QUALITY MANAGEMENT AS A PART OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION’S CULTURE

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Introduction

Study process in general and foreign language study in particular is a complex, dynamic student-teacher relationship process, many-sided facets of which still remains a challenge for practitioners and researchers. Study process in higher education institution is influenced by students and lecturers’ knowledge, skills, competencies, values, beliefs, motivation. Quality of the study process and result can be observed and even to a certain extent measured, using, for example, EFQM model as self-assessment tool (Biggs, 2003).

Inner and outer quality managing activities in Latvian HEIs have a short, about 15 year old history. In 1995 has been established Centre for Evaluating the Quality in Higher Education Institutions AIKNC, where regularly are updated Self-assessment Reports and Commission Evaluation Reports about accredited HEIS and Programmes (www.aiiknc.lv). Quality managing activities in HEIs, which become especially explicit before accreditation and re-accreditation of HEIs or study Programs, basically comprise regular self-assessment of study courses, carried out by teaching staff and student questioning after the completion of study courses (with rarely afterwards carried out corresponding activities), questioning alumni about their career path shortly after graduation (with low return rate of the questionnaires, distributed to graduates upon graduating), involving professional sphere in developing study Programs and assessing results, promoting student and lecturers’ mobility and professional development, attracting domestic and foreign students, catering for students’ learning support services and contemporary study environment.

As quality management is something new in Latvian HEIs, many lecturers consider it being useless and even harmful (because it has been borrowed from economics and business world, where beliefs, values and culture in general are different from academic culture, values and beliefs), and their only wish is to let them do their job without “unnecessary” interruption. On the other hand, in Latvian HEIs a considerable part of the teaching staff understand the necessity to introduce quality management as the response to adjusting to nowadays tough
financial situation, using state money in such a way, that most suits the needs of the society, and being able to give account for their activity to all stakeholders.

Quality is usually evaluated in the framework of HEIs or study Programs, although to a large extent it is formed in one study course, and the teaching staff is responsible for assuring it. However, there are no study course specific evaluation methods and instruments, which could help lecturers to become more aware about their role in quality management of the whole HEI or study Program. Our intent was to develop such course specific instrument for the course of English for Specific Purposes, with the help of which could be evaluated not only present quality of the course, but also traced the possibilities of changing present situation on the basis of lecturers and students’ views and beliefs.

**Objectives of the work**

Find out students’ and lecturers views and beliefs about the following questions:

1. **What are the aims of the study course?**
   
   The aim of this question is to find out what is understood by quality of the study course: is this pure knowledge, language skills or language competences.

2. **What are most valuable results of the learning process?**
   
   The aim of this question is to find out what is students personal attitude to learning, since attitudes are integral part of competencies.

3. **What is the structure of students’ learning?**

4. **What are the most important pedagogical activities in the opinion of students?**

5. **What are the most important students’ learning management activities in the opinion of lecturers?**
   
   The aims of last three questions coincide with their formulation.

6. **Is the lecturer good subject specialist/good pedagogue/good students’ learning manager?**
   
   The aim of this question is to determine in which stage according to students’ opinion is the quality management in ESP courses in Latvian HEIS.

7. **Do the lecturers agree that in order to improve the quality of the course should be practised certain quality management procedures?**
   
   The aim of this question is to compare lecturers’ views and beliefs about practicing certain quality assurance procedures with present practice.

8. **Do the lecturers agree that quality management will improve the quality of the course?**
The aim of this question is to find out if the lecturers believe that quality management will improve the quality of the course, and further compare LR lecturers’ views with those of other EU states, where have been carried out similar investigations.

**Theoretical background**

Quality model and quality evaluation instrument IQE ESP (instrument for quality evaluation in English for Specific Purpose courses), as every system, consists of 3 main parts:

- design of the course (setting aims of the course, planning the course);
- implementation (learning and teaching, assessment, microclimate);
- results (developed competences; students’ satisfaction).

**Design.** Quality management according to TQM principles starts with the setting of appropriate, realistic, controllable aims (George/Weimerskirch, 2002; Omachochu/Ross, 2004). “If we remove the aim, process management is left in the realm of guess”, stress total quality management theoreticians (George/Weimerskirch, 2002, p. 70).

In ESP courses the techniques of setting aims, their monitoring and evaluating their attainment at the end of the course has been discussed widely (Kennedy/Bolitho, 1990; Hutchinson/Waters, 1994).

**Implementation.** Students learning is characterized by cognitive and social objectives, teaching at HEIs is viewed as pedagogic and students’ learning management process (Ramsden 1992; McCaffery 2004; Dominowski 2002); special attention is paid to assessment of students proficiency and microclimate or atmosphere in study process (Knoop/Gardner 2001).

**Competences developed.** In ESP courses the students develop communicative, intercultural and professional foreign language competencies. Communicative language competence is characterized by highly developed receptive and productive skills of foreign language proficiency, not pure grammatical correctness (CEF, 2001). Indispensable part of communicative method is functional approach, which emerged by summarizing lexical and grammatical structures, which are used in communicative situations (Littlewood, 1991). Developing communicative competence is aimed at language used being able to solve communicative tasks, she or he has set for himself/herself (Nunan, 2004).

Educational outcomes in the 21st century are also social skills: team-working, risk taking, encouraging others (The Report to UNESCO, 2001). To meet the needs of labor market, in ESP courses besides communicative and intercultural competences the students develop also professional foreign language competence (Luka, 2005), comprising the mentioned competences and experience in the professional field.
Students’ satisfaction. TQM is oriented to satisfying clients’ needs (QMS Part I, 2002). Students in our opinion can only partly be considered clients, because they are main actors in forming their competencies, and quality in higher education institutions means satisfaction of their needs from a broader perspective: mission fulfillment, empowering individuals through their active participation (Harvey/Green 1993; Harvey/Knight 1996; Harvey 2006).

IQE ESP model and instrument consists of 7 quality blocks.

Quality blocks

1. Aims

In ESP courses at the beginning of each course should be set the aims of the course, taking into account the interests of all stakeholders (Hutchinson/Waters, 1994), students’ needs should be determined by carrying out needs analysis (Kennedy/Bolitho, 1990). Centralized secondary school leaving exams in English, as well as CEF guidelines for self-assessment of language skills (CEF, 2001) can help in determining students’ present level of foreign language proficiency.

To gain more insights in students’ learning process, an attempt was made to view learning process more in depth, trying to find out what cognitive and social activities students use during study process.

2. Learning

In education and higher education especially successful education has always been encouraging students to use higher order thinking skills (McCaffery, 2004). Bloom, the creator of the taxonomy of cognitive processes (Bloom, 1992), as the lowest cognitive aim considered knowledge and comprehension (processes involved: remembering, taking notes, describing, etc.), medium level: application (referring, connecting, applying, etc.), high level: analysis, synthesis, evaluation (developing critical thinking, hypothesizing, analyzing, synthesizing, evaluating, etc.).

In the improved system of educational objectives (consisting of remembering: recalling relevant knowledge from long-term memory; understanding: constructing meaning from oral and written messages through interpreting, classifying, summarizing, inferring, comparing, and explaining; applying: using a procedure; analyzing: dividing into parts, determining how the parts relate to one another and to an overall structure through differentiating, organizing, and attributing; evaluating: making judgments based on criteria and standards; creating: putting elements together or reorganizing elements into a new structure to form a functional whole) evaluating has moved from the highest positions to the previous one, but synthesizing has moved up and become creating (Anderson/Kratwohl, 2001).
If only lower order cognitive skills are used in the study process, low is also the involvement of the student, the students prefer surface or deep approach to the study process, but this is the study situation, which determines which approach will be used (Biggs, 2003).

Nowadays it is not enough to learn to know, it is also necessary to be able to live together (The Report to UNESCO, 2001), and in recent years more emphasis is put on sociocultural than cognitive theories of learning. Ability to cooperate, develop empathy, intercultural awareness and competence characterize the development of social skills, which are “added value, to language study process, the development of additional skills beyond language competencies” (Lantolf, 2000).

3. Teaching

Considering teaching activities in promoting students’ learning, the emphasis should be shifted from information giving to helping the students to search, organize and use knowledge, and teachers from soloists are advised to become promoters, mentors (Report to UNESCO, 2001), or even choreographers (Donaldson, 1999) or conductors (Dominowski, 2002).

Three main teachers’ competences include:

- Subject specialist: teacher as a specialist of his study course, as a mediator between study subject, especially its basic considerations, and the student.
- Pedagogue: creator of motivation, including connecting studies with future profession, cultivator of values, enricher of students’ learning experience, creator of studies promoting atmosphere, including sufficiently challenging activities, and assessor of students’ achievements.
- Students’ learning manager: students’ resource and help, promoter of students’ cooperation, mediator between institutions requirements and the student, as well as between study materials and the student, capable of reflection and learning himself.

Mediator’s role includes adjusting study materials to needs and wishes of the learners, using different tasks for different learning styles. New development in foreign language learning is CLIL (content and language integrated learning), and to organize CLIL learning the lecturer should have all three competences.

Lecturer as pedagogue and students’ learning manager should adjust study process to students’ level of language proficiency and students’ learning styles. If the exercises and test tasks are too difficult, the students are overloaded and the process of forming competencies is hindered (Skehan, 1993).

Ideas about lecturer as leader became topical in 90ies of the previous century, when in study process there was shift from teaching to learning and to lecturer as manager of this
process. Lecturers are leaders, if they can influence students. Liberman (Liberman, 2001) considers that teacher must be like change agent, who first evaluates the situation, and the changing, what is necessary. Bringing about the changes, the lecturer should be sensitive to students’ differences; she should direct them to reaching common aims, situating herself both inside and outside the system. The lecturer, like all leaders, in many cases can best of all motivate the students to learn by personal example. The lecturer should be able to learn from students and admit her personal failures, inability and incompetency (Dominowski, 2002).

Lambert and other authors advocate using in learning organizations widened or distributed leadership. If usual leadership is about leaders and followers, then widened leadership means leaders and leaders. The aim of this leadership is to release potential, which is in organization. This is leadership through people, where it is necessary to create the atmosphere of trust, moving away from hierarchic leadership style, characterized by unwillingness to share, trust, and listen to others. It is admitted that in organizations as important as acting people, are the relations between them. To release human potential, should be formed new trustful atmosphere. Hierarchic systems work without trust, and although they work well, in new conditions it is not enough. Using distributed leadership, the people feel free to form relations, conduct themselves, they self-organize, and selforganizations substitutes control (Lambert a.o., 1997; Lambert, 1998).

In the development of widened leadership main element is learning together, common formation of sense and knowledge. Such leadership acts as mediator in forming values, information and assumptions in the form of constant dialogue. Students and lecturers are deeply involved in their work, they take responsibility; widen their spheres of activity (Jackson, 2006).

Lecturer as leader should possess such characteristics as ability to be proactive, predict what is going to happen; reflect on success, failures, problems; encourage students to express their opinion, be flexible, open to changes; be able to work in a team; give students ample possibilities to participate in study process and learn from students (Lambert a.o., 1997; Lambert, 1998; Report to UNESCO, 2001; Jackson, 2006).

To find out if the lecturers accept quality management, they evaluate the necessity to carry out the above mentioned students learning quality management activities in 4-point Likert scale.

Ideas about lecturer as leader and the necessity to carry out quality assurance many lecturers consider as inappropriate in education, try to resist them, and, if it is not possible, simply want to be left in peace. The statement “the lecturers just want to do their job” is characteristic feature of 1st stage in quality management.
4. Microclimate

People learn best, if they are in pleasant physical and social atmosphere, where they are given sufficiently challenging tasks, where is used meaningful contents, and teachers and students have common higher aims (Knoop/Gardner, 2001). Study environment can be characterized not only as student and teacher centred, but also as their combination: ample support providing study atmosphere (students get ample support, the lecturer is clear, good balance between theory and practice, also frontal teaching) and environment supporting individual learning (Elen et al, 2007). Qualitative study environment can be characterized also by involvement in opposite to alienation (Case, 2007). Involvement and alienation can be referred to students’ relations with studies, university life, home, career, group mates and lecturers. Personal affective involvement promotes information storage, processing and retrieval (Goleman, 1996). Foreign language courses have specific demands towards micro climate, because in these courses should prevail communication atmosphere, and lecturers and students should become partners in communication (Pasov, 1987). Such an approach allows finding causes of students’ success and failure in broader context of society and culture, not only in the sphere of choosing cognitive strategies.

Positive study atmosphere is characterized by balance between students’ competence and challenging them, between known and unknown, and to achieve this, the tasks or problems should be neither too easy, nor too difficult (Knoop/Gardner, 2001). Study process should be suited to learners’ foreign language proficiency and students’ learning styles. If the tasks are too difficult, the students are overloaded, and the process of forming competencies is hindered (Skehan, 1993). The students with higher competence need higher challenge, but for the students with lower competence high challenge can cause anxiety, when the students do not know how to cope with the situation. If the anxiety is too high, challenge should be lowered, so that students can feel good and study with joy (Knoop/Gardner, 2001).

5. Results and satisfaction

According to higher education’s orientation towards learning outcomes, main results of the study course are communicative competence, intercultural competence and professional language competence (Threshold level, 1990; Hutchinson/Waters, 1994; Kaltigina, 1997; Bologna declaration, 1999), as well as students’ ability to enter job market and show sufficient level of language skills needed.

Besides developed competencies important outcome is also satisfaction of interested parties, namely, students, lecturers, graduates and society in general (Bonstingl, 1992; George/Weimerskirch, 2002).
Quality principles

Clarity implies clarity of aims, clarity of presentation, clarity of achievement and clarity of pedagogic methods and language learning approaches used. Transparency is central aspect TQM, where it means that the client should be best informed about the characteristics of service. Similarly, transparency is key issue with regard to the organization of language learning courses (EU project EQUALS). Transparency is topical in all forms of reflective teaching and learning (Richards/Lockhart, 1994).

Adequacy is appropriateness in terms of needs, objectives and purposes of users, taking into account social, cultural and educational; characteristics of learners. The adjustment of services to needs of clients is essential in TQM philosophy (George/Weimerskirch, 2002). Orientation towards learners needs in language learning has a long tradition and refers to individual, as well as cultural and issues (Tarone/Yule, 1989, Reeves/Wright, 1996). Individualization (taking into account learning styles) refers to type of activities and exercises used, allowing the learner to determine their own pace (Horwitz/Young, 1991; Ehrman, 1996, Tomlinson, 1998). If the learners are not at an appropriate level of proficiency, the task can lead to overload of students’ processing capacity, which will inhibit processing (Skehan, 1993).

Reliability comprises quality control procedures, reliability of materials; reliability of teaching and learning methods; internal coherence of presentation of the material, practice and assessment, authentic texts. It is based on needs analysis (Kennedy/Bolitho, 1990).


Ability to cooperate, develop empathy, intercultural awareness and competence characterize the development of social skills, which are “added value,” to language study process, the development of additional skills beyond language competencies”. In recent years more emphasis is put on sociocultural than cognitive theories of learning (Lantolf, 2000). Partnership (personal interest and involvement) implies providing possibility to make choices and share responsibility. Affective dimension supports the storage and retrieval of information (Goleman, 1996).

Partnership is the first step in the direction of autonomy: individual work, in the centre of which is individual taking on responsibility for own learning.
Variety (as well as user-friendliness and interactivity, variety, sensitivity, which takes into consideration affective dimension, creating an attractive environment and motivating activities) contributes to learner’s motivation. Positive study atmosphere in study process is characterized by balancing challenge and competence (Knoop/Gardner, 2001). Correction does not have inhibiting effect on the desire to learn, and there is attention and patience for weaker learners.

Attractiveness of the study course is connected with client led TQM approach (George/Weimerskirch, 2002). The language study interpretation of this issue is influenced by motivational theories of learning, autonomous learning environment, as well as affective approaches, which has been partly taken over by communicatively oriented approaches (CEF, 2001). In ESP courses are varied roles of lecturers and students, emphasis of classes, the degree of centeredness, etc. (Littlewood, 1991; Nunan, 2004; Hutchinson/Waters, 1994).

Data collection and analysis

Quality culture is reflected by lecturers and students’ beliefs and views about quality sensitive issues, which they have expressed in their answers to Research questions 1 and 2. Respondents’ answers were coded. Taking into account qualitative methodological nature of the study, it was not considered appropriate to provide actual numbers of how many answers gave particular answers. However, to illustrate how widespread each perception was, were used such terms as “nearly all students”, “the majority of students”, “the minority of students” and “a few students”.

Students attitude to Research question 6 was expressed in the form of 4-point Likert scale (fully agree, agree, disagree, and completely disagree), to Research questions 7 and 8: in the form of Yes/No answers.

To obtain answers to Research questions 3-5, students and lecturers’ attitudes to teaching and learning process were expressed in 4 point Likert scale, further 27 items concerning cognitive and other learning activities, as well as 19 items concerning lecturers’ pedagogical activities and 23 items concerning students learning management were analyzed with the help of factor analysis, using SPSS Version 17 (Pallant, 2007).

The sample

The research was carried out during 2 study years - 2005/2006 and 2007/2008 - in main types of HEIs of the Republic of Latvia (altogether 13 HEIs): state university type HEIs, state non-university type HEIs and private non-university type HEIs. The sample consisted of 278 respondents: 68 teachers and 210 students.

The results

1. Aims of the study course.
Research question 1: What are the aims of the study course?

Clarity of aims: the students can describe aims: nearly all respondents-students assert that that aims are clear to them, the majority can describe the aims and set them at the beginning of the study course, still the minority check their achievement.

Adequacy of aims: the majority of students consider the main aim of the study course being acquiring knowledge, the minority: developing skills and the use of knowledge and skills. The majority of lecturers consider the main aim being the use of knowledge and skills, minority: developing skills and a few: acquiring knowledge. Minority of the lecturers mention also the development of communicative competence and improving of intercultural competence in general, and in particular better understanding of one’s own and other cultures, but the students do not mention aims connected with competencies.

Reliability: although the majority of students can mention their CEF levels in general English, the students tend to mention the level incorrectly, directly associating it with the levels of centralized secondary school leaving exams, although the connection between two scales is reciprocal.

2. Learning

Research question 2. What are most valuable results of the learning process?

166 students (79.6%) have given answers to free question “What was your most valuable learning experience in this study course?”. Answers have been coded according to division of learning in XXI century as learning to know, to do, to be and to live together (Report to UNESCO). According to classification of learning outcomes, learning to know is classified as gaining knowledge, the remaining three leaning aims are classified as developing life skills. The ultimate aim is developing competencies, applying skills.

The majority of students consider their most valuable learning experience being gaining new knowledge, minority: acquiring, improving and applying language proficiency skills, just a few have mentioned learning to be and to live together.

With the help of z test has been proved that:
1) there is pronounced tendency to consider most important learning experience being gaining knowledge than developing skills (z=7,23>1,96);
2) there is pronounced tendency to consider most important learning experience being gaining knowledge than applying knowledge and skills (z = 9,33>1,96);
3) there is higher tendency to consider most important learning experience being developing skills than applying knowledge and skills to (z=2,95>1,96);
Research question 3: What is the underlying factor structure of students’ learning?

The 27 items of cognitive and other study activities were subjected to principal components analysis (PCA) using SPSS Version 17. Prior to performing PCA, the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was 0.73, exceeded the recommended value of 0.6 and Bartlett’s Test of sphericity reached statistical significance (Sig=0.000, i.e. <0.01).

Principal component analysis revealed the presence of 9 components with eigenvalues exceeding 1. More than two strong loadings were on first five factors, which explained 18.67%, 6.68%, 5.97%, 5.37% and 5.04% of the variance respectively (Table 1).

The five component solution explained a total of 41.73% of the variance (Table 1). To aid in the interpretation of these components, was used Oblimin rotation. The rotated solution revealed the presence of simple structure, with all 5 components showing a number of strong loadings and all variables loading substantially on only one component.

Table 1. Component structure of students’ learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Eigenvalues</th>
<th>No of respondents</th>
<th>No of components</th>
<th>% of variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cognitive activities</td>
<td>5.04</td>
<td>270</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Student cooperation</td>
<td>1.80</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Connection with practice</td>
<td>1.61</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Individual work</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Low level cognitive activities</td>
<td>1.36</td>
<td>278</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>278</strong></td>
<td><strong>3</strong></td>
<td><strong>41.73</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Component 1 – cognitive activities – includes explaining (weight: 0.710), comparing (0.600), hypothesizing (0.548), applying in novel situations (0.529), connecting new information with already known (0.506), describing (0.496), learn to use reference literature (0.482), analyze (0.471). Cronbach’s alpha of factor 1 is 0.747.

Component 2- student cooperation – includes listening to others (0.569), learning from other students (0.524), learning to cooperate (0.515), a.o.

Component 3 - connection with the practice - using the obtained knowledge in practice (0.693), using the developed skills in situation, which will be at work (0.636), a.o.

Component 4: - individual work - studying individually (0.621), understanding information (0.584), evaluating if something is worth learning (0.509).

Component 5 – surface learning - making notes (0.664), receiving information (0.566), reading study materials and notes (0.423).
Thus students’ learning mainly is cognitive pursuit, cooperation with other students, connecting studies with practice are not so explicit.

The respondents of the described factor analysis were 268 lecturers and students, who evaluated if they practice a list of cognitive and social study activities. Separately were analyzed also the answers of 66 students, who evaluated how often they do 27 different study activities according to 3 point Likert scale (often, sometimes, never). The suitability check showed that Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin value is 0.67, which exceeds the recommended value of 0.6 and Bartlett’s Test of sphericity reached statistical significance (Sig=0.000). Oblimin rotated solution revealed the same 5 components, explaining a total of 51.69% of the variance. The only difference between 2 solutions is that students admit that they use in their learning process such short term memory activating activities as learning by heart, receiving information, a.o., while lecturers do not consider that such activities are important in students’ learning.

3. Teaching

Pedagogical activities.

Research question 4. What are the most important pedagogical activities in the opinion of students?

The 19 items of Pedagogical activities were subjected to principal components analysis (PCA) using SPSS Version 17. Prior to performing PCA, the suitability of data for factor analysis was assessed. Inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of 0.3 and above. The Kaiser-Meyer-Oklin value was 0.78, exceeded the recommended value of 0.6 and Bartlett’s Test of sphericity reached statistical significance (Sig=0.000, i.e. <0.01).

Principal component analysis revealed the presence of 5 components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 26.73%, 8.36%, 7.42%, 6.62% and 6.13% of the variance respectively (Table 2). The five component solution explained a total of 55.26% of the variance. To aid in the interpretation of these components, Oblimin rotation was used. The rotated solution revealed the presence of simple structure, with all 5 components showing a number of strong loadings and all variables loading substantially on only one component.

All 5 components show weak positive correlations (Table 3).

Component 1 - involving students- consists of students encouraging to involve in different activities (weight: 0, 828), creating good atmosphere (0.697), promoting cooperation (0.585), a.o.

Component 2 – connecting studies with profession - includes showing how to use the information obtained (0.862), connecting studies with future profession (0.714).
Component 3 - respecting diversity - includes using different exercises for different levels of language proficiency (0.805), using different exercises for different learning styles (0.672), create studies promoting environment (0.462), using CLIL (content and language integrated learning) (0.423).

Component 4 – explaining - includes explaining (0.760), interpreting new information (0.571).

Component 5 - motivating students - consists of paying special attention to the basic assumptions of the subject (0.713), assessing students (0.682), motivating (0.576), creating interest (0.512), a.o.

Table 2. Main component structure of lecturers’ pedagogic activities (students’ opinion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of factors</th>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Eigenvalues</th>
<th>No of subjects</th>
<th>No of items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
<th>% of variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Involving students’</td>
<td>5.08</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>26.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Connecting studies with profession</td>
<td>1.59</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>8.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Respecting diversity</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>7.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Explaining</td>
<td>1.26</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>6.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Motivating students</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.61</td>
<td>6.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>55.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3. Correlation matrix of the groups of pedagogical activities, revealed in factor analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of factors</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>0.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>1.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The interpretation of 5 components is consistent with the view that main factors in pedagogical activity of lecturers in the opinion of students are students’ deep involvement in study process, supporting the ideas of distributed leadership, aimed at empowering students and assuming responsibility for their studies, and the idea of students’ involvement in
opposition to alienation. Other, less important factors are raising students’ motivation, respecting diversity, clear explanations and connecting studies with future profession.

Managing students’ learning (opinion of lecturers)

Research question 5. What are the most important students’ learning management activities in the opinion of lecturers?

The 23 items of Pedagogical activities were subjected to principal components analysis (PCA) using. The suitability of data for factor analysis: inspection of the correlation matrix revealed the presence of many coefficients of 0.3 and above; the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin value was 0.667, exceeded the recommended value of 0.6 and Bartlett’s Test of sphericity reached statistical significance (Sig=0.000. i.e. <0.01).

Principal component analysis revealed the presence of 6 components with eigenvalues exceeding 1, explaining 32,355%, 14,142%, 8,383%, 6,781%, 5,821% and 4,580% of the variance. Inspection of screeplot and of the number of variables loading on each component, were retained 3 factors.

The 3 component solution explained a total of 54.881% of the variance (Table 3). To aid in the interpretation of these components, Oblimin rotation was used. The rotated solution revealed the presence of simple structure, with all 3 components showing a number of strong loadings and all variables loading substantially on only one component.

Table 3. Main component structure of students learning management activities (lecturers’ opinion)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No of factors</th>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Eigenvalues</th>
<th>No of subjects</th>
<th>No of items</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
<th>% of variance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Cooperation with other lecturers</td>
<td>7.44</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>0.81</td>
<td>32.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Teacher’s competencies</td>
<td>3.25</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>14.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Open mind</td>
<td>1.93</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.85</td>
<td>8.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>54.881</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Component 1 – cooperation with other lecturers: consulting with other lecturers (load: 0.801), all lecturers act as a team (0.792), sharing responsibility about course (0.773), documenting students’ work (0.627), enriching students’ learning experience (0.559), participating in conferences (0.548), defining the indicators of students’ success (0.516), a.o.

Component 2 – teacher’s competencies: being good pedagogue (0.831), good manager of students’ learning (0.805), good professional language specialist (0.709).
Component 3 – possessing open mind: reflection of success and failures (0.806), learning from students (0.754), having exchange students (0.723), promoting students’ flexibility (0.870), teach flexibility, openness to change (0.635), ability to be proactive (0.631), good lecturers’ education (0.582), students’ encouraging to feel free and Express their views (0.570).

Thus the most important component in managing students’ learning is lecturers’ teamwork, which exceeds teacher’s competencies, it is also considered important to have open mind. The components correlate positively, medium strong correlation is found between Component 1 and Component 2 (Table 4).

Table 4. Component Correlation Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Component 1</th>
<th>Component 2</th>
<th>Component 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component 1</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>0.369</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component 2</td>
<td>0.119</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>0.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Component 3</td>
<td>0.369</td>
<td>0.009</td>
<td>1.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Evaluation of teacher’s competencies in the opinion of students.

Research question 6. Is the lecturer good subject specialist/good pedagogue/good students’ learning manager?

Picture 1 shows students’ opinion about lecturers’ competencies.

Picture 1. Evaluation of teacher’s competencies in the opinion of students (1-4).

Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test showed (Table 5) that in students’ opinion:
1) students more tend to agree that the lecturer is good ESP specialist than pedagogue (z = -3.88; p<0.001; small effect r=0.19);
2) students more tend to agree that lecturer is good pedagogue than the manager of students’ learning \((z = -6.20; \ p < 0.001; \ \text{small effect } r=0.30)\);

3) students more tend to agree the lecturer is good ESP specialist than the manager of students’ learning \((z = -7.32; \ p <0.001; \ \text{medium effect } r=0.36)\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Test Statistics (^b)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Good pedagogue - good ESP specialist</td>
<td>(z = -3.883a) (r = -0.19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good manager of students’ learning - good ESP specialist</td>
<td>(z = -7.322a) (r = -0.36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good manager of students’ learning - good pedagogue</td>
<td>(z = -6.119a) (r = -0.30)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed) 0.000 0.000 0.000

a. Based on positive ranks.  b. Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test

The results show that the students tend to evaluate quality management in ESP course as corresponding to the 1\textsuperscript{st} stage, which is characterized by the fact that the lecturer is good and subject specialist or to the 2\textsuperscript{nd} stage, which is characterized by the fact that the lecturer is good pedagogue. The least number of students agree that the lecturer is good students learning manager, which is characteristic for 3\textsuperscript{rd} stage of quality management.

Quality assurance procedures

\textbf{Research question 7. Do the lecturers agree that in order to improve the course quality should be practised certain quality management procedures?}

Table 6. Lecturers views about quality management procedures and their practice

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Quality management procedures</th>
<th>Observations of classes in one HEI</th>
<th>Interinstitutional observations of classes</th>
<th>In one course are used the same tests</th>
<th>Tests are compared with the ones used in similar courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice</td>
<td>65.7%</td>
<td>26.9%</td>
<td>64.2%</td>
<td>49.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consider very important and important</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
<td>55.7%</td>
<td>70.3%</td>
<td>80.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The comparison of the percentages of lecturers who practice quality management procedures and who consider them important (p1: observations of classes in one HEI; p2: interinstitutional observations of classes; p3: in one course are used the same tests; p4: tests are compared with the ones used in similar courses).

The results (Table 6; Picture2) testify that lecturers more support the necessity of quality management procedures in ESP course than they are practiced at present.

**Research question 8. Do the lecturers agree that quality management will improve the quality of the course?**

68.5% of the lecturers consider that practice quality management procedures will improve the quality of the course. In Western Europe have been obtained the following results: in UK: 55.8% (n=87) and in Germany 62.2% (n=82) agree that quality management *does not mean* that quality will be improved (Pritchard, 2005). Thus the lecturers in Latvia are more optimistic about the place of quality management in the culture of HEI, in improving course quality.

**Conclusions**

1. Main aim of ESP study course from the viewpoint of students and lecturers is knowledge acquiring and skills developing, competences are mentioned rarely.
2. Students’ tend to consider that there most valuable learning experience is gaining knowledge, skills and competencies are mentioned less.
3. Students’ learning mainly is cognitive pursuit, cooperation with other students, connecting studies with practice are not so explicit.
4. Teacher mainly is good ESP specialist and pedagogue, less students’ learning manager.
5. The students consider that most important lecturers’ activities in raising quality are involving students, supporting the idea of distributed leadership and students’ involvement in opposition to alienation.
6. Lecturers consider that the quality of students’ learning management can be raised by lecturers’ team work.

7. In LR lecturers believe in the necessity of introducing several course quality management procedures and in the role of quality management in improving the quality of ESP courses.

   In general, quantitative, as well as qualitative methods have confirmed that quality management in ESP courses of Latvian HEIs are in first stages of quality management: between action and process stage. But there are trends, which testify that quality management has taken its place in the culture of HEIs, the lecturers and students are aware of necessity and possibilities of improving the quality of ESP courses.

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