

**The IQ Project**  
**– two years of academic tutoring**  
**at the Faculty of Languages,**  
**University of Gdańsk**

BEATA KARPIŃSKA-MUSIAŁ

**1. General information**

The IQ Project, entitled *Ideal Quality in Good Quantity – project of interdisciplinary support for a foreign language student with the method of academic tutoring at the University of Gdańsk (IQ)*, is a research-based, research-oriented but first of all innovative, didactic initiative carried out in the University of Gdańsk in the years 2014–2016. It was funded by a financial grant won by Dr Beata Karpińska-Musiał (the Institute of English and American Studies of the Faculty of Languages) in a competition announced in 2013 by the National Agency (Foundation for the Development of the Education System) in Warsaw, called *Rozwój Polskich Uczelni* (Polish HE Institution Development). The money was awarded from EEA and Norway Grants (Norway, Iceland and Lichtenstein) within the program *Fundusz Stypendialno-Szkoleniowy* (Scholarship and Training Funds). The total value of the grant was 345,407.88 PLN.

**2. Project background**

From the very start the Project assumed the implementation of an elite form of education into academic teaching practice: individual tutorials tailored to the needs of ambitious and inquisitive students. This method of academic teaching, not new

in major high-ranking world universities, has turned out to be a remedy to the lowering job satisfaction observed among teachers on the basis of both research on NQF (National Qualification Framework), as well as the heated debate over marketization of higher education in Poland. The latter, however, causes problems with the acceptance of economy based knowledge management, as it inevitably requires changes in teachers' approach towards educating themselves and others, and most importantly in their competencies to deal with the needs of the students. The Project's major objective was to offer both teachers and students a chance to experience high quality, dialogic and personalized teaching and learning, which shall develop in the students their best potentials, skills and critical thinking especially useful for the labor market, but also precious for the personal and intellectual development. A double series of seven individual tutorials with five students per semester (70 hours over two semesters per Tutor) offered the Project Tutors space to work on students' intellectual passions, while not being limited by official programs, not even calling for the writing a BA or MA thesis. In many cases, this cooperation was a mutual adventure for both the Tutor and his/her Student on their academic path, one on which they could afford a true intellectual journey into the areas never explored before.

### **3. The steps/milestones of the Project**

As with every long-term educational project, this one also had a time-frame and was divided into particular stages. These were as follows:

- (1) November 2013, information meeting and recruitment of participants from among academic staff (in the end participants were recruited from Faculty of Languages (majority), Social Sciences, Management, and one person from Oceanography and Geography – the final number of teachers being 29);

- (2) December 2013 – February 2014, a 64-hour long course in tutoring for the participants run by an external Expert;
- (3) March – June 2014, the first round of tutorials for selected BA students (2nd year);
- (4) February 2014, the 1st evaluation meeting with the Tutors, feedback, networking, assessment;
- (5) October 2014 – February 2015, the second round of tutorials for the 1st year students of MA studies;
- (6) June 2015, feedback and the 2nd evaluation meeting with the students participating (over 50 people took part in this highly appreciative and emotional event);
- (7) July – December 2015, preparation for the final project conference, editorial work on the tutors' and students' monographs BEFORE the conference;
- (8) January – March 2016, final organization and a closing conference in April 2016, books' publication;
- (9) the Project ends on May 31st, 2016.

#### **4. Recognition all over Poland and abroad**

Thanks to the great level of engagement of all its participants', their devotion, extra time they gave, their work and attention, the IQ Project became a didactic innovation within a public HE Institution on a scale never found before at any other University in Poland. 30 academic teachers, the Head of the Project included, worked intensively for two semesters (plus the almost two years of additional administrative work and management by the Head) in order to allow over 230 students of our University to savor the type of education practiced in Oxford, Cambridge and other leading Universities in the world. This type of experience brought amazing results, which are visible and reflected in over 50 essays that were published in the students' monograph in April 2016. In addition to this, several tutors decided to share their experience in articles written for the project Tutors' publication. Universities of Warsaw, Cracow and Wrocław also run tutorials for their students, some of them systemically, some in the form of smaller scale projects. The IQ Project, however, is the only one in Poland

which was awarded a European grant allowing for this experience to go beyond regular didactics and for such a number of teachers and students. This is why the Project presented by me at the 2nd Congress of Tutoring in Warsaw in May 2015, the EDULEARN'14 conference in Barcelona and a number of other national conferences, gained wide recognition among representatives of those HE institutions which know and appreciate personalized, high quality academic education.

A visible outcome of this recognition was also a nomination to a prestigious award in the EDUinspirator contest, announced by the National Agency in Warsaw for HE educational project leaders, which I, as the Head of the Project, was granted in November 2015.

## **5. Why was the IQ Project exceptional and why did it bring added value to academic teaching at the University of Gdańsk?**

### **5.1. Diversity of topics**

The tutorials offered by the team of Tutors represented a vast array of topics in many research disciplines: literature, linguistics, culture, pedagogy, management, history, film, teaching methodology, language and communication studies, and theater and drama to mention but a few – all from varied cultural and language areas. The offer presented by tutors was 100% original and was their intellectual property. It also opened a new world of knowledge to students, who were longing for more educational challenges beyond their regular course of study. A description of the tutorials (in Polish), as well as all other crucial information, can be found on the Project website: <[www.projektiq.ug.edu.pl](http://www.projektiq.ug.edu.pl)>.

## **5.2. A space for students to become empowered**

In addition to the above, the tutorials offered another value to the course: they gave voice to the students. In the course of individual meetings, during which they had the 100% attention of their tutors for themselves, they could not avoid being active, thoughtful and ready to discuss issues first expressed in their essays. The practice and art of writing, mastered in the majority of meetings, allowed thought and mind formulation without the strict academic criteria of passing/failing. The essays the Tutees wrote, therefore, reflected not only their overview of scientific theories, analyses of prose or summaries of read articles. They also included authentic opinions and conclusions marked with their perspectives, world-views, beliefs and interpretations. Thus, the tutorial essays became a tremendous forum for personal development by empowered individuals, which was possible thanks to the careful guidance provided by the Tutor. What is more, this mode of education also made the teacher's personal development possible, as he/she learned how to trust the student's informal knowledge, and mediate in his process of learning and knowledge expansion. In short, tutoring brings into life the otherwise theoretically described change in educational paradigms, which postulate lifelong learning, mutual trust and cooperation in the teacher-student relationship.

## **5.3. Results and future developments**

The IQ Project, ended in May 2016, appeared to have a long-term impact in the Faculty of Languages at the University of Gdańsk. In October 2015 the Dean of the Faculty, Prof. Dr habil. Andrzej Ceynowa, agreed to finance three new cycles of tutorials (in the three coming semesters from now) to be run by a group of twelve tutors of the Project. This initiative, which allowed several new students to gain chance at this qualitative education, meant altogether 360 extra hours of individual

study. It is a huge and important step in the process of making educational offer of the Faculty even more diverse and student oriented. Compared to the ca. 1600 hours tutored in the Project, it is still not a mass undertaking (as it, in fact, should never become), but meaningful. All in all, the tutoring is not an offer which counts in terms of numbers. It is, as the title suggests, about quality and not quantity.

Another result of the Project is the initiation of Centrum Tutorów UG (University of Gdańsk Tutors' Center), which has been launched in co-operation between the Faculty of Languages and the Faculty of Oceanography and Geography. The idea was born among the IQ Project group members when still in a didactic process, and a new project application form was submitted by Dr Ewa Szymczak and Dr Beata Karpinska-Musiał to the university local Fund (University of Gdańsk Fund of Didactic Innovations) in the 2015/2016 and 2016/2017 editions. As a result, we have been – in both editions – granted a sum of money to run four inspirational meetings for academic Tutors of the whole University. There is too, it should be stated, a solid group of certified tutors in the above mentioned Faculty, who have also been implementing tutoring in their didactic and research practice for the last 2 years. Together, Tutors from the Faculty of Languages, Social Sciences, Management and Oceanography and Geography create the biggest group of certified academic tutors working in personalized tutorials in Poland. More about UG Tutors' Center at: <[www.centrum-tutorow.ug.edu.pl](http://www.centrum-tutorow.ug.edu.pl)>.

The final outcome worth mentioning are the project publications. The IQ Project has already marked its existence in the following publications:

- (1) "At students' service – tutoring and coaching as innovative methods of academic education in Poland" by Beata Karpinska-Musiał and Agnieszka Dziedziczak-Foltyn (2014);
- (2) "Tutoring akademicki jako rekonstrukcja relacji Uczeń-Mistrz w obliczu masyfikacji kształcenia wyższego: Próba wplecenia koncepcji w kontekst wewnętrznego system zapewniania ja-

- kości kształcenia jako jednego z kryteriów akredytacji uczelni wyższych” by Beata Karpińska-Musiał (2014);
- (3) “Tutoring akademicki jako metoda kształcenia pro jakościowego w ramach masowego uniwersytetu w Polsce: edukacyjne wykluczenie czy racjonalny kompromis?” by Beata Karpińska-Musiał (2015a);
  - (4) “Tutoring na Wydziale Filologicznym Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego – w trosce o jakość w ilości” by Beata Karpińska-Musiał (2015b);
  - (5) “Czy tutoring jest skazany na elitarność? Szanse i rozczarowania w kontekście kształcenia systemowego w polskiej akademii” by Beata Karpińska-Musiał (2016);
  - (6) *Studenckim piórem w tutorskim kałamarzu: Tutoring akademicki w Uniwersytecie Gdańskim* (Karpińska-Musiał (ed.) 2016a), project students’ monograph;
  - (7) *W trosce o jakość w ilości: Tutoring oksfordzki w Uniwersytecie Gdańskim* (Karpińska-Musiał (ed.) 2016b), project tutors’ monograph;
  - (8) *Edukacja spersonalizowana w uniwersytecie: Ideologia, instytucja, dydaktyka, tutor* by Beata Karpińska-Musiał (2016b).

Students’ and tutors’ as well as the Head’s monographs have all been published by LIBRON Publishing House in Cracow. The first two monographs consist of 54 articles written by IQ students and 13 articles written by the Project tutors and constitute the most remarkable, unprecedented testimonies of a unique educational experience in the University of Gdańsk. Both books are available with a free electronic access at the following website addresses: <<http://libron.pl/katalog/czytaj/id/204>> (the tutors’ monograph) and <<http://libron.pl/katalog/czytaj/id/203>> (the students’ monograph). The third book of the project, authored by Beata Karpińska-Musiał, includes results of the Action Research conducted in the process of its duration. It can also be downloaded for free at <<http://libron.pl/katalog/czytaj/id/219>>.



*W trosce o jakość w ilości:  
Tutoring oksfordzki  
w Uniwersytecie Gdańskim*



*Studenckim piórem w tutorskim  
kałamarzu: Tutoring akademicki  
w Uniwersytecie Gdańskim*



*Edukacja spersonalizowana w uniwersytecie:  
Ideologia, instytucja, dydaktyka, tutor*



The real-life stories and direct reports could be heard during a final conference, which was held in by the end of April (28-29.04.2016) in Gdański Teatr Szekspirowski. This event combined the official report delivered by the Head of the Project with a scientific discussion on the condition and developments of academic education in Poland.

**Konferencja naukowa:**  
**W TROSCE O JAKOŚĆ W ILOŚCI**  
**- EDUKACJA AKADEMICKA W PROCESIE ZMIAN**

*pod honorowym patronatem Pani Prorektor ds. kształcenia Uniwersytetu Gdańskiego  
 Prof. UG dr hab. Anny Machnikowskiej*

**Gdański Teatr Szekspirowski**  
**28-29 kwietnia 2016**



*Główni mówcy plenarni:*  
 prof. dr Heinrich Dauber  
 prof. zw. dr hab. Jerzy Axer  
 prof. dr hab. Teresa Bauman  
 prof. dr hab. Anna Sajdak

Zapraszamy do wspólnej dyskusji  
 o jakości dydaktyki akademickiej w jej różnych odslonach  
 oraz znaczeniu interdyscyplinarnego kształcenia we współczesnej Akademii

Wydarzenie zamknięte. Zainteresowanych prosimy o kontakt.

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Projekt pt. „W trosce o jakość w ilości – program interdyscyplinarnego wspierania studenta filologii obcej w oparciu o metodę tutoringu akademickiego w Uniwersytecie Gdańskim” (“Ideal Quality in Good Quantity”) finansowany jest ze środków funduszy norweskich i funduszy EOG, pochodzących z Islandii, Liechtensteinu i Norwegii oraz środków krajowych. Operatorem Programu w ramach Funduszu Stypendialnego i Szkoleniowego po stronie polskiej jest Fundacja Rozwoju Systemu Edukacji.

The conference poster designed by  
 Małgorzata Karczmarczyk and Ludmiła Markowska



The IQ Project participants – tutors and students.  
Photo: Ludmiła Markowska



Conference participants.  
Photo: Ludmiła Markowska

Renowned plenary and panel speakers delivered keynote speeches, such as our foreign guest speaker, Professor Doktor Heinrich Dauber from the University in Kassel, Professor Jerzy Axer from the Warsaw University, Professor Teresa Bauman (University of Gdańsk), and a guest speaker Professor Anna Sajdak (Jagiellonian University). Professor Tomasz Szkudlarek and a vice Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences, Dr Adam Jagiełło-Rusiłowski, participated in a panel discussion on the general topic: *Questions about elitism, authority, wisdom and democracy in education*, which gave rise to a fervent debate over plentiful issues concerning the quality and social aura of university teaching and learning nowadays.

The whole IQ Project was an exceptional, unique pedagogical and educational experience for both its Coordinator and the Participants. It contributed to the reframing of a very special academic culture, based on mutual commitment and trust among the teachers who turned into not only formally certified and methodologically trained, but first of all experienced, “real-life” academic tutors. They took part in the highest quality of intellectual exchange of knowledge and skills between them and their Tutees. For me, as the Project Head and Coordinator, running the Project was a demanding administrative task and organizational challenge, resulting in the development of skills attributed to a grass roots “servant” type of leadership in an educational institution (Bombała 2011: 16).

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