & Yeh, 2012; Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013), such as globalisation (Altbach & Knight, 2007), massification (Dian-Fu & Yeh, 2012) and new managerialism (Arvaja, 2018). Within this blurred mix of professional identities (Gerzina & Foster, 2013), common to all HEI teaching professionals is the presumption of expertise in specific disciplinary-based knowledge as well as the active roles of knowledge sharing (Brouwer & Jansen, 2019) and knowledge co-creation (Iversen & Pedersen Stavnskaer, 2017). As a result of their knowledge-centred agency and the crucial act of supporting students’ learning, teachers may be considered to occupy a central position in enhancing and maintaining the quality of education (cf. Chapman & Pyvis, 2013, p. 106).

Previous research on the teaching profession has focused on students’ experiences (contact teaching) (Dian-Fu & Yeh, 2012), teachers’ personal experiences and self-reflection on pedagogical solutions (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Koeslag-Kreunen, Van, Van, & Gijsselaers, 2018; Pekkarinen & Hirsto, 2017; Stewart, 2014) as well as professional development (Arvaja, 2016; Postareff, Lindblom-Ylänne, & Nevgi, 2007). For example, Stewart (2014) has emphasised the professionalisation of university education by stating that teaching staff are required to participate in university pedagogical studies, which may further increase teachers’ awareness of student-centred learning (Postareff et al., 2007). Strengthening of the teacher’s identity and expertise is also considered an aspect of pedagogy (Clavert & Nevgi, 2011) that can be further improved by self-reflection (Biggs & Tang, 2011; Pekkarinen & Hirsto, 2017) but which requires detailed guidance and appropriate space (Pekkarinen & Hirsto, 2017).

In general, teaching is strongly connected to the quality of education (Madu & Kuei, 1993), which is often considered from the students’ perspective (cf.

Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Silva, Moraes, Makiya, & Cesar, 2017), despite the fact that quality is a multi-layered concept (Harvey & Green, 1993; Nabaho, Aguti, & Oonyu, 2017) and quality of education is influenced by different factors from legislative issues to actual daily-basis routines that take place in the classroom (cf. Elken & Stensaker, 2018). Therefore, the teaching profession is loaded with various contradictory expectations from the perspective of students (Datta & Vardhan, 2017; Silva et al., 2017) and from the perspective of society (Clegg, 2008; Gale, 2001). In the latter case, the teaching profession also indicates general moral and ethical responsibility (Luukkainen, 2004). This is particularly the case in the Finnish education system, in which the teaching profession is often associated with the notion of significant autonomy (Simola, 2015, 172), which, however, has been at least partially linked to education policy and its demands for education (Arvaja, 2018).

The teaching profession is also embedded in changes in the HEI environment (Pekkarinen & Hirsto, 2017). One example of this is the widening of educational operations nationally and internationally, resulting in a more diversified group of students participating in HEIs (Arvaja, 2016; Pekkarinen & Hirsto, 2017). Moreover, academic staff members increasingly struggle with internal and external pressures to compete for research funding and satisfy publication demands (Kallio, Kallio, Tienari, & Hyvönen, 2016, p. 692) and to handle a diverse set of different projects (cf. Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013). This can further create increased tension between teaching staff and university management, but it can also create conflicting career expectations for the individual (Arvaja, 2018). On the other hand, 'older layers do not disappear when new ones emerge' (Ylijoki & Henriksson, 2017, p.14). Therefore, despite the clear tendency towards market-driven action (Arvaja, 2018) and the heterogeneity of the work duties (cf. Ylijoki & Ursin, 2013), Ylijoki and Henriksson (2017) remind us that, at the individual level, it is still possible to strike a balance between personal interests and institutional strategical aims (Ylijoki & Henriksson, 2017). However, finding an appropriate balance is at least to some extent a contextual concern and, in the case of education export, depends on both the sending and receiving institutions' organisational traditions as well as their socio-cultural and political contexts (Hoare, 2013; Smith, 2009).

### 4.3.2 Teachers in education export action

In general, teaching periods abroad have become multifaceted as an increasing number of various international education models, such as education export, have emerged globally (Knight, 2013; Knight, 2016). While this has increased teachers' workloads (Debowski, 2003; Smith, 2009), education export has also contributed to the diversification of teaching (Engel, 2012; Smith, 2014). At the same time, teaching staff have become increasingly heterogeneous. For example, education export implementations can cover teachers from both the providing and receiving institutions (Smith, 2009; Smith, 2013; Smith, 2014) but also locally recruited teachers (Pyvis, 2011) who work to hourly contracts. In the case of teachers from the providing institutions, working periods abroad may comprise short-term visits (Smith, 2014), or teaching staff may stay at the education export project location for longer periods (Wilkins & Neri, 2019). In this doctoral dissertation, sub-studies III and IV focused explicitly on teaching staff who had participated in educational export implementations abroad occasionally or for short terms. In earlier studies, such groups of teachers have sometimes been called 'flying faculty' (Smith, 2014; Szkornik, 2017).

The flying faculty is shaped by the wide range of different education export implementations as well as socio-cultural (Leung & Waters, 2017; Smith, 2014), educational (Pyvis, 2011) and geo-political contexts (Leung & Waters, 2017; Smith, 2014; Healey, 2018). In practice, all of these aspects may impact the implementation of the curriculum (Waterval, Frambach, Driessen, & Scherpbier, 2015), which is sometimes required at short notice (sub-study IV/Article 4) in contexts where the academic and cultural backgrounds of students and teaching staff can differ significantly (Castle & Kelly, 2004; Gift, Leo-Rhynie, & Moniquette, 2006; Pyvis, 2011; Waterval et al., 2015). Curriculum delivery is a central element of quality assurance (Healey, 2018) because education export providers may be under legitimate pressure to implement pedagogical practicalities, content and assessment as it has been developed in the provider's home context (Waterval et al., 2015). Often, however, localisation of the curriculum is needed to better fit the exported education to local needs (cf. Healey, 2018).

Teaching in education export projects can lead to conflicting demands on the teacher's position. On the one hand, students participating in education export implementations should have equal opportunities to achieve learning outcomes as students at the provider institutions' home campus (Sharp, 2017). On the other hand, the programme should support local needs and contribute to the receiver's

educational goals (Healey, 2018; Pyvis, 2011), which, however, may differ from the objectives of the education export provider. Such tensions may emphasise the multidimensional role of the flying faculty in education export activities, which may include the need for teachers to step outside their comfort zones and to develop the ability to interpret situations (Healey, 2018; Leung & Waters, 2017). At the same time, teaching in education export implementations indicates the ability to recognise the different territorial, local, political and cultural (power) relationships (Leung & Waters, 2017) and willingness to approach local representatives in education export implementation equally (Dunn & Wallace, 2006). Therefore, strict control from the provider's side or ignorance of the workload factors that affect tactical teaching performance may not result in sustainable educational 'production' (cf. Leung & Waters, 2017), at least not in the long term. Moreover, the education export phenomenon is a dynamic and changing phenomenon in which the teacher's identity can be challenged in practice (Liao & Maddamsetti, 2019) and in which the current situation of international mobility represents a north-south dimension (Kosmützky & Putty, 2016) that may face challenges in the future (Leung & Waters, 2017).

In addition, education export can provide a unique international working context for teachers who challenge established academic roles (Smith, 2009; Smith, 2014) and develop new approaches to teaching (Cranton & Carusetta, 2002). For institutions, teachers' engagement in education export action can enhance the organisation's intellectual capital (Lönqvist et al., 2018) and foster its teaching capacity at both the providing and receiving institutions (Hoare, 2013). However, this will require HEIs to recognise and value teaching in education export projects (Smith, 2009) and to support the teachers' ability to enhance their teaching skills in various intercultural settings (Dickson, Hughes, & Stephens, 2017; Hoare, 2013). Thus, education export can provide a platform for the institution to reflect their teaching activities (Hoare, 2013) and thereby become 'intercultural learning organisations', as stated by Hoare (Hoare, 2013, p. 572). However, this requires a more holistic understanding of how sufficient work-private-life balance may be ensured (Hoare, 2013; Starr & Currie, 2009), which is not self-evidently stressed in the human resource policies of HEIs (Hoare, 2013).

In the Finnish context, education export activities are an emerging phenomenon (cf. Lönqvist et al., 2018; Schatz, 2016) and the 'export readiness' of HEIs (Cai et al., 2012) has only recently been strengthened. Therefore, HEIs must be able to justify their educational export activities not only to external stakeholders but equally to internal stakeholders. In this respect, understanding education exports as a broader opportunity than purely commercial activities is crucial, as it can significantly

enhance academics' commitment to education export action (Lönqvist et al., 2018). One possible means of gaining internal legitimation is to consider education export as an expansion of academic career opportunities (sub-study IV/Article 4) with the understanding that academic qualification, especially at universities, is still primarily based on research record (Aarrevaara & Elias, 2010, 46). However, teachers are just one manifestation of the continually changing academic profession (Siekkinen, Pekkola, & Carvalho, 2019). Considering the recent trend of higher education and the increasing variety of international education, teaching in multicultural student groups and short-term teaching periods abroad may well become an integrated aspect of academics' work more generally in the future.

#### **4.3.3 Teachers' engagement in education export regimes from the perspective of transformative learning**

One noteworthy approach to understanding teachers' ability to participate in education export action is to consider engagement as an individual plan (Thévenot, 2014) whereby academic staff nurture personal career-related intentions (cf. Leemann, 2018) and motivations to engage in professional development (cf. Huberman, Grounauer, & Marti, 1993). In particular, teachers who are novel participants in education export projects abroad can consider things from a new perspective by experiencing different cultural and physical environments (Smith 2009). Therefore, experiences gained from education export can result in a re-establishment of assumptions and personal reflection on values, which may translate further into professional learning (Cranton & Carusetta, 2002), which in this research is approached by adopting Mezirow's transformative learning theory (Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow, 1998; Mezirow, 2000).

Mezirow's theoretical framework for transformative learning addresses the learning of new perspectives by reflecting on and questioning them in relation to personal beliefs, earlier experiences and the person's life history (Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow, 2000). Learning occurs in Mezirow's model as a social process in which the meanings of earlier interpretations have either become more refined or transformed into something else as a result of critical and reflective action (Mezirow, 2000). In this case, the learner himself or herself has an active role in the learning process (Mezirow, 1991), through which new meanings can be either adopted or rejected (Mezirow, 1991, 4-5). Transformative learning in itself can take place within the framework of formal education (Fleischer, 2006), but it can also be triggered by



new contexts (Cranton & Carusetta, 2002; Smith, 2009), such as education export implementation.

The critical elements in Mezirow's transformative learning are meaning schema and meaning perspective (Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow, 2000). Meaning schema represents a person's values, assumptions or beliefs regarding the existence of someone or something and how these existing entities should be (Mezirow, 1991). Accordingly, meaning perspective represents a fundamental system that includes both values, assumptions and beliefs, and personal history: 'structure of assumptions within which one's past experience assimilates and transforms new experience' (Mezirow, 1991, p. 42). According to Mezirow (1991), transformation typically takes place in the meaning schema, although transformation in the meaning perspective can also happen in the short term, reflecting epochal transformation, or over a more extended period, indicating incremental transformation (Mezirow, 1991).

One of the preconditions for transformative learning is critical reflection (Lundgren & Poell, 2016; Mezirow, 1991). Reflective thinking may be considered part of the teaching profession (Biggs & Tang, 2011) and learning (Dewey, 1997), in which new perspectives are constructed in relation to the previously experienced (Lundgren & Poell, 2016). However, for Mezirow, reflection involves a critical examination of the legitimacy of one's beliefs and values (Mezirow, 1998), and he suggests that 'reflection is the process of critically assessing the content, process, or premise(s) of our efforts to interpret and give meaning to an experience' (Mezirow, 1991, p. 104). In transformative learning, reflection is categorised as content reflection, critical reflection or premise reflection. Content reflection indicates the process whereby earlier values, beliefs and assumption are challenged by new experiences or new information. Critical reflection denotes reflection whereby the relevance of new information or novel experiences is re-considered. Accordingly, premise reflection invites the learner to explore why earlier values, assumptions and beliefs are challenged, representing thus the core stage of transformation in the meaning perspective, which is assumed to be a more effective and permanent way of processing new information compared to transformation in the meaning schema. In accordance with premise reflection, new understanding is shared, discussed and tested with colleagues, friends or other relevant persons. In the final stage, new meanings are transferred in practice (Mezirow, 1991).

While education export can provide new socio-cultural and political teaching contexts (Cranton & Carusetta, 2002; Smith, 2009; Smith, 2014) and therefore includes a potential platform for professional development and transformative

learning (Smith, 2009), teachers' time and space, however, can be limited (Ginns, Kitay, & Prosser, 2010; Hoare, 2013). A lack of support from the institutions (Hoare, 2013), colleagues and academic managers (Ginns et al., 2010) can also limit the teachers' ability to engage in transformative learning. Moreover, creating meanings based on one's experiences is a historically, spatially, temporally and intersubjectively bounded process (cf. Backman, 2018), that was not critically considered in Mezirow's transformative learning module (Taylor & Cranton, 2013).

Despite the limitations of Mezirow's transformative learning model, in this study, transformative learning describes teachers' potential commitment to education export implementations (Hoare, 2013; Smith, 2009), which represents their engagement with the individual plan (Leemann, 2018; Thévenot, 2014). This can be further supported by the institution's human resources policy and recognition of the opportunities and limitations steered by the underlying conventions governing the export education activities and quality of education. However, in the Finnish context, the importance of human resources policy has not been emphasised as an aspect of education export (as stressed in sub-study IV/Article 4). However, ensuring a skilled human resource is part of HEIs' intellectual capital (Lönnqvist et al., 2018), and thus teaching staff may be seen as fulfilling a critical role in maintaining the quality of education in education export implementations (as stated in sub-study III/Article 3).

## 4.4 Summary of the theoretical perspectives

Based on the triangulation of theory, method and data (Denzin, 2012; Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009), in the present study, research quality in the Finnish higher education export phenomenon is approached from three different theoretical perspectives. First, policy context (sub-study I) is considered from the perspective of CDA, based on social constructionism (Burr, 2003; Fairclough, 1992; Fairclough, 2001; Fairclough, 2003). This clarifies the national higher education policy setting for opportunities and challenges in education export action. It also facilitates consideration of the role of quality in the national debate on education export.

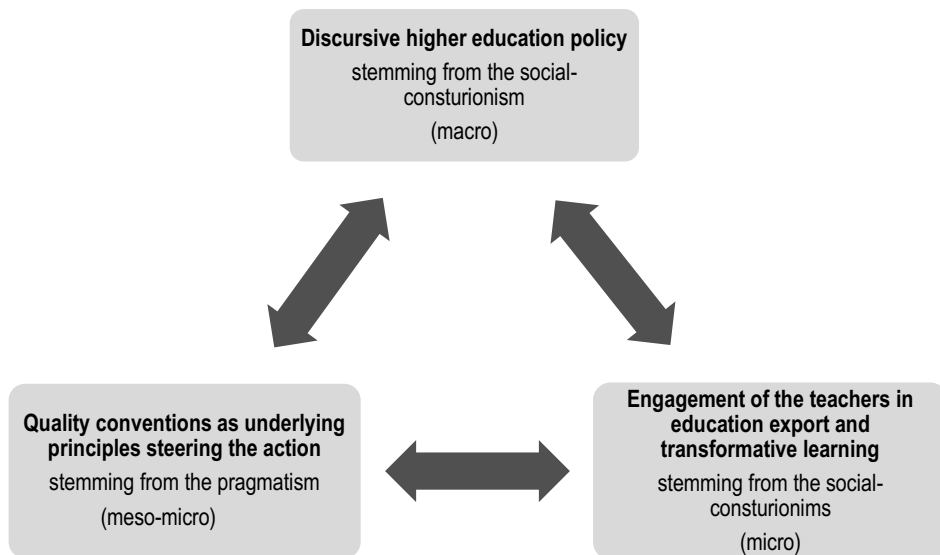
Second, examples of external audit of institutional quality assurance (sub-study II) and notions of quality from the perspectives of students and teachers in education export implementation (sub-study III) are explored by adopting the convention theoretical approach that is based on pragmatism (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Diaz-Bone & Salais, 2011; Diaz-Bone, 2017; Ponte, 2009; Storper & Salais, 1997). In that respect, the research focus is on the socio-

cultural and cognitive frames that represent underlying principles that steer the quality factors identified in the institutional audit reports (sub-study II) and education export implementation (sub-study III). This sheds light on the quality assurance of HEIs as they enter the global market as a novice actors (sub-study II), but it also stresses quality as it is done in daily actions (sub-study III).

Finally, the teachers' domain and engagement in the education export action (sub-study IV) is explored by stressing the transformative learning that stems from social constructionism (Cranton & Carusetta, 2002; Mezirow, 1998; Smith, 2009). In this research, this indicates the crucial role played by human resources in the successful implementation of education export action (cf. Lönnqvist et al., 2018).

In this research, triangulation in theory indicates three different theoretical approaches (see Figure 3). Each of the theoretical angles allows the examination of quality in the education export phenomenon from different perspectives, thus expanding the understanding of quality and its manifestations in different empirical settings. In addition, each sub-study (sub-studies I-IV) represents an independent entity, which together illustrate the diversity and complexity of the phenomenon of quality. Therefore, the theoretical starting points did not contradict one another, because each sub-study focused on examining quality by applying different empirical data and independent theoretical frameworks that facilitate an illustration of the dynamics of quality as a multifaceted concept in the context of Finnish education export.

**Figure 3.** Triangle of the theoretical perspectives



As Figure 3 illustrates, different aspects constitute dynamics between the different theoretical perspectives that have been included in this study. For analytic purposes, the macro, meso and micro levels have been included in the triangle indicating the analytical levels in sub-studies I–IV. However, the dynamics between different levels are somewhat fragmented and complex in education export action, as different levels interact with each other in a nonlinear fashion (cf. Marginson & Rhoades, 2002). Therefore, in this doctoral dissertation, the analytical levels (macro-meso-micro) do not represent a hierarchical connection; rather, perspectives at the macro, meso and micro levels can constitute the blurred mix of interdependencies. For example, education export debate can construct social meanings that may directly (e.g. amendments to the legislation) or indirectly (e.g. general attitude towards education export) impact education export action at the institutional level. Likewise, teachers’ experiences in education export implementation can potentially enhance new institutional practices at the faculty and institutional levels.

## 5 DATA AND METHODS

Stemming from qualitative research traditions (Creswell, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009) this study adopts a holistic and interpretive approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994) to the quality concept in the context of Finnish education export by combining three types of triangulation: data source triangulation, method triangulation and theory triangulation (Denzin, 1978; Patton, 2002). In sub-studies I–IV (Articles 1–4) data triangulation covered policy documents, institutional audit reports, interviews, online questionnaire and personal notes from participant observation (see Table 4). Likewise, triangulation in analysis covered CDA (Fairclough, 1993; Fairclough, 2001; Fairclough, 2003) and qualitative content analysis (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009). The empirical data collection was based on the policy documents available in public, semi-structured interviews, participant observation and an online questionnaire. Overall, the triangulation of method, data and theory led to complementary findings on the quality of education in the context of Finnish education export (cf. Patton, 2002). At the same time, it required an exploration of the ontological and epistemological premises of each of the selected approaches (Blaikie, 1991) that were presented in Chapter 3. (Epistemological and ontological premises).

**Table 4.** Outlines of the methods and data

<i>Article/sub-study</i>	<i>Method of the data analysis</i>	<i>Data</i>
<i>Article 1/Sub-study I: Discursive analysis of national debate on education export</i>	Critical discourse analysis	21 documents
<i>Article 2/Sub-study II: Quality conventional perspective on the quality assurance of education export in the case of Finland</i>	Qualitative content analysis, abductive logic	2 institutional audit reports
<i>Article 3/Sub-study III: Quality conventions in the exported Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia</i>	Qualitative content analysis, abductive logic	16 semi-structured interviews, personal notes from the participant observation (16 Word documents)
<i>Article 4/Sub-study IV: Exploring teaching staff's experiences of implementing a Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia</i>	Qualitative content analysis, abductive logic	19 responses from the online questionnaire, personal notes from the participant observation (16 Word documents)

## 5.1 Critical discourse analysis as a method

CDA, as a method, provides a comprehensive analytical tool with which to analyse meanings in written and spoken language (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002). According to Fairclough (2001), discourses are considered as ‘a form of social practices’ (Fairclough, 2001, p. 22). In this study, discourses indicate both social processes and social conditions, which are internally embedded in social settings (Fairclough, 2001, p. 22–23), representing Fairclough’s (2001; 2003) approach to CDA. In this research, discourse analysis focused on 21 policy documents (sub-study I, Article 1). The selected policy documents represented the main institutional actors of Finnish higher education policy (cf. Kauko, 2011, 4), such as universities (UNIFI), universities of applied sciences (ARENE) and national student unions (SAMOK and SYL). To ensure that the analysis was manageable within a reasonable timeframe, the data were limited, and, for example, policy documents produced by trade unions were excluded from this analysis.

In this research, CDA was based on intertextual analysis, representing an interpretive approach to analysing the meanings identified in the documents. Therefore, the analysis was not applied from the linguistic perspective; instead, the meanings presented in the data constituted orders of discourse corresponding to the broader socio-cultural context (Fairclough, 1997, p. 90). The concept of orders of discourse represents a networked historical continuum of social practices from the perspective of discourses (Fairclough, 2001, 29), alternating aspects of the Finnish educational tradition, such as equality and democracy (Simpson, 2018) and broader trends of education policy such as commercialisation (Välilmaa, 2004). Orders of discourse are actualised in the socio-cultural context (Fairclough, 2001). In this study, the socio-cultural context consists of a higher education policy on the export of education, which was formed between the years 2009 and 2015. The selected timeframe was based on the availability of the policy documents and topicality of the education export. Moreover, legislation covering commissioned education (*tilauskoulutus* in Finnish), which can be considered as one mode of education export, was implemented in the Universities Act and the University of Applied Sciences Act in 2010 (Universities Act 2009/558 § 9; University of Applied Sciences Act 2014/932 § 13). Likewise, education export was included in the Internationalisation Strategy for Higher Education 2009–2015, which was published in 2009. The strategy can be considered one of the first national strategies for education export, which laid the foundation for further national goals.

Analysis process included four different stages, which often overlapped and proceeded in parallel. First, the data were read several times to attain familiarity with the different types of text production. Second, the terms used in education exports were identified in the data. Activities related to terms were also identified at this stage. Third, themes, arguments, the reasoning behind the themes and arguments and the topics that seemed to dominate the debate were identified. This stage included several phases with the ultimate aim of finding a variety of discourses that include power relations and therefore indicate the hegemony of the certain discourse, that took up space for some other discourses. Fourth, the role of the quality concept was clarified in the identified discourses. Finally, the data analysis was interpreted as part of the higher education policy context. This process represents Fairclough's (2001) CDA, in which the text is not interpreted as a stand-alone reality (Fairclough, 2001) but rather is seen as part of a political interest that seeks to subvert or reinforce power relations and thereby stress the power of discourse resulting in implications for social and institutional practices (Törrönen, 2005, 158).

## 5.2 Qualitative content analysis

In this study, qualitative content analysis was applied in sub-studies II–IV ( Articles 2-4). In these cases, the analysis focused on audit reports (Article 2), semi-structured interviews (Article 3) and open-ended questions collected through the online questionnaire (Article 4). In general, qualitative content analysis focuses on written data according to themes, similarities and differences, to provide a synthesised description of the research topic and the broader context relating to the research (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009, 105-106). Qualitative content analysis has been widely applied in the field of qualitative research, and it covers different approaches from theory-based (deductive) analysis to data-based (inductive) analysis (Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009). One of the challenges in qualitative content analysis is the transparency of the analysis logic in constituting themes and categories as well as their interpretation (Graneheim, Lindgren, & Lundman, 2017). However, these aspects are typical of qualitative research in general; interpretation is influenced by the researcher’s own experience and knowledge, and thus the qualitative research setting emphasises subjectivity (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009, p. 20), which makes it difficult, for example, to replicate the research (cf. Seale, 2004).

For sub-studies II–IV (Articles 2-4), qualitative content analysis consisted the following phases: 1) careful reading and familiarisation with the empirical data, 2) coding the data by focusing on meaning units, 3) categorising the units according to differences and similarities and 4) forming the synthesis based on the main categories and context of the research topic (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Graneheim & Lundman, 2004; Miles & Huberman, 1994). Detailed descriptions of the analytic processes used in sub-studies II–IV are presented in Articles 2-4. The coding and categorisation of the data were carried out using the MaxQDA software programme. The analytical logic was based on abductive logic and a hermeneutic circle indicating the researcher’s previous understanding of both the subject and the theoretical and conceptual frameworks (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). However, data analysis was not dominated by the researcher’s previous understanding; rather the theoretical framework, data analysis and reporting the findings were conducted in parallel, allowing the notions stressed in the empirical data to be utilised in the theoretical framework (cf. Paavola, 2004).

Moreover, personal notes taken during the participant observation were consulted during the analytical process and, in certain respects, guided the researcher to select relevant themes in the empirical data. For example, in sub-study III (Article 3), communal learning was emphasised in the personal notes taken during participant



observation and was interpreted as a success factor of the program in the semi-structured interviews, although the codes and categories were not established beforehand. This dialogue between the interview data and observation notes can, in some cases, highlight the contradictions that emerge between the different empirical data (Atkinson & Coffey, 2003). However, in this study, observation notes and interview data represented a different narrative; the interviews recorded reality from the perspective of each participant, including students and staff members (Atkinson & Coffey, 2003; Mietola, 2007), while observation notes represented the researcher's personal notions in a particular context, which was further transformed by the text into the researcher's narrative as a textual field (Palmu, 2007).

### 5.3 Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews represent the primary empirical data of sub-study 3 (N16, 281 transcribed word documents) and are a common research method in qualitative analysis (Fontana & Frey, 1994; Patton, 2002). In general, interviews permit consideration of other people's perspectives on the research topic, and in this respect, they emphasise the meanings created by the participants involved in the research (Patton, 2002). At the same time, the information obtained through interviews enriches the perspectives obtained via other materials (such as documents) (Mykkänen, 2001, p. 110). However, interviews are always unique social events in their specific way, influenced by personal history and the socio-cultural backgrounds of both the interviewer and the interviewees (Fontana & Frey, 1994). Therefore, careful preparation, such as conducting pilot interviews, is essential (cf. Patton, 2002)

The target group of the interviews represented participants in an exported master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia, which is a single-case example of exported Finnish teacher education. Finland's good PISA-success has increased international curiosity towards Finnish teacher education, which can be considered as one of the most typical and coveted Finnish education export activity (Schatz, 2016b; OPH, 2020). As a result, exported teacher education in Indonesia represents an interesting, and rather a common case (see Yin, 2015) of one the nationally well-recognized forms of Finnish education export (OPH, 2020).

In this study, the interview data included 16 semi-structured interviews. The interviews were conducted in two geographical locations—Indonesia and Finland—between November 2016 and June 2017. Interviews were conducted either in

Finnish or English, depending on the interviewees' mother tongues; in the case of Finnish-speaking participants, the interview was conducted in Finnish; in other cases, the interviews were conducted in English. Interviews lasted from 40 minutes to 1.5 hours, with an average duration of 45 minutes. Before conducting the interviews, one pilot interview was conducted and, based on the comments received the interview questions were modified to be more understandable for participants (see Appendix 1: Interview guide student-participants; Appendix 2: Interview guide staff-participants).

In all, eight interview participants resented staff (teaching and non-teaching staff) involved in the exported education. Similarly, eight participants represented students. Staff interviews were conducted in Finland (between January and June 2017) whereas student interviews were conducted in Indonesia during fieldwork in November 2016. Interviewees selection was based on snowball sampling, utilising the contact information provided by those already participating in the interview (Noy, 2008, 300). Before the fieldwork commenced in Indonesia, the study objectives and the possibility of interviewing were disclosed in the research permission that was sought by the client (Sukma Foundation) of the exported master's degree programme in teacher education (sub-study 3) (Appendix 3: Permission to conduct research). This allowed the student interviewees to have some prior knowledge of the research and to consider their willingness to participate in the study in advance. Overall, finding interviewees was a reasonably smooth process, and the student interviewees were particularly willing to participate. Interview permits were requested orally from each interviewee individually. In general, interviews were planned and carried out in accordance with the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity's (TENK) guidelines for human science in Finland. In practice, this meant, for example, that interviews were anonymised, and interviewees were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage of the research process.

The interview guide included four main themes: expectation, personal experiences, important aspects and ideas for improvement (see Appendices 1 and 2). However, each interview situation was unique in its own way, influenced by the location of the interview, the time of the interview (including the stage of the program), the language used and whether the interviewee and the interviewer were familiar with each other beforehand. As a result, the interview guide was relatively loosely followed in cases where the interviewee and interviewer knew one another. In the interviews, the personal experience of each interviewee was stressed, For example, students considered the success of the programme from the perspective of

their own expectations and learning practices, while staff members focused on their own work duties in the program. The interviews were later transcribed and analysed using qualitative content analysis. Personal notes from participatory observation were also used to interpret the results of the analysis.

## 5.4 Participant observation

Participant observation may be beneficial for gaining the research participants' trust and strengthening the holistic understanding of the context and the participants' perspective (Nandhakumar & Jones, 2002; Patton, 2002; Rajaniemi, 2010). Moreover, participant observation can provide a comprehensive tool with which to reflect the researcher's position in the research process (Nandhakumar & Jones, 2002), particularly if the researcher has analytical tools to identify, for example, his/her insider/outsider or overt/covert positions and these effects on data collection and data generation at different stages of the research (McCurdy & Uldam, 2014). However, participant observation and its interpretation are inherently subjective (McCurdy & Uldam, 2014), wherein the method itself involves ethical responsibilities (Li, 2008; McCurdy & Uldam, 2014; Nandhakumar & Jones, 2002), such as identifying the impact of the researcher's presence on the research subject (Li, 2008). Also, participant observation and analysis may require significant time-consuming resources, which is not always possible within the given time frame of the study (McCurdy & Uldam, 2014).

In this study, personal notes taken during the participant observation were utilised in the data analysis of sub-studies III and IV (Articles 3 and 4). Therefore, participant observation was focused on the exported master's degree programme in teacher education. The purpose of participant observation was to understand and interpret the context of the exported master's degree programme in teacher education from the perspective of those involved in the programme's implementation, such as students and teaching staff. In practice, participant observation included observation in Indonesia and Finland, and it encompassed the following situations: events organised in Finland by the faculty (e.g. preparation meeting for staff members, reception for students during the Finland visit, graduation gala) and the fieldwork conducted in the programme's primary location in Indonesia. The fieldwork in Indonesia lasted a total of 10 days, including travel days, whereas participant observation in Finland consisted of several individual events, lasting one to three hours per event. The participant observation was

conducted overtly as the participants were informed that the observation method would be used during the application for research permission. Participant observation was also mentioned orally to the students' group.

Fieldwork in Indonesia took place at the project location—the elementary school area 'campus' of the Sukma Foundation in Bireuen. Lectures, facilities and accommodation of students and teachers of the exported master's degree programme were all located on the same campus. During the fieldwork period, I lived in the female students' dormitory, and I attended the lectures, daily breakfast, lunch breaks, dinners and the students' leisure time. I was also asked to give a presentation on the Finnish education system for pupils of Sukma's elementary school. In this study, participant observation was conducted within a relatively short period, and although I was unable to follow the daily activities on a long-term basis, participant observation still gave a valuable understanding of the context.

Participant observation plan was based on Spradley's (1980) nine-step category for participant observation and Gordon et al.'s (2007) notions on school ethnography. According to Spradley (1980), the categories for participant observation involve space, actors, physical objects that are present, single acts, events that include sets of single acts, timeframe, goals (the things that the actors are trying to achieve) and feelings that are expressed (Spradley, 1980, 78). Moreover, Gordon et al. (2007) presented a project meeting as one method of exploring collective ethnography. According to them, project meetings can include discussion of practical issues and the researchers' personal interpretations (Gordon et al., 2007, p. 53–55). Based on Spradley's (1980) detailed categories and Gordon et al.'s (2007) notions on ethnography, the participant observation plan in this study was divided into primary observation and self-reflection. (Appendix 4: Plan for participant observation).

In practice, the observation plan provided a structure that was particularly useful during the first days in Indonesia, as it allowed me to take observation notes systematically. It also encouraged me to keep a research diary during the fieldwork, but also prior to and after entering the field. However, situations in participant observation ranged from classroom discussions to informal lunch discussions, and ultimately, adherence to the detailed plan was not always possible nor even meaningful; practical situations eventually dictate the framework within which the researcher works (Li, 2008; McCurdy & Uldam, 2014).

Notes taken during the participant observation were used as complementary empirical data when formulating the research questions, analysing the data and presenting the findings; the coded themes were interpreted as parts of a larger entity,

and I was able to consider contextual and local aspects of the research that would not have emerged without the participant observation. One such notion was related to the researcher's position; during the fieldwork in Indonesia, it became clear that aside from being considered as a doctoral candidate focusing on the education export phenomenon, I was also considered a representative of Finnish higher education and Finnish education export, and I was asked about my personal experiences of master's studies or the Finnish national quality assurance system. Such informal conversations outside the interview context supported the interviews in the sense that the interviewees and interviewer were familiar with one another beforehand. At the same time, they challenged me to examine my position as a researcher in relation to the subject being studied (Li, 2008). Overall, the personal notes taken during participant observation comprise 16 Word documents.

## 5.5 Online questionnaire

In sub-study IV (Article 4), the empirical data were collected through an online questionnaire (Appendix 5: online questionnaire) that was emailed to the staff involved in the exported master's degree programme in teacher education. The questionnaire was sent to a total of 24 persons, and a total of 19 anonymous responses were received. Thus, the response rate for the survey was 79%. Nearly all respondents represented teaching staff, although one respondent stated that he/she did not work as a full-time lecturer. The questionnaire aimed to clarify the staff's experience of implementing education export. This was achieved based on interviews and participant observations (Article 3) and, in the light of existing research, which emphasised, in particular, the importance of teaching staff in delivering the curriculum abroad (Healey, 2018). In general, the online questionnaire can be considered a cost-effective method of collecting data (Tourangeau, 2004).

The questionnaire consisted of qualitative and quantitative items. Questionnaire design was developed by applying Dillman's (2007) principles for the questionnaire, which took into account the expected (high) motivation of the target group to describe their experiences on working in education export implementation (Dillman, 2007). The quantitative items consisted of statements that participants responded to using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = does not describe at all to 5 = describes very well). The quantitative items were later analysed by calculating the standard deviation and average rates. Moreover, qualitative items included open questions regarding teaching experiences and motivation for engagement in education export

implementation. In the end, only the open-ended questions were selected for the research results. This was because the target group was relatively small and the open-ended questions were considered richer and more informative than the responses to the quantitative items. For the open questions, the material was analysed by adopting the qualitative content analysis.

## 6 RESULTS OF THE SUB-STUDIES I-IV

In this chapter, the main findings of sub-studies I-IV are presented by introducing the purposes, context, empirical data and further implications of each sub-study. In addition, credibility, limitation and ethical concerns are explored by considering general evaluation criteria for qualitative research and triangulation in data, method and theory.

### 6.1 Sub-study I: Critical discourse analysis on national debate of education export in Finland

**The purpose and research questions:** In the first sub-study (Article 1) the national higher education debate on education export was explored by analysing the 21 policy documents that represent the national actors in the higher education sector: government, national unions of Finnish universities and universities of applied sciences, and national unions of students in both higher education sectors. The data were limited to cover the years between 2009 and 2015, as this period was considered to represent the recent debate on education export.

The study's aim was to define the education export concept and to identify meanings given to education export as well as the role of quality in the identified meanings. Therefore, sub-study I clarified the Finnish education export context and the factors that are considered meaningful and which reflect the nascent state of Finnish education export. The methodological approach used in sub-study I was based on Fairclough's CDA and the concept of hegemony. Hegemony in this study refers to the process or desired state as well as the idea of myth that is produced within the community via hegemonic discourses.

**The case:** In sub-study I, the Finnish higher education policy was considered as a socio-cultural context for the national debate on education export. In the case of Finland, education export became part of higher education legislation in 2008, when the amendment of commissioned education (*tilauskoulutus*) was made in both the University and University of Applied Sciences Acts. Subsequently, education export has been among the main topics in the national higher education debate. Despite the

national political priorities set for the education export, the implementation of education export has been rather slow. One reason for this may be the Finnish educational tradition, in which education is primarily regarded as a public good rather than a global commodity. Moreover, Finnish HEIs do not have a long tradition of participation in the global educational market space.

**Results:** The results of the analysis suggest that education export is a fragmented concept in Finnish higher education and that it covers all for-profit actions for which the target groups are foreigners. The results also indicate that the following three discourses dominated the national debate on education export between the years 2009 and 2015: obstacle discourse (*estediskurssi*), justification discourse (*oikeutusdiskurssi*) and responsibility discourse (*vastuullisuusdiskurssi*). Obstacle discourse covered social and structural barriers that were regarded as complicated or hampering the improvement of education export action. In particular, tuition fees occupied a hegemonic position in the obstacle discourse and the national debate overall. Justification discourse followed the obstacle discourse, and it represented the starting point and inspiration for education export action. Justification discourse was reflected mainly in the Finnish PISA success that was considered in the analysis as a shared myth indicating the hegemonic status of the justification discourse. Therefore, the Finnish education system's good reputation seemed to be a resource for justifying education export nationally. In the responsibility discourse, quality management and ethical concerns were stressed. These elements were seen as prerequisites for sustainable education export activity, though the importance of quality management was highlighted without giving any concrete examples of how quality could be assured in the relatively new international action. Improvement of the quality assurance in the education export context does not appear to have been a priority either in the higher education policy agenda.

**Implications:** The results of sub-study I indicate that the fragmented definition of education export leaves space for a wide range of interpretations and, as a result, education export debate stress the issues that are relevant in the national higher education policy, regardless of whether or not they are particularly relevant in the education export implementations. For example, tuition fees as a hegemonic element of the obstacle discourse refers to the clash between the Finnish educational tradition and (new) trend of academic capitalism. Findings also suggest that while the lack of tuition fees may have set specific barriers for education export action globally, the hegemony of the tuition fees mainly stressed the national desire to maintain tuition-free education in general without any concern for the legal protection of potential fee-paying students. Moreover, the findings show that PISA success has created a



shared understanding of Finnish education as a source of pride; thus, the idea of the superiority of Finnish education and the desire to increase financial resources have supported the justification for education export action. However, despite the emphasis on the good reputation of Finnish education in the national debate, quality assurance of education export has not been on the national agenda, though the importance of quality management in education export action is recognised.

## 6.2 Sub-study II: Quality conventional perspective on the quality assurance of education export in the case Finland

**The purpose and research questions:** In sub-study II (Article 2), education export was considered from the perspective of institutional quality assurance by applying CT and qualitative content analysis. The aim of sub-study II was twofold. First, the study aimed to illustrate the Finnish national approach to quality assurance of education export. Second, the study explored the factors that appear to be distinctive to education export activities from the perspective of institutional quality management. In this sub-study, the following research questions were stressed: what quality conventions can be identified in the selected audit reports, and to what specific issues are these conventions related?

**The case:** The empirical data of this study covered two institutional audit reports that included education export as an optional target in the external quality assurance. Both audit reports were published in 2016, and at the time of the analysis, the reports were the only available national external quality audit in the higher education sector that covered education export activities. In both cases, the external institutional audits were accomplished by the FINEEC that represents the national quality assurance agency in Finland. Therefore, the analysis also facilitated analytical consideration of the national criteria for quality assurance in higher education.

**Results:** The results of the analysis indicated that education export was strategically crucial for HEIs, but still relatively new action. The principles guiding quality assurance in education export activities were particularly emphasised by an industrial convention (stressing the effective-driven action), market convention (emphasising economic competition) and a fame convention (indicating the reputation in global education market). At the same time, the education export activities generated new ideas aimed at improving educational actions in general. This represented the inspiration convention in this analysis. However, the result also showed that education export is still a somewhat unstable action, and thus the roles

and responsibilities of education export implementations were not fully established. Furthermore, the analysis addressed the fragmented definition of education export. The latter aspect can further complicate internal and external communication as well as the establishment of sufficient quality assurance, despite the strategic aims to develop effective and productive education export implementations.

**Implications:** The results of sub-study II illustrate the Finnish approach to quality assurance of HEIs and gives insight into the kinds of elements that are essential in the institutional quality assurance of education export in the higher education sector. The result also indicates that, compared to the domestic educational activities of higher education, the quality assurance of education is not fully institutionalised, and thus the role of individual actors in building trust with customers may become a significant quality factor. On the one hand, the result shows that effectiveness or economic benefits are not the only drivers of education export activities, but that fame, which seems to be tightly connected to the national and global reputations of Finnish education, plays a significant role in quality assurance. On the other hand, the empirical data did not include any ethical concerns, although education export action is often targeted towards regions that represent different cultural and social contexts.

### 6.3 Sub-study III: Quality of education in the education export implementation

**The purpose and research questions:** Sub-study III (Article 3) gave an insight into quality of education as it pertained to one commissioned degree programme that was provided by the Finnish HEI. Sub-study III also explored quality beyond the institutional and national quality assurances by indicating its underlying principles (quality conventions) from the perspective of students and staff members. This study aimed to consider quality as it appears in education export programme from the perspectives of teachers and students. The methodological commitments were based on CT, and the empirical data was analysed by conducting a qualitative content analysis. In sub-study III, the following questions were in focus: what factors describe quality of education and what logics (i.e. conventions) stree the identified quality factors?

**The case:** The commissioned Finnish master's degree in teacher education in Indonesia represented a case example of one exported Finnish degree programme that was among the first Finnish degree programmes organised abroad. The

programme was implemented in Indonesia between the years 2016 and 2017 in collaboration between the Indonesian Yayasan Sukma Foundation and the Faculty of Education, University of Tampere, Finland. The Sukma Foundation owns three comprehensive schools in the Aceh region: Bireun, Pidie and Lhokseumawe. Students on the programme were teachers from Sukma schools, holding a bachelor's degree from an Indonesian university (sarjana 1, S1 according to the Indonesian degree system). Nearly all teachers on the programme were from the University of Tampere, though, in a few cases, teachers were from other Finnish universities. The facilities were provided by the Sukma school in Bireuen, where students and teachers also stayed. Teachers stayed one week in Bireuen approximately once per month, and during that week, lectures took place. Between the intensive weeks, students had independent assignments. Students also had a six-week visit to Finland during the spring term of 2017. The empirical data of this study comprised 16 semi-structured interviews conducted in Indonesia and Finland between November 2016 and June 2017. In addition, researchers' notes from participant observation were used as complementary empirical data when presenting the findings.

**Results:** The result stressed that the factors explaining the quality of education in the context of the commissioned Finnish degree programme are related to the needs of the student group and the expectations of the client but also the provider's priorities regarding what is essential in degree-based teacher education. For example, participants stressed the development of the Sukma schools and trust-based cooperation among the different actors but also highlighted the research-based approach to teacher education, thus highlighting the dynamics of social interaction when implementing education export.

The implementation of the programme was partially organised in terms of efficiency, the ability to react to client needs and local legislation. Thus, the results illustrated the complex set of socio-cultural and cognitive frames where regional development and local traditions (civic-domestic convention) and research-based teacher education for local teachers (professional-academic) partially clash with the market-driven efficiency (market-industrial). Moreover, students' awareness of Finland as a country of superior PISA performance increased their trust in the novel programme. However, Finnish teachers were obliged to justify this good reputation in practice when giving lectures and student guidance. This shed light on the crucial role of the teacher in fostering and maintaining academic quality.

**Implications:** The results of sub-study III stress the multidimensional quality concept that is linked to the situation and purpose of the education as well as actors and context. Such complex dynamics indicate a multi-linear process of education

export implementation. The result also suggests that, in a novel education export implementation, quality is partially personalised by the actors and framed in a different cultural, historical and social environment. This can further indicate that, despite its good reputation, Finnish education must be legitimised locally by adopting underlying conventions. At the same time, education export may as well require legitimisation at the provider's organisation and nationally in Finland.

## 6.4 Sub-study IV: Domain of the teachers' engagement in the education export implementation

**The purpose and research questions:** In sub-study IV (Article 4), the aim was to analyse the motivation and experiences of teaching staff participating in a novel exported Finnish degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia. The study shed light on the teacher's professional development in the frame of internationalisation, but it also stressed the importance of having coherent human resource management. In this sub-study, the theoretical approach was based on Mezirow's transformative learning concept. The empirical data were analysed through qualitative content analysis. Sub-study IV stressed the following research questions: What kind of motivation did the teachers have for participating in the education export projects? What kind of experience did they have in teaching in the education export project? How can the Faculty of Education support teachers' participation in education export projects?

**The Case:** The general case explanation was given in the summary of sub-study III. In sub-study IV, the focus was on teaching staff that were involved in the exported master's degree programme in Indonesia. Nearly all teachers in the exported master's programme came from the University of Tampere, though three teachers came either from the University of Jyväskylä or the University of Eastern Finland. For most teachers, participation in the education export implementation required one week's stay in Bireuen, Indonesia, where the program was mainly implemented. However, a few teachers taught the Indonesian student group in Finland during the students' Finland visit, which took place between March and April 2017. Face-to-face lecturing on this programme was mainly based on the intensive weeks that took place once per month. Between the intensive weeks, students took part in online courses and worked independently. The data in this article were based on the online questionnaire distributed to the teachers and other staff members in March 2017. A total of 19 individuals completed the questionnaire

within the set timeframe, and thus the response rate was 79%. The questionnaire consisted of quantitative and qualitative items. However, in the analysis, the focus was on answers gained via open questions as these were considered more informative and thus the result was based on the questionnaire's qualitative items.

**Results:** The results of the sub-study IV showed that the most common reason for teachers to participate in the education export activities was professional development, but that curiosity about the novel international action also influenced them. Some teachers, however, agreed to teaching in education export implementation out of a sense of duty. The result also stressed the personal factors; teachers were more willing to participate in education export action that aligned with their (personal) ethical values. In addition, the result indicated that while education export may be a positive cultural experience, it can also create extra work related to the preparation of teaching materials and ability to adapt to different socio-cultural and physical contexts. Accordingly, the results emphasised that, at the faculty level, flexibility and an improved ability to take into account the actual workload in the teachers' working arrangements were crucial elements for future consideration.

**Implications:** The results of sub-study III suggest the pivotal role of teaching staff in educational export implementations and in maintaining the quality of education in practice. First, the teaching staff is, in principle, the closest link between the students and the education provided; via teaching, Finnish education becomes a reality for students. For the teachers, participation in the education export activity requires a sufficient balance between the tasks of the education export and other work tasks at home. In this case, ensuring sufficient human resources and working conditions is critical. Moreover, education export can offer a variation in teachers' work routines. However, from the perspectives of internationalisation and development of higher education, the systematic support of the institution for reflection on the experiences of foreign periods is essential. This would also maintain the quality of education in the novice education export implementations.

## 6.5 Credibility, limitation and ethical concerns in sub-studies I–IV

In general, qualitative research represents an interpretive and descriptive research tradition that relies on certain methodological premises (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994), such as pragmatism and social constructionism, which have been the epistemological and ontological starting points in this doctoral dissertation. Moreover, this research

was conducted by applying triangulation in data, method and theory to access comprehensive and diverse perspectives from which to consider ‘quality’ in the context of Finnish education export at the macro, meso and micro levels.

Creditability in this research indicates the trustworthiness and transparency of the research process (Meyrick, 2006) as well as consideration of the methodological and theoretical relationship with the research aims and questions (Cho & Trent, 2006; Kleven, 2008). These considerations are essential to validation in qualitative research in general (Cho & Trent, 2006; Kleven, 2008; Meyrick, 2006), but they are particularly crucial in triangulation, where one of the disadvantages is the fragmentation and incompatibility of theoretical and methodological choices (Thurmond, 2001). Therefore, triangulation in data, method and theory requires the identification of epistemological and ontological premises in different research traditions (Blaikie, 1991). These issues are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.

The decision to apply triangulation of data, method and theory emerged during the research process. On the one hand, the decision was influenced by the availability and nature of the empirical data and the general development of education export activities in Finland. On the other hand, triangulation was chosen as the research results were refined through the articles and as the researcher’s understanding of the education export phenomenon developed. During the research process, the research questions also became more specific and even changed, which is typical in qualitative research (see e.g. Agee, 2009). My original aim was to focus on quality assurance processes in education export action by applying a multiple-case-study approach. However, as the research progressed, focusing solely on the quality assurance process did not seem feasible, as export education was a relatively new activity for HEIs. Thus, quality assurance practices were in progress. Moreover, accessing concrete cases was challenging as limited information was publicly available. Furthermore, the implementation schedule of the education export activities was difficult to predict due to the negotiation process and the time needed for practical arrangements. Therefore, I decided to include a single education export implementation, which, in the end, allowed me to consider the position and experiences of the teachers in greater depth.

Selection of the theories, methods and data gathering was made sub-study-basis by taking into the purpose of the research, but also by leaving room for reconsideration and reflection. In sub-study I, CDA was applied because, at the beginning of the study, (national) education export terminology, the focus of national education export policy debate, and the nature of quality in the education export phenomenon all seemed unclear and fragmented. At this stage, education

export was considered a political and social phenomenon, whereby central meanings are constructed through language (cf. Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002).

In sub-studies II and III, the aim was to focus on quality assurance (sub-study II) and the quality of education in sub-study III. At this point of research, I considered theoretical framework of this doctoral dissertation more broadly. For example, I considered institutional theoretical approaches, such as institutional logic that could have provided one approach to consider underlying principles of quality of education (see e.g. Friedland, 2012) and institutional work that would have stressed the actors role for maintaining and changing the institution (see e.g. Lawrence, Suddaby, & Leca, 2011). However, in sub-studies II and III, I decided to apply a convention theoretical premise because it provided a more valid starting point for examining novel activities in the institutional settings (Diaz-Bone, 2018; Eymard-Duvernay, Favereau, Orléan, Salais, & Thévenot, 2005) by incorporating justification (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Patriotta, Gond, & Schultz, 2011) and quality of production (Ponte, 2009) as well as recognises the central role of actors and moral perspectives (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). Data analysis was performed by applying qualitative content analysis, as it was considered to provide a good starting point for the sub-research questions. In retrospect, discourse analysis as a method could have been considered more closely, at least for sub-study II, which focused on audit reports. This could have highlighted the terminological choices that were also among the research interests in the sub-study I.

In sub-studies II and III, the data selection was determined by accessibility. In sub-study II, the institutional audit reports facilitated the consideration of education export as it is considered in external quality assurance. This exemplified the institutional basis for quality management of export education, but also the national external audit approach to education export conducted by the Finnish HEIs. Audit reports were also publicly accessible, and the selected documents represent the time of research the first audit reports where education export was included in the target of external audit. In sub-study III, the data consisted of interviews and participant observation. The interviewees represented students as well as teaching and administrative staff. This allowed a focus on the quality of education as it appears in practice in a single education export implementation from the perspective of the main participants—students and teachers.

Sub-study III highlighted the crucial role of the teachers in education export implementation. Therefore, in sub-study IV, the teachers' personal experiences of engagement in the education export project were stressed. The data for sub-study III were gathered via an online questionnaire, which provided an easily accessible

means of gathering responses from the relatively large group of teachers. The questionnaire included qualitative and quantitative items, but the analysis focused solely on the qualitative items by conducting the qualitative content analysis. Based on the findings of sub-study IV, the career perspectives was especially emphasised, and therefore the findings were further interpreted by applying the transformative learning framework (see e.g. Mezirow, 1991). This provided a coherent analytical tool with which to highlight the bidirectional learning of educational export activities: the adoption of new perspectives not only concerns the receivers (students or customers), but also the provider of the education export (teachers and other representatives of the provider institution).

One of the essential limitations of this doctoral dissertation is related to the triangulation of theory. Each theoretical approach—discourse analysis, CT and transformative learning—have their own ontological and epistemological premises that steer the attention of the data analysis and interpretation in a certain direction. In this case, the primary purpose of the research is at risk of becoming unclear. At the same time, triangulation of theory can be considered as one of the strengths of this study, which describes the diversity of the concept of quality in an analytical and manifold way.

The second limitation relates to the selection of data, particularly for sub-studies II and III, and the potential differences between the two higher education sectors: universities and universities of applied sciences. For example, this study did not consider whether operational differences between universities of applied sciences or universities, such as the professional orientation of universities of applied sciences or the research focus of universities, can influence the quality of education in education export activities. Instead, in this study, the higher education sector was considered a single national entity. From the perspective of accessible data, the data selection and decision to exclude the system-level difference was ultimately a pragmatic decision.

Overall, the different stages of the research process were guided by the Responsible conduct of research and procedures for handling allegations of misconduct in Finland (2012) and the Ethical Principles of Research in the Humanities and Social and Behavioural Sciences and Proposals for Ethical Review (2009), provided by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity. These principles included consideration of integrity, meticulousness and accuracy when conducting research as well as respecting the autonomy of research subjects, avoiding harm and protecting privacy and data. The purpose of this research was communicated to the participants (interviewees and representatives of the education



export implementation in sub-study III as well as the respondents to the online questionnaire in sub-study IV) in writing or orally. Participation in this research was voluntary and participants were permitted to withdraw from the research at any time during the study. The research data were anonymised so that individuals could not have been identified in the results or from direct quotations. In reporting the research results, the work of both the co-authors and the work by other researchers was recognised. The research funding bodies were also mentioned in the published articles.

In the context of sub-study III, also cultural issues emerged, and these were particularly reflected before, during and after the fieldwork. For example, before entering the field, I considered the cultural manners (such as dress code) and domestic academic traditions. I also planned different alternatives to conducting the interviews such as focus group interviews as I wanted to provide diverse opportunities to participate in this research. However, during the fieldwork, semi-structured one by one interview was conducted. Working in a different socio-cultural context also provided me as a doctoral researcher an opportunity to reflect on my own position, personal (academic and socio-cultural) background and the research subject (as presented in Chapter 1.3.).

## 7 DISCUSSION

This doctoral dissertation addressed two phenomena: quality of education and education export, indicating the different notions, fragmented meanings, multiple characteristics, variety of actions and plurality of principles related to quality of education and education export. Moreover, this study showed that education export covers a wide range of different types of action and services (cf. Knight, 2016; Naidoo, 2009) as well as a complex set of internal and external stakeholders (cf. Borgos, 2013; Farrugia & Lane, 2013).

In general, this study contributed to the analytical and empirical understandings of quality in the context of Finnish education export by triangulating data, method and theory. The main contributions of the research results are presented as follows. Firstly, the dynamics of the quality of education in the context of Finnish education export is presented. Secondly, a hypothetical, theoretical model of quality assurance in educational export activities is described. Finally, based on the research results, implications that are connected to the quality management of education export activities are presented. These implications can be utilized in the development work of higher education institutions and the strategy work of education policy.

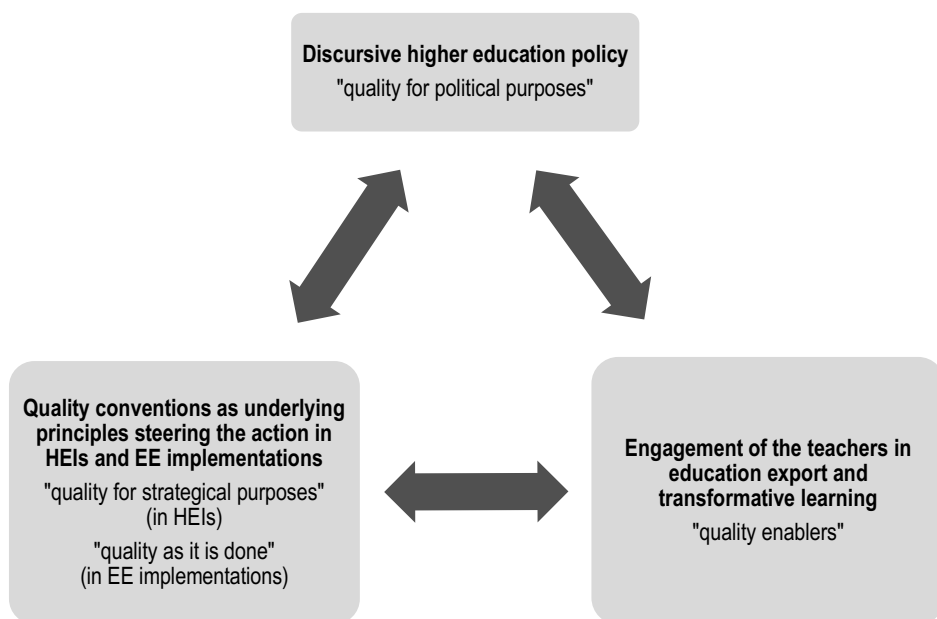
### 7.1 Dynamics of quality of education export in national, institutional and programme levels

Based on the findings of sub-studies I-IV, this study confirmed education export as an international and commercial activity, that manifests itself in a hybrid manner at various local, national and global levels (cf. Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Hasanen, 2020). In this kind of spatial levels, education export activities are nonlinear, complex and interrelated with socio-cultural, political, geographical and historical dimensions (Beerkens, 2003; Caruana & Montgomery, 2015; Marginson & Rhoades, 2002; Sheppard, 2006). Consequently, quality is modified from a variety of settings, such as the institutional and national contexts of the provider and the receiver (Coleman, 2003; Gift, Leo-Rhynie, & Moniquette, 2006; Kinser, 2011), but also from the expectations and experiences of students participating in education export

implementations (Datta & Vardhan, 2017; Silva, Moraes, Makiya, & Cesar, 2017). Thus, quality is subject to several partially conflicting regulations, principles, expectations and notions (cf. Borgos, 2013; Wilkins, 2017).

As described in Figure 4, quality was in this study formulated in three dimensions indicating 1) discursive higher education policy, 2) quality conventions in the institutional quality assurance and education export implementations as well as 3) teachers' engagement in education export implementation indicating quality enablers.

**Figure 4.** Perspectives on quality in the context of Finnish higher education export



Firstly, in the national higher education debate quality was used for political purposes. Quality embodied the responsibility of Finnish education export, it illustrated the good reputation of the Finnish education system, and it was a source of community pride and therefore considered a shared myth. Moreover, hegemony of tuition fees eclipsed the other meanings given to education export, though educational export terminology varied and was embedded within a diverse range of different actions.

Thus, critical discourse analysis, that was applied in the sub-study I, facilitated a holistic understanding of the meanings given to education export; aside from

problematizing education export by stressing the social, structural and knowledge-related barriers, the meanings given to education export in the national debate also represented justification discourse (as further pushing and reasoning education export) and accountability discourse (as stressing the quality management and ethical aspects). At the same time, discourse analysis made it possible to consider issues that are not emphasised in the data or which were not even the focus of data analysis. For example, in sub-study I, the analysis was not focused on the subject position of any particular group. However, the awareness of power relations during the analysis brought up the lack of attention relating to the legal status of students participating in education export implementations, which could be a relevant topic for further research.

Second, stemming from the pragmatism and convention theoretical premises (Boltanski & Chiapello, 2005; Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Diaz-Bone & Salais, 2011; Diaz-Bone, 2018; Ponte, 2009), quality attributes and quality factors in the context of Finnish education export were based on the plurality of underlying conventions that indicate the normative (Ponte, 2009) and cognitive dimensions (Diaz-Bone & Salais, 2011) of the institution's ingredients (see e.g. Scott, 2008).

In the institutional external quality assurance (sub-study II), the national awareness of Finnish education's superiority was emphasised and used as strategical means of marketing Finnish education export services to international customers. This has also been recognised by other researchers (see e.g. Schatz, Popovic & Dervin, 2017). Likewise, the education export customers' satisfaction seemed to play an important role in the institutional quality assurance. Moreover, cost-effectiveness and efforts to develop risk management and to make quality assurance effective indicated the instrumentalisation of quality to resolve its ambivalent nature (Ponte, 2009). Moreover, education export activity invited HEIs to consider international activities as a whole and to consider teachers possibilities to teach in a foreign language in a multicultural group.

However, in the institutional quality assurance, education export was considered a fragmented concept and a reasonably new action. Especially the unclear definition of education export did not explicitly open up to stakeholders, and thus it hampered the institutional quality assurance. Similar remarks on terminology have also been made by Knight (2016), who pointed out that terminological diffusion complicates quality management and international data comparison.

In sub-study III, which focused on one example of Finnish education export activity, the identified conventions were more diverse and compromised compared to sub-study II. This was particularly evident in the combination of the civic-

domestic conventions, where education was considered to support the common good, with an emphasis on social impact, and on the combination of the domestic-civic convention, whereby students were primarily committed to developing the local community. Moreover, the data analysis showed that the Finnish educational reputation supported students' motivation to study and stimulated their curiosity regarding exported education. However, the teachers had to regain the trust of the students and the client during the implementation. Consequently, personal relationships based on the interpersonal convention were essential in this regard.

At the same time, one of the critical success factors mentioned by the teachers was that education was based on the Finnish approach to pedagogy. This notion emphasised the domestic convention, which in this case maintained Finnish educational traditions, but nevertheless formed as a separate entity with professional-academic conventions, which represented the principles of teaching expertise and scientific knowledge. This perspective emphasises the need to adhere to the provider's perspectives on education and thus reinforce the national legitimacy at home (Healey, 2018). Moreover, it determines for the receivers what kind of pedagogical approach is beneficial and right way to do (Caruana & Montgomery, 2015, p. 20; Nordtveit, 2010, p. 335), although the data analysis of sub-study III revealed the more complex process of recognising the positional aspects of teachers, students and clients when exporting Finnish education. Indeed, the power relations between the 'provider' and 'receiver' do not appear to be straightforward (Leung & Waters, 2017, 1235). Overall, there appear to be conflicting aims with respect to providing a commercially relevant yet culturally sensitive education, as the education should comprise marketable products—an 'exported intact' (Altbach, 2004, p. 23) with the guarantee of 'Finnish education'. At the same time, local socio-cultural, traditional and political aspects should be taken into account by avoiding pedagogical and socio-cultural imperialism (cf. Caruana & Montgomery, 2015).

In this research, the third theoretical perspective for considering quality was focusing on the teachers' experiences of working in an education export implementation (sub-study IV), because, based on the findings of sub-study III, teachers were the key agents in maintaining and constructing the quality of education, particularly in the case of novel implementations. Based on the findings of sub-study IV, education export can provide teachers with a unique opportunity for professional development, but this requires the development of a comprehensive strategical human resource policy by faculties and HEIs, wherein the total workload of education export is recognised and the language services and support needed to develop contextual understanding are provided. Therefore, considering staff

perspectives when negotiating, planning and developing education export actions can enhance the staff members' personal motivation (cf. Lönnqvist, Laihonen, Cai & Hasanen, 2018) and cultural awareness (Dervin & Simpson, 2019) required for engagement in the education export activities, and therefore it can be a crucial factor in ensuring quality in education export implementations.

In general, above presented dynamic of analytical levels reflect the interdependency of contextuality and diversity of quality perspectives; as has been pointed out in the previous research literature: in deed, quality is relative (Harvey & Green, 1993) and fluctuating concept (Saarinen, 2007), which, depending on the perspective, illustrate, for example, the good reputation through international rankings (Altbach et al., 2009), comparable curriculum (Waterval et al., 2015) and respected degrees in the labor market (Lönnqvist et al., 2018). However, quality views do not only represent characteristic, but also different discursive, normative, cognitive, and sociocultural principles, that can be identified behind the views; the logics on which quality attributes are based on and which, through the attributes, are incorporated into the quality system of higher education institutions according to what strategic and pragmatic choices HEIs made in each operations, such as in decision-making and in international partner selection (cf. Nhan & Nguyen, 2018).

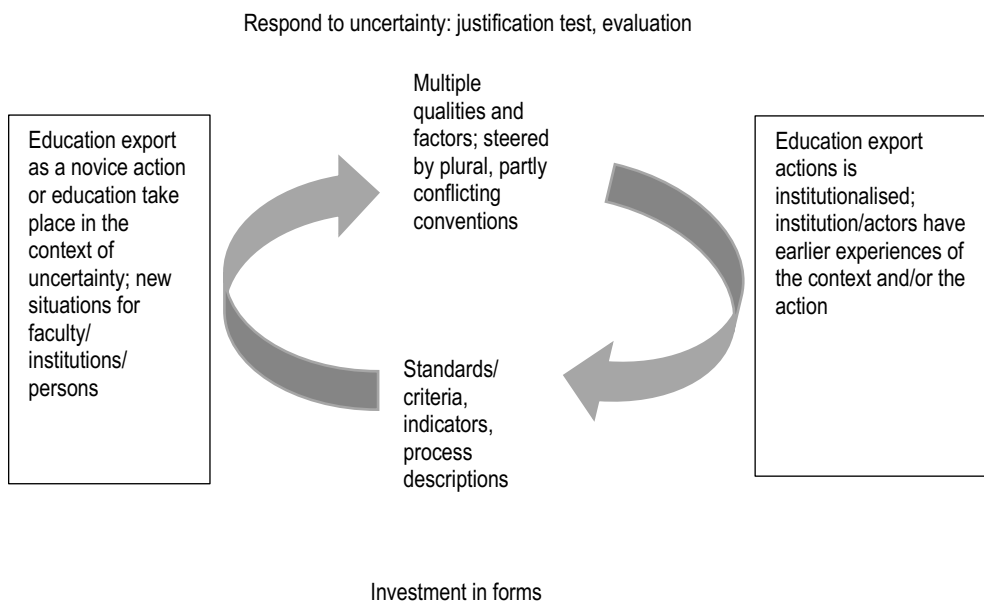
## 7.2 Theoretical contributions: hypothetical framework for quality assurance

Analytically, the fragmented and multifaceted nature of the education export concept as well as the plurality of underlying conventions steering the quality characteristics of education export action indicates a blurred mix of private and public good (Marginson, 2006; Slaughter & Rhoades, 2004). In that case, the moral legitimacy of what is generally considered to represent ethical and sustainable 'good education' and the conditions under which the 'good education' can be realised in a meaningful way (cf. Suchman, 1995). Indeed, it seems that transnational geographical, historical, political, social and cultural boundaries of education export challenge the quality concept, quality assurance and quality management in complex ways by reinforcing HEIs to balance with the local and universal but also to continuously clarify 'to who they serve and source of their legitimations' as stated by Pietsch (2016, p. 36). For novice education exporters, such as Finnish HEIs, whose educational traditions have based on tuition fees-free traditions (Aarrevaara, Dobson, & Elander, 2009) this kind of blend of different public/private and global/national/local regimes can lead to an

organisational transformation. At least in the cases where HEIs are motivated to expand their education export activities and priorities education export as a key development target.

However, in the longer-term, developing proactive quality management for education export action can support internal and external legitimisation as well as reinforcing the institutionalisation of education export. From the perspective of CT, this kind of process can require investment in forms (Thévenot, 1984; Thévenot, 2007) wherein the quality attributes are simplified, and alternatives are excluded as illustrated in the hypothetical framework for developing quality assurance in the context of education export (see Figure 5). Before investment in forms (e.g. standardisation, setting criteria, process descriptions), several different qualities and quality factors are potential, such as aspects relating to localisation and students' perceptions, as well as the traditions and goals of the provider HEI. However, as activities become more established, demand (internal and external) to develop more standardised criteria and systematise process descriptions related to education export implementation may arise. Thus, HEI can reconsider the current indicators, regulations and process descriptions and exclude some of the options. However, the modified indicators and quality standards, as well as the underlying principles, are subject to a new test if the operating environment, actors and target group change.

**Figure 5.** Hypothetical framework for development of quality assurance in the context of education export



The hypothetical framework (Figure 5) is merely theoretical. However, it reveals the technical and political nature of quality assurance at least from two perspectives. First, quality standards and quality criteria do not per se cover all possible quality characteristics; rather, quality is always to a certain extent incomplete (cf. Harvey & Green, 1993). Second, quality assurance is based on the choices (including and excluding certain factors) that are influenced by the principles prevailing in each spatially and temporally embedded (mainly political) context (such as the national audit model for HEIs set for each cycle of external audit).

While investment in forms can enhance trust (Diaz-Bone, 2018; Diaz-Bone, 2017) and stabilise uncertain situations (Thévenot, 2014), CT also emphasises the plural nature of the underlying logics steering quality (Baird, 2008; Ponte, 2009) and the socially and culturally bounded process of the market forces (Biggart & Beamish, 2003; Lamont & Thévenot, 2000). Therefore, supply and demand in higher education operates around socially embedded quality categories (Biggart & Beamish, 2003). As a result of these assumptions, it can be argued that quality management in higher education and quality categories describing the quality of education are not solely based on pre-defined quality attributes (such as pre-described learning



outcomes or national qualification frameworks); rather, they are generally influenced by quality conventions. Moreover, markets are organised into social spheres of coordination and valuation, which are formed by quality conventions and include the value chain, whereby attention is given to the entire process and not only the final product (Biggart & Beamish, 2003; Storper & Salais, 1997). As a result, focusing solely on outputs, or evaluating or managing the quality of the outcomes does not self-evidently improve ‘quality’; rather, the entire process of knowledge creation and coordination of education export actions as well as the underlying conventions that guide knowledge production influence the definition and features of quality of education. This is despite the fact that consolidation and trust-building may require HEIs to also stress stable regulation and invest efforts in the investment in forms.

### 7.3 Practical implications for quality management

In practice, education export can pose challenges for the quality management of Finnish HEIs, as they are required to ensure the domestication of education that takes into account the local context (Gift et al., 2006; Waterval, Frambach, Driessen & Scherpbier, 2015) and the needs of the customers (Owens & Lane, 2014) without abandoning the academic standards that maintain the international comparability of the education (Sharp, 2017). On the other hand, education export challenges HEIs to look holistically at the underlying principles of education and its social impact on the local community (Chen et al., 2019). In addition, as HEIs are increasingly involved in the global economy, and as stakeholder diversity increases, ethical and moral issues are becoming crucial considerations in the concept of quality and quality management (Prisacariu & Shah, 2016).

For national policymakers, the results of this study suggest that the ‘quality’ of Finnish education supports the legitimacy of Finnish education export activities, and thus ‘national quality’ is an important component for HEIs when seeking international partners and trying to attract prospective students. However, the results also indicate that ‘quality’ has not been formulated as a specific political question in the national higher education debate. Instead, the normative principles of quality assurance in higher education, such as external quality assurance criteria (FINEEC, 2015; FINEEC, 2018) and the legislation of HEIs (University Act 558/2009; University of Applied Sciences Act 932/2014), stress HEIs’ own responsibility and solutions in quality assurance and offer the flexibility to arrange quality assurance practicalities that best fit HEIs’ strategic purposes. However, the current normative

principles or strategic documents do not entirely take into account internationally recognised aspects of the quality management of education export, such as the legal protection of students (UNESCO & OECD, 2005) or the terms for using education agents in student selection (Nikula & Kivistö, 2018; Department of Education and Training, 2018). These kinds of factors can, however, still undermine, or support, ethically and socially sustainable education export activities and directly or indirectly affect national reputation, which is seen as one of the justifications for education export activities.

The results of this study also stress that for HEIs, quality-related perspectives are diverse; the planning and implementing of education export activities is influenced by many factors, such as the choice of the international partner, tax practices of the project location and the localisation of pedagogical solutions. In particular, establishing a trust-based relationship and agreeing on common goals with the foreign partner must be done before the concrete implementations have even taken place. Thus, a holistic approach that recognises the negotiation and student selection processes, and the effect of these on the implementation of education export activities, can support the achievement of a concrete outcome (such as the number of degrees) and the wider societal impact of education export activities.

Accordingly, for HEIs, the consideration of different perspectives and quality factors can be essential, especially if HEIs seek to implement a proactive evidence-based approach to quality management (cf. Beerkens, 2018) and consider education export activities from a holistic perspective including, for example, interdepartmental collaboration (cf. Stukalina, 2014), available human resources (Lönqvist et al., 2018) and the localisation of the curriculum (Waterval et al., 2015). While these kinds of aspects might already form an important part of the HEIs' quality management, the results of this study raise questions regarding whether human resource management and the position of the teachers, and other employees involved in education export activities, are included in HEIs' quality management, or whether the dominant rationale of quality management in education export is something else. As an example, involving practitioners (e.g. teachers) in education export activities at the planning stage, supporting teachers' ability to teach in multicultural groups, enhancing academics' possibilities of gaining academic/teaching merits in education export activities, as well as stressing the transparent requirements and bonus policies, can ensure sustainable human resources for education export activities, and thus also maintain and improve the quality of education export.

The results of this research also show that it is not always easy to anticipate the specific issues related to education export activities, and thus to adopt a 'golden

thread' for the implementation of education export projects. This is especially relevant in cases where either the form of education export, customers or the target area are new, and where HEIs do not have any previous experience. While inter-organisational collaboration was not a topic of this research, the results of this study still invoke consideration of how well HEIs' internal stakeholders (employees and students) are aware of HEIs' education export activities, and how coordination works in practice between the different internal units of HEIs, such as coordination between the admission offices, international services and education units, especially in those education export projects that are jointly operated by different departments or various HEIs. Thus, strategic planning in quality management, which takes into account both internal factors and the wider institutional environment (cf. Stukalina, 2014), can play a vital role as a 'solution-maker' in quality management, including the identification of different internal and external stakeholders' perspectives, the application of available data and the ability to make choices and decisions on what quality characteristics and quality attributes matter in education export activities, and how they matter (cf. Beerkens, 2018).

Overall, this study shed light on the diversity of education export activities and stressed the pluralistic concept of quality at national, institutional and programme levels in a way that contributes to the research-based understanding of quality in the context of the education export phenomenon. At the same time, for HEIs, it may be essential to gather different types of evidence that can support the proactive quality management of education export activities, including research-based knowledge, empirical data from practitioners and national and international policy analysis (Beerkens, 2018). Therefore, continuous reflection as part of the development work can be potentially formulated in the same way as the hypothetical theoretical model for the development of quality assurance (see Figure 5). The hypothetical theoretical model can also illustrate the critical circle of considering which quality-related factors, attributes, perspectives and evidence are crucial, and in which contexts they actually work (and in which they do not).

## 8 CONCLUSION

The main research question in this doctoral dissertation was what kind of quality-related initiatives, characteristics and principles are produced and maintained in the context of Finnish education export? Based on the results of sub-studies I–IV, this study showed that quality is pluralistic and manifested differently in diverse education export contexts at the macro, meso, and micro levels. Therefore, quality-related initiatives, characteristics and principles form a dynamic but complex interconnection that emphasises national political aims, HEIs' strategic goals, the contextual and situational dimensions of implementation as well as actors' engagement in education export projects. In this study, the latter was considered specifically from the teachers' perspective.

The main contributions of this doctoral dissertation consist at least contextual and analytical domains (Ladik & Stewart, 2008). Firstly, this study enhanced the contextual understanding of quality of education in the context of Finnish higher education export from the different perspectives, stressing the complexity of education export activities, but encouraging HEIs to apply holistic, reflective and proactive approach in development of quality management of education export. Secondly, this research provides an analytical framework (as described in the Figure 5) to reflect and making choices between different quality notions, underlying principles and evidence that can stabilise or destabilise the HEIs aim to maintain and improve the quality of education.

As a conclusion, at different analytical macro-meso-micro levels and in the global, national and local spheres, quality is simultaneously determined by different characteristics, initiatives and principles, which is difficult but essential to grasp in order to develop ethically, economically, socially and politically sustainable education export actions. In the end, it is the HEIs and academics working in HEIs who are exporting the education, delivering the curriculum and maintaining the education traditions in addition to creating education that is appropriate to local purposes. At the same time, knowledge production, and its success or failure depends on broader factors that are only partly under the control of the HEI. As an example, different kind of global and regional crises, such as rapidly spreading pandemics or the nation-states' own political priorities can have a significant impact on Finnish education

export activities directly or indirectly (see e.g. OPH, 2020). Moreover, the consideration of HEIs as social actors that are part of the socially bounded transnational network, instead of considering HEIs merely as players in the global education market, could foster practices that are beneficial in different geographical boundaries, supporting local needs and thereby fostering socially sustainable knowledge transfer.

In this research, the empirical data primarily covered the education export provider's perspective by focusing on a national debate on education export, institutional audit reports and one education export implementation. In sub-studies I and II, the results indicated the broader implications of the terminological differences, for example, for quality management. Similar notions are also found in earlier studies on education export (see e.g. Knight, 2016). Therefore, in future research, it may be fruitful to focus on the terminology and forms of Finnish education export actions at the macro, meso and micro levels, by applying a discourse analytical framework. Starting point for this analysis could be Knight's (2016) typology for different education export activity. This could clarify the connections between terminology, actions and actors and provide an analytical classification model for Finnish education export. Analysis could also contribute the international higher education debate by providing an update notions on different types of education export activities.

This study also included only one concrete education export implementation. Future studies could fruitfully explore education export issues further by conducting a longitudinal study on different kinds of education export implementations from the perspective of receivers (i.e. clients, students and stakeholders in the project location). This could shed light on the domestication of capacity-building and the broader societal impact. At the same time, examining education export by applying a critical research tradition could provide an interesting approach to identifying potential neo-colonialist practices and power relations in education export activities conducted by Finnish actors. Such research could also challenge us to consider Finnish education from the perspective of equity, for example, by paying attention to the role of ethnic minorities and practices that support, or limit, different ethnic minority groups' participation in higher education.

Moreover, in this doctoral dissertation, a convention theoretical approach was applied, though it has not been widely adopted in the field of higher education. However, in sub-studies II and III, the convention theoretical framework facilitated the exploration of the underlying principles steering the identified quality factors at the meso and micro levels and consideration of quality from the perspective of

justification. Furthermore, the findings of sub-studies II and III, as well as the convention theoretical understanding of investment in forms, provided a theoretical approach to presenting a hypothetical model for establishing and developing the quality assurance process. Therefore, the complex dynamics of HEIs would provide an interesting context for the further development of CT. For example, exploring the interlink with the institutional actors and normative and cognitive elements of the institutions from the perspective of CT could both clarify the convention theoretical concepts of individual engagement of the public regimes and the actor's role in changing the institution. Moreover, in sub-study III, conflict in the single convention (domestic convention) relating to different socio-cultural contexts was identified. This should be further explored by applying the convention theoretical framework and the ethnographic method, which would enhance our understanding of the domestic activities conducted on a daily basis that relate to education export.

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# APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Interview guide for student-participants (sub-study III)

Appendix 2: Interview guide for teacher/staff-participants (sub-study III)

Appendix 3: Request for permission to conduct research (sub-study III)

Appendix 4: Plan for participant observation (sub-study III)

Appendix 5: Online questionnaire (experiences of teachers and staff members) (sub-study IV)





# Appendix 1: Interview guide for student-participants

## Warm-up question

1. Briefly tell me about yourself.

## Motivation and expectations

2. Can you describe your personal motivation for studying in this programme?
  - Expectations

## Programme-related experiences

3. Can you describe your experience of study in this programme?
  - Courses, assessment
  - Timeframe, facilities
  - Student guidance, other kind of support
4. From your point of view, how would you describe the communication and learning environment in this programme?
  - With other students/with teachers/other staff members?
  - Possibility of giving feedback, etc.
5. According to your knowledge, how are foreign (Finnish) master's degrees recognised in Indonesia?
  - Possible differences with the university education in Finland/in Indonesia (compared to earlier study-experiences e.g. Saria I)
  -

## Important aspect(s) from participants' point of view

6. What would you consider to be the most important aspect(s) of this programme (can be several)?
7. From your point of view, how has quality been managed in this programme/what is 'quality' in this programme?

## Expectation for the future

8. From your point of view, what kind of value this programme will give you?
  - Currently
  - In the future; career-related expectations

## Background information

- Name, position, gender, (year of birth), earlier degree/background education

## Appendix 2: Interview guide for teacher/staff-participants

### “Warm-up question”

1. Esittelisitkö itsesi lyhyesti (warm-up question)?
  - Missä roolissa hankkeessa (opettaja/hallintohenkilökunta)

### Hankkeen tausta

2. Kertoisitko tarkemmin hankkeen taustoista (omasta näkökulmastasi)?
  - Järjestelyt, ohjelman aloitus, omat odotukset

### Ohjelmaan liittyvät käytänteet

3. Millä tavoin ohjelma/koulutuksen sisältö suunnitellaan/on suunniteltu?
  - Osallistuvat tahot
  - Indonesiassa huomioitavat asiat
4. Mitkä ovat käsityksesi mukaan koulutuksen tilaajan odotukset tätä ohjelmaa kohtaan?

### Kokemukset opetuksesta/työskentelystä

5. Olet ollut opettamassa Bireunissa aikaisemmin/olet työskennellyt ohjelmassa, kertoisitko tarkemmin kokemuksistasi?
  - Mitä opettanut/mitkä työtehtävät, fasilitteetit
  - Miten eroaa aiemmista opetus/työkokemuksista
6. Miten kuvailisit yhteistyötä eri toimijoiden kesken?
  - Esim. koulutuksen tilaaja, opiskelijat

### Hankkeen lisäarvo/laatu

7. Millaista lisäarvoa ohjelma mielestäsi on tuonut tai mahdollisesti tuo? (esim. sinulle/tiedekunnalle/yliopistolle)
8. Mitkä seikat tekevät tästä ohjelmasta mielestäsi laadukkaan (miten se varmistetaan)?

### Tulevaisuus

9. Miten tällaisia ohjelmia tulisi mielestäsi kehittää?
10. Miten tämä ohjelma jatkuu/millä tavoin koulutusvientitoiminta kehittyty tiedekunnassa näkemyksesi mukaan?

### Taustatiedot

Nimi, positio, sukupuoli, sähköposti/muu yhteystieto (mahdollista jatkohaastattelua varten)

## Appendix 3: Request for permission to conduct research

Sukma Foundation, Indonesia

29.8.2016

### **REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Dear representative of Sukma Foundation,

My name is Henna Juusola and I am a doctoral candidate in the School of Management at the University of Tampere, Finland. The topic of my doctoral research is “Quality Conventions beyond the Borders. A case study on quality management in two exported degree programmes”. The aim of my research is to examine quality management in exported degree programmes by focusing on quality convention.

I hereby request your permission to conduct a semi-structural interviews and participant observation at master’s degree programme (teacher education) during the academic year 2016/2017. Informants of this research can represent female and male students but also teachers and other staff members of the degree programme in Indonesia and in Finland. Participant observation can include, for instance, participant observation during lectures and other activities related to the master programme. The empirical data gained through the observation and interviews will be processed anonymously. The gathered data will be analysed using qualitative content analyses.

It is my hope that information gained through interviews and participant observation will generate new and useful research-based data for continuous quality improvement of education export in the Finnish context.

Upon completion of the study, I am more than happy to deliver a copy of the full dissertation to Sukma Foundation. The dissertation will be also published at TamPub open institutional repository of the University of Tampere: <https://tampub.uta.fi/>. If you require any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me on e-mail/phone: Juusola.henna.m@student.uta.fi/ +358 407476079.

Thank you for your time and consideration in this matter.

Yours sincerely,  
Henna Juusola  
Doctoral student  
School of Management (Higher Education Group)  
University of Tampere

## Appendix 4: Plan for participant observation

### I Primary observation

#### Basic information

- Space and date (where the observation takes place—lecture room, lunch room, dormitory etc.)
- Actors (those that are present during the observation, teacher, students, administrative staff, researcher etc.)
- Physical object (in the observation place, briefly)

#### Situation

- Activity (during the observation, e.g. lecture, reading at library, eating etc.)
- Events A, B, C, D etc. (during the observation, e.g. teacher explaining one specific topic during the lecture)
- Single acts of each event (during the observation, e.g. student asking a question)
- Time (description of sequence of the events)

### II Self-reflection

- Personal expectations and issues that raise new questions etc., practical issues (important dates, travel plans etc.) done before, during and after primary observation

## Appendix 5: Online questionnaire (experiences of teachers and staff members)

Tämän kyselyn tarkoitus on kartoittaa opetushenkilökunnan / muun henkilökunnan kokemuksia Indonesian maisteriohjelmassa opettamisesta / muusta työtehtävästä. Kyselyyn vastaaminen kestää arviolta 10-15 minuuttia. Kysely on osa koulutusviennin laatua käsittelevää väitöskirjatutkimusta (Henna Juusola, Johtamiskorkeakoulu/TaY). Kyselyn vastaukset käsitellään luottamuksellisesti.

### Taustatiedot

Sukupuoli

- Mies*
- Nainen*

Aikasempi työkokemus yliopistossa (Tampereen yliopistossa tai muualla)

Asema

- Professori/apulaisprofessori*
- Yliopistonlehtori/yliopistotutkija*
- Yliopisto-opettaja/tuntiopettaja*
- Suunnittelija/hallintohenkilökunta*
- Muu, mikä?*

Yliopisto

- Tampereen yliopisto*
- Jyväskylän yliopisto*
- Itä-Suomen yliopisto*

Onko sinulla aikaisempaa kansainvälistä opetuskokemusta / työkokemusta (esim. opettaminen ulkomailla)?

- Kyllä*
- Ei*

Jos vastasit kyllä, kuvaile lyhyesti mitä kansainvälinen opetuskokemuksesi on sisältänyt (esim. viikon mittaisen intensiivikurssin pitäminen Espanjassa)

### **Indonesian opetuskokemus / työkokemus**

Kuvaile oheiseen tilaan vapaamuotoisesti niitä syitä ja perusteita, jotka saivat Sinut osallistumaan Indonesian opetukseen / muihin työtehtäviin?

Kuinka monta kertaa kävit Indonesiassa kaikkina?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- Yli 10 kertaa

Kuinka moneen opetuksen intensiiviviikkoon osallistuit yhteensä?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6
- 7
- 8
- 9
- 10
- Yli 10

## Henkilökunnan kokemukset opetustilanteista / muista työtehtävistä

### ***Kaikki vastaajat***

Arvioi seuraavia väittämiä asteikolla:

- 1 = Ei kuvaa lainkaan
- 2 = Kuvaa vain vähän
- 3 = Kuvaa jonkin verran
- 4 = Kuvaa hyvin
- 5 = Kuvaa erittäin hyvin

Millä tavoin seuraavat väittämät kuvaavat omia kokemuksiasi Indonesiassa opettamisesta / muusta työtehtävästä?

	1	2	3	4	5
Minulla oli ennen opetustilannetta / muuta työtehtävää riittävästi tietoa Indonesian koulutusjärjestelmästä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minulla oli ennen opetustilannetta / muuta työtehtävää riittävästi tietoa opiskelijaryhmän aiemmasta koulutuksesta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minulla oli ennen opetustilannetta / muuta työtehtävää riittävästi tietoa Sukma Bangsa -koulujen toiminnasta	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minulla oli ennen opetustilannetta / muuta työtehtävää riittävästi tietoa paikallisesta Aceh'n kulttuurista (esimerkiksi uskonto, poliittinen tilanne)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Minulla oli ennen opetustilannetta / muuta työtehtävää riittävästi tietoa Sukma Bangsa Bireunin toimitiloista (esimerkiksi luokkatilat, asuminen)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## **Vain opetushenkilökunta**

Arvioi seuraavia väittämiä asteikolla:

1 = Ei kuvaa lainkaan

2 = Kuvaa vain vähän

3 = Kuvaa jonkin verran

4 = Kuvaa hyvin

5 = Kuvaa erittäin hyvin

Millä tavoin seuraavat väittämät kuvaavat omia kokemuksiasi Indonesiassa opettamisesta?

	1	2	3	4	5
Opetuksen toteuttaminen vaati mielestäni tavallista enemmän suunnittelutyötä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opetustilanteet Indonesiassa olivat samanlaisia kuin opetustilanteet Suomessa	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Englanninkielinen opetus ei ollut mielestäni este opiskelijoiden oppimiselle	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Opettaminen englanniksi on minulle mielekästä	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pystyin mielestäni tukemaan hyvin opiskelijoiden oppimista pitämäni kurssin aikana	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## **Kaikki vastaajat**

Kun Sinua pyydettiin osallistumaan Indonesian koulutusvienttiin, mikä askarrutti ja mikä houkutti?



Mikä sujui, mikä haastoi ja mikä yllätti Indonesian työmatkalla?

Valmistautuminen - erosiko suomalaisesta opetuksen / työn valmistelusta?

- Kyllä*
- Ei*

Jos kyllä, kuvaile oheen, miten se erosi.

Minkälainen kokemus opettaminen (jokin muu tehtävä) Indonesian maisteriohjelmassa oli kaikkienensa? Mitä se siis antoi ja otti?

### Tiedekunnan tuki

Arvioi seuraavia väittämiä asteikolla:

- 1 = Ei kuvaa lainkaan
- 2 = Kuvaa vain vähän
- 3 = Kuvaa jonkin verran
- 4 = Kuvaa hyvin
- 5 = Kuvaa erittäin hyvin

Millä tavoin seuraavat väittämät kuvaavat omia kokemuksiasi tiedekunnan tarjoamasta tuesta Indonesian luokanopettajakoulutuksessa?

1 2 3 4 5

Minun oli helppo järjestää työtehtäväni siten, että koulutusvientihankkeeseen osallistuminen oli mahdollista

Tiedekunnassani koulutusvientihankkeisiin osallistuminen on houkutteleva uravaihtoehto

Tiedekuntani kannustaa aktiivisesti henkilökuntaa osallistumaan koulutusvientihankkeisiin

Millä tavoin tiedekuntani voi tukea opetushenkilökunnan / muun henkilökunnan osallistumista koulutusvientihankkeisiin?

Mistä muualta koit saaneesi tukea kuin tiedekunnalta? Kuvaile oheen miltä taholta ja minkälaista tukea?

### **Lisäksi**

Olen kiinnostunut osallistumaan koulutusvientihankkeisiin myös tulevaisuudessa

- Kyllä*
- Ei*
- En osaa sanoa*

Halutessasi voit perustella vastauksen

Kiitos vastaamisesta!

# PUBLICATIONS

- Publication I: Juusola, H. (2016). Lukukausimaksujen hegemoniaa ja myytti PISAsta. Diskurssiivinen analyysi kansallisesta koulutusvientikeskustelusta. *Tiedepolitiikka*, 41(3), 23-34.
- Publication II Juusola, H. (2018). Quality conventional perspective on the quality assurance of education export in the case Finland. In V. Korhonen, & P. Alenius (Eds.), *Internationalisation and Transnationalisation in Higher Education* (pp. 100-124) Peter Lang.
- Publication III Juusola, H., & Rähkä, P. (2019). Quality conventions in the exported Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia. *Higher Education*, 79(4), 675–690. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-019-00430-3>
- Publication IV Juusola, H., & Rähkä, P. (2018). Exploring teaching staff's experiences of implementing a Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 13(2), 342-357, <https://doi.org/10.1177/1745499918775208>



# PUBLICATION

I

**Lukukausimaksujen hegemoniaa ja myytti PISasta. Diskurssiivinen  
analyysi kansallisesta koulutusvientikeskustelusta**

Henna Juusola

Tiedepolitiikka, 41(3), 23-34.

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# *Lukukausimaksujen hegemoniaa ja myytti PISAsta*

## *Diskurssiivinen analyysi kansallisesta koulutusvientikeskustelusta*

*Koulutusviennistä, sen kasvusta ja kansantaloudellisesta merkityksestä on puhuttu viime vuosina paljon. Henna Juusola lähestyy artikkelissaan aihetta diskurssi-analyysia käyttäen. Vaikka peruskoulutuksen tuottamat hyvät Pisa-tulokset eivät koske suoraan korkeakoulutusta, niitä käytetään myyttisenä perusteluna kansallisessa keskustelussa. Toinen koulutusviennin linkittyvä teema, lukukausimaksut, nousee hallitsevaksi aihepiiriksi saaden Juusolan mukaan hegemonisen aseman kirjoittajan estediskurssiksi nimeämällä keskustelun alueella. Keskustelu ryhmittyy kirjoittajan mukaan kolmeen eri diskurssiin, joista edellä mainitun estediskurssin lisäksi hahmottuvat oikeutus- ja vastuullisuusdiskurssit.*

### **Johdanto**

Tässä artikkelissa tarkastellaan kansallista koulutusvientikeskustelua aihetta käsittelevien korkeakoulupoliittisten dokumenttien valossa. Artikkelin tarkoitus on selventää koulutusvienti-käsitteen määritelmää suhteessa aikaisempiin tutkimuksiin ja identifioida koulutusviennille annettuja merkityksiä. Analyttinen ote nojaa diskurssi-analyysiin, jonka perinne tekstin tulkitsijana antaa tähän hyvän perustan. Artikkelissa pyritään vastaamaan ensinnäkin siihen miten koulutusvienti määritellään. Toisaalta kiinnostuksen kohteena on selvittää, minkälaisia merkityksiä koulutusviennille kansallisessa keskustelussa rakennetaan. Koulutusviennin käsitteen määrittely ja aineistosta esille nousevat diskurssit tuovat esille tuoreita näkökulmia ajankohtaiseen aiheeseen.

Metodologinen lähestymistapa perustuu

post-strukturalistiseen diskurssi-analyysiin. Sen lähtökohtana voidaan pitää *sosiaalista konstruktionismia*, johon sisältyy kriittinen lähestymistapa itsestään selvänä pidettyyn tietoon (Berger & Luckmann, 2002). Sosiaalisen konstruktionismin mukaan sosiaalinen todellisuus rakentuu historiallisessa ja kulttuurisessa kontekstissa. Tieto rakentuu osana sosiaalista prosessia, ja siten tiedon ja sosiaalisen toiminnan välillä on yhteys. (Burr, 2003, 2–5.) Tästä näkökulmasta tarkasteltuna koulutusviennin merkityksiä rakennetaan osana korkeakoulupoliittista keskustelua. Puheet koulutusviennistä voivat kuitenkin muuttua, sillä ne ovat sidoksissa aikaan ja kontekstiin.

Kriittisessä diskurssi-analyysissä huomio voidaan kohdistaa *tekstiin, diskurssikäytäntöön ja sosiokulttuuriseen käytäntöön*. Diskurssikäytäntö toimii välittäjänä tekstin ja

sosiokulttuurisen käytännön välillä. (Fairclough, 1997, 79–80.) Koulutusvientiä käsittelevien poliittisten dokumenttien merkitykset muodostuvat paitsi tekstin sisällöstä, myös dokumenttien tuotannosta ja sen kulutuksesta eli diskurssikäytännöstä. Kulloinkin korkeakoulupolitiikka sosiokulttuurisena kontekstina vaikuttaa siten myös poliittisten dokumenttien sisältöön. Tällöin kyse on poliittisesta diskurssista, joka voidaan ymmärtää diskurssien välisenä ja sisäisenä valtasuhteena ja nojata tässä suhteessa *hegemoniaan* (Jokinen & Juhila, 1993, 77). Diskurssianalyysistä puhuttaessa, hegemonialla voidaan viitata prosessiin tai lopputulokseen eli tilaan, johon diskurssissa pyritään (Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Palonen, 2008). Hegemonia voidaan ymmärtää myös *myytti-käsitteen* kautta. Tällöin myytti voi perustua totuuteen. Myyttiin viitataan erityisesti silloin, kun halutaan tuottaa yhteisöllisyyttä. (Palonen, 2011, 9; Torfing, 1999, 115.)

Tässä artikkelissa huomio on *intertekstuaalisessa* analyysissä, joka sijoittuu tekstin ja diskurssikäytännön rajalle (Fairclough, 1997, 84). Intertekstuaalisessa analyysissä mielenkiinto on tekstissä esiintyvien genrejen eli tekstityylien ja diskurssien erittelyssä, mutta kiinnostuksen kohteena on myös tekstin sijoittuminen laajempaan historialliseen sarjaan (Fairclough, 1997; Fairclough, 2001). Tällöin analyysi on luonteeltaan tulkitsevaa. Aineistossa esiintyvät kielelliset piirteet muodostavat *diskurssijärjestyksen*, joka kuvaa diskurssien ja genrejen hierarkkista järjestystä jossain tietyssä sosiaalisessa ja yhteiskunnallisessa yhteydessä. Diskurssien ja genrejen muodostamat kokonaisuudet eivät välttämättä ole keskenään samanarvoisia (Fairclough, 1997, 86–88; Fairclough, 2001, 23). Diskurssijärjestys kuuluu laajempaan sosiokulttuuriseen kontekstiin, joka tässä tapauksessa on suomalaisten korkeakoulujen koulutusvientiin keskittynyt koulutuspolitiikka.

Artikkeli rakentuu seuraavista osiosta: aluksi valotetaan koulutusviennin taustaa ja aihetta käsitteleviä aikaisempia tutkimuksia. Tämän jälkeen esitellään analyysiin valittu aineisto ja tarkennetaan analyysimenetelmää. Kolmannessa osuudessa keskitytään tarkastelemaan aineistosta esiin nousseita diskursseja, jonka jälkeen johtopäätökset esitetään suhteessa laajempaan kontekstiin.

## Koulutusviennin taustaa

Käsitteenä *koulutusvienti* viittaa usein sellaiseen kaupalliseen koulutustoimintaan, joka kohdistuu ulkomaisiin asiakkaisiin tai opiskelijoihin ja joka voi tapahtua Suomessa tai ulkomailla (Schatz, 2016, 16). Kansainvälisestä näkökulmasta tarkasteltuna, koulutusvienti (*education export*) linkittyy rajat ylittävän koulutuksen (*cross-border education* tai *transnational education*) tematiikkaan. Monissa tapauksissa *cross-border education* kattaa yleisesti kaiken kansainvälisen koulutustoiminnan, joka ylittää kansalliset rajat, olipa kyseessä sitten perinteinen opiskelijavaihto tai yhteistutkinto (esim. UNESCO & OECD, 2005, 9). *Transnational education* viittaa taas erityisesti sellaiseen rajat ylittävään koulutustoimintaan, jossa on kaupallinen ulottuvuus (esim. Altbach & Knight, 2007, 25–29). Tällaisia toteutuksia ovat esimerkiksi ulkomailla sijaitsevat sivukampukset (*branch campuses*) ja ns. franchising-sopimukset (Naidoo, 2009, 315).

Koulutusvienti laajemmassa kontekstissa nähdään usein osaksi korkeakoulujen kansainvälistä toimintaa, jossa perinteisen opiskelija- ja henkilöstövaihdon rinnalle on muodostunut muita kansainvälisiä toiminnan muotoja (Knight, 2008). Toisaalta koulutusviennin katsotaan olevan osa globalisaatio-prosessia, jossa osaamisesta ja tiedosta on tullut investoinnin kohde ja koulutuksesta globaalia kauppatavaraa (Altbach & Knight, 2007). Eräs esimerkki tästä on Maailman kauppajärjestön (WTO) *General Agreement on Trade Services* ns. GATS-sopimus, jossa koulutuksen katsotaan olevan osa palvelujen vientiä. Koulutusviennistä onkin muodostunut kansallisesti merkittävä tulolähde erityisesti Australiassa, Isossa-Britanniassa ja Yhdysvalloissa (Nokkala, 2014).

Kotimaisen lainsäädännön näkökulmasta korkeakouluja koskeva koulutusvienti tuli mahdolliseksi vuonna 2008, jolloin *tilauskoulutuksen* mahdollistava lakimuutos ammattikorkeakoulu- ja yliopistolakeihin astui voimaan. Lakimuutoksen taustalla nähtiin koulutuksen kaupallistumiseen liittyvät taloudelliset hyödyt ja korkeakoulujen kansainvälinen kehitys (HE, 2007). Lakimuutoksen voimaan astumisen jälkeen koulutusviennille asetettiin opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön (OKM) toimesta strateginen päämäärä muodostua



uudeksi merkittäväksi kansalliseksi vientituotteeksi (Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös, 2010). Keskeisiksi koulutusviennin toimijoiksi nähtiin tällöin korkeakoulut. Tämä ilmenee sekä koulutusviennin strategisia linjauksia käsittelevässä periaatepäätöksessä (2010) että koulutusvientiä koskevassa toimenpideohjelmassa (2013) (OKM, 2013; Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös, 2010). Edellä mainittujen strategioiden lisäksi koulutusvientiin on viitattu korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymistä koskevassa strategiassa (2009) (OKM, 2009).

Koulutusvienti on noussut puheenaiheeksi myös viimeaikojen koulutuspoliittisessa keskustelussa. Esimerkiksi Sipilän hallituksen strategisessa ohjelmassa (2015) koulutusviennin esteet halutaan purkaa lyhyellä aikavälillä (Valtioneuvosto, 2015, 17). Tämä on jo siinä mielessä toteutunut, että EU/ETA-maiden ulkopuolelta tulevilta yksittäisiltä opiskelijoilta voidaan periä lukausmaksuja vuoden 2016 alusta lähtien. Vastikään julkaistussa Koulutusviennin tiekartassa (2016) koulutusvientiä halutaan vauhdittaa muun muassa keskittymällä ns. tukitoimien kehittämiseen, kuten markkinointiin ja koulutuspalveluiden tuotteistamiseen. Kyseisessä dokumentissa koulutusviennin toteuttajiksi nähdään paitsi korkeakoulut, myös muut koulutusvientiä tekevät tahot kuten yritykset. (OKM, 2016.)

Aiempien tutkimusten valossa koulutusviennin kenttä näyttäytyy hajanaiselta. Suomalaisten korkeakoulujen markkinointiosaamisessa, strategisessa suunnittelutyössä ja luottamuksen rakentamisessa on nähty olevan puutteita (Cai & Kivistö, 2013; Hölttä, Pekkola, & Cai, 2009). Korkeakouluilta on puuttunut aiempaa kokemusta koulutusviennistä (Cai, Hölttä, & Kivistö, 2012). Kritiikki on kohdistunut myös kansallisiin koulutusvientiä koskeviin strategioihin, joiden on epäilty olevan turhan kunnianhimoisia ja epärealistisia (Schatz, 2016). Lisäksi kansallisesti on tavattu ajatella, että koulutus on ennen kaikkea julkinen hyödyke, josta ei peritä lukausmaksuja ja joka ei myöskään tässä suhteessa ole kaupallista toimintaa. Toisaalta koulutusvientitoiminnan kehitys näyttää kulkevan samaa polkua korkeakoulujen muun kansainvälisen kehityksen kanssa. Esimerkiksi muihin pohjoismaihin verrattuna, suomalaisten korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymisen on nähty etenevän verkkaisesti (Nokkala, 2007).

## Aineisto esittely ja analyysi

Tässä tutkimuksessa tarkastelun kohteena ovat 21 kansallista poliittisen päätöksenteon tueksi laadittua dokumenttia, jotka on julkaistu vuosien 2009–2015 välillä (Taulukko 1). Aineistoon valitut dokumentit edustavat kansalliseen korkeakoulupolitiikkaan osallistuvien toimijoiden näkökulmia: valtionhallintoa sekä korkeakoulujen ja opiskelijajärjestöjen kansallisia edustajia. Diskursssianalyysiin nojaten ne luovat keskenään jatkumon, joka sijoittuu edelleen laajempaan korkeakoulupoliittiseen kontekstiin.

Keskeisiksi koulutusvientiä koskeviksi kansallisiksi politiikkadokumenteiksi lasetaan tämän analyysin osalta *Korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymisstrategia 2009–2015*, *Suomen koulutusvientistrategia*, *Koulutusviennin toimenpideohjelma*, *Koulutuksen ja tutkimuksen kehittämissuunnitelma vuosille 2011–2016* sekä *Kataisen hallituksen ja Sipilän hallituksen hallitusohjelmat*. Lisäksi aineistoon on valittu mukaan *Sipilän hallituksen esitys (HE 77/2015) eduskunnalle koskien yliopisto- ja ammattikorkeakoululakien muuttamista*. Jälkimmäinen valittiin aineistoon, sillä sen katsottiin sisältävän merkittävän koulutusvientiä koskevan toimenpiteen, jolla on selkeä yhteys sekä hallitusohjelmiin että edellä mainittuihin strategioihin.

Koska hallitusohjelmat sekä opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön koordinoimat strategiset linjaukset edustavat lähinnä valtionhallinnon yhteistä linjaa, ne eivät yksiselitteisesti ilmennä keskeisimpien korkeakoulupolitiikassa osallisena olevien tahojen näkemyksiä. Tämän vuoksi aineistoon on sisällytetty myös kansallisten korkeakoulujen edustajien ja opiskelijajärjestöjen osalta ne dokumentit, jotka ovat julkisesti saatavilla ja jotka liittyvät suoraan koulutusvientiä koskeviin strategioihin, hallitusohjelmiin tai Sipilän hallituksen esitykseen (HE 77/2015) eduskunnalle koskien yliopisto- ja ammattikorkeakoululakien muuttamista. Korkeakoulujen kansallisina edustajina ovat tässä aineistossa ammattikorkeakoulun rehtorineuvosto ARENE ry ja Suomen yliopistot UNIFI ry. Opiskelijajärjestöjen osalta aineisto koskee Suomen opiskelijakuntien liiton (SAMOK) ja Suomen ylioppilaskuntien liiton (SYL) tekemiä linjauksia.

Aineistosta rajattiin pois kansallisten korkeakoulujen edustajien ja opiskelijajärjestöjen

Taulukko 1: Aineiston esittely

Esittäjä	Dokumentin nimi	Vuosi
OKM	Korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymisstrategia 2009-2015	2009
Valtioneuvoston periaate-päätös	Kiinnostuksesta kysynnäksi ja tuotteiksi. Suomen koulutusvientistrategia	2010
OKM	Koulutuksen ja tutkimuksen kehittämissuunnitelma vuosille 2011-2016	2011
SAMOK	Hallitusohjelmatavoitteet 2011-2015	2011
SYL	Hallitusohjelmatavoitteet 2011-2015	2011
UNIFI	Hallitusohjelma tavoitteet 2011-2015	2011
Valtioneuvosto	Kataisen hallituksen hallitusohjelma	2011
OKM	Suomi kansainvälisille koulutusmarkkinoille. Toimenpideohjelma koulutusviennin edellytysten parantamiseksi	2013
SYL SAMOK	Suomi - koulutuksen supervalta. Visiotyöryhmän toimenpide ehdotukset	2013
SYL, SAMOK	SYL ja SAMOK: OKM:n selvitysryhmän ehdotukset lukukausimaksuista kestävämmiksi	2013
ARENE	Arenen näkemykset minihallitusneuvotteluihin	2014
SYL	Arviointi korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymisstrategiasta 2009-2015	2014
ARENE	Lausunto eduskunnan sivistysvaliokunnalle yliopisto- ja ammattikorkeakoululakien muuttamisesta (HE 77/2015)	2015
ARENE	Arenen hallitusohjelmatavoitteet 2015-2018	2015
Sipilän hallitus	Hallituksen esitys (HE 77/2015) eduskunnalle laeiksi yliopistolain ja ammattikorkeakoululain muuttamisesta	2015
SAMOK	Lausunto eduskunnan sivistysvaliokunnalle yliopisto- ja ammattikorkeakoululakien muuttamisesta (HE 77/2015)	2015
SYL	Lausunto eduskunnan sivistysvaliokunnalle yliopisto- ja ammattikorkeakoululakien muuttamisesta (HE 77/2015)	2015
SYL, SAMOK	Korkeakouluopiskelijoiden tavoitteet tulevalle hallituskaudelle 2015–2019	2015
UNIFI	Hallitusohjelma tavoitteet 2015-2019	2015
UNIFI	Lausunto eduskunnan sivistysvaliokunnalle yliopisto- ja ammattikorkeakoululakien muuttamisesta (HE 77/2015)	2015
Valtioneuvosto	Sipilän hallituksen hallitusohjelma	2015
<b>Lyhenteet</b>		
ARENE	Ammattikorkeakoulujen rehtorineuvosto Arene ry	
OKM	Opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriö	
SAMOK	Suomen opiskelijakuntien liitto	
SYL	Suomen ylioppilaskuntien liitto	
UNIFI	Suomen yliopistot ry	

tekemät mielipidekirjoitukset ja blogit. Tähän päädyttiin ensinnäkin sen vuoksi, että aineisto haluttiin pitää kohtuullisen kokoisena ja hallittavana. Toisaalta sekä korkeakoulujen edustajien että opiskelijajärjestöjen valmistelemissa dokumenteissa oli havaittavissa saturaatiota, sillä dokumentteihin sisältyi koulutusviennin

osalta selkeitä poliittisia päämääriä, joita painotettiin paperista toiseen. Aineistoon sisällytetyt dokumentit katsottiin siten olevan riittävän kattava otos tuomaan esille koulutusvientikeskustelun olennaisimpia näkökulmia.

Aineiston ajallinen rajausta perustuu kahteen seikkaan. Ensinnäkin kansallinen koulutus-

vientistrategia julkaistiin vuonna 2010, ja se oli ensimmäinen pelkästään koulutusvientiä koskeva strategiapaperi. Toisaalta aineistoon ei haluttu valita dokumentteja, joiden laadinnassa tutkija on ollut itse mukana. Tätä rajausta koskeva ainut poikkeus on *Korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymisstrategia vuosille 2009–2015*, joka muista aineistoon kuuluvista dokumenteista poiketen on julkaistu jo vuonna 2009, ja jonka valmistelussa tutkija on työpajatyöskentelyn muodossa ollut osallisena. Kyseinen strategia haluttiin kuitenkin valita analyysiin mukaan, sillä sen katsottiin olevan merkittävä korkeakoulujen kansainvälisyystoimintaa ohjaava dokumentti, joka osaltaan ottaa kantaa koulutusvientikeskusteluun. Kansainvälistymisstrategian laadinta toteutettiin huomattavan avoimesti ja konsultaatiopohja oli laaja, joten kyse ei ole tutkijan oman tekstin analysoinnista.

Aineistolle esitettiin analyysissä seuraavat kysymykset:

1. Miten koulutusvienti määritellään?

- ▶ Minkälaisia termejä koulutusviennistä käytetään; ovatko nämä termit toistensa synonyymejä?
- ▶ Minkälaisia konkreettisia toimintoja termeihin liitetään?

2. Minkälaisia merkityksiä koulutusviennille annetaan?

- ▶ Miten merkitykset eroavat toisistaan; mitkä merkityssysteemit toistuvat?
- ▶ Minkälainen rooli koulutuksen laadulla näissä merkityssysteemeissä on?

Analyyssi eteni Faircloughin kehittämää diskurssianalyysin viitekehystä mukaillen, jonka keskiössä on tekstin, diskurssikäytännön ja sosiokulttuurisen käytännön muodostama kokonaisuus (Fairclough, 1997; Fairclough, 2003). Analyyysin ensimmäisessä vaiheessa aineistosta kartoitettiin koulutusviennistä käytettäviä termejä ja konkreettisia koulutusvientitoimintoja. Tällöin huomio oli Faircloughin ajatuksia seuraten tekstissä. Käytännössä kukin dokumentti luettiin huolellisesti läpi ja erilliseen tiedostoon merkittiin onko dokumentissa käytetty koulutusvienti-käsitettä vai jotakin muuta termiä, kuten tilauskoulutusta. Tämän yhteydessä dokumenteista etsittiin myös konkreettisia koulutusvientitoteutuksia (esim. *franchising-sopimukset*).

Analyyysin toisessa vaiheessa selvitettiin

minkälaisia merkityksiä ja merkityssysteemejä eli diskursseja aineistossa esiintyy. Lisäksi huomioitiin koulutuksen laadun rooli identifioiduissa diskursseissa, sillä tutkijan tarkoitus on jatkotutkimuksissaan syventyä koulutusviennin laatuun. Analyyysin toinen vaihe nojasi ensisijaisesti *intertekstuaaliseen analyysiin*, jonka avulla teksti sijoittui korkeakoulupoliittiseen kontekstiin. Käytännössä aineistoon valittuja dokumentteja luettiin uudelleen läpi, ja tekstistä pyrittiin erottamaan mahdollisimman monia erilaisia tapoja, joilla koulutusvienti-ilmiötä kuvataan. Tästä saadut huomiot merkittiin ylös kuitenkin vielä nimeämättä varsinaisia diskursseja, sillä tekstiä haluttiin ”kuunnella” ja selvittää minkälaista todellisuutta siinä rakennetaan. Täsmällisen tekstin tarkastelun jälkeen aineistosta pystyttiin havaitsemaan toisista poikkeavia ja keskenään kilpailevia merkityssysteemeitä. Näistä ensimmäinen ja kohtuullisen selkeä jatkumo linkittyi lukukausimaksuihin. Tällöin analyysissä sovellettiin myös *hegemonian* käsitettä. Jokisen ja Juhilan (1993) ajatuksia soveltaen pidettiin mahdollisena, että aineistosta voidaan identifoida diskursseja, jotka ovat hegemonisempia kuin jotkut toiset (Jokinen & Juhila, 1993). Tässä tutkimuksessa hegemonia ymmärrettiin diskurssien välisten valtasuhteiden kautta ja sitä käytettiin kuvaamaan aineistossa esiintyviä vahvoja, jopa dominoivia merkityssysteemeitä (Jokinen & Juhila, 1993; Laclau & Mouffe, 1985; Palonen, 2011).

Lopulta keskeisimmiksi aineistossa esiintyviksi diskursseiksi tulkittiin *estediskurssi*, *oikeutusdiskurssi* ja *vastuullisuusdiskurssi*. Tähän päädyttiin tekstin huolellisen jäsentämisen jälkeen, johon sisältyi ensimmäisen ja toisen analyyysivaiheen huomioiden ja havaintojen yhdistäminen. Aineistosta identifioidut diskurssit tarkentavat koulutusviennin käsitettä ja rakentavat koulutusvientikeskustelun sisältöä. Aineistoa analysoitaessa valittuihin dokumentteihin pyrittiin suhtautumaan ensimmäisestä lukukerrasta lähtien avoimesti, kuitenkin tiedostaen tutkijan aiempi osallistuminen tutkimuksen kohteena olevaan teemaan.

## Koulutusvienti ja sitä kuvaavat diskurssit

Aineistossa koulutusviennin käsite ymmärrettiin hyvin laajasti. Tämä käy ilmi esimerkiksi

*Suomen koulutusvientistrategiassa* (2010), jossa koulutusvientii kattaa kaiken maksulliseen koulutukseen liittyvän toiminnan, aina silloin kun maksaja tai asiakas on ulkomainen (Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös, 2010, 7). Koulutusviennin toiminnoiksi teksteissä mainittiin muun muassa ”tilauskoulutus”, ”yliopistojen sivukampukset” ja ”yhteistutkinnot”. Nämä tuotiin esille muun muassa *Korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymisstrategiassa 2009–2015* (OKM, 2009, 20). Erityisesti EU/ETA-maiden ulkopuolelta tuleville opiskelijoille suunnatut lukukausimaksut miellettiin keskeiseksi koulutusviennin toimintamuodoksi. Tähän viitattiin useissa teksteissä, kuten Ammattikorkeakoulujen rehtorineuvoston ARENE ry:n vuosille 2015–2018 asettamissa hallitusohjelmataavoitteissa (ARENE, 2015).

Puheet koulutusviennistä lukukausimaksuina, opetuspalveluiden vientinä, koulutoimintaan liittyvänä konsultaationa ja tutkimtoon johtavina koulutuksina rakentavat koulutusviennille heterogeenista toimintakenttää. Tässä suhteessa keskustelu koulutusviennistä on jäsentymätöntä. Määrittelyn haasteena on myös koulutusviennin mieltäminen koskemaan ainoastaan ulkomaisia asiakkaita tai maksajia, huolimatta siitä missä toteutus tapahtuu. Tällöin jo valmiiksi hajanaisia toimintoja sisältävän käsitteen ympärille rakentuu keskustelu siitä kenelle koulutuksen tulisi olla maksullista tai maksutonta. Toisaalta käsitteen määrittelyssä tehdään joka tapauksessa rajanvetoa ja täsmennystä. Koulutusvientiiä koskevaan käsitteeseen kiinnitettiin erityisesti huomiota Suomen ylioppilaskuntien (SYL) eduskunnan sivistysvaliokunnalle tekemässä lausunnossa koskien hallituksen esitystä (HE 77/2015) laeiksi yliopistolain ja ammattikorkeakoululain muuttamisesta:

*”Poliitikot, virkamiehet tai korkeakoulujen johtokaan eivät ilmeisesti ole selvillä, milloin puhutaan koulutusviennistä ja milloin normaalista kv-liikkuvuudesta. SYL haluaisikin selvyuden siihen, määritelläänkö kansainvälisten opiskelijoiden maksullinen tutkintokoulutus koulutusvienniksi vai ei.”* (SYL, 2015.)

## Estediskurssi

Estediskurssi nousee aineistosta esille valitsevina puheina *sosiaalisista, tiedollisista ja rakenteellisista rajoituksista*, joita koulu-

tusviennin toteuttamiselle nähdään. Estediskurssia voidaan pitää hegemonisena, sillä se esiintyy kaikissa dokumenteissa jossain muodossa: joko sitä vahvistavana tai horjuttavana. Useissa teksteissä esteet kulminoituvat suomalaisten korkeakoulujen kokemattomuuteen toimia globaaleilla koulutusmarkkinoilla. Tällöin kyse on lähinnä *sosiaalisista ja tiedollisista rajoituksista*. Toisaalta kyse on *rakenteellisista esteistä*. Tällä viitataan useissa teksteissä lainsäädäntöön. Estediskurssi rakentaa koulutusviennille ongelmalähtöistä merkitystä, jossa koulutusviennin edistäminen ei ole sujuvaa johtuen siitä koskevista rajoituksista. Estediskurssi ei kuitenkaan ole homogeeninen, vaan sen sisällä käyvät kamppailua vastakkaiset näkemykset koulutusviennin todellisista esteistä. Kamppailu kulminoituu erityisesti lukukausimaksuja koskevaan keskusteluun, joka vie hegemonisesti tilaa koulutusvientiiin liittyviltä muilta diskursseilta.

Erityisesti kansallisissa koulutusvientiiä koskevissa strategioissa, hallitusohjelmissa ja korkeakoulujen kansallisten edustajien lausunnoissa lukukausimaksut nähdään esteenä, joka tulisi purkaa. Esimerkiksi Suomen yliopistot UNIFI ry toteaa hallitusohjelmaa koskevissa tavoitteissaan seuraavaa:

*”Koulutusvientiiin liittyy kuitenkin nykyisellään lainsäädännöllisiä esteitä. Tutkintoon johtavan koulutuksen myyminen edellyttäisi koulutuksen maksullisuuden laajentamista. Tämä puolestaan edellyttäisi opintotuki- ja stipendijärjestelmän kehittämistä.”* (UNIFI, 2015.)

Lukukausimaksujen puolesta puhutaan myös koulutusvientiiä koskevassa toimenpideohjelmissa, jossa esteiden purkamista käsittelevässä alaotsikossa kuvataan lainsäädännöllisiä esteitä itsemme rakentamiksi: *”Poistetaan itse tekemämme lainsäädännölliset esteet”* (OKM, 2013, 11). Ilmaisu ”meistä” rakentaa kuvaa yhteisöllisyydestä ja vahvistaa siten rakenteellisten esteiden merkitystä koulutusvientikeskustelussa. Kyseinen alaluku käsittelee erityisesti lukukausimaksuja:

*”Selvitysryhmä ehdottaa, että Euroopan talousalueeseen kuulumattomien valtioiden kansalaisille korkeakoulututkintoon johtava koulutus olisi maksullista, kun se järjestetään muulla kuin kotimaisilla kielillä (suomi ja ruotsi)”* (OKM, 2013, 11).

Kansalliset opiskelijajärjestöt, Suomen

ylioppilaskuntien liitto (SYL) ja Suomen opiskelijakuntien liitto (SAMOK), eivät puolestaan näe lainsäädännöllisiä esteitä koulutusviennille (esim. SYL & SAMOK, 2013). Lukukausimaksujen osalta opiskelijajärjestöjen puheet nousevat aineistosta eriyväksi mielipiteeksi. Vastakkainen näkemys ei kuitenkaan pääse esille hallitusohjelmissa tai opetus- ja kulttuuriministeriön julkaisemissa politiikkadokumenteissa. Siten estediskurssi rakentuu erityisesti lukukausimaksuja käsittelevästä puheesta ja esteellisyydellä viitataan ennen kaikkea lainsäädäntöön.

Lukukausimaksut eivät kuitenkaan ole ainut merkitys, joka estediskurssia rakentaa. Esimerkiksi SYLin ja SAMOKin koulutusviennin visioryhmän tekemässä julkaisussa (2013) esteet liittyvät asenteisiin. Nämä edustavat keskustelussa *sosiaalisia esteitä* (SYL & SAMOK, 2013, 11). Asenneongelmaa valotetaan visioryhmän ydinhaasteita käsittelevässä osiossa, jossa peräänkuulutetaan panostuksia markkinointiin, uskallusta investoida koulutusviennin ja eri toimijoiden välistä yhteistyötä (SYL & SAMOK, 2013, 3). Vastaavia koulutusviennin esteitä on nostettu esille myös koulutusviennin koskevassa toimenpideohjelmissa ja kansallisessa koulutusvientistrategiassa. Esimerkiksi koulutusvientistrategiassa Suomen koulutusviennin heikkoudeksi nähdään tuotteistamiseen kohdistuvat puutteet ja investointeihin liittyvä varovaisuus (Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös, 2010, 18).

*Tiedolliset esteet* ilmenivät aineistossa koulutusvientitoimintaan liittyvänä kokemattomuutena. Suomalaisen korkeakoulujen kansainvälinen yhteistyö on nojannut lähinnä opiskelija- ja henkilöstövaihtoon, kotikansainvälistymiseen ja ei-kaupallisiin hankkeisiin. Tämän vuoksi aikaisempaa kokemusta kansainvälisistä koulutusmarkkinoista ei juurikaan ole. Tämä nostettiin esille esimerkiksi koulutusviennin toimenpideohjelmissa:

*”Osa oppilaitoksista tarvitsisi tukea koulutusvientitoiminnan käynnistämiseksi, liiketoiminnallisen ajattelun kirkastamisessa ja osaamisen tuotteistamisessa”* (OKM, 2013, 30).

Lukukausimaksuja koskevat puheet ovat kuitenkin selvästi saaneet eniten huomiota ja muut estediskurssia rakentavat merkitykset ovat jääneet sen varjoon. Lukukausimaksujen tärkeyttä on perusteltu kansainvälisillä

esimerkeillä, jossa erityisesti lukukausimaksuista saadut tuotot nähdään merkittäviksi koulutusviennin tulolähteiksi (esim. OKM, 2013). Toisaalta myös vasta-argumenteissa on vedottu kansainvälisyyteen ja verrattu suomalaista tilannetta muiden pohjoismaiden kehitykseen. Tämä korostuu etenkin opiskelijajärjestöjen dokumenteissa (esim. SAMOK, 2015).

## Oikeutusdiskurssi

Estediskurssin lisäksi aineistosta voidaan identifoida merkityssysteemejä, jotka rakentavat koulutusviennin toteutuksen oikeutusta. Oikeutusdiskurssissa nousevat esille ne koulutusviennin lähtökohdat ja edellytykset, jotka toimivat koulutusviennin *perusteluina*. Toisaalta oikeutusdiskurssi toimii koulutusviennin kannustuspuheena. Oikeutusdiskurssilla vahvistetaan käsitystä suomalaisesta korkeatasoisesta osaamisesta, jolla on annettavaa kansainvälisillä koulutusmarkkinoilla. Tässä suhteessa koulutuksen laatu on yksi oikeutusdiskurssin lähtökohta, vaikka oikeutusdiskurssi ei niinkään paneudu koulutuksen laadunvarmistukseen. Oikeutusdiskurssissa tuodaan myös esille taloudelliseen tilanteeseen ja kansainvälistymiseen liittyviä syitä.

Suomalainen korkeakoulutus nähdään aineistossa korkeatasoiseksi, hyvämaineiseksi ja kilpailukykyiseksi. Tätä pidetään yhtenä koulutusviennin *edellytyksenä ja perustena*. Korkeaan osaamiseen viittaava puhe on tyypillistä erityisesti strategioissa:

*”Suomen vahvuudet ovat kilpailukykyinen koulutusjärjestelmä ja hyvien PISA-tutkimustulosten ansiosta erinomainen maine. Suomalaiseen osaamiseen kohdistuu merkittävä kysyntä, johon ei toistaiseksi ole kyetty täysin vastaamaan.”* (Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös, 2010, 3.)

Vastaava puhe, hieman eri painotuksin, toistuu aineistossa taustatahosta riippumatta. Esimerkiksi opiskelijajärjestöjen toteuttamassa visiopaperissa nostetaan suomalaista koulutusta esille samankaltaisella tavalla (ks. esim. SYL & SAMOK, 2013, 3). Ajatusta korkeatasoisesta suomalaisesta koulutuksesta perustellaan erityisesti hyvällä PISA-menestyksellä. Sen katsotaan lisänneen suomalaisen koulutuksen kansainvälistä tunnettavuutta ja kiinnostavuutta. Näkemykset Suomen hyvistä

PISA-tuloksista elävät aineistossa vahvana ja itsestään selvinä. Tässä suhteessa PISA-menestys nousee dokumenteissa *myytiksi*. PISA-menestykseen viitataan erityisesti strategiapapereissa. Sen avulla luodaan yhteisöllisyyttä, eikä sen merkitystä ehdollisteta, vaan se otetaan tosiasiana. Vaikka PISA-menestys koskee käytännössä peruskoulutusta eikä suoraan kohdistu korkeakouluun, elää PISA-myytti korkeakoulutukseen liittyvässä koulutusvientikeskustelussa vahvana (esim. OKM, 2009, 14).

Korkeatasoisen osaamisen lisäksi oikeutusdiskurssia rakennetaan *talouteen* liittyvillä merkityksillä. Tämä ilmenee sinänsä jo koulutusviennin käsitteen määrittelyssä, jossa koulutusviennin katsotaan lähtökohtaisesti olevan kaupallista toimintaa. Koulutusvientiin kohdistetaan taloudellisten resurssien kasvuun liittyviä odotuksia, joilla toivotaan olevan merkitystä koko yhteiskunnalle (OKM, 2013, 9). Esimerkkejä taloushyödyistä etsitään kansainvälisestä näkökulmasta. Tämä tuodaan muun muassa esille koulutusvientiä koskevassa toimenpideohjelmassa (OKM, 2013, 10).

Näkemykset kansainvälisyydestä ja globalisaatiosta näyttävät osin sekoittuvan aineistossa. Ne nähdään toisiaan tukevana, joskin joiltain osin erillisinä koulutukseen vaikuttavina prosesseina. Oikeutusdiskurssista voidaan identifioida myös kansainvälisen toiminnan monipuolistumiseen liittyviä näkökulmia, kuten korkeakouluja koskevassa kansainvälisyysstrategiassa tuodaan esille:

*”Tutkintoon johtava tilauskoulutus ja EU/ETA-alueen ulkopuolelta tuleville opiskelijoille maksulliset ylempään korkeakoulututkintoon johtavat ohjelmat ovat korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymisen uusia välineitä”* (OKM, 2009, 23).

## Vastuullisuusdiskurssi

Vastuullisuusdiskurssi nousee esille erityisesti strategioissa. Sillä viitataan tässä yhteydessä sellaisiin asiasisältöihin, joissa tuodaan esille koulutusviennin laadunhallintaan ja eettiseen toimintaan liittyviä seikkoja. Vastuullisuusdiskurssi sisältää siten koulutusviennin vaikutuksiin ja toiminnan seuraamuksiin kohdistuvia näkökulmia.

Koulutusviennin *laadunhallintaa* nostetaan

esille erityisesti koulutusvientiä koskevissa strategiapapereissa. Laatu nähdään toiminnan edellytyksenä, joka ylläpitää hyvää mainetta, tai pahimmillaan vahingoittaa sitä. Esimerkiksi kansallisessa koulutusvientistrategiassa puutteet laadunhallinnassa nähdään koulutusviennin uhkakuvana (Valtioneuvoston periaatepäätös, 2010, 18). Samankaltaisia merkityksiä esitetään myös koulutusvientiä koskevassa toimenpideohjelmassa:

*”Laadunhallinta ja todennettu, koeteltu laatu ovat avainasemassa koulutusvientiä kehitettäessä. Selvitysryhmä ehdottaa että, koulutusorganisaatiot varmistavat vientihankkeiden laadun ennen markkinoinnin ja myynnin käynnistämistä. Puutteellinen laadunhallinta aiheuttaa maineriskin kaikille suomalaisille toimijoille.”* (OKM, 2013, 10.)

Kummassakaan strategiassa ei sinänsä oteta kantaa siihen, minkälainen laadunhallintajärjestelmä parhaiten tukisi koulutusvientiä tai mitä seikkoja laadunhallinnassa olisi otettava huomioon. Sitä vastoin korkeakouluja koskevassa kansainvälistymisstrategiassa löytyy maininta Unescon ja OECD:n vuonna 2005 tekemistä suosituksista koskien rajat ylittävän koulutuksen laadunvarmistusta (OKM, 2009, 42). Vaikka kansainvälistymisstrategia on valmisteltu ennen koulutusvientiä koskevia strategioita, viittaukset Unescon ja OECD:n suosituksiin näyttävät jääneen niissä pois. Kataisen ja Sipilän hallitusten hallitusohjelmissa koulutusviennin laatuksymyksiä ei käsitellä ollenkaan. Siihen ei oteta kantaa myöskään *Koulutuksen ja tutkimuksen kehittämissuunnitelmassa vuosille 2011–2015*.

Laatua koskevissa merkityksissä ei sinänsä tuoda esille opiskelijan tai asiakkaan näkökulmaa. Laadunvarmistus ei myöskään ole tutkintoon johtavassa tilauskoulutuksessa strategian painopisteenä, vaikka eri maiden korkeakoulujen laatu järjestelmät tai kansalliset lainsäädännöt voivat käytännössä olla ristiriidassa keskenään. Tässä suhteessa laatu näyttäytyy koulutusvientiä koskevissa puheissa vientitoiminnan perustana, mutta ilman tarkkaa kuvausta siitä, mitä laadukas koulutusvienti on.

Laadun lisäksi koulutusviennille rakennetaan aineistossa *eettistä vastuuta*. Erityisesti tämä ilmenee Suomen ylioppilaskuntien liiton (SYL) tuottamissa dokumenteissa. Eettisyyden merkityksissä korostetaan eettisyyttä arvona, johon koulutusvientitoiminnan tulisi

perustua. Tätä painotetaan esimerkiksi SYLin ja SAMOKin valmistelemassa koulutusviennin visiota koskevassa julkaisussa:

*”Koulutus on yhteiskunnan kivijalka, sosiaalisaation ja kasvatuksen muoto. Siksi koulutuskasvu on eettisesti herkkää toimintaa, ja sitä on ohjattava vahva eettinen asenne. Näin on muuallakin.”* (SYL & SAMOK, 2013, 5.)

Eettisyyden merkitykset linkittyvät joiltain osin myös globaalin vastuun kysymyksiin. Koulutusviennin nähdään siten olevan yksi keino vahvistaa kehittyvien maiden osaamista ja kapasiteetin vahvistamista. Tämän kaltainen koulutusvienti nähdään yhtenä kehitysyhteistyön toimintamuotona, ja siihen ottaa erityisesti kantaa *Korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymisstrategia 2009–2015* (OKM, 2009, 50). Globaalia vastuuta koskevat kysymykset eivät juurikaan näyttäydy myöhemmissä dokumenteissa, eikä niitä ole sisällytetty hallitusohjelmiin. Ainoastaan opiskelijajärjestöjen puheenvuoroissa koulutusviennin kehitysyhteistyötä sivuavat huomiot tulevat esille. Tällöin se nähdään osana eettisyyskeskustelua (SYL & SAMOK, 2013, 5) ja yhtenä koulutusvientiin liittyvänä mahdollisuutena (SYL, 2014, 7).

## Johtopäätökset ja pohdintaa

Analyysin perusteella voidaan todeta, että koulutusvienti kattaa kansallisessa keskustelussa kaiken sellaisen kaupallisen koulutustoiminnan, jonka asiakaskunta tai kohde-ryhmä on ulkomainen. Koulutusvienti-termi on joiltain osin ylikuormittunut, sillä se sisältää kirjavan määrän erilaisia kaupalliseen toimintaan liittyviä näkökulmia, jotka ovat osittain ristiriidassa keskenään. Toisaalta käsitteen ylimalkaisuus viittaa siihen, että konkreettisia koulutusvientitoteutuksia ei ole kertynyt kovinkaan monelta vuodelta, tai ne eivät tule valitussa aineistossa muutamaa poikkeusta lukuun ottamatta esille. Koulutusviennin määritelmät aiemmissa tutkimuksissa ovat vastaavanlaisia ja tukevat laaja-alaista määritelmää koulutusviennille. Esimerkiksi Schatzin (2016) mukaan koulutusvienti käsitteenä viittaa kansainväliseen liiketoimintaan, joka voi sisältää useita erilaisia toiminnanmuotoja kuten koulutuspalveluita ja materiaaleja (Schatz, 2016, 52).

Tarkasteltaessa aineistosta identifioituja

diskursseja, näyttäytyy erityisesti *estediskurssi* koulutuspoliittisella pelikentällä hegemonisena. Estediskurssi kiteytyy lukukausimaksukeskusteluun ja sen hegemoniaa pitävät yllä sekä lukukausimaksujen puolestapuhujat että sitä vastustavat. Tässä suhteessa estediskurssissa käydään sisäistä kamppailua siitä, mitkä varsinaiset esteet koulutusviennille ovat tai onko todellisia esteitä olemassa. Lukukausimaksuja perustellaan ja vastustetaan kansainvälisillä esimerkeillä, vaikka kysymys koulutuksen maksullisuudesta sinänsä on kansallinen. Lukukausimaksuja koskevat merkitykset näyttävät olleen tehokkaita, sillä ne ovat osaltaan nostaneet lukukausimaksut poliittiselle agendalle sellaisena ongelmana, johon Sipilän hallituksen hallitusohjelmassa tarjotaan ratkaisua.

Estediskurssissa vähemmälle huomiolle ovat jääneet sosiaaliset ja tiedolliset rajoitukset, kuten markkinointi ja kansallisten toimijoiden välisen yhteistyön merkitys. Aiemmissa suomalaista koulutusvientiä käsittelevissä tutkimuksissa näitä tekijöitä on kuitenkin pidetty tärkeänä kehittämiskohtena (Cai & Kivistö, 2013; Hölttä ym. 2009). Esimerkiksi markkinointiin liittyvät haasteet katsotaan johtuvan suomalaisten toimijoiden vähäisestä kokemuksesta konkreettisten koulutusvientitoteutusten valmistelussa ja toteutuksessa (Cai ym. 2012). Cai ym. (2012) esittävätkin yhdeksi ratkaisuksi tiiviimpää yhteistyötä koulutusvientiä menestyksekkäästi toteuttaneiden maiden kanssa, kuten Ison-Britannian ja Australian (Cai ym. 2012, 231). Kansainvälisten asiantuntijoiden tai ulkomaisten partnereiden konsultointi ei aineistoon valituissa dokumenteissa nouse kuitenkaan esille. Toisaalta vastikään julkaisussa koulutusvientiä käsittelevässä tiedartassa painotetaan erityisesti tuotteistamisen merkitystä (OKM, 2016). Tässä suhteessa kansallisen koulutusvientikeskustelun suunta saattaa olla muuttumassa.

*Oikeutusdiskurssi* näyttäytyy koulutusvientikeskusteluissa toiminnan lähtökohtana ja innoittajana. Oikeutusdiskurssi seuraa estediskurssia, mutta sillä ei ole estediskurssin kaltaista hallitsevaa roolia koulutuspoliittisessa keskustelussa. Oikeutusdiskurssin merkityksiä rakennetaan etenkin strategiapapereissa. Tällöin suomalaisen koulutuksen hyvä maine ja korkeasaaminen ovat keskiössä. PISA-menestys ilmenee

aineistossa myyttinä, jolla yhteinen, jaettu oikeutus koulutusvientiin perustellaan. Toisaalta koulutusviennin oikeutuksena nähdään myös taloudellisten resurssien (kansallinen) niukentuminen, johon voidaan vastata koulutusmarkkinoiden tuomilla (kansainvälisillä) esimerkeillä.

Ajatus korkeatasoisesta koulutuksesta, jota perustellaan hyvällä PISA-menestyksellä, on huomioitu myös muissa aihetta käsittelevissä tutkimuksissa. PISA-menestyksen on katsottu muun muassa lisänneen kansainvälistä kiinnostusta suomalaista koulutusjärjestelmää kohtaan (Sahlberg, 2011) ja toimivan siten yhtenä perusteluna koulutusviennille (Schatz, 2016). Tämän on kuitenkin katsottu olevan lyhytnäköistä, sillä esimerkiksi Schatzin (2016) mukaan keskeisimpiä haasteita koulutusviennin edistämiseksi ovat selkeän koulutusvientituotteen puuttuminen ja koulutusvientitoiminnan hajanaisuus (Schatz, 2016, 142–143). Yhdeksi ratkaisuksi tähän on tarjottu koulutusviennin keskittymistä erityisesti ulkomailla järjestettäviin toteutuksiin (Cai & Kivistö, 2013, 73).

*Vastuullisuusdiskurssissa* koulutusviennille asetetaan laadunhallintaan ja eettiseen toimintaan liittyviä vaatimuksia, jotka nähdään edellytyksenä kestäväälle koulutusvientitoiminnalle. Erityisesti laadunhallinnassa painotetaan korkeakoulujen vastuuta ilman konkreettisia keinoja tai päämääriä. Korkeakoulujen kansainvälistymisstrategiasta 2009–2015 löytyy maininta Unescon ja OECD:n tekemistä suosituksista koskien rajat ylittävän koulutuksen laadunvarmistusta. Tämä jää kuitenkin yksittäiseksi maininnaksi. Vastuullisuusdiskurssissa koulutusviennin laadunhallinnan kehittäminen ei nouse sellaiseksi asiaksi, johon kansallisella tasolla on nähty tarvetta keskittyä. Sitä vastoin useissa koulutusvientiä koskevissa tutkimuksissa koulutusvientiin liittyvät vastuukysymykset ovat olleet esillä. Esimerkiksi toimiva laadunhallinta on nähty välttämättömänä koulutusvientitoiminnan kehittämiseksi (Altbach & Knight, 2007).

Diskurssianalyttinen tutkimusote tarjoaa tekstintarkasteluun hyvin soveltuvan lähtökohdan tutkia kansallista koulutusvientikeskustelua. Aineistosta pystyttiin identifioimaan koulutusvientiä rakentavia merkityksiä, jotka tarjoavat tuoreen näkökulman kansalliseen koulutusvientikeskusteluun.

Toisaalta diskurssianalyysin tulokset ovat lähtökohtaisesti sidoksissa tutkijan tulkitaan, joka objektiivisuuspyrkimyksistä huolimatta on aina jollain tavalla subjektiivista. Analyysin läpinäkyvyyden takaamiseksi tekstissä on soveltuvin osin lainattu suoria otteita aineistosta. Lisäksi tämän analyysin tulokset näyttävät tukevan ja syventävän aikaisempien tutkimusten tuloksia.

Tämän artikkelin osalta tekstiä analysoitiin intertekstuaalisesti. Kiinnostava jatkotutkimuskohde olisikin huomioida diskurssissa esiintyviä subjektipositioita. Tällöin voitaisiin esimerkiksi selvittää minkälaista toimijuutta opiskelijat koulutusvientikeskustelussa edustavat. Yleisesti ottaen opiskelijoiden positio näytti jäävän paitsioon. Esimerkiksi vastuullisuusdiskurssissa ei ilmennyt puheenvuoroja siitä, mikä on koulutusvientiin osallistuvien opiskelijoiden tai asiakkaiden oikeudellinen asema ja mikä taho sen turvaa.

Lähitulevaisuudessa on lopulta kiinnostavaa seurata muuttaako lukukausimaksujen käyttöönotto estediskurssin merkitysjärjestyksiä; nouseeko estediskurssiin esimerkiksi joitain seikkoja, jotka nyt rakentavat vastuullisuusdiskurssia? Toisaalta on mahdollista, että koulutusvientitoteutusten vakiintuessa koko diskurssijärjestys muuttuu ja koulutusviennin merkityksiä rakennetaan toisista lähtökohdista.◆

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# PUBLICATION II

## **Quality conventional perspective on the quality assurance of education export in the case Finland**

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Henna Juusola

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## Quality conventional perspective on the quality assurance of education export in the case Finland

Henna Juusola

### Abstract

During the last decade, education export has been seen as a promising new export service for Finnish higher education institutions that can increase national income and offer multiple opportunities to operate internationally. The quality of education and the good reputation of the Finnish education system worldwide are seen as a starting point for Finnish education export activities. In this paper, the aim is to examine national quality assurance practicalities from the perspective of education export. The focus is on two audit reports with education export as an optional target: the Audit of Häme University of Applied Sciences and the Audit of Tampere University of Applied Sciences. The reports are analyzed using qualitative content analyses and French convention theory that sets quality concept in a larger framework. This approach enhances the understanding of education activities where education is considered for-profit and projects can be located outside Finland. By so doing, this paper provides new insights on those quality conventions that seem to have dominant role in external audit reports, but it also offers a theoretically based overview of the global educational market space.

### Introduction

During the last ten years, education export has become part of the national higher education policy in Finland. Education export in this paper is understood as for-profit education services, products or materials targeted at international customers, domestic or abroad (Schatz, 2016). At the strategical level, education export has been seen as a new promising export service that can increase national incomes and diversify the international operations of higher education institutions (MINEDU, 2010; MINEDU, 2013). Despite the national strategic goals, concrete actions seems to be evolving somewhat slowly (Cai, Hölttä, & Kivistö, 2012), and only limited data has been systemically collected on ongoing and past projects.

One particular strength of the Finnish education export services has been seen to be a reliance on the quality of education and the good reputation of Finnish education as a whole (MINEDU, 2013). By contrast, quality assurance of education export has not been on the political agenda and has hardly been discussed nationally. On the other hand, quality aspects have been stressed in many international

studies and recommendations. For instance, Knight (2016) has pointed out that the global educational market space will create greater uncertainty in the quality in higher education as institutions are operating in local, national and global zones (Knight, 2016). This concern is shared by several other researchers (see e.g. Marginson, 2004; Stella, 2006) and earlier studies have pointed out that quality risks may become a major issue if quality cannot be successfully addressed (Kosmützky & Putty, 2016). Likewise, supranational organizations such as the OECD and UNESCO (2005) have highlighted the importance of quality issues in education operations transcending national borders by increasing awareness of quality assurance in education export (UNESCO & OECD, 2005).

The purpose of this chapter is to explore quality of education in the frame of Finnish higher education export by taking a closer look at the current national quality assurance approach from the perspective of education export. The French convention theoretical approach and previous studies in quality of higher education are adopted as a theoretical framework, where quality assurance in education export can be seen on a larger scale. From the convention, theoretical point of view the importance of coordination and aims to achieve a stable market space can offer a salient standpoint to theorize quality of education and in that sense also contribute to the discussion on the concept of quality and quality assurance among higher education researchers.

This chapter includes the following views: firstly, the background of the current national quality assurance approach is introduced from the perspective of education export. Secondly, the French convention theoretical perspective and the quality concept are explained. Thirdly, the institutional audit reports of Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) and Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) and the method used are introduced. Finally, the results of the analysis are explained and discussed. The selected documents are the only national audit reports in the field of higher education currently available including education export as an optional target, thereby affording new and unexamined information on education export.

### Overview of quality assurance in Finland from the perspective of education export

According to the Finnish legislation governing universities and universities of applied sciences (University Act 558/2009; University of Applied Sciences Act 932/2014), higher education institutions (HEIs) are primarily responsible for the quality of education. HEIs are also required to self-evaluate their own actions and participate regularly in external evaluation (ibid). External evaluation is typically performed by a national quality assurance agency, the Finnish Education

Evaluation Center (FINEEC), and the quality label awarded by FINEEC is valid for six years (FINEEC, 2015). As the Finnish national quality assurance approach relies on auditing, external evaluation focuses on the institutional level quality system by aiming to support continuous quality improvement from an institutional perspective (OECD, 2008). In that sense, external (national) auditing does not focus directly on quality of education, but rather the functionality of the institutional quality assurance system.

In general, auditing processes organized by FINEEC consist of an auditing agreement (between FINEEC and a given HEI), establishing an auditing group, accomplishing self-evaluation reports (by the HEI), organizing institutional auditing visits, producing an auditing report (by the external auditing group) and the decision on the audit. Higher education institutions may choose to use national auditing or international auditing for the external evaluation process. In the latter case, the external auditing team consists of national and international experts from higher education institutions or other relevant organizations. The main targets of the auditing are institutional quality policy, quality management and the development of quality assurance practicalities. Also, the institution's core duties such as degree education, research and societal impact are also taken into account. In auditing, HEIs are asked to choose one function that supports the institutional strategy as an optional target. (FINEEC, 2015.)

The Finnish national quality assurance practicalities are clearly based on the Bologna process and European wide recommendations (Saarinen, 2007). The Bologna process has also reinforced the position of FINEEC as an effective actor for supporting the Bologna implementations nationally (Saarinen & Ala-Vähälä, 2007). Overall, the national quality assurance approach follows the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG), also covering education export activities. In practice, the ESG includes recommendations for external and internal quality assurance by emphasizing a student-centred approach (in learning and teaching), transparent practicalities and continuous quality improvement in terms of teaching and learning. In addition, certification, admissions, student support and data gathering are highlighted (ENQA, 2015b).

From a national perspective, education export is a fairly new function for higher education institutions to which they make a strategic choice to commit. However, in a wider context, education export can be seen as a part of a globalization process where knowledge has become a target of investments and education is considered to be a commercial service (Altbach & Knight, 2007). One example of this is the World Trade Organization's (WTO) General Agreement on Trade and Services (GATS), where

education is part of the export services. This has increased supranational organizations' interest in issuing their own recommendations for education export activities. For instance, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO) published as early as in 2005 joint Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education. The guidelines aim to support the improvement of transparent and systematic practicalities for education that transcend national borders by taking into account different actors and their responsibilities, among these being governments, higher education institutions and student bodies (UNESCO & OECD, 2005). Recently the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) has also published A Toolkit for Quality Assurance Agencies (2015) that aims to encourage national quality assurance agencies to take more active role in education export activities (ENQA, 2015a).

In the Finnish higher education debate international recommendations and a global perspective on quality assurance seem not to be entirely been reflected (Kallo & Semchenko, 2016). Instead, it seems that good quality in Finnish higher education is mainly seen as a starting point for increasing education export activities and as a justification for education export in public (Juusola, 2016). In that sense quality of education in the context of education export is taken for granted, as is often the case in quality of education in general (Saarinen, 2007).

### Convention theory and the concept of quality in higher education

In this paper, the theoretical approach relies on French convention theory (also known as the economics of convention). Convention theory (CT) is a sociological-economic framework for understanding co-operation among different actors aiming to achieve mutual understanding in situations where differing expectations clash (Diaz-Bone, 2016). CT relies on Boltanski's and Thévenot's earlier studies on the justification of social world (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006) claiming that in uncertain situations where the price is not a self-evident explanation for the quality of a product or service the quality will be constructed collectively by relying on multiple conventions in order to have a stable market situation (Diaz-Bone & Salais, 2011; Eymard-Duvernay, Favereau, Orléan, Salais, & Thévenot, 2005).

In convention theory, several conventions may exist concurrently, but they have different weights, thus some conventions may be more dominant than others. Actors in market situations have ability to make adjustments to an appropriate convention that fits the situation. The situation may include



wide geographical and temporal dimensions and in that sense include a multilevel approach. (Diaz-Bone & Salais, 2011.) From the convention theoretical point of view, social action is not primarily influenced by the institution. Instead, ‘actors apply conventions to interpret the meaning of institutions in real situations’ (Diaz-Bone, 2016, 215). In that sense convention can be understood as sociocultural frames that actors in certain situations rely on in order to achieve a shared understanding of goals, objects and action that are related to production and consumption (Diaz-Bone, 2016; Eymard-Duvernay et al., 2005). Thus a quality convention can be seen as a fundamental element for the evaluation (and valuation) of qualities contributing to the components in economic situations (Diaz-Bone, 2016, 215).

Thévenot’s and Boltanski’s framework for justification relies on political philosophy and includes the six modes of world (orders of worth) where coordination takes place: inspired world, domestic world, world of fame, civic world, market world and industrial world (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006). In the inspired world creativity, spontaneity and inspiration are seen as common principles that guide the actions. Thus, worth cannot be measured by relying on controls; instead, worth can be tested by emotional, even adventurous experiences. In the domestic world, a common principle is to rely on traditions and family relations, where generation, trustworthiness and positions gained in hierarchical institutional structures are what matters. Worthiness is based on traditions and hierarchical orders through generations and can be tested by relying on oral evidence. In the world of fame success, branding and public opinion constitute the common principle. Worth is based on the reputation and being visible, and can be tested by being recognized in public. In the civic world, worth is related to collectiveness. Worthiness can be supported by rules, laws and statutes, and occurs through elected representatives and delegates that represent the collective interest in public. In the market world, common principles manifest in competition: worth is something that is saleable and wanted. The industrial world is related to productivity and efficiency, the capacity to ensure normal operations to respond usefully to (public) needs. This can be tested by measuring efficiency and functionality by relying on objective measurable evidence (such as standards). (Boltanski & Thévenot, 2006; Ponte, 2016.)

The order of worth (worlds) is open and negotiable. New worlds may come to the fore and the current world can be challenged (Blok, 2013; Ponte, 2016). For instance, convention theorists have recently emphasized the green world, that stresses ecological choices and the environmental perspective (see e.g. Blok, 2013). Convention theory includes the idea that different forms of coordination, organization and actions are supported by different conventions. This may mean that multiple

cognitive barriers and power asymmetry may exist among actors involved in the same situation at some particular time (Ponte, 2016).

In this chapter the main focus is on quality conventions related to the market situation where the worth of (educational) products is evaluated through coordination and common understanding (convention) have been achieved by relying on principles of one or more orders of worth (Baird, 2008; Eymard-Duvernay et al., 2005). A quality conventional approach has been applied especially in global commodities such as the food industry (Ponte & Gibbon, 2005; Ponte, 2016) and marketing research (Finch, Geiger, & Harkness, 2016). However, a few notions can also be found in studies related to quality of higher education (Baird, 2008; Krause, 2012).

While quality conventions offer a theoretical perspective through which to understand the underlying conventions in education export activities several studies have focused on the concept of quality in higher education. One well-known definition is that proposed by Harvey and Green (1993). According to them, quality can be seen as exceptional, as perfectionism (or consistency), as fitness for purpose, as value for money and as transformation (Harvey & Green, 1993). Quality as exceptional includes the idea that education is something special and high class, but it can mean that institutions or actions meet the minimum standards. Quality as perfectionism or consistency covers the idea of ‘zero defects’ (actions that achieve accuracy) and quality culture (quality is everyone’s responsibility). Fitness for purpose in general includes the onus of the customer (‘whose purpose’) and assessment for providers (‘how is fitness assessed?’). Value for money stresses the market approach to quality, but it is also connected to accountability and performance indicators. Transformation includes the idea of an academic community where students are seen as participants in the learning process. Thus transformation stresses the role and status of participants (i.e. students). (Harvey & Green, 1993.)

Quality in education is also closely connected to the stakeholders and accountability in public. In that sense, what kind of quality is deemed crucial and worth achieving is dependent on the interest of the actors (Harvey & Green, 1993; Saarinen, 2008). For instance, ‘quality for money’ means most likely something different to government than to students and employers (Marshall, 2016). On the other hand, quality becomes concrete especially when evaluation mechanisms have a stronger position in higher education policy (Saarinen, 2007). Evaluation of or judgement on quality is institutionalized by using quality assurance approaches that may be based on continuous quality improvement, as in the case of Finland, or rewarding the most excellent units or using some other

principles. The actors that hold the power to decide what quality aspects are worth evaluating or assuring also have the power to decide what to leave out of the evaluation. (Saarinen & Huusko, 2004.) On the other hand, education export can be seen to be a centre of the ongoing debate on education as a private good or public good in the sense that it relies on for-profit activities that can be seen to enhance primarily private good. However, as it has a transnational dimension; it can also support global public good - at least in terms of global knowledge flows and international collaboration among academics, as Marginson (2007) has pointed out (Marginson, 2007).

Convention theory seems to have a certain connection to the concept of quality in higher education (Baird, 2008). For instance, Harvey and Green’s (1993) category of quality and Marginson’s (2007) approach to education as a global public good explains comparable themes that reflects certain quality conventions (Table 1). However, quality conventions are not identical with the quality concept, instead they represent wider socio-cultural frames.

Table 1: Summary of quality conventions and quality concepts in higher education

Convention	Common principle	Quality concept
Fame	Known in public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>being exceptional and demonstrating excellence in terms of institutional reputation</li> </ul>
Industrial	Efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perfection and excellence in terms of quality standards</li> <li>fitness for purpose in terms of students’ specifications and institutional mission</li> <li>value for money in terms of accountability</li> </ul>
Market	Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>value for money in terms of market approach to education</li> </ul>
Domestic	Traditional	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consistency in terms of quality culture (quality everyone’s responsibility)</li> </ul>
Civic	Collectivity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>public good in terms of global knowledge flows and international collaboration of academics</li> </ul>
Inspired	Creativity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>transformation in terms of students’ involvement in the learning process</li> </ul>

## Data and method

In this analysis the data consisted of two audit reports: the Audit of Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) 2016 and the Audit of Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK) 2016. These audit reports were selected as they are the first national reviews of education export activities and thus shed interesting light on the quality assurance of education export in the frame of Finnish higher education.

In both cases the institutional audits were conducted by the Finnish education evaluation centre (FINEEC) and executed by the external audit team in 2016. Selected reports represent the second national audit round that is currently still ongoing. In this audit round special attention is paid to strategic management and improvement work on quality assurance practicalities (FINEEC, 2015; Moitus, 2014). The institutions also have the option to choose one action that supports the institution's strategical aims as an optional target of the audit (FINEEC, 2015). In the cases of HAMK and TAMK, education export was seen to represent this kind of action.

The data were analysed by conducting a qualitative content analysis (see e.g. Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009), where quality conventions were seen as a theoretical framework (see Table 1). The aim of the analysis was to identify those quality conventions that are related to education export activities in the case of the external audit. The research questions can be thus presented as follows: what quality conventions can be identified in the selected audit reports and to what specific issues are these conventions related?

The analysis process consisted of thematic categorization taking a quality conventional approach, although actions and themes that seemed not to fit in the quality convention category were also taken into account. Such an analysis can be considered to represent theory-based content analysis (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009), although the logic behind the analysis was rather abductive given that, besides audit reports, it includes several quality conventional aspects, it is also possible to find themes that cannot be explained by using a quality conventional approach.

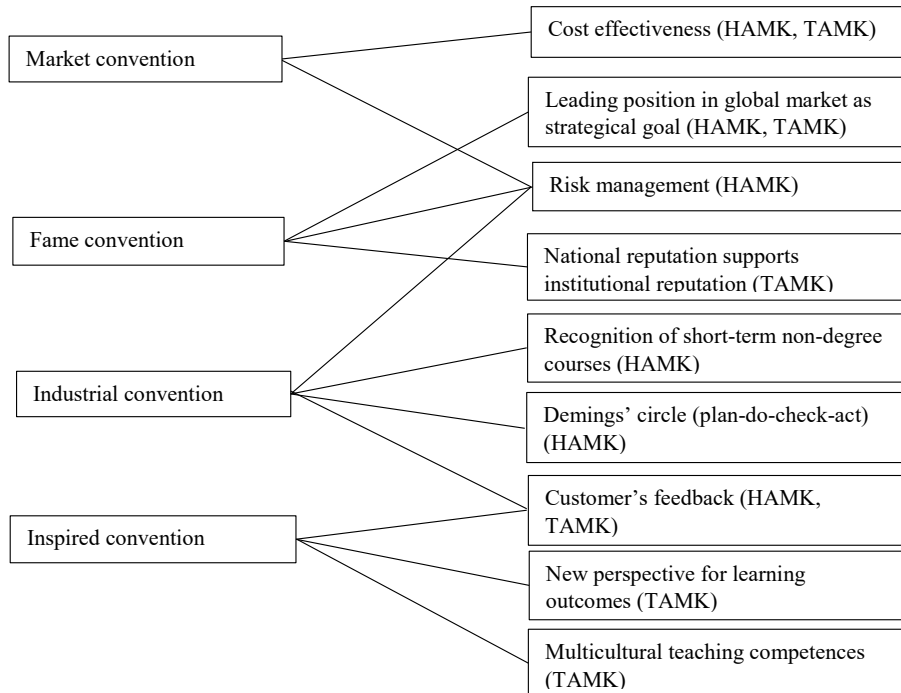
The situation can be considered to be one aspect of the theoretical point of view (Diaz-Bone, 2011). In the case of the audit reports of Häme University of Applied Sciences (HAMK) and Tampere University of Applied Sciences (TAMK), the interpretation of certain situations was already made by the external audit team. On the other hand, the audit report is based on documents and a self-evaluation report submitted by the higher education institution, and on the institutional audit visit consisting of interviews with internal and external stakeholders (such as teaching staff and students) (FINEEC, 2015). In that sense, the audit report can also be considered to be a certain situation where quality of education is the subject of various views. External audit reports as such primarily represent the industrial convention, since they focus mainly on efficiency and fitness for purpose – thematic. However, as external audits address quality assurance practicalities from a holistic perspective, this analysis is based on the premises that quality conventions other than industrial conventions can also

be identified in the audit reports. In the next section the results of the analysis will be presented along with factors explaining the quality conventions identified.

## Results

The qualitative content analyses of the HAMK and TAMK audit reports generally showed that education export was seen to be strategically important, but rather a novel mode of action. Compared to the other audit targets, the quality assurance practicalities of education export were still in progress and education export actions were lacking clear and mutually understood definitions. As an example, ad hoc solutions related to education export seemed to be taken without any overall connection to the quality management system. On the other hand, the analyses showed that quality assurance of education export consisted of multiple levels (Campbell et al., 2016; Werner et al., 2016). In that sense especially market, industrial and fame conventions seemed to have a connection to education export. Yet each of these conventions represented different aspects of quality of education and had different weights - at least in the case of the audit reports. Table 2 shows the main findings of the qualitative content analyses based on a quality conventional approach.

Table 2: Summary of the quality conventions in the audits of HAMK and TAMK



***Market, industrial and fame conventions***

In this analysis, market, industrial and fame seem to predominate. Especially the market convention can be considered to be a rationale for education export operations, or Global Education, as it was called in HAMK and TAMK (Campbell et al., 2016; Werner et al., 2016). In the case of HAMK, the market approach was already apparent in the name of the unit ‘Global Education Business’ (Campbell et al., 2016, 59). Similarly, TAMK emphasized global educational delivery as a precondition for education export (Werner et al., 2016). In that sense, one specific issue relating to market convention in the audit reports was cost-effectiveness. This was mentioned especially in the report on HAMK by stressing the importance of financial risk management (Campbell et al., 2016).

Not surprisingly, industrial convention was strongly present in both audit reports. The external audit teams reported several issues worth taking into account in terms of efficiency and functionality. For instance, a more systematic approach to quality management in order to minimize ad hoc solutions was recommended. (Campbell et al., 2016; Werner et al., 2016). In the case of HAMK, one concern concerned the efficient use of risk management that includes both reputational and financial aspects

(Campbell et al., 2016, 60). Industrial conventions also related to other tools frequently used in institutional quality management such as applying so-called Deming's method (plan-do-check-act cycle) (Campbell et al., 2016, 62). Also, it seemed that there was incoherence with education export activities and nationally-recognized degree structures. For instance, certification of the qualification gained from short-term or non-degree courses did not lead to any degree, nor to nationally or internationally recognized diplomas (Campbell et al., 2016). On the other hand, in the case of TAMK, relying excessively on quantitative measurements and 'numbers thinking' were deemed problematic as such, especially in terms of international education as a whole (Werner et al., 2016, 56).

Both institutions aimed at achieving a good reputation in the global education market space. In that sense the fame convention related especially to the strategic goals. For instance, the vision of TAMK for 2020 includes becoming 'Finland's leading university of applied sciences for global education' (Werner et al., 2016, 31). Likewise, HAMK stressed commitment to education export by setting 'export of expertise' in a central role as a long-term goal of HAMK (Campbell et al., 2016, 59). On the other hand, it seems that while HAMK focused on risk management in terms of strengthening good reputation, TAMK relied on the national 'excellent pre-tertiary' education that Finland received in the PISA survey (Campbell et al., 2016; Werner et al., 2016).

### ***Inspired, domestic and civic conventions***

In this analysis inspired convention is understood as a creativity and transforming knowledge from the learner's point of view. In both audit reports this was mainly related to the customer feedback mechanism (Campbell et al., 2016; Werner et al., 2016), that can be considered to represent primarily the industrial convention, at least in terms of a standardized test that aims to measure effectiveness. On the other hand, in some cases education export seemed to demand greater administrative flexibility and teachers motivated to teach in a multi-cultural environment (ibid). In that sense, inspired convention can be also seen as a willingness to consider education from a new perspective, for instance in terms of learning outcomes, as in the case of TAMK (Werner et al., 2016). On the contrary there seemed to be barriers relating to student learning experiences as there has been discussion on lecturers' competences to teach in English although this concerned courses offered through the medium of English as such, not only education export activities (Campbell et al., 2016; Werner et al., 2016).

According to both audit reports, internal and external stakeholders were not always aware of education export activities and the benefits it might afford them (Campbell et al., 2016; Werner et al.,

2016). From this perspective, the civic convention that refers to education as a public good and collectivity inside the higher education community seemed to be rather weak. However, some of the education export projects can be connected to a civic convention, especially from receiver's point of view. For instance, in the case of HAMK, education export pilot projects have typically been in the field of vocational teacher education often commissioned by a foreign ministry of education or educational administrator (Campbell et al., 2016). In that sense 'the product' of education export is related to a civic convention as it aims to impact the society in the project location (capacity building) by offering education services as a part of national education reforms or training for different actors in the field of education. However, project location would most likely include groups with varying interests in the reforms and training, and thus its collectivity may depend on which group is in question.

Domestic convention has a connection with tradition, but it also refers to the quality culture in terms of shared understanding of roles and responsibilities. According to both audit reports, activities under education export were to some extent undefined and thus there seemed to be a lack of shared understanding of the goals and aims of the education export. In both cases the external audit team stressed the importance of a holistic perspective where the connection with internationalization and education export is better perceived. (Campbell et al., 2016; Werner et al., 2016.) According to the audit report on HAMK, this also emerged during the interviews with external stakeholders as they seemed not to see major differences between education export and other international activities (Campbell et al., 2016).

## Discussion

It is easy to understand that education export activities and the quality assurance of education export emphasize particularly the market convention that concerns of cost-effectiveness and competitiveness. However, taking into account other studies, it seems that market logic has a strong position in the internationalization of higher education in a more general sense (see e.g. Haapakoski's and Stein's discourse analyses on internationalization strategies in Chapter Two and Holubek's case study on education hub in Singapore in Chapter Five of this book). On the other hand, what works in the market world, may not work at the same way in the civic world or the domestic world. Thus relying solely on market and industrial conventions may not support the creativity (inspiration



convention) or localization (civic convention) that may, ultimately, be relevant for students and participants of the education export activities. As Simonsen et al. point out, one-sided understanding of international education on a micro level (such as in a classroom situation) can lead to an exclusive approach to teaching instead of supporting the inclusive perspective (see the study by Simonsen et al. on international teaching and studying in Chapter Six of this book). However,, in cases where institutions rely heavily on market convention, students may consider themselves more as customers than as a part of the academic community and thus they may adopt more customer-like behaviour (Naidoo, Shankar, & Veer, 2011; Woodall, Hiller, & Resnick, 2014).

Education export can also challenge the traditional approach to organizing quality assurance as it raises questions that have not necessarily been crucial before in the Finnish context. One example of this is the recognition of non-degree courses and short courses not leading to any recognized diplomas or degrees in the Finnish qualification framework. Also, for-profit educational activities with fragmented and in some cases temporary stakeholders reveal the importance of risk management (financial and reputational), at least in the case of HAMK. In that sense market convention as a principle of cost-effectiveness relies in some ways on industrial convention.

Stressing quality from a risk management perspective presents quality as something that needs to be ensured. According to Saarinen (2007; 2005) this was already the case in the national political agenda in the 1980s, when undefined goals were seen as a threat to the quality of education (SAARINEN, 2005; Saarinen, 2007). However, moving away from civic values (such as education as a public good) and heading towards what is economically beneficial and assumed to be of worth in the education market, also impacts on institutional quality assurance practicalities (Beerkens, 2015). Nonetheless, this does not alter the fact that the quality assurance of higher education institutions is also steered by the national quality assurance approach, which in the case of Finland relies on auditing. Also, in the case of the current national quality assurance in Finland, education export as such does not constitute a separate assessment as the auditing focuses on the institutional quality assurance practicalities and their connection to the institution's strategic choices. Thus, the audit reports not only reflect the institutional quality assurance practices, but also the national auditing criteria.

Good reputation and well-known position in public can be seen as core principles in the *fame convention*. This was also noticed in both audit reports as HAMK and TAMK had strategic goals to become leading Finnish actors in the global education market. In that sense the fame convention relates especially to institutional position in a market world (market convention) as public recognition

can cause institutions to be more in demand. In the case of TAMK Finland's good reputation especially in pre-tertiary education is also seen to support the institutional reputation of TAMK.

Finland's success, especially in the PISA survey, has increased global interest in the Finnish higher education system (Sahlberg, 2011). This has also become noticeable in the national education export strategies (see e.g. MINEDU, 2013). While national reputation can support institutional success, reputation as such can be seen to be related to a wider concept. As Collins and Park (2016) point out, institutional reputation is a long-term process that includes local, national and transnational actions, but also interactions with multiple stakeholders such as students, teachers and policy-makers (Collins & Park, 2016). On the other hand, in convention theory actors can rely on different conventions in different situations (Diaz-Bone, 2011). This may also be the case in education export activities. As an example, students may rely heavily on fame and industrial convention when considering suitable places to study by taking into account international rankings and quality labels. However, when the education actually takes place, what is of worth to students may be related to inspired world or civic world in terms of learning experiences, but then again, after graduation the world of fame may become the most relevant in the sense of position achieved in the labour market due to the degree obtained. This kind of phenomenon is also stressed by Marginson (2006) as he has pointed out that in some cases the positional aspect may be of greater value to individuals than quality of teaching (Marginson, 2006).

Inspired convention involves creativity and innovation, but also the transformation aspect of quality of education, where the academic community supports students' participation in the learning process. In the case of the HAMK and TAMK audit reports, inspired convention in education export relates especially to the customer-centred approach. From a wider perspective, concerns about improving the learning outcomes in terms of internationalization (as in the case of TAMK) and supporting teachers' international competences for teaching through the medium of English (TAMK and HAMK) relate to the inspired convention since these elements can also support customers' and fee-paying students' ability to take an active part in the learning process.

However, while inspired convention can be identified as a part of education export activities, the audit reports address inspired convention at a general level. Taking into account previous research, inspired convention has been stressed especially in terms of academic culture and its implications for learning and teaching practicalities. For instance, students in transnational programmes (e.g. branch campuses) may be confused with terms and tasks that are required as part of their studies since their

educational background is based on different pedagogical approaches (Pyvis, 2011). In that sense, implementing supportive measures in transnational curriculum (such as workshops for study skills), the cultural differences in students' learning approaches can be supported in a positive way (Waterval, Frambach, Driessen, & Scherpbier, 2015). Likewise, teachers' sociocultural backgrounds may affect the learning process. For instance, unbalanced gender distribution and cultural background may, depending on the case, either support or complicate the students' learning process (Coleman, 2003). Likewise, Weil has stressed the significance of the social dimension in the didactics of higher education in the international context (see Chapter Seven of this book). In the longer term, inspired convention can become a relevant aspect for considering quality of education export as education export activities may challenge current teaching approaches and management practicalities, and demand more innovative and non-traditional perspectives.

In audit reports, domestic convention in the sense of traditional practicalities and matters of trust reflected rather the role of education export as new mode of institutional operation. In both cases there has been concern about roles and responsibilities, but also uncertainty about what is and will be the connection with education export and other international activities. On the other hand, this may be an outcome of the unclear definition of education export activities, but also fragmented, sometimes temporarily, the stakeholder group. By contrast, the external audit teams reported that in both cases institutional level quality culture as a commitment to continuous quality improvement work seemed to be integral part of institutional operation. In that sense, domestic convention may be strong in institutions' core duties, while education export may rely more heavily on market, industrial and fame conventions.

Domestic convention may be a relevant aspect for education export in the sense of improving trust and clarifying roles and responsibilities among different actors. In some cases this may include rather concrete issues such as scheduling academic periods, visa practicalities and support services for students and staff members (Coleman, 2003; Pyvis, 2011; Waterval et al., 2015). On the other hand, excessive reliance on traditions existing in the provider's institutions may lead to an imbalanced relationship and misinterpretation between provider and customer (Smith, 2010). Also, Stensaker and Maassen (2015) have pointed out that one solution to improving trust among different actors is relying on a normative-cognitive mechanism, such as professional networks and private actors instead of using only rational-instrumental mechanisms that typically focus on public authorities or quality assurance agencies (Stensaker & Maassen, 2015).

One specific issue that seems not to fit into the quality conventional category was the definition of education export. Firstly, education export, or global education as it has been called in HAMK and TAMK, has operated separately from other international activities and for-profit services. Also, it seems that institutions lack an exact definition of education export. This confused both internal and external stakeholders on what education export actually is. Lack of a clear definition impacted multiple ways on practicality and seemed to have a connection to several quality conventions. For instance, in the absence of a mutual understanding of education export activities and its definition, it may be difficult to maintain a strong focus on industrial convention in terms of the efficiency and functionality of education, but also in domestic convention in terms of roles and responsibilities.

Among convention theorists, one recent view has been to focus on green convention that highlights the ecological aspect. While green convention may be connected to civic convention, it can still be seen to represent an independent approach concentrating especially on environmental issues. (Blok, 2013.) In this analysis green convention was not in focus, but with the current political, social, environmental and economic challenges in mind, it may contribute to understanding the quality of higher education as well. Sustainability and ethical concerns in particular can explain a fairly important aspect of the quality of education export. As Haapakoski and Stein stress in their study, the national standpoint for international education may include the assumption that non-western students will benefit western education and this is not well problematized (see Chapter Four in this book). Haapakoski and Stein also call for a critical approach to consider ethical aspects as a part of the internationalization of higher education where possible power inequalities are taken into account. This call is certainly relevant for education export actions as well.

## Conclusion

This chapter analysed the audit reports of HAMK and TAMK by relying on qualitative content analysis and the convention theoretical approach. The analysis showed that in these selected audit reports quality is notably explained by relying on market, fame and industrial conventions. These conventions were related to cost-effectiveness and risk management, but also the good reputation of Finnish education and strategic aims to achieve a leading position in the global educational market. Consequently, inspired, civic and domestic convention were rather weak, although positive results from customer feedback may reflect creativity and thus inspired convention, while also representing industrial convention in terms of effectiveness.

The quality conventional approach and qualitative content analysis afforded a multi-dimensional theoretical framework for understanding the main logics present in the education export activities from the perspective of institutional auditing. However, despite multiple applications of content analysis, attention in this analysis was not given to the language or terminology that seemed to have certain implications for the quality management of education export activities - at least in terms of the uncertainty of the definition of education export activities among stakeholders. Also, as the empirical data covered only two audit reports, this analysis gives only limited insight into what manner of phenomenon quality of education in the context of Finnish higher education export can be.

In future it would be interesting to focus on concrete education export projects, but also terminological differences and their implications for institutional quality work. For instance, terminological differences may affect institutional level understanding of education export, but has it any effect on daily activities? In addition, more detailed identification of quality conventions among the key stakeholders (such as students and teachers) could provide a relevant approach for understanding the multiple aspects of quality of education in the context of education export. It also remains to be seen whether education export challenges current national quality assurance approaches and if there be any changes in the national quality assurance policy in the future.

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# PUBLICATION III

Quality conventions in the exported Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia.

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# Quality conventions in the exported Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia

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## Abstract

In recent higher education research, quality in education export action has been explored from the perspective of traditional education export countries such as the UK and USA. However, less attention is given to novice education export providers that rely on different educational traditions. In this article, we explore quality of education as it is done in one exported Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia. Our theoretical premise is based on the convention theory that relies on pragmatic sociology. The empirical data consist of 16 semi-structured students' and staff members' interviews gathered between the years 2016 and 2017 in Finland and in Indonesia. The results of this study stress the plurality of the quality factors that indicate the expectations by the students and the staff members, but also the priorities of the providers as to what is essential in exported degree-based education. From the perspective of convention theory, these considerations emphasize that the successful implementation of the exported master's degree programme in teacher education is based on the professional-academic convention (as research-based teacher education) that together with the civic-domestic convention (as societal impact, local traditions and Finnish approach to pedagogy) influenced the content of the educational programme through personal interaction.

**Keywords** Education export · Quality of education · Finnish teacher education · Convention theory · Quality conventions

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## Introduction

In higher education research, quality in education is typically seen as a subjective, relative and value-laden concept (Harvey and Green 1993) aiming to answer the questions of what is good or valuable (Harvey and Green 1993; Segers and Dochy 1996). Accordingly, quality in the education export context is framed as a multifaceted phenomenon (Altbach and Knight 2007) in which heterogeneity of the actors and diversity of actions can cause information asymmetry and goal-conflicts (Borgos 2013). At the same time, increasing demands to be active in a global knowledge market force higher education institutions (HEIs) to consider quality more and more as fitness-for-use, by emphasizing a users' (i.e. students and clients) approach (Marginson 2006; Silva et al. 2017) and giving more space to international reputation and value-for-money aspects (Marginson 2006).

In this study, quality of education is considered in the context of the Finnish education export phenomenon by giving special attention to one exported Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia that was organized between the years 2016 and 2017. This represents a case example of one of the first commissioned Finnish degree programmes, and thus, it enables researchers to focus on quality as it is done in an early-stage implementation of education export activities by a novice provider without a long tradition of acting in the global educational market. Moreover, this study illustrates the social dynamics in the frame of quality between the Finnish university staff members and Indonesian students, directing the focus on plural conventions as shared sociocultural frames for planning the actions that indicate quality in education (c.f. Diaz-Bone and Salais 2011) and that reinforce common understanding about quality practices (Biggart and Beamish 2003).

In the Finnish context, education export refers to for-profit educational actions that target foreigners either in Finland or abroad (Schatz 2016). While there are other terms, such as transnational education and cross-border education describing a similar phenomenon (Knight 2016), in this study, we prefer to use education export. This will connect our study with the Finnish higher education policy debate while emphasizing the Finnish educational tradition where PISA superiority is based on non-neoliberal logics, on which the education export success story is built (Schatz 2016), even though the educational export phenomenon itself can be considered as academic capitalism (Slaughter and Leslie 1997).

The theoretical framework of this research relies on convention theory. This study aims to identify the internal logics (conventions) that illustrate the quality of education from the perspective of students and staff members of the exported master's programme by focusing on three main research questions: what factors describe the quality of education from the perspective of students and the staff members? What logics (i.e. conventions) steer the identified quality factors? How do these conventions differ, or are the same, among the students and the staff members? The empirical data covers 16 semi-structured interviews conducted in Indonesia and Finland during 2016–2017. This will create a supplementary perspective to consider quality of education in a situation where the national view in Finland on the quality of education and quality assurance stresses the responsibility of HEIs. Also, the Finnish approach to quality assurance is primarily based on the audit, which examines the functionality of the quality assurance system rather than the quality of the education (FINEEC 2015). Thus, this study raises issues related to the implementation of the degree programme, which may not appear in national quality assurance.

This article consists of the following sections: firstly, the quality concept is explored from the perspective of education export. Secondly, the convention theoretical application, the data

and method are explained. Thirdly, the findings are presented by categorizing the main results by interview group (students and staff), and finally, the findings are summarized and interpreted from the perspective of convention theory.

## **The quality concept in the context of education export**

In previous education export studies, quality of education has been one of the main concerns from the perspective of culturally bound learning and teaching experiences (Pyvis 2011; Sharp 2017), of students' satisfaction with receiving education and support services (Silva et al. 2017), as well as of jurisdictional conditions set for education export activities in the provider's country of origin and the destination country (Coates and Mahat 2014). In these studies, one of the main conclusions is that cultural context impacts the way quality of learning is experienced by the students (Pyvis 2011). Therefore, a single reference approach is not appropriate for identifying quality of education (Sharp 2017). However, recent research has stressed the importance of setting robust academic standards which apply regardless of where the education is physically located (Sharp 2017), even though the challenges that occur with two conflicting different national quality assurance approaches may still remain (Kinser 2011).

Moreover, commercialisation and market-like behaviour, which are at the core of the education export phenomenon (Slaughter and Leslie 1997), include several implications that may impact the way quality of education, academic standards and quality assurance are organized (Altbach and Knight 2007; Coates and Mahat 2014; Marginson 2006). Firstly, the market-like behaviour of higher education institutions in general is implicitly and explicitly interconnected with the quality concept, reinforcing the global knowledge creation context that is blurring the boundaries of markets, states and public and private goods and the purpose of higher education (Marginson 2006; Slaughter and Rhoades 2004). As an example, the number of new kinds of for-profit forms in the educational sector is increasing (Slaughter and Leslie 1997), some of them owned by public HEIs, some of them owned by private HEIs or both (Altbach and Knight 2007). This highlights the question of transparency in terms of who owns the curriculum, who carries out the teaching and for whom the higher education is accessible (and on what terms) (Coates and Mahat 2014). Also, increasing desire to become one of the winners in the global knowledge market has put more pressure on HEIs to clarify their marketing strategies to better conform to international rankings and competition for fame (Marginson 2006). In this kind of context, academics are required to be able to participate in education export projects at short notice (Juusola and Rähkä 2018) and work in the name of efficiency in a certain (often too narrow) timeframe (Bovill et al. 2015). These aspects make the quality of education and quality assurance multidimensional issues, in which the practices and policies of education are developed in parallel in institutional, local, national, and international systems (Coates and Mahat 2014; Marginson 2006).

While previous studies on education export activities would suggest there are challenges in balancing quality of education, academic standards and quality assurance for any HEIs, the quality of education export has not become an issue on the Finnish higher education policy agenda and only little research has been done concerning the quality aspects of Finnish education export. One reason for this may be that education export is a relatively recent phenomenon in Finland. Also, the character of Finnish education export is fragmented, covering different providers from public HEIs to large private companies. Likewise, the national governmental actors improving education export activities represent different

ministries, such as the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A diversified concept with fragmented actors raises questions as to which governmental body could potentially set national criteria and how to assure the quality of Finnish education export in general when the providers are operating at least partly different regimes. On the one hand, these kinds of considerations reflect the vague national description of education export as it currently seems to be. On the other hand, this kind of situation is relatively well recognized in previous higher education studies when they stress the diverse phenomenon of academic capitalism where the boundaries of market, state, international, national and local dimensions are blurring (Marginson 2006; Slaughter and Leslie 1997). Considering previous research studies, but keeping an open mind as to supplementary explanations, this study aims to approach the unresearched Finnish education export phenomenon by stressing the students' and the staff members' perception of quality of education. Thus, one contribution of this study is to increase the understanding of quality, as it is done in one education export project provided by a novice player that has traditionally relied on a non-neoliberal higher education policy.

## Theoretical framework

In this article, we apply convention theory (CT) as a theoretical framework for analysing quality in higher education in the context of Finnish education export. CT claims that conventions as sociocultural frames steer action and decisions in cases of uncertainty (Diaz-Bone and Salais 2011) and provide the principles for justification and evaluation of objects, people and actions (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006). Valuing and testing their worth are judged based on whether they contribute to the common good, which varies depending on the convention in question (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006). The justification and evaluation process from the perspective of CT indicates both legitimation and accountability in public, but also the moral aspect of people, objects or actions (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006; Leemann 2018). Thus, CT invites us to consider plural and contradictory notions of quality in the context of higher education export where analysis needs to account for a different sociocultural context and global trend of commercialisation of higher education. Accordingly, CT enables us to explore practical arrangements of education export activities and the logics behind them in a current setting of the education export phenomenon in Finland.

In CT, worthiness indicates quality; what is of worth in a certain situation reflects the quality of the product or services. Quality of products and services is a relative concept steered by various conventions. Actors dealing with different conventions may have a different level of information concerning quality, and this may cause information asymmetry among actors. (Ponte 2009). Also, quality of products or services can be based on several different conventions, or compromises among several conventions (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006; Ponte 2009).

In this study, CT provides a coherent framework to identify the underlying principles and values that guide the concrete action that aims at good or sufficient outcomes, initiatives or performance. CT also stresses the social dynamics of orders of worth where competing notions of quality are seen as a central feature of quality of education.<sup>1</sup> This will emphasize the circumstances and social dynamics that refer to education export as a vague phenomenon in

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<sup>1</sup> The plurality of competing logics is also recognized in the institutional logic approach, though institutional logic does not emphasize the values and objects (e.g. Greenwood et al. 2011; Friedland and Alford 1991.)



which the activities are fragmented and project-based, as currently seems to be the case in Finland. Moreover, the CT perspective stresses the stage where the practices of institutions' quality assurance may not cover all possible situations. In CT, quality assurance (internal and external) can be considered immaterial dispositifs that represent investment in forms (Diaz-Bone and Salais 2011; Thévenot 1984). Investment in forms aims to generalize process or knowledge by putting them in a certain conventional form by disregarding single or optional cases (Blokker and Brighenti 2011). Investment in forms can support coordination and trust among actors, thus enabling them to make action more effective (Diaz-Bone and Salais 2011).

In CT, conventions are based on an underlying higher common principle which offers a commonly understood sphere for action (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006, 138). Conventions are open and negotiable (Ponte 2009); in the same phenomena, several conventions may exist, though some conventions can be more dominant than others (Storper and Salais 1997). In this study, conventions are based on Boltanski and Thévenot's (2006) identification of six conventions using the Storper and Salais (1997) and Boltanski and Chiapello (2005) previous studies in the field of CT. Therefore, our conventional framework includes: *inspired world*, *domestic world*, *world of fame*, *civic world*, *market world*, *industrial world* (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006), *intellectual world*, *interpersonal world* (Storper and Salais 1997) and *project-oriented world* (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005) (see Table 1).

In the inspired convention, inspiration and creativeness are a higher common principle; worthiness can be tested by emotional and adventurous experiences. In the domestic convention, traditions and hierarchy matter, as do trustworthiness and responsibilities. In the fame convention renown in public is important and thus being visible (in public), matters. In the civic convention, collectiveness is seen as a higher common principle; worthiness is based on solidarity and collective interest. In the market convention competition represents the higher common principle; worthiness depends on how desirable the goods or services are. In the industrial convention, efficiency is the highest common principle; productivity and functionality can be tested by relying on objective measurable evidence (such as standards). (Boltanski and Thévenot 2006; Ponte 2009.) The intellectual convention aims to develop something new or benefit already existing knowledge by applying generally agreed methods; worthiness is based on the novelty and therefore the outcome cannot be entirely ensured beforehand (Storper and Salais 1997.) In this research, intellectual convention has been divided into academic convention (stressing the scientific premises) and professional convention (stressing expertise) as it allows us to have more coherent analytical premises for this study. In the interpersonal

**Table 1** Summary of the conventions (c.f. Boltanski and Chiapello 2005; Boltanski and Thévenot 2006; Storper and Salais 1997)

Convention	Higher common principle
Inspired	Creativeness
Domestic	Responsibility, traditions
Fame	Recognition; renown in public
Civic	Collectiveness
Market	Competition
Industrial	Effectiveness, productivity
Academic	Creating new knowledge based on scientific standards
Professional	Knowledge and competence based on expertise
Interpersonal	Personal relations
Project-oriented	Networking

convention, everything is personal, and the actors know each other. Therefore, personal interaction indicates the higher common principle (Storper and Salais 1997). The project-oriented convention covers networks and short-term activities; the worthiness is in gaining a multiple amount of different projects; the more they differ, the more valuable they are (Boltanski and Chiapello 2005).

This research CT offers a coherent approach to explore quality in higher education in the context of Finnish education export. This will set a certain starting point for the research. Firstly, quality in higher education is formed primarily in social interaction and the quality is framed in relation to some other activities. Secondly, quality in higher education is not unquestionably stable, nor can it be self-evidently established beforehand, as the qualities describing quality are based on conventions that vary depending on the situation, which may not be known beforehand. In cases where conventions are generalized in investment in forms, they are often taken for granted, though a new situation or new action can ‘disturb’ the stable situation leading to reconstruction of the earlier convention (Thévenot 1984).

## Empirical case, data and method

In this article, we stress the factors that describe the quality of education in the exported master’s degree programme in teacher education from the perspective of students and staff members. This provides a comparative approach to consider the notions relating to quality among the different stakeholders (students and staff members), which implicitly includes the comparison between the exporter country’s (Finland) and user country’s (Indonesia) perspective on the purpose and content of the master’s degree programmes in teacher education. Also, factors describing quality and the logics (i.e. conventions) behind them illustrate the nationally bounded approach to quality assurance as national quality assurance is not currently targeted in the programme-level accreditation and there are no (national) quality criteria for education export implementations. In this study, factors describing quality refer to the qualities, the distinguishing characteristics of the exported programme on the microlevel. The factors are interpreted during the data analysis in a conventional theoretical framework, as it enabled to consider the plural and competing notions of quality in analytical way.

The empirical case represents one exported master’s degree programme in teacher education that was implemented in Indonesia between the years 2016 and 2017 in collaboration between the Indonesian Yayasan Sukma Foundation and the Faculty of Education, University of Tampere, Finland. The focus of the Sukma Foundation’s activity is education and the foundation owns three comprehensive schools in the Aceh region: Bireun, Pidie and Lhokseumawe. The contract for the master’s degree programme was negotiated by Finland University Ltd., which is a consortium focused on marketing education export services and owned by the University of Tampere, University of Turku, University of Eastern Finland and Åbo Akademi.

The facilities were provided by the Sukma school in Bireuen, where students and teachers stayed. Students of the programme were teachers from Sukma schools, holding a bachelor’s degree from an Indonesian university. Nearly all teachers of the programme were from the University of Tampere, though in a few cases, teachers were from other Finnish universities. Teachers stayed one week in Bireuen approximately once per month, and during that week, lectures took place. Between the intensive weeks, students had independent assignments. Also, students had a 6-week visit to Finland in the spring term of 2017. The aim of the Finland visit was to give students an opportunity to carry out observation in the Finnish comprehensive school and complete courses at the University of Tampere.

The master's degree programme in teacher education was one of the first Finnish degree programmes organized abroad. Moreover, providing a foreign university degree programme in Indonesia was equally significant since Indonesia had traditionally had a rather strict policy towards foreign universities (see OECD 2015). Therefore, this paper raises two aspects. Firstly, this analysis reflects the education export action encouraged by the national higher education policymakers in Finland to improve HEIs' activity in the global educational market. Secondly, this analysis reflects the development of the Aceh region after natural disasters, where education has been one of the key political actions (Widyanto 2017). Accordingly, the paper describes the national educational policy objectives of Indonesia as a practical example of internationalization efforts in education and the improvement of teacher training (OECD 2015).

The empirical data consist of 16 semi-structured interviews done in Indonesia and in Finland between November 2016 and June 2017. Interviews were conducted in Finnish and in English, and the average duration of the interviews was 45 min. Altogether, eight interview participants represented students, both female and male. Likewise, eight participants represented staff involved in the exported master's degree programme, both teaching and non-teaching staff, male and female. Student interviews took place in Indonesia in November 2016, while the interviews concerning teachers and staff members were conducted in Finland between January and June 2017. The selection of the interviewees was guided by the snowball method.

The semi-structured interviews consisted of four themes: expectation, personal experiences, important aspects and improvement ideas. The themes were stressed in the interviews by taking into account the situation; each interview was a unique social interaction depended on interview location, language used and whether the interviewee and the interviewer knew each other well in advance. Especially in the latter cases, the interviewer followed the interview template rather loosely and the interview process was not implemented strictly according to the plan. Also, each of the interviewees described their experiences from their own perspective; in the student interviews, both expectations and implementations were mentioned equally whereas staff members described especially the implementation phase related to their personal duties in the programme.

The transcribed interviews were analysed by applying qualitative content analysis. The analysis was conducted for both groups (students and staff members) as a separate process as it was considered to strengthen anonymity, though in cases where a certain factor was clearly stressed by a participant holding a teacher position, the term 'teacher' was used. In this stage, the focus was especially on the following research questions: what factors describe the quality of education (RQ1)? And what conventions steer the identified quality factors (RQ2)? Implicitly, the analysis included cross-group comparisons, and therefore, the analysis also indicated the differences and similarities between the students and the staff members. The qualitative content analysis consisted of the following aspects (Elo and Kyngäs 2008; Graneheim and Lundman 2004):

- Reading the interview transcripts several times and making sense of the data
- Coding the meaning units, which in this analysis, consist of sentences that refer to a certain meaning, such as 'benefits to Sukma schools'
- Categorizing the meaning units by identifying the similarities and differences
- Generating the main categories by abstraction

The process of the analysis followed the hermeneutic circle, supported by abductive logic. Abductive logic refers here to the researchers' pre-understanding of the research topic and the theoretical framework, which in principle impacted the researchers' interpretation of the empirical

data (Elo and Kyngäs 2008). However, the researchers were not aiming to identify meaning units by relying only on gained pre-understanding based on the researchers' involvement in the master's programme,<sup>2</sup> rather the analysis and construction of the theoretical framework was done in parallel, by indicating the meaningful aspects that were identified from the empirical data and by giving them a theoretical frame (Paavola 2004). In this way, the theoretical framework, data analysis and writing of the research report were all embedded in previous understanding and the meaningful aspects were combined to allow more solid construction of the research topic. As an example, researchers' pre-understanding included the assumption that one core element of the programme is based on the Finnish approach to research-based teacher education. However, in the analysis, it became apparent that the Finnish approach to pedagogy-required thematic localisation, whereby the local purposes of the programme (the development of Sukma schools) had equal importance with research-based teacher training.

## Findings

In this paper, the findings are presented in two groups, students and staff, as this allows more specific reporting of findings. An interviewee in this paper is referred to as a participant or, in the case of a group-related aspect, as a student or staff member, as we consider these terms to refer to a low-hierarchical power relationship between the participants and the researchers (Karnieli-Miller et al. 2009). In the case of quotes, the participants' are referred to as participant 1 (P1) etc. to ensure anonymity. The quotes that were originally presented in Finnish have been translated into English, and the original transcriptions are added in the footnotes. The quotes have been chosen to demonstrate the key findings and to provide readers with the possibility of accessing the empirical data.

The group-specific findings are presented through the themes that were emphasized by the participants during the analysis process in relation to the research questions; the guiding principle of the theme identification is therefore based on the original research task (c.f. Elo and Kyngäs 2008). Nevertheless, as typical for qualitative research, the identification sharpened during the stages of the analysis process. In general, the results of this analysis emphasize the students' and staff members' commitment to the exported Finnish teacher education programme, which was considered an opportunity for personal and professional development. In this respect, Finnish education provided an opportunity for career development, the possibility to be part of the Finnish PISA success. Also, participants highlighted the importance of a common good; education was considered to support the development of Sukma schools and the Aceh region. These factors represent one successful outcome of the exported programme. The notion of the common good was especially emphasized by the students. During the analysis process, the notion became also the starting point for the other themes identified from the student interviews. On the other hand, the participants stressed the project-oriented nature of the exported programme, and comparability of the gained competences between the exported education and education organized in Finland. These factors described the challenges of education export implementation. One challenge was to make the courses to fit better for the local purposes but also maintain the Finnish approach to teacher education.

<sup>2</sup> The personal involvement by Juusola included one week of fieldwork in Indonesia in November 2016 and participation in events related to the programme in Finland. The teaching experiences of a senior lecturer Riih  included two months of lecturing and supervising in Indonesia in 2016–2017.

This localizing challenge was stressed in nearly all staff members representing one of the core elements describing quality from the perspective of staff. As Table 2 shows, the identified factors were further turned into quality conventions by applying convention theory (CT) indicating the plurality of the underlying logics in a different sociocultural context.

## Students

According to the students, the main success factors in this programme relate to *students' personal commitment, supportive learning environment, education for the community good and Finnish education as a promise of something better* (see Table 3 at the end of the chapter). Especially, personal commitment to professional development was raised by every student. For them, it indicated high motivation to gain a new perspective on teaching. This was based on the experiences gained from the assignments and from the Finnish case examples provided. New aspects were seen as valuable to both students themselves and pupils of Sukma schools. From the CT perspective, students' personal commitment relies on the inspiration (as new ideas) that supported the professional-academic conventions (as ability to apply a theoretical and methodological perspective in teaching).

Supportive learning environment, as indicated in the encouragement given by the teachers, referred to an open and dialectic teacher-student relationship especially with the permanently involved teachers visiting Indonesia several times. This enhanced students' learning process as students thought that the teachers were sincerely willing to support their learning and as students they were able to criticize and express their opinions freely. This was pivotal in the situation where students felt pressure to accomplish the programme successfully within the given time frame. Supportive learning environment refers to an interpersonal convention that stresses personal and familiar interaction. As one student pointed out:

And they [teachers] give us such good motivation. And then positive feedback and it makes me more confident. (Participant 1)

Accordingly, students wanted to share their knowledge with the other Sukma teachers that were not participating in the programme. Thus, learning and studying were seen as beneficial

**Table 2** Characteristics of the quality conventions in this study (c.f. Boltanski and Chiapello 2005; Boltanski and Thévenot 2006; Storper and Salais 1997)

Quality convention	Higher common principle	Characteristic
Inspiration	Creativeness, enthusiasm	High motivation, new ideas
Domestic	Responsibility, traditions	Local traditions (in Indonesia/in Finland), commitment to the local community
Fame	Recognition; renown in public	Good reputation of Finnish education
Civic	Collectiveness	Valuable in society; societal impact
Market	Competition	Ability to respond to clients' needs
Industrial	Effectiveness, productivity	Quality standards, effectiveness
Academic	Creating new knowledge based on scientific standards	Research-based teacher education, ability to apply a research approach in teaching and studying
Professional	Knowledge and competence based on expertise	Being highly expert in teaching (in practice)
Interpersonal	Personal relations	Interpersonal contacts among teachers and students; providers and clients
Project-oriented	Networking, being active	Ability to participate in education export activities

**Table 3** Summary of the key factors and quality conventions

Participants	Factor	Quality convention
Students	Personal commitment	Inspiration, professional-academic
	Supportive learning environment	Interpersonal
	Education for the community good	Domestic-civic
	Finnish education as a promise of something better	Fame
Staff members	Professional commitment	Professional-inspiration, project-oriented
	Finnish approach to teacher education	Domestic, professional-academic
	Education for the common good	Civic-domestic

to the Sukma community. Studying in this respect was not only an individual choice, but also an effort for the whole community. Likewise, students considered it valuable that they had the possibility to improve the organizational development of Sukma schools and do something good for the Aceh region. Also, students emphasized that Sukma schools could become national 'example schools' and they could thus improve educational development not only in Aceh, but also in Indonesia as a whole. This kind of notion stresses the domestic-civic convention where education is seen as valuable across the base of the community.

However, personal commitment and teacher-student relationships in some respects clashed with the students' academic background. This refers to domestic convention, which includes traditions as a higher common principle. As one of the participants stated:

They (teachers in this programme) encourage us to do our best. So, it is also a new paradigm for me. Because most of the teachers and lecturers in Indonesia, most of them yes, some of them maybe they, they encourage the student. But some of them they only justify and judge the student in advance. So, it will discourage the students from doing their best (Participant 2).

In this programme, Finnish education was seen as a promise of something better. The reputation of Finland as an educational country and its success in the PISA study raised students' curiosity about and trust in the programme. Students described Finnish education as 'the best in the world', and they felt that having the possibility to gain a Finnish master's degree is a unique experience that supports personal development and Sukma school improvement. Thus, the fame convention convinced the students of the reliability of the programme especially at the beginning and increased motivation to participate in the programme. However, the reception of the programme was not wholly unreserved. One concern was the fact that the programme included distance learning and the programme was conducted in Indonesia, not in Finland. This was seen to weaken the academic atmosphere even though the permanent and qualified teachers further ensured reliability. In this respect, students appreciated personal contact with the Finnish teachers, and thus, after the programme was started, the fame convention was in some respects replaced by the interpersonal convention by increasing the students' confidence in the programme. However, the students were uncertain about the comparability of the qualifications. As one participant stressed:

Because in fact we will have, for example, we will have an MA degree from Tampere which is from Finland, theoretically we should have the same competence as the other students that take a degree in Finland. So, if we cannot match it up, there will be a problem then (Participant 5).

Similarly, studying in a foreign language and the programme's intensity caused students concern. Especially, the pressures relating to the master's thesis were a topical issue during the interviews. While thesis concerns may be typical of any student, in this study, the comparability of the qualification (as comparable standards) and the intensity of studying (effectiveness) represent the industrial convention. As such, it reflects the rapid schedule for the implementation of the programme, which is based on the industrial convention (as effectiveness) and the market convention (as ability to respond to the client's need).

One issue in this programme was also the local tutors and their role in supporting students' ability to study in English and helping them to localize the new knowledge. Based on the participants' descriptions and personal observation, it seemed that local tutors were not necessarily fully aware of the principles of the Finnish education system or Finnish academic culture, which tends to emphasize a dialogic approach and avoids using standardized tests. This caused students uncertainty as local tutors tried to support them, especially with their master's thesis, by relying on their own personal academic experiences gained outside Indonesia (such as in the UK), but not in Finland. Therefore, the domestic convention was challenged by professional-academic and inspiration conventions.

## Staff

For staff, the main factors describing the quality of education were *participants' professional commitment, the Finnish approach to teacher education and education for the common good* (see Table 3). Professional commitment related to participants' genuine interest in working in education export projects and they saw it as a possible career option in the future. Accordingly, participating in the exported programme required the possibility to work intensively despite other work duties. Participants also highlighted the ability to adapt to long travel times and a different climate and sociocultural environment. In addition, personal motivation to 'throw oneself into the programme', as one participant stressed, was important. Commitment to the programme and willingness to continue to work in education export projects refer to professional and inspiration conventions that set the frames for professional development, but also to the project-oriented convention as the ability to work intensively abroad while there are other duties at home.

The teachers emphasized that one of the key factors of this programme was research-based Finnish teacher education based on a scientific and dialogic approach, but also teachers' autonomy and ability to localize the lectures. Particularly, supporting students' personal and professional development by fostering trust-based dialogue and modifying the course to fit the local context were stressed. From the perspective of CT, these aspects refer to the academic-professional conventions, where strengthening teacher identity is supported by research-based teacher education. The curricula of this programme were localized to better suit the contextual purposes referring to domestic convention. Localizing the courses may have required any ongoing concerns to be appropriately balanced with the domestic convention (as localizing the courses and as maintaining the Finnish approach to teacher education), academic convention (as a research-oriented approach) and professional convention (as supporting the students' expertise in teaching). Participants also stressed the dialogic perspective as an important quality factor by emphasizing concerns about using a temporary workforce or fostering the scalability of education export projects. As one participant stated:

Those who buy these services, education services, of course, they also want as much as possible to get their share of this sort of existing education know-how. Which means, if,

for example, an agreement is made with the faculty of education, then those people who are in this faculty of education, who are part of this sort of success, then they also have to be involved in teaching (in education export projects) as well<sup>3</sup> (Participant 10).

From the CT perspective, relying on something familiar and traditional that increases trust indicates the domestic convention, which in this case refers to the Finnish approach to teacher education. However, considering Finland as a country for educational know-how is primarily supported by the fame convention (as being recognized in public). Also, participants stressed that they are not importing any ready-made product. According to them, the main focus in education export activities is on knowledge transformation, which is an ongoing process. As one participant commented:

We are offering participation in certain processes and we try to start to launch these certain processes in these people and in these communities to which we go. And what does that process, or those processes produce? That is just somewhere else. We don't know about that. It can produce ... it produces meanings. That much we do know. And it should produce new meanings. But what will be constructed from these meanings? It's an interesting question<sup>4</sup> (Participant 16)

According to the participants, context sensitivity related to support for education for the common good. In this case, the common good was focusing on development of Sukma schools by localizing the curricula, but it was also connected with the interaction among Sukma representatives (students and representatives from the Sukma Foundation). According to the participants, understanding different cultural practicalities, such as the role of religion, was important and almost self-evidently to be taken into account during the programme implementation. Also, the participants stressed the need to understand the position of education in Indonesian society. Thus, participants saw it as important to gain shared understanding with the Sukma representatives of what the exported master's degree really means in the Indonesian context. These aspects were primarily based on the civic convention that stresses community basis and societal impact, and were in that sense one of the core elements in this programme. Context-sensitivity referred also to the domestic convention that indicates local cultural practicalities, values and the position of teacher education in Aceh and in Indonesia.

Context sensitivity also included legislative issues and interaction with the other local actors. For example, due to Indonesian taxation practices and efforts to avoid tax evasion in Indonesia, face-to-face lectures were given during the intensive weeks. Also, before its implementation, the programme was presented to representatives of the local community (such as representatives of the universities of the Aceh region), as it was seen as important that the programme had community approval. Such issues reflect the strong position of the domestic convention in terms of justifying the programme implementation among the local community.

<sup>3</sup> Original transcription: 'Nämä jotka ostaa palveluja, tätä koulutusta, niin he tietenkin haluaa myöskin osansa meidän ikään kuin olemassa olevasta koulutusosaamisesta. Joka tarkoittaa, että jos esimerkiksi tehdään sopimus kasvatustieteen tiedekunnan kanssa, niin silloin näitä henkilöitä, jotka ovat tätä kasvatustieteen tiedekuntaa, jotka on osa tätä tavallaan menestystä, niin heidän pitää olla mukana siinä opetustoimessa'.

<sup>4</sup> Original transcription: 'Me tarjotaan osallisuutta tiettyihin prosesseihin ja koitetaan käynnistää ne tietyt prosessit näissä ihmisissä ja näissä yhteisöissä, joihin me mennään. Ja mitä se tuottaa se prosessi, tai ne prosessit? Se on ihan jossaki muualla. Me ei tiedetä siitä. Se voi tuottaa... Se tuottaa merkityksiä. Me tiedetään se. Ja sen pitäis tuottaa uusia merkityksiä. Mut mitä niist merkityksistä kootaan? Se on kiinnostava kysymys'.



Participants also mentioned ethical concerns that were related to the commercialization of education. In this case, the participants considered the relationship between education exports and universities' core duties as well as the terms under which education export activity is implemented. Participants, however, also mentioned that education export activities that support local development are having a societal impact and are the 'third mission of universities', and are therefore valuable and justified. This refers to the importance of the civic convention that legitimates the education export activities not only in Indonesia but also in Finland.

Moreover, implementing an exported degree programme abroad is a fairly recent activity for the Faculty of Education and for Finland. According to the participants, this requires specific attention to curricula design and the faculty's human resource policies. Especially, ensuring appropriate human resources in terms of having a more flexible annual teaching plan was mentioned. This reflects the increasing dominance of the project-oriented convention, which however conflicts with the established practices indicating the domestic convention.

## Conclusion

The findings show that the quality of education is perceived in terms of the diverse factors related to the needs of the student group and expectations of the client, but also of the providers' priorities as to what is essential in degree-based education. As an example, participants stressed the development of the Sukma schools and trust-based cooperation among the different actors, but also the research-based approach to Finnish teacher education, thus highlighting the dynamics of social interaction when implementing education export. These considerations emphasize the professional-academic convention that, together with the civic-domestic convention, influenced the content of the educational programme through personal interaction. This may indicate that a successful implementation of education export activities is not primarily based on the market convention, i.e. provider's ability to respond to the client's need. Instead the quality of education in education export activities seems to include multiple conventions that illustrate the recipient's aims of gaining something better and the provider's ability to balance the different educational traditions without losing contact with their own discipline, university and national starting points.

Participants' notions about the good reputation of Finnish education refer to the fame convention where what matters the most is being recognized in public. Students' awareness of Finland as a country of superior PISA performance increased trust in the novice programme. However, Finnish teachers needed to justify this good reputation in practice when giving lectures and student guidance. This stressed the teacher's role in fostering and maintaining academic quality (Altbach and Knight 2007; Bovill et al. 2015). On the one hand, the success story of Finnish education may boost Finnish education exporters in the global fame competition, and fill the Finnish gap of lacking any specific internationally highly ranked universities. On the other hand, national reputation is a complex and narrow way of guaranteeing quality of education or setting criteria for academic standards. However, based on previous studies, the prestige of the institution seems to be embedded in the decision of students, and of their families, when choosing an appropriate place of study (Marginson 2006). The conventional clash became apparent in the circumstances of implementation, which were dominated by the market, industrial and domestic conventions; the implementation of the programme was partially organized in terms of efficiency, ability to react to client needs and local legislation.

As an example, taxation practicalities in Indonesia set the timeframe for face-to-face lectures and efforts to respond to the Sukma's needs had an impact on the programme's relatively fast implementation. In general, these kinds of notions refer to the impact of market-driven forces (Marginson 2006; Slaughter and Leslie 1997) that may impact on a narrow implementation timeframe (Bovill et al. 2015). Also, teachers had to balance their teaching and researching in Finland with giving lectures abroad, which reflected the project-oriented convention. However, the latter was not only a teacher's personal choice, but also an expectation by the Faculty of Education, stressing the project-oriented convention.

Quality of education and quality assurance in education export implementation can include more uncertainties compared with quality of education and quality assurance in familiar social, political, economic and legal frameworks (Borgos 2013). Thus, the established process description and institutional principles are not necessarily applicable as such. As stated in previous studies, fragmented stakeholder groups (Altbach and Knight 2007) and cultural and political variety of education export project locations may impact on the quality of learning opportunities (Sharp 2017). Moreover, the comparability of qualifications may lead to a demand to stress the importance of clearly defined academic standards (Sharp 2017). At the institutional level, this may lead to twofold, partly clashing demands: existing institutional practices, such as designing teachers' working plans to be flexible enough to consider the requirements of the implementations, and furthermore, the qualification and management of the implementation provided should be sufficiently comparable with domestic and international activities.

In general, situational uncertainties and information asymmetry, as well as institutional incompleteness, may lead to a multistage process where orders of worth are reorganized several times. Over a longer term, certain conventions may become forms (investment in forms) that can refer to standardized criteria for education export activity at institutional and national levels. Though, investment in forms as such is susceptible to criticism and can be challenged (Blokker and Brighenti 2011). However, without the national quality criteria for education export activities, each HEI is balancing the conflicting demands independently and investment in forms happens only at the institutional level. This may not provide a robust regime for gaining national legitimacy for education export activities in terms of public accountability which is often embedded in the national external quality assurance (c.f. Leihy and Salazar 2017).

While this study enabled us to consider quality of education from the pragmatic perspective, the convention theoretical (CT) approach includes a certain limitation. On the one hand, the underlying conventions indicated the values and logics of the quality factors, although the connection with convention and institution is not extensively explored. One possibility could be to supplement the theoretical framework with the institutional work approach that could foster the actor's role of maintaining and changing the institution (Lawrence et al. 2011). On the other hand, higher education offers a comprehensive research topic for CT applications. As an example, when considering education export implementations, the contradictions were not only between the conventions but also within the conventions. This became apparent in the domestic convention, which referred both to the Finnish educational tradition and Indonesian educational tradition, thus including the potential internal clash between these two different traditions. One theoretical explanation may be that conventional compromises are possible also inside the convention—not only between conventions, although to clarify this, it would be necessary to conduct a longitudinal study and/or have more empirical cases preferably from outside western educational tradition.

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# PUBLICATION IV

**Exploring teaching staff's experiences of implementing a Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia**

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# Exploring teaching staff's experiences of implementing a Finnish master's degree programme in teacher education in Indonesia

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## Abstract

In this paper, we analyse the motivation and experiences of teaching staff participating in a novel exported Finnish degree programme in teacher education for Indonesian students. The data are based on online questionnaires sent to the teachers in March 2017. Huberman's professional career path and Mezirow's module for transformative learning are applied to construct the analytical framework. We also use our own experiences from our involvement in this exported programme, as a teacher (Pekka Räihä) and as a PhD candidate (Henna Juusola). In addition, we have taken into account Finnish higher education policy in terms of education export. The findings of this analysis demonstrate that education export projects can extend university teachers' professional career opportunities and offer a starting point for transformative learning. However, more flexible administrative practices and an adaptive organizational culture at both faculty and institutional levels are required.

## Keywords

Education export, teacher education, teachers' experiences, Indonesia, Finnish higher education

## Introduction

Since the national strategy for education export was launched in 2010, Finnish higher education institutions have been encouraged by national policy-makers to become leading education exporters worldwide. In spite of the ambitious political goals set for education export services, the

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implementation of education export has been relatively slow (see e.g. Schatz, 2016b). The reasons for this are to be seen in the national tradition of avoiding neoliberalism in higher education policy (Aarrevaara et al., 2009; Välimaa, 2004) and in the novelty of acting in the global education market (Cai et al., 2012). However, commercialization has slowly but surely become part of the higher education policy in Finland. One example of this is the 2016 amendment to the Universities Act, which made tuition fees for foreign students possible. Nevertheless, little research has been done on the concrete implementations of education export. Taking into account the current national situation, this article offers an insight into one of the first degree programmes to be exported overseas by a Finnish higher education institution: a master's programme in teacher education for Indonesian students. The aim of the article is to explore the teaching staff's experiences of participating in a novel for-profit activity by applying Huberman's teacher's career cycle and Mezirow's transformative learning concept.

In the Finnish context, education export (*koulutusvienti*) has been defined as covering all kinds of for-profit educational services where the target group is foreigners, regardless of the group's location (Schatz, 2016a). In general, the education export thematic is synonymous with transnational education and cross-border education, which are commonly used terms internationally (see e.g. Knight, 2016). While the education export phenomenon is rather new in Finland, it has a long tradition in many other countries, such as the USA, Australia, and the UK (see e.g. Aarrevaara et al., 2009; Schatz, 2016b). Internationally, various research studies have been carried out which explore the education export phenomenon from the students' and providers' perspectives. Rather often, these studies focus on activities provided by a traditional education exporter country, such as the UK or Australia (see e.g. Bovill et al., 2015; Djerasimovic, 2014; Keay et al., 2014a). In many cases, previous studies have concentrated on students' experiences of and motivations for participating in international education activities, although increasing numbers of recent research studies have highlighted the teachers' perspectives as well (Cai and Hall, 2016; Hoare, 2013; Smith, 2009).

This article offers an insight into education export activities done by a novice actor that traditionally relies on a different rationale than leading education exporters, and in that sense does not have national or institutional experience of exporting degree-level education overseas, at least not over the long term. The aim of this article is to explore the teachers' motivation for and experiences of participating in the exported programme in order to answer three questions: What are the participants' motivations for working/teaching in the programme? What kind of teaching experience was it for them? How can institutions support teaching in education export activities from the perspective of career development?

The data in this article are based on an online questionnaire sent to the teachers and other staff members in March 2017. In addition, one of the authors (Pekka Rähkä) works as a senior lecturer at the Faculty of Education (FoE), University of Tampere, and has two months' teaching experience in the exported programme in Indonesia in 2016–2017. The other author (Henna Juusola) is a PhD candidate researching education export from the perspective of quality of education. As a part of her doctoral dissertation, she participated in one intensive week in Indonesia in November 2016 to carry out student interviews and participant observation. These experiences have created a pre-understanding of the Indonesia exported programme, which has been used when formulating the research questions and explaining the context of the programme.

## **Master's programme in teacher education in Indonesia**

The master's programme in teacher education in Indonesia ran from December 2015 to April 2017. The programme was provided by the FoE, University of Tampere, Finland with the cooperation of the Indonesian Yayasan Sukma Foundation. The foundation was set up in 2005 with the aim of



supporting the rebuilding of the educational sector in the Aceh region of Sumatra, Indonesia, following the destruction caused by the 2004 tsunami. The foundation owns three comprehensive schools in Aceh: Sukma Bangsa Bireuen; Sukma Bangsa Pidie; and Sukma Bangsa Lhokseumawe (Sukma Foundation, n.d.).

The programme agreement was negotiated via Finland University Ltd, a consortium that consists of four universities in Finland: University of Tampere; University of Turku; Åbo Akademi University; and University of Eastern Finland. Finland University Ltd was founded in 2014 with the goal of promoting education export activities through marketing and negotiation support. All the educational programmes are provided and organized by its member universities. The role of Finland University Ltd in the case of this programme was to coordinate negotiations and prepare the agreement.

The students of the exported master's programme were teachers from Sukma Bangsa schools holding an academic bachelor's degree (or *Sarjana 1*, S1, according to the Indonesian degree system) in the field of their teaching subject. Thus, the students' assumptions about studying at the university were based on the Indonesian academic tradition, where the communication culture supports more indirect presentations and the role of the teachers tends to be more hierarchical compared to the 'Western' system (see e.g. Novera, 2004). On the other hand, the students were primary school teachers, and in that sense, they had to adopt a new role in the classroom: they were now the students, not the teachers.

Student selection was based on motivation and English skills, and it was conducted as a cooperation between the FoE of the University of Tampere and the Sukma Foundation. The curriculum of the programme was based on the FoE's ongoing international master's degree programme in teacher education, which is organized in Finland at the University of Tampere. Nearly all the programme's teachers in the exported master's programme came from the University of Tampere, though three teachers came either from the University of Jyv skyl  or the University of Eastern Finland.

Facilities for the programme were offered by the Sukma Foundation and the programme was physically located in the Foundation's school buildings in the city of Bireu n in the Aceh region, where the teachers and students were also accommodated. The programme consisted of intensive weeks held approximately once a month, distance learning, and a six-week study visit to Finland that took place in March–April 2017. In practice, teachers from Finland travelled once a month to Indonesia in order to give lectures. Between the intensive weeks, students took part in online courses and did independent work. During the study visit to Finland, the students had the opportunity to observe classes at Finnish comprehensive schools and complete the master's degree matriculation examination.

The exported master's programme in teacher education in Indonesia was one of the first exported Finnish degree programmes. Due to its novelty, it received public attention both in Finland and in Indonesia. For instance, *Blue Wings*, the inflight magazine of Finnair (Finland's national airline), published an article about the programme, and in April 2017 representatives from the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture attended the programme's graduation gala in Tampere.

For the FoE, the programme was significant in terms of its extent and intensity. While the FoE's earlier export projects have focused on short-term courses, in this case the Finnish degree programme as a whole was implemented in a different context, on the other side of the world. Having enough academic staff members both for research and teaching at home and for education export activities abroad demands appropriate human resources. Taking into account the current situation in Finnish higher education policy, where public funds are limited and universities are facing political pressure to increase private investments and participate in external funding competitions (see e.g. Ministry of Education and Culture, 2016), it can be challenging to balance the FoE's core

duties while expanding its activities overseas. For instance, in the case of this programme, the FoE had to recruit personnel from outside the University of Tampere in order to provide qualified teaching staff for each intensive period in Indonesia. One consequence of this is a new recruitment policy at the FoE: applicants with the ability to take part in education export activities are favoured when hiring new personnel.

## **Professional career path and transformative learning**

In this article, the chief focus is on exploring the teaching staff's motivation and teaching experiences in the exported master's degree programme in Indonesia. Here, the teachers' motivation describes the reasons that led the teachers to participate in the exported degree programme. Motivation is reflected on as part of the professional career cycle where teachers' professional development can be divided into different phases depending on teaching experience (in years) (Huberman et al., 1993). Correspondingly, teaching experience in the exported master's programme is seen as an initiator of transformative learning. Transformative learning in this analysis is understood as a process where new meanings can be constructed by critically reflecting on current experiences of previous experiences (Mezirow, 2012).

In previous studies, teachers' motivation to participate in education export activities has been seen to rely on curiosity and a willingness to gain international experience (Cai and Hall, 2016), but also on an interest in having new professional opportunities (Austin et al., 2014). In addition, teachers' experiences of participating in education export activities have been seen as challenging in terms of cultural and academic differences (Austin et al., 2014; Keay et al., 2014). For example, there can be unrealistic expectations of the students' academic learning skills (Austin et al. 2014; Bovill et al., 2015) or excessive supposition of the effectiveness of the educational programme, especially in short-term projects (Bovill et al., 2015). Correspondingly, Keay et al. (2014) have stressed the importance of going beyond the official agreement, and understanding education export activities as a continuous process that should be based on an equal partnership among teachers and other staff members from provider institutions and students and representatives from the importers' side (Keay et al., 2014). Likewise, Smith has pointed out the importance of giving teachers time and space for reflection, which can be supported by institutions and can improve teachers' transformative learning (Smith, 2009).

In this article, the teachers' motivation for taking part in education export activities is seen as an opportunity for professional development. This can be especially relevant for teachers with several years' career experience. According to Huberman et al. (1993) teachers with seven to 25 years of career experience can face either diversification or reassessment. In the first case, teachers can feel confident and highly motivated to engage themselves in collective action or new ideas. Correspondingly, a diversification phase can lead to reassessment, where teachers face uncertainty and self-doubts about their future career path (Huberman et al., 1993). Correspondingly, Day and Gu (2007) have stressed the importance of understanding professional, personal, and contextual factors as a part of the teacher's identity and career cycle, though they have pointed out that – due to the general increase seen in additional work tasks – teachers no longer encounter a stabilization phase, as Huberman et al. (1993) have also stated. Huberman et al. (1993) further note that career development includes individual differences and each person can have a unique career path.

Teaching can be seen as a communicative process and a socially constructed phenomenon. Experience, personality, and self-reflection over the years construct the teaching style and pedagogical approaches used in cultural and institutional contexts. In cases where teaching is happening in a new and different context, 'values, assumptions, and perspectives on teaching may be challenged and transformative learning may occur' (Cranton and Carusetta, 2002: 169).

Teachers' experiences in the new contextual situation can lead to transformative learning. According to Mezirow (1991), transformative learning consists of two basic elements: the meaning schema; and the meaning perspective. The meaning schema is a person's beliefs or assumptions about what someone (or some persons) or something (or somethings) is and the way it should operate or be (Mezirow, 1991). The meaning perspective is a fundamental system that can include beliefs and assumptions, but also personal history: it is the 'structure of assumptions within which one's past experience assimilates and transforms new experience' (Mezirow, 1991: 42). The transformation in the meaning schema is more commonly compared to the transformation in the meaning perspective, although in the latter case transformation can also happen in the short term (epochal transformation) or it can be a longer process (incremental transformation) (Mezirow, 1991).

Mezirow (1991) has also stressed the importance of critical reflection as a part of transformative learning, arguing that critical reflection is a process where a person creates new meanings by considering current assumptions and beliefs and reflecting on the new experiences. Critical reflection can include three dimensions: content reflection; critical reflection; and premise reflection. In content reflection, earlier beliefs and assumptions have been challenged by new data or new experiences. In critical reflection, new data or experiences are reflected on by considering whether they are appropriate or relevant. According to Mezirow (1991), premise reflection is the key element for the transformation of the meaning perspective, as it emphasizes why earlier beliefs and assumptions are challenged. After premise reflection, rational discourse takes place where the new understanding is discussed, and in that sense, tested with other people such as colleagues, friends, and family members. The final part of transformative learning includes patterns of actions where new meanings are implemented in practice (Mezirow, 1991).

Mezirow's theoretical framework for transformative learning is based on the interaction between experiences of the past and experiences of the current situation. On the other hand, the way experiences create meanings has not been critically examined in Mezirow's transformative learning theory, as Taylor and Cranton (2013) have pointed out. Furthermore, power relations, emotions, and social relations as a part of transformative learning have been the focus of the latest research in the field of transformative learning (see e.g. Baurgartner, 2012) and the impact of the contextual situation (Taylor and Cranton, 2013).

In this article, Huberman et al.'s (1993) career cycle offers a framework that explains teachers' career state and motivation for participating in education export activities. Mezirow's (1991) transformative learning, especially in terms of critical reflection, is used as an analytical tool to explore teaching experiences. Contextual changes are seen as a starting point for transformative learning, as Cranton and Carusetta (2002) have stressed, and it places the teachers' experiences in a specific context – in this case, the master's programme in teacher education, Indonesia.

## Data and method

The data for this analysis were gathered between March and April 2017 using an online questionnaire that was sent by email and targeted at both the teaching and non-teaching staff of the Indonesian education export project. The non-teaching staff consisted of those persons taking part in the Indonesian education export project's administrative tasks, such as programme coordination. Altogether, the questionnaire was sent to 24 persons. A total of 19 persons completed the questionnaire in the set timeframe, and thus the response rate was 79%. All the respondents represented teaching staff, although one respondent did not work as a full-time lecturer. Of the 19 respondents, 14 were female and four were male, with one respondent not wanting to specify their gender. Fourteen respondents were working at the University of Tampere, and three respondents were

working at either the University of Jyväskylä or the University of Eastern Finland. The latter university is part of the Finland University Ltd consortium together with the University of Tampere. Two respondents did not want to specify their workplace. Of the 19 respondents, 12 were working either as senior lecturers or university teachers, four respondents were working as professors, three respondents represented other teaching staff and one respondent was working in administration. The average length of university work experience was 18 years, and only two respondents had less than seven years' work experience. Altogether 12 respondents had previous international teaching experience, which included short-term visits to an international partner university, teaching in an international programme at the home university, or working for a longer period (over one year) in an international project or at a university abroad. In the case of the exported master's programme in Indonesia, 14 respondents taught in Indonesia, while five respondents taught in Tampere during the Indonesian students' visit to Finland.

The questionnaire was carried out in Finnish as nearly all teachers participating in the exported programme speak Finnish as their mother tongue. This was seen to increase the response rate, as giving answers in one's native tongue can be considered easier. The questionnaire consisted of quantitative and qualitative items. The quantitative items included statements responded to using a 5-point Likert scale (1 = does not describe at all to 5 = describes very well). These were analysed by calculating the average rates and standard deviation. Qualitative items included open questions that were related to motivation and teaching experiences in the exported master's programme in Indonesia. Due to the rather small target group and the fact that the answers gained via the open questions were seen as more informative, this article is based on the analyses of the answers to the open questions, such as 'Using your own words, please describe in the following space the reasons and arguments that made you participate in the Indonesian master's programme', 'What kind of an experience was it to teach in (engage in work for) the Indonesian master's programme? What did it give and what did it take?', and 'How can the FoE support the participation of teaching/other staff in educational export projects?'

The qualitative data were analysed using qualitative content analysis, and the aim was to identify those meanings that explain the teachers' motivations and experiences related to involvement in the education export project. Thus, the following questions were presented in the data:

- (1) What kind of motivation did the teachers have for participating in the education export projects?
- (2) What kind of an experience was it to teach in the education export project?
- (3) How can the FoE support teachers' participation in education export projects?

The starting point of the analysis was based on Miles and Huberman's analytic framework with regard to reducing, clustering, and abstracting the data (Miles and Huberman, 1994). First, the data were carefully read several times in order to gain a holistic understanding of the responses. Secondly, the responses that concerned the teachers' motivation, experiences, and faculty support were reduced and descriptively coded. Thirdly, during the data clustering, differences and similarities among descriptive codes were grouped into subtopics, which were further grouped into the main topics and interpreted as part of a wider socially constructed system where responses reflect the complex, partly conflicting social reality, and in that sense create meanings of education export activities.

The Huberman and Miles (1994) framework for qualitative content analysis is based on inductive logic. However, as Tuomi and Sarajärvi (2009) have pointed out, the researchers' earlier knowledge and experiences nearly always impact on the way they observe the data. As the authors had previous experiences of the research topic and as the theoretical framework was

constructed while the analysis was underway, this qualitative content analysis is based on abductive logic.

## Findings

In this article, the main focus is on exploring the teachers' motivation for and experiences of participating in the education export activities of the master's programme in teacher education in Indonesia. In addition, the actions that the FoE could take in order to support teachers' opportunities to participate in education export activities have been taken into account. The primary focus of the findings is on the data, not the respondents, but direct quotes have been included in this article (R1–R19) because they give readers access to the primary data.

### *Motivation*

The respondents were asked to describe their motivation for participating in the exported master's degree programme in teacher education using their own words. Two main factors were identified in the data: professional reasons; and personal reasons. The most common professional reason mentioned was the motivation for professional development. This was mentioned by seven respondents. Gaining international teaching experience in particular was seen as important. As one respondent commented, the motivation was to gain 'professional development through international teaching, the opportunity to get to know new (teaching) cultures' (R17). Four respondents stated that one reason for participating in the project was professional curiosity. Organizing a master's programme overseas is a rather new type of activity for the FoE, and for Finnish higher education in general. Furthermore, education export has been a political focus at the institutional and national levels, and so in that sense participating in a unique and new activity can be seen as attractive. On the other hand, two respondents mentioned a moral (professional) obligation to take care of the work duties because of the lack of (other) available personnel. This may reflect the limited timeframe for education export implementation, but also the insufficient human resources available for additional activities such as education export projects.

Four respondents stressed personal reasons for taking part in the exported master's degree. Two of them highlighted their enthusiasm for taking on new challenges and learning something new, while two other respondents mentioned that this exported programme corresponded with their personal values. As one respondent commented, 'with my own small contribution, I hope I can make the world a better place' (R7). As the master's programme in teacher education was tailored to teachers from the Sukma Bangsa schools owned by the Sukma Foundation with the aim of supporting sustainable development, the ethical responsibility underlying the foundation's aim increased the teachers' willingness to take part in this project.

### *Experiences*

The key aspects that explained the teaching experiences in this analysis can be classified into two main themes: load factors; and professional development factors. Load factors consist of those experiences that were felt to be challenging or caused extra work. Based on the content analyses, four different types of load factors were identified: preparation; heterogeneity of the student group; intensiveness of the programme; and physical factors. Correspondingly, professional development factors refer to those aspects that were seen to support professional development and personal growth. In this analysis, four factors explain professional development: cultural experiences; international teaching; improvement in self-confidence; and the supportive learning environment.

*Load factors.* Nine respondents stressed that preparation before the intensive weeks was one specific issue that made teaching abroad different compared to teaching at home. Preparation of teaching materials appropriate to the local context in particular – but also translating the materials into English – required extra planning and contextual familiarization before giving lectures. Translating the teaching material from Finnish into English takes time and demands grammatical and cultural knowledge, thus contextual understanding is equally important. According to the respondents, contextual understanding included learning about the Indonesian education system and taking into account the cultural aspects in Aceh.

Five respondents reported that one challenge was the heterogeneity of the student group, in terms of variation in language skills, the students' previous knowledge about the course subject, or both. One respondent comments: 'Our understanding of the students' language- or subject-specific skills was over-optimistic, so we modified and prepared new teaching [materials] during the evening on the spot' (R15). Clearly, teaching in a different programme that was tailored to a specific target group consisting of different and multiple discipline backgrounds can cause extra planning work compared to preparing for student groups at the home campus. Correspondingly, cultural and individual differences in learning habits can also affect teaching practicalities. For instance, one respondent mentioned 'a different learning approach/lack of learning experiences' and that 'more extensive and intensive guidance/support/feedback was needed' (R18).

Four respondents reported that the intensity of the programme was challenging, especially in terms of time management and continuous self-reflection during the intensive weeks. As the time-frame of the programme was rather tight, teaching materials also had to be prepared on a tight schedule. On the other hand, lectures were primarily organized during the once-monthly (on average) intensive weeks in Indonesia and this caused pressure to plan teaching that maintained the students' interest and supported learning during the week. Furthermore, the intensive weeks in Indonesia were held at the Sukma school in Bireuën, where both the students and teachers lived, meaning that the teachers basically did not have any free time during the week.

Four respondents mentioned physical load factors that were caused by the long travelling time, tropical climate, and, in the case of one respondent, an earthquake. As one respondent commented, 'Long travelling times, and the heat and humidity challenged my physical strength' (R7). Travelling from Finland to Bireuën takes nearly two days, as there are no direct flights. The time difference can also cause unbalanced daily routines that take time to adapt to. In that sense, teaching in this programme not only required careful preparation, continuous reflection, and time; it also required physical adaptation in terms of the time zone differences and the tropical climate.

*Factors of professional development.* Despite the load factors, teaching in the exported degree programme offered comprehensive learning experiences and multiple opportunities for professional development. Five respondents mentioned that teaching was a positive cultural experience. In particular, learning more about Islamic traditions and practices, and having the opportunity to work with different people seemed to offer new perspectives for the participants' personal and professional lives. As one respondent commented, 'I also learnt a lot of new things, such as tolerance and tolerating different ways of learning and working' (R8). In that sense, participating in this programme has – at least for some – enriched their teaching experiences and improved their multicultural competences.

While translating teaching materials from Finnish into English and learning new terminology were seen as one element that explained the load factors, teaching in a foreign language was also seen as a useful learning experience. Four respondents stated that the programme provided a good opportunity to practise teaching in English. Overall, the position of the English language in university teaching can be considered significant in terms of research-based education and the

internationalization of higher education in general. However, communication is more than verbal interaction. As one respondent commented: 'Teaching and communicating were not as dependent on language as I originally believed. Non-verbal communication also works in a foreign language' (R15).

The high motivation of the student group and the communicative social atmosphere were seen as two of the key factors that supported the students' learning and the respondents' professional development. Ten respondents stressed that the student group were 'enthusiastic about learning' (R16), 'committed' (R 10) and 'active' (R3). In addition, the student–teacher relationship seemed to be more communicative and closer compared to the teachers' relations with the Finnish students. As one respondent noted: 'The teaching–learning situation was an ideal learning scenario, which hopefully led to the intended effect' (R16).

The master's degree in teacher education has a different role in Indonesia compared to Finland. In the latter case, a master's degree is a requirement for comprehensive school teachers (grades 1–9) which consists of a master's in education (primary teacher education, grades 1–6) or a master's in another discipline (subject teachers, mainly grades 7–9), and includes a mandatory pedagogical qualification (60 European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System). However, in Indonesia a master's degree represents postgraduate studies. In that sense, this programme offered Indonesian students a better social position and an opportunity for professional development as a teacher with paid study leave. This may partly explain the high motivation of the students in this programme.

Correspondingly, the supportive learning environment of the exported programme had a positive impact on student learning and the teachers' professional development. Teaching students who are eager to learn can also encourage teachers to give their best. On the other hand, Sukma Bangsa schools are rather communal and their members interact closely and warmly. As the programme was primarily organized in Indonesia, the organizational culture of Sukma Bangsa most likely had an impact on the interaction among teachers and students in the exported programme.

According to three respondents, teaching in the exported master's programme provided new opportunities for personal growth in terms of the reinforcement of self-confidence and courage. One respondent stated that it was 'a rewarding experience. It mainly took time (to prepare lecture materials); it gave me the experience, perspective, and courage to participate in a similar kind of project in the future too, if the opportunity arises' (R15). One respondent also stressed the importance of daily self-reflection during the intensive week. In this sense, teaching in this exported programme not only provided a different and interesting teaching experience, but also an opportunity for personal development.

Most of the respondents gave only one week of lectures in Indonesia, so in that sense the experience is connected to a rather short-term situation. Experiences as such can thus differ depending on the length of the stay and number of visits. On the other hand, the respondents stressed the positive, open, and warm learning environment that supported both the students' learning and the teachers' professional development despite the length of the stay. When comparing teaching experiences with the motivation factors that enabled the teachers to participate in this project, it seems that the respondents were also open to new experiences and willing to develop themselves professionally.

When comparing those teaching experiences gained from the students' visit to Finland to the teaching experiences in Indonesia, only small differences can be found. Unsurprisingly, those teachers who lectured in Indonesia described the physical load factors more often, such as the long-distance travel. In addition, references to Islamic culture are more common from those who visited Indonesia. On the other hand, it seems that cultural experiences can also be gained by teaching a multicultural student group at home, and in that sense so-called home internationalization should not be underestimated.

## Support from the FoE

The respondents were asked to describe how the FoE could support participation in education export activities. According to respondents, the single most important action would be to ensure sufficient resources. This was raised by 12 respondents. Ensuring enough time was especially seen as crucial. One concrete tool for this would be the creation of a flexible and realistic working plan where contextual preparation and the extra work required are better taken into account. Correspondingly, consideration of the physical (and mental) stress caused by the long journey time and differences in time zone and climate as part of the working hours would support the teachers' ability and motivation to participate in education export activities. As one respondent commented: 'One needs to have enough time for preparation and recovering from the travelling, too. Simply adding more teaching hours to the work plan is not enough' (R13). In addition, two respondents pointed out that the FoE could allocate more human resources to education export activities, for example by employing more pro rata employees.

Four respondents stressed the importance of tailored training and orientation. Two respondents stated that training could be focused especially on proofreading the teaching materials and supporting the teachers' abilities to teach in English. Orientation on the local culture and providing guidelines for different cultural situations were also mentioned. One respondent stressed internal benchmarking: 'In practice, teachers that have already participated in education export activities could share good practices in the Faculty and thus encourage others to participate' (R16).

Individual responses also stressed the importance of coordination (two respondents), a positive attitude towards education exports (one respondent), and ethical issues (two respondents). Regarding coordination, it was seen as important that administrative tasks are the responsibility of other people, rather than that of the teachers. This was seen to have worked well in this implementation. On the other hand, education export was accompanied by ethical issues; for example, it was hoped that the FoE would ensure that participation in education export activities did not undermine the university's core duties. In one response, the ethical issue of the relationship between commercial activities and core duties was also raised.

## Discussion

The findings presented in this paper maintain that education export can offer an intensive and unique experience for professional development and, due to the contextual changes, allow critical reflection and transformative learning in meaning schema to occur. On the other hand, this analysis indicates that the FoE has a crucial role in giving teachers an opportunity to gain international work experience and in further supporting transformative learning.

When asking about the respondents' motivations for taking part in the exported master's degree programme, the most common reasons were professional development and curiosity to know more about education export activities, although in some cases the work task was accepted out of obligation, as there was no one else able to do it. In addition, personal factors had an impact, at least indirectly. One example of this was the programme's aim to support ethically sustainable development in the Aceh region. In this sense, teachers' commitment to education export activities can be improved by implementing projects that are in accord with their ethical values.

The average work experience of the respondents was 18 years ( $n = 19$ ), though in the case of two respondents work experience was less than seven years. Taking into account Huberman's career cycle, it can be assumed that 16 respondents were in a situation where new professional challenges were welcomed and the motivation for self-improvement through collective action was high. Furthermore, an education export project that accords with one's personal values can have a positive impact on one's willingness to participate in education export projects.



Teaching in the Aceh region, Indonesia, provided a different cultural, institutional, and physical context compared to the situation on the home campus in Tampere, Finland. This kind of contextual change in the teaching situation can trigger critical reflection which leads to transformative learning (Cranton and Carusetta, 2002; Mezirow 1991, 1998). Preparation of teaching materials and the heterogeneity of the student group required teachers to be able to reflect on the content and pedagogical approach in a manner appropriate to the local context. This can be seen as a transformation in meaning schema where teachers' earlier assumptions about how to accomplish teaching were challenged. As preparation of the teaching materials began before the actual teaching was carried out, transformative learning at a certain level started before the lectures and visits to Indonesia.

Based on Mezirow's (1991) framework, transformative learning demands rationale discourse that includes sharing and testing new assumptions with other people. This can lead to concrete actions where the new approach is implemented (Mezirow, 1991). During the intensive weeks, content reflection can be seen to continue as in most cases lectures took place in a different cultural context and student–teacher relationships became concrete. On the other hand, teachers felt that the students were well motivated and warm, and that teachers had an opportunity to get familiar with the local culture. In particular, those teachers who made several visits to Indonesia learned about the daily life of students and the Sukma school, and they had the opportunity to share experiences with the colleague traveling with them. This kind of intensive and holistic situation has most likely encouraged teachers to consider their understanding of teaching and teacher education from a different perspective.

The respondents' experiences of the student group's heterogeneity can also reflect both differences between language and subject-specific skills and a different understanding of studying at university. As Novera (2004) has pointed out, cultural values can have an impact on classroom behaviour and on the way students express their opinions. On the other hand, universities typically have close relations with society and local actors. According to Välimaa and Nokkala, these relations can be further located in a certain time, space, and context by creating different social dynamics for universities (Välimaa and Nokkala, 2014).

In this case, the status of a master's degree in teacher education in Indonesia is different compared to the same degree in Finland. At a minimum, this can have a twofold impact, firstly on the respondents' experiences of the heterogeneity of the student group as they represent a different academic tradition, and secondly on the respondents' notion of highly motivated students, as holding a master's degree means postgraduate studies for students and a different status in society compared to master's degree students in Finland. In addition, students participating in this programme already had several years of work experience as teachers, while the Finnish master's students (in teacher education) tend to enter university directly from general upper secondary school without earlier teaching experience.

The different academic background and the status of a master's degree in teacher education in Indonesia challenged teachers to consider university education from a new perspective. In this regard, participation in education export has created a situation where transformation in meaning perspective can occur. On the other hand, the data in this study provide no answer as to whether the experience led to concrete changes in teachers' own work after the Indonesia programme was completed.

When looking at the FoE's support for education export projects, the respondents emphasized the limited resources. The responses revealed that the intensity of the work and extra preparation was not fully taken into account in work planning and working hours. Flexibility and an improved ability to take into account the actual workload in working arrangements was considered to be important in improving the ability of teachers to participate in education export projects.

Correspondingly, more systematic support for teaching in English and clear guidelines for working in different cultures were considered important. Respondents also highlighted the relation between education exports and the university's core duties, which was viewed as an ethical issue.

From the point of view of transformative learning, a more active role of the FoE could have provided a better framework for rational discourse in terms of systematic reflection and collegial sharing of the teaching experiences. This could require the FoE to adopt a more holistic approach to education export implementations. On the other hand, transformative learning is a process that is influenced by a person's past experiences and insights (Mezirow, 1991), indicating that transformative learning can be supported, but its outcome can hardly be controlled or guaranteed.

When taking into account the recent policy at the FoE of the University of Tampere in terms of requiring new personnel to take part in education export activities, it seems that the FoE is recognizing the pressure to increase human resources for education export activities. Nevertheless, the FoE does not have a long tradition of operating education export activities overseas, and there currently seems to be ethical concern over how to balance for-profit action with the FoE's core duties. In order to ensure the sustainable development of education export activities, it may be necessary to also have the support and commitment of current academic staff members – or, to use Clark's words, 'the stimulated academic heartland' (Clark, 1998: 7). On the other hand, top-down and bottom-up dynamics can exist in parallel at the institutional level as well (see Kauko and Medvedeva, 2016), so it is possible to have tensions between management steering policy and practices in teaching and researching also at the faculty level.

Transformation at the individual – and faculty – level is multifaceted. While language training and contextual knowledge is important, Bovill et al. (2015) argue that it is equally important to possess sensitive cultural awareness. In addition, while respondents seem to have faced emerging personal transformative learning, in the longer term it is possible that transformation can take place at the faculty, institutional, and national levels as well, as Djerasimovic (2014) has suggested. For instance, Feng described the hybridization of China's and the UK's joint university, Xi'an Jiaotong-Liverpool University, where the university's institutional identity is based on a cultural and educational mix of the British and Chinese traditions (Feng, 2013). However, this requires institutions to be able to adapt to new approaches and perhaps establish collaborative partnerships that would offer a joint learning framework for students and teachers.

## **Conclusion**

Professional improvement can be considered a process that continues throughout one's career. However, motivation to face new challenges and step outside one's comfort zone can be higher after a few years' work experience. According to Huberman and colleagues, teachers with over seven years' work experience have an independent and autonomous approach to teaching, and thus they can face a diversification phase where new projects and ideas are welcomed (Huberman et al., 1993). New projects can include a different, partly unfamiliar context that may lead to transformative learning where earlier experiences are challenged by new experiences (Cranton and Carusetta, 2002; Mezirow, 1991).

In the case of this analysis, the respondents were at the stage of their career where they felt new challenges were meaningful. An international and exotic project location attracted them and offered an opportunity to break with old routines. For the respondents, education exports brought elements of transformative learning, especially in terms of modifying the subject topics and reflecting on the experiences afterwards. According to Mezirow (1991), this kind of experience can represent a transformation in the meaning schema, as respondents had new knowledge about the Indonesian education system and local culture in the Aceh region, and this created a situation where, at a

certain level, earlier assumptions about the master's degree in teacher education were challenged and critically reflected on. The transformation in the meaning schema is more commonly compared to the transformation in the meaning perspective (Mezirow, 1991). While it seems that teaching in an exported degree programme can offer a starting point for transformative learning, at least in terms of the meaning schema, it cannot be verified within this analysis whether it will lead to a transformation in the meaning perspective.

For Mezirow (1991), critical reflection is an essential part of transformative learning. This proceeds via content and critical reflection to premise reflection (Mezirow, 1991). In the case of the teachers' transformative learning, the role of the institution can be essential, especially in terms of premise reflection, where new understandings are discussed and tested with colleagues and new meanings are implemented in practice. In this analysis, it seems that education export projects and current administrative practicalities are on a 'collision course'. For instance, a flexible work schedule and systematic support for reflecting on the experiences gained in education export activities seem to be lacking. In addition, education export activities have increased the ethical questions regarding the extent and the intensity to which the FoE should participate in education export projects.

As a consequence of a reduction in public funding, Finnish universities are facing increasing demands to diversify the structure of their core funding. Education export can be seen as one potential source of new income. This may be possible for at least some universities, as the number of education export projects seems to be increasing. However, the growth of the education export sector cannot be sustainable without ensuring adequate human resources for the implementation of education export. As our research shows, this already caused a challenge for the FoE, since in the case of this programme the FoE was forced to recruit teachers from outside its own university. The FoE responded to this challenge by establishing a new recruitment requirement where the ability to participate in education export activities is sought after. While this can help to increase the FoE's human resources, it can also increase tensions among academic staff members, as education export activities are a relatively new action for all higher education institutions. Thus, in order to improve educational export activities at the faculty and at the institutional levels, it is crucial to ensure sufficient human resources. However, it is equally important to support opportunities for all teachers to carry out their duties on appropriate terms and to have the opportunity to influence the FoE's activities.

This research study has raised preliminary considerations as to what kind of experience it is for teaching staff to participate in educational export activities. As education export is a relatively new activity in Finland, such research results bring added value to the higher education policy dialogue, not only in Finland but also in other countries lacking a long tradition of education export activity. Based on the results of this analysis, we can list three points that should be given special consideration in the implementation of education export activities:

1. Working conditions should be encouraging and provide sufficient flexibility. The tight schedule of the exported programme and the extra effort involved in preparation were felt to be a load factor for teachers who taught in Indonesia. From the teachers' perspective, more flexibility in the work schedule would have been beneficial and better supported teachers' work in this education export project. Based on this notion, the FoE and the university should recognize that for teaching staff education export activities are not directly comparable with the teaching given at the home campus. By creating a flexible work schedule and incentives, the institution can better ensure that it has adequate human resources for education export activities.

2. Appropriate language and cultural support for teaching staff will ensure quality of education. The Indonesian master's program was organized entirely in English, and the teaching staff had to prepare the teaching material in a foreign language to better suit the local context. Teachers wished for more systematic support for developing their own language skills, for example in proofreading materials. On the other hand, the heterogeneity of the students and different teaching context meant in practice the ability to innovate and modify one's pedagogical approach. Thus, in addition to university language services, it would also be helpful to provide cultural sensitivity information and a framework for systematic reflection on teaching experiences. The latter could provide a learning environment for the whole institution, where the collection and sharing of individuals' experiences can support both the learning of the teachers and the development of the institution's activities.
3. The clear definition of the relationship between teaching at the home campus and participating in educational export activities reduces tensions and promotes the ability of staff to participate in education export activities. The recent recruitment policy of the FoE may increase tensions between new and old employees. A transparent human resources policy can help to foster a sense of community and make education export activities a realistic career choice, also for those whose employment contracts do not require participation. In the case of the Indonesian master's degree, the human resources were inadequate at a certain level as some teachers mentioned that they were involved in the project because of a lack of competent personnel. In order to ensure motivated teaching staff for education export activities, the FoE and higher education institutions should pay more attention to working conditions, but also to clarifying the role of education export in the FoE and at the institution. Taking into account staff perspectives when planning and improving education export activities, can become an essential factor for improving education export activities in the future.

This article has offered a small insight into novel education export implementation. Understanding the daily activities and experiences of teaching in education export projects can help to identify the management practices that need to be developed in order to ensure sustainable and well-operating education export implementations. In future research, a longitudinal study that also takes into account the recipients' points of view would offer an interesting perspective for understanding the transformative learning of the overall exported programme.


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