


How to teach children about food and who should do it?

Päivi Palojoiki, professor

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto 1.11.2012 1



1. Food education vs nutrition education?

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto 1.11.2012 2





Dilemmatic nature of food choices

- Less right and wrong answers
- Contradictory voices on food choice and 'healthy' food
- Dilemmatic advice: 'eat more fish'
- 'Too many alternatives' - problems of plenty
- People choose food not nutrients in their everyday life

Need to change the perspective from nutrition education to food education

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto



Home Economics Teachers – highly qualified academic experts

- Students in Home Economics Teacher education complete a Bachelor of Arts (Education) degree (180 ECTS) and Master of Arts (Education) degree (120 ECTS).
- The major subject alternatives in the degree are: 1) Home Economics Science and 2) Education.
- Home Economics studies include 120 ECTS credits of studies in the subject to be taught, i.e. Home Economics.
- Studies in Education include the teachers' pedagogical studies of 60 ECTS credits required for a teacher's qualification. Both major subject options entail intermediate studies for general upper secondary qualification as decreed.

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto 1.11.2012 6

Home economics education and food education at schools

Changing theoretical concepts on nutrition into everyday food choices: concrete examples of food and meals that taste good and enhance well-being

Discursive turns:

- 'Healthy food is healthy because it is healthy',
- Intentional pedagogical change from surface-level learning to deep-level learning
- Instead of rote-learning and repeating pieces of information (WHAT-level), understanding relations and reasons WHY-level!

Skills of food preparation are essential: relation to freedom of choice

- preparing at home or buying from store are not real alternatives without abilities to prepare food

Equality: boys and girls, different cultural and ethnic background, all are equal during the Hec-lessons.

Critical thinking is not possible without sound understanding of nutritional facts

Changing nutrition knowledge into daily habits!

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/lopisto

'The smallest school subject with the biggest potential'

POPS 2004 TUNTILUKKO 11.11.2009/ajp

Subject	Percentage
Terveystiete	19%
Matematiikka	14%
Luonnontiete	9%
Englanti	8%
Historia ja yhteiskuntaoppi	8%
Ulkomaan kielet	7%
Liikenne ja liikunta	6%
Valinnaiset aineet	5%
Maailma	5%
Ulkomaan kulttuurit	4%
Arviointi	3%
Ti-vaihto	2%
Ulkomaan kielitieteet	1%
Ulkomaan kulttuuri	1%
Ulkomaan kielenoppi	1%

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

TUNTIMAARAT PROSENTTEINA

Fun and creativity in home economics

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

2. Cooperation at the school level?

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/lopisto 1.11.2012 10


School Catering calls to Enjoying and Learning

Seija Lintukangas – Päivi Palojoki

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

1.11.2012 12



School catering staff to act as educators in comprehensive schools (Lintukangas 2009)

AIMS of the doctoral dissertation:

- the empowerment of the catering staff and the effect of it in a work community culture in Finnish comprehensive schools
- finding suggestions to improve the work profile of the catering staff and enhance their participation in the work community of the school.

The goal is to add know-how as an educator and to improve the work profile.



The effects of the TaRu - training can be seen as an empowerment of the staff as well as a change in the work community culture.

The staff was encouraged to participate in the development projects of the work community and to place themselves as educators.

Catering staff has tacit knowledge and it's possible to share it for the whole school community.

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/lopisto 1.11.2012 13






<http://www.lahti.fi/koululaitos/ruoka.htm>

The preparation of school meals is based on standard recipes stored on computer, to ensure the nutritional quality of the food concerning e.g. the amount of salt and the type of fats used. The recipes have been tested, and the quality and quantity of the ingredients have been defined and described.

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

14

School restaurant kitchens:

- Central producer of meal services (private or owned by city)
- Component kitchens, where main courses and salads are prepared using pre-processed ingredients.
- Heat-up and distribute kitchens

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

15


http://www.lahti.fi/koululaitos/ruoka.htm



3. School meals and learning

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

16




In Finland, 1948 was the starting point of free school catering: mainly of soups, porridges and thin porridge-type dishes



HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

17

http://www.jyvaskyla.fi/ksmuseo/haloo/koulu/kouluuoka1.htm



Statutory obligations: free meal every school day

Section 31 of the Basic Education Act
Section 28 of the Upper Secondary Schools Act
Section 37 of the Act on Vocational Education


Objectives

- Support the educational objectives of the school community
- Ensure requirements concerning the quality, sufficiency, extent, and availability
- 'The nutritional quality of school meals is ensured by using nutritional-content calculations provided by the service producer. These are then compared with national nutritional recommendations.' (Helsinki City Board of Education)

'School meals and school restaurants are learning environments (Lintukangas & Palojoiki)

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

18



'School meals must be balanced; tasty, varied and colourful. Soft fats are favoured in school meals, and the salt intake (sodium) has been reduced.'
(Basic Education Act)



'School meals provide pupils with nutrition and energy and help them maintain a good working ability throughout the school day. School meals complement meals at home.'
(School meals – health and manners, National Board of Education).

'The food plate model and personal guidance help pupils make responsible nutritional choices, promote the learning of healthy eating habits, and teach good table manners and social interaction skills. The pupils' eating and taste habits are developed by familiarising the pupils with both Finnish and international foods and customs, for example through varying themes.'
(School Meals – Health and Manners and Lower Secondary School Meals 1998).

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto

19

Sample meal is put together to guide pupils choice of filling their plate. A fish day meal: mashed potatoes, herring, grated carrot, cucumber, bread and milk.

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

http://www.lahti.fi/koululaitos/ruoka.htm




During food service special attention to the temperature of food is paid.

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

21

http://www.lahti.fi/koululaitos/ruoka.htm




The most popular dishes (Helsinki)
pasta-based casseroles and pasta sauces
sausage soups
barley porridge
and spinach pancakes

The most popular dishes (Ylivieska)
meatballs
fish fingers
pasta casserole
chicken cutlets
ground beef steaks
semolina porridge & berries
spaghetti with sauce
barley porridge and strawberries
chicken risotto
turkey sauce

Dishes that receive a mixed response (Helsinki)
pea soup
meat sauces with diced meat
and fish dishes served in sauce

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

22




4. Teaching and learning of food and nutrition

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto

1.11.2012

23



What is food/nutrition knowledge?

A shared understanding is needed:

- Knowledge: Objectivism <-> Relativism
- Personal <-> Shared
- Taken/given from somewhere <-> Jointly constructed
- Free of values <-> Value-loaded (right/wrong)
- Theoretical <-> Empirical
- Transferable to other contexts <-> Context-bound

Real-life connections missing?
Knowledge only for school and for the external credits?

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI


www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto

1.11.2012

24

Knowledge affects activities?

- Everyday knowledge vs theoretical knowledge
- Knowledge vs routines
- Knowledge vs emotions and affective factors
- Knowledge vs values
- Knowledge vs indifference



Edvard Munch: 'The Scream'

Is there an informed and value-free consumer?

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto

Action potential

- being informed <-> being empowered <-> being emancipated => increasing action potential
- **Being able to make changes in one's own everyday life**
- **Being able to help somebody else to change his/her everyday life**

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto

1.11.2012 26

5. School-level cooperation

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto

1.11.2012 27



A good mealtime is an event that gives pleasure, satisfies the need for nutrition, provides a balanced diet, maintains the ability to work, relaxes, refreshes and is safe.

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

28 http://www.aromilehti.fi/pages/juttuarkisto_aromi/aromi200404.html



We don't anymore talk about canteen (ruokala= "feeding place")! A school restaurant was re-named by the students as "Delicacy" (herkkula= place that serves delicates).

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

29 <http://www.lahti.fi/koululaitos/ruoka.htm>



Dining area at "Herkkula"

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

30 <http://www.lahti.fi/koululaitos/ruoka.htm>




Summary

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
 HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
 UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

Käyttäjä- ja sosiaalisen tiedon tutkimus / Henkilön nimi /
 Esityksen nimi

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto 1.11.2012 31



Challenges

Focus from teaching to learning – how?


Focus from separate pieces of information to critical problem solving skills – how?

Parents and homes cooperating more with schools – how?

Creating food-friendly school communities

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
 HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
 UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto 1.11.2012 32



Conclusions

1) Teaching and learning about food and nutrition is not only a matter of a single student or teachers – the whole school should form a pedagogical community with a shared aims and visions.

2) These applies also to other areas of schooling:

- consumer education
- tobacco/alcohol education
- health/sex education
- environmental education

HELSINGIN YLIOPISTO
 HELSINGFORS UNIVERSITET
 UNIVERSITY OF HELSINKI

www.helsinki.fi/yliopisto 1.11.2012 33