Power of Teachers’ Words – The Influence on Pupils’ Grades and Behaviour

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ABSTRACT

The main role of school is to help pupils develop and to empower them towards success in adult life. One of the major factors that play important role in this process is the way teachers talk to their students. Therefore the purpose of this study was to explore the effects of teachers positive language such as among others effective praise, redirection, reinforcement, reminding and confirmation as well as the use of appropriate humor or tone of voice on pupils’ motivation, discipline, interest in the subject being taught and consequently school achievements. On the basis of that, the following research questions are addressed within this thesis: What is the influence of teachers’ positive talk on their students’ results and behavior? Do teachers use positive talk in schools? Additional questions were: How do Polish students and teachers tend to perceive the importance of teacher talk? And: Is there enough relevant literature to the subject of teacher talk? In order to prove the thesis, this study focuses mainly on reviewing relevant literature works and obtaining data from a quasi-experimental design with using positive language, and teacher and student surveys, as means to investigate how positive language affects pupils. My thesis illustrates that teachers words can be characterized as a powerful tool which with the combined action of encouragement, praises and humor facilitates learning, makes pupils believe in their abilities, reduces stress, reinforces their positive behaviors and helps them reach their potentials. More importantly, this is also about teaching the pupils social skills. I would like this work to be handy and inspiring for other teachers in bringing out the best in their pupils.

Keywords: teacher, pupils, words, positive, talk, language, motivation, affective, reinforce, power, grades, behavior
Reviewer:

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PART 1

CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background to the study

The motivation for writing this thesis is based on the fact that I have been a teacher for 16 years and on various occasions I could notice that the words teachers say may cause good but also cause harm. Unfortunately, not all teachers are fully aware of that.

In addition, a friend of mine told me a story from her personal experience. When she was about 8 years old and attended primary school, she was asked to sing in front of the whole class, without accompaniment. Justyna, because that was her name, was a shy girl and she felt very nervous. Her voice was trembling so it sounded rather out of tune. She looked at the teacher for help yet was met with nothing but disdain and impatience. “Terrible! You have a deaf ear!” the teacher commented. As a result, my friend never dared to sing in public again. She went through tough times because of it during her educational years as she would often refuse to sing in front of the whole class. Moreover, it made her miserable because as a matter of fact she loves singing.

The words the teachers say to their pupils can be blissful, inspiring, opening new doors but unfortunately they can be the opposite as well and shut many doors forever. The story of my friend saddened me and made me think about the influence of teachers’ words on pupils, their attitude to a given subject and also about the impact such words could have on the pupils' lives. That motivated me to do research about teacher talk.

1.2. Purpose of the study

One of the purposes of the current study is to prove the impact of teachers' positive language on learners. The work focuses on the mechanisms that make pupils feel motivated and appreciated. It focuses on the language teachers should use to build students up and consequently the one they should avoid in order not to demotivate. As a teacher who strives for perfection I felt the need to examine some of the major books and papers written on this subject. My goal was to find proves that the positive language makes a difference.

Consequently, the present research investigates the influence of teacher’s positive talk on the results of the particular sample of pupils. Additionally it gains insight into its impact on pupils' behavior as well as teachers' and pupils' perspectives on the significance of teacher talk. Therefore, the study was guided by the following questions:

1. What is the influence of teachers’ positive talk on their students' results and behavior?
2. How do Polish teachers tend to perceive the importance of teacher talk?
3. What kind of teacher talk do they usually use to address their students?
4. Do they use negative language?
5. How do Polish pupils tend to perceive teacher positive talk?
6. Is there enough relevant literature to the subject of teacher talk?

“I've come to the frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It's my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous
power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. *I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or de-humanized.*”

- Dr. Haim Ginott, *Teacher and Child* (Ginott, 1972, Macmillan)

I came across these above mentioned words by dr. Ginott and it stroke me how true they were. I realized that it was closely connected with the language teachers use at school. That said, my goal was to raise awareness of that among other teachers as well since teachers concentrate mainly on their subjects, pupils’ behavior and result without being aware how much depends on them. I am inclined to say that many teachers use negative talk, often unintentionally or unconsiously. With this work I intend to help teachers bring out the best in their pupils and themselves, to open their eyes and help them become great teachers.

1.3. Limitations

There were several limitations to this study. First of all, this school year there are only 17 pupils in Year 6 in the Primary School where I work and where I decided to conduct the research (last year there were 34). For that reason I decided to interrogate similar number of teachers and consequently only 18 teachers participated in this study. Nevertheless I found their responses and result relevant enough to use in my dissertation.

Considering the sample size it is rather difficult to make generalizations concerning the findings to the whole population of teachers and schools in Poland and this is not done in this paper. However, the results give an insight of what the situation is like. *In most cases, a survey will aim to obtain information from a representative selection of the population and from that sample will then be able to present the findings as being representative of the population as a whole.* (Bell, 2005) Another issue was that in order not to make this thesis too lengthy I decided to abandon the idea of carrying out behavior changes observation and gain the perspective on that issue only from the surveys.

1.4. Definition of the Terms

Clarification of the terminology used in this study in order to provide its better understanding and interpretation is presented here. The definitions are valid throughout the thesis. They are based on the Merriam-Webster dictionary (Dictionary.com, n.d.) and the theoretical sources listed in the bibliography. Thus, the following are hereby defined:

**Teacher.** Refers to a person whose job is to teach students about certain subjects.

**Pupil.** Refers to a child or young person in school or in the charge of a tutor or instructor. In this thesis also referred to as learner or student.

**Positive.** Refers to good or useful, thinking about the good qualities of someone or something: thinking that a good result will happen : hopeful or optimistic.

**Language.** Refers to the system of words or signs that people use to express thoughts and feelings to each other, words of a particular kind, also referred to as talk.
Behavior. Refers to the way a person or animal acts or behaves.

Cognitive. Refers to of, relating to, being, or involving conscious intellectual activity (as thinking, reasoning, or remembering).

Attitude. Refers to the way you think and feel about someone or something or a feeling or way of thinking that affects a person's behavior.

Motivation. Refers to the act or process of giving someone a reason for doing something, the act or process of motivating someone, the condition of being eager to act or work: the condition of being motivated or a force or influence that causes someone to do something.

Feedback. Refers to helpful information or criticism that is given to someone to say what can be done to improve a performance, product, etc.

Praise. Refers to saying or writing good things about (someone or something): to express approval of (someone or something).

Tone. Refers to the quality of a person's voice, a quality, feeling, or attitude expressed by the words that someone uses in speaking or writing.

Management. Refers to the act or skill of controlling and making decisions about a business, department, sports team, etc.

Affect. Refers to to act on; produce an effect or change in:; to impress the mind or move the feelings of. In Psychology, feeling or emotion. Psychiatry, an expressed or observed emotional response.

Influence. Refers to the power to change or affect someone or something, the power to cause changes without directly forcing them to happen and a person or thing that affects someone or something in an important way.

Confirmation. Refers to an act of ensuring the truth of, strengthening, or approving.

1.5. Organization of the thesis

This thesis shows how teacher positive talk can help pupils increase their motivation, improve their behavior and help them achieve better results. The thesis is composed of five parts. The organization of this study is as follows:

It stars with the theoretical point of view whereby Chapter 1 serves introductory purposes and informs about the need for raising awareness about the importance of teacher talk. Chapter 2 reviews the existing literature connected with teachers and learners and relevant to the subject of the thesis. In that chapter the crucial terminology was revised, valuable sources referred and professionals’ books and publications quoted. The second section of this chapter is focusing more precisely on positive language that is confirmation, affect in teacher’s talk, lasting teachers’ affect and most importantly the advantages of using positive language by teachers for both teachers and learners.

The practical part of the thesis consists of chapters 3 and 4 which are concerned with the research discoveries and discussion. This section outlines the description of the method together with overall design of the study, its participants, data sources description of
procedure and data analysis and research findings. Also in the final chapter there are researcher's conclusions and suggestions.

The thesis ends with bibliography and appendices where among other surveys completed by students and teachers dealing with positive language are included as well tables and charts created by the researcher to better illustrate the study.

CHAPTER 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter is meant to set the background on what has been explored on the topic so far. The literature review is divided into two sections.

Part one presents literature regarding chosen aspects related to methodology and didactics that concentrate mostly on creating a classroom environment favorable to learning. It also deals with teachers’ positive talk yet rather in a covert way. The part is subdivided into: teachers’ and learners’ roles, learning as a cognitive process; learners’ attitudes and motivation, resorting to humor in the classroom, effectiveness of praise and constructive feedback, importance of tone of voice and classroom management.

Part two reviews literature related more directly to positive language. It is subdivided into: confirmation, affect in teacher talk, the advantages of using positive language and affecting eternity- teachers’ lasting influence.

Each part is introduced by a quote consciously chosen to summarize best its content. Basic information about cited authors is provided only when needed. Most of the names are assumed to be well known educators and authors. The chapter is followed by a brief summary containing key concepts that support the importance of teacher talk.

2.1. Methodological and didactical aspects

2.1.1. Teachers’ and learners’ roles

"Be a reflective teacher. Honestly look at what you do from time to time. Evaluate the purpose of your role as a teacher."

Robert John Meehan (Meehan, 2012)

In everyday lives people fulfil different roles –some are thrust upon them by circumstances like upon children at school the role of a learner and some roles are those people choose for themselves like that of a teacher. A further point is, most teachers take on a variety of roles within the classroom. Since it is impossible to examine all these roles in different approaches in the current work, it focuses on the most common ones. Brown develops the claim that “teachers can play many roles in the course of teaching and this might facilitate learning. Their ability to carry these out effectively will depend to a large extent on the rapport they establish with their students, and of course, on their own level of knowledge and skills.” (Brown, 2007)

Firstly, teachers assume the role of the controller when they are in complete charge of the class and the activity, for example while organizing drills, reading aloud, introducing new language, making announcements, restoring order, giving explanations. Secondly, teachers act as the prompter when they encourage the pupils to think creatively or to participate in an
activity, make suggestions and discreetly nudge about how pupils may proceed in an activity, especially when they got lost. Thirdly, teachers are the resource when ready to offer help if needed. Yet instead of spoon-feeding the pupils, it is more advisable that they guide them to use available resources such as the internet or books for themselves. Then, to give feedback, correct and grade pupils’ work, teachers assume the role of the assessor and to give clear instructions about the task, demonstrate and open and close activities the teacher becomes the organizer.

Moreover, when teachers take part in an activity they become the participants. Also, the teacher acts as a coach when pupils are working on a project or study on their own. Then he/ she is the tutor that guides and gives advice. That way pupils may feel they have individual contact with the teacher, feel supported and helped which contributes to the improvement of the atmosphere in the class. (Adams, 1931)

Finally, teachers should be facilitators of pupils learning and create productive classroom environments in which pupils can develop the skills needed at present and in their future life. Harmer uses the term ‘facilitator’ to refer to a teacher, who shares some of the leadership with the students rather than is in control of everything that is taking place in the classroom. (Harmer, 2007) Such teacher fosters learner autonomy.

On these grounds, we can argue that “to create self directed learners, teachers fade back from their role as knowledge providers, becoming coaches and facilitators instead. They may model a behavior demonstrate a procedure, or role-play a situation to help students understand a concept, but gradually they reduce assistance and transfer learning responsibility to the student” (Keeping Kids Connected How Schools and Teachers Can Help All Students Feel Good About School and Why That Matters, 2000).

Last, but not least, teachers should be interactive and fully aware of the group dynamics of a classroom and experienced ones make a smooth transition from one role to another so that their effectiveness is greatly enhanced. (Education.stateuniversity.com, n.d.)

While the teachers set the tone of a lesson, however the ones who influence the process of learning by their attitude and commitment are the learners themselves. Therefore, the focus is now shifted to a few of the roles that the learners should assume in order to be successful.

Obviously, learners are required to work hard and systematically. It is crucial that they find out - with the help of the teacher what kind of learner they are: visual, aural, or kinesthetic? Teachers may be able to help their pupils if equipped with the knowledge of the Index of Learning Styles™ developed by Dr. Richard Felder and Barbara Soloman in the late 1980s, and based on a learning styles model developed by Dr. Felder and Linda Silverman. It shows four dimensions of learning styles that are presented below:

The key points for a learner from this index are that by “understanding this, and developing the skills that help you learn in a variety of ways, you make the most of your learning potential. And because you're better able to learn and gather information, you'll make better decisions and choose better courses of action. (...)Take time to identify how you prefer to learn and then force yourself to break out of your comfort zone. Once you start learning in new ways you'll be amazed at how much more you catch and how much easier it is to assimilate information and make sense of what is going on.” (Mindtools.com, 2016)

However, there are teachers who forget that not everyone learns the same way and they fail to adapt their lessons to their learners’ needs and special traits. Naturally, a conscious learner can acquire specific strategies appropriate to his/her way of learning to enhance own
progress. For instance, "if you are a visual learner, you could use a highlighter when reading a text book. The bright color would appeal to your artistic sense and help you concentrate on the reading." (Ldpride.net, n.d.)

![Index of Learning Styles](Mindtools.com, 2016)

Notably, learners need to be concentrated, attentive not only to what the teacher but also to what the classmates say. In the classroom, pupils perform a variety of roles, such as learners, collaborators or team members. They are supposed to engage actively in learning, that is watch, listen, take notes, carry on tasks, take part in range of activities like dialogue and interactions with peers and teachers, ask and answer questions, perform as well as do oral
presentations and discussions, do written work, artwork, reports or projects, write tests and take examinations.

Above all, learners should realize they are personally responsible for their advancement in learning. Therefore they should actively self-evaluate their own learning, shape it, review and plan. It is vital for them to learn how to learn. Joyce and Weil stated that “In fact, the most important long term outcome of instruction may be the students' increased capabilities to learn more easily and effectively in the future both because of the knowledge and skill they have acquired and because they have mastered the learning process”. (Joyce and Weil, 1972)

2.1.2. Learning as a cognitive process

"Learning is not attained by chance, it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence."
Abigail Adams (BrainyQuote, n.d.)

The process of how people learn through cognition is examined here on the premise that the cognitive processes is being used on a daily bases with learning. Cognition is literary thinking and it describes a person's typical mode of processing incoming information. It relates to all the mental mechanisms like thinking, perceiving, understanding, remembering, or problem solving.

“Fundamentally, cognitive psychology studies how people acquire and apply knowledge or information. It is closely related to the highly interdisciplinary cognitive science and influenced by artificial intelligence, computer science, philosophy, anthropology, linguistics, biology, physics, and neuroscience.” (Lu and Dosher, 2007)

Equally, Stavredes, a PhD in Educational Psychology in her book “Effective online teaching: Foundations and strategies for success”, when discussing learning theories describes cognitivism as the study of the mind and how it obtains, processes, and stores information. In this theory, learners are active participants in their learning, and the mind functions like a computer processor. Information enters the mind as input where it is being processed and then stored away to be retrieved later on and lead to certain outcomes. (Learning Theories, 2011)

Above all, acquiring learning strategies, prior knowledge and schemas attitudes shape learning. (Academia.edu, 2016) Cognitivism emphasizes retention and recall through the use of quality teaching practice. The cognitive view of learning is teacher- centered, and information must be presented in an organized sequenced manner that is understandable and meaningful to the learner in order to achieve the most efficient learning. (YouTube, 2013) In the same way, the focus can be on what pupils learn, how they learn, change, adapt, grow, and develop.

All the cognitive processes play a role in learning. Students enter a learning situation with some perceptions already formed and some judgments already made. People are generally more open to certain kinds of information and more inclined to organize that information in certain ways. By exploring own learning process and determining their learning style, students can find the best ways for them to learn and find the source of any difficulty that occurs. So it is important to discover how we learn.
Cognitive style influences attitudes, values, and social interaction. For that reason it plays essential role in effective learning. (Sharma and Tomar, 2005) It is about the way we process experiences and knowledge and how we organize and retain information. That is to say, some students need to visualize the task before starting it, some students work quickly and others slowly.

Cognitive skills include auditory processing, visual processing, short and long term memory, comprehension, logic and reasoning, and attention skills. (Sharma and Tomar, 2005) They all play a specific and necessary role and must work in concert. Coupled with that, cognitive skills can be developed and strengthened by intense, focused training. The main advantage here is that once they are strong, the process of learning becomes fast, easy and efficient. That implies teachers need to promote more effective learning, so they also need to link new information to familiar information. (cognitive skills development Teacher Introduction Determining Your Students’ Weaknesses, n.d.)

Furthermore, when we use the word “learning”, we usually mean “to think using the brain”. This basic concept of learning is the main viewpoint in the Cognitive Learning Theory (CLT). The theory has been used to explain mental processes as they are influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors, which eventually bring about learning in an individual. (Sincero, 2011) Cognitivism implies that learners should be given the reasons why they are to have particular lesson to facilitate their attendance of the information throughout the lesson. It needs to be pointed out as well that the difficulty level of the material must be at the appropriate level to pupil’s cognitive development. In order to focus pupils’ attention information critical for learning should be highlighted. (Academia.edu, 2016)

In brief, strategies should be used to allow learners retrieve existing information from long term memory to help make sense of the new information. Learners must construct a memory link between the new information and some related information already stored in long-term memory. (Anderson, 2008)

Also, to prevent overload during processing in working memory information ought to be “chunked “wrote in “The magical number seven, plus or minus two: Some limits on our capacity for processing information” Miller, a pioneer in the information processing. Learners should be asked to generate the information maps during the learning process or as a summary activity after the lesson in order to encourage deep processing (Academia.edu, 2016).

2.1.3. Learners’ attitudes and motivation

‘Tell me and I forget. Teach me and I remember. Involve me and I learn.”

Benjamin Franklin (Frost, 2014)

Attitude being a learner’s mental and neural state of being ready and willing to acquire knowledge plays an important role in building up students’ academic success and for that reason it needs to be discussed. It is an underlying inclination which is often revealed in learner’s behavior in the classroom. Learner’s attitudes can be divided into cognitive, that is related to thoughts, beliefs, and ideas about the world and affective which embraces feelings or emotions like fear, sympathy, hate that the world evokes in. (Brown, 2000)

Ellis, a renowned thought leader in the field of Second Language Acquisition, cites after Baker (1988) the following attitudes:
1. Attitudes are cognitive (i.e. are capable of being thought about) and affective (i.e. have feelings and emotions attached to them).

2. Attitudes are dimensional rather than bipolar – they vary in degree of favorability/un-favorability.

3. Attitudes predispose a person to act in a certain way, but the relationship between attitudes and actions is not a strong one.

4. Attitudes are learnt, not inherited or genetically endowed.

5. Attitudes tend to persist but they can be modified by experience. (Ellis, 1994)

Apart from these, one more component of attitudes is known. It refers to a conative aspect, (behavioral) which relates to a tendency or disposition one has to act in given way towards the world. The tendency to act, not the actual acting are emphasized here because what we intend and what we do may in reality differ significantly. (Www3.nd.edu, n.d.)

It is necessary to point out here that some teachers tend to judge pupils' attitudes. Paula Denton, a Responsive Classroom1 consulting teacher puts forward the view that teachers should be careful with presuppositions. “If you cared you would have got a better mark–presupposes the student didn’t care.” (Denton, 2007) What supports that view is that such presuppositions may be very harmful for pupils in a long run.

Learner’s attitudes are influenced by their parents, peers, and teachers and also by different interactions with people from all kinds of social and cultural backgrounds. (Breen, 2001) The opinion of Brown is that attitudes “form a part of one’s perception of self, of others, and of the culture in which one is living”. (Brown 2000).

It is thought that positive attitudes enhance effectiveness of learning while negative attitudes cause the opposite. Learner’s attitudes can be modified by their experience and positive ones may be reinforced especially when learners experience success. On the other hand failure or fear of making mistakes can interfere with it to a great extent. (Language Learners’ attitudes and beliefs: Brief review of the related literature and frameworks, 2013) Since attitudes are learned therefore they can be taught because as Shrigley puts it “they are enduring enough to be stable, but are temporary enough to be transformed” (Shrigley et al., 1988). Here is place for effective teaching to build up learners positive attitudes so they respond favorably to the material being taught and the teachers themselves.

Gardner postulated in “Social psychology and second language learning: the role of attitudes and motivation” that attitudes “are a component of motivation, which refers to the combination of effort plus desire to achieve the goal of learning plus favorable attitudes towards learning the language”. (Gardner, 1985) For that reason, the motivation's mechanisms will be described now. Motivation is defined by Brown as "the anticipation of some sort of reward—tangible or intangible, short term or long term—that will ensue as a result of the behavior", so it drives people to act and behave. (Brown, 2001)

When taking into consideration motivation we have in mind two types: the internal and external one. That is intrinsic and extrinsic. The motivation coming from the inside of the learners causes them to want to perform a specific task and attach importance to it as the results of their action agree with their belief system or is a realization of their desire. The second type, that is the motivation where motivational stimuli are coming from outside. Then the wish to complete a task is being controlled by an outside source. Yet it is worth pointing

1 Responsive Classroom is a research-based approach to teaching that focuses on the strong link between academic success and social-emotional skills.
out that the result will still be rewarding for the person performing the task. (Cherry, 2016) It is well illustrated by this graphic:

![Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation diagram](image)

**Fig. 2.** Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. (Ninacsmith.com, 2016)

Besides, motivation can be conscious- when we aware of such motivation, and unconscious- when we are not aware of it. (Lee, 2014) Motivation stimulates our interest and commitment, our will to make effort and struggle to attain a given goal.

Consequently, in a classroom learners feel motivated if they have positive attitude towards the teacher. Teachers are capable to boost the extrinsic motivation in their pupils and do so they should acquire strategies to motivate pupils to become confident and caring. They need to be aware that statements like: “I know this may seem pointless but we have to get through it.“are simply demotivating. “If you’re forced to follow a less-than-stimulating curriculum, dress it up and sell it however you can in front of the kids. Apologizing for it doesn’t help anyone learn or grow; it only weakens you.” (The Huffington Post, 2016)

On logical grounds, there is no compelling reason to argue that to motivate often means to change one person's negative attitude. At school a pupil may have a negative attitude towards a particular subject or learning in general. It is teachers’ job to change it. Dr. Julius Segal, a psychologist and author of “Teachers Have Enormous Power in Affecting a Child’s Self-Esteem”, in looking at what helps children overcome adversity, wrote that “one factor turns out to be the presence in their lives of a charismatic adult - a person from whom they gather strength.” (Christenson, Reschly and Wylie, 2012).
In order to succeed at school, pupils need to believe they are capable of doing so. (Brown, 2001)

2.1.4. Resorting to humor in the classroom

"To become a good teacher, you not only have to teach the students, you also have to learn from them and must be prepared to be foolish if that will help your pupils attain wisdom."

Dr Somphet Rattanasim (Chandara, 2015)

Humor is a universal communication phenomenon and therefore it will be now investigated how it should be incorporated into classrooms to facilitate teaching and learning process. The consensus view seems to be that relevant humor can be an effective teaching tool and it helps to create a positive learning environment. It happens because humor brings enthusiasm, optimism and breaks the ice. Humor lowers students’ anxiety, engages them, and often helps show the teachers as more approachable and more human communicators. (Sc.edu, 2016)

Mary Kay Morrison, an educator-researcher examined the brain scans when humor was used in conversation and instruction. It showed high levels of activity in multiple areas of the brain which proved that humor lights up more of the brain than other functions in a classroom. Something that is funny simply tends to be more memorable. (McNeely, n.d.) According to laboratory experiments, humorous information is recalled more easily than non- humorous, provided other factors are held constant. The underlying argument in favor of humor is that it has the ability to heighten attention and interest. What is more, lectures where humorous examples of key concepts are used boost pupils’ tests results. (Anon, 2016)

The above doesn’t imply however that a teacher has to turn into a standup comic, very often it is enough to just share a laugh or a smile with students or use games, funny video clips, parody, comical voices, puns, anecdotes that pertain to the lesson and help capture and hold students’ interest. In particular, what the teacher has to be careful about is that sometimes pupils might not understand the jokes. It is best illustrated by the example of younger children who would have difficulties understanding irony or exaggerations. For that reason, teachers ought to take into consideration pupils’ age. For “humor to be an effective teaching tool, student must be able to “get it.” (Anon, 2016)

Also, great teachers are spontaneous and able to find humor in the lecture material. They use the joke to make and sharpen the point and view humor as a learning tool. According to Professor Holcomb who developed an explicit rationale for this issue the role of jokes is to instruct, not only delight. (Sc.edu, 2016) The teacher’s job is to make a conscious effort to teach by means of humor and not simply with it.

There is a danger however that some teachers resort to sarcasm and they think they are using humor. Yet sarcasm may only do harm to the relationship between teacher and his pupils. That implies teachers should be able to judge whether what they are to say is funny or offensive. (Kelly, 2016) Sarcasm is an example of indirect language which can lower the pupils’ self-esteem. It can provide comic relief that is other pupils might laugh but a pupil in question might feel simply embarrassed.

Furthermore, good humor lifts pupils up and helps them feel relaxed, comfortable, while sarcasm may only ridicule them and put down. It is highly inappropriate to make fun of
pupils because they do not know something, misbehave or fail to grasp the material being taught. Such ‘jokes’ are highly likely to create a climate of fear, anxiety, and even hostility in the classroom. (Kelly, 2016)

“If you think that Charlie the cool kid will laugh when you roll your eyes and say ‘D for diploma Charlie!’ when you hand him back his test, Charlie may laugh, the class may be entertained, but ultimately, you may have just destroyed your relationship with that student, and thus destroyed his motivation (...) advertising poor grades is embarrassing.” (Collegefinder.org, 2013)

Besides, negative humor isolates pupils from the teacher and class. Therefore “teachers should utilize humor that laughs with students rather than at them.” (Kelly, 2016) Humor should not be used to single someone out, but rather help pupils acclimate. (Myatt, 2012). In the same way Powers proposes the following guidelines for Teaching with Humor: (Powers, 2005)

- **Humor should not be hurtful or offensive**
- **Don’t be afraid to be funny**
- **Make humor relevant**
- **Act it out**
- **Use clips from movies or television shows**
- **Try music**
- **Classroom management**
- **Test and quizzes**
- **Use yourself as an example**
- **Use stories and comments from students**
- **Be yourself**

Finally, sometimes when dealing with classroom management it is advisable and effective to use humor as well as a good laugh to diffuse a problematic situation. Therefore, if a teacher is for instance asking pupils to open their books and some are busy talking instead, why not to smile, say the pupils who are talking names, and ask nicely to ‘wait until later to finish their conversation because you would really like to hear how it ends and you have to get this class finished.” Such request is likely to make pupils laugh and what is more teacher gets his/her point across (Kelly, 2014).

In a nutshell, it is crucial for teachers to remember that positive and appropriate humor turns the classroom environment into more interesting and relaxed. Pupils are more likely to feel motivated and enjoy the classes. On the other hand negative or aggressive humor makes pupils feel anxious and uncomfortable and the learning environment becomes hostile.

### 2.1.5. Effectiveness of praise and constructive feedback

“Nothing is more effective than sincere, accurate praise, and nothing is more lame than a cookie cutter compliment”. Bill Walsh. (BrainyQuote, n.d.)

When people are given information on some aspect of their behavior and its effect on other people, they are given feedback. The goal is either to reinforce the positive behavior or change the one that we don’t approve of. (En.wikibooks.org, n d.) Hence, feedback seem to be
essential in teaching. In order to render feedback constructive teachers should struggle to leave the pupils motivated and informed, help them to learn from their mistakes and give a reason to improve. The most important issue here is not to be judgmental and give feedback on the behavior, not the person! (Rampersad, 2003). If we say that a pupil was rude that is our subjective opinion. It is much better to describe the pupil’s behavior – what was rude about it and tell the pupil how the teacher felt about it, at the same time being as specific as possible, backing up the feedback with examples to prove the point and linking the performance to predefined criteria. When something goes wrong, the best solution is to pay attention only to this event, and not to the person who provoked it. (Rampersad, 2003)

Importantly, teachers should try to be neutral and focus not on what they think or believe but rather on what they see, hear and feel. They should focus on the impact and consequences of the behavior. Constructive feedback is based on observations. (Pcaddick.com, 2009)

A further point is, pupils will take criticism better if they have also received praise. The praise should be intended to provide an objective basis for the pupils to plan improvements to their future performance and support their motivational development. Praise is constructive once it highlights skills and behaviors the students can build on further. (Faculty.londondeanery.ac.uk, 2012) In brief, for praise to be productive and criticism to be constructive the intentions behind them are essential.

Along similar lines, we talk about constructive feedback when we describe and make it very clear what behavior we are praising and why, instead of using a general ‘well done” which is rather meaningless.(Priolo, 2012) Saying that something was good, bad, excellent, poor etc. does not carry much information. It may sound just as a routine encouragement and can be interpreted in different ways. Generic expressions are too broad for pupils to know which behavior is being praised. (Harris, 2009) Therefore the most powerful praise is specific to a student’s behavior and is called Behaviors Specific Praise (BSP). BSP Should Be:

1. A description of a desired Behavior (social or academic).
2. Specific to the student or class.
3. A positive Praise statement (Anon, 2016)

It is characterized by using specific, positive verbal feedback indicating approval of pupil’s behavior. This way pupils can improve their behavior because they know what they are doing correctly. When teaching to spell or count, teachers could use effective praises such as “good spelling,” and “awesome counting,” since they are not general and refer to the skills being taught. (Sutherland, Wehby and Susan R. Copeland, 2000). BSP helps to increase pupils’ confidence because they are praised for their actions and accomplishments. (Thompson et al., 2012)

An excellent idea for a teacher to learn using this kind of praise is to think about the behaviors that are welcome in the classroom such as listening while others are speaking or raising their hand and asking questions when they need to clarify something. Then a teacher could write down a list of such behaviors and use it to start noticing and acknowledging pupils behavior. (Anon, 2014)

Dr. Haim Ginott also speaks about effective praise in his book “Between Parent and Child”, giving following example: “Your essay was inspiring – it helped me came up with some new ideas”. The possible conclusion a pupil draws here could be: “I am able to write an original composition.” It is much more informing for a pupil than a simple “You deserve a
good degree.” (Ginott et al., 2009) When teachers recognize and appreciate the efforts the children make, they help them gain greater hope and confidence. On the other hand, when they evaluate a child, teachers make them feel uneasy and children protest. Negative epithets such as “lazy” or "stupid" seem obvious to be harmful for children, yet also a negative effect for the child may have surprisingly a positive epitaph such as "good" or "excellent". (Ginott et al., 2009). Here are the guidelines for effective praise adapted from Dr. Bob Kizlik:

Table 1. Guidelines for effective praise (Kizlik, 2014)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effective Praise</th>
<th>Ineffective Praise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is delivered contingently upon student performance of desirable behaviors or genuine accomplishment</td>
<td>1. Is delivered randomly and indiscriminately without specific attention to genuine accomplishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Specifies the praiseworthy aspects of the student's accomplishments</td>
<td>2. Is general or global, not specifying the success.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Is expressed sincerely, showing spontaneity, variety and other non-verbal signs of credibility.</td>
<td>3. Is expressed blandly without feeling or animation, and relying on stock, perfunctory phrases.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Is given for genuine effort, progress, or accomplishment which are judged according to standards appropriate to individuals.</td>
<td>4. Is given based on comparisons with others and without regard to the effort expended or significance of the accomplishment of an individual.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Provides information to students about their competence or the value of their accomplishments.</td>
<td>5. Provides no meaningful information to the students about their accomplishments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Helps students to better appreciate their thinking, problem-solving and performance.</td>
<td>6. Orients students toward comparing themselves with others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Attributes student success to effort and ability, implying that similar successes can be expected in the future.</td>
<td>7. Attributes student success to ability alone or to external factors such as luck or easy task.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Encourages students to appreciate their accomplishments for the effort they expend and their personal gratification.</td>
<td>8. Encourages students to succeed for external reasons -- to please the teacher, win a competition or reward, etc.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Last but not least, teachers should also avoid using comparative language as it can easily damage pupils’ relationships. What often happens is that teachers like to hold some pupil as an example and praise them in front of the whole class. (Denton, 2007)

Another trap some teachers fall into is when they say to a pupil “You are so talented this is easy for you.” When pupils are praised for the ease with which they complete tasks, they become less likely to make more effort in the future. It is because “what we are saying is that they should not have to struggle in order to be successful. The truth is that real learning should be a challenge.” (Collegefinder.org, 2013)

In conclusion, the evidence points almost exclusively to the argument that it’s vital for teachers to use reinforcing language, that is the one that highlights students’ skills, positive efforts and attitudes, and quality work. When pupils know what they are doing well, it gives them something to rely on so they can make progress. Teachers ought to acknowledge pupils’ positives so the pupils build on their strengths. (Responsive Classroom, 2014)

2.1.6. Importance of the tone of voice

"Sometimes people will hear you better if you speak with a voice of compassion instead of authority. They long to be understood more than to be lectured." Dodinski (Dodinski, 2013)

As far as teacher’s voice is concerned, it plays an extremely important role in the world of teaching and education. The voice may serve as a useful tool to change the atmosphere in the classroom. For instance, to calm down the classroom, teachers are advised to use a steady and calm voice. By contrast, to encourage pupils while they are struggling with new material teachers can use an expressive voice, whereas to keep the class interested teachers have inflection (that is the rise and fall of volumes) at their disposal. (Schoolofeducators.com, 2011)

The tone of voice gives clues about whether we are angry, sad, or irritated, it shows how we feel. “When we speak, our listeners get an impression of how we feel from our tone of voice. We can sound pleasant and friendly, angry and upset, and irritated or frustrated.” (Speaking Your Best Online, 2012) Therefore teachers should be careful and think about the way they want to be perceived by the students. We all are human but the underlying emotions shouldn’t interfere with our job.

When teachers resort to yelling or shouting that is the sign that they have lost control of the situation. “Yelling is a costly mistake.”(Linsin, 2011) It is so because:

1. Improvement is temporary.
2. It doesn’t change behavior.
3. It weakens your influence.
4. It replaces real accountability.
5. It sabotages real accountability.
6. It causes students to tune you out.
7. It’s stressful.
8. It’s difficult to defend.
9. It’s graceless.
10. It provides a poor model. (Linsin, 2011)
Ginott observes that “verbal spankings do not improve performance or personality. They only ignite hate” (Ginott, 1972). What is more, when teachers lose their temper and yell, they humiliate and belittle their pupils. The hostile tone makes them feel they are not safe or respected. (Collegefinder.org, 2013). Tone reveals how people feel and words spoken in an angry way can be perceived as an attack.

Denton believes that "a warm, matter of fact tone is what the teachers should aim for as it conveys authenticity, respect and directness." (Denton, 2007)

When a teacher uses a quieter voice he/she comes across as more serious and honest. The right tone of voice is as important as the words teachers use for the simple reason that it also helps effectively pass the information and teach. Teaching voice is what teachers use when standing in front of pupils. It's a professional voice which often differs from ordinary speaking voice. Some teachers use shrill, harsh or too loud voices. So even if they have good knowledge of their subject, their voice may not communicate in a way that inspires or motivates to learn. (Write-out-loud.com, 2016)

It is advisable to use pitch when we want to deliver an important piece of information and slow down when delivering new information and make sure the pupils understand us and follow. (Washington, 2012) There are many reasons why teachers should adjust their vocal tone to their advantage. For instance, a smile helps make the tone sound warmer. In comparison, for delivering expectations, a more formal tone is advised. To avoid being misunderstood all these factors should be taken into consideration.

Importantly, teacher should avoid using a monotone voice as pupils may easily switch off. What is more, they are likely to start, talking, simply disturbing the process of the lesson. That leads to conflicts between teachers and pupils. To avoid monotony it is sometimes a good idea is to whisper in order to catch learners’ attention because that sounds intriguing and mysterious. (Rief, 2012)

When giving a reminder, it is recommended teachers use that kind of neutral voice and instead of: “What did we say is the next step in making these kinds of graphs? said with a singsong voice, arms crossed, and rolling eyes. (Even if meant to be humorous, implies the student isn’t very smart.) (Responsive Classroom, 2014) Mike Muir, an educator writes: The classroom observations showed that teachers who used the “disappointed voice” (a tone that indicated that the teacher was disappointed, upset, or angry with the student) generated the most difficulty with students. Students who might have been calm and compliant would quickly become loud, defiant, and oppositional. Students who were already acting up generally became worse.” (Muir and &rarr;: 2012). Furthermore, the tone the teacher uses needs to remain professional that is warm yet not too warm, otherwise it risks becoming sentimental or a baby talk: “We’re being so good today!” Pupils must feel they are being taken seriously and considered as competent and independent learners. (Muir and &rarr;, 2012)

All in all, when teachers use their voice as a teaching tool and one of the classroom management device they have the power to impress the lives of their pupils. “If you want energized, focused, actively listening students then you need to mirror that in your actions. The trick is to SHOW while you are TELLING what you’ve got to share is exciting, relevant and important." Though teachers need their voices to reflect passion, it is more important that their voices are flexible which means they possess "a wide variety of tonal expressions and other skills to select from." (Muir and &rarr;: 2012)
2.1.7. Classroom management

"Effective teacher manages a classroom, ineffective teacher disciplines a classroom."

Wong, H (Wong, n.d.)

It is thought that classroom management has a large effect on pupil’s achievements. For that reason it needs to receive a considerable attention here. Both pupils and teachers need disciplined environment for effective learning to take place. To develop a proper classroom management, that is all the methods of preventing misbehavior and dealing with it when needed, means to establish a school environment that promotes teaching and learning. (Education.stateuniversity.com, n.d.)

Teachers who want to be effective need skills which include "common sense," consistency, an often undervalued teacher behavior, a sense of fairness, and courage to deal with disruptive behaviors including back–talking, disputes, tardiness and truancy, incomplete homework, cheating, inattention, and more serious ones like bullying, vandalism or theft. They should be able to understand in more than one way the psychological and developmental levels of their students. (Adprima.com, 2014)

In the classroom there are ‘shoulds’ and ‘shouldn’ts’ and positive feedback can be a means of regulating behavior. A considerable amount of literature has been published on this subject: According to Dr. Robert Kizlik these points are fundamental for teachers: (Adprima.com, 2014):

1. Know what you want and what you don't want.
2. Show and tell your students what you want.
3. When you get what you want acknowledge (not praise) it.
4. When you get something else, act quickly and appropriately.

Undoubtedly, teachers who mastered classroom management have more time for teaching/learning since they don’t have to deal with disciplinary problems which disrupt the flow of classroom activities. “Approximately one-half of all classroom time is taken up with activities other than instruction; discipline problems are responsible for a significant portion of this lost instructional time” (Cotton, 1990, p 1.). (Pasquet, 2009) Fuhr (1993) distinguished five basic classroom management usually followed by teachers, namely:

1. First, they inform parents and students what is expected of them during the early stage of the school year.
2. Second, they advise parents and students of the consequences that follow, failure to comply.
3. Third, they manage with fairness and consistency.
4. Fourth, all students are treated with a positive approach.
5. Fifth they model behaviors that are expected from the students. (Fuhr, 1993)

Dreikurs proposed a democratic discipline, (Dreikurs, 1968) based on the ideas that pupils are social beings whose actions are reflections of their attempts to become important and accepted. They are able of controlling own behavior and deciding to behave or to misbehave and if so, it is their conscious choice since they want to get the attention.

He also identified the following strategies for teachers: (Pasquet, 2009)
1. Give students specific directions for expected behavior.
2. Apply logical consequences rather than arbitrary punishment.
3. Allow students to help in establishing rules and consequences.
4. Let students assume responsibility for their own behavior and learning.
5. Be firm.
6. Let students know that you are a friend, but that you will not accept certain behavior.
7. Set limits from the beginning, but work toward developing a sense of responsibility.
8. Teach students to impose limits on themselves.
9. Close an incident quickly and revive positive feelings.
10. Forgive and forget.
11. Mean what you say, but make simple demands.
12. Always distinguish between the deed and the doer.
13. Treat students as social equals.
14. Encourage students’ efforts.

Previous studies have reported that teachers are able to better manage the classroom when they are able to judge and understand pupils’ behavior choices.

The behavior should be separated from the person. Instead of saying “You are so lazy!” a teacher needs to talk to a pupil „about his or her choices, while continuing to affirm who he or she is as a person. You could say “I see that you don’t finish assignments, and you don’t participate much. I think you are bright and capable, so help me understand why your choices and who you are don’t seem to match up.” (Collegefinder.org, 2013) When there is a problem with a pupil behavior teachers who are not judgmental but focus on describing the problem can observe the shift towards constructive problem solving. (Denton, 2007)

One of the effective techniques proposed by Responsive Classroom approach is using reminding language which refers to the expectations known to pupils. It should be done early enough to avoid frustration and nerves, for example before students start a possibly challenging task, or right when they start to make a mistake, this way teachers help them stay on task, organized, responsible, and safe. (Responsive Classroom, 2014) Another proposed solution is redirecting language. When pupils misbehave teachers need to redirect them with clear, skillfully used words which should be rather statements than questions. "A question gives the illusion of choice and can confuse children. Instead of: “Anna, could you refocus on your math?” Try: “Anna, refocus on your math.” (Responsive Classroom, 2014)

To sum up, apart from the above mentioned, another key issue to remember is that teachers should draw pupils’ attention to what should be done, not the opposite. "Saying what not to do may sound like a complaint or an attack on students’ character, and many students may miss what we’re wanting them to do. Naming the desired behavior is clear and respectful of children.” (Responsive Classroom, 2014)

2.2. Teacher positive language

2.2.1. Confirmation

"One of our basic innate drives is to be confirmed by others, that is, to discover and reaffirm through interaction our identity as a human being."

Martin Buber (Tomlinson, 2007)
With these words in mind, the view that it is very important that teachers acknowledge pupils' feelings can be put forward. In such, case we talk about teacher confirmation. Ellis in her study defines it as ‘the transactional process by which teachers communicate to students that they – the students – are valuable, significant individuals’. (Goodboy, 2007) Likewise, confirmation according to researchers Cissna and Sieburg:

1. expresses recognition of an individual’s existence,
2. acknowledges a relationship of affiliation with another individual,
3. expresses awareness of the significance or worth of another individual,
4. endorses another individual’s self-experience (Goodboy, 2007)

Sieburg groups confirmation messages in three ways, namely:

**Recognition** which is expressed through eye contact, touching and conversational opportunities to respond.

**Acknowledgement** which involves communicating in a direct and relevant manner, even if one does not agree with another person’s viewpoint or opinion.

**Endorsement** which refers to responses expressing acceptance of someone’s feelings. (Goodboy, 2007)

What is more, teachers when communicating with pupils send them intentionally or unintentionally verbal and non-verbal messages, which pupils receive, consciously or unconsciously. It makes them feel “real or unreal, accepted or rejected, valued or scorned, understood or misunderstood, humanized or objectified” (Sieburg 1985: 188) – in other words, confirmed or disconfirmed. (Academia.edu, 2016)

Importantly, Ellis (1998) distinguished four categories of behavior patterns in a study done to establish items of common confirmation and disconfirmation that are cited here after Tomlinson:

- **teacher questioning behavior, especially teachers' response to students' questions/comments.** The confirming teacher indicates that students’ responses are appreciated (“That's a good point”), listens to students, is available outside of class, is flexible about following the lesson plan.

- **demonstrated interest in students and in their learning.** The confirming teacher gives constructive written or oral feedback on students' work (e.g., suggests ways to improve or states why work is good), demonstrates that he/she knows students’ names, communicates that he/she is interested in whether students are learning, makes an effort to get to know students, provides oral or written praise or encouragement on students' work, establishes eye contact during class lectures, communicates that he/she believes that students can do well in the class, smiles at the class.

- **teaching style.** The confirming teacher checks on students’ understanding (“Is that clear?”, “Are you ready to go on?”), uses an interactive teaching style, listens to students viewpoints regarding grading, is approachable, uses appropriate facial expressions, makes an effort to communicate the practical application of course material in students' lives.
- aberrant disconfirmation. The disconfirming teacher belittles or makes "put-down" statements to some students when they participate during class (e.g., the teacher makes comments like "I've already discussed that;" "If you'd been listening, you'd know the answer;") does not take students' input seriously, uses a rude tone of voice when responding to some students' comments or questions during class, talks down to students, embarrasses students in front of the class, focuses on only a few students during class while ignoring others, puts students on the spot during class, uses derogatory terms to describe the class (e.g., "stupid," "lazy"), interrupts students when they are making a comment or asking a question, seems more concerned with getting through all of the lecture material for the day than with helping students to understand the material, talks above students' heads. (Adapted from Ellis 1998) (Tomlinson, 2007)

On the other hand, the term “disconfirmation “is referred to “a variety of behaviors that negatively impact self-experience and feelings of worth” (Cissna & Sieburg, 1981). It happens in the following ways: indifference (e.g., silence, no immediacy or interruptions), imperviousness (e.g., "you’re wrong, I know you better than that"), and disqualification e.g., "you always mess things up"(Academia.edu, 2016)

Research conducted by Goodboy concludes that teacher confirmation has an influence both on "student classroom involvement and student learning outcomes. Furthermore, teachers ought not only to consider whether their classroom behaviors are confirming, but to implement and utilize teacher confirmation behaviors in their classrooms”. (Goodboy, 2008)

Notably, Faber presents a most compelling argument that pupils are more prompt to become discouraged when their feelings are denied by teachers. In order for a pupil to be encouraged to continue to strive and change their behavior, his/her negative feelings need to be identified and accepted instead of being ignored. "By responding to a student's distress with an attitude of concern and an occasional nod or "grunt" of understanding, we free him to focus on his problem and possibly solve it himself". Moreover she advises: "Instead of denying feelings (“This story is dumb.” “No, it isn’t. It’s very interesting”), put the feelings into words (“This story is dumb." “There’s something about the story you don’t like."). Instead of ignoring feelings, accept feelings." (Faber, 1995)

All things considered, it seems reasonable to assume that teachers should not criticize, question or constantly give advice but rather accept pupils' feelings and wishes and reflect upon them. (Faber, 1995). Watzlawick et al. (1967: 84) when referring to confirmation calls it „greatest single factor ensuring mental development and stability”. (Academia.edu, 2016).

2.2.2. Affect in the classroom

"One looks back with appreciation to the brilliant teachers, but with gratitude to those who touched our human feelings. The curriculum is so much necessary raw material but warmth is the vital element for the growing plant and for the soul of the child." Carl Jung (Paterson, 2010)

As it was previously defined, the term affect refers to emotional mood and personal feelings. For that reason, affective variables in the classroom cannot be disregarded. Twardosz, professor from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville maintains that "teachers’
styles of expressing affection are certainly influenced by their backgrounds, beliefs, and feelings, but classroom organization and the relationships teachers have with one another help determine whether or not they actually will express affection to the children.” (Twardosz, 2005)

To put it in another way, affective factors are important for successful learning. Along similar lines, they can have a negative or positive effect. In second language acquisition negative affective factors are referred to as affective filters. (Teaching English | British Council | BBC, 2009). Krashen (1982) understands Affective Filter as a complex of negative emotional and motivational factors including anxiety, self-consciousness, boredom, annoyance, alienation, and so forth. These factors may impact the reception and processing of comprehensible input. For that reason, low anxiety classes prove to be better for language acquisition. (Focalskills.info, 2014)

Current research appears to validate the view that we cannot separate learning from the affective part as learning is not only the cognitive process. From a neurological point of view affect is an integral part of cognition, states professor Schumann, member of the Neurobiology of Language Research Group (1994:239). Although emotions, thinking and learning are three different things, they are connected as it is pointed out by Jensen, one of the leading translators in the world of neuroscience into education (1998:71). (Tomlinson, 2007)

Most important, "an affectively positive environment puts the brain in the optimal state for learning: minimal stress and maximum interest and engagement with the material to be learnt. In large part, this state is created by the teacher, with one of the tools for doing so being teacher discourse." (Tomlinson, 2007). Once an affective view of the functions of teacher talk is considered, it contributes to a better development of its functions. Teachers can elicit responses in a way that produces negative affect; for example, their verbal expression (“Let’s see if this time you can get it right”) may be reinforced by their tone of voice, facial expression, etc. which imply that they do not expect a correct answer”. Hence, the effect would be much different if in such situation a teacher nominated a student to answer with a smile. "Such procedure makes it easier for a pupil to communicate". (Tomlinson, 2007)

In addition, when discussing affect a vast ray of emotions and feelings should be taken into account, such as self-esteem, anxiety, inhibition, willingness to take risks, tolerance of ambiguity, learning styles, introversion/extraversion, self-efficacy and motivation, empathy, teacher learner rapport or cross cultural processes. (Tomlinson, 2007) Therefore affect in the classroom is of primary importance for learning.

Last but not least, affect is often listed alongside with motivation as an extremely important variables that can make the difference between success and failure in the classroom. It can be improved by providing positive statements which are told to improve students' self-esteem. (Sonoma.edu, n.d.) Then again, learners' attitude to a subject, to the teacher, to other learners in the group and to themselves are all affective factors and have impact on how well they learn.

Likewise, "teachers who are warm and affectionate show children that they like them, enjoy being with them, are having fun with them, and are pleased with their efforts and accomplishments. Expressions of warmth and affection are most effective in the context of an

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2 Comprehensible input is language input that can be understood by listeners despite them not understanding all the words and structures in it.
ongoing positive relationship between a child and a caregiver; they also contribute to making that relationship positive and authentic” (Twardosz, 2005)

Persuasive enough, when students are asked about the qualities of good teachers, “(…) caring is always at or near the top of the list. Caring here is understood as the ability to perceive a pupil as unique human being, someone who has different learning needs and preferences.” Caring also means that teacher gets involved that is walks around the classroom, talks to pupils, checks how they are doing, answers their questions, believes they can improve. (Hume, 2016)

2.2.3. The advantages of using positive language

“There is an undeniable link between the words you speak and the attitudes and outcomes students create in their lives. By selecting words and phrases intentionally; by altering your present language; by adding to or talking away from your common utterances; you can empower your students and enhance their learning.”

Moorman and Weber (Moorman and Weber, 1989)

According to Moorman and Weber, the authors of the above quote, the choice of words teachers make are very important and decisive to the self-esteem, the academic success, as well as to the healthy mental and emotional development of pupils. (Moorman and Weber, 1989) Teacher’s talk can be a tool to boost pupils’ motivation, marks and change their attitude towards learning, provided it is well structured, comprehensible and organized.

Therefore, teachers should think about what they are saying to pupils, and how they are saying this in order to build mutually respectful relationships with their pupils. In every communication there are exact words a person is saying and the message that is underlying the words. Teachers should remember about that.

The available evidence seems to suggest that when teachers create positive environment for their pupils that helps put pupils’ brains in optimal state for acquiring knowledge. The stress is minimalized and the interest is high, pupils engage more willingly. Teacher talk is one of the most important tools to achieve this. (Academia.edu, 2016) As Pajares puts it, teachers’ “selection of words and their discourse organization play an important role in shaping learners’ self-concept and their academic success.” (Pajares 1992). (Tomlinson, 2007)

Some verbal and non-verbal changes in teacher behaviour can increase pupils’ comprehension as well as their ability to process the target material. “The nature of teacher discourse has a great influence on students’ participation and assimilation of instructional content.”(Tomlinson, 2007)

There is the saying that words are stronger than actions. This is often true in real life and it is true to the classroom as well. Positive language used by the teacher makes students feel safe and boosts their motivation. It supports pupils' learning and helps create a positive, respectful community in which pupils can succeed not only academically but socially as well. Therefore, it is advisable that teachers are direct and use a kind, straightforward tone, to express what they really mean. If it does not work another useful technique would be indicating a logical consequence of bad behavior. Such strategy makes teachers trustworthy and shows teacher respects the pupils.
Since the atmosphere of psychological closeness exercises influence on both pupils ‘motivation and their cognitive learning, Gorham (1988: 50-51) emphasizes the use of “our” and “we” by teachers when they address their pupils, especially in large classes, as well as the use of their names and asking their opinions. (Tomlinson, 2007)

In the already mentioned in this thesis Responsive Classroom approach, specific language strategies are offered, like asking open-ended questions which are useful to stretch learners’ thinking and redirecting pupil’s behavior when it goes off-track. (Responsive Classroom, 2014) Teacher should make an effort to be perceived as an authority who protects his/her pupils emotional safety. According to Denton and the R. C. approach, there are five general principles for Positive Language, namely:

1. Be Direct
2. Convey Faith in Students’ Abilities and Intentions
3. Focus on Actions, Not Abstractions
4. Keep It Brief
5. Know When to Be Silent (Scherer, 2009)

Accordingly, when teacher’s words and tone show faith in pupils' desire and ability to succeed, it is more likely that they live up to the teacher’s expectations of them. (Denton, 2007) Teacher’s words, when spoken in a calm voice, convey the message that he/she believes that they are willing to listen, learn and do good work. That way the chance that pupils will behave properly is high. Once they feel respected they are open to listen and be cooperative.

Another key thing to remember is that teacher should be attentive enough and able to notice and comment on any positive behavior of the pupil. While commenting teacher should be specific and describe what the pupil is doing well. Such observations are more credible for the pupils and they want to repeat the positive behavior. To help elementary-age children understand what the teacher expects them to do, teachers should be specific and enlist detailing concerning given actions leading to a positive environment.

Denton gives teachers an advice that rather than stating for example, "Be respectful it’s much better to say, "When someone is speaking during a discussion, the rest of us will listen carefully and wait until the speaker is finished before raising our hands to add a comment." (Scherer, 2009) That said, it is often advisable to help pupils name concrete positive behaviors themselves.

In addition, the same author prompts that to a pupil who cannot focus during writing exercise, a teacher could ask the question, "What will help you think of good ideas for your story and concentrate on writing them down?" The pupils’ elicited response might be, "I can find a quiet place to write, away from my friends." (Denton, 2007, p. 21-22)

By contrast, when teacher is frustrated with pupil’s not working and says, "you are lazy!" it does not help the pupil to change the attitude and behavior. The worst thing that could happen here is that words like these are likely to cause the pupils to accept the teacher’s judgment and believe that this how they really are. As a consequence they make no further effort to work. When on the other hand teacher manages to issue a positive challenge that names the behavior the teacher expects and moves the focus to what the pupil can do it is much more helpful then.

Notably, teachers should give pupils plenty of opportunities to associate words such as respectful and responsible with concrete behaviors. What is more, they ought to render
classroom expectations meaningful to pupils. (Denton, 2007, p. 22) Whether pupils take part in lessons and assimilate what they are being taught depends significantly on the nature of teacher’s talk. According to Denton, teacher’s words shape students as learners by: (Scherer, 2009)

1. **Affecting students’ sense of identity.**
2. **Helping students understand how they work and play.**
3. **Influencing our relationships with students.**

In brief, along similar lines: “some authors think that teacher talk outside of discussing the lesson material may be the most effective input a teacher can give, as it is the most authentic and meaningful exchange between student and teacher.”(Bogglesworldesl.com, n.d.)

2.2.4. **Affecting eternity- teachers’ lasting influence**

"To teach is to touch a life forever."

(People.wku.edu, n.d.)

Finally, it is time to step outside the classroom and look further in order to reflect upon teachers’ lifelong impact on pupils. This influence goes much deeper than the lessons that teachers teach on daily basis. (Kelly, 2014) It is a widely held view that learners’ future life may be affected by teacher’s words, good or bad.

There are people who sometimes go back to their childhood or youth and recall the words their teachers said. They reflect on their lessons teaching moments and acknowledge their impact on their lives. In fact, some teachers manage to reach their learners at a significant developmental point in time, a point in which they evolve into adults and they offer advice and support.

Similarly, memorable teachers hold the learners to the highest standards of excellence and believe in their abilities. (Masie, 2005) Such teachers display passion and commitment to their pupils. They affect pupils’ personal and academic development. One of the reasons we remember our teachers from earlier days is that they have inspired us one way or another. (Mart, 2013)

To give an illustration, John Merrow in ‘The Influence of Teachers: Reflections on Teaching and Leadership’ talks about the special place that teachers occupy in youngpeople lives’. He is of the opinion that ‘society needs to acknowledge this truth and trust teachers to do more of the character building work” (Merrow, 2011)

According to George Lucas, the filmmaker and founder of the George Lucas Educational Foundation, “The title ‘teacher' conveys the highest responsibility of adults towards children. Apart from my parents, my teachers have done the most to shape my life. From kindergarten through college, their struggle -- and it was a struggle -- to help me grow and learn was not in vain. And I greatly appreciate their efforts.”(Lucas, 2001) The Foundation wishes that teachers understand better pupils' attitudes and emotions. "It’s about their hearts, as well as their minds”. (Lucas, 2001)

Moreover, here is a testimony from an Internet publication by Melissa Kelly, a secondary school expert about how teacher words can encourage pupils and make them
achieve more than they think they are able to and in effect, help them become successful in the future:

"A perfect example of this happened in my niece’s life. (…). She struggled through most of her first semester of ninth grade, making some D’s and F’s. However, she had one teacher who saw that she was really smart and just needed some extra help. What was amazing was that he only spoke to her one time. As he explained, the difference between an F and a C would really just be a small amount of effort on her part. He promised that if she only spent fifteen minutes a day on homework and studying she would see a huge improvement. Most importantly, he told her that he knew she could do it. And she could tell he was sincere— he really believed it. It was like a light was switched on. She became a straight A student and to this day loves learning and reading.” (Kelly, 2014)

Yet further on we can read Kelly’s own account of a negative experience with her teacher: “I’m so afraid of failure. I still hear my teacher’s voice in my ears. (….) “Sure, you’re writing has gotten better. Your spelling and grammar has improved. However, I just think that you need to work a little harder.” And in my mind this means, “You’ll never succeed at writing so why try?” I fight against it every day.” (Kelly, 2014)

Correspondingly, more real life stories closely related to our topic can be found in “My most memorable teacher or trainer” (Masie, 2005) and in the article “The Impact of Teachers: A Story of Indelible Memories and Self-Esteem” published on LD OnLine, a national educational service and written by Dr. Robert Brooks, a clinical psychologist and the author of "The SelfEsteem Teacher": "I had a teacher in junior high who knew that I was particularly shy. She would never challenge me and ask me to answer publicly, but instead took me aside and said, “I can tell by your facial expressions that you are participating silently and that you know the answers.”

"In elementary school, I asked a question and the teacher said, 'Weren't you listening? I just answered that!' I rarely asked questions after that.” (Brooks, 2015)

"The rest of the class can write their names just fine. You are the only one that needs help. You should already know how to do this." J. Sutherland heard from a teacher during her first week in kindergarten. She said she never liked school after that. (Medium, 2015)

With regard to this recall: "In the tenth grade, my geometry teacher asked if I was dumb because I didn’t understand some point he was making.” (Brooks, 2015), in the book "Between parent and child", the authors say that when parents or teachers keep on telling that the child is foolish, the child begins to believe so. He or she begins to think of themselves that they are stupid and are not willing to take any intellectual challenges because of the conviction that if they avoid struggling and rivalry they will avoid being ridicules. Their sense of security is based on not trying and their personal motto is: "If I do not try, I will not fail” (Ginott et al., 2009)

Since all the relevant stories cannot be cited in this thesis, the above examples have to be enough. What is common here is that these testimonies prove teachers’ words have a huge impact on who we become and how we see ourselves. That said, some teachers inspire and encourage, others derail our dreams.

Significantly, Brooks' concluding remark is that "teachers should never minimize the role they play in influencing students' lives. Hopefully, that role will be positive, possessing the qualities of a "charismatic adult" who not only touches students' minds but also their
spirits -- the way they see and feel about themselves for the rest of their lives. Such influence is truly a rare privilege that should be prized and nurtured." (Brooks, 2015)

### 2.2.5. Brief summary of the chapter

#### Table 2. Key concepts concerning teacher talk from the literature review

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Key concepts concerning positive teacher talk</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Title of work</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>About the author</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Our research found a link between the Responsive Classroom approach and improved student learning.</td>
<td>Responsive Classroom, 2009</td>
<td>Social and Academic: Learning Study on the Constitution of the Responsive Classroom Approach</td>
<td>Sara Rimer-Kaufman and colleagues at the University of Nebraska</td>
<td>Sara Rimer-Kaufman conducts research on elementary school classrooms and teachers making decisions for teachers and children. Her research examines the interactions between teachers and children and among the students themselves. She teaches courses in Learning and Development, Educational Psychology, and Social Development.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or heal. In all situations, it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humiliated or dehumanized.</td>
<td>Between Parent and Child</td>
<td>Haim G. Ginott (originally Ginoburg, 1922-1973) see a school teacher, a child psychologist and psychotherapist, and a parent educator. He pioneered techniques for conversing with children that are still taught today.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Parents and teachers need to join forces and form working partnerships. Both need to know the difference between the words that demoralize and those that give courage.</td>
<td>How To Talk So Kids Can Learn</td>
<td>Adele Faber and Elaine Mazlish</td>
<td>Adele Faber was graduated from Queens College with a B.A. in Russian and drama, earned her master's degree in education from New York University, and taught in the New York City high schools for eight years.</td>
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The power of teacher's language cannot be overstated.
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<th>World Scientific News 77(1) (2017) 1-106</th>
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</table>
| **5. The nature of teacher discourse has a great influence on students' participation and on assimilation of instructional content.**
  - For language learning, both as immediate and life-long activity, teacher discourse can facilitate the processes in different ways.
  - We would affirm that it is quite possibly even more important that affective aspects of discourse be taken into account.
  
  (Acosta, ed. 2005)
  - *Telling the Teacher Talk*  
  - Arnold Morgan and Y. Fontana-More, M.C.
  
  - *Research Topics: Language teaching,* *ministry and language learning,* *ethics, reading,* *afflict in language learning.***
  - Researcher  
  - Author  

| **6. As teachers, we send verbal and non-verbal messages, perhaps unintentionally, to students who receive them, perhaps unconsciously but nevertheless deeply, making them feel real or unreal, accepted or rejected, valued or scorned, understood or misunderstood, humanized or objectified.**
  
  (Stevens 1982)
  - *Family Communication: An Integrative Systems Approach*  
  - Evelyn Sedgwick

| **7. Your choice of words and the language selections are critical to the self-esteem, the academic success, and the healthy mental and emotional development of your students.**
  - There is an undeniable link between the words we speak and the attitudes and outcomes students create in their lives.
  - By selecting words and phrases intentionally; by altering your present language; by adding to or walking away from your common utterances; you can empower your students and enhance their learning.
  
  (Morrow and Morrow, 1995)
  - *Teacher Talk: What it Really Means*  
  - Morrow and Weber  

| **8. Want Positive Behavior? Use Positive Language. Language matters.**
  - Our words and tone of voice have a profound effect on children. By tuning in to the language we use with children, day in and day out, everywhere in school, we can empower our students, helping them to learn new skills and become their best selves.
  
  
  Positive adult language is the professional use of words and tone of voice to empower students to learn in an engaged, active way. This includes learning social skills.
  
  To guide children toward choosing and maintaining positive behaviors, school adults need to carefully choose the words and tone of voice we use when speaking to them.
  
  (Wood and Freeman Lots, 2013)
  - *Responsive School Discipline: Essentials for Elementary School Leaders*  
  - Chip Wood and Sue Freeman Lots  

| **9. Teachers’ words can have long-lasting effects on learners.**
  - They should look for ways to reframe (rephrase or restate) negative language, they might be tempted to use as positive statements.
  
  
  Classroom language, even when you are enforcing rules, should encourage students to choose positive behaviors. Students who regularly feel insecure, embarrassed, or angered by a teacher’s communication style aren’t learning effectively.
  
  (Bringle, Jen and Gonzalez, n.d.)
  - *Positive Language in the EFL classroom*  
  - The Articulate English team

| **10. When you focus on using positive language with your child, you will likely find that he has fewer tantrums, whines less and overall experiences fewer challenging behaviors.**
  
  
  Using positive language also empowers a child to make an appropriate choice on his own, which can boost his self-esteem.
  
  (Bringle, Jen and Gonzalez, n.d.)
  - *How To Use Positive Language to Improve Your Child’s Behavior*  
  - Brooke Bringle, Jen Jen and Jen

| **11. Teacher Words Can Inexorably Harm.**
  - By encouraging a struggling student and showing them how they can in fact achieve more than they think, they can change a student’s career from one of failure to success.
  
  You can see that our teacher’s words really do stick with our students for their whole life.
  
  (Kelly, 2016)
  - *Impact of Teacher’s Words and Actions: The Importance of Teachers in Their Students’ Lives*  
  - Melissa Kelly

| **12. My findings revealed that the teachers’ positive stance with the students made them see the students in more favorable ways that triggered a change in their relationship with the students and vice versa.**
  
  (Pasqua, 2009)
  - *When Positive Language Leads to Positive Classroom Changes*  
  - Pasqua, M. B.

| **Consistent Positive Language Creates Positive Changes.**

-32-
The literature revised in this chapter first set the scene for learning and teaching, focusing on chosen aspects considered to be of primary importance for the researcher, then gradually moved to areas more closely connected with teachers’ positive language and its impact on pupils. In the chart below key concepts concerning the value of positive teacher talk are gathered together to highlight their significance:

As it could be observed, the topic has been explored by many scholars and previous studies indicate that positive teacher language leads to positive pupils’ behavior and better academic achievements. The results of the literature study are satisfactory for current work since they prove the thesis is valid. Moreover, by means of literature review the teacher furthered her understanding of how to use the positive talk.

PART 2

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the methodological structure of the study is presented. It details the research methods that were applied for the study. The chapter consists of five parts, whereby part one outlines an overall design of the study and part two is a description of the participants. The third part depicts the instruments used and the following one the procedure for data collection. Last but not least an explanation of how the data were analyzed is provided.

3.1. Overall design of the study

The current study uses quasi-experiment with using positive talk followed by the analysis of the sample of pupils 6th graders' tests - the so called "Sprawdzian Szóstoklasisty" (2nd part concerning English). The analysis concerned two mock exams vs. the real test used to examine the influence of teacher’s positive talk on pupils' results after having carried out the experiment. Creswell (1998) considered document analysis to be a data source as valuable as observation and interview.

Apart from this, two self-administrated questionnaires as additional main tools to elicit data related to teachers’ positive language are used. First questionnaire was designed for teachers working in different schools in Poland, the second for students in one primary school in the Voivode of Podkarpacie. The name of the school and its exact location are not significant and they are concealed since the study contains some sensitive data such as pupils' names or results. The questionnaire responses helped to gain an understanding of the extent to which teachers use positive talk together with obtaining the information whether the positive teacher talk is considered to be important or not.

Additionally, the study gathered data from self-evaluation sheet, which served the purpose of making the researcher aware of what kind of positive attitude and especially teacher talk she uses as a teacher, Index of Learning Styles Questionnaire (Felder and Soloman, n.d.) that provided first-hand information on the types of the sample of pupils.

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3The test is a VI form nationwide examination in the form of a written test consisting of two parts. Part one is Polish and Maths and the 2nd part is foreign language (here: English)
learning styles. Thus collected data helped to answer the research questions and prove the thesis.

3.2. Participants

For this study, 18 English teachers from different schools in Poland were drawn. The sample of teachers, though rather small, included teachers from schools in the proximity including the school were the researcher works, teachers that study at University of Rzeszów as well as teachers from different schools in Poland contacted via the Internet. That was done on purpose, to gain a variety of opinions. A purposive sampling means a sampling technique in which a researcher uses his or her own knowledge of the population and chooses to include in the sample only some particular respondents who have the relevant information to the study. (Kathuri & Pals, 1993)

The sample of pupils consisted of 17 learners from Year 6. They attend the primary school where the researcher works. That school was chosen because of its convenience for the researcher. According to Gay, convenient signifies a sampling procedure in which the researcher selects units or respondents that are close at hand or easy to reach or just happening to be available at the time when data collection is taking place and was applied to students. (Cedu.niu.edu, n.d.). These pupils completed the Index of Learning Style questionnaires, the student questionnaires, and they were the subject of teacher’s experiment with the positive language that was carried out from the beginning of the school year 2015/2016 till 5th April 2016. On that day pupils wrote there 6th grade test. The sample of pupils apart from its convenience for the researcher, was also chosen on purpose to include most of the variables of interest for the simple reason that these are the pupils that the researcher works with as a teacher, therefore considered by her to be of primary importance.

3.3. Data sources

The teacher's self-assessment sheet and Index of Learning Styles were only additional tools used in this study therefore further overview of them will not be provided here. The first crucial data was gathered from 6th grade tests' (mock and real) results. Apart from this, the data was collected mainly by means of two questionnaires administrated by the researcher. The questionnaires based on the reviewed literature had closed and open ended questions designed to gather information and data from the teachers and students. The closed questions’ main advantages are that they are easy and quick to answer and the response choice often clarifies the question text for the respondent. (Wyse, 2014). “The advantage of ‘open’ questions is that the information gathered from the responses is more likely to reflect the full richness and complexity of the views held by the respondent” (Denscombe, 1998, p. 101). The instruments were adapted in order to make them relevant to the aims of the current research.

3.3.1. Overview of the 6th grade test

For the purpose of the study the researcher looked at the results of two mock 6th grade tests and the real one. The test has a written form and is a nationwide examination that consists of eleven tasks. The test starts with four exercises that check listening
comprehension. Another 4 assess the use of English including grammar and vocabulary and the remaining three tasks concern reading comprehension. All tasks are closed-ended questions that aim to check the knowledge and skills that are specified in the requirements of examination standards. A maximum number of points a learner may receive from the test is 40. (Cke.edu.pl, 2016)

3.3.2. Overview of the teacher survey

This questionnaire was designed to establish the survey's teachers' attitude to teaching in general but also to paint a picture of the participants as teachers and gain a variety of perspectives on the teachers ‘perceptions of teacher positive talk. It consisted of four parts. Part one included 18 items that teacher had to rate don’t know, always, mostly, occasionally, rarely or never. Part two resembles an interview and was more time consuming. Teachers had to answer briefly seven open-ended questions that among others sought to elicit the sample of teachers' language used in different teacher learner situations. Part three had 15 items, which were examples of teacher’s negative talk gathered from the literature review. The teachers were asked to tick the ones they happen to use, if ever. In part four there were three statements about teacher's talk that the participants had to finish choosing the factors they considered true. (For details See Appendix E).

3.3.3. Overview of the student survey

It is a 4-part instrument that assesses students’ perceptions of their teachers’ talk. In part 1 respondents rated 18 items using don’t know, always, mostly, occasionally, rarely or never. It helped the researcher obtain a better understanding of pupils' perception of these factors. Part two included open-ended questions that stipulated the purpose of finding out what kind of language the pupils' teachers use. In the last part there were three statement about teacher talk that the pupils had to finish choosing the factors they thought to be true. (For details See Appendix C).

Both questionnaires were constructed in a way permitting to set the variables that were of primary importance to the researcher in context. For that reason the participants' attention was not particularly drawn to these concepts and they were more apt to give sincere responses. Moreover they were informed by the researcher- teacher about the importance of the questionnaires to the study to gather more in-depth answers from both groups of the respondents.

3.4. Procedure

The initial data collection process included caring out self-evaluation by the researcher- teacher and the Learning Styles Questionnaire among the sample of pupils. It helped both learners and teachers, as it will be explained later on.

The second step was starting the quasi-experiment with using positive teacher language in Year 6, that is the group of pupils who were purposefully sampled to participate in this study. The pupils were exposed to teacher's conscious positive talk for about 6 months. Then the 6th grade tests' analysis were carried out.
3.5. Data analysis methods

The current study used mixed methods to analyze the data. Since the researcher is responsible for the appropriate analyzing of data, the Microsoft Excel was used to organize and interpret most of the data. It was also useful to convert nominal data into quantitative form. When analyzing the 6th grade tests number of points received by individual pupils and by the whole class were compared in all three tests. Both questionnaires used open and closed questions to obtain quantitative and qualitative data.

Percentage distribution technique was used to analyze questionnaire data which was in a quantitative format (Creswell, 1993). The qualitative data was analyzed using descriptive or narrative method where detailed literature description of the respondents views was presented for the reader to make their opinions (Bell, 1993).

Closed questions provided data which could be ranked and the strength of the variables could be measured. In part one of both questionnaires a 6-point scale of don’t know (3 points), always (6 points), mostly (5 points), occasionally (4 points), rarely (2 points) or never (1 point) was also applied. (Additionally to above mentioned methods) For negative items, responses are scored as follows: don’t know (3 points), always (1 point), mostly (2 points), occasionally (4 points), rarely (5 points) and never (6 points). The meaning of the information gathered from surveys was interpreted.

The same pattern was followed to analyze both self-administrated questionnaires.

To report the findings from the open ended questions in the student questionnaires the excerpts from the respondents’ surveys are provided verbatim. In teachers survey however the researcher read the responses several times looking for similarities and difference between them in order to group them accordingly and focus on the aspects crucial to the current study.

Being aware of her biases in regard to the proposed study, the researcher set aside all her preconceived concepts and maintained objectivity. Therefore the data is represented as collected. Some observations were drawn from the teacher’s personal experience and reflections as well.

CHAPTER 4. RESEARCH DISCOVERIES AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents the study findings and is divided into three sections. The first one provides information on the research results and details data analysis. That part opens with the brief investigation of the researcher’s self-assessment as a teacher and Index of Learning Styles. Then it presents the analysis of 6th grade test's results carried out to examine the impact of teacher positive language on pupils' results. In the next part of that section the analysis from the teachers survey followed by the analysis from the students survey are detailed. In the next section research findings are stated and questions answered. The chapter will conclude with the researcher's conclusions and suggestions.
4.1. Research results and data analysis

4.1.1. Self-evaluation

The first important step for the researcher was to look at herself as a teacher which was done by the means of self-evaluation sheet created purposely on the basis of the literature review presented in the second chapter of this study. Before September 2015, that is before...
the beginning of the school year 2015-2016, the teacher critically and sincerely evaluated herself and completed the self-administered evaluation sheet (See Appendix A). From the results the teacher observed that as far as determining the frequency of occurrence of positive language sometimes constituted 40.9% of her answers, usually 31.8% and often 27.3%. These findings help the teacher to determine which aspects she needed to improve and work on, namely: constructive feedback, behaviors specific and effective praise, confirmation, keeping the talk brief, sarcasm and the use of previously mentioned "three Rs". Then after half a year of consciously implementing the principles of positive talk into her teaching, the researcher assessed her teacher talk again and the frequency of occurrence of positive language changed as follows: very often 36.4%, often 50% and usually 13.7%.

The initial assessment of negative talk showed that out of 4, the teacher would usually resort to use 3 variables of negative talk, which has changed later on to hardly ever. The teacher is determined to continue working on her positive talk and pay attention to her words with every class she teaches.

4.1.2. Index of learning styles

The second data being briefly analyzed here is the Index of Learning Styles from Soloman and Felder adapted from North Carolina State University (Felder and Soloman, n.d.) and described in Chapter 2 of the current work. The Index helped the learners (here: the sample of pupils from Year 6) identify their preferred style of learning and on the basis of that the teacher was able to obtain the preference profile of the whole class, as shown below:

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Fig. 5. Results for: Year 6 (Mindtools.com, 2016)

What is assessed here are pupils’ preferences on four dimensions, notably: active/reflective, sensing/intuitive, visual/verbal, and sequential/global. If the score on the scale is 1-3, the person is fairly well balanced on the two dimensions of that scale. If it is 5-7, the person has "a moderate preference for one dimension of the scale and will learn more
easily in a teaching environment which favors that dimension." If the score is 9-11, that means a person has "a very strong preference for one dimension of the scale. And may have real difficulty learning in an environment which does not support that preference." (Mindtools.com, 2016)

Though it is just an indication which should not be over interpreted, yet the importance of this is that it helps create a positive learning/teaching environment and avoid some problems and conflicts that would probably arise otherwise. For instance, active learners have a tendency to like group work while reflective ones prefer working alone. Thus, learners who are aware of that may avoid feeling frustrated or discouraged. When the conditions for optimal teaching/learning are met, it is much easier to use positive teacher language. To make it easier for the pupils, the teacher translated the Index questions and results into Polish. (See APPENDIX J)

4.1.3. The 6th grade tests

The next data analyzed was 6th grade test (part 2, English, See APPENDIX K) First the results of the sample of pupils' mock exam that took place in spring 2015 are provided. A pupil could have received a total of 40 points. As it can be seen in the chart the lowest score was 9 points, the highest 34. The above results signify that the class did very poorly in that test and completed the tasks with only 47%. Pupils were not much motivated to obtain high marks from that test at that time. This is a class considered by the majority of teachers in the school as a 'weak' one. Out of the seventeen pupils in the class there are six pupils whose average grades are 2-3, four with average grades 3-4, four with average grade 4 and three with average grades 4-5. It was challenging to change their motivation towards learning and doing well in the 6th grade test. With little internal motivation most of them did not believe they could do better in the future than they did in the first mock test. Some were very reluctant to work during classes and some would often disturb the classes.

The researcher-teacher tried to change the pupils' attitude and motivation through the use of positive talk. Therefore the teacher after having evaluated her own positive talk, started the quasi-experiment with the conscious and deliberate use of positive teacher talk to boost pupils' motivation and results. The positive results could be observed already at the mock exam taken by the sample of pupils in 2016. The lowest score here is 13 points, the highest 38 points. Tasks' completion for the whole class increased to 66.6%.

It has to be observed here that it is not the level of difficulty that made pupils get such low score during the first mock test. What makes the researcher convinced of this is that in previous years there were pupils from 5th grade able to obtain even the maximum of points from that test. In the sample group of pupils only P got a relatively high score at the first time-34 points. The rest of the class needed to open up and believe in themselves to reach their potential during second mock test and the real one. Without the doubt they received better results because they learnt more yet they learnt more because they wanted to, their positive attitude towards English has increased, their behavior has improved and they did start to care. The teacher remembered to use effective praise, advised them to find the best way of learning that would fit their learning style and preferences.

The teacher noticed that those who would misbehave in the past would do so because they felt lost, overwhelmed and not capable of coping with the material. Many of them had little self-esteem and confidence. With teacher's positive talk, emotional and instructional
support their self-perception was being built and they started seeing themselves as capable individuals. On 5th April 2015 pupils wrote the real test. (Cke.edu.pl, 2016) As it can be observed from the figure below pupils did made a progress. The score ranged from 14 to 39 points, and the class reached 70.88%.

**Fig. 6.** Numbers of points received in the mock test in 2015

**Fig. 7.** Numbers of points received in the mock test in 2016
Fig. 8. Results from the real test taken in April 2016

(For details see APPENDIX B)

The figures below represent pupils progress - individual and as the whole class:

Fig. 9. 6th grade tests results: first and last

As it is transparent from the graph, each pupil received a higher score. What is more, the score of many is significantly better than it was during the first mock test.
Consequently, the result of the class as a whole has improved. This finding does suggest a strong association between the use of teacher positive talk and learners' achievements. It is worth noticing that behind these numbers also stand learners' positively changed motivation, attitude and behavior. As a result of the experiment a good relationship between teacher and pupils was produced as well, and that shall not be underestimated.

![6th Grade Tests' class results](image)

**Fig. 10.** 6th grad tests' class results

### 4.1.4. The student surveys

The next data being analyzed here is the student survey. Part 1 of the questionnaire consisted of 18 statements that pupils were to label according to how much the statements were true for them. Since the sample group of pupils is not large, in detailed analysis of each question numbers are used.

Consequently, in the first question 7 out of 17 pupils stated that they *mostly* like being at school, 4 *never*, 3 *rarely*, 2 *occasionally* and 1 *does not know*. 

![I like being at school](image)
9 pupils said they mostly get good marks, 3 never, 2 always, 2 occasionally and 1 never.

7 pupils acknowledged that their teachers mostly praise them when they do something well, 5 rarely, 3 mostly 1 occasionally and 1 said that it never occurs.

8 pupils always feel encouraged by their teachers to work hard, 4 mostly, 2 occasionally, 2 rarely and 1 does not know.

5 pupils always feel motivated by their teachers to do their best, 5 mostly, 4 do not know, 1 occasionally, 1 rarely and 1 never.
4 pupils stated that their teachers are mostly interested in what the pupils say, 3 do not know, 3 always, 3 rarely, 2 never and 2 occasionally.

5 pupils think that teachers in their school always respect pupils, 4 say that it happens occasionally, 3 that mostly, 3 never, 1 occasionally and 1 does not know.

7 pupils said they can never talk to their teachers about their problems while 6 said that they can always do that, 3 pupils do not know and 1 rarely.

8 pupils consider that the language their teachers use is always clear and understandable, 5 mostly, 1 does not know, 1 occasionally, 1 rarely and 1 never.
6 pupils *mostly* like talking to their teachers, 4 *always*, 3 *never*, 2 *occasionally* and 2 *rarely*.

8 pupils think their teachers are *mostly* friendly to them, 4 think that *always*, 2 that *occasionally*, 2 that *never* and 1 *does not know*.

6 pupils said their teachers *mostly* smile to them, 3 *always*, 3 *never*, 2 *occasionally*, 2 *rarely* and 1 *does not know*.

6 pupils stated their teachers *mostly* use humor in the classroom, 4 *rarely*, 3 *never*, 2 *do not know*, 1 *occasionally* and 1 *never*. 
6 pupils rarely feel nervous when talking to their teacher, 4 never, 2 occasionally, 2 mostly, 2 always and 1 does not know.

7 pupils said their teachers rarely patronize them, 4 occasionally, 3 always, 1 does not know, 1 mostly, 1 never.

9 pupils said their teachers rarely get angry at them, 4 that it never occurs, 2 that always, 1 does not know and 1 said that mostly.

7 pupils said their teachers rarely raise their voice or shout, 5 that never, 3 that always and 2 that occasionally.
In the last question, 8 pupils responded they never feel humiliated by their teacher, 4 do not know, 3 always and 2 rarely.

To see the table presenting the results converted into percentages look at APPENDIX F.

The figure below shows the sample of pupils' perceptions of teacher talk at their school as compared to an ideal situation. The number of points range from 38 to 103, whereas in ideal school it would be 108. That gives 74,5 points on average:

![Graph showing pupil perceptions of teacher talk](image)

**Fig. 11.** The sample of pupils' perception of teacher talk at their school

The questions in part two were open-ended. At the beginning pupils were asked what their teachers tell them or their colleagues if they happen to disturb the lesson. The following samples of teacher's language were provided by the pupils:

"They threaten that we will get a written reprimand and they urge us to calm down" (2x),  
"I demand that you behave properly!" (5x)  
"At first they remind us to behave, then they raise their voice and then (but rarely)- they shout"  
"Girls!!!!", "Boys!!!\"
"Be quiet!!'
"Stop doing this! " Stop that noise!"
"Silence! Silence!" Stop it!"
"Attention!" (3x),

Then pupils were asked what their teachers tell them or their colleagues if their response is wrong. Here is what the pupils wrote:
"they always correct us and we discuss our mistakes"
"your response is wrong! You'd better learn more!"
"they just say that the response is wrong, they don't shout if the response is wrong"
"they help to understand the mistake"
"rather no, No!"
"unfortunately no!
"wrong!!!(3x)
"wrong! who's got the another answer?"
"unfortunately this is wrong!"
"wrong answer!
"you get a '1'" "No!"

In the third question pupils were asked what their teachers tell them or their colleagues if their response is right.
"they praise us" (2x)
"good!" (3x) "very good!" (6x), well done!" (2x), "yes!", "super!", "great!"
"good answer!", "good, very nice!"

In the fourth question pupils were asked what their teachers tell them or their colleagues if they have not done their homework or come to a lesson unprepared.
"they ask why we haven't done our homework and ask us to do it for the next time or they give us a written reprimand.
"you're not prepared? again??
"you get a '1'" (3x)
"they ask : "why haven't you done your homework?" etc. And then they give us a '1' or a minus."
"they're not pleased and ask to change that for better"
"what's your number in register?"
"I want your parent to sign this"(3x)
"what were you doing at home?"
"it is very bad that you haven't got your homework!!!"
"you get a written reprimand and I want your parents signature underneath for tomorrow"
"lack of homework!- written reprimand"
"it's very bad! do it for the next time. You get a minus"


4 '1' is the lowest grade in Polish schools.
In the fifth question pupils were asked whether their talk with teachers led them to change some not too good behavior, and if yes, they were asked to describe this situation and what the teacher told them that they decided to improve.

"Once I got carried away and told too many bad things to my friend. then my teacher said we should respect each other and that what goes around comes around. that made me change my behavior."
"Teacher said she was not pleased with my behavior and I felt ashamed and decided to change"
"I got a bad mark and the teacher advised that I should ask someone to read aloud for me so I could learn better. That helped."
"Teacher asked me to be more active and now I am"

In the sixth question pupils were asked whether there was an unpleasant situation they experienced in contact with a teacher and if yes, again, they were asked to describe briefly this situation.

"The teacher accused all the girls of being sneakers after they had told other teacher about some real event"
'I got a bad mark from a test and the teacher started shouting at me...there were many situations like this"
"I don't want to describe this!!"
"Teacher said I was a sneaker and that I was ill-mannered" (2x)
"Teacher forced me to attend after school classes despite my will."
"Teacher told me and my friend that that we were misbehaving and we had no idea what she meant by this"

The samples of teacher talk provided by learners here show a mixture of positive and negative talk yet with the majority of the second type. In the last part of the survey pupils were to choose the options they considered to be the most important. The results present themselves as follows:

11 pupils are of the opinion that teacher’s talk helps to boost students' behavior, 9 pupils say it helps establish positive relationship between students and the teacher, 9 that it helps maintain discipline and 4 that it boosts students’ confidence. Pupils were allowed to choose more than one answer therefore the number of answers does not equal the number of pupils.

Teacher’s negative language is a source of bad behavior during lessons for 11 pupils, a source of discouragement for 9, a source of bad grades and skipping classes for 8. Teacher's positive talk influences pupils' attitude to subject being taught according to 13 pupils, according to 12 to pupils' behavior during lessons, according to 6 to attitude to homework and according to 5 to pupils' grades. (See details in APPENDIX G).

By reason of the results of that survey, following conclusions may be drawn: First of all, based on the questions from part 1 of the survey the following elements of teacher positive talk can be observed always or most at sample pupils' school: praise, encouragement, motivation, clear and understandable language, friendliness, smile (accompanying teacher's talk) and humor. The frequency of the occurrence of these elements' appearance is from 53% to 76%.
However, there are also occurrences of negative talk observed in sample pupils' school like humiliating, raising voice, getting angry (at pupils), patronizing or making learners feel nervous. The frequency of the occurrence of these elements' appearance is from 18% to 23%.

In the last part of the survey following proofs of the validation of the thesis can be found: 71% of pupils believes teacher's positive talk influences pupils' behavior during lessons. 77% agreed it influences pupils' attitude to the subject being taught, 65% said
teacher's negative language is a source of bad behavior during lesson, the same number that teacher's talk helps to boost students' behavior and 53% that it helps to maintain discipline.

![Graph showing percentages of teacher's talk influencing pupil behavior and attitude.]

**Fig. 14.** The importance of teacher talk according to pupils

What is worth mentioning is that while pupils were completing their surveys some noticed and said it aloud "You use positive talk", "I like the way you talk to us!" Those reactions seemed very spontaneous and sincere. The fact that the pupils have noticed and appreciated her attempts with positive talk was significantly rewarding for the teacher.

### 4.1.5. The teacher survey

Part one of the teacher questionnaire consisted of 18 statements that the participating teachers were to label don’t know, always, mostly, occasionally, rarely or never, according to how much the statements were true for them.

11 teachers said they always like teaching, 7 that mostly.

![Graph showing the distribution of teacher's responses to the question 'I like teaching'.]
13 always show respect for their students, 5 mostly.

13 teachers mostly praise their students, 5 always.

10 teachers always encourage their students to work hard, 7 mostly and 1 rarely.

10 teachers always motivate their students, 7 mostly and 1 occasionally.
13 teachers said that everyone in their class is *always* treated fairly, 5 that *mostly*.

![](image1)

10 teachers is *mostly* friendly to their students, 7 *always* and 1 *occasionally*.

![](image2)

10 teachers *always* take personal interest in their students, 6 *mostly* and 2 *occasionally*.

![](image3)

10 teachers *always* care if the students are not doing well, 7 *mostly* and 1 *occasionally*.

![](image4)
12 teachers *mostly* smile to their students, 5 *always* and 1 *occasionally*.

9 teachers *mostly* resort to humor in the classroom, 4 *always*, 1 *does not know*.

9 teachers say they *mostly* can tell the difference between humor and sarcasm, 8 *always* and 1 *never*.

8 teachers consider their language *always* clear and understandable to students, 8 *mostly*, 1 *occasionally* and 1 *does not know*. 
11 teachers say that students *occasionally* talk to them about their problems, 6 that *mostly* and 1 that *never*.

8 teachers *rarely* feel frustrated at work and show it to their students, 8 *never* and 2 admitted that *occasionally* it is the case.

5 teachers responded they *mostly* patronize their students, 4 *occasionally*, 4 *rarely*, 2 *do not know* and 2 *never*.
7 teachers admitted they *occasionally* raise their voice, 7 *rarely*, 3 *never* and 1 *mostly*.

![Graph showing teacher talk]

6 teachers *occasionally* show impatience to their students if they misbehave, 5 *rarely*, 3 *never*, 2 *mostly*, 1 *always* and 1 *does not know*.

![Graph showing teacher impatience]

The figure below illustrates how the teachers view their own teacher talk:

![Graph showing teacher self-perceptions]

**Fig. 15.** The sample of teachers' perceptions of their own talk
As it is shown, 'an ideal teacher' would get 108 points. The sample of teachers' results range from 83 to 100 points. That means the average number would be 92. To see the table presenting the results converted into percentages look at APPENDIX H.

In part two, the participants enlisted the following general factors connected with quality of teacher talk that in their opinion are blocking the communication between teachers and students: lack of positive atmosphere in the classroom, fear - pupils are afraid of making mistakes, lack of trust - students have a tendency not to trust the teacher and this is why this communication happens to be a failure.

Along similar lines teachers mentioned the distance between the teacher and the student- some students feel intimidated by the teacher, the relationship (students are not aware of what they can or cannot do), students think the teacher doesn’t care about them / their results / their problems. One teacher wrote: In my opinion misunderstanding is the main factor that breaks the communication line between teacher and student.

There were also quite many voices blaming students for such situations like: lack of positive attitude, respect or interest in learning, their disruptive behavior, character, unwillingness to develop, their laziness.

Yet the participants were able to see that some teachers were to be blamed as well: teachers' bad acting towards students, the teacher’s personality, teachers focus on the students who achieve the best results without paying attention to students with problems, the teacher’s attitude towards teaching and his or her involvement in the process of teaching, lack of enthusiasm on the part of the teacher (which happens rarely), wrong teaching methods. The most striking response was provided by one teacher who indicated teacher's bad verbal behavior as the main source of the problem.

When asked what they usually tell their students if they happen to disturb the lesson, some teachers just ask them to calm down and pay attention, some admonish, some use disciplinary methods which includes or implies threatening- writing a short test, oral answer, leaving the class, going to the headmaster, obtaining a written remark.

"I ask them to say aloud what they are talking to their classmates, or I put some notes in my notebook and then in registry book. I also tell them that I will speak to their parents if they don’t stop disturbing the lesson. Sometimes I have a little talk with the trouble makers after the lesson"

"We’re going to have a small talk during the break (whisper to S’s ear)"

"I stop talking I tell them that they are going to write a short quiz during the next lesson because I’ve told them way to many times to stop talking But usually I tell them to stop talking or if only one student talks I ask him to repeat what I’ve just said"

“Let me finish my thought and then we’ll listen to you” (and I try to remember to actually give them the time to speak, by that time they usually lose their will to say sth stupid or disturbing), “I can’t talk when you’re speaking at the same time”, “please, stop disturbing me”, “did you not understand something I was saying? Do I need to repeat something?”

But usually I don’t say anything. I often just give them a LOOK or raise my index finger to indicate they should wait with what they’re doing or saying until I’m done talking"

Some teachers try to use different methods:

"I am trying to raise interest in those who are bored. I listen to their propositions of how an interesting lesson should look like."

"I usually hush them, but if it is not working I start to write something on the whiteboard."
"Tell them to be quiet because they disturb not only me but also the other students. If they still talk I give them some additional tasks to make them busy"

However, as it can be observed, not many teacher try to give reason:
"I ask them not to and explain why their misbehavior is a problem for me"
‘Michal you are disturbing, please stop doing it.’
"That disturbs me and other students"

And there was an instance of definitely negative language „You’re wasting your time not mine!"

When asked what the teachers usually tell their students if their response is wrong most teachers ask pupils to think again, ask whether the pupil is sure or encourage other pupils to try. Some give hints, some use phrases like Quite well, but.....
"I correct the pupil drawing his/her attention to the mistake or I correct the mistake with the help of the class, we make the situation clear."
"It depends on the level of the group. I usually write the mistakes down or correct by means of raising my voice e.g. He have???
“Are you sure?”, “Think again”, “Can you find it in the text?”, “Listen to what X said a minute ago, do you see the difference between his sentence and yours? X, please repeat your sentence.”, “Try to say it again...”
"I ask to help some of their peers, because that kind of correction is less discouraging for students in my opinion. And later, I ask to repeat the sentence for example, and say ‘Well done!’
"I don’t scream but I explain why that answer is wrong"
"You used to be better, it must have been a slip of the tongue, you could do better"

One teacher wrote "I ask them to concentrate and pay more attention”.

When students’ response is right, most teachers praise their pupils, either with a smile either emphasizing that the pupils are right. The most frequently used phrases are however very generic like: well done, great, good job or very good but also excellent, lovely, fantastic, brilliant, thank you, super, perfect, nice, ok, well done.

Other response were: "I tell them nothing"- which was rather surprising and "I give them some extra points."

Out of 18 only two teachers used descriptive praise: "You are well-prepared, your pronunciation has improved, I’m happy with your results.” And: "I praise them. I point out pupil ’s progress."

In case students have not done their homework or have come to a lesson unprepared teachers mostly ask for the reason of such situation and asked them to catch up with the class and complete all the missing tasks, sometimes plus some additional tasks as a punishment. Several teachers say they have established rules concerning not being prepared, for instance: 'They can be unprepared twice in a term, if this is the third time, they are tested (short oral). “Some teachers resort to giving such pupil a warning, a minus or a '1" (the lowest grade).

One teacher said it depend on their age: „If they are adults I know that they have many duties to perform at their homes. If they are teenagers I give them extra task or ask to complete it.”

Other responses were quite positive "I’ll give you a chance next time BUT BE ACTIVE during the lesson" or "Why haven’t you done your homework? what happened?"
Yet, the following statement sounds like a threat: "It’s your first and also the last one time when you are unprepared to my classes. Next time you will be punished appropriately."

Then the teachers were asked about the words they use to motivate their students to work harder. Many convey their belief in pupils saying for instance "I know you can do it" or "I believe in you, you can do this……Practice makes perfect"

Some encourage that "Next time will be better". Other teachers praise, yet at the same time prompt their learners to work harder. Some use rewards like extra grades, stickers or funny stamps (primary school teachers). Also:

"One of the arguments includes good results in matura exam. Moreover, I try to show them how being able to communicate in a foreign language is important."
"I tell them that they should devote time, resign from going to a party, turn off the Facebook and focus on learning"
"I praise them, INVOLVE THEM in the lesson (allow them to play roles, act out stories...etc.)."
"Generally, SS motivate themselves if their parents are involved and care about education. And of course if students see that the teacher is motivated, they are usually, too."
"I play to the rules I establish, so that they know that their hard work will be rewarded. I try to convince them that they learn for themselves."

One teacher uses strong motivation: "never give up, believe in yourself do not bother to persevere"

Another tries to describe student's progress:
you're making progress, I see you've been working on this. in the scale from 1 to 10 today you get 6 points. I’m waiting for 10 next time.

However I found those two responses demotivating:
"you did better last time"
"It's up to you how much you will learn but you should be aware that it's not me, your parents or anybody else you're learning for, but it's you yourself."
"You pay for that. Not me."

The last question in this part concerned the average results the participants' students get from their subject. The most frequent answer was that the results range from 3 to 4. When giving reason many said that pupils don't study or care enough or that the low grades are the result of their not being prepared or simply lazy.
"The reasons vary from laziness to lack of talent or motivation."
"They don’t work systematically at home, they're lazy, they have troubles at home, bad peer influence"

Some teachers think it is conditioned by students’ abilities:
"They have average results. I have students who are great, but there are also some students who have poor results."
"I try to do my best and I think most pupils do the same in return. in every class there are pupils with different abilities and I make sure everyone learns the best they can."

Out of 18, only 3 teachers consider the grades the pupils get from their subject as good or even very good. Only two teachers expressed the opinion that students’ results also depend on them as teachers:
"My students are good/ it's my task to make them work/ they usually receive good marks / if sth goes wrong they know that they HAVE A CHANCE."

"reasons may be different, I try to look for them also on my side may lack the patience, desire, enthusiasm or simply motivation and interest on the side of the student"

In part three 15 examples of negative teacher talk were enlisted (without labelling them so) and the participants admitted they happen to use the following:

"Why can't you act like ___________?" 1
"You are so lazy!" 1
"I am done with this." 1
"Another bad grade!" 2
"The other class did well with this. What's wrong with you guys?" 4
"What did I just tell you?" 4
"Tell him you're sorry." 7
"You are so talented, this is easy for you." 9
"That's not a good excuse." 9
"You would do better if only..." 12
"I know this may seem pointless but we have to get through it..." 9
"You would do better if only..." 12

**Fig. 16.** Sample teachers' negative talk

"Why can't you act like ___________?" one teacher
"You are so lazy!" one teacher
"I am done with this." one teacher
"Another bad grade!" two teachers
"The other class did well with this. What's wrong with you guys?" four teachers
"What did I just tell you?" four teachers
"Tell him you're sorry." seven teachers
"You are so talented, this is easy for you." nine teachers
"That's not a good excuse." nine teachers
"I know this may seem pointless but we have to get through it..." nine teachers
"You would do better if only..." twelve teachers
That provides again some supporting evidence for the purpose of the claim that teachers use negative talk at schools. Of all the teachers taking part in the survey only two did not choose any of the above statements, explaining that they found that language negative.

According to 12 participants teacher's talk helps to improve communication with students, according to 11 it helps maintain discipline, 10 think it helps recognize students' feeling, emotions and attitude and establish positive relationship between students and teacher, 7 thinks it helps boost students' confidence and 5 it helps boost self-esteem. 11 teachers are of the opinion that teacher's negative language is a source of discouragement, 10 that of resignation, 8 that of embarrassment, 7 that of disappointment and of bad grades and 6 that is the source of skipping classes.

As far as teacher positive talk is concerned, according to 17 teachers it influences students' behavior, according to 16 the attitude towards the subject being taught, 15 said it influences students' results and 11 chose the attitude to homework. (See Appendix I)

Teachers did not submit any comments apart from this one:

"The survey opened my eyes to many things. It made me ponder about certain things I use to say to my students without much thinking. Maybe there are some traps I have fallen into with my teacher language, maybe I should change it...."

4.2. Research findings

All things considered, here are gathered the key findings of the study.

The first finding is that there is sufficient number of evidence in literature to prove that teachers should use positive language in order to successfully accomplish their roles of educators.

The second finding, consistent with the researcher’s expectations, is that pupils showed greater increases in completing tasks from 6th grade test (and logically in English in general) after having been exposed to teacher's positive talk. The researcher-teacher's adopting a positive attitude expressed in using positive language led to positive changes in her pupils. Their motivation, engagement, behavior during lessons and attitude towards the subject being taught, (here- English) have increased significantly, in a consequence leading to better results. The third finding is that both teachers and students perceive positive teacher language as important especially to influence pupils' behavior as well the attitude towards the subject being taught and improve the relationship between teachers and pupils whereas in their opinion the negative talk is mainly the source of pupils' discouragement.

The study also concluded that in spite of showing a tendency to use a rather positive language, still many teachers do use negative talk, supposedly not being aware of it. What could be observed as well is that teachers participating in the survey mostly positively view their own teacher talk. As far the pupils are concerned, there were significant differences among their perception of teacher talk at their school. There is a high probability that this is connected with their personal experiences. Nonetheless, it can be assumed that teacher negative talk is present at sample pupils' school.

Taken together, the study emphasizes that teachers should use positive language in order to enhance the motivation and discipline of pupils and consequently their school achievements.
4.3. Conclusions and suggestions

“It is much easier to destroy than to build. Teachers work with young people, and they are fragile works-in-progress. A rash or unfeeling word can undo so much of the trust and growth that we strive for.”

(Brown, 2012)

The purpose of my study was to investigate the effects of teacher's positive talk on students; their school results and behavior. I have found that the topic of positive language was mentioned in many books, articles and works. I decided to examine how it relates to real life, to the school where I work, pupils I teach and to teachers I know (as well as those I do not). After having conducted the research I came to the following conclusions: Teachers always need to pay attention to what they say and bear in mind that some words can be simply destructive. Since learning is as much affective as it is cognitive, teachers words can affect change not only in pupils attitude towards the subject being taught but affect eternity. On the premises that both teachers and students are of the opinion that teacher talk impacts students' behavior, it can be concluded that if teachers expect positive behavior from the pupils, they simply should use positive language.

Taken together, the findings are quite promising. I strongly believe this research enhanced the current understanding of the importance of teacher talk and the fact that teachers' positive way of addressing pupils, treating them with respect and caring attitude, offering positive reinforcement, being consistent, smiling, and listening to their concerns significantly helps establish good relationships with them and that minimizes classroom disruptions, increases student engagement and most importantly boosts their achievements.

With this in mind, I wish teachers were more careful with what they say each day because as matter of fact, teachers do use negative talk and very often they are not aware of it. They seem to forget that so much depends on them, especially on their language. Teachers should facilitate learning, care for good relationship between them and pupils.

My recommendations are that there should be organized special training programs for teachers concerning positive teacher language. I also strongly believe that the topic should become a part of curricula for future teaches since learning how to talk to students is critical. (Collegefinder.org, 2013).

Nonetheless, personally, for me as teacher, this dissertation is a call to action and I am convinced that I want to make teacher language a focus for my own continuing professional development.

Last, but not last, there is a famous quote by Henry Adams, where he states that A teacher affects eternity; he can never tell where his influence stops. (Adams, 1931) It is widely used as an inspirational message and can be often seen in all kinds of note cards, posters or gifts for teachers. It is because the quote is usually associated with something positive. The ironic fact is however that Henry Adams wrote this sentence to actually describe damaging influence of bad system of education and teachers at Harvard of his times. Adams was worried by that. The story behind that saying only underlines its true value. It should serve as a warning. Teacher’s influence on pupils’ lives can be negative. Yet the quote is most often used as a positive maxim. Let it be so. Let us teachers affect eternity in a positive way.
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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Researcher's teacher talk self-evaluation sheet.

The list of statements included in this self-evaluation is created on the basis of the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 of the current work.

1 – signifies that the statement is not true for the researcher as a teacher
2 – signifies that the statement is true for the researcher as a teacher with a very low degree
4 – signifies that the statement is true for the researcher as a teacher to the average degree
7 – signifies that the statement is true for the researcher as a teacher to the highest degree
The remaining numbers signifies intermedia degree.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>POSITIVE Attitude and LANGUAGE</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Hardly ever</th>
<th>sometimes</th>
<th>usually</th>
<th>often</th>
<th>Very often</th>
<th>always</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>I assume different roles as a teacher and I can make a smooth transition from one role to another within a lesson when needed</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>I am aware of my pupils’ different learning styles and I select teaching methods that cater to all categories of learners in my classes.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>I use quality teaching practice that emphasizes retention and recall according to the principles of cognitivism</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>I build up learners positive attitudes towards my subject</td>
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### Appendix B

**6th grade tests’ results**

April 2015

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April 2016

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Appendix C

STUDENT SURVEY

Privacy Notice

I am a student at the University of Rzeszów I am conducting a research concerning the importance of teacher talk in teaching and this survey is designed accordingly. Every detail you provide here will be kept confidential. This survey’s aim is to examine the quality of communication between teachers and students. By testing the language of teachers in interaction with students we want to diagnose students expectations concerning teachers words as well as all the obstacles that undermine the communication in the classroom.

Please answer the following questions as accurately and honestly as possible since it will be very helpful for my research as well as for my work as your teacher.

This survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

1. Name of Your School: ______________________________

2. Your Gender? Male   Female   (Circle one)

3. Age:______

Part Take your time and think carefully about each of the following statements. With each statement, show how often it applies to you by filling in one of the circles to its right. Try to give an answer to every statement.

To answer these questions, tick the correct box in each line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Don't know</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Mostly</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
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<td>2. I get good marks</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. My teachers praise me when I do something well.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. My teachers encourage me to work hard.</td>
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<td>5. I feel motivated to do my best in class.</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. My teachers are interested in what I say</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
7. My teachers in my school show respect for students.
8. I can talk to my teachers about my problems.
9. My teachers use clear and understandable language.
10. I like talking to my teachers.
11. My teachers are friendly to me.
12. My teachers smile to me.
13. My teachers use humor in the classroom.
14. I feel nervous when I talk to my teachers.
15. My teachers patronize me.
16. My teachers get angry at me.
17. My teachers raise their voice or shout at me.
18. I feel humiliated by my teachers.

Part two: answer briefly

1. What do your teachers tell you or your colleagues if you happen to disturb the lesson?
   ..................................................................................................................................................
   ..................................................................................................................................................

2. What do your teachers tell you or your colleagues if your response is wrong?
   ..................................................................................................................................................
   ..................................................................................................................................................

3. What do your teachers tell you or your colleagues if your response is right?
   ..................................................................................................................................................
   ..................................................................................................................................................

4. What do your teachers tell you or your colleagues if you have not done your homework or come to a lesson unprepared?
   ..................................................................................................................................................
   ..................................................................................................................................................

5. Did your talk with teachers led you to change some not too good behavior?
   a) Yes   b) No
*If yes, please describe this situation and what the teacher told you that you decided to improve.

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

6. Was there an unpleasant situation you experience in contact with a teacher?
   a) Yes  b) No

   * If yes, what was it? please describe briefly this situation

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Part three

Choose most important answers

1. Teacher’s talk helps...
   □ maintain discipline.
   □ boost students’ positive behavior.
   □ boost students’ confidence.
   □ establish positive relationship between students and the teacher.

2. Teacher’s negative language is a source of…
   □ discouragement
   □ bad behavior during lessons
   □ bad grades
   □ skipping classes

3. Teacher positive talk influences...
   □ attitude towards subject being taught
   □ attitude to homework
   □ students’ results
   □ students’ behavior

Would you like to add any comments?

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Thank you very much for cooperation.
### Appendix D

# Student Survey Polish version

## Table 1: Questions About School Life

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Liked</th>
<th>Overwhelmed</th>
<th>Smiling</th>
<th>Angry</th>
<th>Sad</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Like being in school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Don't like being in school.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Like the school's location.</td>
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<td>Don't like the school's location.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Like the school's atmosphere.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Don't like the school's atmosphere.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Like the school's facilities.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
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## Table 2: Questions About Classmates

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<td>Don't like having a good time in class.</td>
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<td>Like being in class.</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Don't like being in class.</td>
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<td>Like the teacher.</td>
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## Table 3: Questions About Subjects

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## Table 4: Questions About Personal Life

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## Table 8: Questions About Teamwork

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<td>Like working as a team.</td>
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<td>Don't like working as a team.</td>
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## Table 9: Questions About Social Media

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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70.</td>
<td>Don't like using social media.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71.</td>
<td>Like having good time using social media.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>72.</td>
<td>Don't like having good time using social media.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>73.</td>
<td>Like being with friends using social media.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>74.</td>
<td>Don't like being with friends using social media.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>75.</td>
<td>Like having a good time being with friends using social media.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76.</td>
<td>Don't like having a good time being with friends using social media.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Table 10: Questions About Entertainment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Liked</th>
<th>Overwhelmed</th>
<th>Smiling</th>
<th>Angry</th>
<th>Sad</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>77.</td>
<td>Like watching movies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>78.</td>
<td>Don't like watching movies.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>79.</td>
<td>Like listening to music.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80.</td>
<td>Don't like listening to music.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>81.</td>
<td>Like playing video games.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>82.</td>
<td>Don't like playing video games.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83.</td>
<td>Like having good time playing video games.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>84.</td>
<td>Don't like having good time playing video games.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>85.</td>
<td>Like being with friends playing video games.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>86.</td>
<td>Don't like being with friends playing video games.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87.</td>
<td>Like having a good time being with friends playing video games.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>88.</td>
<td>Don't like having a good time being with friends playing video games.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Część treść 

wybór odpowiedzi która najlepiej pasuje (nie musi być jedna) 

1. Odpowiedź sposobu mówienia nauczyciela posag: 
   □ Uszacza apetytu 
   □ Poproszę o zmianę ucznia 
   □ Zwróć uwagę na dziecko 
   □ Zakończ rozmowę na lekcji 
   □ Zobacz swoją sierść 
   □ Ostrzeż się dżdża 

2. „Naprawdę” sposobu mówienia nauczyciela jest dla ucznia ból: 
   □ Zdechania doznaki 
   □ Zakończenia rozmowy 
   □ Złożenia żalu 
   □ Zmiany zdrowia 
   □ Ostrzeżenia przed dżdżem 

3. „Prawdy” sposobu mówienia nauczyciela wpływa mi: 
   □ Podjęcie ucznia do drugiego przedmiotu 
   □ Podjęcie ucznia do drugiej dzienności 
   □ Oznaczenie ucznia 
   □ Zmiana wiedzy na lekcji 

Czy chciałbyś/ślátnych dostarczyć jakieś komentarze? 

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Appendix E

TEACHER SURVEY

Privacy Notice
I am a student at the University of Rzeszów I am conducting a research concerning the importance of teacher talk in teaching and this survey is designed accordingly. Every detail you provide here will be kept confidential. This survey’s aim is to examine the quality of communication between teachers and students. By testing the language of teachers in interaction with students we want to diagnose students expectations concerning teachers words as well as all the obstacles that undermine the communication in the classroom.
Please answer the following questions as accurately and honestly as possible since it will be very helpful for my research.

This survey should take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete.

1. Type of school you work in: _____________________________

2. Your Gender? Male Female (Circle one)

3. Age:_______

Part one
Take your time and think carefully about each of the following statements. With each statement, show how often it applies to you by filling in one of the circles to its right. Try to give an answer to every statement.

To answer these questions, tick the correct box in each line

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Mostly</th>
<th>Occasion-ally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I show respect for my students.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I praise my students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I encourage my students to work hard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I motivate my students to do their best in class.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Everyone in my class is treated fairly.
7. I am friendly to my students.
8. I take a personal interest in each student.
9. I care if my students are not doing as well as they should.
10. I smile at my students.
11. I resort to humor in the classroom.
12. I can tell the difference between humor and sarcasm.
13. My language is clear and understandable to students.
14. Students talk to me about their problems.
15. I feel frustrated at work and show it to my students.
16. I patronize my students.
17. I raise my voice at my students.
18. I show impatience to my students if they misbehave.

Part two: Answer briefly

1. What in your opinion is blocking the communication between teachers and students?
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………

2. What do you usually tell your students if they happen to disturb the lesson?
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………

3. What do you usually tell your students if their response is wrong?
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………

4. What do you usually tell your students if their response is right?
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
   ……………………………………………………………………………………………
5. What do you tell your students if they have not done their homework or come to a lesson unprepared?

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

6. How do you motivate your students to work harder, what words do you use?

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

7. What average results do your students get from your subject?

If their grades are low, what do you think are the reasons?

........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................
........................................................................................................................................

Part three: Put a tick next to the phrases that you happen to use:

1. “You are so talented, this is easy for you.”
2. “Why can’t you act like __________?”
3. “You are so lazy!”
4. “Another bad grade!”
5. ”I know this may seem pointless but we have to get through it…”
6. “Shut up!”
7. “Because I am the adult, and I am in charge.”
8. “You don’t get to question me.”
9. “You would do better if only…”
10. “I am done with this.”
11. The other class did well with this. What’s wrong with you guys?”
12. “You will never be able to __________ “
13. “What did I just tell you?”
15. “That’s not a good excuse.”

Part four: Choose most important answers:

Teacher’s talk helps...

☐ maintain discipline.
☐ boost students’ self-esteem
- boost students’ confidence.
- establish positive relationship between students and the teacher.
- recognize students feeling, emotions, attitude.
- improve communication with students

Teacher’s negative language is a source of…
- embarrassment
- disappointment
- discouragement
- resignation
- bad grades
- skipping classes

Teachers positive talk influences…
- attitude towards subject being taught
- attitude to homework
- students’ results
- students’ behavior

Would you like to add any comments?

Thank you very much for cooperation.
Appendix F

Students’ survey’s results, part 1

The table presents the results converted into percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Mostly</th>
<th>Occasion-ally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like being at school</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>41.20%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I get good marks</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>52.30%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My teachers praise me when I do something well.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>41.20%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>29.40%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My teachers encourage me to work hard.</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>47.00%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I feel motivated to do my best in class.</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>29.40%</td>
<td>29.40%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. My teachers are interested in what I say.</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Teachers in my school show respect for students.</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>29.40%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I can talk to my teachers about my problems.</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>35.30%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>41.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. My teachers use clear and understandable language</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>47.10%</td>
<td>29.40%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I like talking to my teachers.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>35.30%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. My teachers are friendly to me.</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>47.10%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. My teachers smile to me.</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>35.30%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. My teachers use humor in the classroom.</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>35.30%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. I feel nervous when I talk to my teachers.</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>35.30%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. My teachers patronize me.</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>41.20%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. My teachers get angry at me.</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>52.30%</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. My teachers rise their voice or shout at me.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>41.20%</td>
<td>29.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I feel humiliated by my teachers.</td>
<td>23.50%</td>
<td>17.60%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11.80%</td>
<td>47.10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix G

Students’ survey’s results, part 3

**TEACHER'S TALK HELPS TO**

- Maintain discipline: 9
- Boost students’ positive behavior: 11
- Boost students’ confidence: 4
- Establish positive relationship between students and the teacher: 9

**TEACHER’S NEGATIVE LANGUAGE IS A SOURCE OF**

- Discouragement: 9
- Bad behavior during lessons: 11
- Bad grades: 8
- Skipping classes: 8

**TEACHER'S POSITIVE TALK INFLUENCES**

- Attitude to subject being taught: 13
- Attitude to homework: 6
- Pupils' grades: 5
- Pupils' behavior during lessons: 12
Appendix H

Teachers’ survey’s results, part 1

The table presents the results converted into percentages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Don’t know</th>
<th>Always</th>
<th>Mostly</th>
<th>Occasionally</th>
<th>Rarely</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I like teaching.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>61,10%</td>
<td>38,90%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I show respect for my students.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>72,20%</td>
<td>27,80%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I praise my students.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>27,80%</td>
<td>72,20%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I encourage my students to work hard.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>55,50%</td>
<td>38,90%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I motivate my students to do their best in class.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>55,50%</td>
<td>38,90%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Everyone in my class is treated fairly.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>72,20%</td>
<td>55,50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I am friendly to my students.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>38,90%</td>
<td>55,50%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. I take a personal interest in each student.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>55,50%</td>
<td>33,30%</td>
<td>11,10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. I care if my students are not doing as well as they should.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>55,50%</td>
<td>38,90%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. I smile at my students.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>27,80%</td>
<td>66,60%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. I resort to humor in the classroom.</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>16,60%</td>
<td>50,00%</td>
<td>27,80%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. I can tell the difference between humor and sarcasm.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>44,40%</td>
<td>50,00%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. My language is clear and understandable to students.</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>44,40%</td>
<td>44,40%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Students talk to me about their problems.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>33,30%</td>
<td>61,10%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. I feel frustrated at work and show it to my students.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>11,10%</td>
<td>44,40%</td>
<td>44,40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. I patronize my students.</td>
<td>11,10%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>27,80%</td>
<td>22,20%</td>
<td>22,20%</td>
<td>11,10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. I rise my voice at my students.</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>38,90%</td>
<td>38,90%</td>
<td>16,60%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. I show impatience to my students if they misbehave.</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>5,50%</td>
<td>11,10%</td>
<td>33,30%</td>
<td>27,80%</td>
<td>16,60%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix I

Teachers’ survey’s results, part 3

Teacher’s talk helps to

- improve communication with students
- recognize students’ feelings, emotions, attitude
- establish positive relationship between...
- boost students’ confidence
- boost students’ self-esteem
- maintain discipline

Teacher’s negative language is a source of

- skipping classes
- bad grades
- resignation
- discouragement
- disappointment
- embarassment

Teachers positive talk influences

- students’ behavior
- students’ results
- attitude to homework
- attitude towards subject being taught
Appendix J

Index of Learning Styles translated into Polish for pupils:

English version available online: https://www.engr.ncsu.edu/learningstyles/ilsweb.html
26. Gdy czytam książkę, lubię gdy pisarze
(A) jasno określają co chcą powiedzieć.
(B) mówią o rzeczach w sposób twórczy, kreatywny.
27. Kiedy widzę w szkole schemat lub wykres najczęściej zapamiętuję
(A) jego wygląd
(B) to, co nauczyłem módl na ten temat.
28. Myslę o danej informacji, najczęściej
(A) skupiam się na szczegółach, nie na całości;
(B) staram się zrozumieć całość, podkreśla szczegóły.
29. Najlepszym pamiętaniem,
(A) coś, co zrobiłem/łam
(B) coś o czym dużo myślałem/łam.
30. Kiedy trzeba wykonać zadanie, wolę
(A) opierać jeden sposób na jego wykonaniu.
(B) próbować różnych sposobów.
31. Kiedy ktoś pokazuje mi dane, wolę
(A) wykresy i tabelki.
(B) teksty, podsumowujące wyniki.
32. Podczas pisania pracy pisze najlepiej
(A) oczekuję od początku do końca (chronologicznie)
(B) piszę różne części a potem układam je w kolejności.
33. Kiedy trzeba pracować nad projektem grupowym, lubię gdy
(A) najpierw jest "burza mózgow" - każdy podaje swoje pomysły,
(B) każdy robi buźkę naszymu zdaniu, a następnie porównuje się pomysły.
34. Uważam, że lepiej być uznawany/uznaną za
(A) osobę rozsądna.
(B) osobę z wyobraźnią.
35. Kiedy spotykam nowych ludzi najczęściej zapamiętuję
(A) jak wygląda.
(B) co mówi o sobie.
36. Kiedy uczę się nowego materiału tematu, wolę
(A) skupiać się na tym temacie i nauczyć się jak największej potrąść.
(B) próbować znaleźć powiązania między tym tematem a podobnymi
znanymi mi już tematami.
37. Jestem bardziej uznawany/a za osobę
(A) otwartą
(B) skrytą.
38. Wolę lekcję, na których są
(A) konkretne tematy (fakty, dane).
(B) abstrakcyjne tematy (koncepcje, teorie).
39. Dla rozrywki, wolę
(A) oglądanie telewizji.
(B) czytanie książki.
40. Niektórzy nauczyli mnie na początku lekcji przedstawiają krótko czego będzie dana lekcja dotyczyć. Takie podejście jest
(A) w pewnym stopniu przydatne do mnie.
(B) bardzo pomocne dla mnie.
41. Pomyśl odrabiania lekcji w grupach, z jedną oceną dla całej grupy
(A) podoba mi się
(B) nie podoba mi się.
42. Gdy robimy długie obliczenia
(A) staram się powtarzać wszystkie kroki i sprawdzić stosownie obliczenia.
(B) uważam sprawdzanie mojej pracy za niezbędne i muszę zmieścić się, aby to zrobić.
43. Zazwyczaj wyobrażam sobie miejsca w których byłem/byłam
(A) łatwo i dość dokładnie.
(B) z trudem i bez większych szczegółów.
44. Podczas rozmawiając problemów związanych z grupą, bardziej
(A) myślę o etapach prowadzonych do rozwiązania.
(B) myślę o możliwych konsekwencjach/ zastosowaniach tych rozwiązań w szerokim zakresie dziedzin.
Styl Intuicyjny (INT)
uczący się w sposób intuicyjny preferują informacje teoretyczne i pragną zrozumieć, kryjąc się za nimi znaczenie.

Styl Słowny (WR)
uczający się w sposób słowny preferują opis, analizę i cięcie, podkreślające twórczość, zaawansowane techniki, metody i strategie.

Styl Sensoryczny (SEN)
uczący się w sposób sensoryczny preferują odczuwanie, zadanie, rytm, kompozycję, muzykę, teatr, kultury, sztuki plastyczne, zainteresowanie zewnętrzne.

Czasy wymiany stylew uczenia się według Feldera i Silverman

Styl aktynyw (ACT)
uczność aktynywna polega na aktywnym podejściu ucznia, wzbudzaniu jego zainteresowania tematem i prowadzonym przez ucznia podejściu. Uczność aktynywna polega na aktywnym podejściu ucznia, wzbudzaniu jego zainteresowania tematem i prowadzonym przez ucznia podejściu.
Appendix K

6th Grade Mock Test (first)

The other mock test is similar to this, so is the real one, available online at https://cke.edu.pl/images/_SPRAWDZIAN/OD_2014/Arkusze-egzaminacyjne/2016_spr/cze2/SA-1X-162k.pdf
Zadanie 3. (B–G)
Uzupełnij dwukrotnie dialog. Na podstawie informacji w nim zawartych dopisz do każdej osoby (3.1–3.4.) właściwe postać przedstawioną na obrazku (A–E). Wybierz odpowiednią literę w kratce obok każdej osoby.

Uruchom jedna postać na obrazku jest przedstawiona dodatkowo.

3.1. Fred
3.2. Peter
3.3. Luke
3.4. Martin

Zadanie 4. (B–G)
Uzupełnij dwukrotnie pięć tekstów. Na podstawie informacji zawartych w nagrania w zadaniach 4.1.–4.5. z podanych odpowiedzi wybierz właściwą. Wybierz znak X w kratkę obok odpowiedzi A, B lub C.

4.4. Co Dave chciałby dostać na urazdzie?

A. [ ]
B. [ ]
C. [ ]
7.2. The boy is
A. fishing,  
B. sleeping,  
C. reading.  

7.3. The dog is sitting
A. in the tent,  
B. behind the tent,  
C. in front of the tent.  

PRZENIESIĘ ROZWIĄZANIA NA KARTĘ ODPOWIEDZI

Zadanie 9. (9–10)

Wybierz: A. dog, B. when, C. such, D. doesn’t, E. tomorrow, F. yesterday

Message
From: tim.kiran@gmail.com
To: cindy@pobox.com
Subject: Shopping

Hi Cindy,
I'm going shopping with my sister A. ______ I think we'll go after school. We B. ______ going to buy some clothes. I need a summer C. ______ and new jeans. Would you like to go with me?
Love,
Tim

PRZENIESIĘ ROZWIĄZANIA NA KARTĘ ODPOWIEDZI

Data pytań:  
Pete odpowiedzi:  
Z którego tekstu Pete dowiedział się o tym?

1. Do you know how much a kite is?
   Yes, I do.  
   9.1

2. Do you know how to save some money when preparing for the International Day?
   Yes, I do.  
   9.2

3. Do you know when we wear kilts?
   Yes, I do.  
   9.3

4. Do you know when you’ll make posters for the International Day?
   Yes, I do.  
   9.4
10.2. Who prepared the meal for the planet?

A. 

B. 

C. 

10.3. What kind of ice cream does Alice always have?

A. 

B. 

C. 

10.4. What prize did the winner of the race get last year?

A. 

B. 

C. 

---

11.1. He started playing when he was very young. He didn’t go to film school, but he has real talent and he’s very handsome. He likes him a lot and I have seen almost all his films.

This text is about: 

11.2. I love this place. I know it’s strange but I like it much more than the cinema. When I buy tickets I always choose seats close to the stage to see the actors better.

This text is about: 

---

PrzeKon Rownania Na Karte OdPowiedzi

KOD

Imię i Nazwisko:

Karta OdPowiedzi

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STRESZCZENIE

Głównym zadaniem szkoły jest wspomaganie rozwoju uczniów oraz danie im podstaw do odniesienia sukcesów w przyszłości. Jednym z najistotniejszych czynników odgrywających tu znaczącą rolę jest sposób w jaki nauczyciele odnoszą się do uczniów. Zatem celem niniejszej pracy jest zbadanie wpływu jaki pozytywny język używany przez nauczyciela, taki jak miedzy innymi efektywna pochwała, przekierowanie, wzmocnienie, przypomnienie i konfirmacja, jak również właściwy humor czy ton głosu, wywiera na motywację, uczniów, ich dyscyplinę, zainteresowanie nauczanym przedmiotem i w konsekwencji szkolne osiągniecia. Na tej podstawie w pracy sformułowano następujące pytania badawcze: *Jaki jest wpływ pozytywnego sposobu mówienia nauczyciela na rezultaty i zachowanie uczniów? Czy nauczyciele używają pozytywnego języka w szkole? Ponadto: Jak polscy nauczyciele i uczniowie na ogół postrzegają znaczenie sposobu mówienia nauczycieli? A także: Czy jest wystarczająco dużo istotnej literatury na ten temat?* By odpowiedzieć na te pytania, autorka pracy skupia się głównie na studiowaniu istotnej literatury i uzyskaniu danych z quasi- eksperymentu przy użyciu pozytywnego języka, jak również na sondażach dla nauczycieli i uczniów mających za cel zbadanie w jaki sposób pozytywny język używany przez nauczyciela wpływa na uczniów. Niniejsza praca przedstawia słowa nauczyciela jako potężne narzędzie, które w połączeniu z zachetą, pochwałą i humorem, ułatwia naukę, sprawia, że uczniowie wierzą w swoje możliwości, redukuje stres, wzmacnia pozytywne zachowania uczniów, oraz pomaga im wykorzystać swój potencjał. Co więcej, dotyczy to również nabywania przez uczniów umiejętności społecznych. Autorka pragnie, by praca ta okazała się pomocna i inspirowała nauczycieli do wydobywania ze swoich uczniów tego co najlepsze.

*Słowa kluczowe:* nauczyciel, uczniowie, słowa, pozytywny, mowa, język, motywacja, afektywny, wzmocnić, potęga, stopnie, zachowanie