Home Economics and Craft Studies Research Reports 42

Anna Kouhia

Unraveling the meanings of textile hobby crafts

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Screenshot from the autoethnographic cinema at 3:51.
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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the meanings of modern day textile hobby crafts for makers who engage with crafts as a creative leisure outlet. The research is embodied in the term *unraveling*, which conceptualizes the study both as a means to reflect on the meanings of embodied practice, and as a way to open up new perspectives on making. The theoretical framework reviews contemporary textile hobby crafting culture and uncovers how it has found new meaning in recreational leisure, gendered domesticity and individual resourcefulness linked with Do-It-Yourself.

The thesis consists of three sub-studies. The first level of examination is based on interviews with craftspeople coming from different cultural backgrounds, who were asked to talk about how they see the meaning and value of craft making in their lives. Secondly, textile hobby craft making is approached as a collective practice through a study conducted with an open-curricula craft group. Thirdly, the story of a craft-maker-researcher is sewn into the research narrative through autoethnographic cinema in order to create an understanding of the performativity of craft practice from the perspective of a young maker.

The three studies address how hobby craft making opens up opportunities for learning, sharing, community building and self-discovery, and how it materializes experiences of belonging to a social group and nurtures emotional sensibility in relation to one's own being. The studies show that the meanings attached to hobby craft making have many dimensions, and can be characterized as multiple, overlapping, connective, contextual, shifting and conflicting. Regardless of individual differences, there is a range of commonalities shared by the craftspeople, and accordingly, a wider sense of the world, which becomes agreed upon by the people interested in textile hobby crafts. This suggests that as people take up hobby crafting, they become involved in the negotiation of comprehensive strategies for discussing and sharing hobby practices. This implies that a shared view of the world plays an important role in cultivating meaningfulness of one's craft work, as it generates a common cultural interpretation of the meanings of craft as a leisure pursuit. All in all, experiencing personal meaningfulness seems to be the most important reason for taking up textile hobby craft activities.

Keywords: craft, hobby crafts, meanings, Do-It-Yourself, autoethnographic cinema

Helsingin yliopisto, Käyttäytymistieteellinen tiedekunta
Opettajankoulutuslaitos
Kotitalous- ja käsityötieteiden julkaisuja 42

Anna Kouhia

Käsityön harrastamisen merkityksiä purkamassa

Tiivistelmä

Tutkimuksen tarkoituksena on tarkastella käsityön harrastamisen merkityksiä osana ihmisten vapaa-aikaa. Merkitysten tarkasteleminen näyttäytyy tutkimuksessa *purkamisena*, joka viittaa sekä käsityöntekijän kokonaisvaltaiseen kehollis-materiaaliseen vuorovaikutuksen että tapaan ymmärtää tutkimusprosessi uusien näkökulmien etsimisenä ja avaamisena. Tutkimuksen teoreettinen tausta rajaa tarkastelun nykyisiin harrastamisen kulttuureihin tarkastellen käsityöharrastusta vapaa-ajan, sukupuolistuneen kotiympäristön sekä yksilöllisiä resursseja korostavan tee-se-itse kulttuurin näkökulmista.

Tutkimus koostuu kolmesta osajulkaisusta, jotka lähestyvät tutkimustehtävää eri aineistoin ja näkökulmin. Ensimmäinen osatutkimus syventyy eri kulttuuritaustoista tulevien harrastajien käsityökokemuksiin avoimien haastattelujen kautta. Toinen osatutkimus tarkastelee käsityötä kollektiivisena käytäntönä, tavoitteenaan ymmärtää yhteisöllisyyden kokemuksen rakentumista monikulttuurisessa, jakamiseen perustuvassa käsityöryhmässä vapaan sivistystyön kentällä. Kolmas tutkimusartikkeli kehittää autoetnografista elokuvametodia, jonka kautta tutkimuksessa kuvataan ja käsitteellistetään nuoren käsityöharrastajan kokemuksia omasta harrastuksestaan ja sen merkityksellisyydestä.

Aineistoista ilmenee, että käsityöharrastus avaa mahdollisuuksia oppimiseen, jakamiseen, yhteisöllisyyden rakentamiseen ja itsensä löytämiseen. Käsityöharrastus näyttäytyy kompleksisena toimintana, joka yhtäältä tuottaa harrastajille kokemuksia kulttuurisesta kuulumisesta, toisaalta materialisoi käsityöharrastajien kokemuksia omasta itsestään. Tutkimus esittää, että käsityön merkitykset ovat moninaisia, päällekkäisiä, yhdistäviä, kontekstuaalisia, muuttuvia ja ristiriitaisia, ja että käsityöharrastajat kokevat merkityksellisyyden yksilöllisesti ja muuttuvasti. Merkitysten yksilöllisyydestä huolimatta käsityöharrastajat jakavat monia ajatuksia ja kokemuksia käsitöistä. Tutkimus osoittaa, että jakaminen muiden harrastajien kanssa näyttäytyy tärkeänä merkityksellisyyden kokemuksen muodostumisessa, sillä koetun samanmielisyyden kautta rakentuu myös ajatus käsityöharrastuksen kulttuurisesta merkityksellisyydestä. Silti omakohtainen merkityksellisyyden kokeminen näyttäytyy tärkeimpänä tekijänä käsitöiden harrastamisessa.

Avainsanat: käsityö, harrastus, merkitykset, vapaa-aika, autoetnografinen elokuva

Acknowledgements

This study reveals how hobbyist craft makers perceive and understand the meanings of recreational craft making as part of their lives. Most of all, the study has been an exploration on the experiences of craft making, both engaging personal and collective levels of experimentation. Although my name alone stands in the cover page of the published articles, the study would not have been completed without the help of many people. I consider this dissertation as a result of shared capabilities, which have not only emerged in terms of scholarly support and collaboration, but also as social interaction and exchange of ideas with the people I have encountered. I have received a lot of intellectual and emotional support throughout my doctoral journey, and my sincerest gratitude is expressed for all those who have supported, encouraged, and inspired me during the writing of this dissertation.

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During the doctoral journey, I have had an opportunity to conduct my PhD study in encouraging seminar groups, communicating and changing ideas with experienced academies and unbelievably creative young scholars. Most of my fellow doctoral students from Craft Studies and Craft Teacher Education seminar group have already wandered through their doctoral journeys, and thus showed me the path to follow. I am especially grateful to Kaiju Kangas, Tarja-

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On a train from Kokkola to Helsinki, 30.9.2016
Anna Kouhia

Ode to my socks

Mara Mori brought me
a pair of socks
which she knitted herself
with her sheepherder's hands,
two socks as soft as rabbits.
I slipped my feet into them
as if they were two cases
knitted with threads of twilight and goatskin,
Violent socks,
my feet were two fish made of wool,
two long sharks
sea blue, shot through
by one golden thread,
two immense blackbirds,
two cannons,
my feet were honored in this way
by these heavenly socks.
They were so handsome for the first time
my feet seemed to me unacceptable
like two decrepit firemen,
firemen unworthy of that woven fire,
of those glowing socks.

Nevertheless, I resisted the sharp temptation
to save them somewhere as schoolboys
keep fireflies,
as learned men collect
sacred texts,
I resisted the mad impulse to put them
in a golden cage and each day give them
birdseed and pieces of pink melon.
Like explorers in the jungle
who hand over the very rare green deer
to the spit and eat it with remorse,
I stretched out my feet and pulled on
the magnificent socks and then my shoes.

The moral of my ode is this:
beauty is twice beauty
and what is good is doubly good
when it is a matter of two socks
made of wool in winter.

Pablo Neruda (1956, translated by Robert Bly)

List of original publications

This doctoral dissertation is based on the following original publications, which are referred to in the text by their Roman numerals (*Studies I–III*):

I Kouhia, A. (2012). Categorizing the meanings of craft: A multi-perspectival framework for eight interrelated meaning categories. *Techne Series*: *Research in Sloyd Education and Craft Science A*. 19 (1), 25–40.

II Kouhia, A. (2015). Crafting the collective sense: A descriptive case study on recreational textile craft making in Finnish adult education, *International Journal of Education Through Art,* 11 (1), 7–20.

III Kouhia, A. (2015). The making-of: An autoethnographic cinema on the meanings of contemporary craft practicing for a young hobbyist. *Textile: Journal of Cloth and Culture.* 13 (3), 266–283.

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1 Introduction

Loop to loop, casting on stitches,
I made a start, I made a heel, needle passing to needle
Silmäsiä sisaruita, rivi puikoille luotihin,
Syntyi alku, syntyi pohja, puikko puikolle jakeli

1.1 Casting on

Like so many other craft hobbyists, I have been interested in craft making all my life. From early childhood, I have enjoyed experimenting with all kinds of crafts ranging from paper crafts and ceramics to crocheting, silk painting, sewing, and knitting. I remember that my now departed grandmother, who was known as an enthusiastic craftsperson, had made me a crafting bag for storing my craft tools and materials. On the one side of the bag she had typed a verse "Now Anna is crafting," which I liked to put facing upwards while I was engaged in my craft activities. This, I remember, was important to me, because the verse symbolized the significance of the actions that I was doing. The other side of the bag had another verse "Now Anna gathers her craft belongings back to this bag, thank you!" which I did not consider anywhere near as inspirational. For me, the only value of this lackluster side was to demonstrate the gravity of craft making that was just temporarily put on hold while the bag was stored in a drawer the uncrafty side upwards.

The motivation to undertake this study is rooted in my experiences as a hobby craft maker: I am one of the many thousands of people who have been triggered by craft making, and thus contributed to the "resurgence" or "revival" of craft that has taken place in the Western world during the last few decades (e.g., Minahan & Wolfram Cox, 2007; Frayling, 2011; Bratich & Brush, 2011; Peach, 2013). During this shift, crafts have not only become extremely popular leisure-time activities, but are also being represented in the modern mass culture through the language of advertising, packaging, and popular culture in general (Frayling, 2011, 61). This indicates a change in the meaning and value of crafts in society. Against this background, this dissertation aims to examine the shifting meanings of hobby-based textile crafts today, in the times of the grand narratives of individualism, consumerism, and post-everything hybridity.

Today, hobby crafts are indisputable on the up. Especially my age group, women between 25 to 34 years of age, has been said to lead the renaissance of craft making with the increasing participation in yarn craft activities. For example in the United States, the Craft Yarn Council of America estimated in

2004 that about 6.5 million Americans in the age group from 25 to 34 years of age started knitting or crocheting between 2002 and 2004 (Craft Yarn Council of America 2004 Tracking study cited in Wills, 2007, 29)[1]. In 2011, the Crafts Yarn Council of America estimated that there were 38 million people participating in either knitting or crocheting in the US, nearly one fifth of them belonging to the age group between 18- to 34-year-olds (Craft Yarn Council of America 2012 Tracking study cited in Stannard & Sanders, 2015). Recent reports from the UK reflect the trend in the US by estimating that 7.5 million people in Britain are regularly engaged in knitting and crochet activities (UK Hand Knitting Association, 2016).

The situation in Finland seems somehow coincidental, at least when it comes to the popularity of craft-related activities. In Finland, craft making was listed as one of the most popular leisure activities in 2002 in a survey by Statistics Finland (Statistics Finland, 2005). Following the popularity of leisure-time activities in different age groups from the early 1980s to early 2000s, the study confirmed that hobby crafts were widely practiced among people in Finland across all ages. Two thirds (67%) of the study respondents reported having some kind of craft practice as their hobby—domestic textile crafts, weaving, furniture making, woodwork, sewing, mending, and repairing being the most popular ones. Compared to the overall population of Finland this means that about 3.5 million people take up craft-related activities on a regular basis.

Yet, the situation in Finland does not gibe perfectly with international statistics. In fact, home-based textile hobby crafts, such as knitting, crochet, and embroidery, were reported to come down in popularity from 82% in 1981 to 61% in 2002 among the Finnish female population, parallel to a downshift of leisurebased hobby craft making among women from an incredible 86% in 1981 to a steady 72% in 2002. In the light of these figures it seems that there has not been a tremendous renaissance in craft making in Finland, though hobby crafts have never really ceased to be an attractive mainstream hobby. To a certain degree, this might be due to the role of craft making in the Finnish school system, where craft making is taught to all pupils as a mandatory school subject. In Finland, craft education has been valued for its potential to teach children important skills for life, such as problem solving, strategic planning, interaction

[1] Since 1994, the Crafts Yarn Council of America [CYCA] has conducted surveys on yarn trends about women who knitt or crochet, and purchase yarn for their craft activities. CYCA does not provide summaries from previous studies, or release original research data since the data contains retail-sensitive information. Only the press release of the recent Tracking study is accessible on CYCA websites (http://www.craftyarncouncil.com/know.html). Currently, CYCA provides the press release of the 2014 Tracking Study "What inspires & motivates crocheters & knitters," which surveyed more than 3,100 crocheters and knitters in the US. With an overview of sources of inspiration and the current craft projects of the study respondents, the study shed light on the motivations to undertake craft projects, and the experienced benefits of knitting and crochet activities.

with tools and materials, patience, perseverance, independence, responsibility for the environment, and gender equality (e.g., Garber, 2002; Kokko, 2009; Kangas 2014; Veeber, Syrjäläinen, & Lind, 2015). Accordingly, the value of learning to create something from scratch has also been addressed as a means of encouraging the creativity and cultural competence of children and youth, and on a broad scale, is regarded as a skill capable of revitalizing the country's productivity (Strategic Government Program, 2016). Craft making has also affirmed its popularity among adults, not only arousing interest among makers who practice hobby crafts privately in their homes but also within the field of liberal adult education, where arts and crafts have been counted for ages among the most popular areas of study. Overall, in Finland, the hype about craft making seems to have only intensified during the past decade, eventually translating into a marked increase of interest in maker cultures, both online and offline, and across all ages. Against this background, it is not surprising that crafts have been woven into the fabric of the nation's state, and regarded as trendy, urban-vibe hobbies that appeal to a larger number of people than perhaps ever before (The Finnish Crafts Organization Taito ry, 2012; Aalto & Luutonen, 2012).

Today, textile hobby craft activities are undertaken for a variety of reasons. For example, a vast online survey conducted in 2014 by Irina Nykänen, which reached over 3000 Finnish hobby craft makers, suggested that some hobbyist makers considered textile craft making as an ordinary pastime project or a means to compete idleness, while others found hobby crafting a serious part of their leisure (see Nykänen, 2014, 102–103). There are also differences in the meanings and motivations in different age groups. For instance, middle-aged makers are more likely to say they knit and crochet because it provides them with a creative outlet than younger makers (Crafts Yarn Council of America, 2014); younger makers report appreciating the ability to multitask and the various social aspects of crafting along with the enjoyment of creative making (Stannard, 2011; Stannard & Sanders, 2015). In addition, there is a diversity in the ways in which people interpret and articulate their craft learning processes and conceptualize the meanings placed on textile crafts (Kokko & Dillon, 2011; Rönkkö, 2011; see also Wills, 2007, 30).

The present study examines the meanings of textile hobby craft practice, with an underlying intention to develop new, more sensitive methodologies to conceptualize and communicate the meanings of craft making. The first level of examination is based on interviewing women interested in crafts and asking about what they consider to be the meaning and value of craft making in their lives. In this sub-study, I interviewed six women from different cultural backgrounds. These interviews offered remarkable range and depth of the meaning of hobby crafts and its attentiveness to culture and locale. Second, the study examined textile hobby craft making as a collective practice contributing to the generation of collective sense in an open-curricula craft group within

Finnish adult education. Among the hobby craft makers who participated in the craft group, a collective sense was negotiated and enforced in various ways, among them sharing the processes related to the making of the craft works or the makers expressing themselves through the materiality of craft making as they learned new craft techniques from other group members. Beyond these notions, my own story as a craft maker–researcher is knitted into the research narrative to build up an understanding of the performativity of craft practice from the position of a young Do-It-Yourself (DIY) maker. Here, DIY is understood as a culture of creativity, which bases its relevance on the richness of material production. In this sense, DIY not only explores the repair, customization, and modification of raw and semi-raw materials but also embraces a range of recreational and cost-saving activities taken up as a creative spare-time activity. These activities are often pursued in contemplation of self-maintenance and are motivated by the wish to compete with mass production with self-made objects. With the DIY woolly sock project that was undertaken in the third sub-study in this research project, I aimed to reflect on my identity as a young hobby craft maker, and in doing so, to unveil the meanings of modern-day hobby craft making as leisure and recreation. This endeavor experimenting with reflective research methods, practice-led documentation, and artistic film-making was accomplished in the interest of cultivating an appreciation for textile hobby crafts. Methodologically, the aim was to open up a new perspective on the search for the meanings of hobby practice through cinematic production.

As a researcher, I was not only involved in the studies but also actively contributed to the research process in all phases of the study. I framed the overall study and chose the research respondents for each sub-study, and even positioned myself as a research respondent when I composed an auto-ethnographic narrative about my own craft making. This means that the study unavoidably reflects on my embeddedness in the culture of craft. Now in my early thirties, I have been involved in academic craft education for more than a decade, first studying to become a crafts teacher and a textile designer and then following academic discussions from the position of a graduate student. My love of crafts, which formed in early childhood, has changed much throughout the years and eventually turned into a scholarly interest in the culture of making. During this research process, I became increasingly interested in the understanding that occurs through self-reflection. From my own position, I have delved into contemporary craft culture through self-reflection from the position of a young hobbyist maker—a position that will be evidently lost as time goes by. Therefore, it was extremely important that I made every effort to keep my voice clear and uncorrupted during the writing of this study, and I have searched for a great level of descriptiveness about my own experiences as a textile hobby craft maker.

This study comprises two parts. The first part is a summary consisting of five chapters; introduction, aims, and the definitions of key concepts (Chapter 1), an overview of contemporary textile hobby craft (Chapter 2), a description of theoretical and methodological commitments (Chapter 3), a presentation of the main findings based on the empirical studies (Chapter 4), and a discussion (Chapter 5). The latter part consists of three journal articles, which approach the research task with different data sets, and with different interests of the practice. The original studies have been published in international peer-reviewed journals.

1.2 Unraveling and reconstructing: Aim of the study

The overall aim of this study was to investigate the meanings of recreational textile craft making in the lives of so-called ordinary hobby practitioners, in other words, adults who engage with textile crafts as a means of creative outlet as part of their leisure, and through this, better understand the worth and value of craft making in the present times. In order to act in response to this aim, this study framed one general research question as follows:

What kind of meanings do textile hobby crafts have for makers?

The general research question is twofold in the sense that it has an interest in realizing the meanings of textile craft making on the subjective and collective levels. On the one hand, the study approached the subjective experience of craft making, in other words, how one senses crafts with one's body and makes sense of the experiences visually and verbally. On the other hand, the examination of the subjective experience was related to the collective processes of sharing and regenerating meanings with others.

I have characterized the investigation as "unraveling." Here, unraveling is intended as a term which is capable of elucidating the nature of the research process as a sensitive and embodied exploration. Moreover, unraveling serves as a metaphorical concept linking research to the materiality of making, and to the twists and turns of the craft process: while unraveling, the yarns of a knit are pulled out and the knit undone, the threads disentangled, or the skeins unwound. Correspondingly, the previous studies have conceptualized unraveling as a form of scholarship for decoding the memories, beliefs, and understandings of the maker (Wickham, MacNeille & Read, 2013), demonstrating the meanings of knitting (Kingston, 2012), and investigating the relationship between the knit and its wearer through remaking, altering, and embellishing the knitted garment (Twigger Holroyd, 2014b). In this light, unraveling is regarded as a methodological tool to reconfigure and reflect on the making process—and metaphorically "open" up new perspectives on the meanings of embodied practice (see Twigger Holroyd, 2014b). As a deliberate strategy, unraveling is

not simply imposed on materials, but can invite people into self-reflective, experiential dialogue with the materials, provoking makers to puzzle out the meaning of practice through self-reflective thinking and material interaction (see also Schön, 1983; Mäkelä & Nimkulrat, 2011; Mäkelä, Nimkulrat, Dash & Nsenga, 2011; Nimkulrat, 2012).

In the craft process, unraveling may take place, for example, when a knitter wishes to undo the stitches and rip the knitting in order to straighten out an inaccuracy or misreckoning of the work-in-process. Sometimes unraveling is required in order to re-insert the needles and continue stitching, for example, if a stitch has been dropped during a complicated lace knit. From this perspective, unraveling may also be considered a phase of reconstruction and repair. In this study, I understand "reconstruction" to be as an interpretative and embodied meaning-making process at the intersection of culture and the self, which includes the idea that the activities in our culture reshape the experience and influence the imagination though reconstituting and re-enacting the conception of the experiment itself (Saleebey, 1994; also Gooding, 1990: xv; Nash 2001,11) This is to say that mental and material processes are complementary to each other, and "the agency whereby observers construct the images and discourse that convey new experience embraces both" (Gooding, 1990, xv). Accordingly, as we knit, and the material is being transformed from the yarn to stitches in our hands, at the same time the world is being reconstructed stitch by stitch. Stitch by stitch, the world changes, and we as makers change along with the making, reconstructing the world itself through the act of making.

Acknowledging the various roles played by textile hobby crafts today, with a view of the current time constituted by fluidity, individualism, and a fragmentary conception of the world (Bauman, 2001; 2011), the present study sought to contribute and participate in the discussion of the range of meanings and motivations for makers to engage in recreational textile craft activities within the course of the current craft boom (e.g., Grace & Gandolfo, 2014; Hunt & Phillipov, 2014; Stalp, 2015; Stannard & Sanders, 2015; Pöllänen, 2015b). From this standpoint, the research invites an observation of the varying views and beliefs of contemporary hobby craft makers, and goes on to suggest that it takes both discursive and material practices to perceive and capture the worth and value of craft making for people living within this cultural moment.

Although the present study was conducted in Finland, the study had an underlying aim to explore and interpret the meanings of craft on a broader scale, nurturing communication across different individuals and their cultures. This international emphasis can be seen in the theoretical background, which builds on international research literature. However, the data of the present study find the means of knowledge from an eagerness to learn from hobby craft makers from different cultural backgrounds.

1.3 Crafts

"Craft" is a slippery term that has compelling historical alignments with the idea of increasing expertise resulting from the knowledge of the practice. In the sixteenth century, craft was used as a reference to strength, power, and force, or intellectual skill (Lucie-Smith, 1981, 11); later definitions glide over the spectrum of nuances from modernist interpretations of craft as the mastery of handmade beauty as opposed to the creativity and freedom of expression related to art, and postmodern ideas of craft as a critical, speculative, self-reflective practice, or a form of bricolage over skill (e.g., Greenhalgh, 1997; Rowley, 1999; Frayling, 2011; Gauntlett, 2011, 46–49). In detail, "to craft" has been understood as human-material interaction through the application of one's skill and material-based knowledge "to relatively small-scale production" (Adamson, 2010, 2). Although much of the habitual discussion seems to embrace craft as an ability to do something with one's hands, further conflicting interpretations have also been offered. Recently, craft has been used increasingly as an intellectual characterization which realizes authenticity, originality, and homegrown nostalgia – qualities that have been harnessed for commercial artisanry-like production appropriating the image of the handmade as original, high-quality work (Frayling, 2011, 61; Walker, 2016).

As long as craft has been used to describe the materiality of the work created by the human hand, there has also been an emphasis on the quality of the handmade as well. Traditionally, craft has been approached as the control of the ability to execute personal know-how, empowering the maker to take charge of the technology, design, and materials to produce "a thing well made" (Fariello, 2011, 23; also Dissanayake, 1995; Dormer, 1997; Adamson, 2007). Similarly, sociologist Richard Sennett (2008, 9) has sought to make sense of craftsmanship by defining it as "an enduring, basic human impulse, the desire to do a job well for its own sake." Craftsmanship, as Sennett (2008) has argued, is seen to extend to a broad range of skilled manual activities from artisanry work to computer programming, therefore serving all people practicing a skilled craft. Conceptually, craft seems to allude to a form of connoisseurship trained to master a practice. However, in a material sense, craft can also be understood as a name for material entities demonstrating the ways of preserving traditional skills generated and nurtured through social interaction over time (Dormer, 1997, 150–151; Owen, 2005, 30; also Dant, 1999, 1–3).

In recent academic discussions crafts have been repeatedly contextualized as hybrid works that confuse elements from different material, visual, and conceptual frameworks (Roberts, 2010; 2011; Hemmings, 2015), and migrate across disciplines blurring boundaries between the stereotypical categories of craft, art, and design (Shiner, 2012; Twigger Holroyd, 2014a; Paterson & Surette, 2015). Personally, I would like to think of craft making as a material practice that has the potential to extend beyond the production of conventional

products, and therefore, express critical ideas through handmade artefacts (see also Hickey, 2015). Perhaps my reading of the possible material criticism integrated in hobby craft is affected by linguistic contextuality, as the Finnish word craft, *käsityö*,[2] is interpreted as an entity including both the idea of the product that is going to be made during the process of crafting, the embodied craft know-how of the making of the product, and the product itself (Kojonkoski-Rännäli, 1995: 31; Ihatsu, 1998: 16, also Ihatsu, 2002). Moreover, according to Anna-Marja Ihatsu (1998), the Finnish conception of "craft" reflects a closer relation to design (and greater remoteness from art) than to *craft* in the English-speaking world. Ihatsu (1998, 162–163) has argued that the word craft tends to be interpreted in relation to its etymological origin of the performing of skill and strength, which leads to a division into the worlds of "conventional craft" and "art-craft" based on the differences between individual expression and personal commitment in the craft process (see also Jeffries, 2011, 223–224). In comparison, the Finnish word *käsityö* tends to sustain a view of holistic process as a core element both in professional and hobby craft (Ihatsu, 1998, 163). In this vein, it emphasizes the role of the maker and an individually initiated, skillful act conducted by the practitioner (see Pöllänen, 2009a). As Ihatsu (2002, 12) has further argued, *käsityö* carries some minor differences in comparison to the meaning of "craft", but since they share the same conceptual background, and have much equivalent in their lingustical definitions, they can be used interchangeably in terms of research.

In the Finnish context craft is often discussed either as a "holistic" or "ordinary" process, which refers to the maker's own input in the process of designing and manufacturing the craft product (Kojonkoski-Rännäli, 1995, 58–60; Ihatsu, 1998, 17–18; Pöllänen & Kröger, 2004; Pöllänen, 2009a; 2009b). The concept of holistic craft is based on a nested set of arguments about individual creativity: it refers to a unique craftwork where all phases from product ideation and product design to making and manufacturing are conducted by the same maker or a group of makers, and where design solutions are not taken as given (for example, by the patterns or instructions), but apply the knowledge of the practice through "the management of a particular context" (Pöllänen & Kröger, 2004, 162). As such, the activity of craft making is seen as

[2] Finnish word käsityö derives from the word käsi, hand, and työ. Contemporary Finnish Dictionary defines käsityö as work made by hand, or with tools that are held in hands; this definition covers both the process of making and the end product (Nykysuomen sanakirja II, 1992, 705). It also acknowledges that käsityö has a connotation to " work especially made by women", and can be used a name for a school subject. By definition, hobby crafts are habitually distinguished from professional craft work, and from the artistic creation of craft objects (Ihatsu 1998, 162–165). The etymological background of käsityö has been reviewed in English in several studies, most recently in relation to the DIY culture (Na, 2012), and the politicization of the handmade in the era of Finnish cottage industry (Kraatari, 2016).

a form of action demanding both mental-intellectual and physio-motoric skills and abilities (Ihatsu, 1998, 18; also Kojonkoski-Rännäli, 1998, 48–68).

Much of hobby craft work is "ordinary" and unoriginal in the sense that it reproduces traditional models, techniques, and patterns without its own contribution to the design of the object, for example in cases when handcrafted works are conducted by following ready-made patterns, step-by-step instructions, or previously learned models of technical solutions (Kojonkoski-Rännäli, 1995, 94–95; Pöllänen, 2009b), and are conducted, as Glenn Adamson (2007, 139) has noticed, "in a spirit of self-gratification rather than critique." Ordinary craft, though, embraces a traditional understanding of hobby craft as an activity adopting established patterns rather than adopting the critical modes of interpretation. In this way, ordinary craft sheds light on craft practice, which is usually understood in terms of hobby-level step-by-step DIY affected by materials provided by the massmerchandising (Alfoldy, 2015).

However, it needs to be highlighted that both holistic and ordinary craft can provide a means of material interaction and a sense of meaningfulness for hobby makers; holistic craft discovering its origins from the maker's own resourcefulness, and ordinary craft from the variations and appropriations of the process of making. As illustrated in the study by Marja-Leena Rönkkö (2011), ordinary hobby craft making may fulfill the same purposes as holistic craft making, if the craft process is "complete" in that it includes the maker's own input in the design and manufacturing process and if the project develops the maker's skills and knowledge. Although Rönkkö examined craft-making processes in the context of learning, similar qualities can be applied to leisure-based hobby craft making in general. If the maker carries out the craft process with his or her own plans and ideas, masters the project through the realization of his or her own skills and knowledge, and shows commitment to the process, the craft-making process can be regarded as a "complete craft"—even if the project itself followed traditional patterns or a determined set of plans of actions (Rönkkö, 2011, 125, 130–131). For Rönkkö, a complete craft is a key concept for understanding the complexity of the holistic craft process, as a complete craft not only reproduces the predefined "holistic" craft intended as making completed by the same maker from the beginning to the end but also produces a layered conception of the varieties of the holistic craft process. Rönkkö's study showed that holistic and ordinary crafts tend to merge with one another and are constituted by overlapping processes. What is essential is how craft makers feel about their craft projects and what these projects enable the craft makers to express.

1.4 Hobby crafts

The idea of "hobby craft" as a pastime craft work conducted by unprofessional craftspeople has its origins, albeit vaguely, in amateur embroidery made outside the legitimate guild system in medieval monasteries (Lucie-Smith, 1981, 136). Although some crafts, like the embroidery work of noble ladies done as a pastime may be interpreted in favor of the conception of recreational leisure, in medieval times craft making was not a kind of self-initiated leisure pre-occupation that hobby craft is today (see Parry, 1994). The way we understand "hobby craft" today is an outcome of many later changes that originate from the transformation of work and leisure that occurred during the Industrial Revolution, accompanied with the eighteenthcentury perception of amateur work as "an aesthetically accomplished occupation done for enjoyment with little consideration of use or functionality" (Knott, 2015, 80–81). However, only in the 19th century did the notion of leisure begin to be applied to opportunities to gain intrinsic satisfaction from activities outside the workplace (Roberts, 1999, 1–3). The writings of Thorstein Veblen (1992), particularly *The Theory of the Leisure Class* originally published in 1899, located leisure as a non-productive pastime of the "conspicuous class," who could afford a life of idleness, and therefore undertook redundant activities for the sake of beauty or expressiveness. [3] Accordingly, Veblen suggested that conspicuous leisure pursuits addressed the status of the "conspicuous class" through the accumulation of social capital and expressed a new departure through its habits of consumption (Veblen, 1992, 43, 47; also Miller, 1987, 148; Dant, 1999, 18). In a more limited sense, as Daniel Miller (1987, 147–148) has argued, Veblen perceived leisure to be the ability to absent oneself from work, and eventually, the world of practical necessity. In this sense, Veblen's conception of leisure could be understood as a capability to accomplish subjective value through nonproductive, quasi-professional work outside the disturbance of economic forces and the pressures of productive labor (Veblen, 1992, 45; also Miller, 1987, 147–149).

In this vein, I want to emphasize the recreational role of craft making in the lives of the practitioners. For want of a better term, I have chosen to characterize the practice as *hobby craft making*, or *hobby craft*, by which I refer to Veblenian

[3] Veblen's The Theory of Leisure Class identified leisure accomplishments as an "unproductive expenditure of time" extending to redundant activities or knowledge of the processes "which do not conduce directly to the furtherance of human life" (Veblen, 1992: 45). These kinds of activities included, for example, the production of goods which are of no intrinsic use, the knowledge of dead languages, or various forms of household art. However, Veblen did not see handcraft as a noble leisure employment, since he believed such menial, productive practices as handcrafts could not serve highly moral premises or provide a pride in work that were required from wealthy leisure employments (Veblen, 1992: 78–79). At a general level, The Theory of Leisure Class habitually neglects the world of work and leisure of lower classes and women, though identifying leisure from the hegemonic viewpoint of white, wealthy males.

"conspicuous" intentions to abandon the obligations of being prolific, and undertaking the practice of making for the sake of enjoyment and expressiveness, albeit with a critical attitude to Veblen's reductive view of social status relating to the activity. Thus, "hobby craft" is intended as a name for self-governed leisure-based craft activity, with an emphasis on hobbies as an enjoyable, private time outside the burden of vocational work. This characterization is, at least when contextualized in relation to the Finnish word *harrastus*, hobby, derivingfrom the word *harras* (meaning a devotee, a dedicated, enthusiastic person, or one's heart's desire, see Nykysuomen sanakirja I, 1992, 375), and in line with other interpretations of the worth and value of recreational activities that are undertaken as part of one's leisure. In this sense, the conception of a hobby expresses an intrinsic passion to pursue the activity, and a willingness to be involved with the things one enjoys, and practicing the activity that one perceives to be meaningful with a kind of joy (Hanifi, 2005, 119; Crawford, 2009, 192–197; Wolf, 2010, 11–17).

According to English dictionary definitions,[4] having a hobby is obviously a matter of pleasure: something that brings contentment, delight and relaxation into the lives of people undertaking the praxis. These definitions clearly separate hobby practice from the burden of daily work, yet at the same time commission it as *un*-work that is only undertaken for the purposes of entertainment or recreation. A hobby is regarded as an activity or interest pursued in spare time, in other words, in one's own time and at one's own convenience; it is the opposite of duty and takes place "when…not working" and "not as a main occupation." In terms of hobby craft practice these claims create an interesting debate: even if the hobby craft practice could be free from the pressures and deadlines of professional work, the practice itself is constrained by the materiality of labor, since craft making is always hands-on "work" in the sense that it is an exertion with the materials in the hands of the maker. Whether the work results in a finalized product is not so important; what is important is the enactment of actions that develop their own configurations of work appearing like the utopian dreams of unalienated labor (Knott, 2015, xii). Consequently, hobby craft seems to be constituted by the self-driven logic of the management of work in the context of leisure.

All in all, hobby work seems to carry promises of uncorrupted enthusiasm, endless curiosity, affecting anticipation, and a freedom to undertake the activity or interest at the convenience of one's own time, own will, and own effort. This

[4] English online dictionaries share many similarities in the ways they define "hobby": a hobby is regarded as "an activity or interest pursued for pleasure or relaxation and not as a main occupation" (Dictionary.com), "an activity done regularly in one's leisure time for pleasure" (Oxford Dictionaries), "an activity that someone does for pleasure when they are not working" (Cambridge Dictionaries Online), and "an activity pursued in spare time for pleasure or relaxation" (Collins English Dictionary).

is, of course, a romanticized, and extremely individualistic translation of hobby practice. However, such notions also inform the importance of pleasure in experiencing satisfaction and harmony in activities named as hobbies (see Crawford, 2009). For example, Ellen Dissanayake (1995, 41) has described this inherent pleasure of making as *joie de faire*, with which she refers to the experience of importance rising from the sheer enjoyment of transforming the materials at hand into a form that did not exist before by using "one's own agency, dexterity, feelings and judgment to mold, form, touch, hold and craft physical materials". Therefore, she considered that making is not only pleasurable, but also meaningful, because working with one's hand makes us humans, and allows us to express our human values.

In regard to terminology, I am aware that many academic and popular discussions relating to DIY have used the term "amateur" while specifying the relationship between the professional and leisure-based craft practice (e.g., Mason, 2005; Beegan & Atkinson, 2008; Jackson, 2010; 2011a; 2011b; Hackney, 2013; Knott, 2015). In these discussions, the term amateur, which originates from the Latin root *amare* meaning "to love" (Adamson, 2007, 139–140), is used to celebrate individual love and passion by calling the person with such love *amator*, "someone who loves what they do and does it for its own sake rather than financial reward" (Beegan & Atkinson, 2008, 310). However, as Gerry Beegan and Paul Atkison (2008) have noticed, a dominant challenge for the term amateur is its inevitable confrontation with expert work. According to Jane Donlin (2011, 107), this confrontation further pushes "the concept of amateurism into a reductive dichotomy", which therefore fails to adequately understand the complexities of amateur work.

In many recent studies (e.g., Hutchinson, LeBlanc, & Booth, 2006; Jackson, 2010, 2011a, 2011b; Liss-Marino, 2014; Nykänen, 2014; Twigger Holroyd, 2015), hobby craft practices have been approached from the viewpoint of the integrity of the skilled work, emphasizing the perpetually *serious* role of craft activities in the lives of hobbyist makers. The term "serious leisure," which originates in the work of Robert Stebbins (1992; 2001; 2007), praises leisure activities for the enjoyment they bring for the makers but acknowledges that the participants sometimes find leisure activities are "so substantial, interesting, and fulfilling that . . . they launch themselves on a (leisure) career centered on acquiring and expressing a combination of its special skills, knowledge, and experience" (Stebbins, 2007, 5; modified from Stebbins, 1992, 3). This emphasizes "serious leisure" as a form of systematized, thoroughgoing amateur activity that is pursued mainly for the love of it, where practitioners strive for professional standards. "Serious" is based on descriptions of the role of the activity as a free-time passion, which anchors serious leisure with qualities such as earnestness, devotion, and sincerity (Stebbins, 2007). In the field of craft, serious activities extend to a range of quasi-professional, pro-amateur activities,

which reach and sometimes even surpass the quality of the professional craft work in the skill, worth, and value of the handmade but are most often pursued as a form of self-actualization and taken up as pastime projects. Accordingly, Stebbins distinguished among three types of serious leisure—amateurism, voluntarism, and hobbies—but emphasizes that all three types can nurture personal growth and support self-confidence through a sense of accomplishment (Stebbins, 1992, 2007).

"Serious leisure" is often contrasted with "casual leisure"—a term mainly used to refer to "unserious," consumptive, and incidental leisure activities, which are considered to have considerably less substantial value and are often described as much less complex than serious leisure activities. According to Stebbins (2007, 1–2, 5), casual leisure activities can be defined as immediate, intrinsically rewarding actions that require little or no special training. These casual leisure activities can be best understood as a set of simple actions, such as handing out leaflets, directing traffic in a parking lot, or clearing snow off the neighborhood hockey rink, which are quite different from serious leisure activities that require far more nuanced and interrelated core activities in order to be found attractive. Nonetheless, Stebbins (2007, xi) synthetized serious leisure, casual leisure, and project-based leisure (an exquisite, one-off combination of serious and casual core actions that often occur in the form of a "project") into a common serious leisure perspective framework, which aims to show, at once, the similarities, interrelationships, and distinctive features of all three forms of leisure. On one level, the serious leisure perspective addresses the subjective motivational interest to take up leisure activities described as enjoyable (casual leisure), fulfilling (serious leisure), or enjoyable or fulfilling (project-based leisure), and distinguishes among six qualities found among leisure activities (an occasional need to persevere, the pursuit of a leisure career, a significant personal effort to use acquired knowledge and skills, a need for durable benefits such as enhancement of self-image, a quest for the unique ethos that grows up around the activity, and a tendency to identify oneself with the pursuit of the leisure activity). On another level, the serious leisure perspective stresses the importance of the personal and social rewards received from the leisure activities, which tend to be a range of spontaneous, emotional, self-reflective, and financial benefits (Stebbins, 2001; 2007).

Although the term "hobby craft" may not be a better term than any other, at least I believe it manages to overcome some of the controversies that relate to the term "amateur craft" as craft practice failing to reach the quality of the professional work, and the impersonal and fragmented term of "leisure crafts," which I think overemphasizes free time than the experienced *joie de faire* associated with the wholehearted hobby activity. Although hobby craft is obviously a term for a self-initiated, enjoyable occupation, it extends to a vast array of "serious" forms of making (see Stebbins, 2001; 2007; also Jackson,

2010; 2011a; 2011b) associated with integrity and criticality, and the acquiring of special skills, knowledge, and experience through hobby practice, but may still bring casual enjoyment for the maker, for example in terms of material experimenting, which does not necessarily require any special training or skills.

1.5 Do-It-Yourself as a contemporary mentality of making

Hobby craft making today is often characterized with DIY, a broad term used to describe a creative-recreational ethos that seeks to confront and redefine consumerism through the production, transformation, or reconstruction of goods that express the values of self-worth, autonomy, maintenance, and affordability (Atkinson, 2006; Spencer, 2008; Na, 2012, 81; Wolf & McQuitty, 2011; Stevens, 2011). In general, DIY seems to be a broad mentality that relates not only to the practices of craft making, but also to the ways that "go beyond the construction of meaning of a commodity" (Wolf & McQuitty, 2011, 154) with self-initiated work. Accordingly, DIY has been characterized as a reaction to mass design and patriarchal hierarchies of connoisseurship (Atkinson, 2006, 1; Stevens, 2011, 50). Nevertheless, it seems to be widely agreed that DIY embraces individual creative capabilities as resources for alternative forms of production, consumption and material possession, and engagement with raw and semi-raw materials through practices which are based on informal learning and non-expert work (Dant, 1999, 70; Kuznetsov & Paulos, 2010; Gauntlett, 2011, 50–51; Wolf & McQuitty, 2011, 156).

As a democratic, low-threshold craft ideology, DIY is nothing new to the culture of craft. According to Paul Atkinson (2006), DIY occurred as a creative reaction to a post-war shortage during the 1950s; Fiona Hackney (2006, also Hackney, 2010) interprets that DIY already featured in women's magazines in the 1920s and 1930s in the form of home-based make-do-and-mend and interior decoration. All in all, DIY mentality has long provided a stream of intention, creative experimentation, productive criticism, and repurposing of tools and materials to many individuals in their creative work (e.g., Kuznetsov & Paulos, 2010, 295; Jeffries, 2011, 226). Today, DIY embraces a large scale of hobbyist home-based activities situated within the practical-utilitarian rationale, such as saving money and increasing the value of one's own house, aligned with socially and ethically conscious consumption, and the use second hand and recycled materials that would otherwise have been discarded as junk (Jackson, 2011b, 261). In its extreme, DIY invokes the ideal of a proactive response to social and economic change recognized through the ideas of domestic efficiency, denial of excessive goods, self-maintenance and customization: a form of technological utopia based on "actualization through participation in a narrative of technological utopianism and rehabilitation," imagined partly "as resistance to corporate and capitalist power" (Sivek, 2011, 205).

According to Janis Jeffries (2011), DIY mentality has at least three different aspects within the current culturescape of textile craft making; first, the making of self-conscious *extreme craft* that masquerades as art; second, the recognition of irony, *craftster*, within every DIY craft object; and third, the pursuing of crafty activist activities with a political agenda, *craftivism*. Of these three, extreme craft (a term set originating from the "Extreme Craft" contemporary art exhibition of 2007) is meant to describe "a democratic 'anyone-can-make-and-do' exhibition space in which self-organized groups of artists and makers across the globe could create forums for people to make things for themselves through politicized handmade extreme objects such as punk knitting, origami with an agenda and epic cross-stitch" (Jeffries, 2011, 235; CAC, 2007). In its extreme form, DIY raises questions of the power and privilege of professionalism in art spaces and offers a critique within wider societal issues. Although we might talk about "extreme craft" as an attitude that is a constitutive part of DIY craft, it needs to be acknowledged that DIY craft, whether extreme or not, does not exist outside the logics of capital, but uses the materials sold and bought (or otherwise gained) within the system of modern mass-merchandising (Groeneveld, 2010, 263; also Sivek, 2011; Jakob, 2013; Solomon, 2013).

The way to dispute capitalism is to confront capitalistic imaginary through self-conscious, subversive aesthetics, and the use of playfulness, irony, wit, humor, and sarcasm as a way of prompting countercultural politics, related for example to gender and consumption (Greer, 2008; Chansky, 2010; Winge & Stalp, 2013; Myzelev, 2015). DIY crafts have often been conceptualized as crafts embracing "irony as an expressive part of their attitude" (Stevens, 2011, 56) and using "alternative or subversive visual, textual and symbolic messages" (Winge & Stalp, 2013, 74) as an opposition to traditional, home-based hobby crafts. Humor, or craftster as Jeffries suggested, seems to offer a way to challenge the presumed role of domestic creativity within our culture (see Stevens, 2011, 52), and emphasizes the potential of handcrafted products to address social consciousness, environmental and ecological justice and ethical consumption (Hickey, 2015, 120). In Finland, for example, we have seen hobby craft makers create woolly socks and mittens not only with seemingly anarchistic patterns of skulls and crossbones, but also appropriating of comercial logos from candy wrapping papers and beer bottles, exhibiting irony and humor (and often play too) in the face of the materiality of mass consumption.

However, just much as DIY can be about style, it can also be about the attitude: DIY crafts today, as Dennis Stevens (2011, 50) has argued, demonstrate a form of micro revolt through their 'because we can, dammit' domestic creativity that is inspired by the eclectic celebration and appropriation of lo-fi culture and the reclamation of the public space through craft-related activities (see Dawkins, 2011; Gauntlett, 2011, 53). Taken up under the banner of activism, or craftivism, craft making is also becoming a form of personal protest,

or a "quiet activism" (Nelson, 2010; Hackney, 2013): a soft weapon campaigning for social and political change (Greer, 2011; Koch, 2012; Garber, 2013), or simply demonstrating "an aspect of uniqueness and difference from the norms" (Derry, 2011, 186). Originally, craftivism started from tiny cross-stitch antiwar pieces campaigning against the materialism and inequalities in society in the early 2000s (see Greer, 2011; also Greer, 2008). Since, craftivism has started to attract makers around the world as a way of fighting for change creatively, and it has now been taken up by a vast number of makers dexterious in playing with both mouse and needle as a strategy to examine and challenge various contemporary issues such as fast consumerism, capitalist power regimes, increasing reliance on digital technology, or social inequality (e.g., Greer, 2008; Pentney, 2008; Black & Burisch, 2011, 205; Gauntlett, 2011, 57). On the one hand, activist craft activities may take different forms from public knitting circles to street art performances decorating the urban landscape (e.g., Prigoda & McKenzie, 2007; Hagedorn & Springgay, 2013; Myzelev, 2015; Price, 2015); on the other hand, craftivism may be an intimate outcry undertaken for example in the form of a knitting group working quietly for a variety of charity projects (Greer, 2008; Nelson, 2010; see also Suomen Punainen Risti, 2016). Although craftivism seems to favor individual expression, it could be best understood as a politicized grass-roots effort to create social change through craft making.

In the light of this study, DIY is embraced as an open-source culture which provides endless possibilities of self-expression through practices of crafts for textile hobby craft makers. While DIY covers a wide range of activities carried out for a variety of reasons embracing both neoliberal consumerism and anti-capitalistic purposes and extending to different levels of quality and design input, it tends to embrace an alternative, lo-fi maker ideal. Textile hobby craft practices undertaken during this study are, at least in terms of their material objecthood, "ordinary" and "un-extreme"; however, they are multiple and contingent DIY practices that exhibit personal aesthetics and qualities based on individual resourcefulness.

2 Textile hobby crafts as contemporary culture

Today, millions of makers enjoy textile hobby craft as a form of leisure enjoyment with practices spanning wide across the craft realm. At one end, textile hobby craft activities cover a range of seemingly uninventive step-by-step craft projects portrayed in craft magazines, blogs, Pinterest, and YouTube, and a vast spectrum of different so-called ordinary craft activities. At the other end, hobby craft extends to semi-professional craft projects, radical-activist riot crafts, and critical artwork capable of occupying art space. In this chapter I take a closer look at the shifting culturescape of textile hobby craft today, and try to unveil the discursive scene that provides a background for understanding contemporary textile hobby craft activities. I start by discussing the alignments of textile craft making as the making of the feminine, and then proceed to textile making within the realm of new domesticity, participatory craft making, and wellbeing.

2.1 Textiles and the making of the feminine

This study has a particular interest in hobby craft making in the field of textile-based craft production. It is important to acknowledge that although textile hobby craft today is an increasingly heterogeneous praxis and extends to a vast array of different activities, textile crafts have been conventionally identified as trivialized domestic chores and seen as women's responsibility (Hanson & Pratt, 1995, 142–149; Hardy, 2005). This has further had an effect on the contextualization of the practices within the household as the making of the feminine (Dant, 1999, 70; Burman, 1999; Turney, 2009; Briganti & Mezei, 2012, 125–127, 153; Beaumont, 2013, 13, 29, 61). Overall, it has been argued that the traditional position of textile handcraft within an intersecting network of discourses, including motherhood, female subordination, sexuality, and housewifery, has influenced the understanding of home and family life, albeit home has never been a place simply for rearing and caring (MacDonald, 1988, 47; Hackney, 2006; Turney, 2009, 9; Parker, 2010, 2–3; Kraatari, 2016, 165). However, calling these textile-related domestic activities "crafting" only occurred in the late twentieth century, when crafts such as knitting, sewing, and crochet were no longer associated with quotidian life, but had been reclaimed as recreational, middle-classed leisure activities (Groeneveld, 2010, 264). Since then, there have been many changes in the attitudes of work and leisure, relating to the construction of contemporary femininity though increased independency, mobility, individual consumerism, and throwing off of the chains of traditional housewifery (Turney, 2009, 2; also Schofield-Tomschin, 1999).

Knitting, in particular, has been frequently associated with the nostalgic representation of the feminine; yet, during the past decades knitting has undergone a post-feminist resurrection though claiming a status as a public and social activity (Turney, 2009, 10). Today, women, and sometimes men too, not only knit at home, but also out of the home, and they are also involved in the production of contemporary maker identities out of the "perceived safety of the home" (Minahan & Wolfram Cox, 2011, 42). As Elizabeth Groeneveld (2010, 266) argues, relating revolutionary rhetoric to knitting may be simply a way to boost the popularity of a trendy hobby; however, "the language of revolution and reclamation" has also been a way to install a whole repertoire of meanings which not only relate to the politicization of the space of making, but also to the practice of knitting itself. According to Groeneveld, the politicization of knitting becomes visible when knitting, which is traditionally associated with the private domesticsphere, takes place in public in a way that challenges the clear-cut distinctions between public and private. This may, for example, take the form of "Stitch 'n Bitch" knitting groups based on socializing and exchange of skills (Stroller, 2003, 113–115; Prigoda & McKenzie, 2007; Ruland, 2010; Fields, 2014), or participatory online culture enhanced by new technologies (Orton-Johnson, 2014; also Minahan & Wolfram Cox, 2007; Gauntlett, 2011). Craft activity in public, whether online or offline, can be interpreted as an activity aiming to revolutionize the privacy of the domestic and resisting the traditional placing of women (Minahan & Wolfram Cox, 2007, 14).

Although the gender normativity of textile hobby, along with the connotation of the Veblenian notion of social class, seems to be gradually eroding and craft making nowadays invites people across a range of backgrounds and skills (Myzelev, 2009; Hewitt, 2010; Fisk, 2012), it would be difficult to deny that textile-based hobby crafts still appeal to many middle-aged, middle-classed women (e.g., Wills, 2007, 30; Shin & Ha, 2011; Hanifi, 2005, 126). In Finland, recent discussions have tended to highlight hobby craft making as an activity exceeding (and challenging) the ostensible social and cultural boundaries with a vision of openness with catchphrases such as "käsityö kuuluu kaikille" craft is everyone's business (Käsityö elämässä, 2013; also Nykänen, 2014, 17). Given the deep-rooted imagination of textile hobby craft as a site of femininity, this narrative of openness can be understood as a quest to dispute both disciplinary power, and the normativity of the gender sedimented in the practices of domestic crafting (see e.g. Hanifi, 2005; Kokko, 2009; Bain, 2016). However, women engaged in textile hobby craft making at home are still often obligated to negotiate their activities within the constraints and responsibilities of family life and home duties (Stalp, 2006, 112), which suggests that craft making as fun leisure is not completely liberated from domesticity—the norms are just being re-negotiated (and re-accepted, reproduced, and resisted) within the contemporary time and space.

2.2 Textile hobby crafts and new domesticity

Whas traditionally taken place in homes has recently become celebrated in places that in normative society have served public socialization – pubs, parks, libraries, shops, streets, and cyberspace (Myzelev, 2009; also Minahan & Wolfram Cox, 2007). This has also changed the understanding of the place that has traditionally been regarded as a site of women's production, namely, the home itself. Jack Bratich and Heidi Brusch (2011, 239–240) aim at explaining the reterritorialization of feminine home space with a process they call "reclaiming": Bratich and Brush make a distinction between the return to the old and the reclamation of the old, since, according to them, reclaiming is about changing the old, negatively-charged associations of domesticity as female subordination, devalued labor, and social role restrictions with new affirmative notions. For Bratich and Brush, "reclaiming" means reconstituting and refurnishing the past rather than just building on the heritage of the past. Within this process, the relation to space changes, partly due to the act of reconstitution, partly due to the new meanings it evokes:

> This is an affirmation of something that is no longer what we thought it was. We could call it "returning to the home," but that space is no longer the same. Within contemporary fabriculture, practitioners are not forced to go, nor is it always framed as empowerment due to postfeminist "choice." A sentiment like "you can't go home again" evokes the process here: The return is of something that is not the same and may not have been the same even "back then." To put it another way, this is not "returning to the home" but more like "detourning the home" (p. 239).

Other authors have conceptualized the changes within the home by alluding to the "new domesticity," which refers to a trendy way of appropriating of traditional housework and domestic feminine practices, with the emphasis on the 1940s and 1950s styles and home practices (Chansky, 2010; Dawkins, 2011; Hellstrom, 2013; Hunt & Phillipov, 2014; Dirix, 2014). In this vein, Rosanna Hunt and Michelle Phillipov (2014) have written about the re-emerging femininities understood as both a resistance to neoliberal consumerism, and a reflection of the "progressive politics of consumption expressed through images and aesthetics that are culturally coded as conservative." For Hunt and Phillipov, the retrofeminists new domesticity that is being "reimagined as simultaneously nostalgic and politically progressive choices for women" articulates the politics of anti-consumerism, environmentalism, and sustainable consumption through the mobilization of the practices of the grandparent generation. The retrun to practices associated with traditional domesticity and femininities has been conceptualized with an image of grandmother, and references to "nanna style" (Hunt & Phillipov, 2014), or "the inner nana" (Minahan & Wolfram Cox, 2011).

Hunt and Phillipov (2014) consider nanna to be a "countercultural icon" exemplifying the resignification of the home-based practices such as craft making, cookery, baking, repairing, and gardening, which have been traditionally coded as old-fashioned, outdated, conservative, or uncool. In line with Bratich and Brush's (2011) ideas of "detourning to home," Hunt and Phillipov's (2014) examinations show that nanna activities do not indicate a return to a patriarchal, pre-feminist conception of home, but cherish the home as a space for deliberation where "the past can be reinterpreted in the context of contemporary needs and politics." On a broader scale, we might also talk about the emergence of "historically reflexive and community minded new amateurs," who according to Hackney (2013, 187), perceive craft as a powerful capacity, are well informed about the on- and offline resources, and engage in alternative craft economies. These emerging maker identities have left the door open for the reconsideration of hobby crafts "as a fun, urban, slightly ironic, but sexy, hobby" (Groeneveld, 2010, 261) that is capable of appealing to the young hipster generation exploring alternative interpretations of consumerism, domesticity, and traditional gender norms, and with the power to rebel "against the globalization of labor exploittation and consumer indifference" (Jeffries, 2011, 223–224; also Crawford, 2009, 8; Mackinney-Valentin, 2013; Kelly, 2014; Hunt & Phillipov, 2014; Dirix, 2014).

In Finland, the arts of nanna have come into being through the renewed interest in domestic, granny-like craft practices mixed with trendy, urban-vibe hype. The resulting *grannyism* (*mummoilu* in Finnish, derived from *mummo*, granny), cherishes enthusiasm for traditional cultural activities as fashionable lifestyle choices that allow individuals to build and enhance identities though an engagement with "old-fashioned" domesticity (e.g., Koskelainen & Saure, 2014; Sivonen, 2015). In this vein, grannyism is entwined with simplicity, dexterity, sustainability, and downshifting (Sivonen, 2015), the same values demonstrated in the broader nanna-phenomenon with the re-emergence of domesticated crafts, homely production, and contemporary third-wave feminism.

Today, young adults interested in mummoilu undertake seemingly rural and traditional domestic activities, like mending and repairing, woolly-sock knitting, berry picking, and enjoying domesticity through "homing" (Pöllänen, 2013a; also Koskelainen & Saure, 2014; Sivonen, 2015). However, the practices of the grandparent generation are not always adopted straightforwardly, but "resignified and reinterpreted in the context of contemporary needs and politics" (Hunt & Phillipov, 2014), for example when they are transformed and applied to contemporary practices, methods and materials (see Koskelainen & Saure, 2014), and shared within the social media. Enhanced by new tools and technologies, such as blogs and social media, the new domesticity has become widely dissem nated. This, according to Maria Hellstrom (2013, 52), blurs even more

the boundaries between the "old" domesticity as something private, and the "new" domesticity as domestication set out in the public realm.

Sometimes new domesticity home activities are considered to be "an exploration of feminine power and pride" that provide a channel to many difficult emotions with powerfully productive activity (Chansky, 2010, 682), while at other times the nanna-style activities appear as a culture of restraint embracing conscious home economy, and frugal and self-sufficient ethical consumption as the means to a good life in opposition to a high-speed, work-dominated, materiallistic lifestyle (Soper, 2007, 115, also Soper, 2008; Dirix, 2014). This counterconsumptional ethos sustains a view of nanna activities as the affirmation and redevelopment of the practices of the grandparent generation, and enables the idea of intergenerational affiliation, cohesion, and the pleasures of familial warmth between the makers of the different generations (Groeneveld, 2010, 273; Morrison & Marr, 2013; Dirix, 2014). Still, even if craft making would be understood as a way to feel more engaged with the older generations, this does not mean that the meanings of the practice would become shared. Indeed, as Joanne Turney (2009, 11) has noticed, the women who have lived through the period of oppressed feminine domestication, may find it difficult to reconcile the meanings of the younger generation to whom hobby crafts may be understood as a pleasurable choice, and a way to encompass public or social activity distanced from the necessities of domestic chores. Thus, the renewal of old household practices represented through new domesticity could be best understood as resignification (Bratich & Brush, 2011; Hunt & Phillipov, 2014), which allows contemporary nanna makers to carve a space of pleasure for themselves. Indeed, the larger strengths of contemporary hobby craft today, as Hackney (2013, 187) argues, seem to build on values that have been cherished within the discussions of new domesticity, namely, historical reflexivity, and an interest in community building and sharing.

2.3 Crafts expressing the personal

Narratives of craft culture commonly discuss craft making as a form of self-expression: a growing body of research literature explores the practice and occupational applications of craft within different specific and local settings (e.g., Gandolfo & Grace, 2010; Dawkins, 2011; Kokko & Dillon, 2011; Shin & Ha, 2011; Dirix, 2014;). Among other things, these studies have highlighted the meaning and value of craft making as a form of self-identification, social inclusion, and a critique of institutional and sociopolitical structures. For example, Jill Riley (2008, 71) represented one of several craft researchers who have emphasized the importance of craft making as an expression, highlighting how engaging in creative making contributes to a person's sense of self, and "of being and becoming who we are." At the core of this thinking is the belief that

the self is constantly being reformed and regenerated in dialogue with the world. This dialogic conception of the world insists on the idea of liquid modernity, namely, the awareness of the ever-becoming self through feelings of uncertainty and privatization of ambivalence (Bauman, 2001; 2011). This nomadic search for the self builds on the idea of continuous individual transformation, enabling the reading of conflicts, tensions, and contradictions in self-representation. In this light, craft making can be understood as a means of material expression that reflects on the values, assumptions, and social positions of the given moment, while the meanings of craft making remain temporal, situational, and progressive. Accordingly, "to craft" becomes a concern for individual vision and material expression, which correspond to the maker's self-enrichment and visual practices of self-realization.

In recent years, textile hobby crafts have been often discussed in a reflection of the need to express one's inner thoughts, beliefs, and aesthetic ideas. Generally, the emphasis has shifted beyond the functional needs of the household to embrace personal exploration, at least in terms of craft projects undertaken as pastime projects outside the necessities of household domesticity. Nevertheless, there is no denial that many craft projects serve functional and expressive purposes. For instance, a recent sociological study by Marybeth Stalp (2015) revealed that feminine leisure activities, such as quilting and knitting, are undertaken because women themselves consider the activities expressive and private fun, both engaging and entertaining. Despite the emphasis on self-expression and leisure fun, these projects often require the production of a new meaning in dialogue with functionality (see also Risatti, 2009). However, it has been claimed that a great number of contemporary craft makers embrace their craft projects "with a sense of strength, not servitude" (Chansky, 2010, 681), as a form of personal expression instead of repetitive and specialized tasks (Bratich & Brush, 2011, 235).

The craftivist movement in particular (e.g., Greer, 2008; 2011; Groeneveld, 2010; Koch, 2012) seems to have harnessed craft making in the service of self-expression. In craftivism, craft activities are usually undertaken to protest the materialism and inequalities in society, with aims to recognize the power of creativity as a catalyst of change and a way to "actively recognize and remember [one's] place in the world" (Greer, 2011, 180). Today, this opportunity to actualize individual strength and personal choice through textile craft making seems to attract to a vast number of makers as a way to fight for change creatively. Thanks to the rise of online craft forums on the Internet, sharing one's personal microrevolts with likeminded people has become effective and effortless (Minahan & Wolfram Cox, 2007; Gauntlett, 2011). This has further created a space for the politicization of the handmade and launched a range of projects "knitting for good" (Greer, 2008). For example, in Finland, we have witnessed several politically-savvy collective craft projects during the past few

years, most notably a project campaigning for good in the form of a knitting challenge, which encouraged craft makers to knit woolly socks for asylum seekers in order to express humanity, sympathy, and hospitality. There has also been a widespread social craft movement to express graciousness and warmth with the making of crocheted octopuses for premature babies and their families. This movement has not been purely a function of the intention to protest but rather an act of asserting the worth of craft making as a way to campaign for good. Crocheted octopuses seek to explore opportunities for the production of new meaning generated through personal expression and the materiality of making striving for the greater good.

Overall, it seems that craft making has become known in the current debates as a means of expressing oneself, since it lets ordinary people illustrate their own aesthetic taste and creates an avenue for self-contemplation. Moreover, craft making has been recognized as "a way of creating space and time for the self" (Parkins, 2004, 433). In such view, craft projects are portrayed as personal projects that require large amount of attention, determination, and reflection on one's own maker identity. However, it needs to be highlighted that no culturally approved identities as craft makers exist, and identities which are communicated subtly through "an urgent selfexpression, a claiming of something integral, joyful and somewhat subversive", are ambiguous and contradictory, and their understandings of themselves are complex (Gandolfo & Grace, 2010).

2.4 Doing crafts together

Today, collective craft efforts provide the ground for many forms of collaboration. In recent research literature, making crafts together has been habitually portrayed as a way to exchange mutual respect, nurture interaction between makers, and build collaborative skills in a community (e.g., Schofield-Tomschin & Littrell, 2001; Maidment & Macfarlane, 2009; Gandolfo & Grace, 2010). Many studies have also underlined the significance of social connecting through hands-on engagement, and the value of sewing circles, craft groups, and other types of social craft communities. On a broad scale, the recent research literature shows that informal social skill-sharing within the realm of amateur production nurtures the wellbeing of the makers participating in collaborative activities (Maidment & Macfarlane, 2011a; 2011b; Gandolfo & Grace, 2010; Ruland, 2010; Morrison & Marr, 2013). Social or community-based craft making has also been granted to provide an avenue for experiencing individual and collective identities (Scholfield-Tomschin & Littrell, 2001; Johnson & Wilson, 2005; Riley, 2008) and identified as a means to nurture social connectedness through friendship and mutual aid circulated within hobby craft groups (Maidment & Macfarlane, 2009).

The view of people developing memberships in craft groups through participation in shared activities leans on ideas about community development within communities of practices, where understandings of engagement and interest are shared among the people within a particular domain of interest (see Lave & Wenger, 1991). According to Stacey Kuznetsov and Eric Paulos (2010, 296), crafting communities are often communities of low threshold showcasing "meta information" about the community participants: communities invite sensitivity to share personal experiences and knowledge among fellow members, offering possibilities to contribute collaborative and interdisciplinary skill building by circulating ideas in and across communities, and increasing their participation through participation in informal group activities (Kuznetsov & Paulos, 2010, 301; also Stevens, 2011, 46–47). This in turn, allows one to observe crafting communities as ideal spaces for sharing knowledge, skills, resources, processes, sense of purpose and support as an outcome of network ties (Maidment & Macfarlane, 2011a; Millar, 2013).

Considering craft making as a connective activity recognizes the fundamentally social, culturally situated, and relational character of craft. Accordingly, Amanda Ravetz, Alice Kettle and Helen Felcey (2013) talk about collaboration through craft as a dialogic, reciprocal process integrating the maker's conception and execution of idea, form, and matter with ongoing interaction with others. They suggest that collaboration is "expansive in its vision . . . made real with the action repeatedly constituted and reconstituted" (Ravetz, Kettle & Felcey, 2013, 10). This view challenges individual authorship and the ideas of craft making as the artisanship of the lone genius craftsman (cf. Sennett, 2008, 74–80). Instead, craft making becomes imagined as a relational, dynamic creative praxis based on collaborative capabilities expanding our personal engagement with the material.

Correspondingly, Otto von Busch (2013) has suggested that DIY culture is, in fact, inscribed in a social framework through the mobilization of community capabilities. By this he means that besides enhancing internal capabilities among makers, craft making actualizes shared community forms and therefore produces a new Do-It-Together "bodyhood of skills" collectively based on the initiated action (von Busch, 2013). However, von Busch (2013, 145) argues that the do-ittogetherness which occurs in collaborative craft activity is more producing "molecular and interconnected discourse and practice" and mobilizing and sharing interconnected skills, tools, patterns, and methods to enhance internal as well as external capabilities, than about making collective actions concurrently in harmony. This view emphasizes the importance of the shared repertoires of skills mediated in social interaction, and connective capacities of craft.

All in all, it has been suggested that through involvement in group-based craft activities practitioners discover many positive social benefits: craftspeople might enjoy spending time with likeminded people, share ideas, and gain mutual support (Maidment & Macfarlane, 2009). Beyond these everyday social benefits,

it has been claimed that craft activities are capable of providing a sense of continuity and support during life transitions and changes in the conditions of everyday life (Maidment & Macfarlane, 2009; Kenning, 2015). Joint craft activities are also believed to afford makers opportunities for reciprocal interaction, peerto-peer support, and spiritual commitment, ultimately contributing to one's perceptions of health, well-being and quality of life, and experiences of belonging (Schofield-Tomschin & Littrell, 2001; Riley, 2008; Kenning, 2015; Stannard & Sanders, 2015). Craft traditions mediated in social interaction may also connect makers with each other, and help to build social bridges between the makers. Accordingly, a study by Enza Gandolfo and Marty Grace (2010) reported that hobby craft making not only helped to treasure memories of intergenerational family connections, but also maintain and develop relations with various family members. There is also a growing consensus that craft making is capable of forging intergenerational connections with other makers within the community of practice (Morrison & Marr, 2013; also Groeneveld, 2010, 274).

Textile handcraft communities that are most often based on voluntary participation have long provided opportunities for craft makers to identify their place in the world individually and collectively (Schofield-Tomschin & Littrell, 2001; Johnson & Wilson, 2005; also Stalp, 2006). Today, as Kuznetsov and Paulos (2010) have noticed, many hobby craft practitioners belong and contribute to several, and often co-existent, communities of practices. Locally, people might gather together in public or semi-public places such as cafés, pubs, and leisure centers to practice and discuss craft, engaging in collective learning processes in a shared domain (Lave & Wenger, 1991). Simultaneously, they might take part in the actions within online communities afforded by technological innovations, and share and showcase their craft projects with other community members virtually (e.g., Minahan & Wolfram Cox, 2007; Gauntlett, 2011; also Vartiainen, 2010).

In fact, accessibility of information and resources seems to stimulate interrelations across community domains (Kuznetsov & Paulos, 2010, 301). In this vein, Arden Hagedorn and Stephanie Springgay's (2013) research highlights that many craft makers merge traditional crafting skills with technological strategies, engaging in various coexistent and sometimes overlapping communities of practices online and offline. The sense of community, though, is developed through spontaneous sharing and accessible informal support: hobby craft communities offer a supportive network and a place where those committed to craft can actively pursue their creative efforts, building lasting group connections through a shared learning experience (Hagedorn & Springgay, 2013, 26).

2.5 Being (well) with textile hobby crafts

What seems to be characteristic of hobby craft activities, whether those that are individually practiced or those undertaken as part of social activities, is that the activities are often reflected in the discussions how crafts benefit the well-being of the makers. Similarly, scholars have highlighted that craft making contributes to the well-being of the maker in a number of ways: craft making has been celebrated as a source of pleasure and creative self-expression (Schofield-Tomschin, 1999; Johnson & Wilson, 2005; Jeffries, 2011; Collier, 2011), and regarded as therapeutic material exploration providing a means of distraction from emotional stress and depression through feelings of calmness, relaxation, social connectedness, and a sense of empowerment (e.g., Reynolds, 2000; Maidment & Macfarlane, 2009; Corkhill, Hemmings, Maddock & Riley, 2014; Pöllänen, 2015a).

The term "well-being" has been habitually used to describe a state of being characterized by health, happiness, and prosperity: positive outcomes that emerge in terms of physical, mental, and social meaningfulness found in many sectors of society. Although well-being is frequently discussed from the perspective of public health building on disease prevention and institutional health promotion, in this study I use the notion of well-being in relation to mental health as a condition of being contented, balanced, and happy. A healthy physical condition is, of course, fundamental; however, this study places greater emphasis on well-being as a condition of existence "in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community" (World Health Organiztion, 2014). In this view, well-being related to hobby crafts can be defined as a sense of contentment and pleasure arising from the purposeful and self-determined act of making, and well-being is intimately connected with a sense of being (Riley, 2008).

Well-being refers to purposeful, self-initiated craft making oriented toward leisure. In a reflection of Stebbins's (2013) ideas, human beings intrinsically strive for freedom and leisure and intentionally search for ease, peace, and repose. Accordingly, Stebbins introduced the term *homo otiosus*, with which he characterized the nature of a human being. He argued that finding more free time is a fundamental, "albeit, initial step in improving the quality of life", and that people are able to express their own selfhood through "leisuring" (Stebbins, 2013, p. 20). In this sense, as Stebbins also argued, *leisuring* is an active state of mind and includes a vast array of pleasurable actions pursued in free time, in order to find enjoyment and well-being.

There are many ways to enjoy crafts, yet especially for a skilled maker, the flow of the process itself seems to be cherished over materiality of products. Critical to an understanding of the experienced well-being of craft making is Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) interrogation of the notion of flow as a kind

of immersion in the activity, when the maker experiences meaningfulness in the course of an activity. The soft click of knitting needles, the touch of the material in one's hands, and the repetitive movement of the body are all part of the meditative flow so familiar for many hobby craft makers. Hand knitting, in particular, is often described in resonance with the broader aims of mindfulness and well-being gained through bodily enactment: it has been argued that knitting offers a moment of comfort and enjoyment during difficult times by and giving a sense of purpose to both the mind and the body (e.g., Fisk, 2012; Riley, Corkhill & Morris, 2013; Corkhill et. al. 2014). In many respects, the experience of groundedness to the world shares affinities with the celebration of knitting as a soothing spiritual practice, which helps to build a connection with the inner self (Parkins, 2004; Riley, 2008).

Whether approached from the view of religious spirituality (Fisk, 2012), or meditative zen-like mindful activity (Murphy, 2002), knitting seems to link with metaphysical self-discovery and a desire to rediscover meaningfulness in life. In this vein, the rhythmic and sensory flow of making is said to coalesce with descriptions of knitting as a meditative and selftherapeutizing activity, with statements promoting the use of needlecraft as a therapy medium or a self-initiated quietist retreat from the world (e.g., Reynolds, 2000; Parkins, 2004).

Not only knitting has a positive impact on experienced well-being: Jill Riley (2008), and more recently, Emily Burt and Jacqueline Atkinson (2011) and Ann Collier (2011) have privileged the idea of craft making enhancing the sense of the self through various different media; knitting, sewing, crocheting, weaving, spinning, embroidery, cross stitch, dying, and quilting being the most widely applied ways to practice crafts (Collier, 2011, 107). A study by Burt and Atkinson (2011) explained that, amongst other things, quilting enhanced feelings of satisfaction and self-fulfillment, boosted the confidence and sense of mastery, and helped to maintain cognitive abilities. Riley (2008) and Collier (2011), amongst others, have reported that textile handcraft contributes to experiences of self-maintenance and creative expression, enhancing one's sense of the self, along with social fulfillment and sense of collectivity. Many other studies have also underpinned the significance of craft making for facilitating personal growth, and providing a sense of continuity and connectedness for the lives of the makers (Schofield-Tomschlin & Littrell, 2001; Johnson & Wilson, 2005; Gandolfo & Grace, 2010; Hagedorn & Springgay, 2013; Pöllänen, 2015b).

Many studies in the field of craft highlight material characteristics of the handcrafted products. For example, a study by Joyce Starr Johnson and Laurel Wilson (2005) found that, amongst other benefits, craft making provided tangible benefits first, during the process of making through the commitment to the learning of skills and the planning and creation of textile handcrafts, and later, during the intended use of the product through the materiality of the products. In fact, handcrafted objects, in particular, seem to have value and

significance as objects conveying and narrating memories and life histories of their owners and concretizing the perceptions of the place (Hoskins, 1998; Luutonen, 2008; Pöllänen, 2013b). Accordingly, studies have suggested that craft makers do not only produce objects for themselves, but that handcrafts are also given – and received – as gifts, and therefore have significance as valuable and meaningful objects for both maker and receiver (Mason, 2005; Turney, 2012; Pöllänen, 2013b). According to Sinikka Pöllänen (2013b), crafts have meaning and value both as material objects in the homes of their makers, "as visible marks of work done that could be passed on to successive generation," and as meaningful activity nurturing the development of physical and cognitive skills and personal identities, and learning to cope with significant losses, illness, or emotional and physical stress. Also, "holistic intentionality of making" (Pöllänen, 2013b) has been associated with the sense of success gained from learning a new technique from readymade instructions, or a successfully conducted self-expressive design process providing experiences of mastery of the praxis (also Schofield-Tomschin & Littrell, 2001).

3 Research design

Needle clicked against needle, shifting loops.
Spinning yarn, knitting on, the bonny ball turned
Tikku toistaan kilkutteli, silmukoita siirteli,
Lanka juoksi, silmää loi, kerä kimmoinen kiepahti

This chapter provides a view of research methodology, and to turns, spins, and twists of data gathering, analyses, and the writing of the research narrative. The chapter starts with a summary of research tasks and questions, which all deal with issues of reflexivity and perceived meaningfulness in one way of another. These are followed by sections that show that there is a strong focus on personal subjectivity, and a great deal of overlap between research methodologies. The onto-epistemological assumptions of the study fall within social constructionism; the methods and data all fit within a qualitative framework, and include interviews, participant observation, and arts-based autoethnography. Part of the unique contribution of the overall study lies in the development of a visual-reflexive self-study methodology working on the meanings of practice captured and reviewed through autoethnographic cinema. This, along with other examinations of the meanings of textile hobby crafts, is reported in the final part of the chapter.

3.1 Research tasks and questions

This dissertation comprises three sub-studies (Studies I–III) reported in three different research articles. Each sub-study provides a different angle to the meanings of textile hobby craft. The sub-studies draw from the general research task. The detailed meanings of textile crafts for hobby practitioners in current times are discussed, but the task is approached through different research interests, questions, and research methods. As is so often the case in qualitative research, the sub-studies have emerged from each other, each study proceeding from the ground reframed by the previous ones. Together, these three studies add to an understanding of the meaning and value of textile-based hobby craft making in the contemporary world. Table 1 summarizes the research design, tasks, and research questions in Studies I–III. Study I focused on the meanings that emerge from subjective craft experiences and had one specified research task and question. Study II specified two research questions, which aimed to explore the intersubjective meanings and resources required to generate a collective sense in a hobby craft community. Study III distinguished between two research tasks and questions, an interest in the meanings of the young maker

generation and the development of new visual-reflexive research methods for studying such meanings.

Table 1. Summary of research design in Studies I, II, and III.

Sub-Study	Research interests	Specified research tasks	Research questions
Study I	Meanings emerging from subjective lived experiences	Discover and categorize the common content for subjective meanings attached to textile hobby crafts	*(1) What can be identified as the common kinds of meanings that crafts have?*
Study II	Meanings emerging through collective craft processes	Explore the generation of intersubjective meanings and a collective sense in a hobby craft community	*(2) How is a collective sense nurtured, lived through and interpreted by craft practitioners in a hobbyist community of practice?* *(3) What kinds of resources are required for the generation of a collective sense?*
Study III	Meanings emerging from subjective lived experiences	Investigate the meanings of textile hobby crafts for the young maker generation	*(4) What constitutes the meanings of textile hobby crafts for a young maker, and what do these constituents reveal about discursive debates within the contemporary craft culture?*
	Representation of the meanings	Elaborate on the use of visual-reflexive research methods in capturing and reviewing one's own maker identities and the meanings of hobby practices	*(5) What is the value of autoethnographic cinema as a method of self-reflection, and what does it provide for the study of practice?*

At the time when I started this study, I was curious about how other people experienced craft products as material objects and made sense of their processes of making. Framed accordingly, Study I focused on subjective experiential meanings as argued by the makers themselves (Table 1). Study I was particularly interested in the meanings emerging from "the ways of using material, of sharing it, of talking about it, of naming it and of making it" (Dant, 1999, 11) as a common ground for sharing values, activities, and lifestyles with others. Thus, the study had an interest in, first, the materiality of craft products as representatives of culturally embedded knowledge, and second, the processes of making crafts as recreational activity. The overall aim of Study I was to discover and identify different kinds of commonly argued meanings experienced by hobby craft people coming from different backgrounds, and classify the

identified meanings into representative meaning categories that could reveal a knowledge of the meanings of craft that go beyond cultural boundaries.

The interrogation of the intersubjective meanings of hobby craft making nurtured my interest in collective craft practices in Study II (Table 1). Focusing on the generation of collective sense among a group of textile hobby craft makers, Study II examined the meanings emerging from shared craft process. Study II had a particular interest in the formation, reproduction and negotiation of collective meanings within an informal peer-learning-based hobby community. The aim of Study II was to produce knowledge on how collective meanings were constructed, nourished and lived through by community members, and on the other hand, how collective meanings were disciplined and resourced in the given community of practice. The first research question (see Table 1) was connected to the second one, since the quest for the collective sense entailed a need to look into the resources for the activities. For this reason, the emphasis in Study II was in the case-sensitive descriptions of the lived situations that occurred in the very community of practice. The descriptions merged reflective accounts of the researcher participating in the group, and nine other hobby craft makers, who were interviewed after the group meetings.

Finally, adding to the search of the experiential meanings of hobbyist craft making, Study III provided a perspective on the representation and performativity of the meanings of making with the assistance of cinematic technology (Table 1). Study III built on my own experiences of being a hobby craft maker through an arts-based autoethnographic short film production. Through that, the aim was to explore the meanings of hobby crafts from the perspective of a young maker in order to understand what constitutes meaning for the young maker generation, and reflect on the addressed concerns within the current discursive debates underlying the realm of hobby craft. From a methodological perspective, Study III focused on promoting and developing visual-reflexive research methods when searching for the meanings of embodied practices. This was done through the elaboration on the worth and value of autoethnographic cinema as a method for reflecting and documenting practice.

3.2 Social constructionist perspective on meaning-making

In the overall study, the theory of knowledge leans on social constructionism, which is based on a belief that people inhabit the world with other beings, constructing understandings of the world and what occurs on the grounds of social interactions (Hacking, 1999; Burr, 2015; also Scott, 2011, 177–179). Drawing from symbolic interactionism (Mead, 1950; Blumer, 1986), phenomenology (Schutz, 1970), and most notably from Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann's *The Social Construction of Reality* (1985, first published in 1966), recognized as a classic of sociology of knowledge, social constructionism

emphasizes that the understanding of reality is constructed through social processes, namely that reality is itself being created and rationalized through interaction with the social world (Liebrucks, 2001; Fairhurst & Grant, 2010; Burr, 2015). Accordingly, social constructionism focuses on the ways in with people construct, cultivate and habitualize realities through social processes, and engage in the construction of perceived social phenomena as specified by prevailing historical and cultural circumstances. Such a view does not deny the existence of the material reality behind social phenomena – some scholars have even interpreted social constructionism in the light of a subtle realism that recognizes the existence of phenomena independent of our subjective claims (Hammersley, 1992; Searle, 1995; also Andrews, 2012) – but insists that there cannot be direct access to such reality since our knowledge of reality is socially conditioned. Social constructionism tends to take a relativist view of reality by stating that the nature of reality and beliefs about its knowability are negotiated and reinterpreted, and that social structures and cultural meanings are constructed and circulated through the concatenation of social interaction, and inextricably intertwined with subjective values, symbols, and perspectives (Burr, 1998; Scott, 2011). Thus, meaning-making is understood to take place in a dialectic relationship to lived reality as people construct the world through interactions between and among social agents while being simultaneously affected and transformed by these same worlds (Berger & Luckmann, 1985, 204; Hacking, 1999; Fairhurst & Grant, 2010).

In terms of the present study, social constructionism is prior to relational epistemology. Social constructionism renders crafts as sociocultural entities whose meanings are not fixed or prescriptive, but open to endless negotiation, reinterpretation and recontextualization. These meanings evolve, and are being repeatedly redefined in social circumstances. When applied to the study of craft making, this suggests that as people participate in craft making they make connections on the material level to create something new. They also make connections with others practitioners in social processes, eventually connecting with the surrounding world through situational cultural practices that shape the meaning of these practices (see Gauntlett, 2011). Accordingly, David Gauntlett (2011, 2, 25, 63; see also Vartiainen, 2010) has shown that material connections involve a social dimension which brings makers together, and further, with the tools and technologies of online and offline environments, increase the sense of sharing within the maker communities through the materiality of making. Moreover, Gauntlett has suggested that craft making connects human beings with broader social communities and value systems through hands-on engagement, and offers a frame for creativity "which helps people to learn and bond together" (Gauntlett, 2011, 67). Perceiving craft making as cultural socialization provides a ground for the present study to examine the meanings attached to textile hobby crafts. In this study, I have approached meaning-

making as interpersonal and collective processes that base their relevance on individuals and their socially constructed actions. This is to say that the interpretative processes that constitute the social structures are seen as irreducible to individual action, although the frameworks that inform the construction of social reality are being negotiated in the hands and minds of individuals.

With the overall aim to explain and understand the meanings of textile hobby crafts today, the dissertation has been inspired by the philosophy of phenomenological research, which requires the researcher to become involved in the participants' lived experiences, and is accompanied by a "phenomenological attitude" (Wertz, 2005; Finlay, 2014) which emphasizes an empathic "attitude of wonder" (Wertz, 2005, 172) as a principle of acquiring knowledge of practice. Throughout the dissertation process, I have paid close attention to images, ideas, and emotions attached to the aspects of experience (see Holstein & Gubrium, 1998, 139), with an aim to acknowledge "the meaning of the situation purely as it is given in the participant's experience" (Wertz, 2005, 172).

It is important to note that although meaning is often connected with conscious linguistic expression, the corporeality of lived moments is part of phenomenological understanding. Along with consciousness, the body associates emotions with particular types of experiences through habitualization. According to Lanei Rodemeyer (2008), consciousness and the body are both part of phenomenological understanding; only when we need to bring this embodied consciousness to others, does language come into play. Consequently, a phenomenological examination of embodied experience aims to bring meanings into language and description by conceptualizing them. Although linguistic description always informs and influences the body, just as body can influence language, all meanings do not come straight to us or translate into language. Nevertheless, even embodied experiences have been mediated for us by discourse (Rodemeyer, 2008, 207–208). Accordingly, as this study has been driven by an interest to explain lived experience through immediate involvement in everyday concerns, unnamed, embodied experiences are of great value in this examination: throughout the research process I have lived in the culture under study and through the course of actions become more and more absorbed in it through the reconstruction of the sensibility of experiences (see Groenewald, 2004; Smith, 2004; Kleiman, 2004; Cerbone, 2014).

3.3 Knitting it together: Methods and data

The empirical investigation is based on complex real-life cases dealing with multiple and complementary data sources (Yin, 2009), which aim to depict an understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny through a rich description of the case and themes uncovered (Creswell, 2013, 99). Methodologically, the overall study combines two different explanatory approaches; one that develops

an understanding of the experiences through an accustomed, interview-based qualitative research methodology and participant observation (Studies I and II), and another that is grounded in self-reflective articulation of experiences (Studies II and III). In detail, Study I was committed to a descriptive, interview-based qualitative case study approach, and it used qualitative content analysis (e.g., Mayring, 2000; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Schreier, 2014) to interpret and describe the subjective meanings of craftspeople. Study II leaned on similar qualitative interview methods but combined them with an autoethnographic self-study methodology in order to add to the understanding of the collective meanings of textile hobby crafts. Study III drew from the interplay of the introspective, personally engaged self with cultural descriptions through an autoethnographic research approach (see Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Ellis, 2004). Table 2 summarizes the research methodologies and data gathering processes in Studies I–III.

Table 2. Summary of research methodologies and data gathering processes in Studies I, II, and III.

Sub-Study	**Methods of data collection**	**Study participants**	**Data specification**	**Data analysis**
Study I	Unstructured interviews Participant observation	6 craftspeople coming from different cultural backgrounds Hobby craft makers participating in two recreational craft events	Unstructured interviews Written and visual field notes	Qualitative content analysis
Study II	Focused interviews Participant observation Autoethno-graphic self-study-practice	16 hobbyist craft makers participating in a hobby craft course of which 9 were interviewed	Focused interviews Field notes Descriptive-reflective research narrative	Qualitative content analysis Analysis through narrative writing
Study III	Autoethno-graphic self-study-practice	Craft maker-researcher	Autoethnographic craft narrative Process diary Short film script Autoethnographic cinema	Analysis through narrative writing

3.3.1 Interviews with craftspeople

Interviewing is a fundamental research method to gain knowledge of social phenomena and lived experiences. The epistemological background of the interview- based methodology is founded on a belief that individuals who actively create and construct their views of the social world are able to communicate their perspectives verbally (Lewis & McNaughton Nicholls, 2013); accordingly, interviews draw from an attempt to make sense of the phenomena in terms of the meanings that people have within a certain culture through linguistic expression (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Myers & Newman, 2007). In the context of qualitative research, interviews are widely used as tools "to explore people's understandings of their lives and aspects of their experiences" (Edwards & Holland, 2013, 11), or to record and analyze informants' subjective perspectives, and meanings and motives for action (Hopf, 2004, 203). In general, interviews are amongst the most fundamental approaches to gain knowledge of the motives, ideas, and beliefs behind people's behavior, and learning about the experiences of others (Jennings 2005; DiCicco-Bloom, & Crabtree, 2006; Myers & Newman, 2007; Taylor, Bogdan & DeVault, 2015).

In the course of this study, I conducted both informal, unstructured interviews (Study I) and focused interviews (Study II) among craftspeople. With unstructured (or, unstandardized, Berg 2009, 106–107) interviews the aim was to elicit the meanings of crafts through free-flowing interaction with craftspeople, with questions emerging spontaneously during the interviews (DiCicco-Bloom, & Crabtree, 2006, 315). In Study I, interviews were conducted among women coming from six different countries (Finland, England, Uruguay, Peru, Tanzania, and Slovakia). Access to interviewees was achieved through hobby craft courses in a local crafts center, networks related to craft activity, and by word of mouth concerning the interests of the study within different social groups. The interviews in Study I were conducted either in semi-public places, or in the homes of the study participants'. The interviews lasted 1 to 3 hours.

In each interview session, I posed at first some systematically formulated questions regarding the study participants backgrounds, but the interviews readily turned out as conversation-like discussions about (1) the craft culture of the study participants' country of origin, (2) family traditions and craft memories, and (3) cultural values and social, economic, or political influences in craft traditions in the interviewees' home countries. The same questions were not asked of each interviewee (see Latham & Finnegan, 1993, 42); only general topics were shared among the interview sessions. The free-flowing nature of the interviews allowed the exchange of information with craftspeople in the manner of equal peers. It also enabled study informants to feel explicitly in control of the interview situation and to guide me to their world in their own ways. In most sessions, the interviewees also showed me photographs, craft products brought from their home countries or pictures of these products, or other kinds of

personal craft belongings with which they illustrated their dynamic relation to craft making. This allowed their narration to merge with material experience, and eventually, permitted me to witness how the study participants made sense of the meanings of craft through the materiality of the products. I took altogether 285 photographs of the material that was shown in the sessions; the photographs were mainly used as visual field notes, but they also provided a reminder of the embodied consciousness of the interview sessions (see Photo 1).

Photo 1. Hobby craft maker describing her relationship to her self made artistic work at her home. Photos serve as visual field notes. This photo is taken from an interview session in Study I. Courtesy of the photo: Anna Kouhia.

In Study II, nine interviewees were recruited from a recreational craft course held at a local adult education institute in southern Finland. In the field of craft, an educational institute provides non-formal adult education (i.e., liberal adult education) usually in the form of substance-oriented craft courses. However, the course chosen as the setting for the data collection had an interest in sharing, community-building, and including minority groups, and therefore was reminiscent of informal hobbyist communities that build on self-motivated participation and peer learning.

In this study, interviewees were hobby craft makers sharing an experience of participating in a hobbyist community of practice by attending a craft course. The interviews in Study II were "focused interviews," in nature, as they involved the implementation of the pre-determined subjects of conversation: I was interested in hobby craft makers' participation in the craft course, and the aim was to "collect reactions and interpretations in an interview with a relatively

open form" (Hopf, 2004, 205). In comparison to standardized interviews, focused interviews resemble dilemma-interviews or problem-based interviews, but allow more associative reactions and the freedom to digress (Hopf, 2004, 205; see also Schmidt, 2004; Fylan, 2005; Berg, 2009, 107). In this vein, focused interviews are regarded as "a special form of the semi-standardized interview" which aim to capture discussed topics at their broadest, though provoking interviewees to enrich interviews with new, sometimes unanticipated topic points emerging during the freeflowing discussions (Hopf, 2004, 205).

Accordingly, in Study II the focused interviews were based on pre-planned topics, and relatedly, a list of questions concerning (1) one's personal history of craft practicing, (2) well-being gained through hobby crafts, and (3) reflections on encountering throughout the course. Each question from the question list was addressed and discussed during each interview. However, the interviews only loosely followed the pre-planned interview schedule, and most interviews were more like informal meet-ups, as the interviewer me and the interviewee already knew each other. The main topic ended up being recalling and reflecting on incidents from the past craft classes. All in all, the interviews concentrated on examining participants' experiences of becoming engaged with other members of the group, their motivations for encouraging peer-to-peer responsibility, and their ideas on collaboration which emerged through the making of crafts. The purpose of the interviews in Study II was to allow a variety of different voices to be heard in order to arrive at a better understanding of the ways in which collective meanings were enperienced within a given community of practice. The interviews also allowed the exchange of information, probing together the experiences and beliefs of the participants and researcher. The interviews were conducted mostly in semi-public spaces, and the interviews lasted from 35 to 75 minutes.

3.3.2 Participant observation and reflection on action

In order to better understand the embodiedness of the meanings of hobby crafts, the data also included material experimentation and "hanging out" in a research setting (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011, 4; also Pyyry, 2015). Accordingly, I collected data from hobby craft groups through embodied action; that is, making crafts together with other hobby craft makers in natural settings, and observing and reflecting on these making processes (see Schön, 1983; Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000; DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011).

In contemporary qualitative research, reflexivity is seen as an important part of the research (Taylor, Bogdan, & DeVault, 2015, 25). The idea of using reflection as a methodological tool in making sense of one's own thinking and making draws its origins from Donald Schön's (1983) philosophy of reflective thinking. In the philosophical book *The Reflective Practitioner: How Designers*

Think in Action (1983), Schön presented two methods for displaying and expressing the fluctuating relation of thought to action: reflection-in-action (which involves the idea of knowing-in-action, where reflection coincides with the processes reflected; Schön, 1983, 49, 54), and reflection-on-action (which he considered methods to think back to an event or an undertaken project from a distance; Schön, 1983, 61). Reflection in action occurs unconsciously in designer practice, but when studied, must be verbalized consciously. Similarly, reflection on action requires effort in order to be brought into language more specifically. Reflective research has since become widely applied to different types of research interested knowledge gained by means of practice (practice-based), and in contextualizing and interpreting the creative process (practice-led; see e.g., Mäkelä, 2007; Mäkelä & Nimkulrat, 2011; Mäkelä, Nimkulrat, Dash, & Nsenga, 2011). In this study, reflection on action was considered an analytical process leading to new understandings about the meanings of practice, in other words, a form of practice-led research during which thinking, actions, and feelings were taken into consideration in connection with the issues explored. Reflection on actions and experiences permitted the exploration of the collectivity and sharing from the perspective of a maker taking part in the activities of the community – what emerged from the process was a narrative of what was included in the experiences and observations through the body and mind of the practitioner (Schön, 1983, 276–283; Alvesson & Sköldberg, 2000; Mäkelä & Nimkulrat, 2011).

Different iterations of making and reflection on action were carried out during the overall study. During Study I, I participated in hobby craft events, practicing crafts and taking reflective field notes in two locations. In these sessions, I was continuously trying to observe and record how people carried out craft activities in the groups, and how they communicated their craft experiences to others. After each session, I wrote a field diary entry based on my observations and experiences. These descriptive reflections, and the audiotaped conversations recorded from those events, are used in Study I as secondary data, which assist in capturing fragments of free-flowing association that occur on occasions where people meet, discuss, and make crafts informally.

This study of the collective meanings of crafts embarked upon an interpretative and reflexive account of knowledge, and emphasized the ways in which the meanings were formulated and communicated in dialogic relationships between the researcher and the researched (see Berg, 2009, 40). Understood in this way, I have positioned research informants in Study II as study participants, with whom I have actively reconstructed collective meanings through making crafts together with them. This emphasizes the idea that people inhabit the world with other beings, and once constructed, the world along with the other people acts back upon the individual transforming and reconstructing

the individual through interactional dialogue and collective action (Berger & Luckmann, 1985, 204; Kratochwil, 2008, 88).

In Study II, reflexive methodology enabled me to reconsider the cultural practices of hobby craft making from an insider-perspective, from the position of a peer group participant and a hobbyist craft maker, who shared craft processes with other group participants in the hobby craft community (Photo 2). Through self-reflective writing, I was able to examine my own experiences of being and becoming a member of a hobbyist crafting community, and further explicate the negotiation of a collective sense through a careful review of my subjective experiences and the views of other makers. When entering the hobby craft group, I made sure that I formally declared myself as a researcher; however, I took part in the craft activities of the group as a "complete participant" (cf. Berg, 2009, 80–81), as I carried out activities with other makers, and contributed to the practices and interactions of the group.

Photo 2. Felted flowers made by twelve hobby craft group participants in Study II. Researcher's work is second left in the front row. Courtesy of the photo: Tuija Vähävuori.

During the course session in Study II, I wrote field notes in a notepad I had with me; later, after each course session, I composed a detailed research narrative entry based on these handwritten field notes that reflected on my experiences from the past session. While writing, I tried, on the one hand, to describe the temporal structure of the course, as I hoped that it could capture the ongoingness

of interaction through the events of the course. On the other hand, my aim was to make visible my own embodied experiences and interactions between myself and other course participants through reflecting on the fleeting experiences and deeper, thick descriptions. After the final course session, I wrote a recollection of the course, which verbalized my contemplative experiences and perceived engagement in the community. The resulting fifteen-page narrative provided data both on the descriptive and the reflective levels: on the one hand, it outlined the course structure and arrangements, and on the other hand, it emphasized how I felt about becoming engaged with other makers during the course, what motivated me to share, my thoughts and how I experienced a sense of collectivity growing throughout the course.

3.3.3 Autoethnographic cinema

In Study III, I aimed to investigate the meanings of hobby crafts through autoethnographic self-study methods. The study of the self was undertaken as a means to arrive at knowledge about individuals and their society through expressive and evocative description and reflection (see Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Roth, 2005a; Mitchell, O'Reilly & Weber, 2005; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Reed-Danahay, 2008; Delamont, 2009; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). Historically, autoethnographic methodology draws its roots from the generation of postmodern and feminist research movements in the 1970s and 1980s, which aimed to prioritize less hegemonic, reflexive, and artistic research methodologies as ways of "knowing differently" (Liamputtong & Rumbold, 2008), raising doubt about factual knowledge and vocabularies, as well as paradigms of positivistic authoritative research (Liamputtong & Rumbold, 2008, 1–2; Reed-Danahay, 2008; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). The resulting emergence of the personalized voice placed great emphasis on reflexive, practice-led research approaches that were based on critical reflection on the experience (e.g., Reed-Danahay, 1997; Ellis, 2004; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011; Leavy, 2015). Accordingly, the emerging first-person point of view as the basis of the explanations about particular social phenomena intends to reconcile nontraditional forms of inquiry and expression, eventually weaving together the personal and the cultural through the articulation of the experience, and reflection on the constantly changing self (Roth, 2005b; Ellis & Bochner, 2006; Wall, 2008). In this way, autoethnography seeks to address the view of an individual as part of the culture by paying attention to emotions and experiences through selfcongratulatory retrospective introspection, and to set up a critique of the habituated ways of doing qualitative research by speculating with the multiplication of voices, styles, and stories (Atkinson, et al., 2007; Ngunjiri, Hernandez & Chang, 2010; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). As a means of critical analysis of the self, autoethnography bases its relevance on radical

questioning of the universal narratives and explanation-seeking methods (Roth, 2005a; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011).

For the purposes of the present study, autoethnography provided a way to narrate the discourse-in-context through subjective experience, and reflect on my own position in hobby craft culture from an insider-perspective, adding layers to the meanings of other hobbyists with a view of the "embodied presence" (Todres, 2008). The use of autoethnographic methods was therefore meant to emphasize my own embeddedness in the culture of hobby craft making and unveil the epistemological ground relating to data collection. Methodologically, autoethnography was considered a reflective project during which I as a researcher-practitioner rewrote myself into the theory and practice of a phenomenon under investigation through my own intimate autoethnographic narrative (McIlveen, 2008; Delamont, 2009; Denshire, 2014).

In Study III, the autoethnographic research methodology approach was enriched with an arts-based research approach. This enabled the realization of my own subjective, autoethnographic reflection into a form of a state-of-the-art film format. Methodologically, this autoethnographic cinema combined autoethnographic and arts-based methodologies: the aim was to reconstruct a meaningful account of the phenomena through the researcher's own self-reflection (see Estrella & Forinash, 2007; Barone & Eisner, 2012; Leavy, 2015). Accordingly, autoethnographic cinema was intended as "an effort to extend beyond the limiting constraints of discursive communication in order to express meanings that otherwise would be ineffable" (Barone & Eisner, 2012, 1); as a new methodological approach to study the researcher's own assumptions, behavior, and performativity through narrative-fictive film portrayal (see Photo 3).

Photo 3. Performing knitting in front of the camera in Study III. Screenshot from the autoethnographic cinema at 1:12. Courtesy of the photo: Anna Kouhia.

Delivering self-reflective, sensitive and poetic content about the phenomenon under study, autoethnographic cinema allowed an awareness of the layered nature of data generation, analysis, interpretation, and representation. However, unlike practice-led self-studies, autoethnographic cinema did not capture reality on the run, but provided an insider-view of the phenomenon through the practices of the artistic film-making process and the practices of scripting, casting, shooting, and editing. This entailed careful consideration of what was being framed in and out, and what was being performed in front of the camera (see Deleuze, 1986). Accordingly, this kind of cinematographic portrayal reflected back on the collaboration between the researcher-practitioner who performed the practice in front of the camera, and the person behind the camera who framed the performance, and in so doing, interconnected the private and the publicthrough the shifting authority between the viewer and the viewed.

The stages in autoethnographic cinema making were similar to film production: The project started from the development stage in which the ideas for the film were created, the background story of the project was outlined, and the cinema was situated in the context through memory work, story writing and scripting; second was the pre-production stage in which the groundwork—namely, the autoethnographic retrospective and positioning—for the following film-making was detailed, shooting locations were selected, and the required work-in-process woolly socks were knitted; the third stage was the production itself, which was the actual "making-of", i.e., the shooting of the raw footage based on the film script; and finally, the post-production stage in which the film was edited and mastered—and in this case, reviewed, released to the public, subjected to criticism, and set into dialogue within the discourse through article writing.

I started my autoethnographic cinema project "conventionally" with reflective recalling: I wrote a retrospective description of my meanings and experiences as a craft maker. In this self-reflective essay, I recalled my childhood memories, my craft learning experiences at school, at home, and with friends at arts classes, specified and explicated my most memorable craft projects, and remembered my long departed grandmother and her enormous stash of craft materials. While writing, I tried to record the incidents as they occurred to me without removing any of my previous writings, only adding new layers and new entries to the narrative. As I proceeded with my memory work and writing, some recurrent themes regarding my own hobby craft practice started to emerge. Consequently, the narrative eventually turned out to be a layered recollection of my own, subjective maker-becomings. It is important to acknowledge that the retrospective was not created as a chronological story, but that it consisted of several autoethnographic vignettes (see Humphreys, 2005), which like "windows" provided access to my experiences as a maker, and asked "readers to relive the experience through the writer's or performer's eyes"

(Denzin, 2000, 905). During the story writing, I also kept a diary of my reflective process, which as a kind of a metareflection augmented the ideation of the cinema scripting.

The next phase in the cinema-making was reformulating the autoethnographic narrative into a form of script. The content of the script was derived from analysis of the autoethnographic narrative; what was to be portrayed were the knit, the habitat, the ambiance, the layered composition, and the complexity of material negotiations. Likewise, the structure of the script was composed to give an impression of the fragmentary and layered story writing process.

The film shooting itself was conducted in three phases. First came the audio recordings, such as the sounds of knitting needles clicking, and the raw footage capturing the unwinding of a woolen skein. The second phase was the actual film shooting, which took place in several locations given in the script: it was also the predominant phase for screening, as most of the raw footage was recorded in the second shooting session. This phase also required most prepara tions: for example, I had knitted seven work-in-process socks in order to demonstrate and perform the ongoingness of the woolly sock making in front of the camera. During the film shooting, knitting was performed in several phases, with only some stitches or rows being completed at the time. The performance was captured on film in several takes, with changing positions and angles. The third and last shooting session took place after the preliminary film editing process, which revealed the certain gaps in the raw footage. During the last filming session, some new takes were shot, and a few retakes captured on film.

The research writing stage came after the autoethnographic writing and film shooting sessions. The article reporting the "making-of" project is itself both a process and a product as it includes both doing and writing, recalling and narration (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011).

3.4 Overview of the data analyses in Studies I–III

Study I: Crafting meanings through interviews

The primary data in Study I consisted of unstructured interviews of six women coming from different cultural backgrounds. With the interviews, the aim was to capture the subjective meanings given to craft, and by so doing, add to an understanding of the meaning and value of crafts in the lives of the respondents. A set of supplementary data were also collected. Supplementary data include field notes and audiotaped material gathered from two craft events, as well as photographs taken from the interview sessions. In Study I, the analysis relied strongly on the interview data, whereas supplementary data were mainly used in representing relevant examples for the overall categories captured in the analysis of the transcribed interview data.

In Study I, a qualitative content analysis (see Krippendorff, 1980; Mayring, 2000; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Moretti et al., 2011) was undertaken as a method for describing and manifesting the meanings of craft. The analysis was set to assign the data into a frame of descriptive categories through a systematic coding process that could both specify and abstract the information about the meaning attached to a phenomenon under scrutiny. The examination was based on iterative data repeatedly processing going through the steps of analysis in order to establish a descriptive and meaningful categorization of the meanings of hobby crafts.

Typical of qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2014, 171), the analysis combined aspects of concept-driven and data-driven analyses within one coding frame. The categories and names for the categories emerged through inductive category development (Mayring, 2000; Ryan & Bernard, 2003; Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The process involved repeatedly reading data word by word coding, labeling the texts with notes, sorting and linking the notes and preliminary codes into larger themes and sub-categories, and eventually, clarifying definitions for each overall category.

First, transcribed data were read several times to obtain a whole sense of the data, and the data were coded inductively through a word-by-word coding. At this stage, a vast array of different meanings was found in the data. Next, each transcription was annotated with coloured highlights, and the data were re-read carefully. Framing categories was the second step, and here notes with highlights were grouped into larger themes, and the preliminary codes were formed. Subsequently, broader themes were assigned for the overall categorization. Broader categories were derived from iterative cycles of reading, annotating, coding, and organizing the content of the existing codes; the codes were grouped and regrouped based on the relevance of the emerging taxonomy in relation to the empirical setting. This kind of categorization, as Gayle R. Jennings (2005, 109) has acknowledged, required "reflection and questioning of assignment of the codes and the categories and the real-world context." In this way, the analysis was as a process of making decisions and reframing the categories based on social, material and embodied interactions, and systematizing the meanings derived from both material and imaginary praxis. In the early stages of interpretation, the interview data dominated close readings, but as the analysis proceeded, data derived from field work also proved helpful, especially in naming the meaning categories and offering representative samples for the presentation of the analysis. Nonetheless, interview data was the principal material for the analysis and the basis for further categorization. The key aspect of the categorization of meanings was the process of interweaving the analysed talk, observations and literature, and by so doing, establishing a reciprocal dialogue between data and theory. This process also related to the validity of the inductive analysis.

Study II: Crafting collectivity in a hobby craft group

Study II was a descriptive case study elaborating on the collective meanings of crafts generated through making crafts together. Data were collected from a collaborative learning-based craft course entitled Textile Crafts Building Bridges held at a liberal adult education center in Southern Finland. Including myself, the group comprised 16 female hobby craft makers. From a position of a peer group participant, I was able to reflect on the dynamics of the group from an insider perspective, and contribute to the examination of cultural practices and patterned behavior in the group. After each course session I wrote an entry in my field diary; based on the field diary entries I later composed a descriptive-reflective course narrative in which I elaborated on my own learning experiences, and reviewed the encounters and interaction that took place in the course.

After the course, I interviewed nine course participants. With the interviews, I wished to investigate how other group participants considered their engagement, made sense of their motivation to interact with other group members, and unfolded their experiences they had built through crafts.

The data analysis concentrated on the sense of increasing participation and the factors that nurtured collectivity within the community of practice. The analysis was conducted in two phases. First, the content of the transcribed interview data was analyzed using qualitative content analysis methods (see Mayring, 2000; Smith 2000; Moretti et al., 2011) in order to bring out the knowledge sharing processes and experiences of increasing participation among the group members. I started by listening to the interview tapes and making notes in the margins of the transcription prints. Next, I clustered the interview data into different overall themes based on recurring expressions and repetitive topics (see Ryan & Bernard, 2003, 89; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006, 90). The analysis itself began with an episodic description writing (Smith 2000, 329) in which I recalled and the events of the course with hindsight. Next, the descriptive text was annotated with my own autoethnographic, evocative emotional experiences (see Ellis, 2004, 30). Through this, I aimed to give space to the subjectivity of description and the feelings of being a group participant myself.

The second phase of the analysis concentrated on bringing together the views and experiences of the course participants and the researcher through narrative analysis and writing (Cortazzi, 1993; Smith 2000; McCance, McKenna, & Boore, 2001). The purpose was to pay attention to the subjective ways of experiencing interconnectedness and perceiving the environment, and through that, establish a shared view on the generation of the collective sense in the group through concise themes. While writing, I enriched the proceeding research narrative with descriptions that cut across the views of interviewees. In these descriptions, I revived the incidents addressed by the craft makers using overall themes gained from previous analysis. This was done in order to "tie together

individual experiences in order to create the context for understanding meaning" (McCance, McKenna, & Boore, 2001, 354). In the analysis, I concentrated on the ways of communicating and negotiating the experiences of those incidents, translating the argumentation of the intersubjective experiences to the resources required for the generation of the collective sense. Last, I re-reflected on my own subjective experiences about the understanding of the self in relation to the others, knitting together my own views of interconnectedness with the views of other group participants. All in all, the analysis was a back and forth editing and writing process, where narrative writing and analysis (see Cortazzi 1993) proceeded simultaneously phase by phase.

Study III: Crafting (and reflecting on) the self through film

In Study III, autoethnographic cinema was undertaken as a method to uncover the experiences of a young hobbyist craft maker, and contribute to current debates on the meanings of contemporary craft. On the one hand, the aim of the study was to harness the reflexive potential of textile craft making to examine and critically review the meanings and experiences of a young hobbyist maker, and on the other hand, to develop a new visual-material approach for exploring the value of hobby practices through autoethnographic film-making. Although the actual age of the film-maker was representative of the age cohort of 18 to 30 years (see e.g., Stannard & Sanders, 2015), on a broader scale the film embraced the socially constructed understanding of the young maker generation that has grown up in the course of the resurgence of craft making.

I started my autoethnographic film project entitled as *Crafts in My Life* by writing a retrospective description of my experiences as a hobbyist craft maker. In this narrative, I looked back on my craft learning and recalled my feelings and emotions when making some personally significant craft projects. Based on the retrospective narrative, I composed a script for the film. Like written autoethnographies, the script and the resulting film were not only intended to elucidate a particular phenomenon, but also to unfold the processes "by which a researcher creates meaning and knowledge in his/her disciplinary context" (Noble & McIlveen, 2012, 109). Narrative writing was undertaken as a process of generating "new understandings of a nexus of self-theory-practice" (Noble & McIlveen, 2012, 109) regarding my personal experience: on the one hand, narrative writing was about reflecting on the facets of cultural experience through an inscription of my own story, on the other hand, it concentrated on making the characteristics of a cultural experience visible through intimate storywriting, and introducing an emotionally rich narrative to the prospective audience and readership.

The scripting itself was regarded as a way to arrive at an analysis of the knowledge of the researcher through narrative storytelling. The structure and the content of the script were drawn from the autoethnographic narrative: the film

was framed so that it would to provide "conscious and reflexive elaboration . . . of the author's life" (Cortazzi, 1993, 12) in an episodic form, and show how interpretations of the experiences were constructed through critical reflection. Structurally, I divided the script into four narrative sequences so that it would give an impression of the fragmentary and layered story writing process. In between the sequences I used self-composed poetry about knitting to give rhythm and regularity to the script. Accordingly, poetry was used both as a structural element in the cinematic screenplay composition and a deliberate reflexive strategy to turn autoethnographic narration into evocative descriptions (see Butler-Kisber, 2005; Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009, 130). Layers were also added to the script through kaleidoscopic screen compositions and close up takes that were set to occur in several scenes throughout the cinema. In content, the film was intended as a portrayal of my experiences as a young hobby craft maker. Accordingly, in order to have my own voice heard clearly through the film, the script was framed as an episodic first-person story, where the self was set to recall and interpret itself. However, despite the clear narrative voice, the framing of the self through the lens of the camera was represented through the eyes of the other in accordance with the habituated traditions of screenplay – the camera following and framing the actor who performs the scripted play in front of the camera (Deleuze, 1986, 16–17; Minh-Ha 1990).

Based on the script I later produced an autoethnographic film in collaboration with a professional videographer. The layered, four-minute autoethnographic film was intended as a reflective, arts-based documentation composed from my lived experiences. In the film, I navigate between the traditional and subversive, original and replicating, professional and amateur, public and private, and gendered and generational discourses underlying the culture of craft with the means and methodologies enabled by cinematic digital technologies.

In the autoethnographic research process data generation and the layers of analysis merge. Writing and reporting were an integrated part of the analysis throughout the research process; first in terms of composing a retrospective and scripting the cinema, then communicating the process through reflective diary writing, and lastly, through the writing of a critical research narrative, where the personal and cultural experiences fuse with the researcher's theoretical understanding of the phenomenon. Accordingly, the resulting research article is more than just a brief report of the cinematic making-of process; it is instead a thick description (see Geertz, 1973, 6–7, 19–20; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011) demonstrating both personal and interpersonal experiences that were visualized through autoethnographic cinema, and a theoretical account of the context where the practices became meaningful to the protagonist-maker, facilitating an understanding of the practice for other people both inside and outside the culture.

4 The meanings of textile hobby crafts

This section presents the main findings reported in three journal articles. Further details of the studies are available in the original publications.

4.1 Study I: Multiple and overlapping

Many studies have discussed at lenght that by serving the human needs of creative self-expression, craft making can provide a sense of self-worth, address a sense of reward and purposefulness through the making of material objects, and offer moments of recreation as a counteraction to our technologically saturated lives (e.g. Reynolds, 2000; Parkins, 2004; Riley, 2008; Gandolfo & Grace, 2010; Burt & Atkinson, 2011; Pöllänen, 2015a). The aim of Study I was to throw light on the complexity of these claims by examining what kinds of meanings individual craftspersons attach to hobby crafts.

The analysis revealed eight meaning categories conceptualizing the common kinds of meanings placed on crafts. Disclosing both meanings of craft making and meanings gained through the use of craft products, the categories illustrated the shared social content expressed and discussed by the craftpersons, and outlined the discursive commonalities that people linked with textile hobby crafts. The categories were identified as functional, material, aesthetic, expressive, experiential, multi-sensory, collaborative, and narrative meanings.

Functional meanings implied usability and suitability, and intersected with the practical-pragmatic functions and aesthetics of craft objects. Craftspeople frequently described crafts from the viewpoint of purposefulness; however, functional meanings were not only understood in terms of utility or maintenance, but also extended to resources, interests, capabilities, and prospects tied to functionality.

Material meanings related to the production, possession and use of craft products. Materiality was attached to the quality of the craft both in terms of making skillful objects, and the consumption of tangible products. Materiality also played a significant role in performing relations of power and selfhood, as it embraced personal expressions and values materialized in craft objects, and the mediation of the mastery of skill through the practices of making.

Aesthetic meanings provided ground for recognizing the aesthetic value for the makers, owners and viewers of craft products. In addition to the capability of upholding personal values and cultural representations, qualities such as technical competence and faultlessness were addressed as aesthetically meaningful. In this sense, aesthetics were understood in terms of both looking and performing correctly. This emphasized the value of skilled work as a source

of aestheti cally meaningful experience, and interlinked aesthetic meanings with the experientiality, expressivity, and functionality of craft products.

Expressive meanings related to ways in which people expressed who they were as crafts makers, and how they communicated their values and personal style through making, using, and consuming craft objects. Expressive forms of craft making were extensively linked to self-discovery and personal lifestyle, for example, in the way people furnished their homes, or used traditional craft products to express and act upon themselves in social circumstances.

Experiential meanings were identified with experiences that had been gradually developed and personified over time. Experientiality emerged from the associations of mundane experiences, and was linked with cognitions and emotions related to everyday activities. Crafts were generally understood as objects witnessing and sustaining the cultural associations and meanings of being connected and belonging to a cultural flow.

Multi-sensory meanings were manifested in sensory responses to the bodily act of making crafts, such as touching the material and its surface, or in smelling the scent of the felted wool. Multi-sensory meanings were linked with the sense of enjoyment gained through craft making; producing finished objects sometimes seemed less important than experimenting with the material at hand. The craft products themselves did not lack worth and value as material objects, but their meanings derived from other social and cultural aspects and appreciations.

Collaborative meanings were bound to the social and cultural embeddedness experienced in and through crafts. The analysis revealed that crafts were seen to embody and manifest cultural identities and social practices in their material objecthood; for example, culture, national heritage and perceived identity might be addressed. The collaborative dimension also occurred on the communal level, nurturing the feelings of collectivity and togetherness developed through practicing crafts together.

Narrative meanings were bound to lived experiences, personal histories and identities. Narrative meanings contained free-flowing associations linked to individual being: narrativity was nourished in material products in which the makers had put their signatures through the act of making, or through use or consumption; these artefacts then became emblems of personal and cultural histories, or narratives of a nation's state.

Although these eight common kinds of meaning categories prevailed, and the study participants agreed upon many ideas, the results indicated that there was great variety in the subjective meanings attached to crafts. Correspondingly, every meaning category extended to a wide range of personalized meanings linked with crafts. Since each respondent addressed the meanings of crafts in their personal ways, there were also differences in the ways in which the meanings were communicated, shared, and expressed.

In short, the ideas behind categories were not unanimously addressed by craftspeople, and the weight of the concerns within the meaning categories was not equivalent: some meaning categories featured content that was vigorously addressed by many, while others had a more subtle contribution for sharing and discussing the meanings of crafts. Clear boundaries between the categories could not be drawn either, but the categories extended along each other, interrelated and overlapped, however featuring content that transcended individual perspectives. This resulted in viewing of the meanings categories as multidimensional, relational conceptualizations that characterized crafts as complex entities associated with subjective meanings undermining an apparent individual identity.

4.2 Study II: Connective and contextual

One essential premise for the quest to find collective meaningfulness in craft making is that crafts exist in social contexts, and therefore they produce and circulate meanings through social interaction. In Study II, the focus was on examining the development of a collective sense within an informal, peer-learning based community where understandings of engagement and interests were shared among the participants of a situational community of practice (see Lave & Wenger, 1991). The aim was to examine collective meanings built through making crafts in a hobby craft group, including the resources needed to generate a collective sense among the group members.

Four thematic narratives arouse during the analysis: mutual agency, active participation, social interaction, and shared responsibility. These themes showed the capacity for connectedness among the study participants.

Mutual agency represents the underlying motivation and shared interest in craft making among the group participants. Finding mutual agency with other makers was inextricably intertwined with their own personal interests in undertaking craft activities. Hobby craft makers participated in craft activities because they wanted to enjoy their free time by undertaking pleasant activities. They also wished to learn new craft techniques, encounter new people, or share their intuitively gained knowledge, though these were secondary motives for participation. In conclusion, interest in craft making was portrayed as a motivational agent that nurtured a peculiar sympathy to other makers and led people to connect, helping craft makers to forge social connections with others in their hobby craft community.

Active participation recognized an individual's right to take part in the activities voluntarily, making one's own management decisions regarding the activities of the course. It referred to the active role of a practitioner in the organization of learning sessions and course arrangements: during the course, participants were themselves able to choose the learning tasks they wanted to

deliver and participate in. Consequently, freedom encouraged sympathy for the tasks delivered by others, and eventually contributed to the course participants' commitment to the community of practice and the experienced connectivity between the makers. Learning and teaching crafts, craft makers nurtured connectivity among the makers through the assignment of shared goals, and helped to generate shared understandings about the meanings of hobby crafts.

Social interaction required an individual agreement to share and socialize with other makers including decisions to enter the craft events, participate in the learning tasks arranged during the craft course, and contribute to the community development through the distribution of knowledge and interests. Analysis revealed that shared social activities in a welcoming, warmhearted company urged craftspeople to encounter various kinds of otherness around them, and find a new affinity among the emergent community. Accordingly, when people became engaged in the social interaction in the community of practice, connections were made across cultures, across individuals and across different levels of expertise through the exchange of stories, skills, and knowledge in a social environment.

Shared responsibility referred to the frame and organization of the course, I cluding joint responsibility for the learning tasks and collective accountability of the activities within the community. When provided with a shared responsibility for the course organization and learning tasks, participants were given mastery over their own learning and participation, and, eventually, responsibility for the conditions beneficial for the generation of a collective sense. What was of particular interest was how sharing responsibility contributed to a perceived connectivity and a sense of belonging to the community of practice. All in all, the experience was that the group members did not just share ideas with newly-met people superficially, but acted in the spirit of communal trust by sharing their own knowledge with other group members. This encouraged group participants to build new understandings of themselves as craft makers and experience commitment to the group and a sense of connectedness with others.

In conclusion, the analysis showed that at least four kinds of resources were required for the generation of a collective sense within a hobby-based craft learning community: First, *motivational-based resources*, which prompted hobby craft makers to participate in the course itself; second, *agency-related resources* emphasizing the active role of participants within the organization of the course; third, *social resources* relating to the experience of growing involvement and perceived affinity; and fourth, *engagement-related resources* enhancing a sense of empowerment and a commitment to modes of action which facilitated learning. These resources were deliberatively addressed as meaningful accounts in finding connectivity and in nurturing a collective sense in a hobby craft community. All in all, a collective sense was understood as a dialectical, situational, and transformative construction that was explained from the

viewpoint of the acting individual, whose experiences were seen to feature the social world s/he was embedded in.

Although the analysis revealed that the group participants experienced collectivity and shared a joint intention with others, the collective sense itself was temporary; it began to emerge in social interaction with individual craft makers sharing a joint interest in a specific time and place, was supported with different course tasks and learning assignments that augmented participation, deepened due to the participants' active agency, and faded away when the group eventually scattered when the course was over. Many group participants reported that they had felt an affinity with other group members during the course; some stated that during the course they had acquired new understandings of themselves. These experiences indicated that even during a course this short, it was possible to experience collectivity in a maker group, even despite the fact that it was known beforehand that the community itself was temporary, and would disperse after the final course session. Even the temporary mode of we-ness, however, led to situational experiences that left marks on the participants.

4.3 Study III: Shifting and conflicting

Textile crafts have long served as media for self-expression, and as a form of social positioning for craft practitioners. Against this background, Study III reflected on my own learning and "becoming" in the craft field through an autoethnographic cinema, deliberating on the powers and pressures inherent in the traditions of textile hobby crafts. My autoethnographic film making project began with a reflection of the moment, developed through a portrayal of an intensive interaction between myself and the craft materials that I held in my hands, and evolved into a layered depiction of the thoughts and actions performed in front of a camera. Performing occurred both on the conscious and the unconscious levels; what was presented as an outcome of the project was a screenplayed, performed resurrection of the real lived experiences that built its relevance on the viewers' meanings and experiences.

With the assistance of cinematographic technology, I crafted a story of the experiences of a young hobby craft maker. In the autoethnographic film, I reflected on my own *craft practice in resonance with tropes of identity, expertise, public gaze, and gender*, and placed myself in various positions based on my shifting identity as a professional craftsperson, hobby practitioner, young middle- class woman, and a consumer and user of craft products. Eventually, I found myself being placed in many *fluctuating positions* and *imbricate discourses* that sometimes coexisted and shifted, sometimes obstructed and transcended each other.

Overall, I came to realize that my fluctuating identity suggested the complexity of this moment, not only in terms of the struggles of contemporary

crafts(wo)manship, proficiency, traditionality, and the politics of consumption, but also in *the numerous ways of engaging with these struggles and materializing them*. The research project led me to conclude that within these discursive debates, hobby craft making offered me a significant, yet infrequent source of emotional well-being: As much as I enjoyed craft making, I practiced crafts irregularly, often making inherently unoriginal craft products. Although I usually practiced hobby crafts at home and in private, mainly creating ordinary domesticated craft products, I did not consider hobby craft making to be a domestic chore mandated by gender, but rather as a spontaneous deliberate action nurturing a sensibility between my own being, the material, and the world I inhabited. For me as a young maker, hobby crafting carried decisive reconciliations of femininity, recreation, originality, countercultural consumption, and personal agency and know-how. It was primarily a way to replace the consumption-driven individualistic view of the world with ethically conscious alternatives. Certainly, *conflicting interpretations* of the meanings of hobby crafting as part of one's lives still remain, for example in terms of my self-positioning as an able-bodied maker, or in relation to the way I perceive craft making as a way to resist fastpaced consumerism by producing new products.

Methodologically, autoethnographic cinema offered a way to reveal a particular engagement with the world, and address the layered and *fragmentary nature of the process of communicating the meanings of one's practice with others*. The aim of autoethnographic film-making was to bring forth lived moments on the screen through aesthetic and evocative performance, and by showing and narrating thoughts and actions viewers might relate to and reflect on. All in all, the strength of autoethnographic cinema prevailed in the shift of authority between the film-maker and the protagonist. Through autoethnographic film-making I was able to contextualize, frame, perform, and voice my own practice from the viewpoint of a protagonist, hence pointing the camera at myself in order to exhibit and express the sanctity of my own meanings that I assign to craft making. Accordingly, during the film-making process I undertook knitting-asprocess as a craft practitioner and performed knitting-as-practice aware of my position of as a practitioner-researcher. On the one hand, I took the role of the authoritative film-maker(-subject) and set out to define the status quo the film represented. On the other hand, I was the protagonist(-object) reconstructing the meanings of the performed actions. In conclusion, autoethnographic cinema let me create an evocative narrative of my own intimate experiences, and invite viewers to enter my world through my own narration and performance.

Along with the fluctuating subjective and objective maker-observer positions, shifting conceptions of truth and reality also occurred in the course of the cinematic project. Autoethnographic cinema neither set out to indoctrinate the truth, nor capture reality on the run, but to narrate and reconstruct real

performative experiences and load them with the adjuct meanings of the viewer. While making the autoethnographic cinema, the practices were authentically performed in front of the camera: I knitted, my body moved, and loops became stitches in my hands. During this performance, I set value on these intimate practices through the embodiment of actions, living the scenes of the script in front of the camera. In this sense, autoethnographic cinema was a real depiction portraying real practice, and real sensitivity to the material. However, the actions carried out in front of the camera were unavoidably scripted and therefore staged; what was seen on the screen was a fabricated, manipulated revival of the real captured through the lens of a camera. Moreover, the cinematic portrayal was admittedly partial – it was only capable of portraying one fixed, sequential angle of the practice. Still, with such an autoethnographic, self-reflective method I was able to reclaim the power and control to perform the actions I considered of value, giving meanings to the actions through the framing of the performance myself.

4.4 Summary of the results

The three studies have addressed how hobby craft making opened up opportunities for learning, sharing, community building, and self-discovery, and how the materiality of craft objects carried experiences of cultural and social structures. In the studies, hobby crafts were conceptualized as objects that were capable of capturing and representing the memory of a place, and materializing the experiences of belonging to a social group or a realm of culture. Craft making also had relevance as a communicative practice in mediating and reflecting in-person histories and past experiences, and was also a way of nurturing emotional sensibility in relation to one's own being.

Multiple. Multiplicity as a term describing the worth and value of craft in the lives of the makers aims to address both individual differences in the meanings placed on crafts, and the array of conceptual classes in assigning these meanings. On the one hand, it indicates that meanings placed on crafts extended to a wide range of personal experiences, values, and attitudes describing craft making as lifestyle, passion, cultural ritual, and an outbreak of necessary duties in the household and at work. On the other hand, it aims to summarize that the ways of discussing and sharing meanings are multiple and contingent and that craft making is a hybrid practice that extends to a range of different ways of working with materials in our hands and the embodiment of skills through the use of hand-crafted objects. Multiplicity highlights the individual human qualities in the easily recognizable differences of hobbyist craft makers and their habits of action but also in terms of the hidden differences in makers' values, emotions, knowledge, and philosophies of mind that change over time and color the way each individual reacts and responds to the world.

Overlapping provides a view of the meanings of crafts as depictions of socially negotiated processes and addresses the notion that although craftspeople are individual they share many instances in the ways they come to discuss hobby crafts. As a name for the meanings of textile hobby crafts, overlapping endorses the layered nature of meanings and acknowledges that the overlap between the meanings of people involved and interested in crafts creates possibilities for multiple lines of connections, therefore enhancing intersubjective understanding between different individuals. When delineating the meanings of craft using the term overlapping, the fact that crafts are not experienced or debated similarly by all is highlighted, even if craftspeople sometimes use similar expressions while describing their experiences. The term emphasizes the fact that the meanings that crafts have for one person may not have the same content and connotations for another, since the meanings of crafts derive from personal accounts, and can therefore be strikingly relational. However, when portrayed as overlapping, the awareness of what and how we know, agree or disagree about the crafts becomes inherently social, and is very much influenced by the culturally habituated craft practices and social relations of the people we live with.

Connective. Connectivity aims to emphasize one's individual ability to make and maintain connections and experience collective meaningfulness with other people through craft making. This suggests that the connective potential is highly reliant on the craft makers' conscious personal pursuits to take up craft activities, share experiences, and encounter new people. The social dimension clearly characterizes hobby craft making: hobby craft making encourages connectivity through shared, casual craft activities. Almost as important as making, such activities provide occasions for sharing stories, skills, and knowledge in and through hobby crafts. Such activity forges connections between people and materials by resonating with their lives and bringing them closer together through sharing. Hobby craft makers might feel a strong need to share their experiences with people they expect have equivalent ideas and experiences about crafts. It appears that craft making, even in its very solitary and alienated form, is a fundamentally communicative practice that has the potential to bring people together. Therefore, connectivity also addresses that a sense of collectiveness can be reached through hobby craft making, but collectiveness requires common ownership of the craft processes and an understanding of the uniqueness of the experiences of making.

Contextual. Contextuality presents a view of the situational character of the meanings of hobby crafts. It suggests that the meanings of craft are context-related, and are reliant on socially and culturally constituted conditions in which human beings become what they are. Context-relatedness, dependence, and a sense of belonging may take various forms; in craft groups these aspects may be promoted by encouraging the active role of the maker, stimulating social interactions, and strengthening the sense of engagement through shared craft

activities. Contextuality as a concept for the meanings of craft acknowledges that craft makers are prompted by various influences, and continuously participate in the negotiation of social practices. This has an effect on craft makers' self-reflective processes, and the ideas how they come to understand themselves as makers in a particular context. An important aspect of contextuality is that it acknowledges the contingency of meanings, that is, how crafts and craft making may, at times, succeed in addressing issues about memory, subjectivity, and agency, and in different contexts and debates the same processes and material entities may be used to exhibit other recollections and reflections that have more relevance in the given referential constraints.

Shifting shows that the meanings of crafts are eclectic, fluctuating and are continuously being reconstituted and transformed. As a name for the meanings of hobby crafts, shifting denotes to movement from one place or position to another: craft making resonates with different debates that place makers in different positions regarding the identities they identify themselves with. The term is intriguing and inspired by an approach that resists stabilization. There is no permanence in the meanings, but the meanings and the ways the meanings are discussed shift, are filtered, and change in time due to our partial and forever-fragmented conceptualizations of truth.

Conflicting sustains this view, but further proposes that the meanings of craft may sometimes have biased and contradictory meanings that oppose the consideration of craft as a demonstration of the accomplished self. For example, textile hobby crafts may sometimes be seen as objects of femininity; at other times, textile hobby crafts might be celebrated for their power to campaign for domesticity liberated from gendered constraints.

As the terms for the meanings of craft shifting, and conflicting both suggest, craft making is a fragmentary and incoherent project that is neither a single line nor a process proceeding from the beginning to the end. It is instead a network-like project in process that has many parallel beginnings and many parallel ends.

5 Discussion: Weaving in

Yarn by yarn, I straightened every snag
A ball bundled in a hurry, big bonny ball
Lanka langan lomaan lyöttyi, säie säikeeltä suoristui,
Kerä kiireesti kerittiin, kerä kiinteä kimmoinen

In this chapter, I reflect on the findings of the study in relation to my own learning and actions taken during the research process. The aim of the present study was to discuss how craft makers create and express the meanings they gain and attach to their hobbyist textile craft practice, and to a wider degree, contribute to the understanding of the complexities of the meanings of crafts in contemporary society. The first section reflects on the findings and the research process in general level; the following sections discuss the methodological ethical and concerns and limitations, and the perspectives on future research.

5.1 General discussion

This study was set to examine the meanings of recreational textile craft making in the lives of craft practitioners. The interest was in a reasonably widespread hobby culture centered in craft making and its interrelated meanings and values, physical and discursive practices, and objects that proceed from craft makers' material interaction. Accordingly, the overall aim was to add to an understanding of the worth and value of textile hobby crafts in the present times.

The results of the present study indicate that the meanings attached to hobby craft making can be viewed in many dimensions. Each one of the conceptual propositions characterizing the meanings of textile hobby crafts identified in this study recognize the conflicted nature of hobby craft making, and the many ways to obtain what it means to craftspeople. Proposing that the meanings of crafts are multiple, overlapping, contextual, shifting and conflicting the study embraces different ways of thinking about crafts, and acknowledges that each craftsperson has his or her own personalized meanings and interpretations of craft. These concepts reiterate that each craftsperson possesses purely subjective socio-cultural definitions, and therefore, completely unique rudiments, for finding meaningfulness in craft making. Consequently, individual meanings attached to crafts can be strikingly distinctive and disparate, contrasting, and even conflicting. Because meanings are constituted and formulated in the hands and minds of individuals in particular ways, their representations are unique in their content: there are no all-encompassing aspects that all hobbyists would explicitly

or implicitly agree with, and no univocality in the meanings experienced in and through hobby craft making.

Regardless of their subjective nature, the meanings of individuals are grounded in the negotiation of shared social constructions. These social constructions provide constitutions of individual knowledge, and the explanations, apprehensions and awareness towards the material world and the means through which one's experiences of material interaction are made meaningful (Scott, 2011, 13–16; Burr, 2015). Similarly, the study concluded that despite the disparity and multiplicity of meanings, there is much transcendence and overlap in between the meanings of craftspeople and the ways how hobby craft makers come to share and communicate their understandings with others. Overlap becomes apparent, for example, if hobby craft makers meet for the first time. The culture of making implies a particular mentality through which craftspeople learn to interpret their experiences and place value on their actions. Thus, makers are likely to find common concerns and affiliations, even though the meanings of these concerns were not products of shared communicative practices. These kinds of encounters were also reported by the craftspeople during the study, when, for instance, the makers entered into a hobby group and started sharing their experiences with others, reconstituting their thinking and actions based on the mutuality of the orientation towards hobby crafts. Consequently, one conclusive result of the study is that regardless of individual differences, there is a range of commonalities shared by the craftspeople, and accordingly, a wider sense of the world, which becomes negotiated and agreed upon by the people involved and interested in hobby crafts. This suggests that as people take up hobby craft activities, they become engaged in the negotiation of comprehensive strategies to discuss and share hobby craft practices. This further contributes to the construction of a socially agreed view of the world disclosing shared, and connective, understandings of crafts as an important and meaningful leisure pursuit.

At the level of subjective meanings, the results suggest that textile hobby crafts have an ability to cherish a sense of intrinsic reward in hobby craft makers in multiple (and overlapping) levels. Amongst other things, craft practitioners found meaningfulness in material and embodied making, perceived connectivity and collaboration, narrative and experiential product relations, self-initiated expression, historicity, and aesthetic expression. These conclusions substantiate previous scholarship that has time and again emphasized the value of a perceived sense of well-being as one of the prevailing reasons for people to engage in hobby craft making (Maidment & Macfarlane, 2009; Corkhill, Hemmings, Maddock & Riley, 2014; Pöllänen 2015b). The findings of this study also indicate that experiencing overlap with other craft makers is an important aspect in finding hobby crafts meaningful: craftspeople are interested in sharing things that they find personally important with people who they think

share their values and appreciate their meanings and experiences. Therefore, hobby craft making inherently involves a connective level of meaningfulness.

Based on the study results, there is, however, reason to believe that participation in collective and connective craft activities is predominantly motivated by one's own self-determined and somewhat hedonistic interests to gain intrinsic reward and enjoyment. First and foremost, craftspeople reported having participated in social gatherings centered around hobby craft making in order to enjoy their own free time by undertaking activities they found personally entertaining and gratifying. Getting connected with other people and communicating meanings with others was a consequence of this self-determined interest, but these factors were not considered to be the primary impulses for joining in a craft group in the first place.

Concerning the connective level of meaningfulness, the results of this study suggested that a contextually shared interest in a hobby craft was perceived to be a common denominator that led craft practitioners into previously unknown places and spaces, and eventually, led to connections being formed with other makers. A mutual interest in craft making also ensured that when entering the craft group, hobby craft makers already had a common topic to discuss, and therefore, a mutual orientation to the interaction, even if collaborative pursuits were not yet taken up. All in all, the common topic that was discussed with ease succeeded in providing an intimate but still neutral and unbiased ground for sharing and revealing something of the self through the materiality of expression. What was shared through craft making was personal, but was not so private that it would have led to embarrassment or discomfort. This is, perhaps, because craft making is an embodied material practice linked with interrogations of the sense of self (e.g., Riley, 2008). In the light of the study findings, it would seem that even ordinary discussions about hobby craft making have the ability to nurture connectivity among craftspeople, and bring hobby craft makers together through the circulation and collective resignification of embodied practices. As the results showed, sharing experiences and discussing the meanings of making was for some hobby makers as important as the making itself.

Still, the generation of a collective sense within the craft group required more than talk, it was also an inclination to act to the community's benefit by showing and distributing one's own craft knowledge and skills. In the craft group that was followed during the present study, sharing was based on shown-and-tell type events. In the craft group, everyone was free to experiment and deliver craft tasks casually, taking control of his or her own actions and sharing responsibility for the tasks. Many studies have discussed that craft making together strengthens the perceived sense of belonging and nurtures commitment (Maidment & Macfarlane, 2011a; Millar, 2013). On a deeper level both a sense of belonging and of commitment are products of the practitioners' sympathy for others, which contribute to the formation of a collective sense within the hobby craft

community. Accordingly, what was built as a result of social interchange in the hobby craft group itself was a contextual and transformative awareness of collectivity generated by one's consciousness and the flow of shared experiences.

In this light, the collective sense experienced through craft making was a product of a contextual meaningfulness that emerged from social interaction with individual practitioners sharing contextual interests emanating from their own interest in hobby craft making. Collective meaningfulness was experienced as a transient mode of we-ness that engaged participants in the group, deepened with mutual interaction, and eventually faded away when the group dispersed. Accordingly, the contextuality of the meanings highlights the temporality that predisposes the actions of craftspeople, making individuals interpret their experiences in specific ways through becomg integrated into a community of practice. Even though the community itself permanently dispersed after the course ended, the mutual interaction had left permanent marks on the makers, and enabled them to acquire one-of-a-kind contextual experiences with the other makers.

Indeed, understandings about subjective and intersubjective meaningfulness are always bound up with situations in which the meanings are reflected on and discussed. As situations keep changing, conceptualizations of meaningfulness are constantly being revised and negotiated, and new layers added to the understandings. Accordingly, shifting as a concept characterizing the meanings of hobby crafts acknowledges that meanings reflect conscious and unconscious understandings of embodied experiences that come into decisive play in any given moment. This includes the idea that craft makers are continuously prompted by various contextual influences that contribute to the negotiations of meanings in a given situation.

As already argued, the individual meanings are relational conceptualizations that derive from the subjective settings of life. Individual conceptualizations are given to the disparity of the lived experiences, including how one perceives the meanings of craft processes, and of social structures and emotions relating to them. Disparity admits that conflicts occur in terms of material interaction, and on the conceptual level. Take, for example, the emotional conflict proceeding from a disruption of material interaction, when the yarns jumble or the loops fall apart during knitting, and the work does not therefore come up to one's expectations. On a conceptual level, contradictory readings occur, for example, in relation to the self-positioning of the craft makers, or are linked with the ways how different makers perceive hobby craft making in political terms. For some, hobby craft making might be a weapon to campaign for social chances; others might find craft making only suitable for private purposes.

In all likelihood, the capability to cater to various functions and desires is a prevailing rationale for the overwhelming success of hobby craft making. There

are no regulated or particularly valid ways to carry out one's hobby craft practice, no taken-for-granted expectations related to the making, and no highly trained expertise required for one to find hobby craft making intrinsically rewarding. One is, however, free to realize one's hobby crafts in the way one wishes. Given this background, contemporary textile hobby crafting seems to be practiced exceedingly casually and more or less convivially, driven by one's shifting interests, in order to receive intrinsically rewarding experiences. In this vein, this study embraces a slightly different idea of casual leisure than Stebbins (2001; 2007). Textile hobby craft making, as conceptualized in this study, seems to fall somewhere in between Stebbins's serious and casual leisure but has some qualities of project-based leisure, too. Similar to "serious" activities, textile hobby craft making appears to be a form of systematized amateur activity pursued simply for the love of it. Many hobby craft makers seem to have an established devotion to craft making, but they might still not practice hobby crafts regularly or strive for professional standards. Neither is textile hobby craft making as immediate an action as Stebbins's "casual leisure," which requires little or no special training (such as handing out leaflets). However, hobbyist textile craft making is often described similarly to casual leisure—with the depiction emphasizing the intrinsically rewarding nature of hobby craft making. Textile hobby craft making might not be taken as "serious leisure" but as fulfilling, enjoyable, relaxed, and informal action that brings joy and enlightenment to the lives of the makers. Although many hobby crafts might occur as projects, and they combine aspects of serious and casual leisure activities, textile hobby craft making is not what Stebbins describes as "project-based leisure." Many craft projects are started as projects but are left forever halfway or doomed—projects that did not gain the role that was intended for them in the first place (see Steihaug, 2011) or that failed or got lost in the course of making (see Alfoldy, 2015). In addition, all textile hobby craft processes have an endless number of beginnings and ends, and the projects never proceed directly from the beginning to the end. Therefore, instead of a form of leisure, textile hobby craft making seems to be a form of living: a way to find enjoyment, fulfillment, reflectivity, and enhancement of self-image in the lives of the makers interested in and attracted by the materiality of making.

However, due to the differences in the manner of taking up hobby craft activities, the meanings of craft making remain complex and contradictory. Some textile hobby craft makers take up craft activities regularly and are extremely interested in and committed to textile hobby crafts, particularly the creative process. Arguably, textile hobby crafts are an important part of the everyday life of such craftspersons. It even seems that these hobbyists have started to take up different interlinked craft projects, through which the makers learned to express themselves with through textile craft making more and more creatively. However, there are also other, more subtle ways to consider oneself

as a craftsperson and be committed to and interested in crafts. Some hobbyists do not take up craft activities regularly but practice hobby crafts irregularly and with shifting interests—as projects that often change during the time of their making. In general, contemporary textile hobby crafting can be characterized as recreational, relaxed, and reflective activity engendered both by one's love of interaction with materials, and by one's love of getting connected with other makers. This does not mean that textile hobby crafts could not reach the same integrity and virtue as artisanry crafts, or that hobby crafts necessarily suffered from a lack of criticism in terms of their seriousness. It is clear that textile hobby crafts can be practiced at different intensities with varying degrees of commitment and engagement. Moreover, they can be undertaken with ease, borrowing materials and ideas casually and spontaneously from various sources. I interpret that because textile hobby crafts adapt to different purposes and conditions, they enable craftspeople to use crafting for multiple and different purposes that support one's own lifestyle, needs and beliefs, and promote different ways of arriving at diverse, shifting, and contextual meanings regarding the worth and value of the craft making. These finding set up a debate, first, with the view of hobby crafts as a form of leisure that is merely casual kitsch practiced for productive purposes or enjoyable and favorable results, and second, with a dismissive belief that hobby activities would lack critical or intellectual significance.

In terms of the quest for the meanings of textile hobby crafts in present study, it is crucial to acknowledge the sociocultural ground on which this study stands. In Finland, arts and crafts have been celebrated for decades as a source of creativity and well-being (Statistics Finland, 2005). Institutionally, arts and crafts have been attached to higher educational, social, and cultural purposes, as arts and crafts have been included as mandatory subjects in the Finnish education system for all pupils (e.g., Garber, 2002; Kokko, 2009; Kangas 2014; Veeber, Syrjäläinen, & Lind, 2015). Recently, arts and crafts have gained even more cultural and educational weight, as they have become supported by the Finnish government in its efforts to improve the nation's creative and cultural competence with greater accessibility to arts education among children and youth (Strategic Government Program, 2016). Against this background, it obvious that crafts not only enjoy popularity as pastime projects but are also recognized as a material and intellectual means of encouraging creativity, cultural sensitivity, and a perceived sense of the self. Although there is individual variation in ways of understanding the meanings of craft, the hobby craft culture in general seems to be substantiated by a holistic perspective on creativity that has risen in response to different cultural, institutional, and educational uses of art, craft and culture as part of the nation's social welfare.

All in all, there seems to be a widespread awareness of the worth and value of craft pursuits in Finland for both an individual and a society. However, what has

been missing is a discursive frame for what crafts mean within the complex and shifting contexts in which they find their meanings. This research has tried to fill that gap, providing insight into the subjective and collective meaning-making processes of people embracing crafts as part of their leisure.

Most notably, the research has shifted the focus from making processes to comprehensive material interaction, emphasizing the meaning and value of hobby craft making as a lifestyle and a way of living. Thus, the study has claimed that the meanings of textile hobby crafts are integrated in and derived from complex interpretative frameworks in which the makers are socialized and within which they interact. For many craft makers, craft making is deeply integrated in everyday life, predominantly because craft making is seen as a way to provide a fundamental purpose for everyday life through the expression of ideas and explorations of the self in the materiality of self-made craft designs. Against this background, it seems productive to let go of the idea of goal-oriented craft projects as solely substantially meaningful craft pursuits and instead start thinking about craft making as material exploration that has endless potential for generating meanings for the makers. Craft objects are, of course, tremendously important as objects designed to fulfill different expressive, functional, material, aesthetic, experiential, multisensory, collaborative, and narrative meanings. However, in consideration of the usability of the results of this study, in reflection of the interest in supporting creativity through access to art and culture, this research substantiates the development of more integrative and explorative craft projects focused more on material interaction, for example, through the use of materials that have personal value for the makers and are therefore capable of substantiating better the meaningful experiences through craft making. These kinds of projects include an idea of contextual and shifting meaningfulness nurtured through material interaction, and a sense of developing reflectivity deriving from the interpretation of the material.

5.2 Methodological reflections

To a large extent, researchers are always obliged to tackle different challenges in data collection, analysis, and research reporting. Especially research that delves into the social lives of human beings requires commitment to critical reflection, and a careful review of methodological and ethical concerns faced during the research process (Berg, 2009, 60–61; Miller et al., 2012). This study has focused on the meanings that hobby craft makers give to craft making, and the material objects that are being created in the course of making. Since the study was dedicated to the aim of explaining and understanding the views of individuals, and the examination included excursions into craft makers' private lives, there was a constant need for sensitivity and an increased awareness over research ethics and decision making relating to data collection, interpretation, and the

presentation of the results. Bearing in mind that the researcher was part of the culture under study, the research built on a dialogue between the researcher and the craftspeople participating in the study as research informants. In this dialogue, critical reflection arising at all stages of research became a key to attaining a degree of transparency. Capturing reality as it "is" was never the plan; what this study offered to do was to enlighten and unveil the meanings given to hobby crafts. The process has been considered with the term *unraveling*, with which I have tried to emphasize that research can never be free from bias and that researchers are never fully capable of attaining a fully objective view of reality (e.g., Benner, 1994; Miller et al., 2012, p. 6; Ormstrom et al., 2013, pp. 22–23). They unveil only the reality as it appears through subjective and evocative exploration. The term also links this exploration metaphorically to a process of undoing the entangled strings of yarn, making the threads (re)usable for new craft projects. In this process, I was the one to unravel the threads of yarns, making sense of the elements of research so that it can be unveiled to others.

Data collection and analyses. There is always much to speculate concerning the rigorousness of data collection and methods to ensure the highest quality of research. In terms of data collection, speculation often includes a need to discuss research validity, reliability, and the representativeness of the sample size, although it is well known that the attributes meant to validate quantitative research do not straightforwardly apply to the paradigm of qualitative research (e.g., Golafshani 2003; Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006). Some quantifiable figures relating to variety and volume are still worth considering in qualitative research; for example, if a researcher seeks to grasp a phenomenon through interviewing people, there is a need to estimate how many interviewees are required in order to reach trustworthy conclusions. This, of course, depends on the focus of the study, but is also linked with the intensity of the data gained from the interviews.

In this study, interviews were used as a way to gain knowledge on the meanings, values, and ideas of craft makers, and to explore makers' experiences of emerging collectivity. In Study I, the interviews were unstructured, allowing the free-flowing interaction in between the researcher and the craftspeople. Freeflowing conversation and spontaneously occurring questions allowed the mutual exchange of information; this, I think, was essential to ensure the richness and depth of the data. However, it needs to be acknowledged that the unstructured interview method has been criticized for a lack of reliability in comparison to structured interviews, because the same questions are not asked from each research informant (e.g., Latham & Finnegan, 1993, 42). Be that as it may, the aim of Study I was to grasp and explain the phenomenon in its richness rather than breaking it down in order to reach a patterned explanation. However, the sample size being rather small – only six interviewees – it can always be

speculated whether it would have been beneficial to interview more people, especially when all research informants came from different cultural backgrounds. More extensive data would have possibly given a chance to delve deeper into craft makers' private meaning-making processes occurring behind and in relation to the common kinds of meanings identitied in the analysis. This would, however, have possibly engendered a need to reorientate the study itself. Cultural background was one of the criteria in the selection of research informants, but as the focus was on the individual and her experiences and underlying emotions, the demarcation of culture only played a minor role in the study. All this considered, I do not think that the data lacked rigour or trustworthiness to portray the social phenomena that needed investigating. There was enough material to conduct a rigorous, iterative analysis and develop a set of descriptive categories revealing the sociomaterial interaction between craftspeople and their hobby crafts.

The choice of interview approach in Study II was made on the basis of the research task, which was to examine the generation of intersubjective meaningfulness in a hobby craft community. The task was driven by an interest to compare and connect the experiences of individuals in order to illustrate how collectivity emerged within the group. One means to gain knowledge of the experiences of group participants was by interviewing: the interviews were focused (Hopf, 2004), and included three substantive topics that were discussed individually with each interviewee. The depth and length of descriptions varied, but all study participants who were interviewed provided thoughtful insights into the study topics. Here again, it is important to reflect on the interviews: I would have liked to interview all course participants, but for one reason or another some declined. Indeed, one challenge in the data gathering was that those who were interviewed were the same persons who were active for most of the course, and present in most course sessions. Although research is always challenged by the partiality of views, it is important to acknowledge that the individuals who were interviewed were clearly encompassed by the culture.

Triangulation of methods and methodologies within the same research project is one way to promote a wider understanding of the phenomenon under scrutiny (della Porta & Keating, 2008, 37). Accordingly, by knitting together my self-reflective thinking and writing with the insights of the interviewed study participants, I tried to anticipate the issues relating to the active role of the interviewees. Throughout the project, I aimed to be true to the experiences of other study participants through an interpretative and reflexive account of knowledge (see Benner, 1994). However, one concern was that since I and the person interviewed had both been members of the course, the interpretation featured much peer-to-peer reflection. Although admitting that research is always created in a dialogue between the researcher and the researched, it might be wondered whether the dialogue in this research was more intense – and

intimate – than it traditionally is in dilemma-based interview studies where experiences do not have a collective origin. This is a challenge that I had tried to face with a search of the ways to question and critically reflect on my own views and accounts. This was done through a self-reflective examination, and a critique of my subjective writings. However, due to my own participation, I had a chance to reflect on the interactions of the course on a broad scale, including writing about my encounters with the participants who were not interviewed. All in all, I can at least say that my self-reflective writing provided different type of data than the interviews, and therefore enriched the data as a whole.

Although neither the choice of material nor the gender of the maker was addressed, the study was constrained by the interest in contemporary textile hobby crafts, which are usually considered "feminine" and related to the domestic home realm. The study had a particular interest in the meanings of younger makers, which affected what kinds of data were collected and how the data were gathered, produced, and presented. However, the data focused on the self-reflective experiences of craft making do not reflect the whole maker population, because it is likely that older makers do not concurrently agree with the views of younger makers, despite the links between and within generations (e.g., Morrison & Marr, 2013; Pöllänen, 2013b). It is plausible that there will always be differences in makers' meanings and motivations, especially in comparison to different age groups (Maidment & Macfarlane, 2009, 2011a, 2011b; Stannard, 2011; CYCA, 2014; Stannard & Sanders, 2015).

The main methodological contribution of this study has been the development of a visual-reflexive self-study methodology focused on capturing and communicating the meanings of practice through film-making. Autoethnographic cinema was intended as a method for unveiling embodied experiences through narrative scripting and evocative performance. It is a method to bring the lived moments on the screen through aesthetic and evocative performance, showing and narrating thoughts and actions that viewers of the film might relate to and reflect on. In autoethnographic cinema, the camera was perceived as a tool for capturing and reviewing one's own embodied practices, exposing them to the viewer's gazing. Accordingly, the cinema was not filmed through the eyes of the protagonist, but through a "voyeur's gaze" attempting "to expose the social and reveal the hidden truths that lie therein" (Denzin, 1995, 2).

Autoethnographic cinema is both a method for data collection and analysis. In this study, autoethnographic, retrospective writing was undertaken as a method to generate self-reflective data through an analysis of the self. Through filmmaking, the autoethnographic data was converted into the form of a short movie that demonstrated the self-understanding of the researcher through a narrative storytelling. In this vein, data generation and analysis merged through intimate storywriting, and together created an emotionally rich narrative of the experiences of the young hobby craft maker. For me, autoethnographic film-

making offered a way to redefine my own subjectification through material entanglement, and critically review (and change) things that were intimate and familiar to me, such was hobby craft making. I used autoethnographic cinema to capture the fragmentary and layered process of self-exploration, provoking the performance to illustrate the complex maker identity formation of a young craft maker.

In autoethnographic cinema, the protagonist's maker identity and maker body allowed for spectator identification. However, contrary to the habiatual documentary form, autoethnographic cinema offered a view of the intimate actions scripted and framed by the protagonist-makers themselves. In this vein, the authority of the film-maker and the protagonist shifted, as the protagonist reclaimed the power and control to portray and perform the practices that s/he found decisive and valuable. For this reason, autoethnographic cinema succeeded in pointing the camera at the heart of the meanings that are sometimes difficult to dress in words, putting weight on the experiences that had personal meaning in the life of the maker-protagonist. Simultaneously, the autoethnographic film approach deprivileged the view of the filmmaker authority, which has traditionally defined the status quo that the film has set out to represent. All in all, autoethnographic cinema offered a perspective on the experiences of the self through unavoidably personal performance, positioning the self as the directorauthority. This was the undeniable strength of the method in comparison to traditional documentary forms.

One difficulty in autoethnographic film-making is the shifting conception of the real world. Although autoethnographic cinema is composed from lived experiences, the performance is not based on raw footage, but renders the meanings of action through the "artificial resurrection of the real" (Minh-Ha, 1990, 83). However, no matter how the film setting was staged and the gaze manipulated, the body performs actions in front of a camera authentically: I knitted, my body moved, and loops became stitches in my hands. In this respect, there was no difference between what was performed and how the actions were made (see Deleuze & Guattari, 1987, 4), since performing included both being the subject of the action, and constructing my body/self through the action. Accordingly, autoethnographic cinema requires to be evaluated on the basis of evocation that facilitates understandings of the meanings of the practice and opens views to the patterns of cultural experience (Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011)—not on the basis of how "correct" representations of the subject matter are being represented, or whose point of view the viewer agrees with (Minh-Ha, 1990, 84).

Perhaps the main challenge within cinematic production was that it tended to render the self-scrutinizing contemplation as a coherent story that has a beginning and an end. In truth, the actions were not captured on the run, but the filming required many re-takes and re-placements. I re-performed knitting in

front of the camera time and again to exhibit the ongoingness of the experience; what is later composed out of the performance is a fragmentary reconstruction of the performed details moving in time and space. It is apparent that the autoethnographic narration or its cinematic visualization need not be chronological, although film still displays the subject matter in a sequential way. Despite this, the film format obviously succeded in illustrating the facets of cultural experience differently from written autoethnographies; it offered a medium for re-viewing, re-assessing, and re-conceptualizing the performed actions with the assistance of digital tools, allowing both film-maker-protagonist and spectators to reinforce their own subjectivities by watching the film as "voyeurs". To sum up, autoethnographic cinema is a promising method, but there are still many critical themes that remain to be explored and developed further.

Interpretation and presentation of the data. Qualitative research requires reflexivity about the role of researcher in the research process, and an understanding that the researcher is always part of the phenomenon under investigation (Alvesson & Sköldberg 2000; Berg, 2009, 198). The assumption that knowledge is created in the dialectic of individual and society has been at the heart of this project, acknowledging of course that individuals constitute and formulate their own interpretations of the world in particular ways (Berger & Luckmann, 1985, 208; Scott, 2011, 14). The interpretations of each individual are one-of-a-kind and therefore unique in their content, but the fundamental elements of individual understandings derive from collective representations showing socially constructed understandings of the world.

With all this in mind, I have used my own experiences to illustrate the facets of cultural experience – the common understandings of a way of life deriving from belongingness to the culture of hobby crafts through an exploration of a particular life (Ellis, 2004, xvii; Ellis, Adams & Bochner, 2011). This is to say that since self-studies do not achieve a value-neutral view of the world (or do not even pursue to it), they are not "generalizable" in the same way as studies based on statistical analyses, instead they provide knowledge of the social world through the researchers' intimate experiences. Revealing this intimacy has been crucial especially while writing the study reports. While writing, I have aimed at critical reflection throughout the research process. One method that has helped me to make my own voice clear has been to use the first-person in my writing, hoping that it could best offer me ownership of what has been said and reported. I have also felt this style of writing has assisted me in developing a consciousness of an honest and personal self, rather than hiding behind the passive voice.

Defining my own maker identity has been an essential part of the research process. During the prosess I have learned to know myself as a maker who celebrates hobby craft making as a way to nurture sensibility with my own

being, the material I work with, and the world I inhabit. However, even if I was not actively crafting I consider myself a hobbyist knitter, a representative of the younger generation of makers keen on craft making. What I want to emphasize with my own self-reflection is the way in which I have learned to aknowledge the complexity of meanings of hobby crafts, which I think is the only way to productively conceptualize a sense of meaningfulness in modern life. I have also felt that my own engagement and critical reflection have helped me to realize the cultural nuances that might not reveal themselves to people outside the culture under scrutiny. For this reason, I would like to think that my embeddedness in the culture of hobby craft is more of an advantage than a disadvangate (it is both, of course), since it has allowed me to build on intimate experiences from the perspective of an insider. I believe, for example, that my own background as a hobby craft maker played a crucial role when probing my own views and those of other participants when I entered the craft course in the second group meeting session. I was readily asked to share my experiences and invited to take my place in the group through contributing to the mutual interests of the group. I believe this also helped me to grasp the experiences of other makers, and eventually, to knit together the views of the participants and my personal reflection in the analysis. Later on, critical reflection of my own maker identity offered an avenue to thinking and writing, especially in relation to issues about what could be known and how the knowledge was created.

5.3 Re-casting – suggestion for further studies

During the past decades, we have witnessed a renaissance in craft making in the Western world that has introduced many changes to the material culture of hobby crafts. Not only have the materials provided by the vast craft supply industry become overly abundant, but also the methods of sharing and communication have revolutionized through the emergence of the Internet and social media. It has been suggested that the current revival of craft making shares commonalities with the upthrust of maker cultures in the late 1960s and 1970s (see Lucie-Smith, 1981, 274; Adamson, 2007, 166; Stevens, 2011, 51; Peach, 2013) when crafts flourished because they provided an alternative to institionalized workmanship. Some fifty years ago craft revival sought inspiration from the nostalgic and idealistic retreat, and stood against conservative preoccupations and patriarchal hegemonies of power. However, much of the current resurgence has been directed towards forward-looking social movements, which are deliberately ironic in their referencing of the past and dexterious with innovations in new digital media (Peach, 2013, 174; also Minahan & Wolfram Cox, 2007; Spencer, 2008, 60; von Busch, 2010). The rise of these “new” maker cultures does not, however, suggest that the culture of ordinary hobbyist home crafting would be threatened by extinction. On the

contrary, this study has shown that textile hobby crafting is to be blooming along – and in connection with – the urban maker communities.

Given the alignment of the "old" and the "new" maker cultures, there is much to delve into with future research. For example, there are an ever-increasing number of hobbyists embracing textile craft making as a valuable leisure pursuit who engage in the negotiation of meanings through social media sharing. Besides widespread, worldwide craft communities such as Ravelry and Etsy, there are countless online communities on Facebook and Blogger formed around particular craft events or interests. For example, the largest Finnish-speaking online craft community on Facebook [*Käsitöiden ystävien vinkkipankki,* Craft friends sharing tips and tricks for crafty ideas] currently has about 35 000 members, and the number of community members and online posts is still growing rapidly (see Kouhia, 2016). In addition, hashtag-based Instagram and Twitter provide the means for negotiating meanings through image-intensive network sharing, enabling craft practitioners to define their maker identity by posting photos and videos of their projects on social media. There are already studies that have unveiled the role and position of craft objects between the self and the social network (Hellstrom, 2013; Orton-Johnson, 2014), and opened up views on a new sense of community-development (e.g., Vartiainen, 2010; Mayne, 2016) as well as different types of online merchandise (Liss-Marino, 2014). Against this background, examining the negotiation of meanings through the newlyemerged online photo-sharing platforms would be desirable for future research, especially from the viewpoint of self-representation. Although I am tempted by the use of quanlitative research methods and visual data, a mixed method approach might also provide an interesting view on the motivations for posting and sharing in social media.

There is also a need to develop autoethnographic film-making further, and substantiate its potential to explore protagonists' material engagement. The outcomes of this study indicate that the methodology is applicable to research interested in the meaning of practice, but what still remains vague is what the methodology can provide to practice-led study. More films need to be conducted in order to promote fictional storycrafting and performative resurrection as a means to gain the knowledge of the practice itself. All in all, I hope that autoethnographic cinema is able to legitimize more open discussion and further research into the meanings of the presentation of the self.

Throughout this study, I have aimed to highlight different ways of experiencing, communicating, negotiating, and reproducing the meanings within the culture of hobby craft. To sum up, textile hobby crafts are undertaken because they are capable to realize one's individuality and interestedness, and because they become intrinsically meaningful and valuable for the practitioners themselves. Because of this individuality, textile hobby crafts seem to be able to generate diverse, complex, and shifting meanings which arise in and through

craft maker's material interaction and develop with the passage of time. For example, my own craft projects sometimes occupy my hands and mind extremely intensively, but there are times when I put my craft projects aside for months in order to have time for my other interests. What I have also learned throughout this process is that many of the projects actually have no substantial end in terms of material interaction. Even if I could complete my woolly sock project, the socks will soon be worn out and in the need of repair and reconstruction—as if my hobbyist textile craft making was just temporarily put into hold.

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