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NARVA COLLEGE STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF LEARNING SKILLS
AND THEIR IMPORTANCE IN TERTIARY EDUCATION

Bachelor's thesis

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PREFACE

Learning is a very important part of human life. The concept of life-long learning is gaining popularity in the modern society as the requirements of modern life, with its fast technological development and the increasing tempo of overall globalization, make a person constantly increase his/her own level of professional competency. One of the key preconditions of efficient learning is the presence of well-developed learning skills which make a person's mind capable to search for, select and analyze information, look for solutions and make decisions.

The present Bachelor's thesis titled "Narva College Students' Perception of Learning Skills and Their Importance in Tertiary Education" aims at finding out how students of Narva College of the University of Tartu perceive what learning skills are and which learning skills they consider to be of crucial importance for obtaining higher education. The present paper consists of the Introduction which explains the topicality of the issue of learning skills; Chapter I which is dedicated to providing the theoretical background of the topic of learning skills and their types; Chapter II, the practical part of the paper, which analyses the results of the survey conducted among students of Narva College of the University of Tartu; the Conclusion which sums up the results of the research and comments on the hypothesis. The thesis also includes the Summary in Estonian.

INTRODUCTION

Significance of the Topic of the Thesis

There are several reasons to claim that the topic of students' perception of learning skills and their importance in tertiary education has a significant meaning and should be studied in this thesis. In general, learning process is the most important process in human life because it helps people develop their abilities and knowledge. Therefore, it seems to be important to study the information about learning skills, their functions competences in particular and ways to develop them. What is more, being a student of the Division of Foreign Languages of Narva College of Tartu University and studying pedagogy and the English language, the author of this BA paper has a personal interest towards types of learning and their importance of in educational process because it can be very useful for the future profession as a teacher. Finally, this thesis is the first research of this kind in Narva College, so the idea about the topic of learning skills and their importance in tertiary education can be viewed as fully as possible.

Meaning of the Learning Process and Study Skills

As Anita Woolfolk writes in her book "Educational Psychology" (2005:206), when people hear the word learning, most of them think about the studying process. The learning process is the same term as the studying process, is not just limited only to education because people learn something new every day of their lives. If to provide an exact scientific definition, learning is a process of assimilating information with a resultant change in knowledge or behavior. In addition to that, Robert E Slavin (2003:257) has claimed that education is much more than just a memory. Students should understand how to act in different situations and be able apply their knowledge. They should learn to solve problems and find new ideas for their educational development. The aim of education is not just to fill the student's head with information, but to teach students learn how they can use their knowledge in different situations.

As it was written in the Journal of Managerial Psychology by Richard Boyatzis and David Kolb (1995:4,5), "A learning skill defines a generic heuristic that enables mastery of a specific domain", which means that it is important to note that for successful learning, students need to have some abilities in the educational process. Alison Wolfe writes in the

“Students attitudes toward study skills”, that study skills are those skills that helps to understand and save the information (2009: para 4). Thus, the definition of learning skills combines knowledge and abilities, which help students to get new information and experience as well as use them in different learning situations (Boyatzis; Kolb 1995:4, 5).

Importance of Learning Skills in Tertiary Education

Teaching provided by schools, colleges and universities a fundamental to our way of life. In a modern society people have to be basically skilled. Job opportunities and careers development today dependent on the degrees and educational level (Debey; Jayaram 2008:para 3, 4).

In the report “Students attitudes toward study skills”, Allison Wolfe wrote that higher education is different from other forms of education. Today, most universities focus on students’ independent study of academic subjects. For higher education it is very important for students to be able to work independently using their learning skills. For academic success, a student needs to have certain skills that will help him/her in the learning process, but many students believe that nowadays universities do not provide an opportunity to acquire different learning skills. Colleges provide only a brief foundation for learning skills, but unfortunately they cannot assist students with further advice and support. Learning skills and habits are very helpful to the student in the learning process for acquiring new information and they play an important role in student’s academic results. In order to become successful in today's rapidly changing academic environment, it is not that important for a student to work in the classroom, as it is to be efficient in working outside the classroom, i.e. studying independently (Wolfe 2009:para 6).

As Jill Terry writes in his Collaborative Widening Participation project “Moving On” (1999:5,6), a lot of different skills which students acquire in the process of independent work will be useful in the everyday life in the future. The development of students’ is an important goal of higher education. Skills that a person receives in the process of higher education indicate not only the need to full fill specific tasks, but also to educate the whole person, the acquisition of values and attitudes.

As the Internet article “The Development of Key Skills in Higher Education” says, The notion of “graduateness” and “employability” requires students in-depth study skills in order to be able to effectively act in the world of work. Skills development in higher

education is crucial, because it depends on the skills of its human personal development and achievements in long life (Burke 2002: para1).

Despite the fact that there is no exact formula for successful learning, some research shows that there are some factors that influence on success. Successful students are actively involved in many works, they have a system of works doing and know how to manage their time. They are able to assess their own learning and adjust their poor skills. Certainly successful students are motivated and they take responsibility for their own learning (Blerkom 2001:5,6).

In the report “Students attitudes toward study skills” wrote that, conducted among students of liberal arts college on the East Coast survey contained several questions in order to identify student assessment in relation to learning, as well as the methods they choose to assimilate knowledge. Results of research show, that students associate learning skills with understanding the content of lectures. The main conclusion from the survey is the following: lecture comprehension is the key study skills competency for college students. The survey addressed a lot of aspects of the study habits and their differences in school and college. Some respondents give preference to explain the importance of the material in the classroom, but others prefer to study new material in a quiet location and the importance of planning their own time. Other low-ranked statements included not being organized and liking to study in groups of three or more. Moreover, the survey shows that notes access is the most important study skills tool for students. One common denominator across many survey questions is a preference for tools that aid in optimizing the process of learning, and particularly lecture comprehension. As s the survey shows, students prefer to use electronic formats for create and accept information for learning process. If consider the study in terms of learning styles preferences of students, most students prefer to do the work themselves or in small groups. The overall results demonstrate that time management and lectures are important aspects for students, especially when they make the transition from high school to college. Despite the fact that each student to choose the most appropriate skills and habits that he/she used in the process of education, the role of each of the skills is very important in order to help the student become successful (Wolfe 2009: para10).

- The hypotheses of this Bachelor’s thesis are the following:
 1. students of Narva College of the University of Tartu understand the notion of learning skills

2. students of Narva College of the University of Tartu consider cognitive learning skills to be the most important for tertiary education.

CHAPTER I. TYPES OF LEARNING SKILLS

Learning skills are divided into three main categories: cognitive skills, metacognitive skills, and affective learning skills. Each of these groups includes several learning skills which are necessary for getting education and achieving academic success (Jōgi 2010: para2-4).

1.1 Cognitive Learning Skills

Cognitive skills include human feelings and thoughts, as well as learning strategies which are regulated and chosen for different situations in the learning process. Cognitive skills are related to memory and memorizing, concentrated on finding necessary information, critical thinking and problem solving. The cognitive group of learning skills consists of critical thinking, active listening, learning sciences, problem solving, remembering and using of content, memorizing of content, and consciousness about existing knowledge (Jōgi 2010: para 4).

1.1.1 Active listening

Active listening is an essential, fundamental element and key to academic success and achievements at all levels of education. Moreover, listening is a very important component in development of the relationships between students and teachers or academic advisors (Duck, McMahan 2012:78).

Active listening skills are also play important role to career success and advancement. As different surveys show, active listening is a necessary skill in all professions and its development (Duck, McMahan 2012:79). As Duck and McMahan (2012:80) write, a lot of people think that terms listening and hearing have the same meaning and can be interchangeable but people can hear something without thinking about that and with thinking and understanding of information.

Passive listening is not necessary and voluntary activity. People do not remember all information and the time of speaking and even do not pay attention to the speech, so human can not use it for himself. Active listening means that people are paying attention to the speech at the time of speaking, understand information and can get useful knowledge for themselves by analyzing (Jōgi 2010:6).

Active listening is a necessary ability to be a good communicator because these two skills are connected. The terms “an effective communicator” and “listener” include three main elements: hearing, remembering and comprehending (Listen actively 2014:125).

Effective listening skill can help a person to develop successful note taking skill (Carroll 1990:19).

As Jōgi states (2010:7), listening skills depend on many aspects. People can be active listeners, passive listeners or they can listen some information and only some facts. Different factors have influence on the listening process, such as relations and interest for exact subject; interest in the topic, terminology understanding and size of information; teachers skills and abilities of giving information for students; listener mood and other personal factors, and also external factors, for example noise.

1.1.2 Active Reading

Academic reading skills are different from leisure reading. Academic reading includes finding new ideas and thoughts, and developing human understanding in academic area. Students normally do not need to read whole book but should be able to identify main ideas from the text. It is necessary to develop academic reading skills because it will help to save students' time in the future educational process (Allan 2010:37). The aim of writing is a key to effective reading (Carroll 1990:19). Through active reading people can improve their assignments and other skills in university study (Rice 2003 :1).

Critical reading helps students at school and universities better understand and choose useful information. It is a very important fact, that critical reading teaches and develops people but takes a lot of time. Critical reading means that people can choose necessary and less important information also make conclude the main ideas from the text. In the reading process human can imagine and create almost of what happened in the book or article. Reading develops and activates evaluation process. Reading process depends on complexity of the text. Through reading takes a lot of time and in this case different reading strategy can be useful for effective reading. Critical reading helps people to make a review and get own opinion in educational process (Jōgi 2010:7).

As Jōgi writes (2010:8) for critical reading and thinking necessary required the following skills in educational process: students need to understand and accept information in the text because it is difficult to read books especially with specific terminology. Students need to use previous experience and knowledges because using of other source on the same topic can help people to understand new information faster. The ability to analyze is one of the basic skills, which plays an important role in the critical reading. Analyze is the main aim of reading because people read for getting and understanding information, but it is unreal without process of analyze. Organize and

synthesize are also fundamental abilities in the critical reading. These skills help people to create the full picture and make notes about the information from the text.

1.1.3 Problem Solving

Problem solving is a very common and main discipline to all human activities (Berhenkötter 2014: 33). A problem happens when a person needs to achieve some goals but does not understand how to do it (Good, Brophy 1995: 323). The process of problem solving has an important meaning for students because this skill helps students to identify, define and solve different questions or situations using logic and creative thinking. This skill teaches students to understand situations very deeply and fully, moreover to be able to make decisions. Problem solving skills develop students' abilities in their professional, personal and educational lives. Nowadays solving problem skills are more important than ever because conditions of human life change very fast. The ability to solve problems in different situations and contexts plays a fundamental role in understanding, performance and development of knowledge (Crebert, Smith, Cragnolini 2011:5).

Educational psychologists have two opinions about possibilities for teaching people to solve problems. First believe, that people need to have deep knowledge about how possible to solve problem, moreover they should to have a rich practice experience. Other think, these skills of problem solving can be developed by teaching people directly in problematical situations (Good & Brophy 1995:330).

As Slavin (2003:276,277) states, students need to use several strategies in solving problems process. The main steps in solving problem situations are fix the problem and define possibilities, identify main goal and represent the problem, understand suitable strategies for solving, think about outcomes and act, look back and learn situation as experience. The model of problem solving helps students not only in education but it can also be useful in other situations in human life (Jõgi 2010: 6).

1.1.4 Learning Sciences

Learning Mathematics is different from other subjects. People use science material in work constantly because this science includes a lot of formulas. Mathematics for many students is a simple science compared with foreign language learning. People need to use language because without practice people tend to forget languages. Moreover, sentences have structure which also plays important role in language study. Mathematics as science has different difficulty levels. People can hear information about subject but science learning also needs a lot of practice. In exact science it is necessary to be careful because one mistake has serious influence to the whole task (Jõgi 2010:6).

1.1.5 Consciousness about Existing Knowledge

It is well known that students connect new knowledge with previous one. One of the major aspects of understanding of the new material is activation of previous information about the same information. The aim of the learning process is to help students activate previous knowledge for accepting new information. The better structured previous knowledge, the better to add new. When a person receives new knowledge, then inclined to compare that with the previous knowledge, so human expands the outlook. Method of group discussion and concept map is well suited for connection between new and previous knowledge. Consciousness about existing knowledge is skill which also necessary to learn. (Jōgi 2010:4).

1.1.6 Remembering and using of content

Remembering and using of content are conscious actions. It is proved, that information faster reproducing in the same place where it was received. Also situation where the action happend can helps remember important information. Teacher's role is very important because teacher should to show how to use different strategies of memorising and remembering. The earlier student will master this skill, the effectively will be use it in the educational process (Jōgi 2010:5).

1.1.7 Memorizing of Content

Memory strategies play an important role in memorizing. Memorization strategies are very commonly used in the study of the exact dates, mathematical formulas and should be universal for the development of students. People create for themselves the most useful way of how better and fast remember new information. Better to start use different strategies, for example a specific association, memory requires in early age. It should be noted that there is a difference between how pupils and students use memory strategies, because students often develop memory strategy for themselves independently. Repetition is a very popular strategy for memorizing, also useful way to memorize the information is using the repetition exercises by exact topic. Association, grouping and reduction of the amount of information play important influence for memory. (Jōgi 2010:4, 5).

1.2 Meta-cognitive Learning Skills

Learning with meta-cognitive awareness is fostered when the skills are taught as strategies to be accessed and used to accomplish clearly understood goals. When instruction focuses on the skills, it teaches not just mastery of the processes or steps involved in performing a skill but also knowledge of when and why the skill is used. In particular application situations, the teacher's structuring and scaffolding of the activity helps students to remain aware of their goals and strategy decisions. (Good & Brophy 1995:323)

Meta-cognitive skills are the skills of planning, controlling and self-evaluating one's knowledge. They reflect the learner's ability to define the amount and quality of the knowledge he/she already has and still needs to acquire. The group of meta-cognitive skills consists of self-esteem, being self-conscious about oneself and one's learning skills, control over one's knowledge and skills of self-analysis (Jōgi 2010:8).

1.2.1 Self-esteem

Definition of self-esteem depends on human's view of the many aspects such as appearance and individual abilities. Self-esteem can change depends on situation and society where lives a person. Many people think that self-esteem of young people depends from reactions of other people such as parents, friends, teachers and other people. Only with age comes own reaction to themselves as individuals. Perception of self-esteem can affect on human's decisions and ability to react in different conflict situations. Self-esteem can help making decisions independently from other people. Moreover feedback of other can influence on self-esteem development but friendly atmosphere can support and help to a person become more confident. Self-esteem it is even not like exact a skill but it plays important role in classroom, school or in different communities. School and teachers can increase student self-esteem through of different tasks, group work and other methods. Low-esteem often associated with problematic students. But level of self-esteem often depends on different events in human's life. People should to control feelings because it influence of self-esteem. A person should to be resilient to many events that happen around but it is no exact rule how to be protect from society influence (Mendoza., Ross 2007:85).

Higher self-esteem positively affects on educational process. In addition, students with higher self-esteem feel about school more positively than other students, behave at school better and appreciate other students. It is generally accepted that it is better to have higher or lower self-esteem for different reasons. Students with low self-esteem usually have low self-effectiveness and results of learning can be lower. However, students with higher self-esteem can lead to strait and low long-term poor learning to learn necessary skills (Jōgi 2010:8).

High self-esteem is undoubtedly one of the most critical prerequisites for a life marked by competence, fulfillment, contentment and accomplishment. Healthy self-esteem is a precondition for developing respect and empathy for others. It is the basis for accepting responsibility for our actions and for gaining satisfaction from our achievements. Those possessing healthy self-esteem are more likely to both create dreams and pursue them intentionally. By believing in their ability to accomplish these ideas, people with high self-esteem will be self-motivated to grow and risk as they fully experience life. They will not be excessively discouraged by the inevitable challenges and criticisms that anyone pursuing a worthwhile goal is sure to encounter. People with healthy esteem possess the ability to love themselves -- a prerequisite to love and be loved by others. In every way, a healthy sense of self-worth is a necessary requirement to lead an

empowered life marked by positive self-direction, trust, responsibility and accomplishment. (Rubino 2006:10)

1.2.2 Being self-conscious about oneself and one's learning

Learning is more effective when a person knows and understands a lot about himself/herself and about own business. Activity refers as the material which a person learning such as a cognitive process by which the material is processed. Self-knowledge is knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of their own actions. The learner should be aware of ourselves as motivating forces, the stress-inducing factors, their self-esteem and its impact on learning (Jōgi 2010:8).

1.2.3 Having Control over one's Knowledge

Every student is supposed to have control over one's knowledge and understand what he/she has already got in the educational process. For self-checking student can use the same methods as a teacher uses. Students usually work individually and do not have a tendency to do self- control of what is already known and what is necessary to learn. One of the most common method of check is asking the questions about learning materials (Jōgi 2010:9).

1.2.4 Skills of self-analysis

Meta-cognition should be learned the sooner the better. Meta-cognition-oriented teaching methods are used for a lot of activities aimed at understanding, self-evaluation and reflection on what is known and already widely spoken, which is already enough work done on it, and which should still work to be done. In addition, the student must be aware of his/her cognitive processes because to get all necessary in studying process. It is taught through example, teaching, and learning, learning, planning, evaluation, or checking their own. Meta-cognition using in teaching is positively related to students' acquired knowledge in a new context (Jōgi 2010:9).

1.3 Affective Learning Skills

Affective learning skills are directly linked to development human feelings, values, motivation, concentration and attention. The group of affective skills consists of motivation, school stress, attention and concentration (Jōgi 2010:9).

1.3.1 Motivation

The article Academic Motivation (2010: para 1, 2) says that positive academic motivation helps students to understand that people can be successful not only in academic area but also in all aspects of human life – in society, at work or relationships. People are

naturally motivated to developing their knowledge from the time when they are born. A child at an early age motivated to learn all interesting things in this world step by step. A child who has a positive academic motivation thinks that human can succeeded if try to work hard and this child will be do something better than other children. Parents can increase child's academic motivation on the few ways. Effective study skills also can be helpful background for the students on the different educational levels (Academic Motivation 2010: para 5).

Motivation can develop either inside the person or also come from outside factors. Intrinsically motivated children are getting the joy from the learning process, but externally motivated children are learning new materials because to gain rewards or other grades. As research shows, children with internal motivation may achieve greater success than externally motivated children (Motivation: The key to academic success 2002: para1). As teachers and parents know, motivation often depends on many factors: the task and situation, the people involved have influence to the result. The key to success for each learner is to find that which motivates. (Motivation: The key to academic success 2002: para 2).

As a fact, there are some aspects which influence on the decrease of student motivation. Fair of failure is important in children development because child can be afraid of make a mistake because do not want to look foolish in front of other classmates or teacher. Lack of challenge means that child can be bored with schoolwork. Lack of meaning is a very popular factor, because children often think that schoolwork is not important because they do not understand how this information can be relates to everyday life. Emotional problems can often be a problem in educational process for children, because child can not focus in class and do exact exercise. Anger which happened when parents try to influence on the children success at school, may also be destructive factor for motivation. Desire for attention is also very important because nowadays parents can not give a lot of attention to their children (Motivation: The key to academic success 2002: para 3-9).

Parents can help students to be motivated in educational process. Parents often create a models of successful examples for children, give opportunity and accepting home environment also possible relate schoolwork (Motivation: The key to academic success 2002: para 10).

1.3.2 Coping with Stress

Stress is a normal part of young people's life. Stress has positive and negative meaning, can be internal or external and has influence on human's mood, behavior and

other factors. A young person must adapt to any stress because it has destructive effect on our body and brain. Students' stress is usually connected with problems at university, at home, with friends and can be other worries. Situations with unresolved stress can be reason for depression, physical illness, aggression and poor skills use, such as alcohol or drugs. Stress management skills can help young people and adults to reduce stress situations and worries. Teachers often create different practical and fun techniques in the class, which can help student reduce the stress. Student think that it is necessary to eat healthy meals, maintain daily routine, rest and sleep enough for be able to protect the stress situations (Stress Reduction Activities for Students 2014: 1).

According to a survey conducted by John Tung Foundation (2004), 84.2% of the surveyed young people have felt depression not once, and 15.3% of reported said that they feel depression every day. Also, 33.6% said that they felt depression at least once a week. What about sources of stress 56.7% a strongly believe that their depression feelings and stress come from school. 50.9% think that stress causes are relationships and 45.6% attributed their depression to academic tests. The survey results tell that school is the main source of stress for young people and students. Moreover, stress is the main factor of depression feelings. Studying at college is a critical period for students because in this period young people enter to adulthood. Students should develop stress management abilities as to live in society healthy. Nowadays understanding the sources of stress is a very considerable in society (Wen 2009: 2).

1.3.3 Attention

Attention is a commonly used skill in many everyday tasks. It helps person to focus on important work, understand information and think about something. But this skill is highly depends on environmental changes. Person has opportunity to divide attention on the few tasks but it requires more concentration and brain resources. The terms attention and focus are interchangeable things but mechanics of each process are significantly different (Attention skills: The role of attention 2014: para 1).

People constantly get huge amount of different information but pay attention only on a part of it. Person need to be attention for learning and for getting knowledge in the study process. Motivation also plays an important role for attention because from it depend importance and interest of information to students. Teacher's role on the lectures is to tell students what is the most useful information for learning on the exact topic. (Jōgi 2010:11). Attention abilities are higher with age because older people use more effective things to

concentrate their attention on something important. With age students become more systematic and better understand how to plan their time (Shaffer 2002: 270).

1.3.4 Concentration

Concentration is a complex process that consists of three levels: sensation, perception and attention. At each level, person is able to separate and memorize the necessary information from unnecessary (Prakash 1999:4). Concentration is a process when student on the lecture does not think about anything else, during the lecture student making notes, listening to the lecture and is not thinking about time or weather. There are three stages of concentration in order to understand how well person focused on the lecture information. Light concentration it is when person notices movements in a class and after lecture get only some less important information. Middle concentration occurs when person pays more attention to the lecture and less concentration what happen around. Deep concentration it is when student completely focused on the lecture material and remember almost of information after the lecture. If student want to be concentrated it is important to understand what kind of factors can influence on personal concentration and reduce their influence. Motivation is also important for concentration process because every person need to understand importance of lecture or information and how it can be used (Jōgi 2010:11).

Many students use their time inefficiently for learning process just because can not concentrate as external or internal factors have influence on their concentration level (Reynolds 1996:para4). Concentration is not just the ability to direct and maintain human's focus on anything in particular, but also the ability to stop the thought process for reconsideration and understanding what person already know (Sadhu 1959: 9). Paradox of concentration concept is that the more people try to focus on something, the more difficult to do it. However, if interest on the exact topic is high, the concentration comes spontaneously (Prakash 1999:3)

1.3.5 Time management

Time management skills which are recognised as important in the learning process at different stages, are not included into any category of the learning skills. However, they deserve to be discussed separately.

Time management skills are fundamental for successful people in different parts of life, such as sport, job, business, education or every day routine (Time management skills 2014: para1). Educational process starts with time management skill. Education can be

more effective and comfortable if students can use time management skill. Time management skill helps students organize their time and life in the future (Jōgi 2010:3).

Effective time management is a basic skill, which a person needs to enhance the career prospects moreover it is essential skill to make work and career successful. Principles of time management are very simple: do what is higher important then do what is less important. Time management cannot be without strategies for settings goals (Forsyth 2010:12).

Effective time management means to understand what person wants to get and to set goals. Time planning does not mean that person busy all the time, it means that a person uses time effectively. Good time management brings satisfaction, relaxation, less stress situations and increases personal achievements (Fetsch 2008:para1). To make to time management is important to everyone because it can helps to achieve productivity in human aims and be able to combine society and private life (Forsyth 2010: 153). Affective learning skills direct on development human feelings, values, motivation, concentration and attention. Affective group of skills consists of motivation, school stress, attention and concentration (Jōgi 2010:9).

The following conclusions can be made on the basis of characteristics of different types of learning skills:

- Learning skills are necessary for achieving academic success
- Learning skills are divided into three large categories: cognitive, meta-cognitive and affective skills
- Each of three categories of learning skills includes several learning skills, in total 15 and also described time management skill which is fundamental in educational process, but it does not belong to three main groups of learning skill
- Each of learning skills has own peculiarity in educational process.

CHAPTER II. STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF LEARNING SKILLS AND THEIR IMPORTANCE FOR TERTIARY EDUCATION

2.1 Description of the Survey

The aim of the practical part of the Bachelor's thesis is to find out students' perception of learning skills and importance of those skills in tertiary education. Firstly, it is necessary to find out how students of Narva College of the University of Tartu define learning skills. Do they have understanding about what learning skills are and where these skills can be used? Also, it would be interesting to discover how students define learning skills by categories. Moreover, it would be useful to find out what kind of learning skills are the most important for students in the educational process. In order to achieve these aims a survey was conducted.

The survey was based on the questionnaire which was created by using Microsoft Word programme. The electronic form allows collecting data from different locations. Also this form of the questionnaire was printed out as a handout that was used to collect data locally among students in Narva College of the University of Tartu. The questionnaire consists of the introductory information about the aim and topic of present research and the survey, in order to make the questionnaire trustworthy, and three questions on the topic. The questions include one basic question about understanding the definition of learning skills. The respondents were asked to write how they define learning skills. The two other questions in this questionnaire were about understanding of three main types of learning skills and considering the most important learning skills in higher educational process. The list of learning skills consists of types which are described in Chapter I of the current paper.

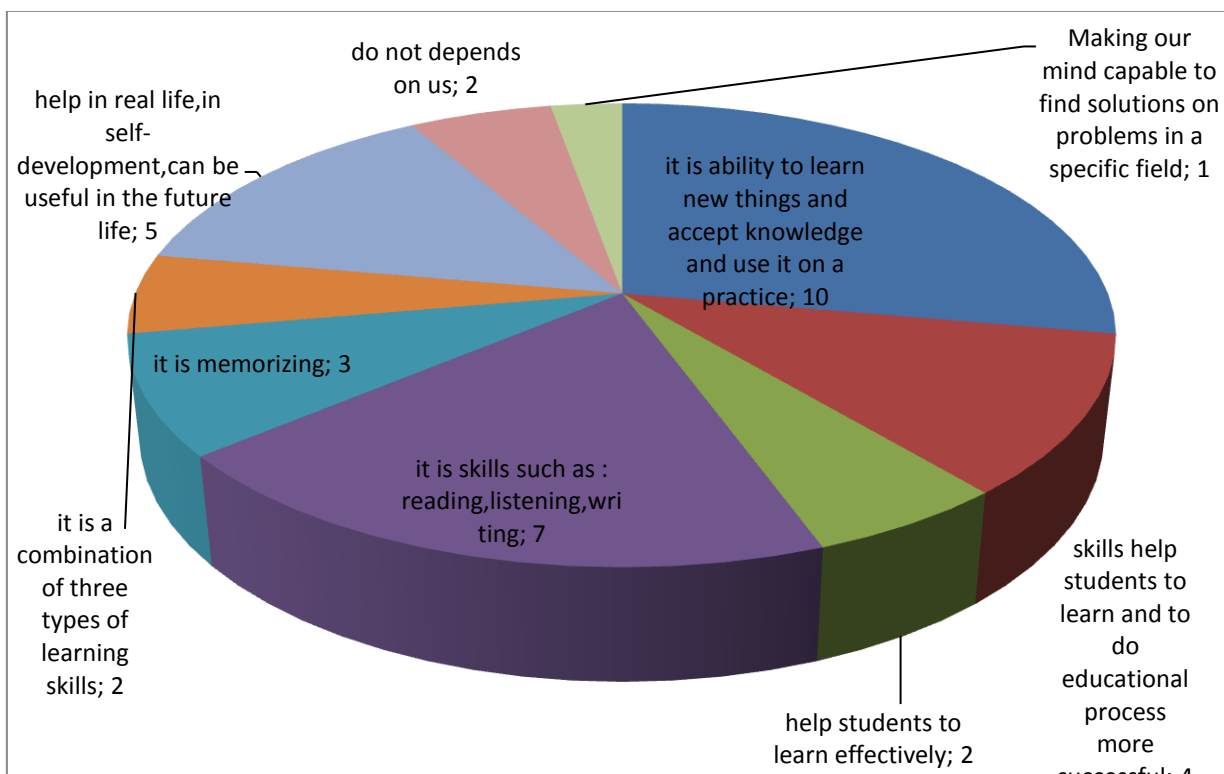
The target group of the survey are first, second and the third years students of Narva College of the University of Tartu. 3 responses were collected online and 33 responses were collected during the class in the form of the paper questionnaire. In total 36 students were questioned.

2.2 Analysis of the Results of the Survey

2.2.1 Analysis of Question 1

The first question of the survey is connected with students' understanding of learning skills. Students were suggested to answer on a question of how they would define learning skills. To calculate the results there were selected answers with similar thoughts and meaning, 9 combinations of thoughts in total.

Diagram 1. Students define learning skills



As can be seen from the diagram, it is clear that all respondents have their own opinion about the definition of learning skills. Also it is evident that learning skills are associated with ability to learn and use knowledge both in the educational process and in a real situation where it is necessary. Using of learning skills help students to make the educational process more successful and effective.

2.2.1 Analysis of Question 2

The second question of the questionnaire is connected with students' defining of learning skills by three main categories: cognitive, meta-cognitive and affective groups. The students marked the learning skills which were given them according to three categories.

Group of Cognitive skills

According to the results of the questionnaire it is evident that the majority of respondents of Narva College of the University of Tartu correctly define the group of cognitive learning skills. An exception is only consciousness about exiting knowledge skill. This is demonstrated by the fact that 17 out of 36 respondents believe that it is a meta-cognitive skill, but only 8 of 36 respondents define it as a cognitive learning skill.

Table 1. Students' perception of cognitive learning skills

Skills	Cognitive	Meta-cognitive	Affective
Problem solving	17	8	11
Active listening	22	7	7
Remembering and using of content	17	11	8
Learning sciences	21	7	8
Critical reading	18	10	8
Memorizing of content	25	5	6
Consciousness about exiting knowledge	8	17	11

Group of Meta-cognitive Skills

As it can be seen from the table, the results of the questionnaire show that a significant number of students absolutely correctly define all skills which belong to the group of meta-cognitive skills.

Table 2. Students' perception of meta-cognitive learning skills

Skills	Cognitive	Meta-cognitive	Affective
Skills of self-analysis	11	17	8
Self-esteem	8	15	13
Control over one's knowledge	11	14	11
Being self-conscious about oneself and one's learning	5	22	9

Group of Affective Skills

From the table results it is clear that a significant number of students correctly define almost all affective learning skills, but some skills have a small difference between the results with other groups. The exception of this group of learning skills is only motivation because 13 out of 36 students note that it is a cognitive skill, other 12 out of 36 define it as a meta-cognitive skill and only 11 out of 36 respondents think that it belongs a group of affective learning skills.

Table 3. Students' perception of affective learning skills

Skills	Cognitive	Meta-cognitive	Affective
Concentration	10	12	14
School stress	3	6	27
Attention	14	7	15
Motivation	13	12	11

The results of this question show that a significant number of respondents correctly define learning skills by three main categories. According to the results it is possible to suggest that almost of students of Narva College of the University of Tartu have an understanding about three main types of learning skills.

2.2.3 Analysis of Question 3

The third question in the survey was to assess each of learning skills in the table from the most important to the absolutely unimportant in the educational process, 5 graphs of assessment in total. As a result, consider the points of the fourth graph as “very important” and the fifth graph as “the most important”, by putting them together, because a significant number of students define the fourth graph as one of the most important and actively used this skill in practice. It is important to note that some students assessed a few learning skills as “very important” and “the most important”.

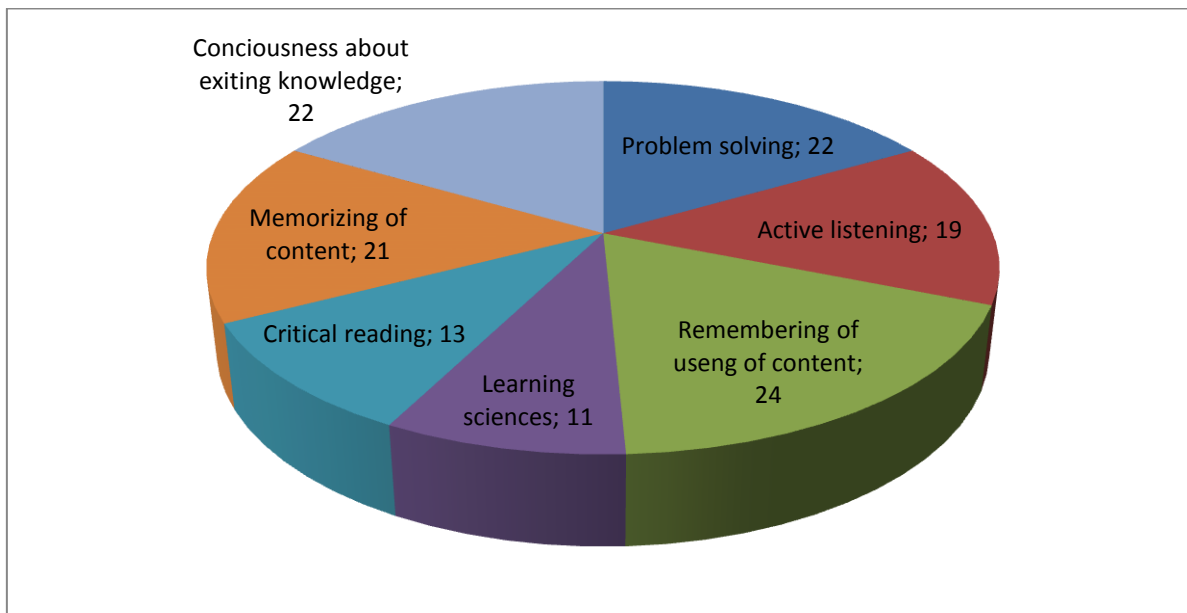
Group of cognitive Skills

Table 4. Students’ assessment of the most important skills

Skills	1 absolutely unimportant	2 - less important	3- important	4 - very important	5 - the most important
Problem solving	1	2	11	11	11
Active listening	1	6	10	13	6
Remembering and using of content	1	3	8	12	12
Learning sciences	4	7	14	7	4
Critical reading	3	6	14	10	3
Memorizing of content	1	2	12	10	11
Consciousness about exiting knowledge	1	3	10	16	6

According to the results of this table it is possible to suggest that almost of students of Narva College of the University of Tartu think that cognitive learning skills are the most important for tertiary education.

Diagram 2. Students' assessment of the group of cognitive skills



As it can be seen from this diagram, the majority of the students define remembering of using of content as one of the most important skill among cognitive category 24 out of 36 respondents. A small number of respondents, only 13 out of 36, chose critical reading as an important skill in the educational process.

Group of meta-cognitive skills

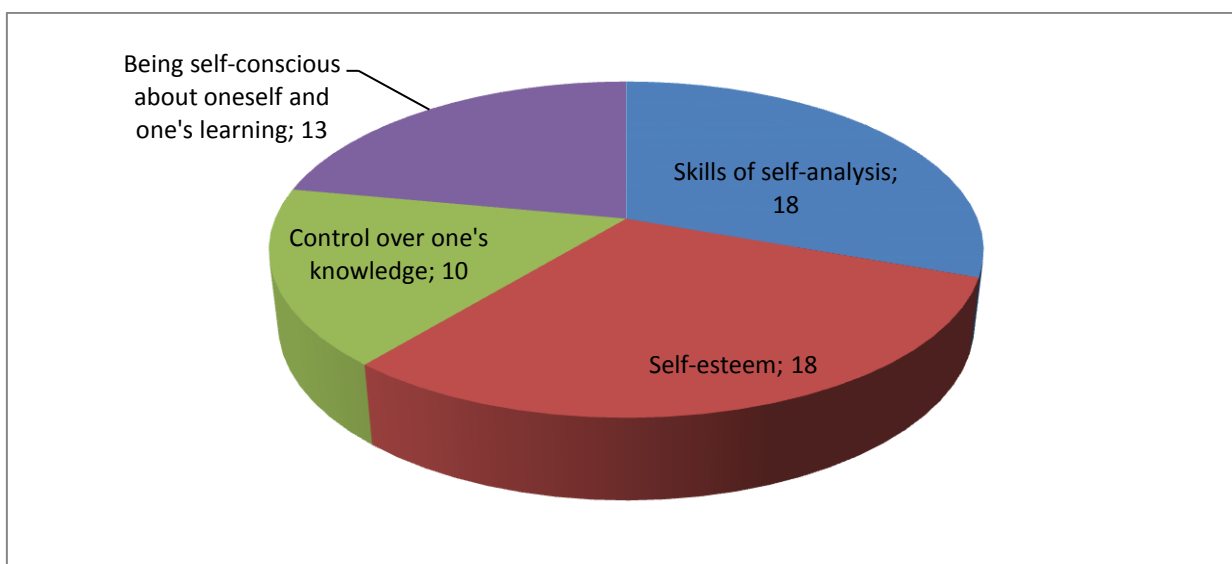
Table 5. Students' assessment of the most important skills

Skills	1 absolutely unimportant	2 - less important	3-important	4 - very important	5 - the most important
Skills of self-analysis	2	5	11	13	5
Self-esteem	1	4	13	9	9
Control over one's knowledge	5	11	10	7	3

Being self-conscious about oneself and one's learning	3	3	17	9	4
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From the results of this table it is difficult to assert that that almost of students of Narva College of the University of Tartu believe that meta-cognitive learning skills are the most important for tertiary education.

Diagram 3. Students' assessment of the group of meta-cognitive skills



From this diagram it is evident that self-esteem and skills of self-of analysis are two the most important skills in the group of meta-cognitive learning skills because 18 out of 36 students supported them.

Group of Affective Learning Skills

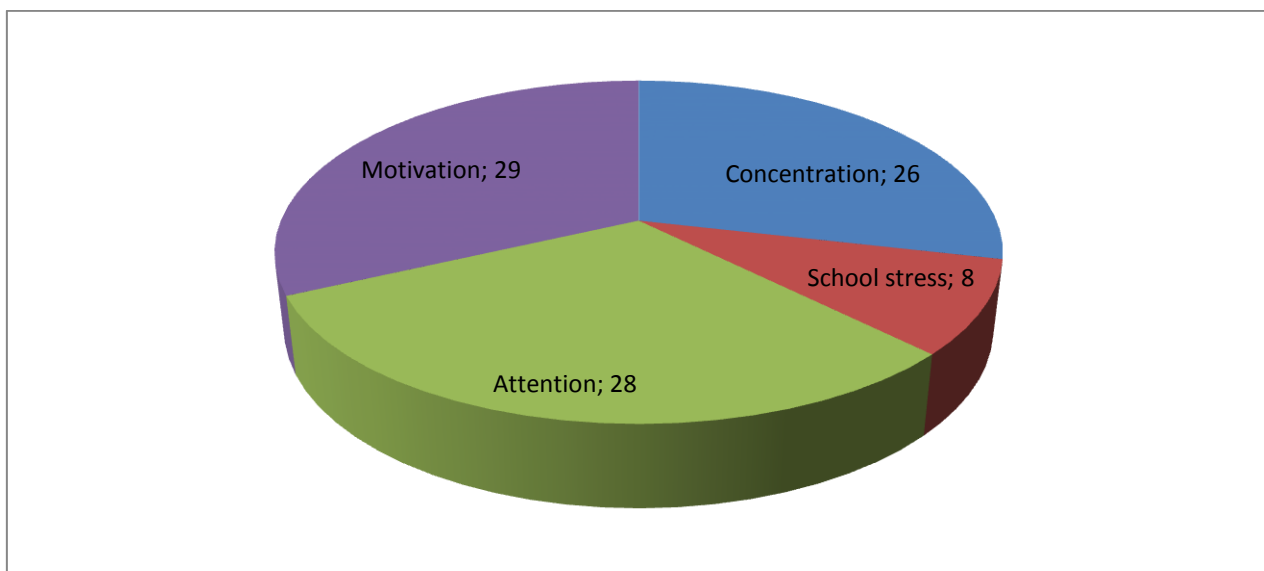
Table 6. Students' assessment of the most important skills

Skills	1 absolutely unimportant	2 - less important	3-important	4 - very important	5 - the most important
Concentration	1	1	8	14	12
School stress	7	16	7	4	2

Attention	1	1	6	13	15
Motivation	1	2	4	2	27

From the results of this table it is also possible to suggest that almost of students of Narva College of the University of Tartu think that affective learning skills are the most important for tertiary education.

Diagram 4. Students' assessment of the group of affective skills



According to the results of this diagram, it is obvious that this group has the majority respondents who think that the skills of this group are the most important in tertiary education. The exception is only school stress because only for 8 out of 36 respondents emphasise its importance. it is one of the most important skills.

Table 7. Students' assessment of time management skills

Skills	1 absolutely unimportant	2 - less important	3- important	4 - very important	5 - the most important
Time management	3	3	2	11	17

The third question of the survey also contains time management skills which do not belong to the three main categories of learning skills. As it can be seen in the table, time management skills are also very important in the educational process because 28 out of 36 respondents consider them “very important” and “the most important”.

As can be seen from the analysis of the survey, the results disprove the hypothesis that cognitive learning skills are the most important in tertiary education. As it can be seen in the first and second question, a significant number of students of Narva College of the University of Tartu have understanding about what a learning skill is and define three main types of learning skills. From the results of the third question it is evident that students think that affective learning skills are the most important in tertiary education but the exception of this group is only school stress. As it can be seen in Table 6 students in Narva College of the University of Tartu think that school stress is practically unimportant in the educational process. However, the results show that one of the most important skills for students is time management but it does not belong to any of the three groups of learning skills described in the thesis.

CONCLUSION

The final part of the current thesis is meant to sum up the results obtained during the practical research and the thesis as a whole. A general conclusion has to be made considering the methodology used during the work, the aims that were set and the hypotheses that were put forward at the beginning of the work.

The thesis has looked through different online and printed resources and has collected the information about different types of learning skills and their functions for students in the educational process. The total amount of three types of learning skills and 16 learning skills was collected. The theoretical part provides a brief description of these types of learning skills.

The practical part of the thesis is based on an empirical research which consists of a survey and the analysis of the obtained results. The purpose of the research was to achieve the aims set at the beginning of the work which were: 1) to find out how students of Narva College of the University of Tartu perceive what learning skills are; 2) which learning skills students consider to be of crucial importance for obtaining higher education. Both aims were achieved during the research.

It has been proven that the majority of the respondents of Narva College of the University of Tartu, have understanding about the definition of learning skills and determine learning skills by three main categories. In addition, students choose affective category of learning skills as the most important for tertiary education and exception is only school stress. The students also think that time management is the most useful skill in the educational process.

SUMMARY IN THE ESTONIAN LANGUAGE

Käesolev bakalaureusetöö põhineb õppimisoskuste uurimisel kõrghariduse tasemel. Peamiseks uurimisobjektiks on erinevad õppimisoskused ja nende kasutamine. Töö eesmärk on uurida: 1) kuidas Tartu Ülikooli Narva Kolledži tudengid mõistavad õppimisoskuste olemust 2) mis õppimisoskusi tudengid peavad kõige tähtsateks kõrghariduse omandamise juures.

Bakalaureusetöö koosneb sissejuhatausest, kahest peatükist ja kokkuvõttest.

Sissejuhatus annab põhilist informatsiooni õppimise, ka õppimisoskuste tähtsusest kõrghariduses. On olemas kaks hüpoteesi: 1) Narva Kolledz Tartu Ülikooli tudengid aru saavad mis on õppimisoskused; 2) Narva Kolledz Tartu Ülikooli tudengid arvavad, et kognitiivsed õppimisoskused on kõige olulisemad kõrghariduses.

Esimeses peatükis, mis on samas ka teoreetiline, on kirjeldatud kolm põhilist õppimisoskuste gruppi mis sisaldavad õppimisoskusi (kokku 16), mille kasutatakse õppimisprotsessis. Teoreetiline osa annab korralikku ülevaadet selle tüüpi õppimisoskuste kohta.

Teises peatükis on esindatud uurimine, mis koosneb küsitlusest ja saadud tulemuste analüüsist. Küsitluse abil saadud tulemuste analüüs näitab, et suurim osa Tartu Ülikooli Narva Kolledži vastajaid mõistavad õppimisoskuste olemust ja definitsiooni kolme tüüpi. Lisaks, tudengid peavad afektiivseid õppimisoskusi kõige oluliseks kõrghariduse omandamises ja erandiks on ainult koolistress. Tudengite arvates aega planeerimine on ka väga kasulikuks oskuseks õppimisprotsessis. Võttes arvesse tulemuste analüüsi saab väita, et esimene hüpotees oli tõestatud, aga teine oli ümber lükatud.

Kokkuvõttes antakse ülevaade terve töö tulemustest, kommentaaridest ning ülesannetest ja hüpoteesidest.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Questionnaire

Dear Student of Narva College of the University of Tartu!

The following questionnaire is designed as a part of the research aimed at finding out students' perception of learning skills and importance of those skills in tertiary education. The survey is anonymous; its results will be used for writing the bachelor's thesis "Narva College Students' Perception of Learning Skills and Their Importance in Tertiary Education".

Thank you!

1. How would you define learning skills?
2. There are three types of learning skills: affective, cognitive and meta-cognitive. Please mark the learning skills given below according to these three categories as A for affective, C for cognitive, and MC for meta-cognitive learning skills.

* Self-esteem

*Active listening

* Concentration

* Skills of self-analysis

* Problem solving

* Remembering and using of content

* School stress

*Control over one's knowledge

* Learning sciences

* Critical reading

* Being self-conscious about oneself and one's learning

* Memorizing of content

*Attention

* Consciousness about exiting knowledge

* Motivation

3. Which of these learning skills do you consider the most important for you as a college student? Access and put a tick.

Skills	1-unimportant	2-less important	3-important	4- very important	5-the most important
Problem solving					
Active listening					
Concentration					
Skills of self-analysis					
Self-esteem					
Remembering and using of content					
School stress					
Control over one's knowledge					
Learning sciences					
Critical reading					
Being self-conscious about oneself and one's learning					

Memorizing of content					
Attention					
Consciousness about exiting knowledge					
Motivation					
Time management					

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