"Positive feelings about my work: I needed it!” – Emotions and emotion self-regulation in language teachers

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Recently it has been recognised that teaching is not only a cognitive matter, but that teachers’ emotions also play a significant role in their lives. Indeed, the link between teachers’ emotions, their identities and their well-being has been identified as a key factor in their lives (Day & Lee 2011) and in their professional development (Golombek & Doran, 2014; Kubanyova, 2012). Although teachers’ well-being is essential for staying engaged in the profession, little empirical work has been done to investigate how teachers cope with the affective complexities of teaching. Expectations, interest, satisfaction, but also anxiety and frustration are often an unspoken part of a teacher’s everyday work. This may contribute to a teacher’s sense of isolation, an increasingly common emotional state emerging in the literature.

By combining various instruments (self-reports, questionnaires, interviews, group discussion and teachers’ logs), this empirical research study investigates the emotions of language teachers in higher education and the strategies they use in order to self-regulate their emotional states in relation to teaching.

Since emotions steer both cognition and courses of action (Immordino-Yang & Damasio, 2007), this study aims to understand what strengthens the agency of language teachers, how their resilience grows, and the implications for teacher education.

References


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