Impact of teachers’ behaviours on student motivation and exam performance

A thesis submitted to the University of Manchester for the degree of Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology in Humanities

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Thesis Abstract
The University of Manchester
Deborah Flitcroft

Impact of teachers’ behaviours on student motivation and exam performance
D.Ed.Ch.Psychol. 2013-2016

Student motivation is a significant concept as school teachers need to be able to mobilise students to work towards success in examinations. This thesis investigated the impact of teachers’ behaviours on students’ motivation and examination performance and how these behaviours could be adapted to suit the needs of students.

A systematic review of the literature examined how secondary school teachers use motivational strategies in respect of student academic assessment, performance and attainment. Six studies were included in the review and showed both the positive and negative impacts of teacher behaviour on students’ academic performance. The review highlighted a need for further research on teachers’ knowledge of the impact of their behaviours on student motivation.

An empirical study was completed which engaged high school teachers as participants, affording the opportunity to reflect on their current practice from feedback from their students. The research progressed through 3 phases: focus group of six teachers teaching high stakes examination programmes to students age 14-16 (English GCSEs); 10 interviews with students selected from each teacher’s classes; and a second focus group re-convening the teachers. The research found a link between what students perceived to be motivational and the changes that teachers were able to envisage for future practice, indicating that teachers were able to learn from their students. The implications for educational psychologist practice and future research are discussed.

Finally, the thesis concludes with a reflection of the dissemination of the above pieces of research. Dissemination focussed on offering the findings to schools and using methods of consultation and collaboration to integrate findings in to school practice.
Declaration

No portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.
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Acknowledgements

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Professor Kevin Woods, for the continuous support of my Doctorate study and related research, for his patience, motivation, and immense knowledge. I could not have imagined having a better advisor and mentor for my Doctorate.

I want to thank my fellow trainees, with special mention to Nadia Ezzamel, Charlotte Cockcroft, Allison Inoue and Lee Randall. We were not only able to support each other by deliberating over our problems and findings, but also happily talking about things other than just our thesis and placements.

I must thank my family and friends, for understanding how limited my time was over the past 3 years, yet being there with various cups of tea and hugs when I needed them. I would like to thank my brother, Joshua Flitcroft, for all his technical support and help to compile my thesis and my brother, Thomas Flitcroft, for having the ability to always make me laugh when I needed it the most.

Finally, but not least, I want to thank my parents for their wise counsel and sympathetic ear. Thank you to my Dad for taking me out on various long bike rides and cups of coffee to keep me sane. Thank you to my Mum for reading endless re-writes of the same essay and having a critical eye for grammatical errors.
Paper One

High School Teachers’ Role in Student Motivation for Examination Performance

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1 It is anticipated that this paper will be submitted to the International Journal of School and Educational Psychology and has therefore been prepared in accordance with author guidelines which can be seen in Appendix 1 (Retrieved April 15, 2016, from http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/style/layout/tf_quick1-4.pdf).
Abstract

Student motivation is a significant concept for school teachers who need to be able to mobilise students to work towards success in examinations. This systematic literature review surveys current research evidence to find out how secondary school teachers use motivational strategies in respect of student academic assessment and performance. Six studies described the behaviours secondary school teachers engaged in to improve student performance in assessment. Taken together, the studies presented show the importance of teacher behaviour to students’ academic performance, with both positive and negative impacts. The review highlights a need for further research on teacher knowledge of the effects of teacher behaviour upon the motivation of students. The review recommends the involvement of teachers in research to provide a locally sensitive and credible knowledge base.

Keywords: student motivation, teacher behaviour, teacher knowledge, academic assessment, academic performance
Introduction

The importance of student motivation

Student motivation has been a highly significant concept in school settings as teachers need to be able to mobilise students to work and succeed (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Motivation is viewed as the “need or desire to achieve a particular outcome” (Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000, p.1) and requires “all aspects of activation and intention” (Ryan & Deci, 2000, p.69). Specifically, student motivation is viewed as “goals, energy, drive and direction and having a reason to do what they do and do it to the best of their abilities” (Spielhofer, Walker, Gagg, Schagen, & O'Donnell, 2007, p.13). A key aspect of student motivation is developing students so they become independent learners. For students to become independent learners they need to develop self-regulation (Meyer, Haywood & Sachdev, 2008), since students who set goals and record their effectiveness in achieving these goals display superior achievement and perceptions of personal efficacy (Schunk, 1989; Zimmerman, 1989). Teachers therefore need to be able to empower their students to become self-aware and monitor their behaviour in relation to their goals. This in turn will boost students’ self-satisfaction and self-efficacy, and facilitate viewing their futures optimistically (Zimmerman, 2002).

Student motivation will become particularly important in England where, from 2015, all young people will be required to participate in some form of education or training until the age of 18 (Spielhofer et al., 2007). In this context, student motivation is likely to be influenced by various factors, for example, students’ perceptions of programme relevance, and of the role of further and higher education. Furthermore, learning is now conceived as ‘lifelong’, with potential employees having a greater need to be highly adaptable through their working lives (Keegan, 1994). Along with other developed nations, England is described as a ‘learning economy’, economically dependent on the creation of new knowledge and the manipulation of current knowledge and ideas (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, OECD, 2000). Therefore, employees are required to continue to learn throughout their life span, with previous learning and qualifications becoming obsolete (OECD, 2000).

Educational theory relating to student motivation

To motivate students, teachers are required to have a knowledge base of how to teach effectively (Department for Children Schools and Families, 2008). Shulman and Sykes (1986)
define the knowledge base of teachers as the “body of understanding and skill, of dispositions and values, of character and performance that together underlie the capacity to teach” (p.5); they propose that a teacher’s knowledge base comprises of eight categories, one of which is general knowledge of pedagogical principles and practice. Tamir (1987) extended this category to focus on the student, curriculum, instruction and evaluation, and identified skills required for General Pedagogical Knowledge (GPK), including ability to respond to and redirect students’ questions, to develop students’ ideas to guide them to an answer, and to formulate key questions in the classroom. More recently, Coe, Aloisi, Higgins and Major (2014) propose six components found in ‘great teaching’: pedagogical content knowledge, quality of instruction, classroom climate, classroom management, teacher beliefs and professional behaviours. Classroom climate centres on the interactions between teachers and students, showing the importance of teacher language and interactions with students in the classroom. Perhaps surprisingly, some studies suggest that praise can actually be harmful to learning and that teacher encouragement or sympathy after failure to low attaining students may be perceived as having low ability expectations (Dweck, 1999; Hattie & Timperley, 2007; Stipek, 2010).

**Psychological theory relating to student motivation**

Contemporary theories of motivation propose that behaviour is underpinned by a belief that it will lead to a desired outcome (Deci & Ryan, 2000) and recent research proposes that aspects such as goal type and anticipated success impact motivation (Bong, Cho, Ahn & Kim, 2012; Putwain & Remedios, 2014; Ryan & Deci, 2000); furthermore, student motivation may be influenced by wider cultural factors (Johnson, 1993). Research comparing those with ‘authentic motivation’ to those who are ‘externally controlled’, has found the former to have more interest, excitement and confidence which leads to enhanced performance, persistence, creativity, and self-esteem (Deci & Ryan, 1991; Deci & Ryan, 1995).

Self-Worth Theory (SWT) (Covington, 1984) proposes that student motivation is based on the student’s need to protect their sense of self-worth, to which self-perceptions of abilities are critical. Society recognises accomplishments and this becomes a significant part of defining ourselves; students motivate themselves to avoid failure as failure leads to feelings of worthlessness and social disapproval. In SWT, students’ perceptions of their ability is a primary
activator of their achievement behaviour and so students are driven to succeed not for only personal and social benefits, but because achievement promotes a reputation of ability.

Alternatively, Ryan and Deci (2000) have proposed a Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which posits that humans are active and growth-oriented organisms, naturally inclined to organise thoughts internally and externally between themselves and the world. SDT proposes that motivation is based on innate psychological needs for competence, autonomy and relatedness. Unlike earlier theories, SDT differentiates goal-directed behaviour by accounting for the different content and influence of goals, and the regulatory process required to reach these goals. Accordingly, when school teachers need to mobilise their students, they need to understand differences in student motivations, ranging from unwillingness through passive compliance to active commitment (Deci & Ryan, 2000).

Control Value Theory (CVT) (Pekrun, 2000, 2006) focuses on emotions in educational contexts which potentially affect student motivation. Achievement emotions are “tied directly to achievement activities or achievement outcomes” (Pekrun, 2006, p. 317) and are determined by an individual’s perception of their control and value of the activity and outcomes (Pekrun, 2000, 2006). CVT does not assume that appraisals of situations are consciously made but instead through recurring activities and outcomes and therefore emotions surrounding the situation become automatic (Pekrun & Stephens, 2010). CVT proposes four routes whereby achievement emotions may influence performance outcomes: effects on mood, use of cognitive and metacognitive learning strategies, cognitive load, and effects on intrinsic and extrinsic motivation (Pekrun & Stephens, 2010; Schunk, Pintrich & Meece, 2008). For teachers influencing student motivation, CVT suggests a need to influence students’ perceived control and value appraisals relating to achievement activities and outcomes (Pekrun, Frenzel, Goetz & Perry, 2007). Teachers can achieve this by adapting student learning to facilitate development of emotional competency in learning and performance (Astleitner, 2000).

Against this background showing the significance of student motivation to teachers in supporting student achievement, this paper aims to survey current international research evidence to find out how secondary school teachers use motivational strategies in respect of student academic assessment, performance and attainment.
Method of the review

*Literature search strategy and selection of research*

The present study aimed to address the following literature review question:

What motivational behaviours do secondary school teachers engage in, in respect of student performance in assessment and why?

The PRISMA framework (Moher, Liberati, Tetzlaff, & Altman, 2009) was used to identify, screen and select relevant research papers. The research papers within the literature review were sourced between April and May 2015 from across a number of databases, including Web of Science, EBSCO, PsycINFO: Ovid online, JSTOR, Education Resources Information Centre (ERIC), British Library EThOS and Google Scholar. The following search terms were applied to the abstracts of papers: ‘motivation AND teacher behaviour AND academic performance’. In addition, consultation with an academic expert in the field of teacher behaviour, student motivation and academic performance gave further indications for key research papers. Finally, papers were also obtained through ‘reference harvesting’ of sourced papers (cf. Woods, Bond, Humphrey, Symes & Green, 2011).

653 papers were initially sourced, of which 608 were excluded after screening of titles. The remaining 45 papers were screened against the following inclusion criteria by reading of abstracts:

- Published in English
- Entailed primary data collection
- Research was based on quantitative or qualitative investigation or evaluation
- Sample age range of 11-16 years of age (UK secondary equivalent) or a reflection on school experience during the ages of 11-16 years of age
- Academic achievement must be a measure

At this stage, a further 30 studies were excluded as they did not meet the criteria outlined above. After removing duplicates, 6 papers remained and were examined in full.
Quality assessment of research

Quality assurance of reported research is important as it ensures that unreliable research and findings are excluded from the review. In order to accurately review the quality of research, each paper was read at least twice. The quality of quantitative investigative research was reviewed using a framework published in systematic literature reviews by Bond, Symes, Hebron, Humphrey and Morewood (n.d.) and Woods et al. (2011). The framework identifies 15 features including data gathering, data analysis and data interpretation. Attributing one point for each evident framework feature, each selected research paper was given a total evaluation score ranging from 0-15. The quality of qualitative investigative research was reviewed using a framework utilised in a published systematic literature review (Woods et al., 2011) which identifies 12 criteria including sampling rationale, analysis close to the data and transferable conclusions. Attributing one point for each evident framework feature, each selected research paper was given a total evaluation score ranging from 0-12. For comparability, total quality evaluation scores were converted to percentages. Reports which scored less than 33% were deemed to be ‘low quality’ and were to be excluded from the review. Reports which scored between 33% and 66% were viewed as ‘moderate quality’ and those which scored above 66% were viewed as ‘good quality’.

Review of research: teacher behaviour and student motivation for examination performance

Overview of studies included


The main characteristics and findings of the studies included in the review are shown in Table 1 below.
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sample</strong></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Type</td>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>Teachers</td>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>Pupils and Teachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Size</td>
<td>n=365</td>
<td>n=234</td>
<td>n=347</td>
<td>n=28</td>
<td>n=375</td>
<td>Pupils: n=454 Teachers: n=18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus of Research Age Range</td>
<td>13-14 years old</td>
<td>14-16 years old</td>
<td>15-16 years old</td>
<td>14-18 years old</td>
<td>13-14 years old</td>
<td>11-12 years old</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subject Specific</td>
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<td>Yes: Mathematics</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographic Area</td>
<td>Rural and Urban Schools</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>Not reported</td>
<td>Suburban School</td>
<td>Suburban School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Design Features</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Study Design</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Focus Group</td>
<td>Questionnaire</td>
<td>Questionnaires Teachers: Rating Scales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Measures</td>
<td>Teachers' Classroom Behaviour Students' Motivational Beliefs about Math Math achievement</td>
<td>19 Questions based on 5 themes (endorsement of fear appeals and efficacy appeals, endorsement messages and domain knowledge, beliefs of fear and efficacy appeals)</td>
<td>Fear appeals Motivation GCSE Math grade</td>
<td>SAT scores and high school academic performance</td>
<td>Perceived caring from teachers Psychological distress Control beliefs Pursuit of social goals Academic effort Irresponsible and Prosocial behaviours Academic achievement Characteristics of caring teachers</td>
<td>Self-report measures to assess: background information, social goal pursuit, interest in class, mastery goal orientation, classroom behaviour, academic performance, teaching dimensions</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Procedure</strong></td>
<td>Term 1: Parental involvement and mathematics teaching measures. Term 2: Measures on motivation beliefs regarding mathematics. Term 3: Mathematics achievement reported.</td>
<td>Term 2: Fear appeals measured 3 months prior to GCSE exams Term 3: Motivation measured</td>
<td>Term 2: Fear appeals measured 3 months prior to GCSE exams</td>
<td>4 separate focus groups at end of the first semester</td>
<td>Longitudinal study data collected in 6th grade and 8th grade</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reliability and Validity of Measures</strong></td>
<td>Reliability coefficients given (range .78-.89), 0 below .69</td>
<td>Reliability coefficients: .65-.73</td>
<td>Reliability coefficients given (range .79-.89), 0 below .69</td>
<td>Facilitators checked transcript against recording for accuracy</td>
<td>Reliability coefficients given (range .67-.91), 1 below .69</td>
<td>Reliability coefficients given (range .60-.84), 6 below .69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Results</strong></td>
<td><strong>Data Analysis</strong></td>
<td><strong>Behaviours Teachers Engaged in</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reliabilities and Validities of Measures</strong></td>
<td><strong>Facilitators checked transcript against recording for accuracy</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reliability coefficients given (range .67-.91), 1 below .69</strong></td>
<td><strong>Reliability coefficients given (range .60-.84), 6 below .69</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Descriptive Statistics</strong></td>
<td>Descriptive statistics</td>
<td>Academic support</td>
<td>Academic support</td>
<td>Descriptive data Bivariate and Intercorrelation correlation</td>
<td>Research team coded transcript independently and agreed categories</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Correlations</strong></td>
<td>Bivariate Correlations</td>
<td>Academic press</td>
<td>Academic press</td>
<td>Mediation Model Fear Appeals</td>
<td>Analyses of Variance</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Multiple Regression</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>Mastery goal</td>
<td>Mastery goal</td>
<td>Fear Appeals</td>
<td>Inter correlations Multiple Regressions</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Efficacy appeals</td>
<td>Teacher motivation</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Reassuring messages</td>
<td>Rule setting</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Negative feedback</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>High expectations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Procedure**

- Term 1: Parental involvement and mathematics teaching measures.
- Term 2: Measures on motivation beliefs regarding mathematics.
- Term 3: Mathematics achievement reported.

**Reliability and Validity of Measures**

- Reliability coefficients given (range .78-.89), 0 below .69
- Reliability coefficients: .65-.73
- Reliability coefficients given (range .79-.89), 0 below .69
- Facilitators checked transcript against recording for accuracy
- Reliability coefficients given (range .67-.91), 1 below .69
- Reliability coefficients given (range .60-.84), 6 below .69

**Results**

**Data Analysis**

- Descriptive Statistics
- Correlations
- Multiple Regression

**Behaviours Teachers Engaged in**

- Academic support
- Academic press
- Mastery goal
- Fear appeals
- Efficacy appeals
- Reassuring messages
- Passionate
- Hardworking
- Delivery methods
- Modelling
- Democratic
- Interactions
- Expectations based on individuality
- Nurturance
- Fairness
- Teacher motivation
- Rule setting
- Negative feedback
- High expectations
<table>
<thead>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Significant positive correlation between all dimensions of math teaching dimensions and math grade</td>
<td>Not researched</td>
<td>GCSE score negatively correlated with fear appeals Higher perceived threats predicted lower self-determined motivation and thus predicted lower GCSE scores</td>
<td>Unknown</td>
<td>Perceived caring from teachers was related significantly and positively to students’ academic effort</td>
<td>High expectations: positive predictor of grades Negative feedback: negative predictor of grades</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Why?</td>
<td>Not researched</td>
<td>Domain knowledge of fear and efficacy appeals Motivating effect</td>
<td>Not researched</td>
<td>Not researched</td>
<td>Not researched</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review Framework</td>
<td>Quantitative Investigation</td>
<td>Quantitative Investigation</td>
<td>Quantitative Investigation</td>
<td>Qualitative Investigation</td>
<td>Quantitative Investigation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality Evaluated (%)</td>
<td>80%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>64%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Quality evaluations of the studies ranged from 53% (Putwain & Roberts, 2012) to 87% (Putwain & Remedios, 2014). Four studies had a rating over 66% (LevpuÅÄek & ZupanÄiÄ, 2009; Putwain & Remedios, 2014; Wentzel, 1997, 2002), indicating the majority of studies were judged to be of good quality.

**Main Findings**

*Putwain and Remedios (2014), Fear Appeals and Motivation, UK*

The research aimed to examine the impact of students’ perceptions of fear appeals on their self-determined motivation and if students’ reported experience of fear appeals related to academic performance in end-of-school Mathematics performance (the GCSE examination). The study involved collecting data in three waves. The first wave involved measures pertaining to perceived fear appeals, which were collected three months prior to GCSE examinations. Fear appeals are messages which “focus on the threat of failure and extrinsic reasons for engaging in behaviours likely to avoid failure” (p505). The second wave involved measures pertaining to self-determined motivations which were collected one month prior to GCSE examination. The third wave was the Mathematics GCSE score of the students. The researchers found a significant negative correlation between GCSE performance and perceived fear appeals frequency ($r=-.39$, $n=347$, $p<.001$) and GCSE performance and Perceived Threat ($r=-.28$, $n=347$, $p<.001$). From a mediational model, the researchers found that self-determined motivation predicted a higher GCSE score ($\beta=.13$, $p=.001$), perceived threat predicted a lower GCSE score ($\beta=-.34$, $p<.001$) and a greater frequency of perceived fear appeals predicted a lower GCSE score ($\beta=-.1302$, $p<.001$). This led the researchers to conclude two possible mediational routes from fear appeals to GCSE Mathematics scores via self-determined motivation. First, higher perceived threat predicts lower self-determined motivation which predicts a lower GCSE score. Alternatively, greater frequency of fear appeals predicts lower self-determined motivation which predicts a lower GCSE score. The research summarised that the analysis showed students performed better in GCSE Mathematics when they reported that their teachers used less frequent fear appeals and when they perceived these fear appeals as less threatening. Also lower performance on GCSE Mathematics scores followed more frequent fear appeals and their perception as threatening by students was found to be partly due to lower self-determined motivation. The limitation of this
research is that it is based only on one subject, Mathematics, and so the findings can not necessarily be generalised to other subjects.

This research suggests that teachers should generally avoid the use of fear appeals as a method to motivate students as it will have a detrimental impact on students’ self-determined motivation and performance.

Levpuäek and Zupanäiä (2009), *Mathematics Achievement in Early Adolescence, Slovenia*

This research focused on the impact of teachers’ reported behaviour on Mathematics achievement in early adolescence mediated by motivationally related concepts. This research involved 365 eighth-grade students from 13 schools from different regions of Slovenia. Researchers assessed various aspects of student reports upon teachers’ classroom behaviours, including academic support, academic press [academic pressure] and teachers’ support towards goal mastery. From inter-correlations, the researchers found a significantly positive correlation between Mathematics achievement and perceived academic support (r=.25, n=365, p<.01), academic press (r=.25, n=365, p<.01) and mastery goal (r=.25, n=365, p<.01). From multiple regressions analysis, the researchers found that academic press and mastery goal had a significant indirect positive effect on Mathematics achievement (β=.09, t=3.03 and β=.07, t=2.77, respectively), which was mediated through the students’ self-efficacy in Mathematics (β=.36, t=5.84 and β=.28, t=4.19 respectively). The researchers concluded that students who perceive teachers as taking into account their basic psychological needs of relatedness and competence and have high expectations of students’ academic work show more positive motivational beliefs and therefore achieve higher academic grades in Mathematics. Furthermore, students who view their teachers as responsive, helpful and appreciate students’ good work appear to perform better than their counterparts who perceive teachers as less supportive. However, as this was a quantitative correlational design, there may be some degree of bi-directional causality. Limitations of this study are that it is subject-specific and therefore not necessarily generalizable to other subject areas; also, students were surveyed after they had been taught by the teacher for only three months, which is arguably not enough time for a student to get to know a teacher and their teaching style. Further to this, the teacher style may change especially as the end of year examinations approach which is not accounted for in this study.
This research suggests that the behaviours teachers should engage in, in order to motivate students and have a positive impact on students’ performance, are providing academic support for competence and relatedness, academic press and behaviours which emphasise mastery goal orientation.

*Wentzel (1997), Teachers Who Care, USA*

This research analysed students’ perceptions of pedagogical caring of teachers in relation to their motivation and how this related to academic progress. This research was a longitudinal study and followed sixth to eighth grade students of a suburban middle school in a mid-Atlantic state. The research found a significant positive correlation between perceived caring from teachers and academic performance (r=.0918, n=248, p<.001). The larger group of eighth grade students were asked characteristics of a caring and uncaring teacher. The responses were initially coded into six categories: modelling, democratic interactions, expectations for behaviour, nurturance, rule setting and other. The largest representation of responses for characteristics of a caring or uncaring teacher surrounded expectations for behaviour (43% for caring teachers and 28% for uncaring teachers). This code was subdivided into two codes: ‘student as a person’ focuses upon ‘a recognition of a student’s individuality, and concern with the student’s nonacademic functioning’; ‘student as a learner’ focuses upon ‘a recognition of the student as having unique academic skills, problems and contributions to make to the class’ (Wentzel, 1997, p416). The second largest representation of a caring or uncaring teaching was democratic/absence of democratic interactions between students and teachers (20% for caring teachers and 43% for uncaring teachers). This code was subdivided into two codes: ‘communication style’ pertained to the act of communication itself, that teachers were open to talking with students and that the communication would be reciprocal; ‘equitable treatment and respect’ pertained to “honest and fair treatment as well as keeping promises” (Wentzel, 1997, p.416). The limitation of this research is that students were not asked to think of any teachers in particular and their academic grades were based on a grade point average for English, science, social sciences and Mathematics. Therefore, students may have reported characteristics of teachers of subjects that were not included in the academic performance.

To motivate students and to have a positive impact on academic performance, this research suggests that teachers need to show caring behaviours to students in the classroom.
These caring behaviours include: modelling, democratic interactions, high expectations for behaviour, nurturance and rule setting.

Wentzel (2002), Effective Teachers, USA

The relationship between perceptions of teachers’ behaviours, including modelling of motivation and student academic performance, was examined by students and teachers completing self-report measures to assess teacher role dimensions. Student grade data and student reports on teacher dimensions were collected from the same curriculum subjects evidencing good integrity of research design. This research involved sixth-grade students and teachers from two suburban middle schools in a mid-Atlantic state. From School A, all of the teachers had been with their class for the entire academic year. From school B, two of the teachers had been with their class for only part of the academic year. From analysis, five factors emerged: high expectations, fairness, negative feedback, rule setting and teacher motivation. Academic performance was the end of year grades for the subject taught by the teachers that students assessed for teacher dimensions. Wentzel (2002) found a positive correlation between classroom grades and teacher fairness ($r=.09, n=452, p<.05$) and classroom grades and high expectations ($r=.23, n=452, p<.001$). Wentzel (2002) also found a negative correlation between classroom grades and negative feedback ($r=.21, n=452, p<.001$). From a hierarchical multiple regression, teaching dimensions accounted for significant variance of classroom grades ($\Delta R^2=.10, p<.001$), with a combination of fairness, teacher motivation, rule setting, negative feedback and high expectations accounting for 10% of variation in positive academic performance. Negative feedback was found to be a significant negative predictor of classroom grades ($\beta=.22, p<.001$) and high expectations was found to be a significant positive predictor of classroom grades ($\beta=.23, p<.001$). The research proposed that if teachers are trained to provide students with the teacher dimensions mentioned then this will lead to academic gains for their students.

However, low reliability of measures lowers the confidence in the findings of this research since six of the measures reliability co-efficients are below .69 (see Table 1). Also, for school B, two of the teachers had only been with their class for part of the year and therefore their academic grade could partially be due to their previous teacher, whose teaching period with the class was not identified. A further limitation of this research was the lack of consideration by
the researcher of the different academic attainments for the two schools. Students from school A scored between the 59th and 63rd national percentile on the California Test of Basic Skills (CTBS) for reading and Mathematics respectively, whilst those from school B scored between the 29th and 32nd percentile.

This research suggests that in order for teachers to have a positive impact on student motivation and academic performance, teachers need to be perceived as fair and have high expectations of students; they also need to avoid providing a preponderance of negative feedback.

Siegle, Rubenstein and Mitchell (2014), Honors Students’ High School Experiences, USA

Siegle et al. (2014) investigated Honors students’ retrospective perceptions of their high school teachers’ influence on motivation and subsequent high academic performance. The study sample was Honor students ranked in the top 4% of their graduating high schools with an average SAT score of 1400 out of 1600. This research comprised of four focus groups and revealed that students most often attributed their interest and motivation to the interactions they had with their teachers. The researchers found that students needed to perceive their teacher as ‘caring’ to have an impact on their motivation. Students reported their teachers as ‘inspiring’ when they fostered meaningful relationships with their students. They accomplished this by demonstrating that they knew the students personally for example, by tailoring learning to suit students’ individual styles of learning, being interested in helping them to succeed and by attending school events in which their students were involved. However, the concept of relationship was viewed as curvilinear with some teachers perceived as too distant and others as too friendly. Students also reported that it was important for teachers to show how knowledgeable they are, and they wanted to feel like teachers knew more than they did. They reported a high level of motivation when teachers were able to link the course to personal experiences and real life current events. Also students reported to be more engaged with learning and more motivated when they perceived the class activity to be: of value and worth time spent; involve challenging content; relate to depth and breadth of the subject; be well paced. Finally, teachers needed to have a variety of content delivery methods which suited different style of learners and provided variety in their classrooms. The researchers concluded that students were motivated by teachers who inspired them to believe that they could succeed in the learning
environment, who set tasks which students felt were worth completing, and who built students’ sense of self-competence. A limitation of this research is that information from students was collected retrospectively, therefore there is possible attributional bias as the student participants all succeeded and could attribute this success to their teachers’ behaviours. Consequently, it is difficult to compare the findings of this paper with the other five discussed. Although this paper does give an interesting insight to teacher characteristics needed for ‘high flying’ students. A further limitation is the data was based on retrospective reflections of high school experiences. It also does not allow for differences between subjects although does give an overview of students’ thoughts from different schools.

To summarise, in order for teachers to have a positive impact on student motivation and academic performance, teachers need to engage in caring behaviours, create meaningful relationships with their students, show they are knowledgeable and deliver tasks that are relevant and in a variety of formats.

*Putwain and Roberts (2012), Secondary Teachers’ Perspective of Language, UK*

The research aimed to survey teachers about their views of fear and efficacy appeals and their knowledge of how this area impacts student motivation. The authors constructed a questionnaire which contained items corresponding to five themes: endorsement of fear appeals, endorsement of efficacy appeals, reassuring messages, beliefs about the influence of fear appeals on students and beliefs about the influence of efficacy appeals on students. The research found that the majority of teachers agreed that students should be warned about failure (87%) and its negative educational consequences (67.5%). However, the vast majority of respondents (99.6%) also agreed with the use of messages without any explicit fear content, such as reminders of approaching coursework deadlines and exam dates. The research also found with regards to efficacy appeals, most teachers agreed with all five items regarding the use of efficacy appeals. With regards to teachers’ knowledge of domain beliefs, most teachers agreed that fear appeals may have unintended negative outcomes on students’ motivation to pass their GCSEs (72.6%) and that messages intended by teachers to be encouraging may be perceived as threatening and demotivating by students (84.6%).

The researchers found that teachers were more likely to endorse the use of fear appeals when they believed this would motivate students (r=.19, n=234, p<.01) and less likely to endorse
the use of fear appeals when they believed these messages would be anxiety provoking for students (r=.14, n=234, p<.05). The researchers acknowledge the small correlation level reported within these positive relationships.

The research suggests that teachers are able to recognise individual differences between their students and will utilise different messages depending on the impact they feel it will have on students.

**Summary of Findings**

Of the six reviewed studies, two found a negative impact of teachers’ use of fear appeals and negative feedback on students’ academic performance, which was linked with the students’ perception of threat and lowered self-determined motivation (Putwain & Remedios, 2014; Wentzel, 2002). Behaviours which have a positive relationship to students’ academic performance include: perceived caring from teachers (Wentzel, 1997); teacher fairness and high expectations (Wentzel, 2002); academic support, academic pressure and support towards goal mastery (LevpuÄÄek & ZupanÄiÄ, 2009); teachers fostering meaningful relationships, showing subject knowledge and the class activity being perceived as valuable (Siegle et al., 2014). Putwain and Roberts (2012) found that teachers adapted their behaviours depending on the response they felt it would elicit from the student and were more likely to endorse the use of fear appeals when they believed this would motivate students and less likely to endorse the use of fear appeals when these would be viewed as anxiety provoking by the students. Research to date has focused mainly on quantitative and associative measures therefore the direction of influence between related factors cannot always be confidently demonstrated.

**Conclusions**

This review has provided an original evaluation of the empirical literature relating to the motivational behaviours teachers engage in in respect of student performance in assessment. However, despite its international focus, the research review exercise returned only a limited number of relevant studies. Nevertheless, the majority of studies were rated as good quality and therefore may give a reasonable preliminary insight to this subject area.

The papers presented show the potential effect of teachers’ behaviours with regards to students’ academic performance by both positive and negative impacts for different forms of
behaviour. The reviewed research suggests, that in order for teachers to have a positive impact on student motivation and academic performance, teachers could engage in caring behaviours, create meaningful relationships with their students, show they are knowledgeable, deliver tasks that are relevant and in a variety of formats, be fair, have high expectations of students, provide academic support and academic pressure, and support mastery goal setting. Students want to feel that teachers are supporting and nurturing their basic psychological needs of relatedness and competence. Research suggests that teachers may want to avoid the use of fear appeals and negative feedback as it will have a detrimental impact on the students’ academic performance.

In all school settings internationally, the impact of teacher behaviours on student motivation and academic performance can be a significant concept. This is more prevalent for schools in the UK and other leading economies where there is pressure to ensure that students perform well and thereby improve the country’s international educational rank (Williams, Ryan & Morgan, 2014). Further to this, in some countries, such as England, teachers’ pay is now partially dependent on the performance of the students they teach (Department for Education, 2013). “Great teaching” is viewed “as that which leads to improved student progress” (Coe et al., 2014, p.2) and therefore student progress is often taken as the proxy measuring tool to assess teaching quality. Individual teachers can be pressurised to increase student motivation in their classrooms and thereby mobilise their students to work hard and succeed (Ryan & Deci, 2000).

From the research reviewed only one psychological theory of motivation was explicitly referenced (Putwain & Remedios, 2014 - Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Ryan & Deci, 2000)). Therefore, the utilisation of theories of motivation appears to be lacking in the education system and notably this researcher’s previous literature review searches found no current research that assesses teachers’ knowledge or understanding of student motivation. However the current review did find some evidence of a link between student motivation and GPK, which as indicated above encompasses aspects of student motivation (Siegle et al., 2014). Therefore, this is an important area for further research since if teachers understand student motivation then they are better able to motivate their students in the classroom to make the most of their abilities.

In the present review, only one research paper investigated the reason behind teachers’ behaviour and the aim of this behaviour in influencing students’ motivation and outcomes (Putwain & Roberts, 2012). Interestingly, these researchers found that teachers adapt their
behaviour depending on the response they feel it will have with students. Future research could further investigate the reasoning behind teacher motivational behaviour, and could assess how teachers come to know which behaviours to engage in for different student needs, for example, through previous experience or trial and error with each individual student. Educational Psychologists (EPs) could play a key role as a bridge between motivational theory and teacher behaviours to promote motivation. EPs can support teachers to extend their understanding of student motivation and to utilise this is in mobilising their students in their school work. EPs can help teachers and schools by simplifying motivation theories (Lipton, 1992) so they are more accessible to teachers who may be able to see both the positive and negative impact of their language and behaviour on students’ motivation and academic performance.

Recommendations for Future Research

A significant limitation of five of the studies (LevpuÅÄek & ZupanÄiÄ, 2009; Putwain & Remedios, 2014; Putwain & Roberts, 2012; Wentzel, 1997, 2002) was the constraints of the measures used as the researchers used closed question questionnaires, which acts to limit the categories of behaviours that teachers could be perceived to engage in. Furthermore, previous research has not directly linked teacher and student data to enhance internal validity and assess the feelings of students for their own teachers’ behaviour (though Wentzel (2002) did use a parallel and independent data gathering involving teacher and student data). Using more open, qualitative data gathering methods with students and their teachers, would allow for a more detailed, dynamic and contextualised picture to be gained.

With regards to research utility, previous research has also not given teachers the opportunity to play an active role within research on motivational language, which would provide teachers with a professionally meaningful opportunity to develop relevant motivational strategies in the context of motivational theory and practice-based research (Furlong & Oancea, 2005). The authors here propose that a model of ‘teachers as researchers’ is a method by which to empower teachers in their practice (Bracey, 1991). Research has found that this model can increase teachers’ own critical learning skills, support development of innovative approaches to instruction and increase student success and performance (Babkie & Provost, 2004). Therefore, EPs’ use of action research, or participatory research, could usefully build schools’ capacity to
develop teachers’ understanding of their impact on student motivation in a school setting by utilizing local, school-based student perspectives.
References


Paper Two

Developing school practice in preparing students for high-stake examinations

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2It is anticipated that this paper will be submitted to the Educational Psychology in Practice, Journal of the Association of Educational Psychologists and has therefore been prepared in accordance with author guidelines which can be seen in Appendix 1 (Retrieved April 15, 2016, from http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/authors/style/layout/tf_quick1-4.pdf).
Abstract

Prior to ‘high stakes’ examinations, teachers use different forms of verbal messages which may have different impacts on a student’s motivation. This study engaged high school teachers as participants, affording the opportunity to reflect on their current practice in light of feedback from their students. The research was carried out as a single embedded case study within a secondary school, progressing through 3 phases: initial focus group of six teachers teaching high stake examination programmes to students age 14-16; interviews with 10 students selected from the teachers’ classes; follow-up focus group with teachers. The research found that students preferred motivation intentioned language which provided personalised and individualised advice. The research found a link between what students perceived to be motivational and the changes that teachers were able to envisage for future practice, indicating that teachers were able to learn from their students. The implications for educational psychologist practice and future research are discussed.

Key words: GCSE, teachers as researchers, student motivation, teacher behaviour, academic performance
Importance of student performance in high stake examinations

Educational assessments are viewed as ‘critical moments’ in the life trajectory of children and young people (Denscombe, 2000) and are proposed to have a vital role in a students’ academic life, allowing for transitions to higher school phases, further education and employment (Woods, 2007). Many students, including those with special educational needs (SEN), view educational assessments as crucial to their future aspirations. In many countries the use of examination access arrangements (known as test accommodations in the US) allows students with SEN to access programmes of study (Woods, Parkinson & Lewis, 2010; Woods, 2007). Importantly, the availability of access arrangements allows for flexibility in teaching and learning opportunities for SEN students, as well as developing a student’s self-esteem in their abilities to access the curriculum. In the lead up to educational assessments, students can suffer from ‘test anxiety’ which is “a form of social-evaluation anxiety experienced in an assessment context” (Putwain, 2007, p.579); Woods et al. (2010) found evidence to suggest higher test anxiety levels for SEN students in comparison to the general population (Putwain, 2007).

Currently, economically developed countries are in an era of performativity and performance management, reflected in international competition in educational performance and greater pressure on teachers to ensure student attainment (Williams, Ryan & Morgan, 2014). From 2015, teacher performance related pay in the United Kingdom (UK) was linked to the performance of their students (Department for Education, 2013). Evidence has accumulated to show the unintended detrimental effects of performativity as a control for improvement (e.g. lower commitment) (Williams et al., 2014; Pampaka, Williams & Hutcheson, 2012; Pampaka, Williams, Hutcheson, Wake, Black, Davis & Hernandez-Martinez et al., 2012).

Teacher knowledge of student motivation

Potential strategies that teachers could use to motivate students prior to high stake examinations can be identified. Teachers’ use of supportive behaviours such as the provision of choice, minimal use of controls and explanation of the relevance of learning tasks (Skinner & Belmont, 1993) can promote positive outcomes (Putwain & Remedios, 2014b). Research suggests that negative effects on motivational outcomes are only found when fear appeals are not
accompanied by additional messages which explain to students the course of action they must take to avoid behaviour that lead to this (Sprinkle, Hunt, Simonds, & Comadena, 2006). Teachers can use efficacy appeals, which focus on how threats can be averted and communicate to students strategies to develop self-efficacy, mastery and self-regulated learning. Teachers also need to build motivational strategies into efficacy appeals to boost self-esteem and self-worth (Putwain & Roberts, 2012), and to communicate the value of educational tasks and values to support student persistence (Eccles, 2005).

A recent systematic literature review by Flitcroft and Woods (under review) focused on research pertaining to the motivational behaviours secondary school teachers engage in in order to influence student performance in high stake assessments. The review found that teacher behaviour can have both positive and negative effects on student motivation and performance in academic progress. To positively influence student motivation and academic performance the review suggests that students prefer teachers to be caring (Wentzel, 1997); be fair and have high expectations (Wentzel, 2002); provide academic support, academic pressure, and support towards goal mastery (LevpuÅÄek & ZupanÄiÄ, 2009); develop meaningful relationships with students, show they have good subject knowledge, and engage students in meaningful activities (Siegle, Rubenstein & Mitchell, 2014). Fear appeals (Putwain & Remedios, 2014b) and negative feedback (Wentzel, 2002) are more likely to have a negative effect on motivation. From this review, the authors were unable to find current research that assesses teachers’ knowledge of student motivation, though Siegle et al. (2014) linked student motivation and General Pedagogical Knowledge (GPK). Notably, the review found no research that actively engaged teachers to understand their motivationally intentioned behaviours, and to further develop practice to support student motivation for examination performance.

Researchers argue that educational psychologists have “considerable expertise in learning, development, motivation, classroom management and assessment” (Patrick, Anderman, Bruening, & Duffin, 2011, p. 71). These elements are viewed as vital components to effective teaching and important for teachers to learn about to enhance their role in the classroom and promote positive outcomes for their students. Arguably part of the educational psychologist role is to impart knowledge, that is central to their role, in to teacher education. However Berliner (1992) contends that it is important for educational psychologists to fully understand school
environments and adapt their knowledge accordingly rather than implement ‘psychological principles’ that may not be appropriate.

**Aims of the present study**

Teacher behaviour in the lead up to high stake examinations can have positive and/or negative impacts on student performance (LevpuÅÄek & ZupanÅiÄ, 2009; Putwain & Remedios, 2014b; Putwain & Roberts, 2012; Putwain, 2009; Siegle et al., 2014; Wentzel, 1997, 2002), and motivational strategies have been identified (Eccles, 2005; Putwain & Remedios, 2014a; Putwain & Roberts, 2012; Sprinkle et al., 2006). However, research in this field has not engaged teachers collaboratively, or brought together the perspectives of students and teachers to create new understanding in the classroom to better support student motivation (Furlong & Oancea, 2005). Previous research in this area has focused on researcher-led experimental methods, using standardized questionnaires and surveys (Putwain & Roberts, 2012), quantitatively comparing answers from questionnaires to examination results (Putwain & Remedios, 2014b; Putwain & Best, 2011; Putwain & Symes, 2011a) or using vignettes to see what response they elicited (Putwain & Symes, 2014). A limitation of previous research in this area is that it has focused on the teacher pupil interaction and ignored wider relevant contexts for example peer and family influences on student motivation towards high stake examinations (Bronfenbrenner, 1986). The present research aims to allow teachers to become researchers themselves and reflect on their current practice from feedback from their students, and from this think about their future practice (Furlong & Oancea, 2005).

Therefore, the proposed research has three aims; first, to find out what type of motivational language statements teachers are using in the classroom, using relevant background research as an implicit framework for enquiry; second, to tap into students’ views about attainment motivation language they hear from their teachers and from currently unresearched non-teacher sources (e.g. peers and parents); third, to feedback to teachers the views of students providing an opportunity for teachers to develop understanding of the impact of their language, and to review their motivational language prior to high stake examinations. The research will focus on Key Stage 4 students as previous research has shown the impact of language, prior to
their high stake examinations (GCSEs), to have a detrimental effect on performance (Martin, 2001; Putwain & Remedios, 2014b; Putwain & Symes, 2011a, 2011b; Putwain, 2009).

The study research questions are:

1. What language do KS4 teachers report using prior to high stake examinations and what purpose do they perceive it to serve?
2. How do KS4 students perceive language from teachers and non-teachers and what language do students believe would be beneficial?
3. What new approaches can teachers envisage or plan for based on students’ views?

Methodology

Design

The research was an exploratory single embedded case study design (Yin, 2009) with a secondary school as the context for the case study of a group of KS4 teachers and their students. The research aimed to involve teachers as researchers in order to evaluate the potential for teachers to be empowered in their practice in relation to achievement-promoting language in the classroom (Bracey, 1991). Previous research has found that developing teachers as participants in research can increase student success and performance, revise practice based on new teaching and learning, increase teachers’ own critical learning skills and develop innovative approaches to instructions (Babkie & Provost, 2004).

The participating mainstream secondary school was recruited in the North-West of England through a local university and has a track record of using external agencies to support staff development. The school has 1220 students on role (national average: 957; Ofsted, 2015), with 49.9% of the students being female. As a proxy social deprivation index, 12.6% of the students are also eligible for free school meals (national average 28.5%; Ofsted, 2015). In 2014, 63% of the school’s students attained 5 GCSEs grade A* to C including English and Mathematics (National average: 55%; Ofsted, 2015).

Pilot study interviews with a Mathematics teacher, and student (aged 16) who had recently completed GCSEs determined the appropriateness of focus group method for teachers, and interviews for students. The main study comprised of three phases.
Phase 1: Eliciting teachers’ examination language

A purposive sample of five teachers, who taught either GCSE Mathematics or English to Year 11 students (aged 15-16), was used, together with one teaching assistant who had previously taught the GCSE syllabus. The sample included three females and three males and teaching experience ranged from two to 21 years.

A focus group was used to gather teachers’ views on achievement-promoting language that they currently use in the classroom and the purpose of this language (Barbour, 2007; see Appendix 2 for focus group schedule). This methodology was used following a pilot study whereby a Mathematics teacher was interviewed and expressed a focus group would be more beneficial as it would enable them to ‘normalise’ the responses they gave and prompt them to give further ideas from what other teachers had said.

Phase 2: Eliciting student perspectives of examination language

Teachers from Phase 1 of the research were asked to identify four students from their Year 11 GCSE classes from each of the following categories: achievement on target grade and appears motivated to achieve; achievement below target grade and appears to be motivated; appears less motivated towards examination performance; and those with current performance at a significant grade borderline\(^3\) (e.g. D/C grades, A/A* grades). The teachers were asked not to choose students known by school staff to be vulnerable (e.g. are perceived to have high levels of anxiety, recent bereavement).

From the identified students, 10 were available for interview, with at least one student volunteering from each of the teachers’ classes. Of the students who took part, four were viewed as being on target grade and apparently motivated; two students were below target grade and apparently motivated; four students had performance at a significant borderline. Two students were indicated to have Special Educational Needs. No student viewed as less motivated volunteered to take part in the study.

Semi-structured interviews of students was used to gather their views on language used in the classroom prior to their GCSEs (Oppenheim, 1992; see Appendix 3 for interview schedule).

\(^3\) Students on a significant borderline are at risk of getting a lower grade than targeted. A Grade C is viewed as a pass in the English Education System and A* is the highest academic grade available to students.
This methodology was used following a pilot study with a study who had recently sat their GCSEs and who expressed that they would not give the same responses in a focus group out of fear of judgment from other students and as this was a potential anxiety producing discussion, would feel more comfortable talking about this area with a researcher (Opdenakker, 2006). For internal consistency, teacher data from phase 1 were incorporated to student interviews in the form of prompt cards in order to evaluate student perception and views of teacher reported classroom language (see Appendix 4). Students were also asked what language they would like, or find useful, to hear prior to their GCSE examinations. Finally, data were also gathered on messages that students might hear prior to their GCSEs from non-teacher sources (e.g. parents).

To enable the researcher to understand the traits of the students interviewed and the group of students as a whole, each student’s academic self-efficacy and valuing of GCSEs was evaluated. Academic self-efficacy was measured using the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) (Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990), which identifies three distinct and reliable motivational factors: self-efficacy (Cronbach’s α=.89), intrinsic value (Cronbach’s α=.87) and test anxiety (Cronbach’s α=.75). Valuing of GCSEs was measured using a scale from Putwain and Symes (2014) which is an adaption from the Michigan Study of Adolescent Life Transitions (MSALT) scales (Eccles, Midgley, Wigfield, Buchanan, Reuman, Flanagan et al., 1993) along with two additional items suggested by Putwain and Remedios (2014b); items and instructions were adapted to fit the GCSE context (see appendix 5). Student scores were converted to percentages and banded: 0-33% low; 34%-66% moderate; 67%-100% high.

The MSLQ comprises a 7-point rating scale where 1 meant ‘not at all true of me’ and 7 meant ‘very true of me’, the remaining points were unlabelled. From the MSLQ, the average scores from the research sample for each component are as follows: self-efficacy, $M = 4.80$, $SD = 1.5$; intrinsic value, $M = 5.48$, $SD = 0.7$; test anxiety, $M = 4.13$, $SD = 1.6$. From the MSLQ, two students (Student 7 and 9) had low self-efficacy in comparison to the others in the study. Four students (Students 2, 7, 8 and 9) also appeared to have higher test anxiety. Overall, two students had lower motivational beliefs (Student 7: 34% and Student 9: 43%) in comparison to the average (62.6%) The average score for Valuing of GCSEs was 3.6; one student (Student 7) appeared to have a lower score in comparison to the other students. Due to students’ 7 and 9
differences to the rest of the group, additional analysis of interview transcripts was completed to assess if any differential patterns of response were present; none were found.

**Phase 3: Planning for the future**

Allowing for timetable constraints, four teachers from phase one (2 male; 2 female) reconvened for phase 3 workshop discussion and development from the identified phase two themes.

Phase three comprised two sessions (see Appendix 6 for outline). The first session involved gaining teachers’ initial views on feedback about what students had reported hearing from teachers, and what they felt would be helpful (see Appendix 7 for feedback sheet). For credibility, student views included verbatim excerpts, as for change to occur teachers need to be convinced about its likely positive impact upon student learning (Convery, 2001). The second session involved teachers discussing what they felt could be learned and developed from the student feedback either at teacher, department or school level. Teachers were also asked if they felt the process of the research had been a useful and/ or a worthwhile experience. This methodology was used following a pilot study mentioned above, whereby the teacher commented that a focus group would be more beneficial as it would allow for collaboration with the other teachers and a more realistic action plan would be formed as it would allow the teachers to discuss and reflect upon the feasibility of the ideas generated (Kitzinger, 1995).

The rationale for two separate sessions was to allow teachers the time and space for reflection on the student data presentation, as reflection is often considered to be an essentially ‘private’ activity (Zeichner & Tabachnick, 2001). Reconvening for a second session allowed collaborative discussion to influence practice within the context.

**Data analysis**

Thematic analysis was applied to both focus group and interview full transcripts as this method allows for identification, analysis and reporting of detailed and meaningful patterns within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Nvivo software (QSR International Pty Ltd, 2012) was used to systematically organise and classify data.

The thematic analysis proceeded by utilising an inductive approach, meaning the identified themes and codes were developed inductively from the participants’ responses within
the focus groups and interviews (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This means the themes generated will be strongly linked to the data sets (Patton, 1990). The researcher then extended this process to enable quantitative statements to be generated. Once basic and organising themes had been created and organised, the researcher went through each of the original codes to evaluate the number of different participant comments in each of the codes. Therefore allowing the researcher to make quantitative statements in the results section about the number of participants who had talked about the basic and organising themes.

Inter-coder validation was completed to ensure validity of codes generated. Five percent of transcripts were chosen by the researcher and given to another experienced psychology researcher briefed on the project RQs, to be coded in accordance with the aforementioned method. For the focus group transcripts, 87% reliability and 100% agreement in meaning was found for coding in relevant transcript extracts. Three new codes were identified, however these related closely to basic and organising themes generated by initial coder. For the pupil interview transcripts, 81% reliability and 94% agreement in meaning was found for relevant transcript extracts. Two new codes were identified, however these related closely to basic and organising themes already generated by initial coder.

**Ethical considerations**

For this research, relevant ethical protocol of the University of Manchester was adhered to and ethical approval was granted in September 2014 (see Appendix 8 for application documents and Appendix 9 for information sheets and consent forms). As the research required contact with young people, the researcher had an approved Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check. In keeping with the University guidelines, school, teachers, parents and students gave formal written consent.

For student participants, discussion about future examinations was regarded as potentially anxiety-provoking. If the researcher felt any student was upset by the process or raised concerns during the semi-structured interview, relevant information would be passed on to the Head of Year; in the event, no student distress was observed or reported.

The researcher was aware of the reputational risks involved in students talking about their teachers and teachers receiving feedback relating to this. The researcher was mindful of preserving professional confidence of teachers and used the researcher’s previous experience as a
high school teacher to control for this. Throughout the process of feedback, the researcher was mindful of respecting teachers and developing their understanding that the purpose of the student feedback was to provide an opportunity for teachers to enhance their professional development. Since teachers received student feedback within the focus group, confidentiality outside of the teachers’ focus group was discussed and teachers were asked, during the research process, not to discuss student feedback outside the focus group.

Results

Data analysis is presented by research question, with exemplification of each relevant organising theme. Some organising themes were significant in their own right, did not contain sub-themes (basic themes) and so were constituted directly from the coded data.

What language do KS4 teachers report using prior to high stake examinations and what purpose do they perceive it to serve?

Interestingly, all teachers reported that they do not consciously think about the language that they use and there appeared to be a general consensus that the language used was “automatic” (FGT1). Teachers reflected upon different types of language prior to high stake examinations, which are moderated by the individual student being spoken to:

“you’re obviously trying to be instructional, you are just trying to think of the best tactic for that person … sometimes it’s calming and soothing and other times it’s kicking up the bum and like waking up” (FGT4)

Teachers wanted to motivate students to work hard for their examinations, to provide emotional support, and to tell the student that they had belief in their abilities. Advice-giving language typically comprised of subject-specific revision and timescale reminders. Some fear appeals, forecasting the impact of failure on the student, were used by some of the teachers and were used to “scare” (FGT6) students to work hard towards examinations; for example, examination failure would necessitate a college re-sit, entailing increased workload and time spent on a less preferred subject. Conversely, teachers highlighted increased future opportunities from examination success. Teachers emphasised to students that, through their own efforts, they have ultimate control of their examination outcomes.

Teachers commented on their own context of pressure from Ofsted and performance-
related pay, reflecting that they did not want to pass this on to the students:

“When you’re talking to the students at that moment, yeh that’s the only thing that matters talking to the student and getting the best out of the student… you know that you’ve got to motivate them, 1200 kids but in that moment it’s just that one student that matters.” (FGT5)

**How do KS4 students perceive language from teachers and non-teachers and what language do students believe would be beneficial?**

**Language students report hearing from teachers**

The range of language messages that students report hearing prior to examinations highlights a theme of ‘student changes’ which conveys students’ agency to change their behaviour in order to improve examination outcome, e.g. through dedicated working time or ‘effort’ [persistence]. Most students also heard teachers’ belief in their abilities:

“… my teacher is like quite positive towards it and he is always telling me that I should have confidence and he believes that I can pass…”. (Student 7; moderate motivation/moderate importance of GCSEs)

This verbal message was reinforced by teachers providing additional help and guidance outside of lesson time, and by the provision of progress feedback. All students reported teachers providing revision advice and basic information about the examination (e.g. format, timescale).

Congruent with the teachers’ reports, students reported hearing language relating to future impact of examination performance, and fear appeals emphasising the impact of failure. Notably, such language was perceived as being tied to student agency, there still being time to change feared outcomes:

“… like when they say things like there is plenty of time for you to start, it is like a bit of hope and telling us to have confidence”. (Student 7; moderate motivation/moderate importance of GCSEs).
Language students report hearing from non-teacher sources

Students reported mainly receiving messages from parents, which, in contrast to teacher language, focused primarily on recommended ‘amounts of revision’ [time spent working at home] and prioritisation of subjects (e.g. focus upon subjects important for further education).

“… if I get stressed I can speak to my mum about it and maybe sometimes my mum does say to me maybe you should just do this tonight and stop for a little bit cause you’re doing a bit too much.” (Student 2; moderate motivation/high importance of GCSEs)

All students perceived and valued emotional support from parents through messages of confidence in their abilities and ‘trying their best’; parents had an understanding of them ‘as a person’, of when emotional support was appropriate, and of the best form of emotional support for them. All students regarded specific examination advice as being the most valuable when it came from teachers:

“I think it’s more my teachers cause I feel that they would know more about how I’m doing but my mum and dad they only know what I’ve been doing at home and they don’t know what I do at school which I think a lot of my teachers know that I do a lot in school and I do a lot at home to get the grades that I want.” (Student 2; moderate motivation/high importance of GCSEs)

Teachers were recognised as having the subject knowledge and experience to know when a student was ‘off target’, and to be able to advise accordingly from a wider variety of learning and study techniques.

Some students reported having heard messages from the media about examinations getting harder and performance-related teacher pay, though these were not viewed as significant.

Messages that students would find beneficial

All students had formed a view about different aspects of language messages that they would find beneficial prior to high-stake examinations. Some students would value optimistic messages of belief in their chances of success, rather than negative messages associated with fear appeals. Students also identified a need for emotional support (calming reassurance) to reduce worry directly before an examination. At the same time, some students did not want class-based discussion of examinations as they did not want to talk about examinations with friends, as well
as with teachers and parents. Surprisingly, some students did value fear appeals in the context of messages of belief in their ability to succeed, of emotional support, and of specific guidance to support success.

All students wanted specific guidance on revision; they wanted individualised advice relating to their current progress, next steps, and specific revision techniques that would work for them.

“Maybe just try and push me a little bit more, may say oh like do, ‘cause they don’t really say to me oh maybe try this practice question….” (Student 2; moderate motivation/high importance of GCSEs)

Some students indicated they would like discussion of examination preparation to start in year 7 (age 11/12 years), maintaining a steady pace, so they can scaffold their learning, rather than experience a pressurising step change in messages in Year 10 (age 14/15 years) when they were “stressed enough as it is” (Student 4). All students made it clear that they preferred individualised examination support to be provided by class teachers, rather than departmental leaders:

“I think class level ‘cause it’s more personalised to a particular lesson you’re in and the particular things you need to know whereas at year group its more generalised and certain things wouldn’t apply to certain people as they didn’t take certain lessons.” (Student 1; high motivation/high importance of GCSEs)

Several students wanted ‘honest’ messages about the impact of examination outcomes on their future, e.g. realistic evaluation of importance of subjects:

“Well it is sometimes like, I am actually quite happy with an A in that, a subject I am not desperate about, there are some that I definitely want to get an A*...” (Student 5; high motivation/high importance of GCSEs)

**What new approaches can teachers envisage or plan for based on students’ views?**

The phase 3 transcript was analysed thematically (see appendix 10) and the key themes are presented and discussed. The two-part second teacher focus group produced an action plan of
possible approaches based upon the knowledge of student experience and perspectives (see Appendix 11).

Teachers proposed a range of strategies and considerations to motivate and skill students to become independent learners. Study skills, time management and metacognition lessons from ages 12 to 14 years would prepare students for intensive study towards high-stakes examinations at age 15-16. In line with feedback from students, teachers debated how to provide individualised support for students, e.g. daily form tutor meetings, weekly incentivised assertive mentor meetings for target setting. The teachers acknowledged time constraints for individualised support and identified that job role descriptions would need to incorporate these activities.

From the student feedback, teachers intimated that students perhaps did not recognise the long term impact of examination performance. Teachers proposed the utility of: motivational guest speakers at school assemblies to exemplify the life impacts of examination outcomes; of employers outlining their requirements; and of further education staff explaining the disadvantages of examination re-sits.

Further strategies proposed by the teacher focus group included: targeted assemblies to provide more differentiated guidance; creation of a whole school revision plan to support realistic revision planning at subject level; use of “pop quizzes”, which the teachers believed was common practice in the US, to re-cap (overlearn) knowledge. From student feedback about parent guidance on subject prioritisation, teachers felt it would be useful to develop examination-related home-school communications to arrive at coordinated and well-informed perspective and strategies to support students at home and at school.

Discussion

The research reported here provides a demonstration of the feasibility and potential utility of school-based research, involving teachers as collaborators, in the endeavour to promote student motivation for achievement in high-stake examinations. There appears to be a link between what students said they would like to hear and the ideas teachers were able to envisage, in effect supporting the proposal by Queenan (1987) that teachers can learn from their individual students and generalise to their classes; and in this study, teachers were also generalising to the
school system more widely, not just their own teaching practice. A limitation of this research is that no unmotivated students, according to the MSLQ, and no students with a low value of importance for GCSEs were interviewed and they potentially would have perceived language differently and held different ideas of what they felt would be beneficial to hear. These are also arguably the students that teachers may need to focus upon with regards to their language and behaviour in order to find ways in which to motivate them to work towards optimal examination performance (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Other limitations of the present research are its small sample size and subject-specific focus, reducing to some extent the generalisibility of findings across subjects and school settings. Nonetheless the findings give a preliminary indication of the types and processes of future adaptations to better suit students in the lead-up to high-stake examinations.

**Language teachers use prior to high stake exams**

Both teachers and students identified messages of advice giving language (Putwain & Remedios, 2014b), fear appeals (Putwain & Remedios, 2014b) and emotional support (Wentzel, 1997). In keeping with previous research, teachers reported that they adapt their language to suit different students and this adaption has developed from teachers’ own experiences and trial and error (Putwain & Roberts, 2012).

Teachers identified their use of fear appeals with some students in order to ‘scare’ and motivate students thought not to be putting sufficient ‘effort’ into their work (Putwain, 2009). However, some students did not feel fear appeals were generally beneficial as they did not know whether the messages applied to them. Although teachers use fear appeals in order to motivate students (Putwain & Roberts, 2012), fear appeals can lead to a negative impact on students’ academic performance (Putwain & Remedios, 2014b; Wentzel, 2002). Therefore, there appears to be a gap between teacher knowledge and teacher understanding of the motivational impact of their behaviour on student motivation; educational psychologists could provide support for teachers in understanding the limitations of the use of fear appeals.

Teachers from the focus group felt strongly that students had ultimate control of how well they performed in their examinations, and controlled how successful they are (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). However, this premise relies entirely upon students having the tools by which to enable themselves to take control of their learning and be effective in their examination
preparation. Educational psychologists could provide support to schools, through training or action research, to build capacity for staff to support students in becoming independent learners in an examination context.

**Messages from sources other than teachers**

Not evident from previous research, students identified other influential sources with regards to high-stake examinations as parents, siblings, grandparents, extended family and friends. Students recognised that they sought and received emotional support mainly from their parents. This may be challenging for those parents who may not have the knowledge of the context, content or possible outcomes of high-stake examinations. Students identified teacher messages as the most important as teachers have subject-specific knowledge and experience of the examination system. Students viewed parents’ messages as more important for emotional support and belief in the possibility of success. Taken together, these findings indicate the potential utility of creating a model of home-school collaboration in which teachers and parents can co-ordinate their knowledge of the child and the requirements of the examination system.

**Language students would like to hear**

Students indicated they would find useful messages which convey belief in the possibility of success, specific information and guidance, and emotional support. These messages are all linked to a positive impact on students’ academic performance (Levpul & ZupanÄi, 2009; Siegle et al., 2014; Wentzel, 1997). The exception to this was if students were at risk of failing and in this case they wanted teachers to use fear appeals accompanied by messages of belief, emotional support and specific guidance of how to avoid failure (Sprinkle et al., 2006).

Research suggests that teachers communicate the importance of high stake examinations to students from the beginning of year 10 (age 14/15) (Putwain & Symes, 2011b). However, in this research students wanted to be informed from year 7 (age 11/12). Although this may be feasible for schools, it may be argued that younger students may not see the relevance of earlier preparatory messages.

Another important point from students was the indication of needing specific and individualised advice. Students want to be recognised as individuals with their own methods; they want specific revision assistance and guidance about what they needed to do to succeed. This links in with research about students being treated subjectively rather than objectively
(Siegle et al., 2014). Students appear to want teachers to focus upon direct teaching and respond to feedback in a supportive manner. Paradoxically, the pressures for student achievement that feature so prominently in the teachers’ reality, are best discounted as students need to feel safe and contained within the learning environment.

Students felt that sometimes teachers misrepresented the importance of examinations as not all subjects carried equal weight. In practice, however, explicit in-school ‘ranking’ of subjects might be difficult to enact. An alternative, which would still be in keeping with this student viewpoint, is linking together mastery goal orientation to individual differences in expectancy value (Eccles, Adler, Futterman, Goff, Kaczala, Meeches et al., 1983); that is, helping the student to work out what is most important to them and acknowledging that they may need to allocate time according to priorities.

**Envisaging different approaches to student examination motivation**

In response to student feedback, teachers envisaged adaptations in whole school practices as well as messages conveyed through language (see appendix 11). Teachers thought about having differentiated assemblies targeted to the relevant students and therefore aid in messages being more specific; teachers also identified the potential utility of motivational speakers. There is limited research in the area of teacher knowledge of student motivation and this subject gets scant attention within the literature on general pedagogical knowledge (Tamir, 1987). Therefore, it appears it would be useful for teachers to have specific training on relevant motivational theory and research, which could be provided by educational psychologists.

Although students wanted to be given information for examinations, revision techniques and timetables, teachers felt it was more important to develop them as independent learners. Students as independent learners is proposed to be a key part of student motivation (Meyer et al., 2008). The teachers proposed that teaching study skills would allow students to become empowered in their learning and to self-regulate their own progress, in turn boosting their self-satisfaction and motivation in a virtuous cycle (Zimmerman, 2002). Furthermore, students are now required to attend some form of education till the age of 18 therefore independent learning skills will aid them beyond high stake examinations at the age of 16 (Spielhofer, Walker, Gagg, Schagen & O'Donnell, 2007). Further to this, learning is now perceived as ‘lifelong’ (Keegan, 1994), so study skills that students learn may be transferrable beyond the education system.
Finally, the idea of a mentor came from students’ need for individual support. Teachers suggested weekly meetings between a student and ‘an assertive mentor’, in which weekly targets would be set and monitored. This is supported by research findings that students who set themselves goals and monitor progress of goals display superior achievement (Schunk, 1989; Zimmerman, 1989).

The author feels this research locates itself in the area of practice-based research according to the definition by Stokes (1997). Therefore the findings for phase 3 are reported in this manner due to the ‘use-inspired’ methodology utilised as the research enabled teachers to envisage different approaches to student examination motivation following student feedback.

**Future research directions**

Engaging teachers as reflective practitioners is proposed to be difficult as reflection is commonly considered a private activity whereas being a reflective teacher is viewed as a public activity (Zeichner and Tabachnick, 2001). However, in the present research teachers engaged fully in a process of self-evaluation and seemed genuinely interested to find out about their students’ experiences. They were able to envisage new possibilities from student feedback, to reflect upon the practices of the school, and to propose future developments. This research suggests that teachers need to develop a psychological perspective which enables them to reduce the school and teacher environmental constraints, to support students towards mastery, and to promote students’ feelings of being emotionally supported and cared for.

At the end of the research, teachers reported that they found the experience useful for their own development and also relevant for wider school development. In future, they suggested it would be useful to have students participate in the action planning research phase so that teachers can clarify or negotiate some of the ideas they have created. Teachers also suggested senior leadership participation for guidance on the feasibility of ideas and support for implementation. Future research could usefully extend this piece of research to allow teachers to implement the initial ideas generated and to review at a later date the usefulness, perceived effectiveness, and feasibility of these ideas. However it is important to note that the research aims need to be on the teachers’ and schools’ agenda for effective change to occur (Wandersman, Duffy, Flaspholer, Noonan, Lubell, Stillman et al., 2008).
Replication and extension of the current research is important to assess the generalisability of the findings since contextual variations, for example, relating to curriculum, student expectancies, and examination boards, may all affect possible responses within a school setting; further research is currently underway (McCaldin, 2015).
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Paper Three

Influencing school practice in preparing high school students for high stake examinations
Introduction

This paper aims to reflect upon the dissemination process and significance of the findings from papers 1 and 2. This paper will start on a general level focusing on an overview of concepts of evidence-based practice and practice-based research, and then review different models for dissemination of research. The paper will then move on to the significance of the findings of papers 1 and 2 on the site in which the research was completed and potential influence at organisational level and professional level. The paper will conclude with a strategy for promoting and evaluating the dissemination and impact of the research described in papers 1 and 2.

Evidence-based practice (EBP) and practice-based research

Evidence-based practice

Evidence-based practice (EBP) is a concept developed in healthcare and, over time, has integrated itself across the education sector (Frederickson, 2002). The use of EBP provides safety and ensures effectiveness and cost effectiveness of interventions (American Psychological Association, APA, 2006). The APA (2006) defines EBP as “the integration of the best available research with clinical expertise in the context of patient characteristics culture and preferences” (APA, 2006, p.273). Scott, Shaw and Joughin (2001) propose a hierarchy of evidence with the strongest body of research at the top of the hierarchy (see table 2).

Table 2. Traditional hierarchy of evidence (from Scott et al., 2001)

| 1. Several systematic reviews of Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) |
| 2. Systematic review of RCTs |
| 3. RCTs |
| 4. Quasi-experimental trials |
| 5. Case control and cohort studies |
| 6. Expert consensus opinion |
| 7. Individual opinion |

Frederickson (2002) concludes that the choice of research approach is dependent on the purpose of the research. If, for example, a researcher seeks to understand the effectiveness of an
intervention, then the use of Randomised Controlled Trials (RCTs) and systematic review of several trials is the most appropriate. RCTs are viewed as the best evidence for the general effectiveness of interventions and are arguably highly compatible to scientific research methods. However, RCTs are based on large sample groups of individuals and arguably do not take into consideration individual differences (Reason & Woods, 2002). For example, Frith (1999) when comparing tests of phonological and literacy components, highlighted that although these tests have statistical validity in discriminating between groups, the tests were not sensitive enough for individual cases. Although RCTs show a fixed/controlled method which must be adhered to, they do provide a starting point of practice of what might be generally effective. If this form of research is not feasible then the researcher should continue down the hierarchy (Sackett, Rosenberg, Muir Gray, Haynes, & Scott Richardson, 1996) as although wide generalisations from less well-controlled studies may be inappropriate, they do offer an insight in to unresearched areas and suggest promising areas for future development (Frederickson, 2002).

**Practice-based research**

There appears to be no internationally accepted definition for practice-based evidence (Furlong & Oancea, 2005). Stokes (1997) proposes an idea of ‘use-inspired basic research’ where research is based on a problem or gap identified by policy makers and practitioners and the outcomes of this research contributes to development in policy and practice. Furlong and Oancea (2005) define practice-based research as “an area situated between academia-led theoretical pursuits (e.g. historical research) and research-informed practice, and consisting of a multitude of models of research explicitly conducted in, with, and/or for practice” (p.9). Although it has been argued that practice-based research does not lend itself to the production of widely generalisable findings, it does provide innovatory and useful ideas for future research directions and allows for these emerging areas of interest to be researched (Furlong & Oancea, 2005). Furlong and Oancea (2005) propose four dimensions of quality: epistemic, technological, capacity and economic, to assess the quality of practice-based evidence (see figure 1 for full descriptions).
The empirical study reported in paper 2 locates itself in practice-based research. Using the definition of practice-based research by Stokes (1997), the author felt there were 2 main gaps in the area of teacher behaviour in the lead up to high stake examinations. Firstly, research in this field has not engaged teachers collaboratively or triangulated students and teachers views to create a joint understanding of how to support students in the classroom. Secondly, previous research in this field has focussed upon researcher-led experimental methods (Putwain & Roberts, 2012; Putwain & Remedios, 2014; Putwain & Best 2011) and not involved teachers in the research process to allow them to reflect upon their practice given the perspectives of their students and envisage future practice for themselves and the school community. Following on from this, the research was arguably ‘use-inspired basic research’ as the research developed school policy as phase 3 of the research allowed the creation of an action plan which was generated by the teachers in the school for the school to implement (appendix 11). Although the research in paper 2 does not lend itself to widely generalisable findings due to the single case study design and small sample size, it did allow the school, in which the research was completed in, to reflect upon their practice and envisage alternatives for the future. Furthermore, paper 2 provided suggestions for future research directions (Furlong and Oancea, 2005), for example developing teachers psychological perspective to support students towards goal mastery.

Figure 1. Furlong and Oancea’s (2005) dimensions of quality for practice-based research
Implications of evidence-based practice for educational psychologists

The Department for Education and Employment (DfEE, 2000) defines the role of the Educational Psychologist (EP) as a role which will promote and improve the provision for children with special educational needs through applying their knowledge of psychology by working with individual and groups of children, stakeholders within the child’s life, other appropriate agencies. Hence a key part of the EP role is to embed EBP into their work. EPs are individually responsible for the development of their knowledge and accountable for the application of their knowledge (Health and Care Professions Council, 2015).

Salkovskis (1995) proposes an hourglass model to show how research can contribute to the role of EBP in the role of the EP. At the top of the hourglass small scale research can develop initial ideas and hypotheses for interventions. From this development stage, interventions are tested through rigorous research, for example, RCTs and considerations for internal validity are made. From this, generalisability of the interventions is explored. It is therefore argued that the profile of the EP should be promoted as not only users of research but also researchers in their own right (Frederickson, 2002).

Charities, such as Early Intervention Foundation (2016) and Sutton Trust (2016), act as sources to support EBP and as such the creation of a narrow list of approved interventions has been formed by these charities, however the author, from their professional experience, feels this may be met with skepticism due to individual differences between cases and an EP’s own knowledge base. Stoiber and Gregory (2002) propose these lists, created by the aforementioned charities, leads to a risk in increasing the separation between research and practice rather than narrowing this gap. Conversely as EPs more systematically incorporate best available research in their work it may draw attention to gaps in research or areas requiring further research. As currently the effectiveness of an EBP is restricted to a specific situation, population and problem therefore by EPs implementing EBP, they may find other situations where the use of an EBP may be effective (Stoiber & Gregory, 2002).

The development of the Campbell Collaboration, which comprises of international review groups, aims to make accessible systematic reviews in areas of education. From this the Department for Education and Skills (2001) hopes that parents will research interventions for their child prior to meeting with the EP. Therefore, consultation meetings with parents, schools
and EPs will be based on discussing interventions which will be the most applicable for the child and the context which they are in (Frederickson, 2002). From this point there will be clear expectations of the implementation of interventions and that this will be evaluated by the EP after an appropriate amount of time. This also allows for further work and discussions with stakeholders about why an intervention did not lead to successful outcomes and from there adaptations can be made or an alternative intervention implemented with collaboration with parents and school (Frederickson, 2002).

EBP is a fundamental component of scientist practitioner model of EP work (Stoiber & Gregory, 2002). The scientist-practitioner model proposes the application of scientific knowledge and analytical thinking skills by psychologists to problem solve situations (Belar, 1990; Thorne, 1947). However it is suggested the scientist-practitioner model is an often unmet aspect of psychological training programmes (Hayes, Barlow, & Nelson-Gray, 1999).

EPs are felt to have a unique opportunity in which they can take research findings, embed them in to their knowledge and use these to impact policy and practice in the organisations in which they work. In individual casework, EPs operate as scientist-practitioners by generating hypotheses from an individual problem, explore this through various assessments, formulate an understanding and recommend interventions specifically for the individual, whilst taking into account that findings from academic research may not necessarily generalise into the environment in which they work. From this point EPs are then able to compare interventions between individual cases and start to generalise successful interventions therefore cementing scientist-practitioners as part of their role (Miller & Frederickson, 2007).

The use of EBP in the EP role is proposed to have had negative reactions from EPs due to a perception of EBP as being designed to cut costs and limit the freedom of advice within the EP role which EPs have gained from their professional experience within the education system (Frederickson, 2002). Arguably EPs need to be able to take into account individual characteristics of the child or young person, people involved in the child or young person’s life, school environment, home environment and so forth. However EPs using solely practitioner research cannot control for the aforementioned multitude of factors impacting a case. Due to this it can be difficult to effectively implement an intervention from academic research as the environment may not have the same characteristics in which the research was originally based on.
for the intervention. For research to be considered internally and externally valid, a number of variables will be controlled, which may not be feasible in a school setting or applicable to individual children (Reason & Woods, 2002). EBP is proposed to integrate with the knowledge EPs bring to their role rather than replace it and to use their wealth of experience and knowledge to decide whether a particular intervention is appropriate to an individual and the system they are currently in (Frederickson, 2002).

Research of school psychologists by Bramlett, Murphy, Johnson, Wallingsford and Hall (2002) found 83% of school psychologists reported relying upon personal experience to inform intervention practice; 62% use reference books and 47% use journal articles. This research suggests that half of school psychologists do not use journal articles to inform the intervention they use and suggests school psychologists are not able to utilise “best available research”. A survey of school psychologists by Nelson and Machek (2007) found that 56% of respondents reported their knowledge of scientific, research-based reading interventions as low or moderately low. There however appears to be a lack of research which considers EPs’ actual engagement with EBP or scientific practice and therefore the aforementioned research is not necessarily a generalised consensus of EP practice (Lilienfeld, Ammirati, & David, 2012).

The effective dissemination of research: outcomes and impact

Previously researchers have feared a lasting gap between science and practice (Backer, David, & Soucy, 1995; Clancy & Cronin, 2005) and the need to bridge this gap through EBP. The purpose of EBP is to build on existing approaches and to promote the development of community-centered models (Wandersman, Duffy, Flaspohler, Noonan, Lubell, Stillman, et al., 2008). Effective dissemination of research evidence has enabled psychologists to lessen this proposed gap and created effective change within an organisation (Mayer & Davidson, 2000). Researchers have recognised the importance of disseminating research findings to audiences other than researchers and to not relegate research to academic journals which are not necessarily readily accessible to the public, parents, school staff and others who work on behalf of a child (Sherrod, 1999). Sherrod (1999) proposes the idea that dissemination is ‘giving child development knowledge away’ and this is important to continue to progress with in order for policies, practice and programmes to continue to develop to suit the development and the progress of all children and young people (CYP). The Fund for the Development of Teaching
and Learning (FDTL, 1997, cited in Harmsworth & Turpin, 2000) proposes that “Dissemination has been successful when educational practice has changed in response to disseminated excellent practice” (p2).

Sherrod (1999) proposes the purpose of dissemination of research by universities is to enable both the private and the public sector access to information that will benefit the wellbeing of CYP and be beneficial to policy makers and future ‘best practice’. A further benefit, is that universities are in a position whereby their research is potentially neutral and not impacted by political positions or purposes in promoting a specific intervention. Leading on from this, the United Kingdom government has made a push to change the access of journal articles to ‘open access publishing’ (Curry, 2012). Prior to the year 2000, the vast majority of journal articles could only be read by academics who paid a subscription fee to a journal. However, the growth of the world wide web has allowed instantaneous distribution and access to journal articles which has fused with the argument that publicly funded research should be freely available to all therefore leading to the open access of scientific publishing (Curry, 2012). Therefore this shows how universities will be able to comply with Sherrod’s (1999) thoughts as universities will be able to allow all to access the research they have completed which arguably will benefit all within the community.

Harmsworth and Turpin (2000) propose three different stages of dissemination. The first stage is *dissemination for awareness* and is aimed at target audiences who do not require a detailed account of your research, instead you are informing them of the presence of the research. This form of dissemination mainly works on a ‘word of mouth’ approach and helps to build up the presence of your research in its research area. The second stage is *dissemination for understanding* and is aimed at targeting your dissemination approach to audiences that you feel will benefit from the findings of your research. This form of dissemination aims to develop audiences understanding of your research. The third stage is *dissemination for action* and is aimed at your research findings causing change to policy or practice in the relevant field. Dissemination is aimed at audiences that can create change in their organisations and research needs to be able to equip the audience with the tools and the knowledge they require to create change in line with your research findings. Harmsworth and Turpin (2000) propose researchers
who undertake these stages will pass through each of these stages in turn to disseminate their research.

The next part of dissemination is to clearly identify what you want to disseminate (Harmsworth & Turpin, 2000). From this point, analysis of who your audience will be and what you want to offer them from your research can be decided upon. It is then important to consider timing and when you want to disseminate. From here, researchers need to decide upon the most effective approach to disseminate using a model or framework.

Due to the need to bridge the gap between research and practice and with the different stages of dissemination, various models and frameworks have been proposed and researched (Greenhalgh, Robert, Macfarlane, Bate, & Kyriakidou, 2004). Wandersman et al. (2008) propose that frameworks for dissemination and implementation can be classified into two models: source-based and user-based. Source-based models are generated by the researcher and follow a linear pattern to the user. User-based models are generated by a gap in research found by users or an opportunity arises which users feel need to be developed. This model again follows a linear pattern from initial idea or awareness of an area for development to implementation in practice (Klein & Sorra, 1996). These models can be differentiated according to their starting point: academic oriented researchers which is based on researchers to practitioners or practice-based evidence researchers which is based on practitioners through researchers back to practitioners (Stokes, 1997). Wandersman et al. (2008) feel the most dominant model of research is researchers to practitioners. Wandersman et al. (2008) feel the limitation of source-based and user-based models of dissemination is that these models focus on the functions that take place rather than the infrastructure required to support the effective implementation of the research being disseminated. In other words, the models focus on the ‘what’ needs to be done aspect rather than ‘how’ this can be effectively disseminated and implemented.

Wandersman et al. (2008) propose that for effective dissemination, research should adopt a community-centered model. Therefore, research begins “with the community and ask what it needs in terms of scientific information and capacity-building to produce effective interventions” (Wandersman & Florin, 2003, p230). Understanding the capacity in which you want the research to be disseminated and implemented enables the gap between research and practice to be lessened (Wandersman & Florin, 2003). Further to this, Harmsworth and Turpin (2000) propose
effective dissemination engages the audience in an awareness of the research, develops their understanding of the research and enables them to implement in their organisation.

Building on from this Sherrod (1999) proposes the idea of ‘outreach universities’ as a method to create a partnership with academic institutions and community organisations to enable effective dissemination and implementation of research and increase the usefulness of scientific research in the ‘real world’. These partnerships also allow organisations to become empowered in their practice as it allows them to become engaged in the research and the evaluation of its applicability in their setting. This partnership also benefits the researchers as it brings a new perspective to research where the community becomes a context for the study rather than simply seeing if an intervention “works”. Finally the partnership allows for bidirectional communication between communities and researchers rather than it being uni-directional from researchers to a community and a learning enterprise is formed by all parties encompassing cooperative learning and collaboration (Sherrod, 1998).

The Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology, which the author is currently on, aims to change this model as theses are mainly commissioned by Local Authorities (LA) for not only a gap in a research area but for a research area they feel will benefit the local education community in the LA. Further to this, as the research completed on the Doctorate utilises methodologies such as Activity research (Crawford & Hasen, 2000) and Appreciative Inquiry (Cooperrider & Srivastva, 1987), the methodologies of the research themselves lends to the current infrastructures in place within the context of the research and therefore incorporates the ‘how’ aspect into the methodology. This idea is shown in paper 2 whereby the methodology lent itself to aspects of Activity Theory and was employed in phase 3 of the research as the school action plan was generated by teachers from the school and the appropriateness of ideas created by student participants was discussed in the context of the school.

Researchers propose a broad number of issues and factors which will affect the dissemination and implementation of research (Harmsworth & Turpin, 2000). Factors at the individual level include the educational level of the audience (Boehm & Litwin, 1997), viewpoint of the research and the drive to implement implications (DiFranceisco et al., 1999). At the organisation level it is important to consider how the research will fit into their particular context and to the extent that adoption of a new approach will impact on their organisation such
as time, money and infrastructure. It is important to not overwhelm organisations with a new approach. It is also important to link research findings to previous research and shows organisations how it builds on existing knowledge (Harmsworth & Turpin, 2000). Further factors at the organisation level include the leadership in the organisation (Lempa, Goodman, Rice, & Becker, 2007); commitment of the organisation to implement (MacDonald & Green, 2001) and the size of the organisation (DiFranceisco et al., 1999; Greenhalgh et al., 2004). It is also important to note that even if an organisation has the infrastructures and capacity to implement research, they may be unwilling to adopt this practice in to their organisation (Wandersman et al., 2008).

**Implications of the current research for policy and practice**

*Implications of the research for the research site*

The findings from the systematic literature review, reported in paper 1, have future potential relevance for teachers’ practice as different behaviours teachers engaged in can lead to different impacts on students’ motivation and performance on high stake examinations. The findings suggest that teachers may need to avoid behaviours such as fear appeals and negative feedback (Putwain & Remedios, 2014; Wentzel, 2002) and instead focus on being perceived as caring (Wentzel, 1997); being fair within the classroom and have high expectations for students (Wentzel, 2002); provide academic support (LevpuÅÄek & ZupanÄiÄ, 2009); and foster meaningful relationships (Siegle, Rubenstein & Mitchell, 2014). As “great teaching” is viewed “as that which leads to improved student progress” (Coe, Aloisi, Higgins & Major, 2014, p.2), it is therefore important for teachers to consider the impact of their behaviours on student motivation and therefore their academic achievement in order for teachers’ abilities to be viewed in a positive light.

The findings from the empirical research, reported in paper 2, potentially had immediate implications for the practice of the teachers involved in the project. The main implications the teachers from the focus group appeared to take away were: enabling pupils to become independent in their revision, individualised support and guidance in the classroom where possible and recapping knowledge with students on a regular basis.
Implications of the research at organisational level

Although, in paper 2, students reflected upon language and behaviours of teachers in the focus group the teachers mainly envisaged practice at a whole school level and concentrated on developing practice within the school through the creation of a school Action Plan (see appendix 11). These practices included: dedicated lessons to teach study skills; time management and to develop students sense of their metacognition; individualised support in the form of mentors; motivational guest speakers and future employers to develop students’ understanding of the impact of GCSE results; and targeted assemblies dependent on students’ current performance and level of motivation towards their GCSEs.

A previously unresearched area highlighted in paper 2 was the influence of non-teacher sources on student motivation. The feedback from students drew attention to the fact that they receive guidance on subject prioritisation from their parents which teachers felt may not necessarily be accurate or beneficial to the student as the information from parents may be for example outdated. Therefore a key finding for paper 2 and a change of practice in the school was to develop an examination-related home-school communication to develop parents’ understanding of GCSEs and how best to support their child at school and at home.

As previously mentioned, the methodology of paper 2 engaged teachers as reflective practitioners which teachers reflected upon and suggested was helpful. This therefore shows a potential methodology which can be utilised by Local Authorities and Educational Psychology Services to gain student voice on a topic and feedback to teachers in a non-threatening way as well as developing school practice as part of the process.

The impact of teacher behaviours on student motivation and academic performance is viewed as an important concept not only for teachers and schools but also for Local Authorities and on an international level due to the pressure to ensure that students perform well in high stake exams to improve the country’s international educational rank (Williams, Ryan, & Morgan, 2014).

Implications of research at a professional level

Paper 1 found there to be limited research in the area of teacher knowledge of student motivation and the General Pedagogical Knowledge literature was researched in the late 80’s (Tamir, 1987) but has since lost traction. In paper 2, teachers suggested motivational speakers
rather than themselves to talk to students. Therefore an implication of this research could be training input into teacher training so teachers have an understanding of relevant motivational theory and research and how they can utilise this in their practice. This training could be provided by Educational Psychologists (EPs) as EPs can simplify motivational theories (Lipton, 1992) and bridge the gap between motivational theory and teacher behaviours so teachers can promote motivation in the classroom and mobilise their students in their school work. Furthermore both papers 1 and 2 also reported that teachers adapted their behaviours for different pupils depending on the response they wanted to elicit (Putwain & Roberts, 2012). EPs could provide training for how to adapt messages if this is appropriate. Paper 2 also suggested that teachers could be ‘assertive mentors’ for students in order to give the individual support students felt they needed in the lead up to their GCSEs. Again EPs could train teachers on how to be assertive mentors.

Paper 2 also suggested the idea of developing students as independent learners as: this is considered to be a key part to their motivation (Meyer, Haywood & Sachdev, 2008); as it allows them to be empowered as learners (Zimmerman, 2002); and teaches them skills in which they can utilise throughout their educational experience which they are now required to remain in till the age of 18 (Spielhofer, Walker, Gagg, Schagen & O'Donnell, 2007); and teaches them skills arguably for the rest of their life (Keegan, 1994). Therefore EPs need to consider how they can enable students to become independent learners and to encourage teachers to allow and trust students to be independent in their learning.

Finally this piece of research was commissioned through England’s Department for Education (DfE) National College for Teaching and Learning (NCTL) ITEP award 2013-2016. Therefore the project allowed for a partnership to be created between the university and school organisation and therefore shows how the research methodology of paper 2 allows for the increased usefulness of scientific research in the ‘real world’ and allows for schools to become empowered in developing their practice by utilising action based research (Sherrod, 1999).

**Summary of implications of this research:**

- Teachers can potentially have a positive impact on student motivation and academic performance, when they engage in caring behaviours, give individualised advice, have high expectations of students, provide academic support and support mastery goal setting.
• There is an opportunity to develop teacher knowledge and utilisation of student motivation in their practice and generally in the education system. EPs could support teachers to extend their understanding of student motivation and to utilise this in mobilising their students in their school work.

• School-based research which involves teachers as collaborators, in the endeavour to promote student motivation for achievement in high-stake examinations is both feasible and useful.

• It is important to develop students as independent learners. EPs could provide support to schools, through training or action research, to build capacity for staff to support students in becoming independent learners not only in an examination context, but as part of a life-long learning process.

• Non-teacher sources have a potential impact on student motivation and examination performance. A model of home-school collaboration in which teachers and parents co-ordinate their knowledge of the child and the requirements of the examination system would be beneficial.

Promoting and evaluating dissemination and impact of research

Whilst writing papers 1 and 2, the author considered the findings they wanted to disseminate (Harmsworth & Turpin, 2000). From paper 1, the author felt the main message to convey was the possible impact of teachers’ behaviours on student motivation and academic performance. From paper 2, the author felt there were two messages to convey, the first being the methodology of the research and the second being school practice proposed to positively support student motivation and academic performance. The author feels there are various audiences for the findings of papers 1 and 2 including: individual teachers, schools and EPs.

The author plans to disseminate the findings of papers 1 and 2 through the three stages of dissemination as proposed by Harmsworth and Turpin (2000).

The first proposed stage is dissemination for awareness and involves informing audiences of the presence of the research. The author aims to achieve this by focusing on consultation when networking in schools through their role as a trainee Educational Psychologist by informing relevant parties in schools of the research that has been completed and the positive impact it
could have on school practice. The author also aims for this to be further disseminated at this stage through ‘word of mouth’ as other trainees are aware of this piece of research, the Local Authority in which the author will work in as of September and via qualified EPs and EPS team.

The second proposed stage is *dissemination for understanding* whereby the author aims to develop audiences understanding of the research findings. This has partially been met as the author presented the research findings at the Edgehill Annual Conference for Research in Education (ACRE) - Controversies in Education: Problems, Debates, Solutions (see Appendix 12 for conference slides and notes). This conference allowed for the author to present the research findings in line with 2 other pieces of research as part of a symposium with a teacher discussant to deliberate the impact of these findings on the practice of a teacher. The conference was attended by a mixture of researchers, teachers and people working in the education sector. Positive feedback was gained from teacher attendants about the utility of the research and the impact on school-based practice. The author also plans to present as part of a symposium at the International School Psychology Association (ISPA) conference in July 2016. This conference will be attended by school psychologists from across the world. As previously mentioned teachers are under pressure on an international forum to ensure student performance in high stake examinations and EPs are in a unique position in which to aid teachers develop their understanding of student motivation and the behaviours they need to engage in in order to enable students to succeed. The author has also submitted papers 1 and 2 for publishing to further disseminate the research to develop audiences understanding. The author has submitted paper 1 to the International Journal of School and Educational Psychology. The author has decided upon this journal as the aim of journal is to bridge the gap between psychology and school-related practice on an international level which the author feels the findings of paper 1 relates to due to the international focus of paper 1 and the transferability of findings. The author has submitted paper 2 to Educational Psychology in Practice as this journal is predominantly read by UK practitioners and publishes research based on applied psychology and which represents theory, research and practice relevant to the practice of EPs working primarily in the UK which the author feels paper 2 links in well to due to the specific nature of the paper to UK examinations, teachers and EPs although the results will possibly have relevance to other countries school systems.
The third and final stage is *dissemination for action* which involves the findings from papers 1 and 2 causing change to policy and practice. As previously mentioned, paper 2 involved the creation of an Action Plan with teachers to feedback to the school and senior leadership the overall findings of the research and the possible changes to school practice. FDTL (1997, cited in Harmsworth & Turpin, 2000) proposes that “Dissemination has been successful when educational practice has changed in response to disseminated excellent practice” (p2). Currently the author is unaware if the Action Plan has had an impact on school practice. Ideally the author would have followed this up in the school by possibly meeting with school leadership and a representative from the teacher focus group to discuss the potential Action Plan and discuss which, if any, of the proposed changes could be made in the school after taking in to account the capacity of the school (Wandersman & Florin, 2003). This form of community-centered model is proposed to lead to more effective dissemination (Wandersman et al., 2008). From papers 1 and 2, the author plans to create a twilight training session which can be utilised in the EPS to develop teachers’ understandings of theories of motivation and how this relate to students and their performance in high stake exams. A twilight session enables the audience to become aware of the research, develop their understanding of research findings and collaboratively plan how to implement in their organisation which again is proposed to lead to more effective dissemination (Harmsworth & Turpin, 2000).

The model of dissemination for papers 1 and 2 follows a source-based model (Wandersman et al., 2008) as the research was generated by the researcher and followed a linear pattern to the users. The issue of this is that both papers 1 and 2 focus on ‘what’ and ‘how’ schools and teachers need to change in order to support student motivation and academic performance and do not consider the infrastructures required in order for these changes to occur. This is where the author feels the role of the EP comes in to play as they are able to utilise their role as a scientist-practitioner (Belar, 1990; Thorne, 1947) and act as an external agent to support schools understand the research and how to successfully implement in their schools given the infrastructures they have in place.
References


Boston: Allyn & Bacon.


Appendix 1: Author guidelines for International Journal of School and Educational Psychology and Educational Psychology in Practice
Advice to authors on preparing a manuscript

NB: Please follow any specific instructions for authors provided by the Editor of the journal

Font: Times New Roman, 12 point. Use margins of at least 2.5 cm (1 inch). Further details of how to insert special characters, accents and diacritics are available here.

Title: Use bold for your article title, with an initial capital letter for any proper nouns.

Authors’ names: Give the names of all contributing authors on the title page exactly as you wish them to appear in the published article.

Affiliations: List the affiliation of each author (department, university, city, country).

Correspondence details: Please provide an institutional email address for the corresponding author.

Full postal details are also needed by the publisher, but will not necessarily be published.

Anonymity for peer review: Ensure your identity and that of your co-authors is not revealed in the text of your article or in your manuscript files when submitting the manuscript for review. Advice on anonymizing your manuscript is available here.

Abstract: Indicate the abstract paragraph with a heading or by reducing the font size. Advice on writing abstracts is available here.

Keywords: Please provide five or six keywords to help readers find your article. Advice on selecting suitable keywords is available here.

Headings: Please indicate the level of the section headings in your article:

- First-level headings (e.g. Introduction, Conclusion) should be in bold, with an initial capital letter for any proper nouns.
• Second-level headings should be in bold italics, with an initial capital letter for any proper nouns.
• Third-level headings should be in italics, with an initial capital letter for any proper nouns.
• Fourth-level headings should also be in italics, at the beginning of a paragraph. The text follows immediately after a full stop (full point) or other punctuation mark.

Tables and figures: Indicate in the text where the tables and figures should appear, for example by inserting [Table 1 near here]. The actual tables and figures should be supplied either at the end of the text or in a separate file as requested by the Editor. Ensure you have permission to use any figures you are reproducing from another source. Advice on artwork is available here. Advice on tables is available here.

Running heads and received dates are not required when submitting a manuscript for review.

If your article is accepted for publication, it will be copy-edited and typeset in the correct style for the journal.

If you have any queries, please contact us at authorqueries@tandf.co.uk, mentioning the full title of the journal you are interested in, or see our Author Services homepage.
Appendix 2: Phase 1 focus group schedule for teachers
Introduction:

- Welcome and thank you for agreeing to participate
- Explain nature of project to participants and ethical protocol.
  - 2 x meetings and discussion with students
- Reminder of consent
- Describe the focus group process and purpose for using this method
  - Presentation of some key questions
- I will be recording the focus group on an audio recording device and may make some notes
- Do you have any questions before we start?
- I would like you to discuss the questions from your own experiences

Key Questions

- What sort of things do you say prior to GCSEs? Give examples
  - Prompts with regards to fear appeals, efficacy appeals
  - Does this differ depending on the student?
- How aware are you of what you say and when do you become aware?
- What impact do you hope to have on your students?
- Do the things you say change as you get closer to the exams?
- How do you feel about what you say? Why?
  - Explore positives/negatives, effectiveness and balance
- What are your reasons behind the language you use? Are you consciously aware of what you are saying?

Summary of messages and purposes

Debrief: I’ll obviously be careful not to write up any of this in a manner by which you can be identified. However, is there anything you’ve just told me which I should be particularly careful about? Anything you’ve mentioned that I should check with you first before I use it?

Thank you for participation, I will be in contact with your school to give feedback of the research findings at a later date.
Appendix 3: Interview schedule for students
Introduction:

- Welcome and thank you for agreeing to participate
- Explain nature of project to participants and ethical protocol.
- Reminder of consent and right to withdraw without any consequences
- Confidentiality: externally
- I will be recording the focus group on an audio recording device and may make some notes
- Do you have any questions before we start?
- I would like you to answer the questions from your own experiences

Key Questions

What do your teachers say in the run up to your GCSEs? Prompt for examples.

- I’ve got some statements that teachers have reported to say and some that students have said they hear teachers say. So I just want you to look through and say if you’ve heard any of these before. [Prompt cards laid out in front of student]. Have you heard any of these before or something similar?

Would you say any of these relate to certain subjects?

- How do they make you feel?
- Is what they say helpful or unhelpful?

What do you hear in:

- Maths
- Science
- English
- Relation to GCSE options
- Do you feel particular subjects are more important? Why?
- Do teachers say their subject is more important?

And which subjects do you find you hear the most about your GCSEs from?

Do you find what your teachers say changes as you get closer to the exams?

How do you feel about what your teachers say?

What do you think their reasons are behind the language they use?

That’s a lot of messages at class level, have you had any messages about your GCSEs at:

- Year group level?
- Individual level?
When do you start noticing that teachers start talking about your GCSEs, when does that start happening?

- Do they countdown the days for you? Is this helpful?

What messages would you like to hear from your teachers prior to your GCSEs? Why?

- If you were to just go through each of these and put them in to piles [prompt cards], one pile this is something I would like to hear and one pile this is something I would not like to hear. There might be a middle pile for ones in the middle. Could you separate them out for me?
  - General questions around why?
  - Who from?
  - Individual, class or group level?
  - How feel?

- How would you like the language as your exams become closer? Would you like it to remain constant as your coming towards your exams?
- Are you happy with when the messages start for your exams?
- When they are talking about your GCSEs, again do you think it’s better to talk about it at individual, class level or at a year group level?

What types of messages do you hear from your parents?

- Do they talk about certain subjects being more important?
- Is there anyone else at home for example brothers, sisters, grandparents, aunts, uncles who talk about GCSEs?
- What about your friends? Do you talk about exams a lot?
- How about the media? Do you ever see anything on the TV or the news that make you think about your GCSEs?

Whose messages are most important: teachers, parents or friends?

During the exams what types of messages would you like to hear?

- During the exams, who do you think you will be relying on then for support? Teacher’s parents or friends?
- What would you want from your teachers during the exams?
- What about your parents during your exams? What type of things do you want to be hearing from them?
- And what about friends during exam time?
- Let’s say the year could be re done about people talking about your exams, thinking about your teachers, parents and friends. What would you like to hear from each of them?
Is there anything else you want to add about your GCSEs and what your teachers or parents say?

Debrief: I’ll obviously be careful not to write up any of this in a manner by which you can be identified. However, is there anything you’ve just told me which I should be particularly careful about? Anything you’ve mentioned that I should check with you first before I use it?

Thank you for participation, I will be in contact with your school to give feedback of the research findings at a later date.
Appendix 4: Prompt cards used in student semi-structured interview
The higher the grade you get, the more doors it will open at the next stage

You control how successful you are in your GCSEs

Work hard now so you don’t have to spend your first year of college resitting exams

What can you do today to pass because you can’t go back in time, what can you do today to maximise the chances of passing your exam.

You will not get a good job or progress on to college if you fail

You will fail your exams if you don’t revise

There’s still plenty of time to start working towards your exams

You’re more than capable of passing your exams if you put the work in

You have the potential to pass your exams

Your GCSE grades will last forever and are the first thing people look at so you need to put the effort in now and it will open up a lot more doors

You will get the grade you deserve. Be it good or bad so don’t regret it

Have confidence in your own ability

To avoid failing your exams you need to start working hard

If you start working hard now you’ll pass

To pass your exams you need to work hard

I believe you can pass your exams
Appendix 5: Importance of GCSE questionnaire
Are GCSEs valuable?

Please tell us how valuable you think GCSEs are, by circling the questions below.

There are no right or wrong answers, just what you think.

Your answers are treated completely confidentially and will not be reported to anyone in the school.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In general, I find doing GCSE homework…</td>
<td>Very boring</td>
<td>Neither</td>
<td>Very interesting</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<th>2. In general, how much do you like working towards your GCSEs?</th>
<th>Not very much</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Very much</th>
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<th>3. In general, I find GCSE lessons…</th>
<th>Very boring</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Very interesting</th>
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<th>4. Is the amount of effort it will take you to do well in your GCSEs worthwhile to you?</th>
<th>Not worthwhile</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Very worthwhile</th>
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<th>5. How important is it to you to get good grades in your GCSEs?</th>
<th>Not important</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Very important</th>
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<th>6. How useful are GCSEs for getting a job or going to college?</th>
<th>Not very useful</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Very useful</th>
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<tr>
<th>7. How useful is what you learn in your GCSE subjects useful for your daily life outside of school?</th>
<th>Not very useful</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Very useful</th>
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<tr>
<th>8. I think that my GCSEs will be useful when I have left school</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Neither</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
</tr>
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Appendix 6: Phase 3 group meeting schedule
Phase 3: Group Meeting 1

On arrival

- Thanks for participation again etc
- Reminder about recording
- Recap of research
  o What I’m doing and why meeting
  o Last time we met recap
  o What I’ve done since then
- Outline of today’s meeting and Friday’s meeting

**Give out feedback documents (see Appendix 7)**

Feedback of Stage 1: What do students report hearing from teachers?

Feedback of Stage 2: What students think is helpful

Focus Group Questions:

- Anything you agree with?
- Anything you think that would be problem implementing or trying?
- Anything that puzzles you?

Summary

Between now and Friday, it be good if you could have a think about which, if any, of the messages you’ve heard today you think would be significant in the future

Debrief

Phase 3: Group Meeting 2

Introduction

- Give out documents
- Explain purpose of this meeting

Focus Group Question:
If you could take away current constraints e.g. current classes, school policies, what could you envisage from the feedback from students at school level, department level and for individual teachers?

- Thinking about things which are generally feasible and may not necessarily be done tomorrow
- This may be new things or imbedding existing work/language

What do you think the school could take away from this either at teacher, department or school level?

Final thoughts:

For future reference, has this been a useful/positive experience?
Appendix 7: Feedback sheets
What do students report hearing from teachers?

Main Codes (Squares: what they said) and Organising Themes (Diamonds: ideas for grouping)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Code</th>
<th>Quote</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pupil Control</td>
<td>“At the end of the day it’s for you, if you don’t do something you are not going to get your place at college so it is for you at the end of the day and you will get out of it the effort you put in.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pupil Self Belief</td>
<td>“In maths my teacher is like quite positive towards it and he is always telling me that I should have confidence and he believes that I can pass cause like he thinks I can do well so he is more like positive towards things and cause I have had potential and stuff like that”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback of Progress</td>
<td>“Once in art I was told that I needed to push my work on as I could do better”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information</td>
<td>“Well, a lot of them are giving us countdowns saying how close they are, there is a countdown in the cafe as well saying how many days. Then they are obviously encouraging us to start revising”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision Advice</td>
<td>“They have set me that homework but every teacher has said that you need to be revising this subject every night and its sort of they haven’t listened to each other. We can’t do everything in one night…”</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
“Because I think if teachers say your capable and they believe in you, it gives people and people like me a bit more motivation to put in the revision and realise they’ve got the capability to do well. People that have got a low self-esteem I think it boosts them up a bit to think I will do well cause my teacher says I will.”

“They make sure that we are revising and they say that if we are struggling with anything there is always time to talk to them about it, that we can go over it so that when it gets to the exam we actually know it, instead of getting there and not knowing anything.”

“… like when they say things like there is plenty of time for you to start, it is like a bit of hope and telling us to have confidence”

“Scared, stressed but I feel that they are preparing us for later life, it helps me a little bit”

“Yeah because like at first it’s just like you need to start revising now and then as you get closer to the exam it’s like if you’re not revising now you’re not going to pass it.”
Messages from non-teacher sources

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<th>Main Code</th>
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<tr>
<td>Revision Advice</td>
<td>“…they do advise me on how much to do, if I get stressed I can speak to my mum about it and maybe sometimes my mum does say to me maybe you should just do this tonight and stop for a little bit cause you’re doing a bit too much.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Belief</td>
<td>“My mum … does says like, sometimes I tell her what I’ve achieved at school and she’s really proud of me and everything and she just says to me to carry on and I guarantee that you will get what you want. My dad says, he knows I work really hard and he just says to me that I need to focus on the subjects that you need to improve on most.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support</td>
<td>“… make sure your revising, then at the same time you’ve been able to do this before, you need to make sure you can do it in the exam and sort of like once you’ve done the exam, you don’t have to do it again so do it to the best of your ability.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Results to date</td>
<td>“You’re doing well at the minute but you just need to be sure your knuckling down and getting on with it and repeating the results you’ve already got.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact on future</td>
<td>“When I told my mum about the IT she said well just don’t do anything about it then, it isn’t your main priority and it isn’t a GCSE it’s not anything you want to do in the future. You concentrate on what you want to do, that is going to benefit your greatly there is not a lot you can do so there is no point wasting your time on something”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fear Appeals</td>
<td>“It is more like saying things like, if you fail now you will go to a bad college and you aren’t going to do well”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What students think is helpful

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Code</th>
<th>Quote</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Belief</td>
<td>“Maybe don’t worry you’re going to do fine, keep revising and with the way you’re going you will achieve what you want.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Emotional Support</td>
<td>“Directly before exams, calm down, it will be okay, so I am not overly worried.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No exam language</td>
<td>“I think we would just talk about other things during exam time cause you sort of need time to think about something else cause you’ve spent a lot of time thinking about the exams previous to that.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Every Year Counts</td>
<td>“I think earlier because I wish I could do things again, because in year 7 you get a year to muck about. I don’t remember anything about year 7 but you are expected to still do things now which you learnt in year 7 but it is not necessarily just talking about your GCSEs I think everyone needs to know how important school is and the learning factors. I think that in year 9 there is enough time to start talking about GCSEs and your options but I don’t think that there should be pressure built on anyone. If they had a more relaxed way of being around it I think people will be more relaxed about the GCSEs themselves and not be as pressured.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revision Organisation</strong></td>
<td>“Yes, to have like, to just talk about, I think it would help if you had someone there to help you prioritise if you can’t necessarily do it, I don’t want to choose between your subjects, and they are my subjects but if you have got someone else saying, you are confident in that so that’s okay but if you want to prioritise on that for a bit and then prioritise that for 2 weeks and then that for 2 weeks it would just sort of help you through it, it would help”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Individualised Advice</strong></td>
<td>“Maybe just try and push me a little bit more, may say oh like do, cause they don’t really say to me oh maybe try this practice question, like I’d rather have someone say like that do this practice question cause then I will do it cause if they don’t tell me, then I’ll think oh well they don’t really want me to do it and if they do then I will do it.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Impact on Future</strong></td>
<td>“Well it is sometimes like, I am actually quite happy with an A in that a subject I am not desperate about, there are some that I definitely want to get an A* and I think I could get that and will be disappointed if I don’t and then there are other subjects where you go actually if it means I can concentrate more on those and just get an A in that I would be happy and I wouldn’t be disappointed.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Reality of GCSEs</strong></td>
<td>“It is the way that they are sort of like say it, an A* sounds like and A and a An sounds like a B. So a C is like not really anything, and a B is like, if you are working at a B you could be getting A and A*, an A is like not really an A* and an A* is like you are doing alright as long as you stay at an A*”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pace of Exam Language</strong></td>
<td>“I think sometimes do you need a little bit of an up but I think keeping it more at a constant would help cause when its gets closer to your exams people are sort of panicking anyway and it doesn’t always help as they panic more.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Level of Messages</strong></td>
<td>“I think class level cause it’s more personalised to a particular lesson you’re in and the particular things you need to know where as at year group its more generalised and certain things wouldn’t apply to certain people as they didn’t take certain lessons. So it would be more useful at the class level.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pupil Control</strong></td>
<td>“I would like to hear more of you get out as much as you put in because they can’t force you to do anything so.....”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 8: Manchester Institute of Education ethical approval application form

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4 Appendices mentioned in the presented ethical form are in the following places: for Appendix A see Appendix 2, Appendix B see Appendix 3, Appendix C see Appendix 5, Appendix D see Appendix 6 and Appendix E see Appendix 9.
This ethical approval application form has been revised to incorporate changes made to the new University Research Ethics Committee (UREC) Form. It has been designed to incorporate prompts for information needed to ascertain whether the proposed research matches MIE’s research template pre-approved by UREC and to facilitate completion of the form to a standard that will allow speedier review, and approvals, by RIC members. Please follow all directions contained in this document.

### SECTION 1: Student Details /Identification of the person responsible for the research

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of Student:</th>
<th>Deborah Flitcroft</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student ID (quoted on library/ swipe card):</td>
<td>76196820</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Email Address:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:debflitcroft@sky.com">debflitcroft@sky.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of Supervisor:</td>
<td>Kevin Woods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supervisor email:</td>
<td><a href="mailto:kevin.a.woods@manchester.ac.uk">kevin.a.woods@manchester.ac.uk</a>, 01612753511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme (PhD, Prof Doc, MEd, PGCE, MSc, BA etc):</td>
<td>Prof Doc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year of Study</td>
<td>1st</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full/Part-time</td>
<td>Full</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Title of Research Project:</td>
<td>The language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Recruitment and Data Collection | **Start Date:** On receipt of confirmation of ethical approval  
**End Date:** 30.08.16 |
| Location(s) where the project will be carried out: | Preistnall High School |
| Student Signature: | Deborah Flitcroft |
| Supervisor Signature: | **Date:** |

** Supervisor signature confirms that the student has the relevant experience, knowledge and skills to carry out the study in an appropriate manner.**
SECTION 2: PROJECT DETAILS
(Please write your answers in the boxes provided. Boxes will expand to fit answers as necessary)

1. Aims and Objectives of the Project

1.1 Research Question

State the principal research question(s).
1. What kinds of fear/efficacy statements and other language do KS4 teachers report using prior to high stake exams and what purpose do they perceive it to serve?
2. What language do KS4 students report to receive from teachers and other sources prior to their exams and what language would they like to receive?
3. What new approach can teachers envisage or plan for based on students’ views and previous research findings?

1.2. Academic justification

Prior to high stake exams e.g. General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSEs), teachers use different forms of messages to motivate their students (Putwain, 2009). Research in this area appears to have focussed on fear appeals used by teachers and the impact it has on students. Teachers’ use of fear appeals prior to high stake exams is to try and motivate students to work hard and therefore achieve good exam results (Putwain, 2009). Research would suggest that perception of fear appeals can have the opposite intended effect and have a detrimental effect on exam performance (Putwain and Best, 2011). Throughout research, strategies have been suggested for what teachers could say prior to exams (Eccles, 2005) but research has never engaged teachers in this process or brought the views of students and teachers together to create ‘new talk’ in the classroom to better suit their students.

Therefore the proposed research aims to fill three gaps; the first is to find out what type of language statements teachers are using in the classroom. The second gap is to tap into students views about the type of language they receive from their teachers and if there are other sources students maybe hearing messages from regarding their exams e.g. messages from peers and parents. The third gap is to feedback to teachers the views of students which in turn will develop their understanding of their students and help to create language prior to high stake exams which is not deemed as threatening by students and aid in their exam preparation.

2. Methodology

2.1 Project Design:

The proposed research is an exploratory single embedded case study design (Yin, 2008) of a secondary school which will examine the language teachers use prior to high stake exams, the language students receive and the new language teachers can envisage and plan.

The proposed study comprises of a pre-phase of gathering information and 3 phases. For Phase 1, a focus group will be used to gather teachers’ views on current language they use in the classroom and the purpose of this language. The findings will be used in phase 2 to inform the focus group and will act as a comparison for phase 3 to see what new language teachers can create.

For phase 2, 4 focus groups of students will be used to gather their views on language used in the classroom prior to their GCSEs and how it makes them feel. Thematic Analysis will be used for focus groups see previous description. The themes from the students about the language they would like to hear will be feedback to teachers in phase 3.

For phase 3, the teachers from phase 1 will be reconvened in a workshop format and presented with the themes from phase 2 and research findings. From this the teachers will envisage and plan new language to use in their classrooms to suit the needs of their students through a focus group process.
2.2 Data Collection Methods:
Describe the research procedures/activities as they affect the study participant and any other parties involved. Which of the following will your research involve and what will you be asking your participants to do.

2.2.1. Interviews
Yes [ ] No [x]
If Yes, describe how these are to be conducted (Append your interview guide):

2.2.2. Questionnaires
Yes [x] No [ ]
If Yes, how will these be delivered to and collected from participants? (Append your draft questionnaire(s)): Questionnaires will be delivered and collected from pupils at the beginning of the focus group. See appendix C for copies of questionnaires.

2.2.3. Observations
Yes [ ] No [x]
If Yes, describe the context for the observation and what participants will be engaged in. (Append copy of any observation framework or other data collection guide to be used):

2.2.4. Diary
Yes [ ] No [x]
If Yes, describe the context for use of the diary and what participants will be asked to do. (Append copy of the Diary instructions and format):

2.2.5. Intervention
Yes [ ] No [x]
If Yes, describe the intervention and what participants will be asked to do. (Append a detailed description and any images necessary to support the description):

2.2.6. Assessments
Yes [ ] No [x]
If Yes, give full details of the assessment(s) and what participants will be asked to do. (Append a copy of the assessment schedules to be used):

2.2.7. Other
Yes [x] No [ ]
If Yes, give full details and what participants will be asked to do. (Append supporting documentation as appropriate): Participants will be involved in Focus Groups to gain their thoughts and opinions on the language used prior to exams. See appendix A, B and D for draft focus group questions.

2.2.8. Does data collection use video or still image? Yes [ ] No [x]
If Yes, complete the VASTRE documentation - Available from:
http://www.seed.manchester.ac.uk/studentintranet/miestudenthome/integrityethics/stillimageresearch/
2.2.9 Research Experience

Please state your experience in conducting these research interventions or assessments (where applicable) and methodologies outlined above - provide supporting evidence (e.g. course unit code).

As part of an assignment (A1) in year 1 of my professional doctorate in educational and child psychology, I have run a focus group with my supervisor for Deputy Head teachers. From this, I learnt how to structure a focus group and how to effectively run a focus group to allow participants an opportunity to speak and not feel threatened by the process.

2.3 Sampling

What type of sampling method do you propose to use?

2.3.1. Statistical

Yes [ ] No [x]

If Yes, describe the type, your justification for taking this approach and proposed sample size:

2.3.2. Other

Yes [x] No [ ]

If Yes, describe the type, your justification for taking this approach and proposed sample size:

An opportunity sample of teachers will be used from a secondary school. The inclusion criteria for the school are that they:
- must not be in special measures because of the ethical implications
- will have GCSE results similar to the national average including English and Maths
- should be non-denominational, mixed gender and culture in order to support analytic generalisability

The order of preference for the sample of teachers is as follows:
- teach either English or Maths to Year 11 students as these are the 2 core subjects students need a pass grade in to access further education and career opportunities
- teach one of the English Baccalaureate subjects to year 11 students
- teach year 11 students

From each of these teachers classes, 4 pupils will be randomly selected from each which meet the following criteria:
- Year 11
- D/C border liners for GCSEs in either/or/and English and Maths. The reason for this is that the type of language used is linked to exam performance (Putwain and Symes, 2011a, 2011b) and therefore the current research will benefit the border liners most as a grade C will open up more opportunities than a D.

2.4 Analysis method

What type of analyses do you propose to use to explore this data?

2.4.1. Quantitative analyses

Yes [ ] No [x]

If Yes, please give details:
2.4.2. Qualitative analyses

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If Yes, please give details:
Thematic analysis will be used as this method allows for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns which gives a rich and detailed data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

2.5 Ethical Issues

Briefly state the main ethical issues raised by the methodology outlined above.
For the pupil participants due to the topic potentially increasing anxiety levels as it is talking about their future exams, for the debrief a positive summary of their ideas will be given. The reason for this is to promote constructive thinking and re-framing for students what they find helpful and therefore lessen anxiety levels. This method will also aid with providing group support. If the researcher feels any students are upset by the process or raise concerns during the focus group, relevant information will be passed on to the Head of Year.

Due to the research involving pupils talking about their teachers and teachers' receiving this feedback, the researcher is aware of the risks involved in this. The researcher will be mindful of preserving professional confidence of teachers and will use their previous experience as a high school teacher to control for this. Throughout the process of feedback, the researcher will be mindful of respecting teachers and developing their understanding that the purpose of the feedback is to enhance teachers' Continuing Professional Development (CPD). The researcher will endeavour to control for any feelings of threat from this process but acknowledges something advertent may happen and appropriate action by the researcher will take place. Due to the teachers involved all receiving feedback from their pupils, confidentiality outside of the teacher's focus group will be discussed and teachers will be asked to be mindful of discussing the feedback with other people not involved. As pupils are talking about messages they receive from teachers, it is possible a negative group mind about a specific teacher may occur, the researcher will neutralise this by positively reframing messages or refuting unsubstantiated links that pupils might have.

3. Participant Details

3.1 Characteristics of participants
Please specify the characteristics of the participants you wish to recruit.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>number</th>
<th>20</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sex</td>
<td>Mixed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>age group(s)</td>
<td>Year 11 Pupils, Adults</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location(s)</td>
<td>High School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 Vulnerable groups

3.2.1. Will your project include participants from either of the following groups?
(Tick as appropriate)

[X] Children under 16 in school, youth club or other accredited organisation.
[ ] Adults with learning difficulties in familiar, supportive environments
[ ] NONE OF THE ABOVE (go to item 4.)

3.2.2. Inclusion of vulnerable groups

Please describe measures you will undertake to avoid coercion during the recruitment stage.
Discussions with teachers prior to approaching pupils to ensure pupils are not vulnerable or be upset by the process. Informed consent will be gained from parents.

3.2.3. Research in UK with vulnerable groups
Please confirm you have relevant clearance for working with vulnerable groups from DBS and/or other relevant sources.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DBS*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*NB: You will need a DBS application through the University. Any work related DBS clearance is not valid for your University research.

3.2.4. Please confirm that you will notify the Administrator for Ethics and Fieldwork (AEF) immediately if your DBS status changes.

I will immediately notify the AEF if my DBS status changes

4. Recruitment

4.1 Permissions
Do you have permission to collect data from an organisational fieldwork site from...

4.1.1. The organisation where the research will take place
(e.g. School head etc)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

4.1.2. Sub-settings within the organisation (e.g. class teacher etc)?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>NA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

If Yes, append letter/email confirming access to this application

If NA, please explain why permission is not applicable.

The school where the research will take place is unknown at the moment. Schools will be approached once ethical approval has been granted.

4.2 Participant recruitment

4.2.1. How will your pool of potential participants be identified? (tick all that apply)

- Letters/emails and follow up phone calls to organisations
- Posters/Advertisements
- Website/Internet (including Facebook/other social media)
- Known or named client groups (students, etc).
- Networks and recommendations
- Person in a position of authority in organisation
- Directory/database/register in public domain

Describe the nature of these routes to identify your pool of potential participants.

Contacts with the Local Authority I will be using will be used to find a suitable school and one willing to participate. Teaching staff will be approached using the order of preference. Pupils will be randomly selected from teachers’ classes.
4.2.3. How will you approach potential participants? (tick all that apply)

- [x] Letter
- [ ] Email
- [ ] Website/internet (including Facebook/other social media site)
- [ ] Presentation at meeting or similar
- [x] Other (describe here): Teachers will be approached with a summary sheet of the study. Pupils will be approached by via a letter

Indicate how information about your study will be delivered to potential participants and how they will (directly or indirectly) let you know they would like to take part in your research.

Teachers can let me know by email and pupils through consent letter from their parents

Append text of letters / emails / posters / advertisements / presentation etc

4.2.4 How will you ensure those interested in the research are fully informed about the study and what will be expected of them if they take part?

Information giving will be undertaken through:

- [ ] Letter
- [ ] Email
- [ ] Website/internet (including Facebook/other social media site)
- [ ] Telephone
- [x] Information sheet (covering headings in University template)
- [ ] Presentation at meeting or similar
- [ ] Other (describe here):

Append text of recruitment letters / emails / information sheet to this application

Information giving will be undertaken by:

- [x] the researcher
- [ ] someone in a position of authority
- [ ] a neutral third party to known or named client groups
- [ ] Other (describe here):
4.2.5 Information accessibility

What arrangements have you made to ensure information is accessible to those unable to read standard English? (low literacy level, non-English speaker, persons with learning disabilities)

- I have supplied information relevant to each participating group
- The information provided follows the guidance provided in the University of Manchester Participant Information Sheet Template

4.2.6 Decision period

How long will the participant have to decide whether to take part in the study? If you are proposing a decision period of less than 2 weeks, full justification for this approach should be given.

Participants will be given 2 weeks to decide whether or not to take part in the study.

4.2.7 Incentives

State any payment or any other incentive that is being made to any study participant. Specify and state the level of payment to be made and/or the source of the funds/gift/free service to be used and the justification for it.

The study has no incentives.

4.2.8 Avoiding coercion

How will your recruitment methods avoid putting any overt or covert pressure on vulnerable individuals to consent (children, junior colleagues, adults with learning disabilities)?

Pupils will be informed that choosing not to take part in the study will not affect their future education in the school.

4.3 Consent

4.3.1 How will participants’ consent to take part be recorded?
- Implied consent - return/submission of completed questionnaire
- Written consent form matching University template
- Verbally (give details of how this will be recorded)
- Other method (give details here):

Append text of consent forms/consent taking procedure to this application.

- My consent taking procedures are relevant to each participating group
- The consent taking procedures follow the guidance provided in the University of Manchester Consent Form Template

4.3.2 Special arrangements

Please outline any special consent taking arrangements relevant to your research study.

5. Participation in the research
5.1 **Duration**

How long will each participant be expected to take part in activities?
- Teachers will take part in 2 focus groups and 1 feedback session, this will take around 3 hours in total.
- Pupils will take part in a focus group lasting 1 hour.

5.2 **Benefits to participation**

Are there any benefits to participation for participants (beyond incentive noted above)?
- Teachers will be able to use the participation in the study to add to their CPD.

5.3 **Deficits to participation**

Will any benefit or service otherwise received by participants be withheld (e.g. pupil misses lesson, or part thereof) as a consequence of taking part in this study?
- Pupils will miss one possibly 2 lessons for the study. The researcher will liaise with the school to try and ensure it is not a GCSE lesson. If this is not possible, lessons the school is happy for them to miss.

6. **Risks and Safeguards**

Please outline any adverse effects or risks for participants in respect of the methods you have indicated in Section 2B [Interview; Questionnaire; Interventions; Assessments; Observation; Diary keeping; Other activity]

6.1 **Physical risks**

6.1.1 Potential

What is the potential for adverse effects of a physical nature; risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, inconvenience, or change in lifestyle / normal routine for participants?

None

6.1.2 Safeguards

What precautions or measures have been taken to minimise or mitigate the risks identified above?

N/A

6.2 **Psychological risks**

6.2.1 Potential

Will any topics discussed (questionnaire, group discussion or individual interview) potentially be sensitive, embarrassing or upsetting, or is it possible that criminal or other disclosures requiring action could take place during the project?

For the pupil participants due to the topic potentially increasing anxiety levels as its talking about their future exams.
- Teachers may feel under threat from the feedback from their pupils about the language they use in lessons.

6.2.2 Safeguards

What precautions or measures have been taken to minimise or mitigate the risks identified above?

With pupils, a positive summary of the ideas they have given will be used in the debrief. If the researcher feels any students are upset by the process or raise concerns during the focus group, relevant information will be passed on to the Head of Year.
- For the teachers, the researcher will endeavour to control for any feelings of threat from this process but acknowledges something advertent may happen and appropriate action by the researcher will take place. Due to the teachers involved all receiving feedback from their pupils, confidentiality outside of the teacher’s focus group will be discussed and teachers will be asked to be mindful of discussing the feedback with other people not involved.
6.3 Risks for you as researcher

It is important that the potential for adverse effects, risks or hazards, pain, discomfort, distress, or inconvenience, of a physical or psychological nature to you as the researcher have been assessed. This is a requirement by law. Risks to you are identified as part of the RREA/FRA process. Ensure this assessment has been completed by either:

a. a completed and approved Fieldwork Risk Assessment (FRA), or
b. a signed Low Risk Fieldwork Declaration in Section D of RREA form.

Briefly state here the conclusions of your assessment and append a copy of your approved FRA form (if required), in addition to your RREA, to this application:

The conclusion of the assessment are that there is low risk towards the researcher.

6.4 Early termination of the research

6.4.1 Criteria

What are the criteria for electively stopping the research prematurely?
If the teachers from the focus group all withdraw.
If the focus group for pupils causes pupils to be extremely upset by the process.

6.4.2 Please confirm, by ticking here, that:

X any adverse event requiring radical change of method/design or abandonment will be reported in the first instance to your research supervisor and then to the MIE RIC Chair

7. Data Protection and confidentiality

7.1 Data activities and storage of personal data

Will the study use any of the following activities at any stage?

- Electronic transfer by email or computer networks
- Use of personal addresses, postcodes, faxes, e-mails or telephone numbers
- Publication of direct quotations from respondents
- Publication of data that might allow identification of individuals
- Use of audio/visual recording devices
- Sharing data with other organisations
- Export of data outside EU

Will the study store personal data on any of the following?

- Manual files
- Home or other personal computers
- Laptop computers
- University computers
- Private company computers
- NHS computers

7.2 Confidentiality of personal data
7.3 Research monitoring and auditing

Please confirm:

The student researcher’s supervisor(s) will monitor the research

If other arrangements apply please specify:

7.4 Data Protection

Please provide confirmation that you will employ measures that comply with the Data Protection Act and the University Data Protection Policy (UDPP)?

**Data Protection Act**: I confirm that all Data collected will be:

- Fairly and lawfully processed
- Processed for limited purposes as outlined in this application
- Adequate for the purpose, relevant and not excessive
- Accurate
- Not kept longer than necessary
- Processed in accordance with the participant’s rights
- Secure – on an encrypted storage device
- Only transferred to other settings with appropriate protection.

**University Data Protection Policy** (UDPP): I confirm

- My data and its storage will comply with the UDPP
- Paper copies of data and encrypted storage devices will be stored in a locked draw or cupboard

For UG research: On completion of my research, the data will be kept until the study has been completed and will then be shredded/destroyed

For PGT/PGR research: On completion of my research, the data will be passed to my supervisor for archiving at the University for a period of 5 years after which it will be shredded/destroyed

7.5 Privacy during data analysis

Please confirm:

- Analysis will be undertaken by the student researcher
- Analysis will take place in a private study area

If other arrangements apply please describe:

7.6 Custody and control of the data

Please confirm:

- The student researcher’s supervisor will have **custody** of the data
- The student researcher will have **control** of the data
7.7 **Access to the data**

- [x] The student researcher will have access to the data
- [x] The student’s supervisor(s) will have access to anonymised data

**If other arrangements apply please describe:**

7.8 **Use of data in future studies**

Will the data be stored for use in future studies?  
Yes [ ]  No [x]  

If Yes, confirm this is addressed in the information giving/consent taking process by ticking here. [ ]

---

**8. Reporting Arrangements**

8.1 **Dissemination**

How do you intend to report and disseminate the results of the study?  
(Tick all that apply)

- [x] Peer reviewed scientific journals
- [ ] Book / Chapter contribution
- [x] Published review (ESRC, Cochrane)
- [ ] Internal report
- [x] Conference presentation
- [x] Thesis/dissertation
- [ ] Other e.g. Creative works (describe here):  

8.2 **Participant and community feedback**

How will the results of research be made available to research participants and communities from which they are drawn?  
(Tick all that apply)

- [x] Written feedback to research participants
- [ ] Presentation to participants or relevant community groups
- [ ] Other e.g. Video/Website (describe here):
9. Research Sponsorship

9.1 External funding
Are you in receipt of any external funding for your study? (tick one)

- External Funding
- No external funding

If you have funding please provide details:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organisation</th>
<th>UK Contact</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Duration</th>
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9.2 Sponsoring organisation
Who will be responsible for governance and insuring the study? (tick one)

- The University of Manchester
- Other organisation

If not UoM, provide details of who will act as sponsor of the research and their insurance details.

10. Conflict of Interest
Have any conflicts of interest been identified in relation to this project? (tick at least one option)

- Payment for doing this research?
  - If so, how much and on what basis?

- Direct personal involvement in the research of a spouse/funder?
  - If so, please provide details:

- Does your department/the University receive payment (apart from costs)?
  - If so, please provide details:

- NONE of the ABOVE APPLY

Thank you
This is the end of the form

Please use the checklist below to ensure that you append all necessary supporting documents.
### CHECKLIST

Please tick to indicate whether the document is APPENDED OR NOT APPLICABLE for this application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents</th>
<th>Appended</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td><strong>NA</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Data collection instruments</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Draft copy of each data collection instrument named in Q2.2 (Questionnaire, Interview guide, etc)</td>
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<td>Video and Still Image Recording Declaration (VASTRE)</td>
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<td><strong>Participant recruitment</strong></td>
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<td>Letter(s) of permission to conduct research within each organisation</td>
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<td>Recruitment advertisement(s) specified in Q4.2.1 (poster/email/letter/presentation)</td>
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<td>Participant Information giving – one for each participant type specified in Q3.1 (Information sheet/letter/email/script)</td>
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<td>Consent taking – one for each participant type specified in Q3.1 (Consent form or alternative procedure)</td>
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<td><strong>Fieldwork risk assessment</strong></td>
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<td>Fieldwork Risk Assessment Form (approved)</td>
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<tr>
<td>RREA form Low Risk Fieldwork Declaration (Section D) completed</td>
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**SECTION 3: MINOR AMENDMENT TO RESEARCH PROJECT**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application for Approval of Minor Amendment(^1) to a Research Study</th>
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<td>Details of proposed amendment <em>(please give as much detail as possible)</em></td>
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<th>Supervisor Declaration</th>
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<tr>
<td>I agree that the amendment proposed does not change the character of this research or the participant groups.</td>
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</table>

| I confirm that the research risk assessment for the study as MEDIUM remains. |

| Supervisor’s signature* | Date. |

Please send applications for amendment to ethical approval for MEDIUM risk research to the Manchester Institute Administrator for Ethics and Fieldwork at ethics.education@manchester.ac.uk who will pass on the request to the RIC member who authorised the original application wherever possible.

\(^1\) Minor amendments are those that do not alter the character of the research or the participant groups
Appendix 9: Information sheets and consent forms for teacher participants, parents of student participants and student participants
The language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students

Teacher Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study aimed to research the language used by teachers towards pupils prior to GCSEs. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Deborah Flitcroft (Trainee Educational Psychologist)

Kevin Woods (Supervisor)

Title of the Research

The language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students

What is the aim of the research?

The aim of the research is to find out the language teachers use prior to GCSEs and the perceived impact of these messages on pupils and if they need to be adapted to suit the needs of the pupils.

Why have I been chosen?

You are a high school teacher who teaches GCSEs.

What would I be asked to do if I took part?

If you agree to take part in the research, you will be asked to be a part of 2 focus groups and feedback session on TBC. The first focus group involves talking about the language you use prior to GCSEs and the reasons why you use this language. After this focus group, I will code and theme what you have said for a feedback on TBC, to allow you to check the themes and if they represent what you said. The second focus group will be after I have talked to your pupils. This focus group will involve feedback to you the language pupils like to hear and research in this area. We will then discuss, if applicable, the types of language you could use in the classroom. These focus groups will be an opportunity to share ‘best practice’ and aid in developing your own learning.
What happens to the data collected?

The data collected will show the types of language you give in the classroom prior to GCSEs and after feedback from pupils and research, the types of language you could use in the classroom prior to GCSEs. The data gathered will develop practice across your school and further inform research in the area of language before exams.

How is confidentiality maintained?

The focus group will be audio-taped and this will be stored securely and will only be accessed by authorised personnel. The tapes will be kept until they have been transcribed and checked before being deleted. The transcriptions will be anonymised and kept securely.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not to take part. If you do decide to take part you will be given this information sheet to keep and be asked to sign a consent form. If you decide to take part you are still free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

Will I be paid for participating in the research?

You will not be paid for participating in this research.

What is the duration of the research?

The duration of each of the focus groups and feedback session will be between 45 minutes and 1 hour.

Where will the research be conducted?

Research will be conducted at TBC

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

The research maybe be published and findings will be used to develop practice across the school.

Contact for further information

Deborah Flitcroft

Email: deborah.flitcroft@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

Kevin Woods

Email: Kevin.a.woods@manchester.ac.uk

What if something goes wrong?
If there are any issues regarding this research that you would prefer not to discuss with members of the research team, please contact the Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator by either writing to ‘The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL’, by emailing: Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk, or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 8093
The language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students

CONSENT FORM

If you are happy to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving a reason.

3. I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded

4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes

5. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers

6. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.

I agree to take part in the above project

<table>
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<th>Name of participant</th>
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<th>Name of person taking consent</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Signature</th>
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123
Dear Parent/Guardian of ........................................................

I would like to invite your daughter/son to participate in a piece of research as part of a thesis for a second year Trainee Educational Psychologist. The aim of the research is to see how teachers can talk with students to encourage them to do their best in their GCSEs and the language they would like to hear prior to their exams which will aid them in their preparations.

Attached to this letter is information with further details of the study and how your child will participate. If you are happy for your child to participate, please sign the attached consent form and hand back into the school as soon as possible. Please discuss this with your child as well. They will be given an information sheet and consent form on the day of the interview. If you have any concerns or wish to discuss further, please do not hesitate in contacting us on the details in the information sheet.

Yours faithfully

D Flitcroft

Deborah Flitcroft
Trainee Educational Psychologist

K Woods

Kevin Woods
Supervisor
The language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students

Parent Information Sheet

Your child is being invited to take part in a research study aimed to research the language used by teachers towards pupils prior to GCSEs. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish your child to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Deborah Flitcroft (Trainee Educational Psychologist)

Kevin Woods (Supervisor)

Title of the Research

The language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students

What is the aim of the research?

The aim of the research is to find out the language teachers use prior to GCSEs and the perceived impact of these messages on pupils and if they need to be adapted to suit the needs of the pupils.

Why has your child been chosen?

Your child has been randomly selected from the year group.

What would your child be asked to do if they took part?

Your child will be asked to take part in an interview. In the interview they will be asked about the messages they receive with regards to their GCSEs, how these messages make them feel and the messages they would like to receive to aid them in their preparations of their GCSEs.

What happens to the data collected?

The data gathered will be feedback to teachers to aid in their development and understanding of the language pupils would like to receive prior to their GCSEs and develop practice across the school and further inform research in the area of language before exams.
How is confidentiality maintained?

The interview will be audio-taped and this will be stored securely and will only be accessed by authorised personnel. The tapes will be kept until they have been transcribed and checked before being deleted. The transcriptions will be anonymised and kept securely.

What happens if I do not want my child to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not for your child to take part. If you do decide you would like them to participate, please sign the consent form attached. You are also able to withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason.

Will your child be paid for participating in the research?

Your child will not be paid for participating in this research.

What is the duration of the research?

The duration of each of the interview will be between 45 minutes and 1 hour and every effort will be made with the school to ensure a GCSE lesson is not missed.

Where will the research be conducted?

Research will be conducted in school

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

The research maybe be published and findings will be used to develop practice across the school.

Contact for further information

Deborah Flitcroft

Email: deborah.flitcroft@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

Kevin Woods

Email: Kevin.a.woods@manchester.ac.uk

What if something goes wrong?

If there are any issues regarding this research that you would prefer not to discuss with members of the research team, please contact the Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator by either writing to 'The Research Practice and Governance Co-ordinator, Research Office, Christie Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Road, Manchester M13 9PL', by emailing: Research-Governance@manchester.ac.uk, or by telephoning 0161 275 7583 or 275 8093
The language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students

CONSENT FORM

If you are happy for your child to participate please complete and sign the consent form below

1. I confirm that I have read the attached information sheet on the above study and have had the opportunity to consider the information and ask questions and had these answered satisfactorily.

2. I understand that my child’s participation in the study is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time without giving a reason.

3. I understand that the interviews will be audio-recorded

4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes

5. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers

6. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.

I agree for my child to take part in the above project

Name of Pupil

Name of Parent/Guardian

Name of person taking consent

Please Initial Box

Date

Signature

Date

Signature
The language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students

Student Participant Information Sheet

You are being invited to take part in a research study aimed to research the language used by teachers towards pupils prior to GCSEs. Before you decide it is important for you to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with others if you wish. Please ask if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish your child to take part. Thank you for reading this.

Who will conduct the research?

Deborah Flitcroft (Trainee Educational Psychologist)

Kevin Wood (Supervisor)

Title of the Research

The language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students

What is the aim of the research?

The aim of the research is to find out the language teachers use prior to GCSEs and the perceived impact of these messages on pupils and if they need to be adapted to suit the needs of the pupils.

Why have you been chosen?

You have been randomly selected from the year group.

What would you be asked to do if you took part?

You will be asked to take part in an interview. In the interview you will be asked about the messages you receive with regards to your GCSEs, how these messages make you feel and the messages you would like to receive to aid in your preparations of your GCSEs.

What happens to the data collected?

The data gathered will be feedback to teachers to aid in their development and understanding of the language pupils would like to receive prior to their GCSEs and develop practice across the school and further inform research in the area of language before exams.

How is confidentiality maintained?
The interview will be audio-taped and this will be stored securely and will only be accessed by authorised personnel. The tapes will be kept until they have been transcribed and checked before being deleted. The transcriptions will be anonymised and kept securely.

What happens if I do not want to take part or if I change my mind?

It is up to you to decide whether or not for you want to take part. If you do decide you would like to participate, please sign the consent form attached. You are also able to withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason.

Will you be paid for participating in the research?

You will not be paid for participating in this research.

What is the duration of the research?

The duration of each of the interview will be between 45 minutes and 1 hour and every effort will be made with the school to ensure a GCSE lesson is not missed.

Where will the research be conducted?

Research will be conducted at school.

Will the outcomes of the research be published?

The research maybe be published and findings will be used to develop practice across the school.

Contact for further information

Deborah Flitcroft

Email: deborah.flitcroft@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk

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The language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students

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4. I agree to the use of anonymous quotes

5. I agree that any data collected may be passed to other researchers

6. I agree that any data collected may be published in anonymous form in academic books or journals.

I agree for to take part in the above project

Name of Pupil ___________________________ Date ___________________________ Signature ___________________________

Name of person taking consent ___________________________ Date ___________________________ Signature ___________________________
Appendix 10: Thematic map for phase 3 focus group
What new approaches can teachers envisage or plan for based on students’ views?
Appendix 11: Action plan generated from second teacher focus group
Focus Group Action Plan

Ideas at School Level

- Targeted assemblies
  - Separate for those on/below target
- Speakers in assembly
  - Motivational speakers
  - Past pupils experiences
  - College speakers
- Assertive or Learning Mentors
  - Set weekly targets with
  - Help with organisation
  - Reward for attending meeting and meeting targets: Prom
- Understanding Importance of Subject
  - Communication between teachers with regards to amount of revision and revision sessions
  - Pupils taught to prioritise work load and not to just revise for their first exam
- Vertical form groups and teachers can mentor year 11s in their form
- Revision timetable for pupils
- Homework timetable
  - Pupils to time allocate homework and input into diary to learn organisation skills
  - Teachers to monitor amount in diary
- Developing understanding of GCSE as a long term activity
  - Making it explicit to pupils that year 7 builds in to year 8 etc.
  - Future impact
- Teaching global study skills
  - Teach pupils how to produce a revision resource
  - Create a revision folder from the start of the GCSE course
  - Encourage pupils to share revision resources
- Time on the timetable for study skills
  - Buy in ‘exam time’
  - Study skills needs to be delivered as a programme
  - Start in year 7 and continue to year 9
  - Needs to be consistent for all pupils
Appendix 12: Edgehill conference slides and notes
The language Key Stage 4 teachers and other sources use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit students.

Deborah Flitcroft
Introduction

- My Background
- Area of Interest

My Background

- Second year studying for an applied Doctorate in Educational and Child Psychology
- Currently on placement in an Independent Psychology Service in Edgehill
- Previous to my role as a TEP, I was a secondary school maths teacher for 2 years which included preparing students for their GCSEs which will link in to my area of interest.

Area of Interest

- Putwain and Best (2011) found that certain languages teachers use prior to high stake exams can have a debilitating effect on students’ performance in that exam.
- As mentioned, due to my previous role as a teacher, I feel like this is an important strand of research to further explore as teachers strive to help their students as much as possible.
Language Prior to High Stake Exams

- Prior to high stake exams teachers use different forms of messages.
- The messages can also be *administrative and informative* with regards to times, dates and venue (Putwain and Remedios, *in press*).
- They use *persuasive messages* to highlight to students the **consequences of failure** (Chamberlain, Daly, and Spalding, 2011; Putwain and Remedios, *in press*) and highlight the importance of exams with regards to academic credentials for further education and future careers.

Traits of the Pupil

- The impact of persuasive messages is dependent on the traits of the pupil
- Putwain (*under review*) suggests pupils *appraise messages* in 2 ways:
  - *Attainment value of the messages*
  - Their level of *self efficacy* so if they believe they can succeed
- students *who judged messages to be personally meaningful and significant* (high intrinsic, extrinsic and attainment value) and who expected to *perform well* (high academic self-efficacy) appraised fear-eliciting messages as **challenging**.
- Conversely students who judged messages to be personally meaningful and significant (high attainment value) but who did not expect to perform well (low academic self efficacy) appraised fear-eliciting messages as threatening.
Fear Appeals

- Research in this area appears to have focussed on fear appeals used by teachers prior to high stake exams and the impact on students.
- Fear appeals are messages to elicit fear through highlighting consequences of failure and courses of action which will increase threat of failure.
- Reasons teachers use these messages: motivate their students, school ethos, teacher interpersonal style.
- This could be due to their general teaching approach/philosophy or teachers may use fear appeals in other contexts e.g. discipline.

Impact of Fear Appeals

- Research by Putwain and Best (2011) has found that students in a high threat condition, where fear appeals were made prominent, reported an increased level in test anxiety and performed worse in an age appropriate test at the end of the condition in comparison to a low threat condition, where no fear appeals were used.
- Putwain and Remedios (in press), who found a negative correlation between fear appeals and GCSE math scores.
- Research suggests that fear appeals may not be an effective motivational strategy to use prior to high stake exams as highlighting avoidance of failure is not seen as motivational.
- However depending on their perception, fear appeals may have mixed outcomes.
- Some students believe fear appeals are necessary as they act as a source of pressure and trigger for worry and panic to start working towards their exams  (Putwain and Symes, 2011b).

Strategies Teachers Could Use to Motivate Students

- Research by Putwain and Roberts (2012) found that fear appeals may not be associated with negative outcomes if they are accompanied by efficacy appeals.

Teachers as Researchers

- In 1974, Charles Cooper first called for teachers to become researchers and that teachers should learn from their individual pupils and generalise to their classes (cited in Queenan, 1987, p. 88).
- Most powerful staff development technique and are a method in which to empower teachers in their practice (Bracey, 1991).
- Teachers are faced daily with new practice to implement in their classroom but are arguable not always a part of the process.
• Positives of teachers as researchers can increase student success and performance, revise practice based on new teaching and learning, increase teachers own critical learning skills and develop innovative approaches to instructions (Babkie and Provost, 2004).

Summary

• Teachers’ use of fear appeals prior to high stake exams is to try and motivate students to work hard and therefore achieve good exam results
• However research would suggest that fear appeals can have a detrimental effect on exam performance
• Throughout research, strategies have been suggested for what teachers could say prior to exams but research has never engaged teachers in this process or brought the views of students and teachers together to create ‘new talk’ in the classroom to better suit their students.
• This research aims to allow teachers to become researchers themselves and reflect on their current practice from feedback from their students and think about their future practice.
Rationale

3 gaps:
- Language teachers use in the classroom
- Students views and other sources of messages
- Developing teachers' language
- Technique of gaining students' views
- Teachers as Researchers

- Therefore the proposed research aims to fill three gaps;
  1. what type of language statements teachers are using in the classroom.
  2. students views about the type of language they receive from their teachers and if there are other sources students maybe hearing messages from regarding their exams e.g. messages from peers and parents.
  3. feedback to teachers the views of students to develop their understanding of their students and help to create language prior to high stake exams which is not deemed as threatening by students.
- These are three important gaps to gain knowledge on
- if the process of the study has a positive impact, it shows a technique of gaining students’ views and a way to feedback to teachers which is not threatening their status as a teacher.
- This research is also a new method not previously used to research this area as it incorporates teachers as researchers and part of the process.
- There is also a better chance that this research will be effective intervention in developing the language teachers use because of its ecological validity as it is linked to the setting teachers work in and is relevant to the students they teach.
- By researching other sources students receive messages will further add to the ecological validity and relevance of the research as gains a complete picture of the messages pupils’ receive.
There is no research to date which examines alternative sources of fear appeals and so research could be missing an important source which could be affecting students with regards to their exams.

Part of the research will also explore if the reason behind the language used by teachers has changed since the reviewed research especially with the introduction of performance related pay this year (Department for Education, 2013).
Aims and Research Questions

1. What kinds of fear/efficacy statements and other language do KS4 teachers report using prior to high stake exams and what purpose do they perceive it to serve?

2. What language do KS4 students report to receive from teachers and other sources prior to their exams and what language would they like to receive?

3. What new approach can teachers envisage or plan for based on students’ views and previous research findings?

- The aim of the research is to look **the language Key Stage 4 teachers use prior to high stake exams and how this can be adapted to suit their students**

- The research questions for the proposed study are:

What kinds of fear/efficacy statements and other language do KS4 teachers report using prior to high stake exams and what purpose do they perceive it to serve?

What language do KS4 students report to receive from teachers and other sources prior to their exams and what language would they like to receive?

What new approach can teachers envisage or plan for based on students’ views and previous research findings?
- Exploratory single embedded case study design (Yin, 2008) of a secondary school which will examine the language teachers use prior to high stake exams, the language students receive and the new language teachers can envisage and plan.

- The propositions for the first research question is that teachers will report increased use of fear appeals prior to high stake exams and their language will be different for different students.
  - For the second research question, the research proposes that students will report receiving fear appeals prior to their high stake exams and this will change depending on the subject they are in. Also they will report messages with regards to their exams from other sources as well.
  - For the third research question, teachers will attempt to envisage and plan a more positive and motivating language prior to high stake exams.

- The propositions for this research are based on the researcher’s previous experience as a KS4 teacher and from the literature review.

- The case study will be made up of multiple units of analysis: views of teachers and the language they perceive to use, views of students and the language they hear and the new view of teachers after being feedback from their students about language used in the classroom.

- The proposed study comprises of a pre-phase of gathering information and 3 phases, the methodology for each phase will now be presented.
Phase 1

- Sample: 3 English and 3 Math GCSE teachers
- Data gathering methods: 1 Focus Group
  - What language do teachers use in the classroom?
  - Is the language aimed at certain pupils?
  - What is the purpose of this language?
- Data analysis: Thematic Analysis
  - Findings used to inform Phase 2 and RQ 1 and act as a comparison for Phase 3

- Sample
  - A purposive sample of 4 - 6 year 11 secondary school teachers, as previously mentioned, will be used.

- Data gathering methods
  - Focus group will be used to gather teachers’ views on current language they use in the classroom, if aimed at particular pupils and the purpose of this language
  - Audio recorded and transcribed.
  - Member checking will take place by feed backing to participants, codes generated by researcher to ensure meaning.

- Data Analysis
  - Thematic analysis will be used as this method allows for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns which gives a rich and detailed data set (Braun and Clarke, 2006).
  - The thematic analysis will be a combination of both inductive and deductive strategy.
  - The identified themes and codes will come from the participants’ responses within the focus group.
  - However the codes and themes will also be processed according to the research question as the research questions are based on what language teachers currently use and the purpose of this language.
The reason for this is that the codes from this analysis will be used in phase 2 of the research.

This approach also links with the researcher’s epistemological position.

The themes from the analysis will show the language teachers use prior to high stake exams and the purpose of this language and provide information for research question 1.

The findings will also be used in phase 2 to inform the focus group and will act as a comparison for phase 3 to see what new language teachers can create.
o **Sample**
  o Purposive sample of 3 – 4 pupil participants from the teachers’ classes based upon the analysis of themes within the teacher focus groups’.

o **Data gathering methods**
  o 3 focus groups of students will be used to gather their views on language used in the classroom prior to their GCSEs and how it makes them feel.
  o Some of the messages and themes from phase 1 will be reported to students to see what emotions they elicit if students struggle to provide examples.
  o This will then be extended to find out what language students would like to hear prior to their GCSEs.
  o Finally, data will be gathered on external messages students hear prior to their GCSEs from sources other than their teachers (see appendix B for draft focus group questions).
  o Prior to the focus group each pupil will be measured for academic self efficacy and the importance of their GCSEs to them. **Academic self efficacy will be measured using the Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire** (Pintrich and DeGroot, 1990, see appendix C).
  o This questionnaire has undergone factor analysis to ensure reliability and validity and found a correlation and stable factor structure. The questionnaire has three distinct motivational factors: self efficacy (α=.89), intrinsic value (α=.87) and test anxiety (α=.75). **Importance of GCSEs will be measured using the Michigan**
Study of Adolescent Life Transitions scales (Eccles et al., 1993) along with two additional items suggested by Remedios and Putwain (2013, cited in Putwain, under review).

- Items and instructions have been adapted to assess the importance of GCSEs at a general level (see appendix D).
- The purpose of these measures is so the researcher can evaluate if self efficacy and value of GCSEs may influence their perception of language they receive and the language they wish to hear prior to high stake exams.
- If there is any indication of their possible links, there is a possibility of follow up interviews to discuss this with specific individuals from the group (e.g. high/low self efficacy individuals).
- The focus groups will be audio recorded and transcribed.

**Data Analysis**

- Thematic Analysis will be used for focus groups see previous description.
- The results from phase 2 will inform research question 1 and be used to compare to the themes from the teacher focus group to see what language each perceive there to be and the purpose of this language.
- The themes from the students about the language they would like to hear will be feedback to teachers in phase 3. Themes of external messages will be use to inform research question 2.
Sample: GCSE teachers from phase 1
Data gathering methods: Focus Group
  ◦ From feedback from phase 2 and research in this area, teachers will have the opportunity to envisage and plan new language to use prior to high stake exams.
Data analysis: Thematic Analysis
  ◦ Findings used to inform RQ3

Sample
  o Same teachers from phase 1.

Data gathering method
  o Focus group and present them with the themes from phase 2 and research findings.
  o It also aims to allow teachers to become researchers as previously discussed and give them time to reflect on their current practice as proposed by (Richardson, 1990).
  o From this the teachers will envisage and plan new language to use in their classrooms to suit the needs of their students
  o This process is being used as it will allow teachers to build on their current knowledge and language and incorporate what their students’ have said and psychological theories.

Data analysis
  o Thematic Analysis will be used for the focus group see previous description.
  o The data gained will be used to inform research question 3.
Phase 1 Findings
This is the model created from Thematic Analysis
Squares: basic themes and Diamonds are organising themes
Emotional Support
Motivation
Advice Getting
Belief in Pupil
Fear Appeal
***Messages are independent on the pupil***
- Motivation level
- Work ethic
- Anxiety level of pupil
Impact on Future
Pupil Control
Pupil Personality Development
Phase 2 Findings

Presented in to separate parts due to the research question
What pupils report hearing from teachers

- Pupil Concern
- Pupil Data Sheet
- Information
- Feedback of Progress
- Time to think
- Teacher Support
- Teacher Input
- Medical Advice
- Information for CCQA
- Personal Advice
What pupils think is helpful
Parents vs Teachers vs Friends

- Depends on the situation and what the pupil needs in that moment
- “I think it’s more my teachers cause I feel that they would know more about how I’m doing but my mum and dad they only know what I’ve been doing at home and they don’t know what I do at school which I think a lot of my teachers know that I do a lot in school and I do a lot at home to get the grades that I want.”

When asked who’s messages were more important:
Teachers as had subject knowledge and knew how pupil was performing
Parents – if teachers or for emotional support
Phase 3 underway
Thank you for listening