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## **Teacher's socially-communicative competence qualities - promoters of professional innovative activities**

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### **Abstract**

*The research is linked to efficiency of teacher performance which creates a need to find original solutions to the problem of identifying and promoting professional competences and to select behavioural models promoting social-communicative competence. The current research presents various structures of the communicative competence. Social-communicative competence is viewed as the basic, key competence of the teacher's professional activity. The research sample consisted of 110 teachers from two gymnasiums and two secondary schools, 59.2% from schools where primary study language is Latvian and 48.8% from schools where primary study language is Russian. An outcome from the research was recommendations for the development of teacher social-communicative competences and improvement of teacher social status in society.*

**Keywords:** *communicative competence, social-communicative competence, innovative approaches*

### **Introduction**

The topicality of the research is related to the growing uncertainty of economic and labour market conditions in Latvia, which lead to the necessity to find the original solutions identifying the problems and furthering awareness of the teacher's professional competences, as well as choice of behavioural patterns for promoting socially - communicative competences which contribute to cooperation.

Our research was conducted at a time of socially-political change in Latvia, marked by the condition of economic crisis. Nowadays, adult society is focused on money, fast track achievements, well-paid jobs. The market economy introduced dissonance in the process of identification of the values of society and personality, expressed in a somewhat negative attitude to non-load-bearing money professions including to the teacher's status.

### **Communicative competence**

Communicative competence is viewed as a phenomenal category, which includes features of personal development, linking the inner personal world and professional environmental allows us to talk about the uniqueness of the structure of communicative competence. Competent communication in the school environment provides its' harmonisation and orientation to innovative and emotionally supportive cooperation. To characterise socially-communicative competences, it is applicable to look at

communication as an inclusive systemic integrative process. Communicative potential is a set of of three components:

- 1) communicative qualities of personality which characterize the needs of the development of the skills of communication;
- 2) communicative abilities – abilities to respond emotionally to the situation of the partner of communication, to maintain a positive initiative of interaction, to create and implement your individual strategy of communication;
- 3) communicative competence is the ability to stimulate emotional uplift and willingness to share the further activities, which encouraged synergy for cooperation.

Experience of contact has a special place in the structure of communicative competence of personality. On the one hand, it is social, including cultural norms and values, on the other hand, it is individual, as it is based on the individual communicative abilities and psychological experience, associated with communication in life of personality. The dynamic aspect of this experience is based on socialisation and personalisation processes which are realised in interaction and ensure social progress of a human, as well as his reaction to adequacy and specificity to the situation of interaction.

The American linguist N. Chomsky introduced the term 'language competence' - the system of intellectual abilities, knowledge, and belief that is developed in early infancy and in mutual interaction with many other factors and determines types of behaviour (Chomsky, 1965). Chomsky promoted the following competences within his conception - inborn speech ability-competence, the concepts of architecture of language and speech production (formation of real speech - performance). In his opinion, speech product creates the process of successive realisation of semantic, grammatical and pragmatic regulations which are created on the basis of inborn cognitive structures of the speech producer (Chomsky, 2002).

The concept of communicative competence includes skills and abilities to use language adequately in a specific situations which is made up of interaction. Communicative competence is defined as a person's creative ability to use the inventory of language (in the way of expression and discourse) which is made of knowledge and readiness to use it adequately. This concept includes the cognitive, affective, and international factors (Hym, 1972; Omaggio, 1986).

In Russia, the term of the language didactics 'communicative competence' was introduced by M. Vyatutnev (М. Вятютнев), offering understanding of it as follows- 'how the program of selection and implementation of speech depends on person's ability to navigate in situations of interaction; on ability to classify situations depending on the themes, tasks, communicative settings resulting from interaction of participants before the conversation, as well as during the conversation within the process of mutual adaptation' (ВЯТЮТНЕВ, 1977).

The content of socially-communicative competence, which can be described as a methodical, consistent psychological and linguistic unity of all components, includes the following interrelated and balanced sections:

- a) sphere of communication activities, themes and their conceptual meaning for the participants;
- b) situations and scenarios of the development of communicative events;
- c) the social and communicative roles of participants, role of behaviour of each role in accordance with consecution of the communicative developments ;
- d) pragmatic speech objectives;
- e) the types of discourse and circumstances of their formation;
- f) the list of communicative meanings ;
- g) understanding of the meanings of internal system;
- h) level of acquiring of language (Anouk et al, 2002).

According to the concept of A. Lyeontyev, 'communicative action is looked at as a subject of interaction, but other people – as the partners of interaction , but the necessity of interaction as human urge to explore and appreciate other people, but through them, and with their help – to explore and evaluate oneself' (Леонтьев, 1994, 1996). For example, A. Dobrovich (*А. Добрович*) views the communicative competence as a constant readiness for contact, explaining it from the position of consciousness and thinking: man thinks – it means that he lives in a mode of dialogue, in addition to this, his duty is to follow the changing situation constantly in accordance with intuitive expectations, as well as his partner's expectations (Добрович, 1987).

V. Kan-Kalik defines the communicative competence as part of human existence, which exists in all human activities. He stresses the problem that not all people can imagine how communicative acts can be implemented, as to implement those, human should have certain skills and abilities. (Кан-Калик, 1995). Further definitions of communicative competency are those which are statistically significant and associated with the essence of the concept of discussion: 'The communicative competence – a unity of skills and abilities is required for effective communication' (Петровский, 1996); 'Communicative competence — the ability to adapt to the situation and the ability to use verbal and non- verbal means of social behavior freely' (Faerch & Kasper, 1984).

Looking at all the definitions, it can be concluded that the communicative competence = communicative abilities + communicative skills + communicative knowledge which is adequate to communicative tasks and sufficient to solve them.

Communicative skills are targeted actions or a sequence of actions that can be performed and repeated in a definite situation. The more skills a man has the greater is the probability that he will be able to structure his behaviour effectively and adequately. Communicative knowledge is the knowledge of interacting, of its types, phases, regularities of development, existing communicative methods and techniques, what is their influence, what are the possibilities and limitations. The concept of socially-communicative competence provides human's awareness of the following aspects of a personality:

- orientation of his own needs and values, the technique of his work;

- skills of perception, i.e. the ability to perceive the surrounding without subjective distortions, without showing rigid prejudices with regard to one or other problems, personalities, social groups;
- readiness to perceive the new in external environment;
- the ability to understand the efforts of other socially -economic groups;
- ability to understand and accept norms of other cultures and values;
- ability to acknowledge his feelings and mental conditions due to the effects of factors of external environment;
- a conscious level of economic culture, which emerges in relation to environmental elements of the place of residence (Bakx et al., 2006).

‘Socially, communicative competence is seen as the ideological and ethical concept that governs the whole system of human relations with the social world, people and nature, as well as with himself as the product of synthesis of both of these worlds’ (Bakx et al, 2006). It is ability to analyse, create, and manage social situations (Homich, 2009). Socially-communicative competence is formed as collaboration of development of personality, communication and integration of activity. Socially-communicative competence is viewed as a system of internal resources required to create effective communication within a definite process of the interaction of personalities and encourages personality for further synergy cooperation. Socially-communicative competence of teachers is made up of the following skills:

- to identify prediction of the socially-psychological-communicative situation;
- to determine the personality traits and emotional state of other people correctly;
- to manage the process of communication correctly, based on the specify of communicative situation;
- to implement adequate management of socially-psychological interaction processes in communicative situation;
- to encourage the development of skills of positive communicative competence in innovative activity.

Socially-communicative competence is based on the individual’s inborn ability to cooperate. It is naturally formed and developed in primary, secondary and further socialisation process, however, it is important to remember that components of socially-communicative competence of personality depend on many objective and subjective factors which do not depend on personality; these factors must be taken into account and should be used in the work by teachers (Leung, 2005). Thus, the teacher’s socially-communicative competence is seen as a set of specific personality traits, abilities, knowledge and socially-communicative skills which enables integration of human in society and implements pedagogical activities successfully.

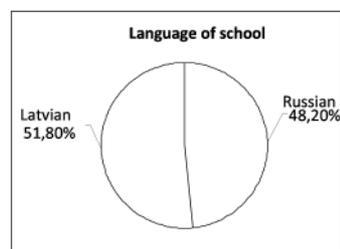
### **Materials and methods**

The survey of socially-communicative competence (Goncharova, 2006) is used in the work. Six qualities of forming socially-communicative competence are determined in the survey, as well as the levels of forming them. Static analysis is made: transferring data to

Stan scale; distribution in high, medium and low stan indicators. The selection of research was done in city X and included 110 teachers from Latvian and Russian schools, i.e. 2 gymnasium and 2 secondary school teachers-all together 84, including 8 men-59,2% from the schools with Latvian language and 48,8% from the schools with Russian language.

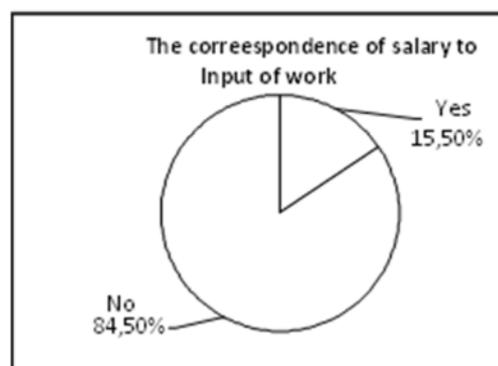
The teacher's work assessment and a self-assessment were determined in this research using the Survey of the social status of teachers. The questionnaire was filled by 84 teachers: 43 (51.2%) from Latvian schools and 41(48,8%) – from Russian schools (see. 1st figure) and the correspondence of salary to the input of work (see input. 2nd figure).

**Figure 1. The percentage of teachers from Latvian in relation to Russian schools**



The salary correspondence to the input of work was identified. More than 84% of teachers from schools with Latvian and Russian language openly dared to testify discrepancy of the salary to the input of work (the others were almost afraid to testify it not to lose jobs). That is why there is a gender inequality in schools with only 0.08% men in schools.

**Figure 2. The percentage of responses of the teachers from all schools in relation to correspondence of salary to the input of work**

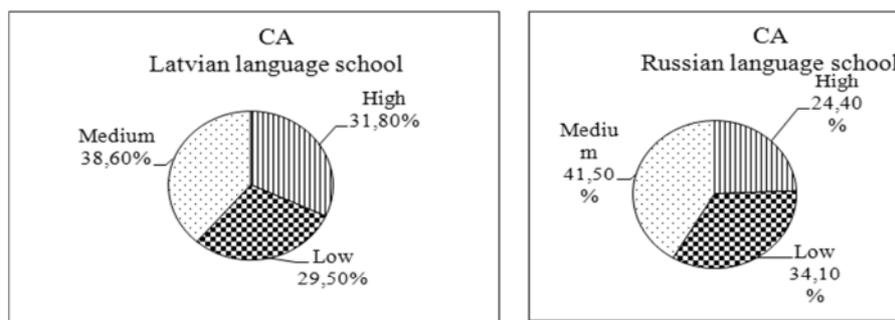


The satisfaction with work of teachers in Latvian and in Russian speaking secondary schools and a gymnasium was found out. All together 84.5% of teachers consider that salary does not correspond to the input of work. 90% are dissatisfied with the work in minority schools, but 79% of teachers in Latvian-speaking schools. The qualities of the socially-communicative competence of teachers were analyzed further. The proposals were provided for improvement of the teacher's communicative competence and development of the importance of the social status of teachers in society. The qualities of socially-communicative competence were identified:

- CA-socially-communicative awkwardness;
- IU-intolerance to uncertainty;
- AC – aspiration for conformity;
- SI-endeavor for improvement of status;
- AF- the orientation to the avoidance of failure;
- FI- frustration/ intolerance.

*CA-socially-communicative awkwardness*: On the positive side, socially -communicative harmony: highly developed skills and abilities. On the negative side – socially -communicative awkwardness: to express his views and to listen to others.

**Figure 3. CA – socially -communicative awkwardness**

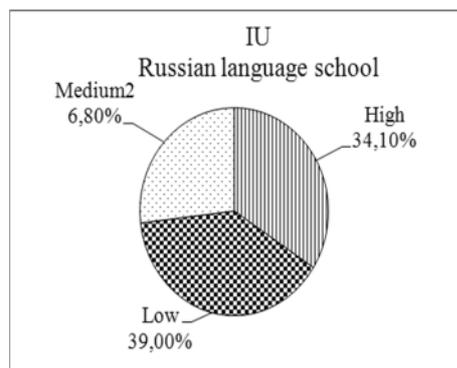


The number of teachers with low and medium sized CA indicators in Latvian schools, exceed the number of teachers in Russian schools substantially. Substantial differences of parts of percentage are not found. Among the Latvian school teachers there is the prevalence of the group of teachers with medium CA indicators. The difference of statistical significance is not found. Among the teachers of Russian schools there is the prevalence of a group of teachers with medium and low CA indicators (the value of the highest indicator is 0.05).

*IU- intolerance of uncertainty*. There are more teachers with low IU indicators in Russian schools. There are more teachers with medium IU indicators in Latvian schools. There is approximately the same number of teachers with high indicators in Latvian and

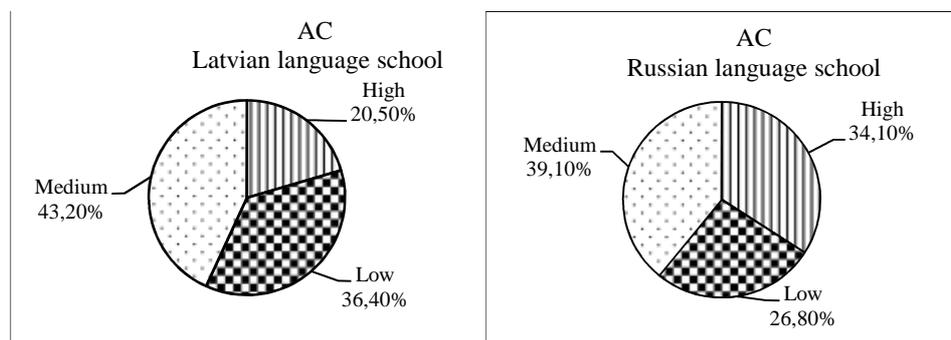
Russian schools. Substantial differences of parts of percentage are not found. Among the Latvian school teachers there is the prevalence of teachers with medium IU indicators. Among the teachers of Russian schools there is the prevalence of teachers with low and high IU indicators. Substantial differences of parts of percentage are not found. On the positive side- intolerance to uncertainty, creativeness in the sphere of communication. On the negative, side-low level of the prediction of the socially-communicative situation.

**Figure 4. IU-intolerance to uncertainty**



*AC-aspiration for conformity.* There are more teachers with low AC indicators from Latvian schools. There are more teachers with medium AC indicators from Latvian schools. There are more teachers with high AC indicators from Russian schools. Substantial differences of parts of percentage are not found. Among the Latvian school teachers there is the prevalence of teachers with medium and low AC indicators than high indicators (0.01, 0.05); the mutual difference is negligible. Among the Russian school teachers there is the prevalence of teachers with medium and high AC indicators.

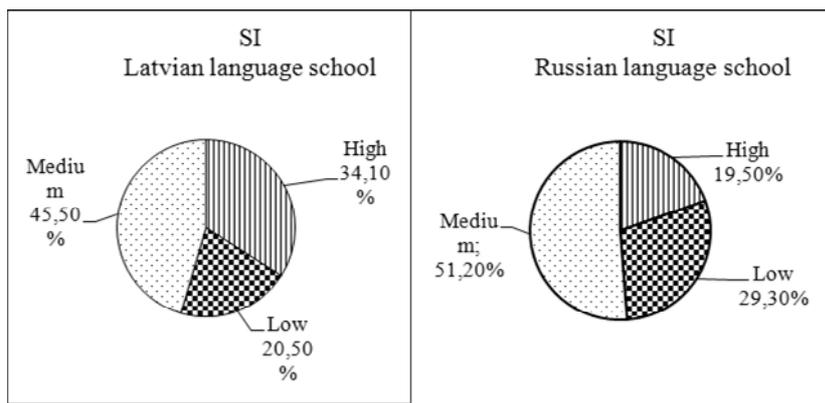
**5. Figure. AC – aspiration for conformity**



On the positive side: resistance to the pressure of group. On the negative side: surrendering to pressure of group.

*SI- aspiration of improvement of status.* There are more teachers with low SI indicators from Russian schools. There is approximately the same number of teachers with medium indicators in Latvian and Russian schools. There are more teachers with high SI indicators from Latvian schools. Substantial differences of parts of percentage are not found. Among the Latvian school teachers there is the prevalence of teachers with medium and high SI indicators, than high indicators (0.01, 0.05); the mutual difference is negligible. Among the Russian school teachers there is the prevalence of teachers with medium and SI indicators (average low indicators -0.01). The number of teachers in both groups with the average indicators of SI is higher than with other indicators.

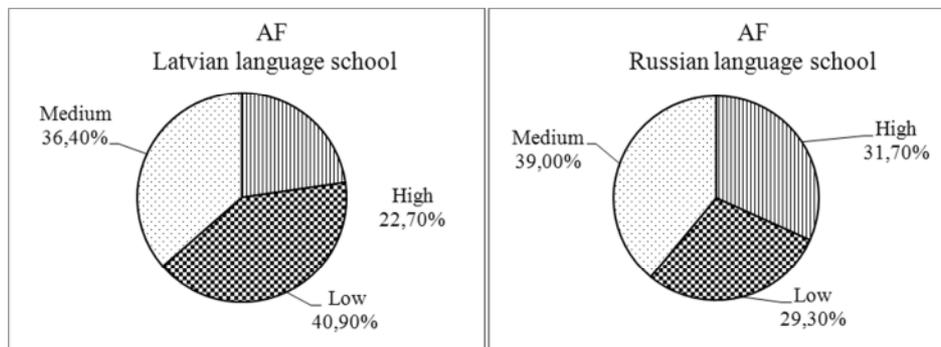
Figure 6. SI-endeavor for improvement of status



On the positive side, the aspiration for improvement of status is not an end in itself, but it is not denied completely. On the negative side – increased endeavor for improvement of status.

*AF- the orientation to the avoidance of failure.* There are more teachers with low AF indicators from Latvian schools. There is approximately the same number of teachers with medium AF indicators in Latvian and Russian schools. There are more teachers with high AF indicators from Russian schools. Substantial differences of parts of percentage are not found. Among the Latvian school teachers there is the prevalence of teachers with low and medium AF indicators; the lowest and highest differs significantly-(0,05). Among Russian school teachers there is the prevalence of teachers with medium AF indicators. Substantial differences of parts of percentage are not found.

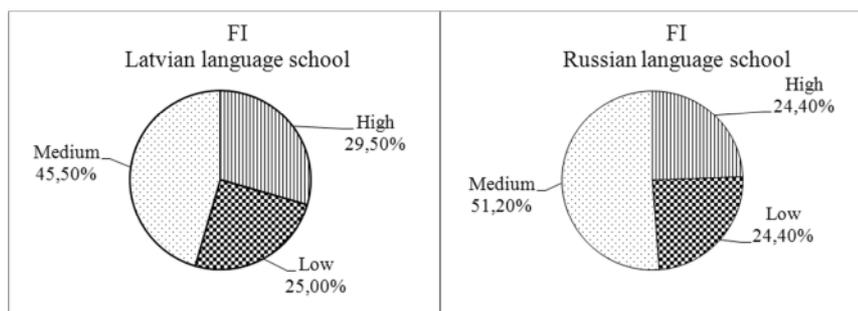
Figure 7. AF the orientation towards the avoidance of failure



On the positive side, the endeavor for the high success in interpersonal relations ensured high results. On the negative side: orientation towards the avoidance of failure in interpersonal relations that does not ensure high results.

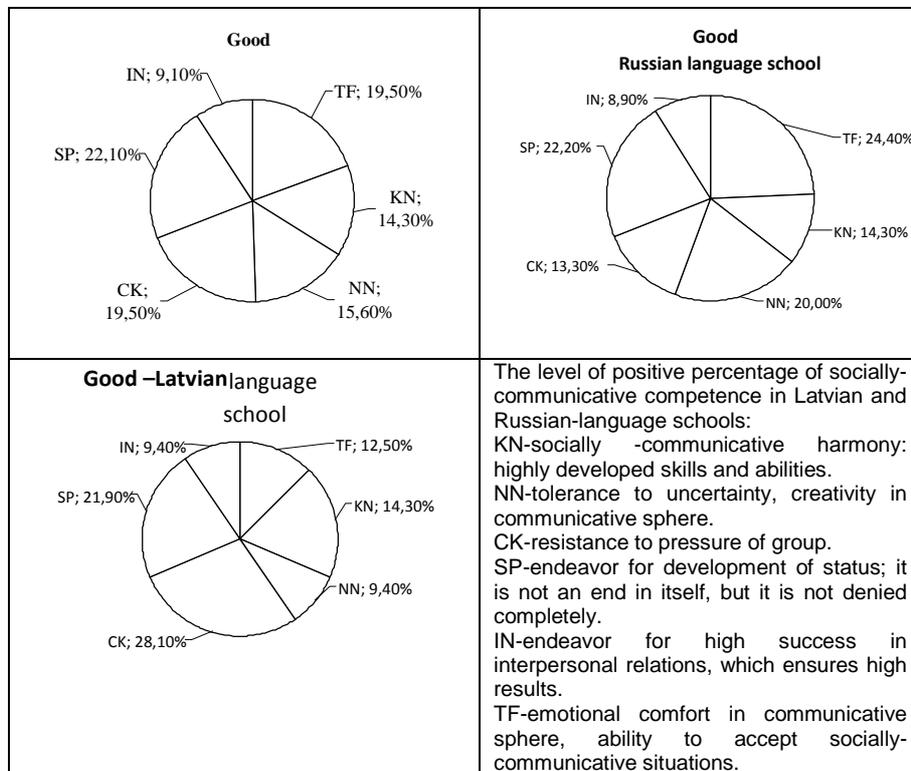
*FI-frustrating intolerance:* There is the prevalence of teachers with medium AF indicators. There are more teachers with high indicators from Latvian schools. Substantial differences of parts of percentage are not found. Among the Latvian school teachers there is the prevalence of teachers with low and medium and high FI indicators; the lowest and highest differ significantly-(0,05). Among Russian school teachers there is the prevalence of teachers with medium FI indicators. The difference is significant – 0,01.

Figure 8. FI-frustrating intolerance



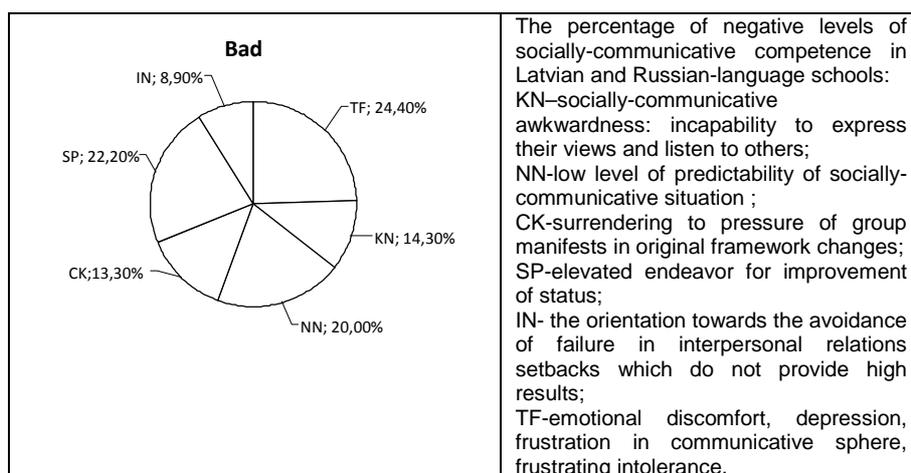
On the positive side, the emotional comfort of communicative sphere, ability to accept socially -communicative situations. On the negative side: emotional discomfort, depression, frustration in communicative sphere.

**Figure 9. The percentage of positive levels of socially –communicative**



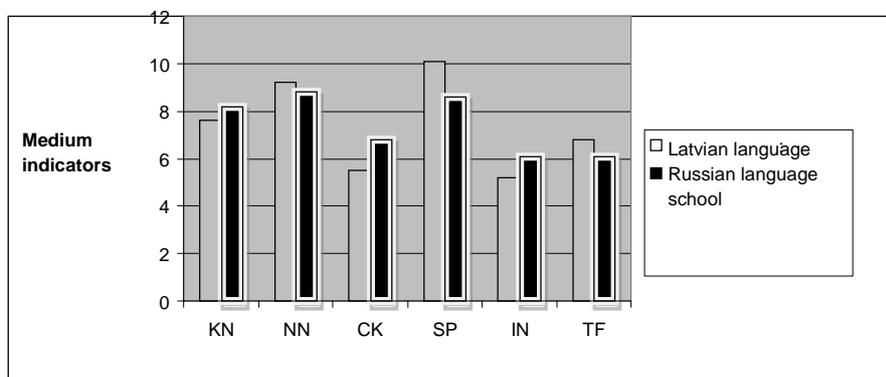
The differences among the levels of all parameters are statistically insignificant.

**Figure 10. The percentage of negative levels of socially -communicative competence**



The results of statistical analysis of salaries do not correspond with input of work in both types of schools, there is dissatisfaction with salary. The fact of insufficient salary is confirmed relating to social status of teacher, which has led women to low salary in the teacher's profession, as a result, men ignore this profession because of low social prestige. This leads to ruthlessness, dissatisfaction with work, which is also reflected in qualities of socially- communicative competence. The quality of socially-communicative competence in Latvian and Russian language schools is medium with statistical significance of differences not found (see. figure 11).

**Figure 11. Study of differences in levels of indications. The comparative chart of average values**



## Conclusions

The percentage of medium levels of socially-communicative competence in both language group schools are similar. There are more teachers from Russian schools with low NN intolerance indicators to uncertainty. There is the prevalence of teachers with medium KN indicators among the Latvian school teachers. Among Russian school teachers there is the prevalence of teachers with medium and low KN indicators (the medium value of highest indicator 0.05). There are more teachers with low CK indicators –resistance to the pressure of group - among the teachers from Latvian schools. There is the prevalence of teachers with medium and high CK indicators among Russian school teachers –endeavor for conformity.

The number of teachers with medium SP -endeavor for improving of the status of teachers is approximately equal in Latvian and Russian schools. There is the prevalence of teachers with high SP indicators among the Latvian school teachers. There is the prevalence of teachers with low IN indicators – orientation to avoidance of failure among the Latvian school teachers. The number of teachers with medium indicators is approximately equal in Latvian and Russian schools. There is the prevalence of teachers with high IN indicators- orientation to avoidance of failure among the teachers from

Russian schools. There are more teachers with medium frustrating intolerance indicators TF in groups of both schools. There is the prevalence of teachers with high TF indicators- among the teachers from Latvian schools. It is one of the evidences to the discrepancy of load of work and the status of the pedagogue leading to insecurity and inefficient quality of socially - communicative competence: these problems are not dealt with at national level in a long term and degrade the supreme values of society and endeavor of further development.

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