Universita Pardubice
Fakulta humanitních studií
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

CLASSROOM   CLIMATE

Diplomová práce

2001   **Helena Potůčková**

Universita Pardubice
Fakulta humanitních studií
Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky

KLIMA ŠKOLNÍ TŘÍDY

Diplomová práce

Autor: **Bc. Helena Potůčková**
Vedoucí: **PhD. Michaela Píšová, MA**

2001

The University of Pardubice
Faculty of Humanities
Department of English and American Studies

CLASSROOM CLIMATE
Diploma Thesis

Author: **Bc Helena Potůčková**
Supervisor: **PhD. Michaela Píšová, MA**

2001

PROHLÁŠENÍ AUTORA

Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto práci vypracovala samostatně. Veškeré literární prameny a informace, které jsem využila, jsou uvedeny v seznamu použité literatury. Souhlasím s tím, že práce jsou prezenčně zpřístupněny v Univerzitní knihovně Univerzity Pardubice.

V Pardubicích, 1. května, 2001   …………………………..

                                                                    Helena Potůčková

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract

Review of Literature

Resumé

Bibliography

Appendix

Abstrakta

Cílem této práce je shrnout v přehledu dosažených poznatků o psychosociálním klimatu školní třídy. Práce uvádí přehled různých definic prvků spojených s tématem psychosociálního klimatu školní třídy – sociální skupiny a motivace – prvků úzce spojených s tématem práce. V práci jsou shrnuta různá pojetí myšlenky hledající odpověď na otázku kdo nebo co tvoří a ovlivňuje klima školní třídy. V teoretické části práce jsou sumarizovány hlavní objevy posledních výzkumů, jsou představeny hlavní typy klimatu školní třídy, rozdílné výzkumné přístupy a jejich rozdělení včetně způsobů diagnostiky klimatu školní třídy. Praktická část práce se zaměřuje na výzkum a měření klimatu školní třídy ve výchovné instituci. Přímé i nepřímé metody jsou použity v prováděných měřeních. Ačkoli se praktická část práce soustřeďuje přednostně na klima školní třídy, vzájemná propojenost mezi klimatem třídy a školy je rozpracována v části týkající se definování podmínek školního prostředí před zahájením výzkumných prací. Vyhodnocení tří dotazníkových průzkumů přináší přehled jak o aktuálním, tak o preferovaném vnímání klimatu školní třídy jak učiteli, tak studenty. Výsledky průzkumů podávají cenné podněty k tomu, aby se v budoucnosti aktivita učitele mohla zaměřit na záměrné ovlivňování klimatu školní třídy s cílem změnit ho k dosáhnutí lepších výsledků výchovné činnosti. Cílem práce bylo vyvolat změnu v myšlení studentů a jejich přístupu k prostředí, ve kterém pracují.

Abstract

One of the aims of this work is to summarize so far gained knowledge dealing with psychosocial climate of the school classroom. Various definitions of features connected with the topic of the classroom climate are being introduced in this work as a social group or motivation. The work is trying to find the answer to the question who or what creates and influences the classroom climate. In a theoretical part of this work, numerous findings of recent researches are being introduced and summarized. Main types of classroom climate can be found here including different ways of diagnosis of this feature. A practical part of the work focuses on research and measuring of the classroom climate in an educational institution. Both direct and indirect methods are being used in the research conducted. Although the practical part of the work is preferably aimed to investigation of the classroom

climate, the merging of the two fields /classroom and school/ has been faciliated by including description of the background and introduction of the ethos of the school where the researches were carried out. Final results of evaluating of three questionnaire researches bring an overview about both the actual and preferred perception of both the students and the teachers. The findings of the research provide some valuable instigation for the further teachers' to be aimed to deliberately influence and change the classroom climate in order to be able to reach

better educational outcomes. Another aim of the work was to induct a change in students' thinking and attitudes to the environment in which they were working.

Review of Literature

Since the topic of the work is dealing with a bordering discipline, and, moreover, in the Czech Republic, the field of environmental investigating of schools and school classrooms is still among new and only recently discovered disciplines, all the books on the topic are not numerous and they are not easily available. The would be researcher has to rely on browsing through numerous methodological, pedagogical and psychological books and booklets in a hope he could come across some information dealing with desirable topic.

The primer and one of the classical books on school environmental problems - Barry J. Fraser - Classroom Environment, printed in Coolm Helm Australia in 1986, is not available in any Czech or Slovak university libraries. To obtain the book from abroad requires the would be researcher to order it via some Czech library at least five months in advance. This is certainly a valuable book . The book meets the call for simple measures of cognitive outcomes. The book offers a review of approaches to studying classroom environments, historical perspectives on classroom environment research. The book provides a distinction between school-level and classroom-level environment. It provides researchers with different instruments of assessing classroom environment, provides an overview of different instruments, instrument validation procedures and information, short fort of CES, ICEQ and MCI questionnaires. B.J. Fraser studies association between students' outcomes and classroom environment. Overview of past studies of outcome-environment is included. The book investigates the differences between student and teacher perception of actual and preferred perception of of actual and preferred environment, includes person environment fit studies of whether students achieve better in their preferred environment. It also deals with changing classroom settings. This is undeniably a valuable and easy to use book but its low availability makes it be the book researcher cannot rely on.

Nevertheless, a lot of quotations from the above mentioned book can be found in a Czech book Komunikace ve škole, by Mareš and Křivohlavý , published in Brno University in 1995. The book can be taken for one of a prime books on the classroom

climate topic in our republic. The book provides a list of for the Czech and Slovak conditions modified and

translated instruments of assessment of the classroom climate. In a modern way introducing ways of communication within school classrooms, interaction between students

and teachers, Attitudes of teachers to their students, types of interaction and its social aspects. The book deals with different roles of teachers, competition and co-operation at school..etc.

Fraser is also often quoted in Mareš and Lašek´s articles published in the Czech pedagogical journals Pedagogika 1991 and Pedagogická revue 1994

Psychological aspect of classroom climate can be studied in a comprehensive publication

Educational Psychology, by Sprinthall and Sprinthall, published in Mc Graw Hill, inc in 1990. This is a book containing 700 pages in which the authors really detailly describe all the psychological phenomena including their historical background. The book is suitable for all kinds of educators. For the purposes of this work, it served as a very detailed source of theories and practical examples especially explaining refinements of motivation, socialization, competition and co-operation.

Psychology for Language Teachers, by Williams and Burdens, published in CUP in 1997 is a modern publication which specializes on the aspects of psychology connected with the studying of foreign languages. For this work, the chapter dealing with motivation to study foreign languages and the ability of the teacher to set an appropriate tone and gain learners respect and cooperation in the class. Throughout this book, an individual is viewed as an inseparable part of a social system. In this book , a short chapter on classroom climate can be found. The definitions, however, seem to be the same as in Fraser.

In Moderní pedagogika by Jan Průcha, published in Portál in 1988, some basic definitions, which, however, do not differ from either Fraser or Mareš and Křivohlavý, can be read.

The similar overview of classroom climate is being introduced in the book Klíčové dovednosti učitele, by Chris Kyriacou, translated by Dvořák and Koldínský, published in Portál 1997.

Fraser is also grossly mentioned in the book Individual Differences in Second Language Learning by Peter Skehan, published in Routledge USA in 1989. This book points out an importance of an individual perception of environment by individuals.

In Přehled pedagogiky by Jan Průcha, published in Portál, 2000 - all the sources of materials and addresses of libraries needed for classroom climate investigation are being listed,
however, the recommended brochures were not available in the year of 2001. It might improve in oncoming years.

In Inside Teaching by Bowen and Marks, published in Heinemann in 1994, the idea for a metaphor questionnaires was found. The book provides a source of self reflective tools which can be used in a classroom environment research since this is an area we need to get some feedback from.

Jiří Pelikán, in his Výchova jako teoretický problém, published in ISBN, in 1995, provides a wide overview of definitions of social group according to eighteen different mostly Czech
authors. Other theoretical definitions can be found there.

Other books mentioned in the bibliography were used only marginally.

I - INTRODUCTION

This work deals with a topic of a climate of a school classroom. In its opening part, some points of departure are being introduced. A conception of the climate of the school classroom has to be formulated as well as its individual determinants and elements. Some of the methods of diagnosis of the school classroom climate are being mentioned. The second half of the work is devoted to research of classroom climate in educational institution. Both direct and indirect methods /observations, interviews, questionnaires/ are used in investigation of mutual relationships between the school classroom climate and students´ motivation to study foreign language. The above mentioned research will be conducted in two classes of the private language school Labyrint in Trutnov.

II - THEORETICAL PART

II - 1 TERMINOLOGY

II – 1.1 The Key Problem Number One

At the beginning of the work, an essential need to introduce some basic terminology arises. Terminology is one of the two key problems, together with the question who or what is the force creating classroom climate, which should be taken into consideration by the teachers before they start to look into interrelations within their class. The above mentioned idea was found in the article by Lašek and Mareš - /1991:155/. Different sources use different terms to describe socio-psychological features at school, for example, we can come across expressions as environment, climate, atmosphere, characteristics, ethos of all the school, a classroom or communication within one classroom. Moreover, to above mentioned terms other adjectives are often being added such as educational, learning, social, socio-psychological, socio-emotional et cetera. In this way, a variety of terminology is brought into existence. Průcha, /1988:146/ claims, „…over fifty terms dealing with the topic of the climate at school could be found in

all the available literature." On top of everything, some authors use the above mentioned expressions as neutral terms having no evaluative scale. Some authors, however, put into these terms only positive contents. As it is mentioned in Mareš, Křivohlavý, /1995:146-150/, "educational environment is sometimes taken for the environment which influents most of the students´ attitudes, activities and outcomes only in a positive way." Mareš and Křivohlavý, support the idea that the terminology in the field of the school climate should be used in a neutral way, otherwise "it would be necessary to multiply all the existing terms by all the possibilities using opposites educational versus de-educational."

The bellow stated terminology used by Mareš and Křivohlavý /ibidem/ should help the reader to distinguish all the socio-psychological features at school as for their extent, variability, length and versatility.

Environment is the most general expression with a wide extent. It does not have necessarily to deal only with socio-psychological aspects.

Classroom environment not only includes all the architectonic aspects /an overall design of the classroom, the level of its equipment, variability of the shape of the room, its size and placement of the furniture/, but also hygienic ones / illumination, heating, airing/, as well as ergonomic aspects / suitability of the furniture, organization of teacher´s and students´ working space, arrangement of all the teaching aids/ and also acoustic ones /level of noise, reverberating and repercussion of sound/. etc.

Atmosphere is a term with quite a narrow meaning. It is variable and a short - lasting. Atmosphere is changing during the day or even during one lesson. Individual phenomena last from minutes to hours, exceptionally longer. The atmosphere in the classroom before the writing of an important test, or during role play with some competitive games can be mentioned here to help understand the meaning of this term.

Social climate is a term describing long-lasting features which are typical of a single classroom and its teacher for several months or even years. Its creators are students of all students as a social group, groups of students in that class, individual students, all the teachers teaching in that class and the teachers as individuals. Social climate is indirectly influenced by the climate of all the school.

In English written literature, however, expression such as environment- climate, environment-atmosphere, atmosphere-climate are in many cases used as synonymous words, so that there is a need to notice the context of all either the sentence or the part of the work carefully to avoid ambiguity.

II - 1.2 Class - Classroom

Other terms which are going to be used grossly throughout this work are class and classroom. Undoubtedly, class is a social group. For the reader, to be able to understand the term itself and to avoid equivocation, both the terms of the social group and an individual need to be defined. All the definitions mentioned below were found in Pelikán. All the below stated quotations, as well as all other quotations from the books written in Czech, were translated by the author of this work.

We can find numerous definitions of the term social group. For example, Marko understands this term as

> "a social unit, a system of integrating and mutually interdependent individuals joined for a particular time by their common target an by their emotional unity" /Marko in Pelikan:1995:136/

The following definition by M. and C. Sherif mentioned in the same book as the definition above, seems to be more precise

> "Group is a social formation which consists of a definite amount of persons, who are one to another in more or less given positions and roles, it has its own system of values and norms regulating

behavior of its individual members at least in the for the group important cases." /ibidem/

A new aspect - a system of values and norms appears here but a common target is not being mentioned.

Other researchers, /ibidem:136–140/ do not try to define the term but they are trying to mark off main features of a social group. The following features are being mentioned most often:

a) Each group consists of more than two people (all authors)

b) Connection of the group by particular sometimes only a temporary target (Marko, Hrabal, Čáp)

c) Group norms are being created in a social group based on the similarities of value hierarchy of all the group members (Janoušek, Hrabal, Krecht, Helus, M. and C. Sherif)

d) Relatively stable structure of relationships among the members of the social group is being formed. Individuals take different posts and play different roles. /Marko, Hrabal, Čáp/

e) All the members gather in a social group in order to indulge in common activity, which satisfies needs of individual members or to reach a common operation (Janoušek). In the groups, division of work and inner organization occurs (McDouglas)

The five following features are being mentioned less often:

f) In addition to group targets, the members of a social group have their own individual needs. Their attitude to the social group target

determins motivative structure of the group. (Janoušek)

g) Groups are in a particular opposition to other social groups or in a dissension with them (Mc Douglas)

h) Ties and loyalty among the members are of a permanent rather than temporarily character (Mc Douglas)

i) In all the members of a social group a conception of groups and their targets is being created (Mc Douglas)

j) Dynamics is typical of the social groups. Dynamics is many times very complicated. Groups are being created and petered out. Targets and activity contents are being changed, relationships among the members of the social group and leadership and even other individual members occur, stress and conflicts are being created /Čáp/

No matter how different attitudes different researchers feel towards social groups, it is obvious that social groups influence its members and vice versa

> "Individual, no matter whether he wants or not, is once and for ever a member of social groups. No matter how independent and strong he may be, he is being formed by mutually shared forms and opinions of his groups. It is even possible to say that the individual is sometimes being restricted by the membership in the group, it is said to impair his creativity and prevents him from fulfilling of his targeted task. At the same time, however, it is being discovered that individual can express his individuality the best under the protection of the social group" /ibidem:137/

II- 1.3 Motivation

Motivation is the last term to be defined since this work aims to find out links between climate of the school classroom and motivation. The

fact that motivation is a crucial component in learning is so taken for granted that such a thought now seems like a statement of the obvious. A proposed structural definition of motivation was found in Williams and Burden

" Motivation may be constructed as

- a state of cognitive and emotional arousal,
- which leads to a conscious decision to act, and
- which gives rise to a period of sustained intellectual and/or
  physical
  effort
- in order to attain a previously set goal /goals/"

/Williams,Burden,1997:48/

A number of points arise from this definition. To start with, people are aroused in some way. This may involve an element of desire, but not necessarily. The initial arousal may be started by different causes, perhaps internal ones such as interest or curiosity, or often by external influences such as another person or event. Whatever the cause, the persons´ interest or enthusiasm is activated, leading them to make a conscious decision to act in certain ways in order to achieve a particular goal related to the activity undertaken.

It was not until early in the twentieth century that anyone experimentally validated the link between learning and motivation. E. L. Thorndike accomplished this task in his famous law of effect, which can be found in Sprinthall,

> "But practice without zeal - with equal comfort at success and failure - does not make perfect, and the nervous system grows away from the modes in which it is exercised with resulting discomfort. When the law of effect is omitted - when habit formation is reduced to the supposed effect of mere repetition - two results are almost certain. By the resulting theory, little in human behavior can be explained by the law of habit. and by the resulting practice, unproductive or extremely wasteful forms of drill are encouraged" /Thorndike in Sprinthall:1990:519/

Motivation, however, never works apart from either learning or perception. Most human motives are learned and acquired. Motives also

affect perception. Psychologists who have analyzed motivation have found that motive has two identifiable components - a need and a drive. A person is not considered to be in a drive state until the need moves the person into action. Motives may be physiological and psychological. The types and levels of various emotions also have a strong impact on motivation. Intrinsic motives are those that are being satisfied by internal reinforces and, thus, are not dependent on any external goals. On the other hand, extrinsic motives, depend on needs that must be satisfied by external reinforces.

In a practical part of this work, two more terms are going to be used. Both of them are categorized as acquired motives. They are cooperation and competition.

Acquired motives, such as competition, power status, even achievement, are dictated by social rules and pressures - either in origin or in the form in which they are expressed. Though, social motives are learned, people tend to learn these lessons so well that they begin to behave with almost the kind of automatic precision of a homing pigeon. Two very for the teacher important motives are those of cooperation and competition. First, let me dispel the myth that competition is built into the human species as some kind of biologically determined instinct. There is simply no evidence to support such a notion.

> "Actually anthropologists have found groups of people, for example, the Zuni Indians, in which competition is nonexistent. For the Zunis, the act of winning at anything so frowned on that it brings disgrace and social ostracism "
>
> /ibidem:532/

The evidence, therefore, suggests that competition is an acquired motive. In most of schools competitive grading system have traditionally utilized in evaluating students. This is certainly a major reason why the competition is so strongly ingrained among students. The classroom by its very nature is always going to promote some

competitive feelings. Competition can probably never be completely ruled out of our schools. On the other hand, cognitive psychologists Jerome Bruner and Jean Piaget, /ibidem: 535/, are although suggesting that "motives toward cooperation and reciprocity may have strong biological underpinnings," they warn that "the strength of these motives may vary with the age of the child.". Piaget tells us that "young children are limited in their ability to cooperate because of their egocentricity, the inability to take another person's point of view." Another issue to be mentioned is unconscious motivation. Sigmund Freud, /ibidem:535/, stated that "roughly two-thirds of all human motivation lies below the threshold of conscious awareness." That is, Freud estimated that most human behavior is motivated by reasons of which we are totally unaware and which are therefore largely irrational.

The theoretical perspective which has been discussed so far, has been mainly concerned with what learners bring to the learning situations, and how different tasks affect a learner´s motivation. However, the reality of language learning in schools and other institutions is that learning is generally introduced by another person, most often the teacher. It is obvious that there may be an influence of the involvement of significant others. Many an idea dealing with this topic was found in Skehan. Two main factors can be seen an contributing to the learners motivation to participate in these activities. The first is the personality or nature of the person introducing the activity.

> "All learners are likely to be influenced by their personal feelings about their teachers, and therefore, their perception of their teachers and of the interactions that occur between them and their teachers will undoubtedly affect their motivation to learn."
>
> /Skehan,1989:133/

The second is "the way in which the person presents the activity and works with the learner during the completion of that activity". Thus the role of the teacher is important at all stages of the motivational process.

The further aspect of the teacher´s role in motivation, that is, as the provider of feedback. Behavioral psychologists were the first to recognize the power of feedback as a motivating influence. This idea is being introduced in Hedge, /2000:22 – 23/ , Tricia Hedge points out an importance of a reason why learners want to learn English. She points out an up to date reason of students which is "the students' either awareness or unawareness of how English would give them a mobility in the European Community." This is a very strong social context which can support heavily an interactive model of motivation. With the age group studying in the language school the research of this work is being conducted in, this point of an essential need of a language as an instrument to achieve other purposes such as doing a job effectively or studying successfully in an English speaking institution, or wishing to integrate into the activities or culture of another group of people seems to be unavoidable. These features are being mentioned as indicative and integrative motivation. Both features might influence the strength of motivation, through it - and possibly vice versa - attitude to the language class, language class sociability etc.

Definition of motivation by Tricia Hedge shows this issue in a holistic point of view including into consideration following items,

> "There are four main categories. The first is motivation, which involves desire to learn language, intensity of effort to achieve this and attitudes toward learning language . The second is integrity, which involves attitudes towards the target language group and which touches on the affective factors of ethnocentricity. The third involves attitudes towards the language teacher and the language course. The fourth concerns measures of anxiety in classroom situation and in using the language. It is now clear that motivation is a highly complex phenomenon consisting of a number of variables. It is also clear that the high correlation that studies show between motivation and successful learning confirm what is already indisputable among teachers: that motivation is of crucial importance in the classroom , whether learners arrive with it or whether acquire it through classroom experience." /ibidem:23/

Two graphs are shown below to confirm the idea of an importance of a social context in learners motivation. The interactive model of

motivation can be found in Williams and Burden /1997:122/. It points out an importance of social context for learners´ motivation and, moreover, it supports the aim of this work. Motivations of students is, thus, very probably influenced by social climate of the classroom.

In the second graph, dealing with additional cognitive, affective influences on language learning, found in Skehan, /1989:108/, the model of proficiency development is being introduced. The graph points out, beside other issues, an importance of attitude towards the class, language class sociability, as well as classroom discomfort, aptitude and strength of motivation - all these terms are undoubtedly having significant importance in the topic of the climate of the school classroom.

a/ An interactive model of motivation

/Williams, Burden:1997:122/

b) Ely´s model of proficiency development (after Ely 1986)

/Skehan:1989:108/

Although the problem of an importance of school climate has been studied in recent years, there is still a lack of literature dealing with this element and only a little is this literature known by teachers. The above mentioned idea can be proved by two excerpts of the book by Williams, Burden

> "It seems to me that very little material exists to offer suggestions for practical things a teacher can do to improve relationship and atmosphere within a group"
> /ibidem1997:195/

> "A fascinating but little known literature on 'learners' and 'teachers' perception of classroom environment has grown over the past twenty five years."
> /ibidem:196/

II - 2   THE KEY PROBLEM NUMBER TWO

II- 2.1 Who Influents Climate?

All the teachers who want to start investigating the climate of their classrooms are being advised to start with two basic key phenomena. They are, according the Lašek and Mareš´ article /1994:156/, "terminology and a raising a question who or what creates the climate of the classroom." The following part deals with the secondly mentioned key feature.

One about the most striking facts about life on this planet is that human beings form groups and live out their lives in group situations. Equally

16

striking is the fact that while in the group situation, people tend to behave in a uniform way. The school classroom cannot be an exception. It has been proved so far that "on certain tasks a persons´ performance would improve when others are around." This was, as it is mentioned in Sprinthall, /1990:491/ "discovered even before the turn of the century." This phenomenon was called as "social facilitation." The same studies found out that,

> "group situation apparently produces an environment in which individuals become far less cautious than they would be if they were alone, consequently, an attitudinal shift in the direction of 'throwing caution to the wind' occurs. Individual are willing to take greater risk regarding their attitudes and behavior. They become less conservative and more willing to gamble."
>
> /ibidem/

The following quotation supports the idea of social facilitation as well:

> "......the daredevil is more revered than is the individual who prudently and cautiously weighs all the outcomes before acting......."
> /ibidem/

The concept of social facilitation cannot be omitted in the research dealing with classroom climate, either. Each classroom is a distinct social unit with its own set of forms, its own psychological atmosphere, its own sets of relationships, its own special blend of behavioral expectancies.

Every classroom has a social climate unlike that of any other classroom. In one school, even in the classroom which is next the door, different kinds of climate can be found. The room charged with excitement and enthusiasm, another one tense, with submissive students going through the motions, and still another, bordering on anarchy can exist within one school building.

The psychology of the classroom does not operate in vacuum, for every

classroom is a part of a larger social unit, the school itself. What or who causes differences among rooms, among schools, among any different number of groups? Different sources offer dissimilar opinions:

> ".....The quick and easy answer is the personality of the teacher or principal. This, however, is only part of the answer. Just as the principal´s behavior helps shape the teacher´s, so the teacher´s behavior shapes the principal´s actions. And just as the teacher´s behavior influences the pupils behavior, so the pupil´s behavior has a profound effect on the teacher." /ibidem:489/

Teachers may firmly believe that their classrooms have the same social climate year in and year out, despite the shifting student population, but these same teachers will stare in shocked disbelief at a videotape showing one of their classes two or three years ago, or even last year. The shifting student population creates a shifting social climate.

"Who sets the beat of the classroom?" This question is being answered in the following quotation,

> "The classroom, within the context of the larger social situation, sets its own beat, and every single member of the class participates in the process."   /ibidem:499/

The above quotations support definition in Mareš and Křivohlavý, /1995:150/, in which "all the students of one class, individual teachers and students create the climate." In this version, groups of teachers or students are not being mentioned.

As it is noticeable from all the above writings, the results of the students do not depend only on individuality of their character, on the intensity of their home preparation as well as the results of teachers'

work do not depend only on particular individuality of their character, on the profoundness of their preparations for the lessons.

Teacher and his students meet one another in the lesson, they influence one another, they together create very specific social climate. This phenomenon is called interaction and it is being explained and worked with later. Classroom climate can be both, either pleasant - evoking cooperation or, on the other hand, it can be very unpleasant - evoking humiliating, intimidation and deprivation of the students.

According to the article by Lašek /1994:155/, "in most of the recent schools working in traditional ways even communicative rules are being very often designed by teachers."

> No wonder that many researchers leading researches about school classroom climate concentrate on a question how the teachers themselves influence their pupils by their acting with them. /ibidem/

The above idea about the teachers significant importance in creating of classroom climate can be supported by several following quotations which were taken from different sources,

One of the quotations was found in Průcha,

> "...the main creator of the classroom social climate is a teacher since due to his qualities, and preferably due to his status and role he can very significantly influent this phenomenon."
> /Průcha:1988:350/

The aspect of a role and a status were being mentioned in Průcha's quotation. It is crucial to understand the term of a role behavior. Both the terms are being explained in Sprinthall, /1990:538/. " People tend to behave in the way society /as embodied by people around them/ treats them." Social psychologists use the terms status or role to describe expected behavior of this type.

> "Status is the position we occupy in society´s prestige hierarchy. Role is the behavior that is expected of us because of the particular status we have."
>
> /ibidem/

Another supportive idea supporting the role of the teacher in creating the classroom climate comes from Kyriacou,

> "Climate of the classroom which is created by the teacher can have a significant influence to the pupils motivation and their positive attitude to learning. That is why the teachers´ skills used to create a positive climate of the classroom are very important."
>
> /Kyriacou,1994:79/

II – 2.2 What influents climate?

A somewhat different, but related aspect of the classroom climate which undoubtedly influences learners´ learning outcomes is their interpretation of interpersonal teacher behavior. This aspect is being described in Williams and Burden,

> The management of learners´ learning is clearly linked to teachers´ ability to set an appropriate tone and gain learners respect and co-operation in the class . This has led many researchers into teacher effectiveness to emphasize that the creation and maintenance of a positive classroom climate is essential in producing optimum learning /Williams. Burden:1997:199/

The way in which teachers influent learners in all the levels of the school education is undoubtedly the way in which they communicate with them. This feature was named a communicative climate of the classroom and it is mentioned in the article by Lašek This article prefers the role of the teacher in a creating of this sort of a climate

> "The substantial actor of a communicative climate of the classroom is a teacher. His words are, however, being perceived very individually by those who co-create the climate – by the pupils. They can be either motivated by the teachers

statements , the statements can verify their operations, or pupils can be de-motivated by them even led to different techniques how to avoid communication with the teacher or to stay passive" /Lašek, 1994:156/

Learners, nevertheless, communicate with one another and therefore, as Lašek claims in his above mentioned article,

"they can share their personal perception of the teacher´s contact, they can support one another in a creating their mutual opinion about the teacher and in this way to create the climate"
/ibid:156/

Communicative climate is not determined only by the way how all the individual actors communicate with one another but also by the way how is the spoken word being perceived by the receiver, what was the intention of the speaker, what is the listeners deduction from the heard. In Mareš, Křivohlavý, however, the authors put the teachers´ and learners´ importance in influencing the climate of the classroom into an even level by writing a following statement,

"It is obvious, having taken into consideration so far made interpretation, that teacher is not the only one to create psychological climate of the classroom. The influence of the teacher is more conspicuous with the lower grades, with younger learners. Later, the class can become a partner. Due to their mutual inter-influence they create the climate together. Some cases when the class or a group of learners influent the lessons more than the teacher are not rare. A protagonist can from time to time become an antagonist." /Mareš, Křivohlavý,1995:144/

A significant role of all the components of learning-teaching process, including environment , in a shaping and influencing the social climate is being pointed out by an important contemporary psychologist Albert Bandura. His ideas are being mentioned in Sprinthall, /1990: 258-259/. He has suggested that "a significant part of what person learns occurs through imitation and modeling." Bandura has been called a social learning theorist in that he is concerned with the learning that takes place in the context of social situation. During

social interactions "an individual may learn to modify his or her behavior as a result of how others in the group are responding." Bandura´s social learning theory is truly an all-inclusive psychology, borrowing as much from behaviorists as from cognitive theorists. Bandura sees behavior, internal cognitive structures, and the climate as interacting so that each as an "interlocking determinant of other".

> People are to some extend products of their environments: It is not simply a one-way street   /Bandura in Sprinthall:1990:259/

II – 3   MAIN TYPES OF THE CLIMATE
II -   3.1 Why Study Learning Environments?

Learning never takes place in vacuum. Whether one adopts a Piagetian perspective, mentioned in Williams and Burden /1997:188-189/, which conceives of the "developing child individually exploring her or his own environment,"   or the approach strongly advocated in the above mentioned book that "right from birth learning is the result of social interaction, it always occurs within a particular context." This idea agrees with Bandura´s social learning theory mentioned previously.

Or rather we would argue, learning occurs within a variety of often overlapping context, some of which are more conductive to the process of cognitive, affective, moral and social development than others.

The importance of the appropriate environmental conditions for learning to take place cannot be underestimated. This topic has to be viewed from several overlapping levels. Williams and Burden write about these different levels /ibidem:200/. An understanding of the way in which aspects of the environment affect learning is particularly important for language teachers and learners. At the broadest level, it is clear that "national and cultural differences have a profound influence upon the development of a language and the way in which it is used."

> One of the primary functions of a language is to describe our environment so that we can form an image of ourselves inter-relation to it   /ibidem:188/

The better we can come to understand the cultural context which gives rise to the language we are trying to learn, the more likely we are to come to understand the essential differences between the way in which that language is used and our own.

At another level, a country´s educational system will affect the learning climate. There are really vast differences between the aims of the educational system of such countries as China, Japan, the UK and the USA and , of course, the Czech Republic. Even within all the countries there is not necessarily a universally recognized set of educational policies about how such aims should be achieved.

At the school level , the ethos that exists within a school will affect the type of learning that goes on in that school. What makes a successful school, must, therefore, be judged in terms of the expressed educational aims of that school within the broader national and cultural context of the country´s educational system.

At an even more basic level, the immediate physical environment of the classroom and the nature of the personal interactions which occur within it will have a profound influence upon whatever, what and how any individual learns language.

At the opening part of Fraser, it is stated that

> Students spend a vast amount of time at school. Jackson's /1968/ <u>Life in</u> <u>Classroom</u> estimates that this is as high as approximately 7,000 hours by the end of primary school, whereas the title of Rutter et al.' s /1979/ book <u>Fifteen Thousand Hours</u> suggests that this figure rates to 15,000 hours by the completion of secondary school. Students, therefore certainly have a large stake in what happens to them at school and students' reactions to an perceptions of their school experience are significant.
> /Fraser, 1986:1/

We shall focus on the personal interactions that give rise to a particular ethos or climate. More specifically, we shall be looking closely at the ways in which the members of any class or learning group „interpret those interactions and construe them as facilitative or otherwise.“

Not only do we have to take into considerations all the above mentioned environmental levels, but in order to understand properly any person´s development, we need to take into account their ecology as well. This term emanates from the work of the social and clinical psychologist Uri Bronfernbrenner whose ideas are being mentioned in Williams, Burden /1997:189-191/; summarization of the ideas follows:

At the closest level there is the microsystem which contains the developing child´s more important relationship with parents, teachers, siblings and peers. Next comes the mesosystem within which are contained broader range of interactions of significant people in the developing child´s life, for example home-school relationship. At one level further removed is ecosystem where the interactions of others will have an indirect rather than a direct effect on the learner. An example here might be the nature of a teacher´s personal relationships outside school or the kind of ethos that exists within school. Finally, there is the macrosystem, which involves the whole culture of the society in which people live. This will affect learning in a number of possible ways, for example formally, by the imposition of a national curriculum, or informally by often subtle cultural customs and mores.

A variation of the ecological perspective which has been particularly influential in its effect on school psychology is the system approach.

There are some key elements which all advocate of the system approach have in common.

> "Each individual is viewed as an inseparable part of a social system. Sometimes these systems have clearly defined boundaries, for example school, classroom, groups, families. However, these boundaries are often permeable, so systems are constantly changing but also resistant to change."
>
> /ibidem:191/

To understand why people are more or less successful at learning within a particular system such as a school, it is necessary to consider how the system works as a whole and the kind of influence that systemic factors bring to bear on different individuals. This approach argues that learning must be viewed holistically with as much emphasis being placed on relationship and interactions as on the participants and the content or what is learned.

> "There is a growing body of evidence to show that different individuals, and probably also groups of individuals, find certain environmental conditions more conductive to learning than others. Somewhat inexplicably many of these studies are grouped under the heading of learning styles. This really is a misnomer because the studies have very little if anything to do with the person´s style of learning and much more to do with preferred conditions for learning
>
> /ibidem :191/

Tradition of investigating of communicative school classroom was established , as it is written in Lašek, /1991:157/, by D. Thomas in 1940´s. Later on it was J. Gibb, also mentioned by Lašek, who pointed out that there were two basic kinds of a communicative climate,

a/ supportive communicative climate

Participants respect one another, they openly express their feelings and opinions. The report is clear and unambiguous.

b/ defensive communicative climate

Causes defensive reactions from the participants. Participants compete with one another, they do not listen to one another, they hide their feelings and opinions. The report is unclear and ambiguous.

According to L. B. Rosenfeld´s research conducted at the beginning of 1980´s, / ibid,:157/, learners who experience by the teacher created

supportive climate in the classroom, are being acknowledged, they are more satisfied and, moreover, by their teacher´s positive information they are being highly motivated to bigger activity and stronger feeling of their own self-confidence. Compare to the students form the defensive climate, their attendance at school is better. On the other hand, those learners who experience defensive climate, are using a variable scale of defensive techniques against their teachers who is by his or her defensive communicative style pushing them into defense.

At the beginning of 1980´s L. B. Rosenfield, the author of the book „Communication Climate and Copying Mechanism in the College Classroom“, mentioned in Lašek, /1991:158/, tried to measure communicative climate of the classroom. He found out that „three major types of climate can be distinguished in common lessons
a) real climate
b) actual climate
c) ideal climate /preferred/
In the above mentioned article these three major types are more detailly described in Mareš, Křivohlavý, /1995:153-159/. The ideas were summarized. This kind of distinction serves to the process of utilization of the pieces of knowledge drawn from the researches of the classroom climate. Description of a real state is the first of the options. A teacher, or a headmaster, an inspector or an innovator need to figure out how the participants of the teaching-learning process perceive and live through the social climate of a particular classroom. This real state is worth investigating in case when investigator is either meeting a new class or when the class itself is entering some kind of experiment /the description functions as an issue state then/. Another purpose for finding out the real state of the climate could be the case of the class which considerably differs from the others . For example by an extremely big number of learners, problems with school results, problems with discipline et cetera.

Comparison of opinions of both camps - teachers versus learners is the second offered alternative. Teachers are being advised to have filled in the questionnaires before the learners are being asked to do so. Views of both the sides are being compared and all the differences are being figured out. /Ibid:155, „So far led researches have pointed out that there are some variables whose evaluation by teachers and learners differ"

Comparison of actual and preferred classroom climate is the last of the three choices. This approach was set up by Fraser, as it is mentioned in Skehan,

> Where Fraser differs from other researchers in this field is in his recognition that there might be a big gap between how an individual learner perceives his or her classroom to be organized and how he or she would like it to be. Fraser therefore, produced both an actual and preferred version of his scale in order to make such comparison possible. He also produced both teacher and learner version so that further comparison could be made between teachers´ and learners´ perceptions.   /Skehan, 1989:198/

This is actually a wish of the learners. The common way of research is based on, as it is noticeable from the above quotation, a use of two forms of the same questionnaires. One of them investigating the ideal /wish/ state of the classroom climate and the other one looking into actual state of it. As it is advised by the procedure developed by Fraser and Fisher, both of them are well known Australian scientists dealing with the topic of classroom climate, the procedure is mentioned in Mareš, Křivohlavý, /1994:155/, a questionnaire dealing with an ideal - preferable state should be handed out about a week before the actual form of the questionnaire. Differences between ideal and actual state show the way in which participants of teaching-learning process want to change it. Mareš and Křivohlavý in their article quote that

> Generally, it can be quoted that both, learners and teachers are not much satisfied within their classrooms, they wish to work in a better social climate than in the climate they experience day by day. The smaller the differences between the actual and the ideal

form of the questionnaires are, the better the output in the classroom reached by the students is.
/Mareš, Křivohlavý:1995:155/

What we have in any classroom is a multitude of perceptions. All the participants, teachers and learners, perceive what is happening in their own particular way. They also have an image of how they would like things to be, which more or less matches their perceptions of how things are. The greater the degree of concordance between one´s ideal classroom and the actual classroom within which one finds oneself, the greater the degree of satisfaction there is likely to be. This sense of satisfaction is therefore likely also to increase one´s liking for a subject - in a language teaching-learning process this is a language - and by association, one´s success at it. Alternatively, dissatisfaction and friction are likely to arise when there is a mismatch between how one would like things to be and how they actually appear to be, or if there is lack of agreement between teachers´ perceptions and those of their learners.

Since the psychology of the classroom does not operate in vacuum, for every classroom is a part of a larger social unit - the classroom itself and the school itself is a part of a larger unit which is society, as it has already been stated in the paragraph 'The Key Problem Number Two'. Mareš and Křivohlavý /1995:157/, also offer four more ways of investigating of school social climate. They are summarized below,

1. Discovering of differences between different schools. There are definitely some significant differences between state and private schools, alternative and classical schools, as well as, differences between town and village schools.

2. Measuring of the effectiveness of a well thought out intervention into teaching - learning process, for example a change in a content of the subject matter or the curriculum or a change in the teaching methods.

Learners´ reaction to all the changes become a subject of investigation.

3. The well thought out changing of the classroom climate - According to worldwide experience, it is possible to chance classroom climate step by step. This is, however, an action which is lasting for long months. Some elements of the classroom climate are changeable, some, nonetheless, are not.

4. The climate of the teachers´ room and the school - Not only are the learners being influenced by a teacher as an individual, but they are being influenced by the group of teachers. These are all the teachers teaching in one group. All the teachers teaching in one group create an independent pedagogical unit which is sometimes called   collected teacher.

In a course of a relatively short time, when the researchers have been trying to measure a classroom climate, different approaches have been discovered and being tried in,   comparing to other aspects of educational problems, not so numerous researches.

Skehan deals with an individual perceptions of climates.

> Where we differ, however, from most of the aforementioned writers is in our emphasis upon the indirect rather than direct nature of this association. By this we mean that it is the way in which the participants in the teaching-learning process make sense of that process and of the environment /x/ in which it occurs which exerts the major influence on the learning outcomes.
>
> /Skehan,1989:200/

x an expression environment is being used as a synonymous expression of climate

A growing body of researches has been done to identify factors within the physical environment, aspect of social organization and form of teachers´ behavior which seem most likely to enhance the learning climate of classroom. However, it is the meaning that teachers and learners attribute to those factors and whether or not they construe them as helpful that makes the real difference.

> Quantitative research studies tend to indicate that we can make some fairly confident general predictions in this respect, but we can never take this for granted with regard to any individual learner.
>
> /ibidem/

In this way two different points of view have to be taken into consideration - differing perspectives from both between and within learners and teachers. These ways could offer a potentially very useful way forward.

II – 4   MAIN APPROACHES OF RESEARCH
II – 4.1 Division of Approaches

In Mareš and Křivohlavý /1995:144–148/, an extensive outline of seven main approaches to investigation of school climate are being offered. A summarization of all the seven definitions follows,

1. Socio-metric approach - Classroom as a social unit is the object of the study. Researchers are interested in the structuring and reconstructing of the class, development of social interactions and their influence to the learners´ advancement. The socio-metric-rating questionnaire /SORAD/ is the means of measuring. Cohesion of the class together with integrity of the classroom, learners´ inclination and learners´ influence within the class is being used as an independent variable. On the other hand, success of the learners, school efficiency of individuals and all the class are used as a dependent variable.

2. Socio-organizational approach - Classroom as an organizational unit and a teacher as a leading individual create the object of the study. Researchers focus on a development of a team work within a lesson, on reduction of learners´ low self-esteem needed for fulfilling their tasks. Standardized observation of the course of the pedagogical interaction is the diagnostic method. A range of used methodological approaches, the level of the delegation of the teachers pedagogical authority, the

space for communication among learners /lateral communication/ are taken for independent variable. Efficiency of the class as a unit, addition of learners´ efficiency in concrete school subject.

3. Interactive approach - School classroom and a teacher are the object of the study. Researchers study interaction between the teacher and the learners during the lesson. Standardized observation is a diagnostic method. These are interaction pen-and-paper analysis, the computer methods, audio-visual recordings of interaction including their description and analysis. Both, direct and indirect influence of the teacher are an independent variable. Efficiency of the classroom together with the efficiency of individuals, attitudes of the students and effectiveness of the teacher´s work are, on the other hand, the dependent variable.

4. Pedago-psychological approach - school classroom and a teacher are the object of the study. Researchers focus on cooperation within the classroom, co-operative learning in small groups. Classroom Life Instrument /CLI/ evaluating scale is a diagnostic method. Mutual learners´ social interdependence, social support of the learners plus learners´ self-esteem create an independent variable, whilst efficiency of all the class and individuals, attitudes of the learners to the subject of the matter, learners´ ascribing of the causes of their either success or failing.

5. Scholastic-ethnographical approach - School classroom, teacher and all the natural school life are the object of the study. Researchers are interested in the way in which climate is functioning, how it is being perceived, evaluated and described by its participants. They are focused on socio-cultural construct of the climate. Participative observation in which the researcher stays at school for months even years are the main diagnostic method. They interview both, the

teachers and the learners, they record their formulations, write them down into protocols and analyze them. As a matter of a principle, there is either no independent or dependent variable in this method since the ethnographs do not enter to the research with in advance defined variables. Nonetheless, the results of this approach are often very interesting and inspirative.

6. Developmentally-psychological approach - a learner as an individual personality and a classroom are the object of the study. Researchers focus on the ontogenesis of the pupils during the time of their puberty, especially the period from 5th to 8th grade of the elementary school. A set of different diagnostic methods is being used. Teacher´s directing of the lesson, some ways of disciplining of the learners, individual approach to learners, teachers´ ways of evaluation, mutual relationship between teacher and learners, space for the learners´ self-regulation, the learners´ need of autonomy and self-development a are an independent variable. School failure, learners´ lack of interest in school, negative inner motivation for learning, students´ low self-esteem, learnt impotence, worsened mental health are taken for a dependent variable.

7. Socio-psychological and environmental approach - this approach is the most widely spread one. School classroom conceived as environment, learners of that classroom and teachers who teach at that classroom are the object of the study. Researchers are concerned about the quality of the climate, its structural components, actual appearance of the climate and about the appearance of the climate which does not exist but the learners would wish to have it. Evaluating scales filled in by participants themselves are the diagnostic method. They capture their own point of view and their vision, their attitudes and their subjectively influenced thinking, their expectations. Independent variable can be summarized into three main groups - mutual interrelations among participants, opportunity for personal

development, stability and changing of the system. On the other hand the dependent variable is created by school efficiency of both, the class as a unit and individuals, attitudes of the learners to the subject of matter et cetera.

In the appendix of this work, a table of used questionnaire methods in different kind of schools can be found.

II – 5   DIAGNOSIS OF THE CLIMATE
II – 5.1 Direct and Indirect Methods

In a previous list of the seven major research approaches, some of the methodological instruments have been already mentioned. In a real practice it, however, as it is stated in   Mareš and Křivohlavý, /1995: 147-150/ " has to be reduced to two main usable possibilities".

a/ standardized observations   - direct method

b/ questionnaires and evaluating scales - indirect method

/Mareš, Křivohlavý 1995:147/

Summarized explanation of both the above mentioned   methods, /ibid.147 – 150/ can be found below,

Standardized observation, which is a direct method,   is based on the activity of the teacher and the learners, the lesson, the coding and the evaluation of its course.

 Methodological approach is based on three assumptions:

- climate should be evaluated by outer, independent observer

- the observer should issue from the observation of the chosen excerpt of the lessons

- the observer should rely on easily observable, measurable, and valuable features which are not demanding much deduction.

Questionnaires and evaluating scales are indirect methods. This methodological approach has to respect different three features:

- climate should be evaluated by the participants themselves /teachers and learners/
- they should issue from their own feelings, experiences, attitudes, experiences deducted from all the situations which occurred in their class /even outside the classroom/
- evaluating should be issued from the features which are not accessible to direct observation and measuring. A lot of deduction is needed.

In the Czech Republic, five following questionnaires have been already translated: MCI /My Class Inventory/ Lašek, Mareš 1991/

           CES / Classroom Environment Scale/ /Mareš,Lašek

                            1990/91/

           ICEQ / Individualized Classroom Environment /Klusak, Škaloudová 1992/

           CCQ /Communication Climate Questionnaire/ /Lašek,

                        1994/

           CUCEI /College and University Classroom Environment/ /Duzbaba, 1994/

For more details about questionnaires look at the appendix of the work. The above mentioned questionnaires are supposed to be used by the teachers and headmasters who themselves can set a task, evaluate and interpret them. This is a suggestion stated in Mareš, Křivohlavý, /ibid:148/ "…this is only a translation of the questionnaires and their first verification." The method has not become a standardized yet.

A handbook containing all the above translated sophisticated questionnaires was published in the Czech Republic. The hanbook is being mentioned in Průcha,

> „As an example of a sophisticated questionnaires, we can introduce special questionnaires for measuring of educational environment. They were constructed by an Australian specialist B. J. Fraser. They possess a great speciality due to which we can measure both - the real state of the climate how it is being perceived by learners and their teachers and the preferred state / a wish state/ according to the respondents. To be able to use these questionnaires by

would be researchers in the Czech Republic, it is essential to know that Mareš, <u>Social Climate of the Classroom</u>, 1998 handbook had been published. It contains a detailled study of the problem and questionnaires about classromm climate, which was translated from its original English version and was adjusted to Czech and Slovak version. The book also offeres a manual / e.g. instructions how to use   and   evaluate   questionnaires/ /Průcha:2000:194/

This is certainly a valuable piece of information, nonetheless, as it was proved through the computer system Lanius by the librarians of the Regional Library in Trutnov, the above mentioned handbook is not available in any either Czech or Slovak library. This was the reason why all the questionnaires used in this work were designed by the author of this work.

II – 5.2 Individual Perception

To make the list of approaches more complete, some approaches dealing with individual perceptions of environments have to be added here.

The approach taken by Fraser and Wubbels and their co-workers, mentioned in Skehan, /1990:200–203/ , seeks to bring together differing perspectives from both between and within learners and teachers, it offers a potentially very useful way forward. An abstract of the ideas follows,

Probably the most widely used „method of tapping into people´s personal constructs" /ibid:200/ is George Kelly´s Repertory Grid Technique. Of particular interest and potential value to those interested in exploring the ways in which individuals make sense of social structures and organizational functioning, in the classroom and elsewhere, is the personal resources dependency grid. This technique makes it possible to identify situations in which individuals find problematical and the personal and social resources that they can upon it dealing with those situations. As yet such techniques have mainly been used as aids to therapy but are by no means necessarily confined

to such settings. This technique can be applied to a wide variety of situations such as helping people to become more effective managers, to improve their teaching performance, to restructure their learning resources in a school, to obtain higher exam results, to explore personal change and to evaluate the effects of specific course work.

Individuals often express their personal constructs in terms of metaphors. If our predominant metaphor for the classroom is „the workplace" , our expectation of what should take place there will be different from those related to „a prison" or „ a social club". If a teacher employs the first metaphor but some of his or her learners´ conceptions are more in line with the second or the third metaphors, then a mismatch of expectations will undoubtedly occur.

The idea of using metaphors is also being mentioned in Bowen and Marks /1994:13-14/. Following options are being offered there.

Classroom can be perceived as

- a workshop   a parade ground

- a playground   a prison

- a courtyard   a minefield

- a factory   a church

 -   a greenhouse

 Bowen and Marks point out an importance of classroom climate in a learning - teaching system,

> People do learn languages /and have learned them through ages/ by all sorts of methods, some involving classroom and teachers and others not. Perhaps what matters is not so much what methodology we use, but other more basic underlying factors to do with how people feel about the place they are in and the people they are with

> /Bowen,Marks,1994:13/

Bowen and Marks, however, claim /ibid:13/ that „metaphors can be dangerously seductive and lead us away from accurate perception of reality". On the other hand an opposite opinion can be found in the book as well,

But they can also act as spectacles to enable us to see things from a different perspective and therefore perhaps more clearly, or to have new insights - to see into things which were previously hidden.

/ibidem:15/

/In a practical part of this work, two questionnaire researchers dealing with metaphors are being conducted/

II – 5.3 - Situation in the Czech Republic

In our republic, as it is mentioned in the article by Mareš and Lašek - 1994:157/, the tradition of investigating school climate, however, is a novice among other better discovered areas of the teaching-learning process. In the previous regime, teachers used to be ordered to „form a good collective" or it used to be said that every class is a special social unit in which sociometry can measure all important factors among students. Nonetheless, „Czechoslovak psychology and pedagogy have not been successful in helping the classroom diagnosis." in Lašek´s opinion „it is sad that nobody had tried to provide teachers with any reliable methods with which they would be able to work under the conditions of an ordinary school". Unlike in our republic, in Europe, USA and especially in Australia, "the tradition of investigation of the school climate has lasted for over twenty years."

III -   PRACTICAL PART
III - 1 - Research
III -   1.1 Background

At the beginning of this part, an introduction of the place where the research is being conducted seems to be essential. Labyrint is a commercial language school which has been operating for ten years. The schools is providing both, intensive daily and afternoon language courses. Participants of the intensive daily courses are mostly the

students who had not succeeded in being accepted for the universities and who devote one year to the intensive language studies /23 lessons a week taught in the morning/. Since this is a private school where a school fee is being paid, whoever pays the fee can take part, so that there are even some adults among the age group of eighteen or nineteen-year-olds. Since Trutnov is a relatively small town, there is only a little exposure to English in society but most students are generally highly motivated first by the fact that they had paid for the services to be provided, second by the fact that a big number of them are preparing themselves for the passing either Czech State Exam or other language certificates or for their capability to use the knowledge gained in a search for job. Also future studies or travelling is another reason why they study foreign languages. The school ethos is, compared to other state schools in the town, more open and liberal.

A number of students varies from 80 - 150 daily students in one school year /See the statistics in the appendix/. The school year of 2000/2001 is exceptional since in the school year 1996/1997 there was a major change in basic school educational system. A compulsory school attendance was prolonged from eight to nine years. Thus, there were hardly any fourth classes in high schools last school year. As a result of the previously mentioned fact, there are only two daily classes containing 37 students this school year and a majority of all the school activities is being aimed into afternoon and factory courses for adults which are being taught either on the premises of Labyrint school or on the premises of our customers. This has caused two new phenomena in our school we had not experienced before.

For both the classes are placed on the first floor, actually next door, there is a big potential of creating more personal relationship between students of both classes and teachers and overlapping climates of the classrooms. The climate of all the school is becoming more familiar than in other years. On the other hand, there is a big mobility of teachers who have to travel to satisfy needs of all the numerous

customers in different organizations in different surrounding smaller towns and villages. The class of lower intermediate students is being taught mostly by their class teacher, the author of this work. It means 18 lessons a week. Two other teachers are teaching in this group for two plus three lessons a week. The group is containing eighteen students aged from eighteen to thirty four. /An average age is 19.8 years - group contains eight females and ten males/. Except for three learners, no one is preparing himself or herself to sit for the State Exam.

Another social group which can be found on the premises of the Labyrint language school is a group of nineteen advanced students who predominantly prepare themselves for external exams /Czech State Exams or FCC exams/ The group consist of ten females and nine males aged from nineteen to twenty-two (average age is 19.6 years). This group has been taught by eight different teachers since the beginning of the school year 2000/2001. Recently, the problem with the teachers´ fluctuation seems to have been settled down. The group of advanced students is being taught by four different teachers who share a week load of teaching in a ratio 6, 6, 6 and 5 lessons a week.

All the later questionnaire research used in this work was being carried out among the groups specified above.

III – 1.2 Role of a Teacher

As it was mentioned in the part of this work dealing with defining the basic terms, all the teachers who want to start investigating the climate of their classrooms are being advised to start with two basic key phenomena - terminology and rising the question of who or what creates the classroom climate. The following part tries to prove the undeniable role of the teacher in this process. A positive classroom climate has to be being building at a very beginning of any course. An importance of the first encounter of both the sides of learning - teaching process is pointed out. Let us start with a quotation from Stewick,

> The first meeting of any language class should be exciting. Not knowing precisely what is to come sharpness every one´s expectations. How difficult will this class be? Will I be a successful learner? How effective teacher will I be? The assumption is that everyone - students and teachers alike - will make every effort to get off to a good start. The teacher comes into the room, glances at the students, and stands in front of the class. What will the teachers´ first words be? A salutation perhaps: Buenos dias! /"Good morning!"/. No response is expected, of course. The students have just taken the very first step on along voyage into the mysteries of new language."   /Stewick:1987:17/

„Good morning, class" is the sentence which is also being offered by Earl W. Stewick

> "…by naming the group class, the teacher recognizes his or her students as a very special kind of group. It is a group that has its meaning within a public school, system, as well as, at university or a commercial language school, or some other social institution."
>
> /ibidem:4/

„Welcome, people", which is an opening greeting in the group of lower intermediate students, seems to be suitable. When the word ´welcome´ is being used, the teacher uses the same word he or she would say to his or her guests who have just come to his or her home. Using this word means first of all that the teacher is speaking for the family that lives there. More important, though, it means that the teacher intends to help his or her guests to feel comfortable. So we often follow ´Welcome´ with ´Make yourself home´ The word ´Welcome´, then, stands for one of the essential sides of the role as teacher. The teacher hopes that by the end of the course his or her students will feel more at home with the target language than they do now. The teacher hopes as well that students will prefer to concentrate on the work at hand rather than on the clock. Most of all, the teacher hopes that they will throw intellect and imagination into the lesson, and not just go through the motions with their voices and their pencils. The last point is particularly important .

In the long run, the quantity of the teacher´s students´ learning will depend on the quality of the attention that they give to it. In Stewick, an apt metaphor for this phenomenon was found,

> The quality of their attention will depend, in turn, on the degree to which they are able and willing to throw themselves into what is going on. And they will throw themselves in only to the extent that they feel secure in doing so. In this respect they are something like a turtle, which moves ahead on its own power only when it is willing to stick its neck out a little.
>
> /ibidem:5/

It is taken for granted that it is nice to make one´s guest feel comfortable. But when the teacher makes his or her stutent-guests feel welcome and safe, the teacher has done more than just to be nice to them. The teacher achieved a very practical end in opening the way for them to participate more freely in the course and to profit more fully from it.

Another part of the above mentioned greeting formula ´people´ shows that the students are going to be treated as human beings with human needs. But they are not the only human beings in the classrooms. So is the teacher. So it will be worth the teachers´ while to notice what it is that makes him or her welcome or unwelcome, what would make him or her more secure and to be able to put himself or herself into work in the class. It is very helpful to tell the students a bit about how the teacher came to be their teacher, why the teacher does the things in the way he or she does, and so on. To uncover a bit of the teacher's private life is of a big use as well. Students want to know that they are investing their minds and their emotions, their time, and in the case of our school, even their money, in a way that will bring them a satisfying return.

Next in the opening words of the teacher has to be giving the students teacher´s full name. The name should be inserted in the way the teacher wishes the class to use in speaking with him or her. And the teachers should then ask themselves silently, „What is the person like

who goes by this name? What brought me to the classroom, what do I hope to get out of it?"

This part dealing with the opening greeting formula of the very first lesson can be finished by the quotation by E.W. Stewick, which supports the above ideas,

> When the students sense that they are in firm hands, they can relax and turn their full attention to the task before them.
> /ibidem:8/

A very powerful means how not to build any psychological barriers, which could later prevent students from taking part in discussions and asking questions or asking for help is, besides smiles, teachers' knowledge of their students names.

In Petty, there is a felicitous wisdom about an importance of people´s names said by Dale Carnegie,

> "Remember that the name of a human being is for him or her the sweetest and the most important word of the language."
> /Petty:1991:80/

It is obvious that during the teaching - learning process the learners are as important as teachers. If the learners are being called by their names, it gives them a feeling of being important. If the teacher starts teaching the class where the learners do not know one another, which is a situation in Labyrint language school because every September new students are coming, it is essential for the teachers to start their teaching with mutual introducing on two levels - teacher - students and students - students.

In Silberman and Laws /1997:32 – 34/, 10 ways how to learn one other's names are being offered. Two below mentioned ways, which were being shortened, seemed to me the most effective,

1. Chain of the names. All learners introduce themselves one by one and they repeat the names of the learners who had introduced themselves before them. For example - the first person introduces only himself or herself but the second person is to introduce himself or himself and add

the name of the person introduced before him or her. With the lengthening chain there will be more and more names to remember, on the other hand, these names will be more and more repeated. The above mentioned book offers the idea of creating a letter continuity - for example ´football player´ František, charming Charles, et cetera. Some alliterative words can sometimes make it easier to remember names and very often bring humor into classroom. Silberman holds out another idea how to modify this way. Learners can be asked to introduce themselves and to add some physical movement which can become a mnemotechnical aid.

2. Do you know your neighbors? A circle is created. We all know a true power of circle. One person is being put into the middle of the circle. He or she points at somebody and asks, „Do you know your neighbors?“. If the player knows the name of both - the neighbor on his left and right, he stays in the circle, otherwise, he changes the role with the person in the middle. Players in the circle often change their positions to make the game more difficult.

In the group of intermediate students ,a modification of the chain introduction is being used. Not only names are being used but some interesting information about students themselves are being added. For example, „ I am Luboš and I play the guitar“ - „He is Luboš who plays the guitar and I am Pavla. I am a bit shy“ – etc. Not only does this serves to remember names, but it is also a practicing of grammar telling me what it the student capable of and both teacher and students learn something about likes and dislikes of others. This year there was several very beginners in our group. They were asked to say something in the languages they had already known for others to be able to say - „She is Renata who can speak French“ and for Renata herself and others to be able to say after a month „I am Renata who could not speak English a month ago but now I can“. This introductory lesson is very often being recorded and serves at the end of the course to see the students´ progress.

At the end of the first lesson, which is in a five - lesson - block in Labyrint language school, the group is not tense, the atmosphere is friendly. The very next day, I students can be named by their own names. It is good to focus on learning the students´ names during the very first day, we know some basic information about one other and we are ready to build a positive climate of the classroom.

III – 1.3   Questioning in Advanced Group

The idea of a big importance and influence of knowing one another´s names in creating a positive classroom climate was proved by random questioning the students from the other group , which was, moreover, the way how to find out something about the classroom climate in that group. The outcome was measurable in numbers since it was possible to compare in per cents negativity and positivity of the answers.   The following questions were chosen for the questioning round due to their connection to previously introduced idea of an importance of teachers and their role at the beginning of school year in creating of bases for further positive classroom climate,

„How do you know your teacher?
 How do you know one another?“

 All the 17 questioned studends answered the question. The students were being questioned during breaks on the premises of the Labyrint school. Either in the corridor or in their classroom. In the end of October - two months after the beginning of the school year the following responds could be heard,

„We have not known one another yet. I know hardly anything about our teacher either“   Líba 19

„It is like being in a dark cave"   Pepa 22

„I care only about a particular group of people. Others do not interest me"   Jiří 19

„People are hidden in their shells in our classroom"
                                        Martin 20

„Why do not we have only one or two teachers for us to know them better and vice versa?"   Emil 19

„It looks like in my former high school here. It was terrible."
                                        Hana 21

„Slightly disappointed"   Lukáš 20

„ I would like to be next door"   Jana 19

„Confused"   Eva 21

„ I envy the students next door"   Šárka 19

"Some people are hidden in their shells, they
  need a help to get out"   Pavel 19

"Teachers come and leave – strange"   Jan 19

"How to change it?"   Amálka 19

"Mortuary"   Lucie 19

"I may escape. I have been thinking
  about it several times"   Mirek 19

"Our teachers are indifferent"   Petra 20

"Oops!"   David 21

Out of 17 asked students 17 of them replied in a negative way. The number of negative answers can be, therefore, expressed by the number 100 %. Despite of the fact that a prevailing percentage of negative answers had been expected, the result of this drive was surprising. The following steps of the research which are going to be conducted later are to bring some change. Due to that, the lowering percentage of dissatisfaction is being expected and is going to be reviewed.

The above answers prove the idea that a role of a teacher in the building of a base for a good classroom climate is inevitable. The teacher should help students who had not known one another before they came to school to know one another. This over idea is also justified in Williams, Burden , where it is being stated that there are two main factors which can be seen as contributing to the learners motivation and consequently to creating of positive classroom climate. The first of them is the personality or nature of the person introducing the activities,

> All learners are likely to be influenced by their personal feelings about their teachers, and therefore, their perceptions of their teachers and of the interactions that occur between them and their teachers will undoubtedly affect their motivation to learn.
> /Williams, Burden:1997:133/

The second factor is the way in which the person presents the activity and works with the learners during the completion of that activity. Thus the role of the teacher is important at all stages of the motivational process. Nevertheless, as it was mentioned at the part of the work trying to explain and define all the terms used at this work, ..."it is obvious that teacher is not the only one to create and influence social climate in the classroom." /ibid:133/ The class can become a partner. Due to their mutual inter-influence, they create the climate together. At some degree, prevailing competitiveness over cooperation and creativity can be an obstacle on the way leading to the common target - good, supportive and positive classroom climate. Teachers should focus on

putting these two important components of teaching - learning process into balance. Socio - organizational approach serves to focus on a development of a team work.

III – 1.4 Influence of a Long Term Course of a Time

In the school year 1999/2000 a focus aimed to arouse students´ creativity and to allow them to discover skills that is some cases they did not know they possessed was made. The focus in a form of an action research was not originally supposed to be investigated from the point of view of its influence to creating a positive classroom climate, still, the further events and influence of this act in following school year justify its being used in this work. The title of the work was „Video - how to free students from the passive consumerist feelings that some people bring to viewing"

The aforementioned action research was being carried out in a group of 16 lower intermediate students of a commercial language school Labyrint /average age 19,3 is the same as average age of 2000/2001 school year, which is 19,6/. It was conducted in the same school in which this year research dealing with classroom climate is being carried out. Although, video is, inarguably, a supercharged medium of communication and a powerful vehicle of information, a rich terrain to be worked and reworked in the language learning classroom, the numbers concluded from the research in the school year 1998/1999 and again in 1999/2000 showed, that video scored unexpectedly low as for level of the students´ priorities. This was a starting point of my thinking „why?" and „How to improve this?". I figured out that among the age category whose members had just left or were going to leave their teenage years, there was still a big number of so called screen addicts. This fact explicitly influenced then students attitudes to creativity at school and through this even indirectly all the classroom climate. The idea of the project was following , „To be able to make

most from the video lessons" and of course by changing the students attitudes even from all the lessons in then class „students should change their attitudes to this kind of teaching aids." Making their own video, to have to make all the decisions both behind and in front of the lens was thought to have been the best solution. The fact that many students had already been familiar with the ways how to use a camcorder was very helpful. Thus, the first step towards video/TV literacy and through it to the change in students attitudes, which are essential in creating a positive and cooperative classroom climate, could be done. This was supposed to be a spark in developing students independence, which is also crucial in creating a supportive classroom climate. Then students were asked to come out with a useful end-product, which was supposed to be a thirty - minute ´video news´. Not having been prepared for such a kind of work, then students had to be pre-prepared by an overuse of role-play. The roles in the classroom were reversed. The students were to work out the order of the items, the timing of the items and the program as a whole, who is responsible for doing what and when, where in the room the different parts of the program will be filmed, design of the ´set´ and ´backdrop´, to decide, with consultation, on a name for the program, title of the program, filming itself.

 The teacher´s role was to give support and advice to the producer and camera operator, to support group dynamics, allowing the class to cohere and cooperate smoothly, which does not just happen, and to create the right atmosphere.

Everybody had his or her own role. Then students succeeded in managing the task. In the end they came out with a 45 - minute - program. Competitiveness and laziness in then class was taken over by creativity and cooperation This could be proved by another project - making a radio station „Yummy, Yummy for my Tummy". Working on the project following their first one , the 1999/2000 students were working very spontaneously, enjoying themselves, working in an excellent atmosphere of cooperation, being aware of belonging to one

group, getting to the very substance of themselves - joy. In Pecková, it is stated that,

> "..... joy of activity is a very substance originally present in our being A feeling of happiness and elevation is based in the activity itself, it is said to be there independently on what we achieve. A possibility for every human effective education is bottomed in this experience. The highest degree of joy, which we call eudaimonia - bliss, is founded in every activity. A nature of activity , respectively the joy of acting is linked, in Nohl´s opinion, with what we call by old Greek expression ´thyme´ - breath, passion, courage. Nohl continues using a meaning of ´thyme´ as courage and he joins it with two things: with courage to educate and education towards courage."
> /Pecková, 2000:148/

Thus, last year students had an opportunity to experience a feeling of power, pleasure and joy owing this to the discovering of their own possibilities, and aim of their concentration.

from their aiming to concentration. In Nohl's opinion /ibid:149/ , I agree with that idea, there is a feeling of dependence and power on the capability to master given targets. It necessary to experience success and feeling that something has been mastered.

 Moreover, the 1999/2000 students   managed to strengthen their cohesiveness and to profit from it later. Cohesiveness has to be built because when students and teachers meet in the classroom for the first time in September, they resemble a collection of individuals more than they do a cohesive group.

Only through the activities on both sides of the teaching-learning process can the social situation change dramatically as the loosely knit of individuals become more cohesive. The previous sentences dealing with cohesiveness can be proved by the quotation taken from Sprinthall,

> "When individuals interact in a group situation, one possible by-product is the spread of a group phenomenon that social psychologists call cohesiveness. When cohesiveness develops, group members tend to stick together more and have more of a sense of 'we-ness' than 'I-ness'".

/Springhall,1990:492/

The spontaneity of last year students was verified by the comment made by the 2000/2001 students who watched and listened to their previous year contemporaries, „They must have been drunk". Of course, they were not. The observers only saw the spontaneous joy of creating. /see the photo documentation in the appendix/

The previous example showed that the climate of the classroom is strongly being created by students if they are given efficient input, and what was the lesson? Agreeably with Nohl, published in Pecková,
 /2000:149/, it is of a high value to dare to try something new since it can teach others to be courageous.

The previous research also verified the idea of a continuity and a link-up of the teaching - learning process. Results of 1998/1999 research initiated the action research of 1999/2000 which   became, as it is mentioned later in the work, a base for other researches in 2000/2001 school year...etc. This phenomenon not only can help the teachers life-long professional growth but it influences even the second side of the process - the students. Once the seed has been sown, it grows into a big tree having an energy that cannot be stopped by any means. Otherwise, if teachers keep on what they have always been doing, they will keep on getting what they have always done. This idea, of course, has something to do with interaction in the class and consequently with the classroom climate, too.

Previous parts dealing with the way how to start the school year and the action research conducted in 1999 were trying to find an answer to the question, „Who affects the classroom climate?". The following part discovers at least a small part of „What affects the classroom climate?"
Climate of the classroom is significantly influenced by its physical environment, which is closely connected to appearance of the classroom, arrangement of the furniture and even by appearance of the teacher and the students. An overall appearance of the classroom shows

50

the students, how much attention was devoted to their learning environment which supports their skills and knowledge. The decorations in the classroom usually correspond with the ethos of all the school, and, moreover, they serve the student as an illustration of their teacher personality, attitudes, sense of humor etc. Making photo documentation and notice boards seems to be a powerful means of how to aim the students activities and to provoke their natural curiosity. Curiosity is, as it is stated in Sprinthall, closely linked to motivation,

> "Indeed, the two may be inseparable. There is much recent speculation that the curiosity motive is not an acquired motive at all but is,, in fact, based on the psychological functioning of the nervous system. There seems to be mounting evidence that the curiosity motive functions autonomously right from birth, that is never depend on food or drink or any other biological predecessor" /Sprinthall.1990:531/

"Why not exploit this ?"

There are several notice boards not only in the class but there are five notice boards even in the corridor on the first floor, which is an English section in our school. Let me mention one very important idea found in Wright,

> "Things we see play an enormous part in affecting us and giving us information. We predict, deduce and infer, not only from what we hear and read but from what we see and from what we remember having   seen."
> /Wright.1989:14/

The following ideas come from my research paper called „Research Tools of Self-reflection" led in the school year of 2000/2001. Either this research or the research „Action Research" written in 1999/2000, was not originally thought to be a part of these thesis, but as it was mentioned some two pages before, a course of   time together with all the events started with both the researches   showed how all the

components of the teaching-learning process are linked-up and mutually tied together.

The research paper „Research Tools of Self-reflection" would not have come into being if it had not been for the previous „Action Research" paper and the secondly named research only tore off the avalanche of events and consequences rising more questions to be answered and items to be solved.

There are five notice boards on the first floor corridor, which is the English language section in our school. This work mentions the latest three ones. /see the photo documentation in the appendix/. The notice boards called „Business before Pleasure" and „Pleasure before Business" were created at the end of the school year 1999/2000. The notice board called „We Have Been Studying English for Two Months" was hung on the wall in November 2000. The purposes why the above mentioned notice boards were placed in the corridor were different. The first two mentioned were supposed to be a presentation of the group activities in the year for other teachers, looking at the pictures is a kind of an observation one can get some feedback from, also for the last year students to see their own progress, for the students who were to come in September 2000 to know what to expect, and for the would-be students of 2001, 2002,3,4,5...school years to help them decide whether to come to our school or not. The third notice board was placed in the corridor to attract the attention of the other group students.

The feedback I got was bigger than I had expected. Tony, our new Australian teacher, came to me mentioning the pictures dealing with the film making. This was one of the things I had expected since at the end of my „Action Research" I wrote,

> „......this information can be used in future because this kind of project could be used as a means of team teaching involving all the teachers and all the groups contributing to enriching of everybody´s experience and mutual interclass relationship and to the feeling of belonging to one „tribe" /my own Action Research 2000:/20/

Tony brought the idea of using the camera in the class. The idea of a new project was born. He would not have thought about it if he had not seen the notice boards. From this point of view, the effectively used photographs can serve as a factor which aims attention towards t events at the school and in the classroom. Within two months a 'feature film' with the title „Look Out Kájinek!" was finished. The work on the film brought the students together and supported cohesiveness in the classroom. It let the students experience the joy of creation and led I-ness to take over we-ness.   In the questionnaire research which followed the movie making, 87 per cent of the students involved in the project admitted that they would not have taken part not having seen their last year contemporaries doing the same kind of activity on the notice board.   They dared to try even without being taught to be courageous. The work was used later in several grammar lessons as a learner based teaching aid. All the structures practiced at those lesson as „Painting the bars, all the criminals felt happy sniffing the solvent., „It made their minds fly.",

„If Kajínek had not gone to the party, he would not have been caught.", etc. got stuck in the students´ minds. Not only will they remind the students of the grammar they came across during that special lesson, but also the fragments of the sentences will remind them for ever of the atmosphere of the time when they were creating. The feeling of a job well done should encourage them to try to do something similar later on.

The case mentioned above was an evidence of the role of notice boards and other photo documentation within a group of lower - intermediate students. They are one of many „what" that influences the climate of the classroom. Nonetheless, the above mentioned notice boards may have been a reason for further changes in the group of advanced students, as well as, the changes may have been started by questioning the students from the advanced group in October. One of the goals of that was a change. The students from the advanced group, who were

very dissatisfied while being interviewed at the end of October with the social climate in their class started thinking. From time to time some of them came to take part in the lessons in other class. This is possible in the Labyrint school. The students can move to different class if they feel like being there. So far there had been a classical front-teaching arrangement of the furniture in the classroom of advanced students, and any time somebody entered the class during break, there were separated groups of students sitting not communicating together. There was a strange silence there. From time to time some students came with a proposal to join both the groups for them to experience different ways of teaching and for less advanced students to have an opportunity to talk wit more advanced students. All of a sudden, at the beginning of December, there was a surprise awaiting in the classroom of advanced students. Furniture had been newly arranged into a shape of two horseshoes. Students themselves started to change their environment. That was the first step. More steps were supposed to come.

III – 1.5 Questionnaire Surveys

Originally, at is has been mentioned before, the target of this work was to use some of for these purposes designed questionnaires. The questionnaires were introduced in a theoretical part of this work. Both questionnaires which were initially thought to be used with the Labyrint students CUCEI – College and University Classroom Environment Inventory and CES – Classroom Environment Scale – both of them were translated by Mareš a Křivohlavý – are not easily available in the Czech Republic.

In the theoretical part of this work, seven main research approaches were being introduced. For the extensiveness of all the approaches it is not possible to employ all of them. Socio-psychological and environmental approach was chosen as the most suitable for conducting a survey among the students and teachers. Teachers teaching in the

class and their students are object of the study. They capture their own point of view and their vision, their attitude and their subjectively influenced thinking, their expectations.

III – 1.5.a   Metaphor Questionnaires

Two kinds of questionnaires working with metaphors were designed by the author of this work. The first one is using at its opening part the following quotation from Bowen and Marks,

> Clearly people do learn languages, and have learned them through the ages, by all sorts of methods, some involving classroom and teachers others not. Perhaps what matters is not so much what methodology we use, but other more basic underlying factors to do with how people feel about the place they are in and the people they are with.   /Bowen, Marks, 1994:13/

Due to the ethos of the school, the questionnaires do not contain any closed questions for the students to be able to better express their inner feeling. The form of a metaphor appears to be the most suitable for this purpose.   Both,   students and teachers were asked to fill in the questionnaires, teachers before students. They were asked to circle one or more   of the following metaphors which expressed most precisely their feelings about their classroom. Students and teachers were encouraged to add their own metaphors as well. The following options were offered,

The classroom is:

- a workshop   a parade ground
- a playground   a prison
- a courtroom   a minefield
- a factory   a minefield
- a greenhouse   a church

The above idea was found in Bowen and Marks, /1994:14/ and in Skehan /1989:46/. In the books, the idea was originally offered to teachers for their self reflection but being modified it can be used in school classroom climate research, too. Two different versions of

questionnaires were handed out. One of them requiring a real classroom climate and the other one the ideal climate of the classroom. The questionnaires with real metaphors were handed out a week before the questionnaires with the ideal version of metaphor. Fifty questionnaires were distributed in two groups of learners and teachers each week. The first week, 43 questionnaires returned. The second week, 45 questionnaires were handed in. This big percentage of questionnaires which were being filled in and handed in proves that both, students and teachers prefer filling in the questionnaires which do not look overly officially. Several questionnaire researches conducted in our school discovered that a percentage of returning of more officially looking tables and questionnaires ranks about 30 to 40 per cent. This proves the rightness of the form how to design the questionnaire.

Once again, what we have in any classroom is a multitude of perceptions from all the participants, teachers and learners, perceiving what is happening in their own particular way. They also have an image of how they would like things to be, which more or less matches their perceptions of how things are . The greater the degree of concordance between one´s ideal classroom and the actual classroom where one finds oneself, the higher the degree of satisfaction there is likely to be.

Let us start with the metaphors from the questionnaires of the teachers in the advanced group. The questionnaires were filled in by all the 4 teachers teaching in that group.

The metaphors chosen for a real classroom climate were:

three times workshop, twice playground, three times greenhouse, twice a parade ground.

Some comments:

"Well, I haven´t spent that much time here. So far for me as for a teacher, the classroom is a playground, sometimes a parade ground . And I think this feeling has a lot to do with the atmosphere of the class as such – specially the students – they are the ones who make the

atmosphere of this classroom. Good students make the good classroom and then it really doesn´t matter how the classroom looks. Bad students with no interest in learning and with no respect make …….. you know"
Katka a novice teacher

The same teacher added her own metaphors – sometimes a pub and sometimes a kindergarten.

"Greenhouse – some growing with their learning naturally, factory - some only doing what they should and when they should, and some just here for show - /a parade ground/
Individuality = difference! but…. there seems to be something missing of keeping them /students/ all growing together, individually yet collectively? I do think this is such a normal circumstance but also a challenge, something that can be changed for the positive"
Zacharias – an American

"In my view a classroom should be a combination of a workshop, a playground, a greenhouse and, to some extent a courtroom /or at least a diagnostic center."
Josef – headmaster

"The teacher is the master. He knows the most out of all. This knowledge is the material that needs to be passed on his students to produce a new product. Each student´s gained knowledge can be a a new product that will come out of the workshop"   René

As it is noticeable from the above quotations, four teachers teaching in one classroom view the class differently, although they circled mostly three the same metaphors from what they said it is noticeable that their feelings toward the classroom are dissimilar.

The same teachers about the ideal classroom climate,

workshop was circled twice, playground twice and greenhouse twice as well. Parade ground was not mentioned this time.

"Ideal greenhouse" "Free to grow indoors as they would outdoors.
having the atmosphere feel natural – healthy, comfortable for growing in which every way their learning takes them /individually/"
"What can I start doing to achieve it? – Taking one by one the students and meeting them on their level of understanding for everything and keeping your individualistic qualities but adjusting them to fit the situation…..tis a challenge"
Zacharias
Some metaphors added – holiday abroad and camping

"What can I start doing to achieve it? – my task is to try to make my class being enthusiastic about English. And – as I have already said – good students make the good classroom. But, anyway, I like the classroom of Mrs. P. and YES, this is actually one of the ways how to try to make the class being interested and enthusiastic about English. So....Should I start?"

<div align="right">Katka</div>

"What shall I do to achieve the ideal? – A good lesson plan is the right answer. Thinking of the students needs is another one. Tireless looking for answers to questions like this one is, yet, another option"

<div align="right">Josef – headmaster</div>

"I think, I should try to learn something more about my students"
"We should be creating new improved things – as it is done in the workshop. We want to have fun doing pleasant atmosphere while doing /playground/. We are supposed to create knowledge – a product /Factory/   /René/   /

It is interesting to compare – a real perception of the climate with the

vision of the ideal state.

In the advanced students´ point of view, their real classroom is workshop /4X/ , playground /5X/, courtroom /O/ , factory /O/, greenhouse /2X/, parade ground /2X/, prison /lx/ , minefield /O/ Church /1X/.

The most often mentioned metaphors were workshop, playground and

greenhouse, parade ground. Some advanced students added an extra

metaphor.

"A dark cave – studying is so boring without any games"

"A dentist – sometimes, I am afraid to open my mouth"

"In every moment I am in different situation, It mostly depends on the teacher because he gives or should give the impulses to the students and directs the energy which is there. The energy changes with every change of the teachers"

"A cinema – everybody chooses his favorite ´film´ and visits ´the cinema´ to watch it and if he doesn´t like ´the performance´ he leaves"

" A fitness center - if somebody wants to improve himself he attends ´the center´"

"A fellow club - there are a lot of friends and if you want to talk or have fun with them you simply go to the club"

"A playground - players have to struggle or fight to win and students must too – but not with their schoolmates or teachers but with themselves – mostly to make themselves study and not hanging around."

"A shop - students are like customers and teachers are shop sellers and it is up to customer what and how much for he buys."

"Classroom should be classroom – let´s be tolerant."

´Ideal´ metaphors of the advanced students were mostly greenhouse and playground. Some interesting ideas were found among the extra added metaphors
"Oasis - I would want to find safety here – our classroom should be decorated with nice colorful posers and pictures. I have always dreamt about I would be at classroom similar to Helča´s classroom"

"The ideal classroom cannot exist but it can be very close."

One more answer to the question: "What can you start doing now towards achieving ideal classroom climate?",

"I think   that although student can appeal to teacher to change something or he can support teachers´ good methods of teaching by paying attention in other ways, he cannot change a school system by himself because students do not have leading role at schools. The system – and even classroom climate – can be only changed by leaders of the school because they choose teachers, they make rules, and both, teachers and rules make system which represents every school"

Although there is some concordance between teachers and students, perception of their climate differs in many ways as well, and a desire for the change can be noticed. In the classroom mentioned above, several students added extra negative metaphors – as a dark cave, dentist, etc,   probably reflecting the fact that some students were not satisfied with the state of the climate at their classroom at the time of filling the questionnaires in. Expression like those mentioned above express a certain degree of tension. The opinion that it is the teacher

who "gives or should give the students impulses" or "teachers make rules, students cannot change anything" were not exceptional.

In the group of lower intermediate students, as it has been mentioned before, unlike in the advanced group, there is a stable situation with their teachers. The stable situation means 18 lessons a week with their class teacher and 5 lessons with a different teacher. Author of this work, a class teacher in this group, filled the questionnaire as follows,

" A kindergarten is the closest metaphor for expressing my real feelings about it. This is the place where everybody can express himself or herself freely, where very good family-like and friendly relationships have been established and where everybody tries to learn through his or her being playful and to others helpful. The physical environment of the classroom is very colorful and evokes the feeling of being in the kindergarten. According to the psychologists, there is a child present within every human being for all his or her life. Why not exploit it in language teaching? As for me, there is a concordance between the real and ideal conception of the classroom climate. ´What can I start doing now towards achieving even better concordance?´ It is easy, ´Spread enthusiasm´".

The other teacher teaching in the group of lower intermediate students expressed herself as follows:

"Workshop and playground are the metaphors representing the real climate in the classroom. Students are playful, cheerful and ready to co-operate. I like this group. This could be considered to be almost an ideal climate " /Katka/

As for the metaphors used by the two teachers teaching in this group, there is a very close concordance between them since a playground can be taken for something very similar to kindergarten. In the ideal version, only playground was mentioned by the other teacher teaching in the group mentioned above.

It was interesting to find out, that almost 85 per cent of questioned students in the group of lower intermediate students mentioned playground in the real state questionnaire and 100 per cent of them in the ideal version. Even kindergarten appeared in added metaphors

which was an absolute concordance with the class teacher perception. These numbers show a big concordance between the perception of the teachers and students, which is a good sign since the higher the concordance – the more the ideal state of the classroom. Besides the playground, workshop was mostly chosen /in ten cases/, once parade ground and once prison were chosen.

The metaphor mentioned last was used in a slightly different meaning showing that a liberal climate does not have to be always the advantage for some students,

"Prison – If our classroom were prison, I would have to attend it regularly and I would study more hard".

There were several metaphors added:

"A discussion club – we can discuss about anything with our teacher"

"A party club – it is like a big party to be here and have a lot of fun every day"

"A circus – there is a lot of noise in our classroom. Our classroom is very colorful and interesting. There is a plenty of actors and comedians there."

"A playground – everybody who comes to this place can play only his own game or he can play with others. Our teacher is very playful and amusing"

"A church - sometimes there is no noise, only silence, because nobody knows anything."

"A playground – our classroom is amusing and learning can be pleasure"

"A forest – I like our palm trees"

" An exhibition – nice pictures"

"A playground – Our classroom is very nice. I feel very good in our classroom. I like our palm trees and all the happy pictures here. And our teacher is our friend too. It is not often that a teacher is a friend. I am very sorry that I hadn´t this beautiful classroom and super teacher sooner because we have super environment for learning. Thanks."

Some voices from the ´ideal´ questionnaires,

"I think that our classroom is super. It does not need big changes. Maybe, I will paint chairs and tables in various colors and I will do pillows on the chairs. When I sit for a long time, I have got a bottom ache. I think that flowers in flower pots could be in our classroom. I like flowers, but I do not know if they grow."

"When I look at our classroom full of people who want to improve their English, it reminds me of kindergarten, where children play all the time, and where they learnt their first words. Sometimes they behave like disobedient children and the teacher has a lot of work with them."

"We are in a half – way now. We have a good great enthusiastic teacher. Class should have less students, so the teacher will be able to focus on each single student. Everybody should pay attention during class time. Students should be taught through games. "

"I wish all the students were more active and creative"

Unlike in the group of advanced students, there was a higher concordance between the students´ and teachers´ perception of the classroom climate. Hardly any negative metaphors were added. There were not such a big need for changes. The idea that students cannot make changes was not apparent.

III – 1.5b Adjective Questionnaires

It is difficult to measure phenomena which are not expressible in numbers. Nevertheless, following questionnaires dealing with adjectives try to conclude outcomes which are expressible in numbers.
A set of adjectives was offered to both – the students and the teachers - for them to circle adjectives which represent a real social climate in their class with a blue pen and with a red one, the adjectives that represent an ideal social climate in their classroom. They were asked to note down two things they would do that help promote one of the adjectives and two things that hinder the promotion of the same adjective. This survey was carried out about two weeks after the

previous metaphor questionnaires. The higher the concordance between real and ideal classroom climate, the bigger the quality of the climate is. In the questionnaire designed by the author of this work, the concordance will be easily measurable since the adjective circled by both colors represents one point. All the adjectives can be divided into two groups – positive and negative. The amount of used negative or positive adjectives is expressible in numbers too and gives an opportunity for the researcher to compare numbers with both the classes and to measure previously expected change in the group of advanced students. The results were supposed to be slightly more positive than the results of the previous questionnaire survey since first, the questionnaire drive was aimed to bring some change. Second, as a result of the first round, the number of advanced students taking part in the lessons of lower intermediate students increased.

The list of offered adjectives follows:

Positive adjectives:

calm, challenging, cozy, differentiated, encouraging, enriching, entertaining, enthusiastic, excellent, free, friendly, funny, helpful, interactive, joyful, merry, playful, positive, soothing, symmetrical, warm

Negative adjectives:

asymmetrical, boring, depressing, difficult, exhausting, frightening, gloomy, negative, quite OK, sad, secret, sleepy, tiring, unbearable

Since this time the number of concordances within one classroom is the result which is expected to be concluded from the questionnaire survey, all the questionnaires from one classroom are being evaluated no matter by whom they had been filled in. The bellow table shows in numbers the results of this round,

class	number of	questionnaires	%	actual perception	%

	students	handled in		positive	negative	
lower interm.	18	16	88.8	56	10	10.6
advanced	19	15	78.4	62	28	32

Class	number of concordances	the most used adjectives				frequent adj. concordance	
		positive		negative			
lower interm.	27	friendly	31	difficult	4	playful	12
		playful	23				
						friendly	8
		enriching	20				
		free	14				
advanced	18	helpful	7	sleepy	7	enthusiastic	6
		encouraging	10	asymetrical	8		
		enthusiastic	8	stuffy	3		

Compare with the previous metaphor questionnaires, the ratio between negative and positive perception has changed in the group of advanced students and stayed roughly the same in the group of lower intermediate students. The negative evaluation was prevailing two weeks ago and now despite the fact that the number of negative adjectives in the group of advanced students is still bigger than the number in the group of lower intermediate students, the movement forward is noticeable. The number of negative answers has been steadily lowering since October 2000.

The percentage of negative response in the group of advanced students can be compared in the following table,

----

October	metaphor questionnaires	adjective questionnaires
2000	February 2001	March 2001
100 %	56.2 %	32.1 %

The lowering number of negative perceptions together with the most common word which was being circled by both   blue and red pen 'challenging' is the sign that the perception is changing and that there is an urging need to change the situation in the classroom of advanced students.   Every motive has two parts a need and a drive and every motive is sooner or later followed by some drive. This was, as it has been mentioned before, one of the goals of the questionnaire survey conducted.   White walls of the advanced group classroom were a big challenge. In many metaphor questionnaires, an idea that many a student wished to have his classroom similar to that one of lower intermediate students occurred. At the time of filling in the first series of questionnaires, there was a general conviction within the advanced class that only a teacher is that who can change the things and students themselves can change hardly anything. Following events, however, show that changes in   school climate can be sparked also by the students. Over one half of the students from the class of advanced group   collected some money and bought several boxes of colorful painting chalks and stayed at school after lessons to change the physical environment of their classroom and through it to profit through new vocabulary learned, to prepare some learner based teaching aids for the further students and for themselves, and   for the teachers teaching in that classroom to use them. The action was a kind of a revolt against the headmaster of the school who likes a frontal form of teaching and due to his being busy with his business, which is not teaching, does not have enough time and enthusiasm to try new things. The action was started by the episode when Katka, a novice teacher, dared to write patterns of conditional clauses with a piece of green chalk on the white

wall, having seen this being done in the class of intermediate students before. Afterwards she was talked to by the headmaster of the school. Why not learn language through the tables, poems and sayings written on the classroom walls? This was a starting point which evoked the drive, another part of the motive. Most of human motives, as it was mentioned in the theoretical part of this work, are learned or acquired. Before the students started decorating their classroom, they had thought about the ideas, had read many a book to find suitable poems, sayings or interesting ideas, they must have pre-thought the pictures themselves too. There had been a cognitive or, perhaps, emotional arousal which led to a conscious decision to act, and which gave rise to a period of sustained intellectual and physical effort, working on a high step ladder is physically demanding, in order to attain a previously set goal. During one afternoon and evening the classroom was changed completely. A poem 'If' by Rudyard Kipling appeared on the wall between two windows, a big colorful ball with phrasal verbs, which cause a lot of problems in this class, appeared on the back wall of the classroom. Numerous little poems, sayings and ponderings can be read round the classroom. That afternoon and evening helped students get together and think while working creatively. The feeling of we-ness took over I-ness as well. That afternoon and the evening some of the students brought three digeridoos and several drums to create a pleasant atmosphere of joy and co-operation. All the decorations were created on Tuesday afternoon and upcoming Friday was expected with a slight fright. Friday is the day when the advanced students are being taught by the headmaster of the school. As it was mentioned before, the action was driven without any previous consultation with the headmaster. The headmaster was slightly shocked, nevertheless, after several minutes of talking to, he responded that the students were lucky that he liked the result of the work. He also expressed the idea it would be of use in future years.

One month passed and a need to measure a change which was started by the drive in the group of advanced students arose. Together with the need a question of through which means to measure the change emerged. The means of measuring should be somehow similar to both previous ones. The first idea to come was the idea of observations and observing and noting down a number of eye contacts and comparing the numbers of both involved classes. The eye contact is one of basic indicators of a quality of human relationships. Nonetheless, the idea was rejected in the end since both previously conducted questionnaire drives were carried out through verbal means, so that the following survey should be conducted through verbal actions, too. Moreover, the last of the used questionnaires should be designed in a similar not officially looking style.

III – 1.5.c Questionnaires with Associations

This time the idea of associations is being employed by the author of this work. Associations are connections of the thoughts initiated by some instigation. Associations are very often emerging from human subconsciousness, so that through this fact they can be taken of a true expression of human thoughts. Students and teachers were offered a list of words dealing with the class and classroom climate. They were asked not to think the mater over and over but to try to express themselves through immediate associations connected with the word chosen from the offered list. This time only an unrepeated survey is being conducted since we need only to find out a real state of perception of the classroom climate to be able to compare the results in two different classes. A presence of both positive and negative words makes it possible to compare with the previously carried out adjective questionnaire drive. 19 + 18 questionnaires were handed out and 17 + 16 questionnaires were handed in. A big percentage of handed in questionnaire shows the students interest in the topic of the classroom climate. The list of options follows,

MUCH WORK   SUCCESS   QUIET   EASY   INSIDE CLASS
FRIEND   ONE ANOTHER   ENERGY   IMPORTANT   JOY   FOOL
AROUND   ORGANIZED   CHANGE   OUTSICE CLASS APART
COMPETITION   SOCIAL   NOISE   DAYDREAM DIFFICULT
SORROW   CLOCK   CO-OPERATE   HOUR FRIENDSHIP
EXPLAIN   FRIENDSHIP   CLASSWORK TOGETHER   FAILURE
PAY ATTENTION   BREAKS   PROJECT TALKING

HARDLY EVER   OFTEN   SELDOM
WHY?   WHEN?   WHO?   HOW?   WHERE?

The choice of the words should point out an importance of single classroom climate features for the respondents. This can be studied in the following table,

+ = positive   - = negative

LOWER INTERMEDIATE students,   ADVANCED   students,

expression chosen	frequency	expression	frequency
breaks +	3	breaks +	2
clock +	3	class work +	4
co-operate +	6	co-operate +	5
class work +	3	change +	8
daydream -	1	daydream -	3
difficult -	1	difficult -	5
easy +	7	easy +	3

energy +	6	energy +	6
explain +	3	friend +	6
friend +	10	friendship +	5
friendship +	10	important +	4
fool around +	1	much work	3
hour	2	one another +	4
joy +	3	quiet	3
much work	3	often	3
noise	2	seldom	3
organized +	3	where?	3
together +	7	why?	3
sorrow +	2	how?	2
success +	4	when?	3
talking +	2	who	3

the perception of the classroom climate in the lower intermediate group could be expressed by five most used expressions,

the perception of the classroom climate in the advanced group could be expressed by five most used expressions

FRIEND + FRIENDSHIP + EASY + TOGETHER + CO-OPERATE

CHANGE+ENERGY+FRIEND +FRIENDSHIP+CO-OPERATE

Looking at the two above patterns it is noticeable that perceptions of classroom climates in both the classrooms are nearly identical, while in October one hundred per cent of advanced students were dissatisfied and the words like friend, energy and co-operate may have not appeared, only two of handed in questionnaires were negative. It is possible to express this in numbers and to compare it to previously used number of dissatisfaction. In the group of advanced students 17 questionnaires were handed in /89.1%/ - the percentage of dissatisfaction is 11.7%. This is the number which can be added to the steadily declining line of dissatisfaction in the advanced group

===

October	metaphors	adjectives	associations
100 %	56.2 %	32.1%	11.7%

It is difficult, however, to evaluate, to count and to compare negativity and positivity of all the by the students chosen expressions since some positive expressions may be followed by negative associations and vice versa. Nevertheless, it is possible to sense whether the questionnaire is negative or positive. Several chosen excerpts from the questionnaires can help the reader to get an idea how to work and evaluate this kind of questionnaires,

"WHEN? Now. WHERE? Here. WHO? All of us. HOW? Clearly.
ENERGY – taking the best from the ones who have it, ignore the negative one/s/. I get heaps of energy from students – IMPORTANT
I hope to GIVE the best + energy to students – DOING
CLASS WORK = TOGETHER – learning becomes EASY – We take it easy.
DAYDREAM / don' t just sit there, come with us and JOIN us
we are studying
Learning   TOGETHER
we are outside class because the sun is shining / we are doing class work = we are having FUN, we give energy to ONE ANOTHER , we are TALKING, we are laughing = learning is FUN = learning is FUN = learning is EASY = this is our FRIENDSHIP, this is US = this is our DAYDREAM.
WHEN? Always. WHERE? Anywhere. WHO? Us who want to be the sun. HOW? However we want.
IF WE WANT, WE CAN DO ANYTHING.   Smile,"

Another excerpt follows,

"WHY quiet?
HOW apart?   = DIFFICULT PROJECT
WHEN explain?

OFTEN JOY.
SELDOM NOISE. = Boggle
WHERE TOGETHER"

The following excerpts shows that hardly any questionnaire was filled in in the same way,

"Two groups of people – FRIENDS who I like talking to and learning and people who do not CO-OPERATE, it is very DIFFICULT to do

some project or discussion. But mood in our class has CHANGED. It is getting better – mostly with Katka and Zach. We are able to help ONE ANOTHER and speak TOGETHER.",

Some respondents were even associated to write a form of a personal letter, two personal letters from different groups were chosen. The first one comes from the group of lower intermediate students, the second one was written by an advanced student,

"For me it is very important to have FRIENDSHIP and SUCCESS and it is in our CLASS. I found a lot of FRIENDS here and I IMPROVE in English. I am very happy that I can be here. It is happy and beautiful TIME and I look forward to next days. /and I thing next year too/. I find new life and new way of living and I hope that my English will be still better in future. English is a very nice language and we have nice CLIMATE too. Thank you, Helča, for your help and for your patience. You are a super person and you help me a lot /with English but with me too/. It´s super that I can have FRIENDSHIP with my teacher. Klárka."

"DAYDREEM – SMILING – NICE – JOY – TALKATIVE – RELAXED –
FREE – FRIENDSHIP Only good people making a good group. Good weather supports the mood. Enjoyable reading with new words – not forcing you to learn it but you like it, so you remember it.
TOGETHER – JOKES, FUN – not different BREAKS from lessons,
It is a pity that we are only few here in the very morning, but at least, the others come later to share TIME TOGETHER with us – SCHOOLMATES. I am happy that many of us became FRIENDS. We are not only people sitting in the same room, ignoring others, looking only what´s good for ourselves. Hand in hand with the change of the season, with the coming of spring , has come good, relaxed, funny, smiling, free
friendly mood. We are trying to HELP ONE ANOTHER – among students and teachers too. Now, at this very moment, I am feeling very optimistic and enthusiastic. CHANGE – IMPORTANT.
Katka is a good TEACHER – FRIEND.
Thanx, Helena, for the opportunity to think about the CLASS deeper. I have realized something important for life while filling in your questionnaires. I like the topic you have chosen for your school report. I consider it important for you as a teacher and for all the teacher at all.
Thanx – Amálka.   P.S. Thanx for the sweets."

Some respondents chose the form of word associations,

"CLOCK = good time, JOY = good joy, MUCH WORK = yes, BREAKS = table tennis"

"SUCCESS – some, ENERGY – consuming, CO-OPERATE – mixture, TALKING – joy, DAYDREAM – nightmare, FOOL AROUND – why not?. FRIENDSHIP – LTD, NOISE – mice, FAILURE – never",

Other respondents employed the chain of associated words,

"CHANGE – necessary, good, at last, green, red, yellow, orange, love it, know why, yes.

FRIENDSHIP – teacher, Eva, for ever, good, nice, helping, red, it came, lessons, breaks

TOGETHER – sit, chat, read, smile, laugh, succeed, fail, drink beer, escape.
IMPORTANT – I and you he and she we and they – yup."

For the contrast one of the negative questionnaires was added,

"QUIET – no enthusiastic atmosphere is present
ENERGY – level is low, a challenge to get the clan to respond
CHANGE – I would like to change quiet, low energy environment
DIFFICULT – to make the lesson FUN"

Although the last one of the by the author of this work designed and used questionnaires offered numerous variations of students thoughts, it proved that the expected change was provoked and realized. It helped the students from the advanced group realize that it does not have to be only a teacher who creates the climate in the classroom. Through the changes all the teachers teaching in the above mentioned group might start thinking and contributing their energy and willingness to participate in the building of better classroom climate having been sparked by the movement from bellow. Since only one of the research

approaches was chosen this year, some of other methods could be employed in future to discover more about this not so much uncovered part of the school life.

IV CONCLUSION

One aim of this work was to look back over the knowledge on this topic which has already been gained and gathered in either Czech or foreign literature. There was another aim - to draw out some conclusions proving some theoretical ideas found in the literature through some practical surveys. The last aim of this work was to look ahead and attempt to identify some profitable directions for future work.

Undoubtedly, having a positive classroom climate is an educationally desirable and in its own right. Moreover, some evidence presented in this work also clearly established that the nature of the classroom climate also has a potent influence on how well students achieve a range of desired educational outcomes. Consequently, educators do not need to feel that they must choose between to achieve constructive classroom climate of cognitive and affective aims. Rather, constructive educational climate may be viewed as both means to valuable ends and as worthy ends in their own right.

The purpose of this work was simple. One aim was to look at the topic from the point of view of determining of all with the classroom climate connected phenomena, e. g. trying to find numerous definitions of a social group, different explanations of motivation, the feature unseparabdly connected with a quality of the classroom climate. In the opening theoretical part of the work, the author of this work tried to introduce as many different and various conceptions of ideas about who or what influences the most the classroom climate to show through how many different perceptions can one single problem be seen. The theoretical part also summarized some major findings of past researches by introducing main types of climate, different approaches

of research and their division including ways of diagnosis of the climate. A comprehensive review of different defining and perceptions of classroom climate clearly shows that the pattern of relationship between student outcomes and classroom climate perception has been replicated in numerous countries through different classroom climate instruments, which are being introduced in this work as well. An importance of individual perception of the climate was pointed out to show that from no research it is possible to conclude an absolutely explicit outcomes.

Another aim of this work was devoted to the research of classroom climate in educational institution. Both direct and indirect methods were used. Although traditionally the fields of classroom-level climate and school-level climate research have been independent, this work attempts to contribute to the desirable aim of confluence of the two fields. Consequently, although the practical part of the work concentrates primarily on classroom climate, the merging of the two fields has been faciliated by including description of the background and introduction of the ethos of the school where the research was carried out.

Despite of the fact that in the Czech Republic the field of investigation of the learning climate has been researched recently , several publications have been written and some for the Czech educational reality suitable conclusions have been drawn out, this topic is still in a stage of a newness among the other bordering disciplines. One of the original purposes of this work was to try out some for these purposes officially designed instruments according to the literature available in our republic. Despite the effort to find for the high schools and colleges suitable instruments – questionnaires CUCEI and CCQ, the author of this work did not succeed in obtaining them. Three kinds of by the teacher designed questionnaires were used for gathering data for further evaluation. A verbal form of expression was chosen. All three above mentioned questionnaires involved perceptions of

psychological aspects. In the two out of three questionnaire surveys, the study of differences between student and teacher perception of actual and preferred classroom learning climate consistently showed that both students and teachers prefer a more favorable climate than they perceive as being present, and that teachers view the same classroom more favorable than their students. The promising findings were that class achievement was greater in class where there was a greater congruence between the actual climate and that preferred by the class.

If replicated in future researches, the findings of this work have very important implications about how teachers can improve their students´ achievement through   deliberate attempts to change classrooms in directions which bring them closer to students preferences. This could be based on the study of discrepancies between actual and preferred classroom climate. Some practical examples of contributing to creating of more positive classroom climate were being introduced in this work. In contrast to methods which rely on outside observers, the above described approach defines the classroom climate in terms of shared perceptions of the students and   sometimes the teachers in that environment. This has a dual advantage of characterizing the class through the eyes of the actual participants and capturing data which the observer could miss or consider unimportant.

Another goal of the work was to provoke a change in the thinking and acting of the students and to lead them to conscious decision to start a change from below and to support their own awareness of being an important element in creating the social climate in their classroom. The different changes in students attitudes had been occurring independently and their mutual influence and interactions were being observed in a long term course of a time.   This time, the research focused also on a role of physical features in successful reaching of the desirable   aim. One desirable orientation for future work   on classroom climate would be to incorporate assessment of psychosocial

climate as but one of several approaches involved in a multiphasic climate assessment which also includes other important aspects of the climate – psychological climate, characteristics of people in the setting, the physical features ..etc. Having taken into consideration the fact that one action starts the other and the other another, the change in students perception of their climate through the questionnaire drives had been expected by the author of this work. The expectation was fulfilled and proved by in the numbers expressible table showing a surprising rocket raise of positive perception of the classroom climate. The change in the physical environment which was realized by the students of one group themselves rose the motivation to study foreign languages and brought an evidence to the last of the aims of this work. It answered positively the question whether the classroom climate and environment influent students motivation to study foreign languages.

This work devoted a lot of attention to report results of four classroom climate instruments. All of them are going to be used as worthwile school-based application including getting feedback information about a class from the students´ view point.

This work could encourage others to use classroom climate assessment for a variety of researches and practical purposes.

This research on classroom climate should not be put into a drawer and forgotten. Hopefully this work will stimulate and guide a new agenda so that important and research and practical application of it involving classroom psychological climate can progress rather than just proceed.

RESUMÉ

Není pochyb o tom, že pozitivní klima školní třídy je ve vzdělávacím

procesu velmi požadovaným jevem. Některé výsledky vyhodnocovaných průzkumů prokázaly, že pozitivní klima školní třídy má vliv na motivaci studentů a výsledky školní edukace. Jedním z cílů této práce pojednávající o klimatu školní třídy bylo podívat se zpět na dosud nashromážděné poznatky uvedené jak v české tak zahraniční literatuře. Autorka práce si vytkla další cíl, jímž bylo na základě provedených praktických průzkumů potvrdit teoretické hypotézy podložené vybranou literaturou. Posledním cílem práce bylo pohlédnout kupředu a pokusit se identifikovat správné nasměrování pro budoucí práci.

Účel této práce je jednoduchý. Jedním z cílů je podívat se na dané téma z pohledu vymezení definicí všech s klimatem školní třídy spojených prvků, např. četné a od sebe se lišící definice sociální skupiny, rozdílná pojetí motivace k učení, jevu neoddělitelně spojenému s kvalitou klimatu školní třídy. V úvodní teoretické části práce jsou představeny různorodé koncepce odpovědi na otázku kdo či co je tvůrcem klimatu školní třídy a kdo či co jej ovlivňuje. Na otázku, kdo je zdrojem utváření klimatu ve třídě, jsou mezi odborníky odlišné názory. Někteří míní, že hlavním zdrojem jsou žáci – jejich jedinečná struktura, vlastnosti, chování, které jsou odlišné od jedné třídy k druhé. Jiní odborníci soudí, že hlavním tvůrcem klimatu ve třídě je učitel, neboť tento subjekt svými vlastnostmi a především rolí, kterou má ve vyučování, může významněji ovlivnit klima třídy. Výčet uvedených rozdílných vědeckých názorů uvedených v úvodní části dokresluje fakt, že tento problém skutečně může být viděn z mnoha různých úhlů. Teoretická část práce uvádí výsledky minulých průzkumů představením hlavních typů klimatu školní třídy, rozdílných výzkumných přístupů a jejich rozdělení včetně diagnostiky klimatu. Rozsáhlý přehled různých definicí a vnímání klimatu školní třídy jasně ukazuje že spojitost mezi

výsledky studentů, třídou a vnímáním klimatu školní třídy byla aplikována v mnoha zemích pomocí rozdílných výzkumných prostředků,

již jsou v této práci také představeny. Důležitost individuálního vnímání klimatu školní třídy je v práci stavěna do popředí, aby se ukázal fakt, že z žádného výzkumu není možno vyvodit jednoznačné výsledky.

Praktická část práce je věnována výzkumu klimatu školní třídy ve výchovné instituci. V průzkumu jsou použity jak přímé, tak i nepřímé výzkumné prostředky. Přestože z tradičního úhlu pohledu klima školy a klima školní třídy jsou pojímány nezávisle, tato práce se snaží přispět k vytyčenému cíli vzájemného ovlivňování obou prvků. Takže, i když se praktická část práce zabývá přednostně klimatem školní třídy, pronikání obou prvků je zdůrazněno v části týkající se pozadí a představení ethosu školy, ve které probíhá průzkum.

Přestože v české republice byl fenomen klimatu školní třídy vědecky zkoumán v nepříliš dávné době , několik odborných prací na toto téma bylo publikováno a z výzkumů byly učiněny závěry aplikovatelné v české vzdělávací soustavě, toto téma je stále v roli novice mezi ostatními hraničními disciplinami.

Jedním z původních cílů této práce bylo v českých podmínkách vyzkoušet některý pro tyto účely zkonstruovaný a pro české podmínky modifikovaný průzkumný nástroj. Podle dostupné literatury, tyto průzkumné nástroje by měly být v české republice dosažitelné. Navzdory snaze objevit a vyzkoušet pro podmínky středních škol a nižších ročníků vysokých škol vhodné sofistikované dotazníky CUCEI a CCQ, tiskopisy v České ani Slovenské republice nebylo možno obstarat.

Ke shromažďování dat tedy byly použity tři druhy autorkou práce zkonstruované dotazníky. Pro průzkum byla vybrána verbální forma vyjadřování. Vzhledem k ethosu školy byla vybrána netradiční forma dotazníků. Dotazníky pracovaly z pojmy – metafora, přídavné jméno a asociace. Všechny tři nahoře uvedené dotazníky zahrnují vnímání psychosociálního aspektu. Ve dvou ze třech zkonstruovaných dotazníkových průzkumech jsou studovány rozdíly mezi tím, jak

vnímají klima školní třídy studenti a učitelé a rozdíly mezi aktuálním a preferovaným klimatem školní třídy. Průzkum prokázal, že jak žáci tak studenti někdy preferují lepší klima než to, které vnímají jako aktuální. Pohled učitelů na klima třídy je většinou optimistictější než pohled žáku na něj. Výsledky získané z tohoto průzkumu mohou být implicitně použity ve způsobu jak mohou učitelé zlepšit dosahovaných výsledků svých žáků skrze záměrné ovlivňování klimatu školní takovým směrem, aby se přiblížilo studenty preferovaném u stavu. Toto může být založeno na důkladném studiu nesrovnalostí mezi vnímáním klimatu učiteli a žáky. V práci jsou uvedeny některé praktické příklady jak přispět k vytváření pozitivního klimatu školní třídy. Na rozdíl od metod, které spoléhají na jediného pozorovatele, nahoře uvedený přístup definuje klima školní třídy jako společně sdílené vnímání prostředí žáky a někdy také učiteli . Tento přístup má dvojí výhodu, neboť charakterizuje třídu viděnou očima jejich účastníků a zachycuje data, která by pozorovatel nemusel postřehnout, či mohl je považovat za nedůležité.

Dalším cílem práce bylo vyprovokovat změnu v myšlení a konání studentů, která by je vedla k vědomému rozhodnutí začít měnit klima školní třídy odspoda a které by upevnilo jejich uvědomění si faktu, že to jsou oni, kteří jsou důležitým elementem ve tvoření sociálního klimatu své třídy. Rozdílné změny v postojích studentů byly již pozorovány v dlouhodobější perspektivě. Tentokrát se průzkum také zaměřil na roli fyzického prostředí k úspěšnému dosažení vytčeného cíle. Jedním z úkolů pro další práce bude zapojit výzkum fyzického prostředí spolu s průzkumem psychosociálním v mnohofázovém přístupu ke klimatu školní třídy, zahrnujícího též psychologické klima, charakteristiky lidí v prostředí, fyzické jevy atd.

Po zvážení faktu, který byl také prokázán v dlouhodobějším časovém úseku, že jedna akce startuje druhou a ta zase další, změna ve vnímání klimatu školní třídy samotnými studenty byla předem očekávána. Očekávání bylo vyplněno a prokázáno údaji vyjádřenými čísly

v tabulkách ukazujících raketové zvýšení procenta pozitivního vnímání.

Změna fyzického prostředí, která byla realizovány samotnými studenty jedné skupiny, zvýšila motivaci studentů ke studiu anglického jazyka a přinesla důkaz k potvrzení posledního cíle této práce. Odpověděla pozitivně na otázku zda pozitivní klima školní třídy ovlivňuje motivaci studentů ke studiu cizích jazyků.

Tato práce věnuje mnoho času, aby představila výsledky použití čtyřech průzkumných nástrojů. Všechny jmenované nástroje budou ještě později použity k podrobnějšímu studiu včetně využití dosažené zpětné vazby.

Tato práce by mohla podnítit jiné, aby se pokusili použít průzkumných prostředků k různým výzkumům a praktickým účelům.

Tato průzkumná práce by neměla být uložena do šuplíku a zapomenuta. Autorka práce doufá, že tato práce přispěje k rozšíření agendy, takže její většinou praktická aplikace zahrnující psychosociální klima školní třídy bude moci přispět k pokroku a ne jenom k pokračování.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bowen J. Marks J., <u>Inside Teaching</u>, Heinemann, 1994

Fraser J.B.   <u>Classroom Environment</u>, Croom Helm, Australia,
                      1986

Hedge T.   <u>Teaching and Learning in the Language Classroom,</u>
                     OUP, 2000

Kyriacou Ch.   <u>Klíčové dovednosti učitele</u>, Portál, 1994
/Dvořák,Koldínský/

Lašek J.   Komunikační klima ve středoškolské třídě in
                     <u>Pedagogika,</u> 1991

Lawson K., Silberman M. <u>101 Metod pro aktivní výcvik a vyučování</u>
<u>/Koldínský/</u>

Mareš J., Křivohlavý J. <u>Komunikace ve škole</u>, MU Brno, 1995

Pecková N.   <u>Filosoficko-pedagogická antropologie</u>, Karolinum, 2000

Pelikán J.   <u>Výchova jako teoretický problém</u>, ISBN, 1995

Průcha J.   <u>Moderní pedagogika</u>, Portál 1991

Průcha J.   <u>Přehled pedagogiky</u>, Portál, 2000

Petty G.   <u>Moderní vyučování</u>, Portál 1991

Skehan P.   <u>Individual Differences in Second Language Learning</u>,
                Routledge, USA, 1989

Sprinthall A. and R. <u>Educational Psychology</u>, Mc Graw Hill inc, USA
                     1990

Stevick W.   <u>Strategic Interaction</u>, CUP, 1987

Stevick W.   <u>Teaching – Learning Languages</u>, CUP, 1982

Wright A.   <u>Pictures for Language Learning</u>, OUP, 1989

APPENDIX

1. A photography of the educational institution in which surveys
   were being conducted

2. Statistics on number of students in the past ten years

3. Photo documentation - 1999 Action Research

4. Photo documentation - 1999 Action Research

5. Photo documentation - 2000 Tools of Self reflection

6. Photo documentation - 2000   Tools of Self reflection

7. Photo documentation - 2001 – We-ness took over I-ness

8. Photo documentation – 2001 - One of the aims is being fulfilled

9. Photo documentation - 2001 – Creativity helps support motivation

10. Photo documentation – 2001 – One of the aims is being fulfilled, learner-based teaching aid is being created, learning environment is being changed by highly motivated students

11. Photo documentation – 2001 – more examples of a new look of learning environment

12. Photo documentation - 2001 – The same place BEFORE and AFTER

13. Photo documentation   - 2001 - Expression of the atmosphere

14. Overview of Scales Contained in Five Classroom Environment Instruments

15. My Classroom Inventory sample form

16. Classroom Environment Scale – Actual short form

17. Individualized Classroom Environment Questionnaire – Actual short form

18. Scale Description for the Individual Dimensions

19. 3 samples of metaphor questionnaires

20. 3 samples of adjective questionnaire

21. 3 samples of association questionnaires

FORMULÁŘ PRO ZPŘÍSTUPNĚNÍ PRÁCE
V ELEKTRONICKÉ FORMĚ – ČESKY

Typ dokumentu	*diplomová práce*
Autor	**Potůčková, Helena**
E-mail adresa autora	*potuckova@hotmail.com*
URN	
Název závěrečné práce	*Klima školní třídy*
Stupeň studia	*magisterské*
Katedra	**Katedra anglistiky a amerikanistiky**
Vedoucí práce, školitelé	**PhD Michaela Píšová, MA – vedoucí práce**
Klíčová slova	*atmosféra, klima, prostředí školní třídy* *motivace, soutěživost, spolupráce, individuální vnímání, učitel, žák,* *komerční vzdělávací instituce,*
Datum obhajoby	

Abstrakt	*Práce uvádí přehled různých definic prvků sociální skupiny a motivace. V práci jsou též shrnuta různá pojetí myšlenky hledající odpověď na otázku kdo či co ovlivňuje klima školní třídy. V teoretické části práce jsou sumarizovány hlavní objevy posledních výzkumů, jsou představeny hlavní typy klimatu školní třídy, rozdílné výzkumné přístupy včetně způsobu jeho diagnostiky. Praktická část práce se zaměřuje na výzkum a měření klimatu školní třídy ve výchovné instituci. Přímé i nepřímé metody jsou použity v použitých měřeních. . Vyhodnocení tří dotazníkových průzkumů přináší přehled jak o aktuálním tak preferovaném vnímání klimatu školní třídy jak studenty, tak učiteli. Výsledky průzkumů podávají podněty k tomu, aby se aktivita učitelů mohla zaměřit na záměrné ovlivňování klimatu kšolní. třídy s cílem dosáhnout lepších výsledků výchovné činnosti. Cílem práce bylo vyvolat změnu v myšlení studentů a jejich přístupu k prostředí, ve kterém pracují. Práce potvrzuje, že stanoveného cíle bylo dosaženo.*

Název souboru	*diplom2001* *diplomúvodorg*	Velikost souborů	287 kB

FORMULÁŘ PRO ZPŘÍSTUPNĚNÍ PRÁCE
V ELEKTRONICKÉ FORMĚ – ANGLICKY

Type of Document	*Thesis*
Author	**Potůčková, Helena**
Author's E-mail Address	*potuckova@hotmail.com*
URN	
Title	*Classroom Climate*
Degree	*Master*
Department	**Department of English and American Studies**
Advisory Committee	**PhD Michaela Píšová, MA, supervisor**
Keywords	*atmosphere, climate, environment of school classroom motivation, competitiveness, co-operation, individual perception, student, teacher, commercial educational institution*
Date of Defense	
Availability	*1/ Unrestricted*
Abstract	*Various definitions of features connected with classroom climate as a social group and motivation are being introduced. The work is trying to find the answer to the question who or what influents the classroom climate in its theoretical part. Many types of climate can be found here including different ways of of its diagnosis. A practical part of the work focuses on research an measuring of classroom climate in an educational institution. Both, direct and indirect methods are being used in the research conducted. Final results of evaluating of three questionnaire researches bring an overview about both the actual and preferred perception by both students and teachers involved. The findings of the research provide valuable instigation for the further teachers´ activities to be aimed to deliberately influent and change classroom climate in order to be able to reach better educational outcomes. Another aim of the work was to induct a change in the students´ thinking and their attitude to the environment in which they were working. The work proves that the aim was reached.*

Filename	*diplom2001 diplomívodorg*	Size	287 kB