CONDITIONS FOR STUDENT TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract
The rapidly changing nature of Europe and of education and culture that includes conditions for student teacher professional development is generated by the democracy transition from opportunity to choose towards qualities and purposes in the context of cultural and educational globalization. Conditions of contribution applied to enhance student teachers' professional development become particularly important for the development of education and culture change in the constantly changing environment. The success of student teacher professional development requires conditions of contribution applied to be considered. The aim of the following contribution is to identify and to analyze conditions for student teacher professional development within a multicultural environment. The meaning of the key concept *professional development* is studied within the search for conditions. Moreover, the study demonstrates how the key concept is related to the idea of *conditions for development*. The directions of further research include the search for the institutionalized process of tertiary teaching and learning to develop the system of external and internal perspective both for students and educators as well as educator's efficient contribution to promote the development of students' communicative competence as the prerequisite of teacher professional development.
Key words: Teacher Education, Student Teachers, Professional Development**,** Conditions for Development, Student Communicative Competence, English for Academic Purposes studies

1. Introduction
The rapidly changing nature of Europe and of education and culture that includes conditions for student teacher professional development is generated by the democracy transition from opportunity to choose towards qualities and purposes in the context of cultural and educational globalization. Conditions of contribution applied to enhance student teachers' professional development become particularly important for the development of education and culture change in the constantly changing environment. The success of student teacher professional development requires conditions of educator's contribution to be considered.

The aim of the following contribution is to identify and to analyze conditions for student teacher professional development within a multicultural environment. The meaning of the key concept *professional development* is studied within the search for conditions. Moreover, the study demonstrates how the key concept is related to the idea of *conditions for development*.

The methodological foundation of the present research is formed by the System-Constructivist Theory (Homiča, 2009). The application of this approach to learning introduced by Reich (Reich, 2005) emphasizes that human being's point of view depends on the subjective aspect (Maslo, 2007):

- everyone has his/her own system of external and internal perspectives that is a complex open system as depicted in Figure 1 by Ahrens and Zaščerinska (Ahrens, Zaščerinska, 2010) and
- experience plays the central role in a knowledge construction process (Maslo, 2007).
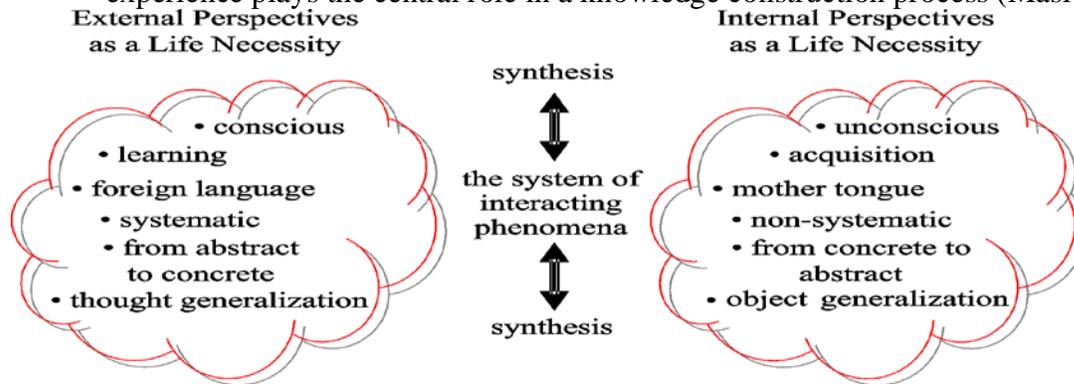
Figure 1: **Developing the system of external and internal perspectives**

The manuscript is organized as follows: Section 2 introduces the theoretical framework on conditions for student teacher professional development within teacher education. Research design is revealed in Section 3. The associated empirical results are presented and interpreted in Section 4. Finally, some concluding remarks and directions for further research are elaborated in Section 5.

2. Theoretical Framework
2.1.   *State-of-the-Art*
Sustainable student teacher is often realized from one of the following perspectives (Surikova, 2007):
- from the internal perspective accentuating cognition,
- from the external perspective accentuating social interaction and
- finding a balance between the external and internal perspectives.

However, the modern issues of global developmental trends emphasize "a prime importance in sustainable development that is to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Zimmermann, 2003). Thus, sustainable personality, and, consequently, student teacher, is "a person who sees relationships and inter-relationships between nature, society and the economy" (Rohweder, 2007). In other words, this is a person who is able to develop the system of external and internal perspectives, and in turn the system of external and internal perspectives becomes a main condition for the sustainable student teacher to develop. For instance, the concern of the European Union to become "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" (European Commission, 2004) demonstrates the significance of developing the system of external and internal perspectives for the development of humans, institutions and society. Thus, the fourth approach of developing the system of external and internal perspectives is used in the present research.

The development of the system of external and internal perspectives and its implementation's sequence proceeds from the external perspective to the internal perspective through the phase of

unity of external and internal perspectives or the system of interacting phenomena in the student teachers professional development as shown in Figure 1 by Ahrens and Zaščerinska (Ahrens, Zaščerinska, 2010).

2.2.   Student Teacher Professional Development

Professional development in pedagogy is defined as a qualitative change taking place in the professional involving process, growth, expansion, and striving for perfection in his/her professional activity, with regard to the conditions, opportunities, and needs of society, and the situation of the profession (Kacapa, 1999). Student teacher professional development comprises competence development (Maslo, 2006c).

However, not all development is equally valuable (Aase, 2006). For example, a perspective that focuses solely on the individual learner may lose sight of the common (social and/or professional in the present research) perspective that insists on a specific direction of development and problem solving (Aase, 2006). It should be mentioned that the terms *perspective*, *view*, *strategy*, *approach, plan* (often in Germany and Russia), *design*, *way of thinking* as well as *curriculum* and *programme* are used synonymously in many publications. The term *view* is further used concerning student teacher professional development in the present research due to the term *perspective* has already been introduced in the State-of-the-Art in Part 2.1 of the present manuscript.

The term *view* is defined as a central, organizing stance (Portelli, Vilbert, 2002). The view comprises vision, mission and objectives. The view in pedagogy is usually regarded as the concept of learning organization that focuses on the teaching and learning process design (Garavan, 1997; Thomas and Allen, 2006). Since the System-Constructivist Theory emphasizes the subjective aspect of human being's point of view that plays the central role in a knowledge construction process, views of all the participants of the teaching and learning process as shown in Figure 2 by the author of the present contribution are significant to elaborate the support system for student teacher professional development.

However, student teacher professional development is based on conditions.
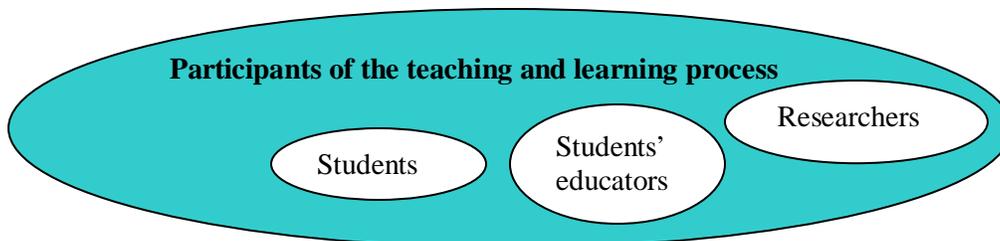
Figure 2: **Participants involved in student teachers' professional development**

2.3 Conditions for Student Teacher Professional Development

Conditions for experience improvement are based on the development of psychological processes (Žogla, 1997). Conditions comprise intrapersonal, interpersonal and introspective processes (Maslo, 2006a), thereby developing the system of external and internal perspectives.

Conditions as the intrapersonal and interpersonal processes put the emphasis on the uniqueness of personality (Maslo, 2006b) and reflection for becoming professional (Kepalaite, 2008). The intrapersonal process reveals cyclic nature of development (Maslo, 2006b) that means that theoretical findings focused on children are equally applicable to adult development:

"Vygotsky's work focused on children, yet, his instructional insights (teaching in the frame of the present research) are equally applicable to adult learning" (Benson, 1995).

Conditions as integrative introspective processes lead to understanding that learning is already the process of learner's development (Žogla, 2008). In other words, professional development proceeds if only professional learning takes place. Thus, professional learning is a possibility for professional development. All learning is part of a single process, an on-going process (Maslo, 2007). This finding suggests that professional learning is part of a single learning process within the professional development. Moreover, continuing professional development is regarded as lifelong learning (European Commission, 2004). Life long learning includes formal learning, non-formal learning and informal learning.

Conditions for student teacher professional development are formed by student interaction in foreign language, academic native language defined as native language for specific purposes (Zaščerinska, 2010b), as well as in foreign language for professional purposes (Zaščerinska, 2009a) and on the types of the relationships between spontaneous concept and mother tongue, between scientific concept and foreign language, between spontaneous and scientific concepts and/or mother tongue and foreign language (Vigotskis, 2002). Thus, student interaction comprises the following forms: interaction with teacher educator with use of scientific and professional concepts as well as interaction with peers with use of quasi-concepts. Hence, developing the system of external and internal perspectives, student teacher interaction with teacher educator with use of scientific and professional concepts, student teacher interaction with peers with use of quasi-concepts, learning and reflection are the conditions for student teacher professional development as described in Table 1 (Zaščerinska, 2010a). The relationship between quasi-concept and foreign language for professional purposes, namely, English for Academic Purposes studies (Zaščerinska, 2009a), determines that student teacher professional development is centred on student interaction with use of quasi-concept and/or in foreign language for professional purposes. English for Academic Purposes studies comprise diverse open academic problem situations based on the principles of mutual sustainability, complementarity and reflexivity (Zaščerinska, 2010a).

Table 1

Conditions for student teacher professional development in the academic context

Academic environment		
External perspective		Internal perspective
Opportunities to construct experience in social interaction		Opportunities to construct experience in cognitive activity
Mastering constructive strategies and techniques of social interaction in General English and Academic Native Language, English for Academic Purposes and Mother Tongue and its use in real life		Mastering constructive strategies and techniques of cognition in General English and Academic Native Language, English for Academic Purposes and Mother Tongue and its use in real life
Interpersonal dialogue	Study cultural dialogue	Individual internal dialogue
Scientific and professional concept	Quasi-concept	Spontaneous concept
General English and Academic Native Language	English for Academic Purposes	Mother Tongue
Establishing social purposes, social interaction planning	Establishing joint purposes, collaboration planning and	Establishing personal purposes, individual

and organizing	organizing	planning and organizing
Social decision making	Joint decision making	Individual decision making
External evaluation	Mutual evaluation and self-evaluation	self-evaluation

3. Research design

3.1. The research purpose and questions

The present research was conducted during the implementation of English for Academic Purposes studies in the *English for Academic Purposes* course within the masters' programmes *School Management, Pedagogy* and *Music Pedagogy* of Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy in Latvia in 2006-2007 to reveal the view of student teachers, educators and researchers on English for Academic Purposes studies for the development of students' communicative competence in order to promote the quality of studies. Its topicality is determined by ever-increasing flow of information in which an important role is laid to communicative competence to get information and gain experience. The research question is as follows: what is the view of student teachers, educators and researchers on the purposes of English for Academic Purposes studies for the development of students' communicative competence?

3. 2. Description of the implementation of the English for Academic Purposes course in the Masters' programmes

The two-year master studies are aimed at facilitating students' research success, supporting preparation for international Ph.D. programmes in the European Union, further specializing in the chosen field and learning in a simulated environment. A graduate has the opportunity to continue to study in a respective doctoral study programme. The aim of the *English for Academic Purposes* course in the two-year masters' programmes is to improve student teachers' communicative competence in English for Academic Purposes for the participation in international research activities. English for Academic Purposes studies involve various teaching and learning techniques. For example, discussion, prepared talk, communication games and information-gap activities (Zaščerinska, 2009b) are used to promote student teachers' communicative competence in English for Academic Purposes. It has to be mentioned that there were no specific requirements as to level of communicative competence to study in the respective *English for Academic Purposes* course.

3. 3. The respondents of the research

The empirical study comprised three researchers, five language educators, 85 master students of Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy in 2006-2007. The sample of 85 master students included

- 26 students of the first year within the professional master's study programme *School Management* in October – December 2006,
- 19 students of the second year within the professional master's study programme *School Management* in October – December 2006 and
- 30 first and second students of the professional master's study programme *Music Pedagogy* in October – December 2006 as well as
- 10 first-year master students within the professional master's study programme *School Management* in September 2007.

The samples with different cultural backgrounds and diverse educational approaches were selected. 60 of the students had certain expectations from the master programmes and, consequently, from the *English for Academic Purposes* course, which were demonstrated in the

answer to the question why they had chosen this programme. The students' communicative competence in English for Academic Purposes in the studies was one of the answers.

### 3. 4. Research methodology

A qualitative explorative research has been used in the research (Tashakkori, Teddlie, 2003). The qualitative explorative research has been aimed at the development of general statements which can be tested for generality in following studies with different people in differerent times (Mayring, 2007). The study consisted of the following stages: exploration of the view of student teachers, educators and researchers on English for Academic Purposes studies for the development of students' communicative competence in Latvia, data processing, analysis and data interpretation, analysis of the results and elaboration of conclusions and directions for further research.

In order to determine what views of English for Academic Purposes studies have been developed, the methodological procedure of the qualitative explorative research moved from the analysis of students' view in Phase 1 through the investigation of educators' view in Phase 2 to the study of researchers' view in Phase 3 as depicted in Figure 3 by the author of the present research.
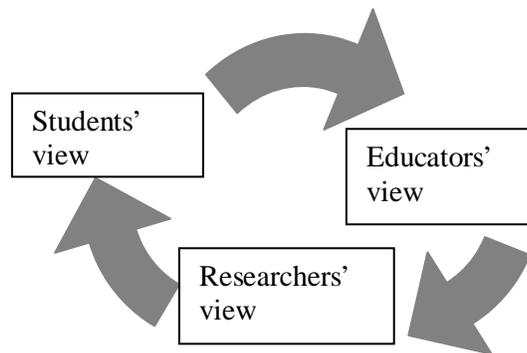
Figure 3: **Three phases of the explorative research**

Structuring content analysis has been used (Mayring, 2004) in the research. Structuring content analysis seeks to assess the material according to particular criteria that are strictly determined in advance (Mayring, 2004). The criteria in the present research were determined as the purposes of English for Academic Purposes studies. The purposes were differentiated into three levels as depicted in Figure 4 by Ahrens and Zaščerinska (Ahrens, Zaščerinska, 2010).
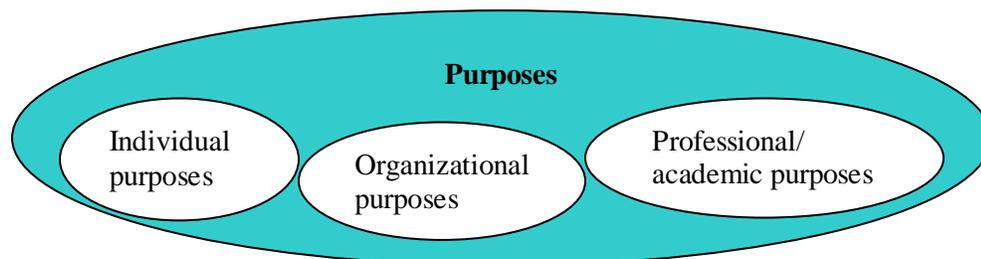
Figure 4: **Levels of purposes**

By individual purposes private use of English for Academic Purposes is meant, namely, communication with the family and friends, for example, chatting, phoning and sending e-mails to the family and friends. Organizational purposes of English for Academic Purposes studies are shown between the colleagues, for example, distribution of information, announcement, experience, opinion, report, or evaluation between the participants of the organisation, company or agency. Professional purposes of English for Academic Purposes studies comprise communication with specialists or experts aimed at professional development. Therein, professional development includes academic development and education characterized by research (Kramiņa, 2000). Hence, the terms *professional purposes* and *academic purposes* should be used synonymously.

Moreover, each purpose includes four domains (Karapetjana, 2008) as shown in Figure 5 by the author of the present contribution.
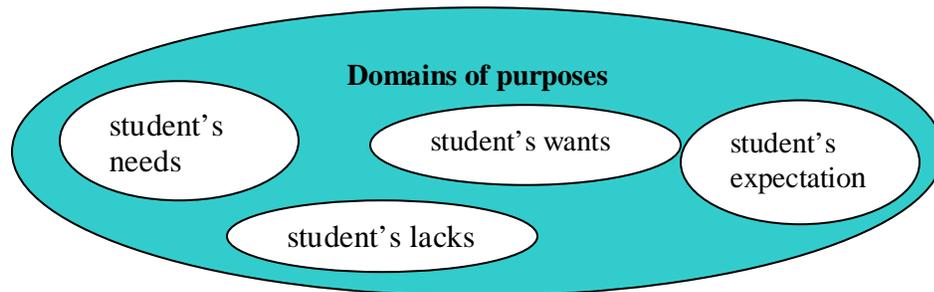
Figure 5: **Four domains of purposes**

Interviews have been chosen because they allow for a more in-depth exploration of issues than is possible with a questionnaire, though they take longer to administer and are only feasible for smaller groups (Richards, 2001). Moreover, an interview may often be useful at the preliminary stage of designing a questionnaire, since it will help the designer get a sense of what topics and issues can be focused on in the questionnaire (Richards, 2001). Hence, different forms of interview (Kardoff, 2004) have been used in the present research as shown in Figure 6 by the author of the present contribution.
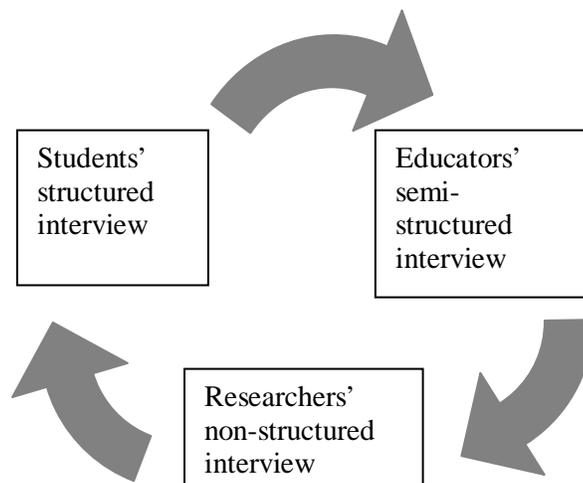
First, the structured interview has been provided on the basis of the theoretical analysis (Kroplijs, Raščevska, 2004). The structured interview is usually based on a set of series of questions (Richards, 2001). It allows more consistency across responses to be obtained (Richards, 2001). Second, when the knowledge of the research field has been obtained by the researcher the semi-structured interview has been used (Kroplijs, Raščevka, 2004). And, finally, in order to search for the main categories of the research field the non-structured interview has been used (Kroplijs, Raščevka, 2004).

In order to provide data reliability and validity the use of mixed methods is implemented in the present study, namely, the qualitative interviews are supplemented with a quantitative survey. The quantitative survey has included the questionnaire based on a set of structured items in which the respondent chooses from a limited number of responses (Richards, 2001).

4. Findings of the research
4.1 Student teachers' view on English for Academic Purposes studies
Analysis of the student teachers' view on English for Academic Purposes studies for the development of student teachers' communicative competence comprised three phases, namely,
- the structured interviews involved a group of five second year master students of the professional master's study programme *School Management* of Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy from September 2006 to October 2006,
- the questionnaire filled in by 75 master students of Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy was analyzed from October 2006 to December 2006,
- 10 first-year master students of the professional master's study programme *School Management* at Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy in September 2007 were interviewed.

The structured interviews based on the theoretical analysis (Kroplijs, Raščevska, 2004) comprised three questions: 1. Why study English for Academic Purposes? 2. What are your interests in English for Academic Purposes? 3. What are your achievements in English for Academic Purposes by the end of the course?

The first phase of the analysis of the student teachers' view from September 2006 to October 2006 involved a group of five second year students of the professional master's study programme *School Management* to conduct the structured interviews. The aim of the interviews was to reveal the students' view on English for Academic Purposes studies.

For example, Respondent *NAS1* emphasized English for Academic Purposes as an international language. The student's interests in English for Academic Purposes included talk and presentation. Preparation of two presentations, namely, about the native place and a successful researcher, was stressed as the achievements in English for Academic Purposes by the end of the course. Therein, Respondent *NAS4* revealed English for Academic Purposes to be used in future jobs for searching for information and talking with colleagues from other countries. Problem solving and research were outlined as the student's interests in English for Academic Purposes studies.

Structuring content analysis (Mayring, 2004) of the structured interviews revealed that the students' view on English for Academic Purposes studies was heterogeneous.

The second phase from October 2006 to December 2006 involved 75 master students. The aim of the present phase was to reveal a detailed information about the student teachers' view on the purposes of English for Academic Purposes studies. The quantitative survey included the

questionnaire demonstrated in Appendix 1 by the author of the present research. The questionnaire was based on levels of purposes and four domains of purposes shown in Figure 3 and 4 respectively. The questionnaire comprised the evaluation scale of five levels for each question, namely, "1" means "disagree" and "5" points out "agree".

The Cronbach's Alpha test showed the high level of reliability of the present questionnaire with the coefficient of reliability [0,848]. Moreover, the item-total statistics test excluded three questions from the questionnaire, namely, expectation to interact with other people for the individual purposes (,163), need to learn for the organization's purposes (-,330), and wish to interact with other people for the organization's purposes (,133) that had the corrected item-total correlation lower than 0,3.

Frequencies were determined to reveal the purposes the students had used English for Academic Purposes studies for most frequently. The survey showed that the students had used English for Academic Purposes studies most frequently for their individual purposes putting the emphasis on the lack of interaction with other people for the individual purposes (63 responses). Moreover, the determinant of the individual purposes of the factor analysis equals 0,40. And the determinant of the organizational purposes is 0,37. As well as the determinant of the academic purposes is revealed as 0,03. Thus, the conclusion has been drawn that the student teachers' individual purposes prevail in the student teachers' view on English for Academic Purposes studies while English for Academic Purposes studies are focused on academic purposes.

The third phase of the analysis of the view of student teachers on English for Academic Purposes studies involved the sample of 10 first-year master students within the professional master's study programme *School Management* in September 2007 to conduct the structured interviews. The structured interviews comprised three questions: 1. Why study English for Academic Purposes? 2. What are your interests in English for Academic Purposes? 3. What are your achievements in English for Academic Purposes by the end of the course?

For example, Student *F1* joined the English for Academic Purposes course because English is the most popular language. The student determined the interests in English as presentation skills and small talk. Achievements within English for Academic Purposes studies were considered as improved presentation skills. Therein, Student F6 put the emphasis on English as an international language and the main language of the chosen profession. The student's interests in English for Academic Purposes focused on gaining more experience (practice) in English language, namely, speaking, writing and etc. Improved English skills and making a presentation were determined by the student as the achievements by the end of the English for Academic Purpose course.

Structuring content analysis (Mayring, 2004) of the structured interviews revealed that the emphasis is put on the individual purposes in English for Academic Purposes studies by the student teachers while English for Academic Purposes studies are focused on academic purposes.

4.2 Educators' view on English for Academic Purposes studies

Analysis of educators' view comprised five respondents of Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy in 2006.

The semi-structured interviews comprised one question as following: what is the educator's view on the purposes of English for Academic Purposes studies for the development of students' communicative competence as student teacher professional development?

For example, Respondent *NAEMP* revealed the aim of the *English for Academic Purposes* course within the professional master's study programme *Music Pedagogy* of Riga Teacher Training

and Educational Management Academy to be oriented towards the fostering students' competency, which includes students' communicative competence. The exposure of the students' communicative competence could comprise the implementation of the acquired academic content in native language, professional language and foreign languages (English, German and others). The respondent put the emphasize on the number of students in a foreign language classroom considering that the fewer students are in a foreign language class, the more attention the educator is able to pay to each learner, as a result the learning outcomes improve. In his/her turn, Respondent *NAELP1* highlighted the *English for Academic Purposes* course to tend to the students' preparation for international Ph.D. programs in the European Union, students' further specialization in the chosen profession and learning in a simulated environment. The respondent emphasized the *English for Academic Purposes* course to be aimed at fostering a foreign language as a language of instruction in the studies. According to the respondent, the level of the students' competence could reach the levels of independent users and proficient users by the end of the *English for Academic Purposes* course. This competence level (B1, B2, and C1) could enable the students to read professional texts in English and to use English as a means for studying other courses/subjects.

Structuring content analysis (Mayring, 2004) of the semi-structured interviews revealed that the emphasis on the individual and organizational purposes from the educators' view prevails in English for Academic Purposes studies while English for Academic Purposes studies are focused on academic purposes.

4.3 Researchers' view on English for Academic Purposes studies

Analysis of researchers' view comprises three respondents of Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy in 2006.

The non-structured interviews comprised one question as following: what is the researcher's view on English for Academic Purposes studies for the development of students' communicative competence?

For example, Respondent *NARLP* suggested the system of language module for the development of students' communicative competence within English for Academic Purposes studies. The language module should be based on students' workload corresponded to the ECTS-system. The language module is part of the study courses within the professional masters' study programmes *School Management, Pedagogy* and *Music Pedagogy* of Riga Teacher Training and Educational Management Academy. The language module could be available for continuous education programs and inhouse seminars for companies as well.

Structuring content analysis (Mayring, 2004) of the non-structured interviews revealed that the emphasis on the academic purposes from the researchers' view prevails in English for Academic Purposes studies for the development of students' communicative competence that corresponds to the focus of English for Academic Purposes studies.

5. Conclusions and directions of further research

The findings of the present research allow drawing conclusions on student teacher professional development centred on English for Academic Purposes studies. The empirical findings draw the conclusions that the view of student teachers, educators and researchers on English for Academic Purposes studies is heterogeneous.

Thus, in order to help student teachers to widen their learning experience in professional development it is vital to organize a support system based on the development of the system of

external and internal perspectives, student teacher interaction with teacher educator with use of scientific and professional concepts, and student teacher interaction with peers with use of quasi-concepts, learning and reflection that would favour student teachers' learning in the *English for Academic Purposes* and other courses.

The present research has limitations. The views of student teachers, educators and researchers on English for Academic Purposes studies were studied paying attention to the views of students, educators and researchers of one tertiary institution. If the results of other tertiary institutions had been available for analysis, different results could have been attained. There is a possibility to continue the study.

The directions of further research include the search for the institutionalized process of tertiary teaching and learning to develop the system of external and internal perspective both for students and educators as well as educator's efficient contribution to promote the development of students' communicative competence.

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Appendix 1
Questionnaire

Dear participant,

We would appreciate your help to carry out our research by answering the questions below. Please, circle the answer.

● **Focus on individual purposes**

1. I <u>need</u> to interact with other people for my individual purposes.

Disagree   Agree

1	2	3	4	5

2. I <u>need</u> to learn for my individual needs.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

3. I <u>want</u> to interact with other people for my individual purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

4. I <u>want</u> to learn for my individual purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

5. I <u>lack</u> interaction with other people for my individual purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

6. I <u>lack</u> learning for my individual purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

7. I <u>expect</u> myself to interact with other people for my individual purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

8. I <u>expect</u> myself to learn for my individual purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

● Focus on organization's purposes

9. I <u>need</u> to interact with other people for my organization's purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

10. I <u>need</u> to learn for my organization's needs.

	Disagree				Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

11. I <u>want</u> to interact with other people for my organization's purposes.

	Disagree				Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

12. I <u>want</u> to learn for my organization's purposes.

	Disagree				Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

13. I <u>lack</u> interaction with other people for my organization's purposes.

	Disagree				Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

14. I <u>lack</u> learning for my organization's purposes.

	Disagree				Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

15. I <u>expect</u> myself to interact with other people for my organization's purposes.

	Disagree				Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

16. I <u>expect</u> myself to learn for my organization's purposes.

	Disagree				Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

● **Focus on professional purposes**

17. I <u>need</u> to interact with other people for my professional purposes.

	Disagree				Agree
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

18. I <u>need</u> to learn for my professional needs.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

19. I <u>want</u> to interact with other people for my professional purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

20. I <u>want</u> to learn for my professional purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

21. I <u>lack</u> interaction with other people for my professional purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

22. I <u>lack</u> learning for my professional purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

23. I <u>expect</u> myself to interact with other people for my professional purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

24. I <u>expect</u> myself to learn for my professional purposes.

Disagree				Agree
1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

Thank you for your cooperation!