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## Abstract

Through this study, we set out to find out what teachers can do to be effective and to generate positive learning experiences for all students. The main research question from which our study started was related to the actions that teachers can take to strengthen their relationship with students and to design and carry out relevant and authentic teaching and learning activities. We were also interested in determining which of the educational activities where members of the community were invited were real and unforgettable learning opportunities for the students. An important aspect for optimizing the activities of the teacher is related to the ability to ask for feedback. The feedback received from students is a useful tool through which the quality of the teaching-learning-assessment process increases considerably.

### Keywords:

Interactive learning; Teacher competencies; Feedback; Teacher-student Relationship.

## Zusammenfassung

Mit dieser Studie wollten wir herausfinden, was Lehrer tun können, um effektiv zu sein und positive Lernerfahrungen für alle Schüler zu generieren. Die Hauptforschungsfrage, von der unsere Studie ausging, bezog sich auf die Maßnahmen, die Lehrer ergreifen können, um ihre Beziehung zu Schülern zu stärken und relevante und authentische Lehr- und Lernaktivitäten zu entwerfen und durchzuführen. Wir waren auch daran interessiert zu erfahren, welche der Bildungsaktivitäten, zu denen Mitglieder der Gemeinschaft eingeladen wurden, echte und unvergessliche Lernmöglichkeiten für die Schüler waren. Ein wichtiger Aspekt zur Optimierung der Aktivitäten des Lehrers hängt mit der Fähigkeit zusammen, Feedback zu erbitten. Das Feedback der Studierenden ist ein nützliches Instrument, durch das die Qualität des Lehr-Lern-Bewertungsprozesses erheblich gesteigert wird.

### Schlüsselworte:

Interaktives Lernen; Lehrerkompetenzen; Feedback; Lehrer-Schüler-Beziehung.

## 1. Introduction

Teachers are the most important educational agents. Teaching skills, the teacher's emotional estate, their feelings, and the work atmosphere in the classroom are some of the factors that ensure the efficiency of teaching activities. The current pedagogical tendencies are related to the development of the social and emotional skills of the pupils. The action of evaluating the efficiency of teaching activities, from multiple perspectives, is extremely important. The feedback received from other colleagues or pupils is a helpful instrument to improve the teachers' activity.

## 2. Theoretical foundation

"Teaching competence refers to the ability of teachers to carry out theoretical, practical or integrated instruction in the implementation of their teaching duties successfully. Teachers have to be able to determine learning objectives and teaching content on the basis of considering individual properties of

vocational learners (e.g. their existing background, their social/ family/ personal characteristics, their needs etc.), as well as on the basis of the philosophy of education and training, the curricula and the corresponding link with the real work processes." (Diep & Hartmann, 2016, p. 17). Each teacher should create a stimulating educational environment and a positive work atmosphere. "We also suggest that workplace-based, collaborative reflections on own practice, including cross-collegiate observations and guidance, may represent a valuable tool for practitioners on which they could capitalize" (Bubikova-Moan, Hanne Næss, and Wollscheid, 2019, p. 17). Not only the way the teaching activity is done and the students' grading is important. The teacher's enthusiasm for the teaching activity, an open attitude towards the students, and the sense of humor are some of the important characteristics of the teachers (Stan & Manea, 2014). Anitha & Krishnaveni (2013, p. 13) mentioned that according to Albee and

Piveral (2003) some of the characteristics of an effective teacher are: "interest and enthusiasm in their subject and students, respect for all students, concern about student learning, fairness and sympathy toward students, and others that are associated with learner-centered teachers".

Game-based learning has positive effects on students' cognitive, emotional and social development (Mitton & Murray-Orr, 2022). For preschoolers or primary school students, teachers should frequently initiate teaching games and learning should take place in a relaxing and fun environment (Martle, Stephen, & Ellis, 2011; Pyle & Danniels, 2016). The way teachers are seen by students is influenced both by the personality of the teacher, and also by contextual factors (der Heijden, Beijaard, Geldens, & Popeijus, 2018).

### 3. Research methodology

Data were collected through a questionnaire survey. 431 students (aged 6 to 19) from an educational unit in Cluj county filled in a short questionnaire consisting of 3 questions, through which

we set out to find out what teachers can do to make students truly happy in school (see Appendix A). The students were asked to briefly describe the most beautiful day of school, a nice gesture that a teacher made towards them, and an activity in which community members were invited and in which they gladly participated. Through this study, we set out to find the answer to the question, "What can teachers do to become memorable to their students?"

### 4. Results

The answers of the students were very varied. Most students fondly remember the first or last days of school, celebrations, trips, or lessons where they were appreciated or received high marks. Students understand the efforts that teachers make in order to educate them, to design interesting lessons for them, and are very grateful for their support.

We have carefully analyzed the students' answers and, based on them, we have formulated some recommendations that teachers can use to improve their relationship with the students, to increase the quality of their teaching activities, and also to become unforgettable teachers for their students (see Table 1).

Table 1. Strategies to become an effective teacher

Recommendations for becoming a memorable teacher, based on children's opinion	Students' statements
Organize outdoor lessons whenever possible!	"An ideal school day is a day when we have interactive outdoor classes and we do sports and sports activities with the class." "Yesterday I liked it when we spent our Romanian lesson outdoors, to connect with nature. The outing was truly unforgettable and full of adrenaline, but also suspense." "The teacher showed us some team games. That day, I befriended my best friend."
Give your students a chance to increase their grades or extra time to prepare for a test!	"It's an unforgettable gesture that has given us extra time to prepare for a more difficult test." "I think a nice gesture that the teachers made was to give me a second chance." "Although I cut a correct calculation in the test, the teacher gave me the maximum score." "The teacher did not pass the grade in the catalog and gave me a second chance." "It gives us extra points if we're active, which we can use to increase our test score." "A nice gesture that a teacher made for me is when I took a low grade in a subject and it gave me a second chance to take the test, and this time I took a higher grade because I learned a lot".
Work after class with students who need extra training! They will not forget your effort!	"I appreciate my teacher for all the passion she puts into her work and for how much she tries to prepare us." "The teacher stayed after classes to help me understand and know better about math."

- "I did some extra exercises for the Olympics. I really appreciated that the teacher stayed overtime in school with me to prepare me extra. "
- Be understanding, friendly and empathetic! "My former religion teacher is the most beautiful thing I've ever had. She made the most beautiful gestures and always understood me ".  
I am very grateful to the teacher because she is our friend first and then our teacher ".  
"The most beautiful gesture was when the math teacher took me in his arms in the fourth grade."  
"The religion teacher teaches us a lot of new things and she always comes to class happy."
- Make sure every student is well before the lesson begins! "She was an excellent teacher and she always thought about our feelings, not only about the knowledge we have about the Romanian language and literature. She just made a gesture: it made my last year of high school more beautiful. "  
"The French teacher never judged me and is always with us when we are not well. It always brightens my day, either with a nice gesture or with her voice ".  
"I would like to thank the history teacher for her patience with each of us, and I consider the headmaster to be my second father because he was with me when I needed him, even if he wasn't connected to school."  
"Being more emotional, the teachers encouraged me and trusted me more than I did. I feel like I can talk to anyone with the math teacher. He is my colleague and friend, not my teacher. "
- Help them and listen to them more! Give them a chance to talk about the issues they face! "A beautiful gesture that a teacher made for me was to aspire to do something that I did not think I would succeed. If that teacher hadn't spoken to me, I wouldn't have accomplished what I set out to do. "
- Always give positive feedback! "I like it when some teachers praise me when I do something or when I did well on a test, it makes me feel good and motivates me to do the same."  
"Every time a teacher congratulates me, I feel good."
- Give students the opportunity to cooperate or carry out group projects as often as possible! "In my opinion, a beautiful school day means understanding. It is important to communicate, to understand each other, to unite and to help each other with whatever is needed. One day when I felt really happy was when my class and I were supported to come together and work in teams. "  
"The school days that I consider unforgettable and in which I felt happy were the days when I did activities with my colleagues and we had fun, being productive at the same time."  
"It was a day when we were all integrated, we were a group of friends, not colleagues."
- Organize volunteer activities! "A school day when I felt happy was a day full of harmony between classmates, seriousness and fun games on the break."  
"I had an unforgettable day when I made greeting cards for those in Ukraine when I felt very good and I was very happy."  
"Making and selling greeting cards for Ukraine was a great and fun activity. We felt very good knowing that the money is being raised for a charity project. "  
"We made globes, stars and tinsel, which we put on some Christmas trees, which we gave to some elderly people. Many people from the community attended the event. "
- Encourage collaboration between students from one or more classes! "I felt happy the day I went to the other class and we played together."  
"The best day of school was when I made two good friends in the other class."  
"I love collaborations between classes. I like those sports classes in which students from several classes collaborate and play different games together "
- Invite people from outside the school! "I like the moments when people come to present us with faculties because it helps us all to focus on a career and a better future."

	"One activity that I took part in and that I enjoyed was the meeting with the priest of the city who helped us to perceive life and school differently."
	"I really enjoyed it when my parents and my classmates came to school to tell us about their jobs."
	"It was a beautiful day when my father, who is a painter, came to school."
	In the third grade, a doctor, the mother of a colleague, came to tell us what we can eat and what not. I enjoyed learning how to eat healthily. "
Organize fun and relaxing activities!	"An unforgettable day is a day when you feel better about yourself, you are full of energy and you want to interact with your loved ones. Those are the days when we, as well as the teachers, are in a good mood and there is a much more pleasant collaboration between us. "
Mistakes are learning opportunities!	"It was very nice that the teacher was thinking about us and brought us sweets."
Make a pleasant surprise for your students!	"The most beautiful gesture was when the teacher gave us sweets."
	Even though we have grown up and we are no longer in her class, the teacher brings us sweets, tells us words of encouragement and she still has our pictures in the classroom "
Organize celebrations or excursions!	"We miss trips!"
	"The celebration was a special activity, which was to my liking and attended by my parents."
	"In the first grade, when the end of the school year celebration took place, our parents and friends came to see us. It was an unforgettable day".

Students prefer outdoor activities and want them to be organized as often as possible. They also rejoice when teachers give them a second chance when they receive poor grades or receive extra time to prepare for a test. Some of the students mentioned that they appreciate the teachers who give them extra points, which they can use to increase their grades. In the opinion of students, mistakes should be seen as learning opportunities and it would be beneficial to create a stimulating environment in which students feel relaxed and happy.

Also, students who need additional training are very grateful to their teachers when they are offering them support and stay with them at the end of class.

Students want that their qualities to be highlighted and to have had a close relationship with their teachers. They want teachers to be concerned about their well-being. Therefore, the students mentioned that they appreciate the teachers who do not start the class until they make sure that all the students are well. They also need encouragement. Teachers should also listen to them and talk with them about their concerns or even problems. Most of the students appreciated the teachers who listened to them and encouraged them.

From the students' answers, it turned out that they are happy when they receive positive feedback. Students feel great when teachers praise them and remember with great joy when teachers praise or appreciate them. Other moments that students fondly remember are the days when people from outside are invited to school. Students enjoy the presence of their

parents in school so it is very important to invite them to activities. Thus, they have participated with pleasure in the activities in which members of the community were invited. They have mentioned people who work in various fields (for example, firefighters, policemen, chefs, writers, librarians, actors, athletes or coaches, older students to present their projects, members of Erasmus+ or eTwinning projects, visual artists, entrepreneurs, NGO employees, parents, priests, doctors, lawyers or judges, university graduates).

They are also happy when teachers surprise them. Both primary and secondary school students mentioned that an unforgettable gesture for them is when teachers bring them sweets.

Other contexts that make them happy are school celebrations or trips. The happiest school days for the students were the ones when they went on a trip or the ones when the parents participated in their celebrations. The results of this study are in line with another study conducted in the school year 2020-2021, through which we set out to identify the most beautiful activities organized by teachers for primary education. Thus, celebrations and excursions are moments that parents also remember with great pleasure (Marin & Bocoş, 2021).

## 5. Discussions

The sample of participants was low so the results obtained cannot be generalized, but they can be an

important point of reference in the organization of future teaching activities. The students' answers are in line with the latest pedagogical trends, in which the student is valued and great importance is given to interactive training. The study found that eighth- and 12th-grade graduates were in great need of teacher guidance regarding the path they should take in the future. Thus, it is important to have scientifically validated, easy-to-apply tools, including digital applications, to help teachers, school counselors or parents make the right choices, according to the most developed skills or according to the intelligences profile of the children. There is also a need for effective collaboration with higher education institutions and vocational counseling centers.

## 6. Conclusions

In order to become memorable teachers for the students, teachers need to make an effort to get to know them, discover their qualities, and discuss their concerns. The students consider to be unforgettable, the teachers who are very involved, who carry out their teaching activity with a lot of dedication. Teachers should encourage students to take steps to self-knowledge, to know each other, and to cultivate students' self-confidence in their own forces. Also, the differentiation and individualization of training are based on the analysis of the educational, intellectual, and emotional needs of the learner. Thus, both non-formal and informal activities are extremely important. The results of the research reveal the importance of good emotional management - essential in the management of intellectual and social activities. Emotional intelligence is considered a relevant predictor of students' success in school, to ensure their satisfaction and achievement, but also good social integration). Therefore, the results of this study revealed that the integrated modeling of emotional and cognitive intelligence is a current trend in the field of pedagogy extremely important. Given the importance that students place on interpersonal relationships (both

with students and with teachers), teachers' actions should be focused on developing their social skills, in order to achieve effective management of interpersonal relationships. The results of this study are useful to all teachers who work in pre-university education and want to improve their relationships with their students.

**Authors note:** The authors have equal contributions to this article.

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## Appendix A.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Class: \_\_\_\_\_

### Questionnaire for students

1. Describe in a few sentences a school day that you consider unforgettable, in which you felt really happy.
2. Indicate a nice gesture that one of your teachers made for you and that you can't forget.
3. Think of a special activity that has been to your liking and to which members of the community who work in various fields (for example, writers, parents, doctors, firefighters, police officers, etc.) have been invited. Mention who was invited, where the activity took place and why you really liked it.

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