# Positive classroom – before, during and after Covid-19

**Lucyna Wilinkiewicz-Górniak**

**Senior Lecturer of Business Communication and Business English**

**Languages Centre, Cracow University of Economics**

**lucyna.wilinkiewicz@gmail.com  wilinkil@uek.krakow.pl**

# MOTTO

"The school is changing its processes, some of its culture, and its programs, but the mission is the same.

We prepare our participants and our alumni throughout their lives to be leaders to whom we can entrust the future.

That mission, our mission, must - and will - continue."

*Maria de Fátima Carioca*

# TODAY'S SCHOOLS RAISE LEADERS FOR TOMORROW

„Today a reader tomorrow a leader."

*Margaret Fuller*

educational goals: knowledge, skills, social competences

diversity of learners

interaction

inclusive teaching / learning

effective classroom-management

KEYWORDS

areas to consider

change management

virtual classroom

roles
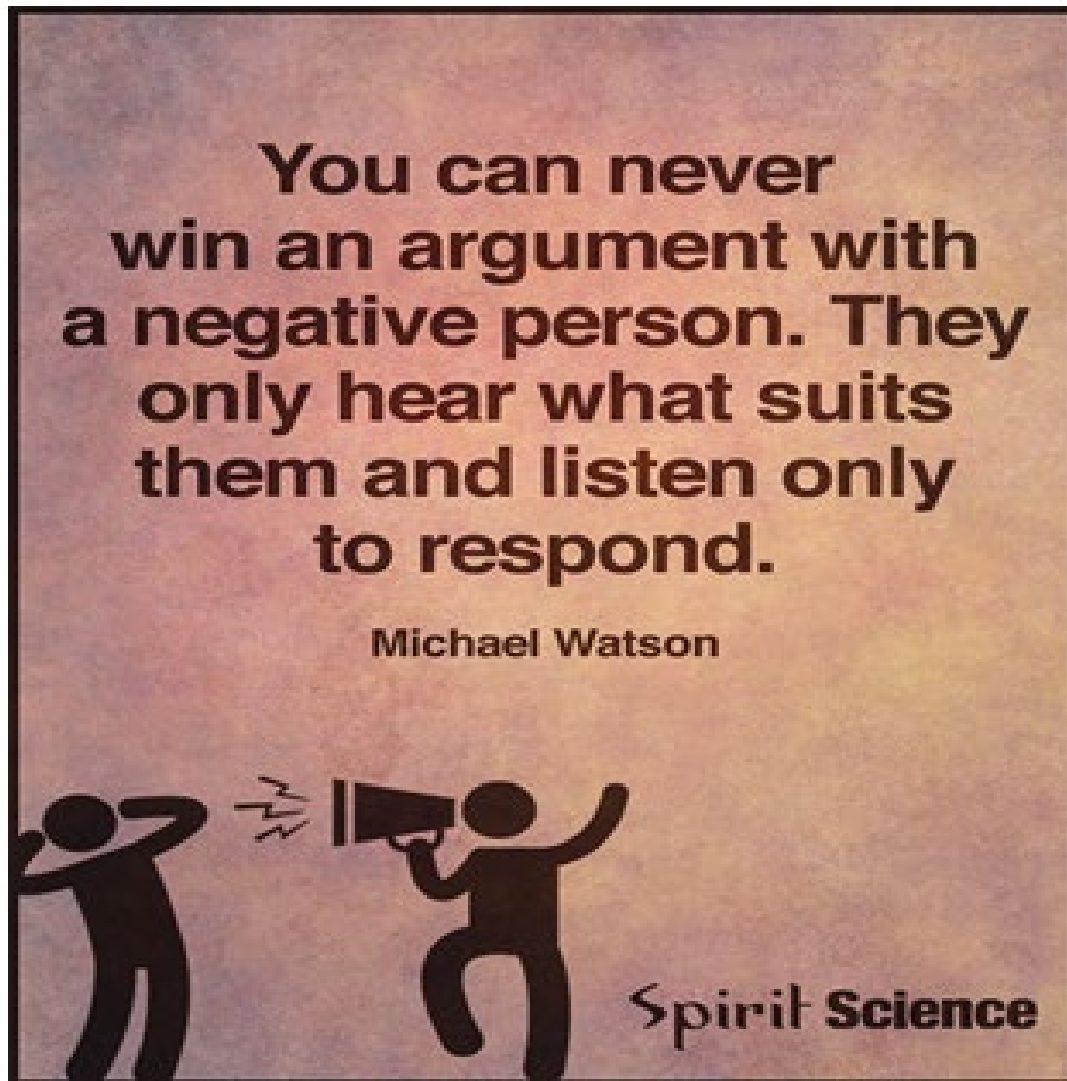
the virtual classroom as 'culture'

learning opportunities

new consensus

positive teaching

# Create a positive classroom culture

You can never win an argument with a negative person. They only hear what suits them and listen only to respond.

Michael Watson

Spirit Science

DO think and act positive !!!

LWG

# Positive classroom

- **no one definition**
- **Most educators agree that a positive classroom is…**
  - ➔ **…a learning/teaching environment wherein students feel comfortable enough to continue their educational process without any limitations.**

- **"In such a classroom students, with their potential, needs and expectations, are at the center of teacher's attention." LWG**

# Some characteristics of a positive classroom

**These characteristics are numerous, e.g.,**

► **inclusion**

► **ongoing communication with students**

► **clearly specified rules and expectations**

► **teacher's flexibility and readiness for change**

► **high quality of the teaching/learning process….. and?**

# My analysis:

- **analyzing these characteristics, I reflect on them from the perspective of the school/academic year.**

- **such an analysis - different elements for every teacher**

- **differences may occur depending on different educational contexts, etc.**

# Before we enter the classroom - 1

- ✓ **analyze** the previous semester/s
- ✓ **Enumerate the pros and cons**
- ✓ **draw conclusions,**
- ✓ **think about recommendations for the upcoming year.**

# Before we enter the classroom - 2

- ◆ **identify not only areas of improvement but good practices**

- ◆ **prepare a checklist of good practices and the relevant materials which we will be able to use in the next semesters.**

- ◆ **"Good practices" file - may include efficient teaching files, students' successfully completed tasks - "model versions" of the tasks we assign**

# Before we enter the classroom - 3
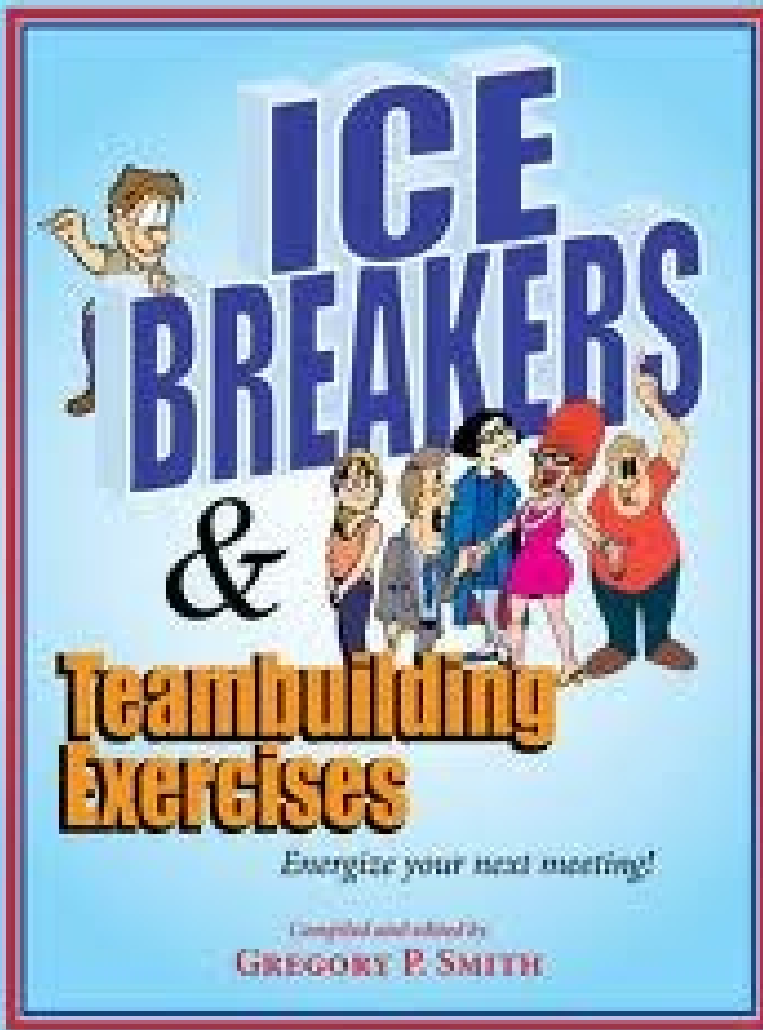
## Why good practices?

►**high motivational value for students with their "yes, you can also do it"**

## ATTENTION!

**Always ask students for their consent to use their work & remember that such authentic materials should be continually updated.**
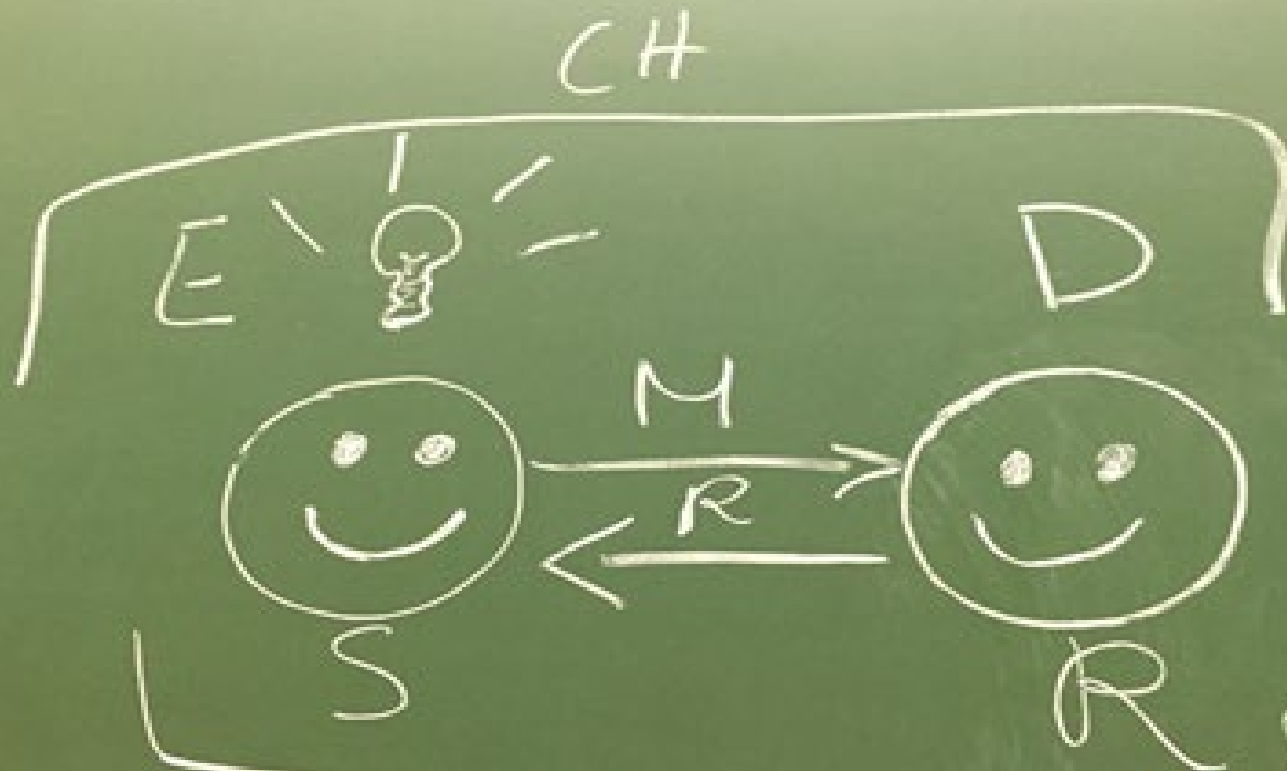
# WARM-UP TASKS:

# „good old blackboard”

# Pinterest account:
## https://www.pinterest.fr/lucynawilikiewi/

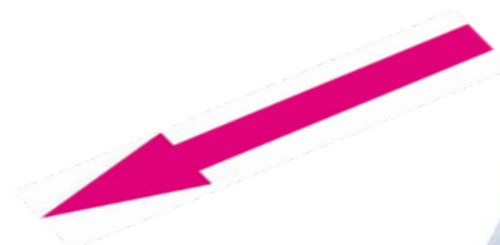## 44 boards such as:

- **VOCABULARY**
- **LANGUAGE TIPS**
- **TEACHING**
- **LEARNING**
- **NETWORKING**
- **STUDENTS' SPECIAL NEEDS**
- **QUOTATIONS**
- **SOCIAL MEDIA, etc.**

# The first encounter with our students

- **enter the classroom ready for new challenges**

- **be aware of summer slide**

- **presenting the syllabus and requirements - not enough**

- **introductory needs' analysis:**

  - ➢ **observe the students' response to our offer**
  - ➢**identify their expectations in an opening discussion (or brainstorming session).**

# Student-centered approach

Students should feel:

- ♥ respected
- ♥ engaged
- ♥ secure
- ♥ being at the centre of educational process

This way we can develop a culture of inclusion, cooperation, and mutual respect.

# Inclusive culture

**This culture should also aim at:**

**continuous improvement, which means that we must be always ready to rethink and redesign our teaching strategies and syllabuses and willing to give "another chance" to those students who, although they may have failed, are prepared to work towards enhancing their skills and knowledge.**

# The other side of the coin – role-reversal

► **students** should consider themselves **responsible for their education**

► **role-reversal** (one of the most useful techniques from psychodrama) should be used by teachers to:

→ reinforce students' **motivation**

→ make them feel **important** and **knowledgeable**

→ create a sense of **accomplishment**

Example: as **digital natives** they know the digital world better than their teachers (often - digital immigrants)

*"Each student has something they can teach […]"*

# Referring to students' interests and passions

❖**encourage** students to express their interests and passions

❖**refer** to them

❖**consider** them while designing the course

Result:

Students' interest in the course as such increases

their creativity is stimulated

*„Teachers should stimulate behavior whose effect is a free expression of students' own ideas, self confidence, and social creativity."*

# Continuous (positive) communication

One of the biggest **challenges:**

✓ **time** pressure, variety of **activities**

✓ **especially challenging in a virtual classroom, - contacts are limited**

**Solution:**

► **encourage** continuous communication.

► **use various channels, such as: e-mail, discussion forum, virtual office hours**

# Correspondence with students

# Ongoing, two-way feedback - 1

## Two-way feedback - one of the pillars of a positive classroom.

**Feedback sent to students – to:**

- **inform** them how well they are doing
- refer to their **strengths** and areas of improvement
- suggest **methods** of improvement

**It should be:**

- carefully planned
- exhaustive
- syllabus-oriented
- criteria-based

# Ongoing, two-way feedback - 2

► **feedback from students concerning their evaluation:**

- ✓ may take the form of an immediate response to teacher's evaluation
- ✓ may be expressed in private, after the lesson is finished, in any form or communication

► **students' comments on teaching/learning - during or after the course:**

- ✓ anonymous questionnaire discussed by the students
- ✓ students' own dedicated discussion forum, students collect & analyse information and recommed action/s to teacher

# Ongoing assessment, monitoring students' progress

## The process of monitoring students' progress never finishes

**Before completing every task:**

- specify requirements
- present evaluation criteria

**Assessment should be:**

- continuous, transparent, varied and just-in-time
- formative - used before and during learning; also called assessment for learning
- summative - evaluates student achievement at the end of some section, e.g., semester, assessment of learning

# Transparency – the goal:

"[…]The goal of transparent teaching is to promote students' conscious understanding of how they learn. Transparent teaching methods help students understand how and why they are learning course content in particular ways."

# Transparency – codes of coduct:

**Useful means:  codes of practice, also called codes of conduct, or simply regulations**

**They specify all the necessary rules concerning the whole learning-teaching process, usually in the form of a list of dos and don'ts, which are to be paid attention to, both by teachers and students.**

**They can be:**

- ✓ **prepared by teachers and then presented to and discussed with students at the beginning of the course,**

- ✓ **or they can be compiled by the students themselves with some guidance from the teacher**

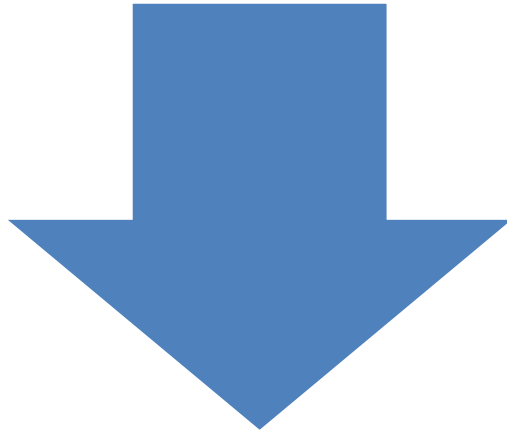# Awareness of social and emotional learning - SEL

relationship skills

self-awareness

responsible decision making

SEL

self-management

social awareness

# Educating the mind without educating the heart is no education at all.

**Aristotle**

# Awareness of SEL – two sides:

care about students' social and emotional development

mind our own wellness and self-care

# Conclusions

1. **Creating a positive classroom is not easy**

2. **Solution - use the power of our professional and personal networks, as well as our communities of practice.**

3. **Staying connected in the process of continuous professional development is the key to educational success.**

# Think positive, be positive and positive things will happen!

# Bibliography - 1

1. How the Pandemic Has Changed Us - and Higher Education. Reflections from a Dean, a Professor, and a Student featuring Maria de Fátima Carioca, Wendy Stahl, and Nour Khalil, July 12, 2021, https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/how-the-pandemic-has-changed-us-and-higher-education , accessed 30.07.2021.

2. For more details – see: The Value of Positive Feedback and Ongoing Needs Analysis in the Process of Formative Assessment, Lucyna Wilinkiewicz-Górniak, p. 1 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337647042_The_Value_of_Positive_Feedback_and_Ongoing_Needs_Analysis_in_the_Process_of_Formative_Assessment .

3. Using Community Agreements to Start the Year Strong by Cait O'Connor / August 24, 2021 https://www.edutopia.org/article/using-community-agreements-start-year-strong, accessed 26.08.2021.

# Bibliography - 2

4. Compare: "Let's Begin with Success: Early Academic Wins Have a Lasting Impact", https://www.ascd.org/el/articles/lets-begin-with-success-early-academic-wins-have-a-lasting-impact , accessed 28.08.2021 "The first two weeks of the school year are a critically important time for students and teachers alike. When students return to school after a summer break, their perceptions about school and about themselves as learners are typically in flux. The new year brings new teachers, new books, new classes, new schedules, and new friends. Even though many remnants of the pandemic remain, all of these changes come with the hope that this year will be different and better than previous years.").

5. Classroom culture of performance, empirical study, November 2015, Conference: NORD Conference Bucharest 2015, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/294522338_Classroom_culture_of_performance ], p. 5, accessed 09.09.2021.

# Bibliography - 3

6.  For more details – see: The Value of Positive Feedback and Ongoing Needs Analysis in the Process of Formative Assessment, Lucyna Wilinkiewicz-Górniak, p. 3 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337647042_The_Value_of_Positive_Feedback_and_Ongoing_Needs_Analysis_in_the_Process_of_Formative_Assessment .

7.  What Does it Mean to Teach with Transparency?, https://www.csun.edu/undergraduate-studies/faculty-development/teach-transparency, accessed 09.09.2021.

8.  CASEL'S SEL FRAMEWORK: What Are the Core Competence Areas and Where Are They Promoted? https://casel.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/CASEL-SEL-Framework-11.2020.pdf , p. 2, accessed 09.09.2021.

# Thank You All!!!

# Lucyna Wilinkiewicz-Górniak

**Senior Lecturer of Business Communication
and Business English
Language Centre
Cracow University of Economics
lucyna.wilinkiewicz@gmail.com
wilinkil@uek.krakow.pl**