

# Study projects in sports science programs: A way to improve quality of teaching and learning?

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## Introduction

Study projects have become popular with universities' bachelor and master degrees to improve the quality of teaching and learning. According to this tendency they were implemented in sports science programs too. However, there are divergent understandings of what constitutes a study project, which educational objectives and competence expectations are associated with it, and what the learning outcomes of study projects are.

This project was part of a nationwide research program, which was established to promote and evaluate the quality of the first part of German teacher training at universities (BMBF, 2017).

The main question of our research is how to promote coherence between scientific, didactical and educational parts of university studies. Related to this topic we analysed the effects of project-based learning regarding the long-term sustainability of learning outcomes and the professionalism of teaching. Our project "Sportfabik" looks into this problem with regard to PE teachers' higher education (Kleine, Fritschen & Wastl, 2017).

## Methods

- ❑ Interdisciplinary qualitative approach to carve out the perspectives of academic teaching staff, current and former students as well as project partners (e.g. teachers) about study projects
- ❑ 34 focused interviews (Merton & Kendall, 1956) using a semi-structured guide
- ❑ Qualitative content analysis (Mayring, 2015)
- ❑ Results of student course evaluations and project reports were reviewed to assess the findings

## Discussion

Focussing on the quality of teacher education at universities from the academics' and learners' perspective, our study shows that study projects can supply a positive contribution to the quality of sport scientific courses. Especially learning that was experienced as meaningful in combination with comprehensible learning goals motivated the students and fostered the acquisition of competences. This way of arranging university courses seems to be more activity-oriented and helps students to enhance their autonomy.

During this process, diverse responsibilities for teachers and students that often require high effort for the participants of study projects, became clear. The teaching and learning culture at universities makes it difficult to establish guidelines for study projects or to create a certain form of study-project-evaluation in particular.

For the future it is therefore challenging, to make arrangements for the successful design of study projects, that preserve their open character and yet still enable discipline-specific approaches.

## Results

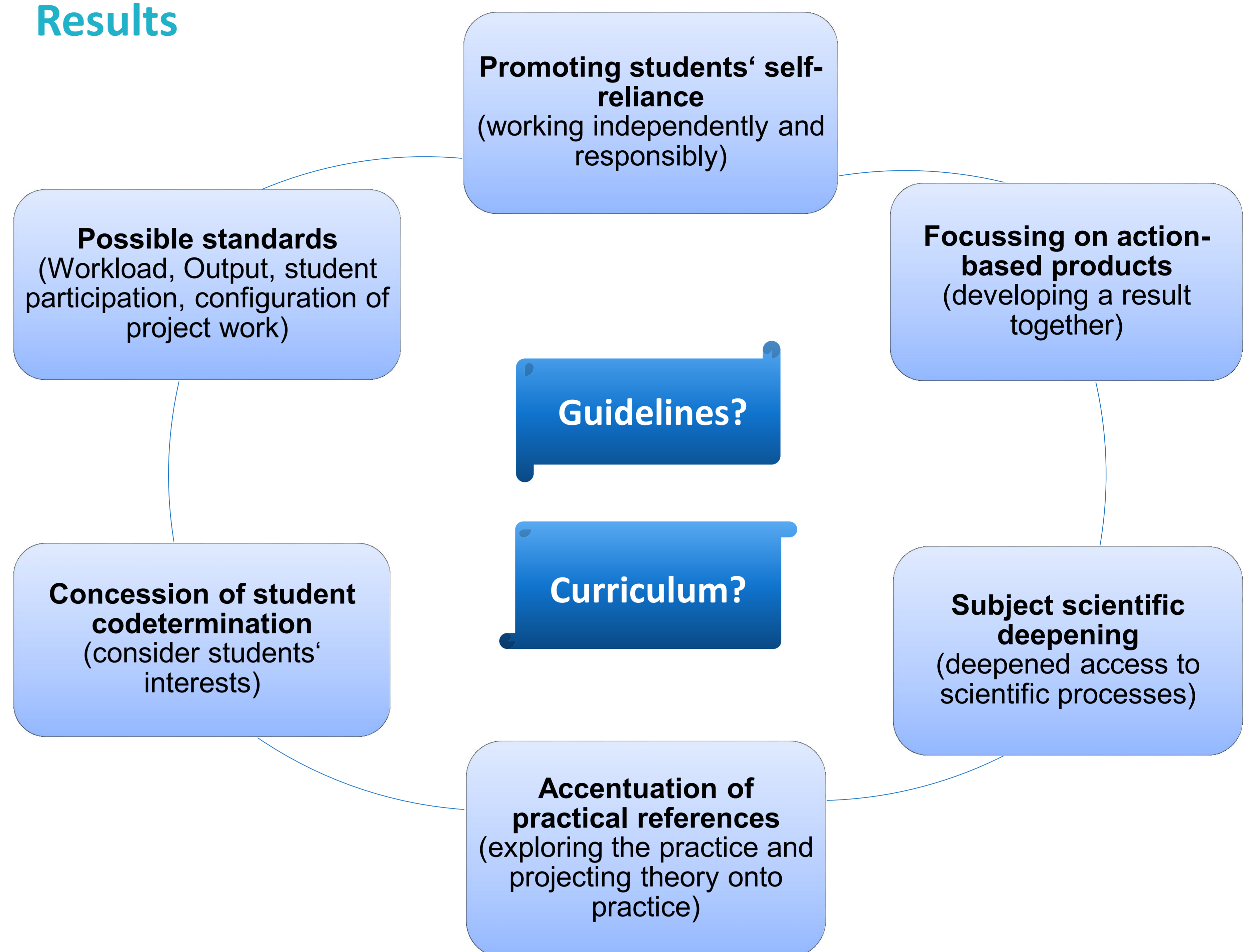


Fig. 1 Model character of study projects – academics point of view

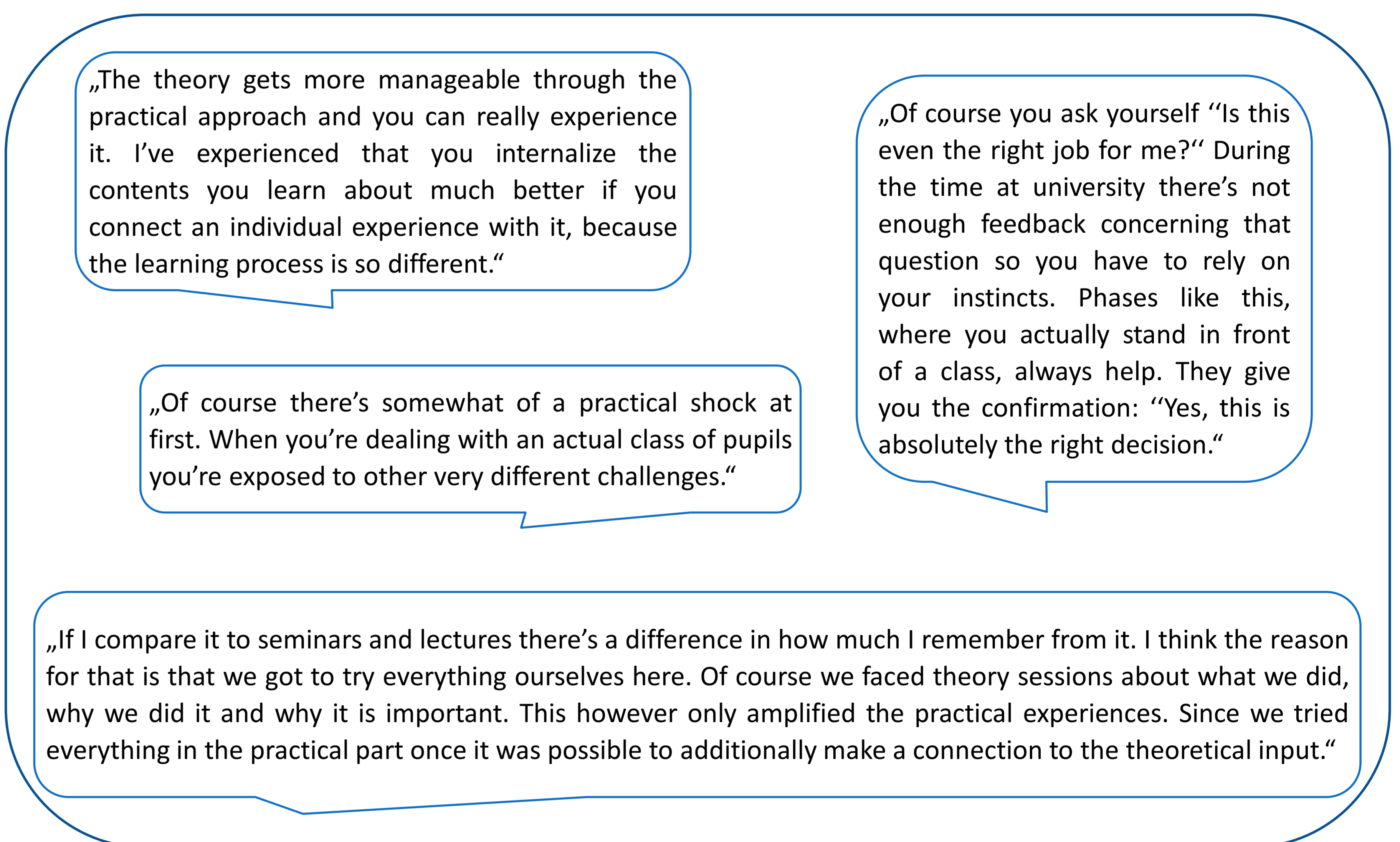


Fig. 2 Model character of study projects – students point of view

## References

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