

The Role of Language Teachers' Appraisal Disposition and Situated Coping in the Experience of (Un)pleasant Emotion(s)

Julia Goetze, *University of Wisconsin – Madison, USA*

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-4856-760X>

julia.goetze@wisc.edu

ABSTRACT

Language teaching is stressful and emotionally complex. Language teachers are regularly exposed to stressors, such as heavy workloads, role or social conflicts, and a lack of agency in institutional hierarchies, which impact their emotional experiences in classrooms. Recent research suggests that language teachers' classroom emotions change dynamically across even the shortest timescales within individual lessons. While research has begun to capture this emotional complexity and dynamicity in the context of stressful classroom situations, questions remain about the role of teachers' individual differences and situation-specific variables (e.g., teaching task, student behavior), as well as their interactions, in these processes. This survey study used an integrated appraisal and motivation framework to examine the role of language teachers' dispositional appraisal style (i.e., threat and challenge perception) in the self-assessment of their abilities to cope with situation-specific stressors and their experiences of (un)pleasant emotions across three distinct stressful classroom scenarios. Results of regression analyses showed that only a challenge appraisal style significantly and consistently predicted higher coping expectancy and systematically moderated situated appraisals that resulted in (un)pleasant emotions. Findings highlight the importance of examining situation factors as salient variables in language teachers' emotion research.

Keywords: appraisal theory, language teacher emotions, appraisal disposition, coping potential, vignette methodology, situation-based approach

INTRODUCTION

Research on teachers' occupational stress and their emotions is not new. Existing work attests to the fact that teachers experience stress at higher rates than other professions (Johnson et al., 2005) and that their stress generally has a negative impact on their emotional experiences at work (MacIntyre et al., 2020). Studies have examined these associations in the context of teacher wellbeing (e.g., MacIntyre et al., 2019, 2020) and teacher burnout (e.g., Chang, 2009), finding that individual differences (IDs), such as personality, appraisals of teaching tasks and student behavior, as well as coping potential are systematically linked to (language) teachers' (un)pleasant emotions, stress, emotional exhaustion, and burnout. Outcomes have been used to understand how structural (policy) changes at the institutional level, as well as professional development programming grounded in positive psychology principles (e.g., mindfulness, emotion regulation), might be able to reduce stress and improve teachers' (emotional) work lives, thereby also counteracting rising attrition rates and adverse health effects in the profession (e.g., Gregersen & MacIntyre, 2024).

To investigate the relationship between teachers' daily classroom stressors and emotions, studies in education and educational psychology frequently utilize theoretical frameworks that are rooted in stress research (e.g., Lazarus, 1991, 2001). Such studies causally link cognitive evaluations of situated stressors with specific emotions, otherwise known as (cognitive) appraisal (e.g., Frenzel et al., 2009; von der Embse & Mankin, 2021). In education, scholars have linked discrete appraisal patterns to teachers' anger, anxiety, and enjoyment (e.g., Frenzel et al., 2016). While applied linguists also focus their work on discrete language teacher emotions like anxiety (Horwitz, 1996) and enjoyment (e.g., Ergün & Dewaele, 2021), they mainly used basic and dimensional emotion theories (e.g., control-value-theory; Pekrun, 2006, 2024) in their work. These studies do not focus on how teachers' appraisals of stressors form the origin of emotions but rather investigate language teachers' emotions in relation to student emotions (e.g., Moskowitz & Dewaele, 2021), student motivation (e.g., Dewaele et al., 2022), student achievement (e.g., Liu et al., 2021), as well as teacher wellbeing and resilience (e.g., Zhang, 2023).

While the effects and consequences of teacher emotions have received some important research attention, the origins

and underlying activation processes of language teacher emotions are still understudied. One central premise of appraisal theory is that the emergence of emotions is dependent on the person-situation interaction (i.e., the subjective perception of a situation), thereby rendering the individual person and specific situations crucial for the emotion process. However, situation variables have not received much systematic attention in emotion studies, and only rarely have situations been adopted as units of analysis in emotion studies with language teachers (e.g., Goetze, 2023a). This is somewhat curious, as multiple studies have shown that teachers' classroom emotions are dynamic and fluctuate across different timescales (e.g., Goetz et al., 2020; Verduyn, 2021). From an appraisal perspective, changes in the perception of a stressor (e.g., classroom situations, participants, tasks) over time are assumed to correspond to changes in resulting emotional experiences. However, such a correspondence has been underexplored.

Importantly, situations and associated variables are only one part, since the individual perception of them forms the other crucial piece of appraisal theory. If an appraisal theory lens is adopted, questions about person variables and the role of teachers' IDs merge as well. For example, what role do language teachers' dispositions for situation perceptions, also known as cognitive appraisal dispositions (Skinner & Brewer, 2002), play in the situated appraisal-emotion process? Cognitive appraisal dispositions capture the general tendency to perceive stressful situations as opportunities for growth or as a threat to one's self-image, which are assumed to impact situation-specific appraisals of classroom scenarios (e.g., Skinner & Brewer, 2002). So far, isolated appraisal-based studies in language teacher emotion research have examined language teachers' shared experiences of anxiety (Fraschini & Park, 2021), emotional complexity (Goetze, 2023a), appraisal antecedents of discrete teacher emotions (Khajavy et al., 2018), and the role of gender and teaching experience in longitudinal changes of teacher enjoyment and anxiety (Goetze, 2025). Nevertheless, none of this work has accounted for trait differences in perception in their study designs.

The current study narrows these gaps in language teacher emotion and IDs research in multiple ways. First, it is grounded in an appraisal theory of emotions that affords the simultaneous examination of person and situation variables, thereby shifting the role of IDs and situation variables into focus. Second, it comparatively examines language teachers'

situated appraisal-emotion processes across three (stressful) classroom vignettes, thereby exploring the salience of situation variables in the emotion process. Third, it investigates how a cognitive trait individual difference, namely language teachers' dispositions to appraise stressful situations as challenges or threats, affects situated appraisals and subsequent emotion experiences across different classroom vignettes.

The objective of the study is to (comparatively) explore the role of language teachers' appraisal disposition and the salience of situation variables in language teachers' situated appraisal processes and emotion experiences across different classroom scenarios. The aim is to better understand the degree to which cognitive personal traits and situation variables contribute to the complexity of language teachers' emotions, which have wide-ranging effects on both teachers' health and job satisfaction (e.g., Dreer, 2024), as well as on student learning (e.g., Liu et al., 2021).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Appraisal Theory

Appraisal is a theory of emotion that is rooted in cognitive psychology and that prescribes to a componential understanding of emotions. Appraisal theorists posit that an emotional episode consists of interconnected feeling, behavioral, somatic, motivational, and cognitive components, which all fulfill different functions in the emotion process (Shuman & Scherer, 2014). Importantly, the theory posits that the cognitive component, which has a meaning-making function, is the central component that activates an emotional episode. Specifically, it is concerned with the cognitive processing of information about a stimulus, which affects changes in the other components of the emotional episode (e.g., the feeling or motivational component) (Shuman & Scherer, 2014).

Adopting appraisal theory affords researchers to account for variability in cognitive processing between individuals and changes of subjective perception and meaning-making within individuals over time. In other words, it provides an explanatory theoretical framework to investigate why the same stimulus can activate different emotions across individuals and why the same person might experience the same stimulus differently over time. While rooted in cognitive psychology, appraisal is not a unified theory

(Scherer, 2000). Instead, multiple traditions exist that broadly differentiate their approaches and frameworks by the number of appraisal dimensions, whether appraisals are performed sequentially, consecutively, cyclically, or concurrently, and the types and numbers of emotions they can explain (Scherer, 2000).

The two dominant appraisal traditions are rooted in the domain of stress research. The tradition around Klaus Scherer and his component process model (Scherer, 2001) assumes five appraisal dimensions, labeled stimulus evaluation checks, which are processed sequentially to account for a plethora of discrete emotions (Scherer, 1993). In contrast, the tradition around Richard Lazarus and his transactional model of stress and coping (Lazarus, 1996, 2006) categorizes appraisals in two broad categories, which can occur in parallel to differentiate between a limited number of discrete emotions (e.g., anxiety, anger) and emotion families (e.g., joy, which comprises enjoyment, happiness, or contentment). Lazarus' (1991) primary appraisals assess a stimulus (e.g., an event) for importance and (in)congruence with individual goals, while his secondary appraisals assess situated coping resources, including physical (i.e., actions) and psychological (i.e., regulatory skills) resources.

According to Lazarus' (1991) model, appraisals of goal (in)congruence and coping are of central importance in the emotion process when a stressful stimulus is encountered. Goal incongruence and low coping potential have been associated with unpleasant emotions, while goal congruence and/or high coping potential have been linked to more pleasant emotions (e.g., Skinner & Brewer, 2002). For example, if a teacher's goal of active student participation is not met, the resulting appraisal of goal incongruence elicits an unpleasant emotional response. This response is further shaped by the teacher's perceived coping ability. A perceived lack of classroom management or emotion regulation skills may lead to anger, frustration, or anxiety. Such detailed associations between concrete appraisal patterns and discrete emotions have been theorized and tested (e.g., Smith & Lazarus, 1993). Importantly, the empirical work surrounding Lazarus' appraisal, emotion, and stress theory often conceptualizes stimuli as stressful events and operationalizes them as text or video-based vignettes (Robinson & Clore, 2001). Due to their compatibility, this study incorporates Lazarus' model in its theoretical framework and employs vignettes to

examine language teachers' appraisals, coping, and emotional experiences.

While events or situations (i.e., stimuli) constitute one crucial aspect of appraisal theories of emotion, the other aspect is the person, whose perception of stimuli forms the theoretical core. Appraisal studies of teacher emotions that systematically consider IDs are rare, however. In education, isolated studies have examined inter-individual differences between teachers' goals and appraisals of goal attainment (Frenzel et al., 2020), as well as perceptions of students' motivation and discipline as predictors for emotions (Becker et al., 2015). In instructed second language acquisition, appraisal studies with a focus on teacher IDs are even rarer. Instead, they highlight shared subjective experiences in the language teaching profession (i.e., inside and outside of the classroom) associated with anxiety (Fraschini & Park, 2021) or explore the antecedents and/or salient appraisal dimensions for a variety of discrete language teacher emotions, including enjoyment, pride, anxiety, anger, shame, and boredom (Khajavy et al., 2018). Existing studies also investigate emotional complexity and the correspondence between appraisal patterns and resulting emotions across distinct anxiety-provoking classroom situations (Goetze, 2023a) and demonstrate how emotions and appraisal systems can be utilized in language teacher training (Gabriś-Barker, 2011).

Only recently, Goetze (2025) explored the role of gender and amount of teaching experience as IDs in her longitudinal examination of language teachers' anxiety and enjoyment in two distinct classroom scenarios across the span of a semester. Using an appraisal approach and latent growth curve modelling, in which these IDs were used as time-invariant variables, her data suggested that both ID variables may play a role in stimulus perception. Specifically, she observed that gender played a significant role in teacher-student conflict situations, while teaching experience impacted emotional experiences during teachers' performance evaluations. The current study takes these recent findings as a starting point to examine whether language teachers' general tendencies for the cognitive framing of situations as threats or challenges play a role in situated appraisals of stimuli and the experience of (un)pleasant emotional episodes in stressful language classroom scenarios.

Dispositional Appraisal Style as an ID

Two appraisal disposition styles have been identified in the literature: threat and challenge (Skinner & Brewer, 2002). These cognitive trait IDs are considered antecedents of situated appraisal-emotion processes and are defined as "dispositions to appraise [one's] ongoing relationship with the environment *consistently* in one way or another" (Lazarus, 1991, p. 138, emphasis added). A person with a threat appraisal disposition tends to perceive stressful situations as dangerous to their wellbeing and as threatening to their identity and self-esteem (Skinner & Brewer, 2002). This disposition is associated with low confidence in being able to cope with threatening or dangerous stimuli, as well as with unpleasant emotions, such as anxiety (e.g., Lazarus, 1991). For example, a teacher with this disposition may appraise a supervisor class visit and subsequent feedback as threatening to their professional identity and expertise. In such cases, adaptive coping is less likely, and unpleasant emotions are more probable.

In contrast, a person with a challenge appraisal disposition is confident in their coping ability and the fact that the demands of a stressful situation can be overcome with effort. Challenge appraisers tend to view stressful situations as opportunities for success, social rewards, mastery, and personal growth. Consequently, this disposition and associated high coping confidence have been linked to positive emotions that are rooted in the anticipation of reward or growth (Lazarus, 1991; Skinner & Brewer, 2002). A teacher with this disposition may appraise a supervisor class visit and subsequent feedback as an opportunity to develop their expertise, making adaptive coping more likely and pleasant emotions more probable.

In the present study, both dispositions are explored as key IDs in language teachers' situated appraisals-emotional processes. In the past, both appraisal dispositions have predominantly been studied in achievement situations in relation to coping, emotional valence, and performance. Most studies investigated athletes in competitions (e.g., Jones et al., 2009), while some research also looked at students in exam situations (e.g., Burns & Egan, 1994). Both bodies of research generally confirm that a tendency to perceive stressful performance situations as dangerous or threatening to one's self-image is associated with doubts regarding one's ability to meet the demands of the situation, resulting in unpleasant emotions (e.g., anxiety). Conversely,

a tendency to perceive stressful performance situations as an opportunity for goal attainment or personal growth is associated with confidence in one's ability to meet situational demands, resulting in pleasant emotions (e.g., optimism). Based on these findings, Skinner and Brewer (2002) specify that "the influence of threat and challenge appraisal styles on emotion is mediated by event-specific coping expectancies" (p. 679), rather than claiming a direct link between appraisal dispositions (un)pleasant emotional experiences.

Nevertheless, very little is known about these processes in (language) teachers in relation to stressful classrooms. Such a state of affairs is curious since teacher emotions have a significant effect on student motivation, engagement, and learning, as well as on teachers' instructional practice and wellbeing. So far, existing studies have examined the effects of teachers' fear appeals that induced challenge or threat appraisals in their students before examinations (e.g., Putwain et al., 2017), but to my knowledge only one study has been conducted with faculty, albeit outside of a (language) classroom. Skinner and Brewer (2002) tested Lazarus' (1991) hypotheses about the role of appraisal dispositions in coping expectancy and emotion valence. Using a written vignette, in which faculty were asked to imagine that they spoke at a high-profile conference and presented a paper that had recently been rejected from a prestigious journal, these researchers examined the role of appraisal style on situated coping. They found that threat appraisal dispositions were associated with lower confidence in situation-specific coping but unexpectedly found no link between challenge appraisal dispositions and higher confidence in coping skills.

In their discussion of these results, Skinner and Brewer (2002) emphasized the importance of the content of stressful events that are used as stimuli in appraisal-coping-emotion research. Specifically, they highlight that the examination of personally relevant events that have the potential to be viewed as stressful should be considered in future studies. For example, they explain the lack of an expected association of challenge appraisal and higher coping expectancy with the familiarity of faculty with the vignette contents due to its frequent occurrence in academia. The current study takes these findings and conclusions as a starting point and examines the appraisal-coping-emotion links with a language teacher sample. It uses vignettes that have been sampled from existing research on language

teacher stress and anxiety, developed with focus groups of language teachers of different target languages, and validated with experts and a target population sample (see Goetze (2018) for a detailed description of the vignette development).

Vignettes as Situated Appraisal and Emotion-Eliciting Stimuli

In the context of this study, vignettes are understood as methodological tools to elicit data. They are defined as "written stimuli that contain realistic or imaginable situation-specific contents that resonate with research participants to a degree that activates a response strong enough to elicit emotional or emotion-related data (e.g., cognitions)" (Goetze, 2023b, p. 2). As such, they present a situation-based approach to the study of emotions that affords scholars to collect different types of data (e.g., quantitative, qualitative, mixed) in different modalities (e.g., oral, written, virtual) on situation-specific variables, processes, and phenomena. Their situated nature makes vignettes an ideal methodology for appraisal-based emotion studies that place the person-situation interaction at the theoretical core of an emotional episode.

As a methodology, vignettes are rooted in mental imagery research (e.g., Kosslyn et al., 2006), which posits that mental images evoked by reading textual stimuli can (re)create experiences that feel realistic enough to (re)activate emotional responses. During the moment(s) of imagining the stimulus (e.g., a stressful classroom event), participants are put in situ and asked to respond to data elicitation instruments immediately after they created their mental image. Educational psychologists have designated this data elicitation method as a compromise between in situ and retrospective self-reports (Frenzel, 2014).

While vignette methodology is an efficient and cost-effective approach with great potential for situation-based studies of affective variables like emotions, there are also some validity concerns. Mental images that are created in the research participants' imagination are assumed to be influenced by personally meaningful details. Therefore, questions can be raised about the reliability and validity of vignettes, as well as the difference between vignette-induced and true in-situ emotions. However, meta-analyses in psychology have shown that vignettes reliably induce

emotions (e.g., Siedlecka & Denson, 2019). Additionally, a recent study determined that, at least for some discrete emotions like anger, vignettes were more reliable than autobiographical recall methods in inducing and eliciting emotion data (Devilly & O’Donohue, 2021). In education, Krolak-Schwerdt and colleagues (2018) examined the ecological validity of emotion ratings, comparing in-situ scenarios and constructed vignettes, finding no difference between both methods.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The framework of this study (Figure 1) is rooted in cognitive appraisal theory (Lazarus, 1991, 2001) and a general model of motivation (Heckhausen & Heckhausen, 2018). Specifically, it draws on three dimensions of Smith and Lazarus’ (1993) six-dimensional appraisal model, which is frequently used in stress and anxiety research: motivational (in)congruence, problem-focused coping potential, and emotion-focused coping potential. The remaining dimensions of the original model (i.e., motivational relevance, accountability, and future expectancy) are not considered, as they fall outside the scope of this study.

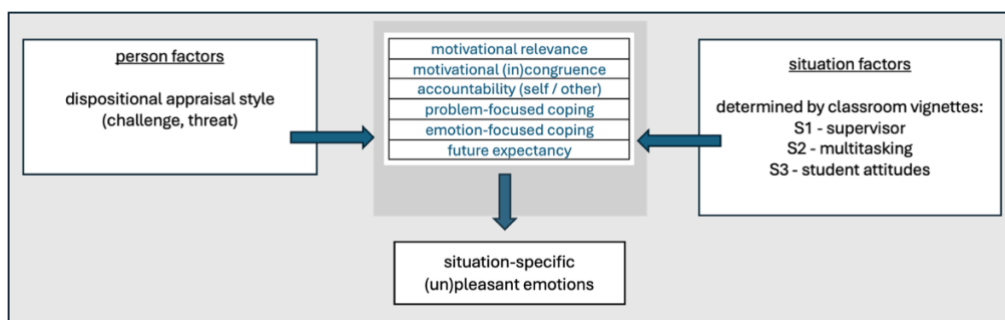
Appraisals of motivational (in)congruence determine the general valence of an emotional response as pleasant (when the situation is goal congruent) or unpleasant (when the situation is goal incongruent). This appraisal dimension affords a more comprehensive examination of (un)pleasant emotions, rather than limiting the focus to select focal emotions (e.g., enjoyment, anger, anxiety). Both coping dimensions capture language teachers’ self-perceived,

situation-specific abilities to manage classroom demands and regulate emotions in response to classroom stressors (Gross, 2015). Specifically, problem-focused coping evaluates one’s perceived ability to gain or maintain control over a situational stressor through a set of actions to make or keep a situation motivationally congruent. In contrast, emotion-focused coping evaluates one’s perceived ability to adjust psychologically to the outcomes of a stressful situation, regardless of whether the outcome is goal congruent or incongruent.

While goals are important person-, context-, and situation-specific variables to consider as antecedents in appraisal-based research, they were not a focus in the current study. Instead, I utilized Heckhausen and Heckhausen’s (2018) general model of motivation as a framework to account for the role of IDs assumed to shape situated cognitive appraisals and resulting emotions. This model posits that the interaction of person and situation factors, such as the perception of a situation through the lens of individual person factors (e.g., situation-specific goals, personality, appraisal disposition), produces motivational tendencies that can lead to action.

To integrate the appraisal-based emotion theory with this motivation framework, I adopt the assumption that the emotions resulting from individual situation-specific appraisals form the organizational core of motivation or a rudimentary motivation system (Schneider & Dittrich, 1990). However, rather than tracing how these emotions activate goal-directed motivation in language teachers, this study examines whether language teachers’ dispositions for threat or challenge appraisal are a salient trait ID that shapes the situated appraisal of classroom stressors and resulting emotions across three classroom vignettes.

Figure 1. *Integrated Appraisal-Motivation Framework*



RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of the study is to examine whether language teachers' dispositional appraisal styles play a systematic and significant role in their appraisals of situation-specific coping abilities and their experiences of (un)pleasant emotions in stressful classroom scenarios. To that end, the following research questions (RQs) are posed:

RQ1: To what extent do language teachers' dispositional appraisal styles (i.e., challenge, threat) explain variance in their self-perceived emotion- and problem-focused coping potential across three classroom scenarios?

RQ2: To what extent do language teachers' situated appraisals of motivational (in)congruence and coping potential, when moderated by dispositional appraisal style, explain variance in language teachers' experiences of (un)pleasant emotions across three classroom scenarios?

RESEARCH METHODS

Procedures

This survey study is part of a larger project and used an observational, correlational, and cross-sectional design. After receiving ethical approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at the University of Wisconsin – Madison, participants were recruited in fall 2023 via email invitations and social media posts. Interested parties followed a link or QR code to the online survey, where they completed an informed consent form before providing their responses. The survey was open for a period of four weeks, and completion took between 45 and 60 minutes. A total of 408 responses were recorded at the time of the closing of the survey, 254 of which were complete and considered for analysis. Data were downloaded into an Excel spreadsheet, cleaned, and prepared for analysis. Data was stored on a password-protected external hard-drive in my office in accordance with the data management policies outlined by the IRB.

Participants

The 254 language teachers who completed the survey identified as male ($n = 80$), female ($n = 168$), non-binary ($n = 5$), or chose not to disclose their gender ($n = 1$). The

average age of participants was 36.05 years ($SD = 10.74$). Participants were working as language teachers at different institutional levels, including primary schools ($n = 17$), secondary schools ($n = 25$), post-secondary schools ($n = 110$), and language institutes ($n = 11$). Approximately 20% of the respondents ($n = 56$) were not employed at the time of data collection but had worked as language teachers in the past.

The languages taught by participating teachers ranged from commonly taught languages, such as Spanish, German, French, and English, to less commonly taught languages. The latter included ASL, Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, Turkish, Lithuanian, Russian, Oriya, Serbian, Portuguese, Azerbaijani, Mandarin, Hindi, Hausa, Japanese, Finnish, Swedish, Italian, Wolof, Yoruba, Greek, Hebrew, Hoocak, Korean, Catalan, Swahili, and Urdu. Respondents' home countries were equally as diverse and spanned all continents, except Antarctica and Australia. However, the majority ($n = 198$) was working in the United States at the time of survey completion.

Instruments

The online survey consisted of three components, including a background questionnaire, an adopted scale to measure appraisal disposition, and three vignettes that were linked to situation-specific appraisal and emotion scales.

Background Questionnaire

This survey component collected information on language teachers' age, gender, level of education, current employment (i.e., educational level), average class size, country of origin, countries of current and past employment, linguistic profile, target languages taught in a classroom setting, and amount of teaching experience. This information was used to characterize and describe the sample.

Appraisal Disposition

Appraisal disposition was measured with the 18-item Cognitive Appraisal Style scale (CAS; Skinner & Brewer, 2002). The instrument consists of two subscales that capture respondents' tendencies to assess stressful situations as threats or challenges. The threat appraisal subscale has 10 items (e.g., *I worry about the kind of impression I make*),

while the challenge appraisal subscale has eight items (e.g., *I look forward to opportunities to fully test the limits of my skills and abilities*). Each item was rated on a 6-point Likert-type scale, ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” All items are included in Appendix A.

Vignettes

Three validated text-based vignettes (Goetze, 2023b) were used to examine the relationships between appraisal disposition, situated appraisals of motivational (in)congruence and coping potential, and (un)pleasant emotions across different classroom scenarios. These vignettes have been shown to elicit a complex range of emotions and appraisals in past research (Goetze, 2023a). The vignette contents are rooted in existing teacher anxiety research, therefore including situational stimuli that can be perceived as stressors. In the vignettes of the current study, stressors varied regarding situational aspects, such as the teaching task, as well as the presence and behavior of classroom participants. Vignettes are labeled *supervisor*, *multitasking*, and *student attitude*, and their texts are provided in Appendix B.

The *supervisor* vignette does not specify the teaching task but details the presence of a supervisor, which signals a performance evaluation. The supervisor’s behavior is described as continuously taking notes, which can be perceived as extensive criticism and threat to one’s professional identity or as praise and constructive feedback for professional growth. In the *multitasking* vignette, the situation description is teacher-centered, and the task is having to listen to students, providing feedback, and writing down their answers all at the same time. While students are mentioned as being present and contributing answers after a non-specified classroom task, the potential stressor is the cognitive load resulting from performing multiple actions at once. Stress can result from the uncertainty whether the situational demands can be managed and the degree to which they impact the teacher’s desired classroom performance goal. In the *student attitude* vignette, the teaching task is not specified, and the scenario description is centered on student actions, which include *overestimating* language abilities, disrespecting the instructor, and disrupting the class with unrelated content. The stressor is the continuous disruptive and disrespectful behavior of students that requires classroom management skills, emotion-related regulatory skills, or both.

Situated Appraisals

For each vignette, respondents were asked to imagine themselves in the scenario and to report their situated appraisals. Situated appraisals were captured using a 14-item scale (Smith & Lazarus, 1993). This scale included two items to capture emotion-related coping (e.g., *To what extent did you think that you had the ability to accept or adjust to the situation emotionally, regardless of its outcome?*) and problem-focused coping (e.g., *To what extent did you think that you had the ability to improve or maintain the situation so it would conform to your wishes and ideals?*), respectively. Motivational (in)congruence was measured on a two-item scale, with one item measuring congruence or incongruence, respectively (e.g., *To what extent were there positive aspects of the situation (e.g., things you wanted to happen, aspects you were pleased about?)*). All items were rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from “not at all” to “a great deal.” Scale instructions and items relating to the target appraisals in this study (i.e., motivational (in)congruence, coping) are included in Appendix C.

Situated Emotions

Separate situation-specific emotion ratings for each vignette were captured using the 20-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988). The instrument contains two subscales with 10 positive and 10 negative descriptors of momentary emotion states via adjectives (e.g., scared, interested, ashamed). It asks respondents to indicate whether and to what extent the emotion was present at a specified point in time (i.e., while imagining the vignette scenario). Emotions were reported using a 5-point Likert-type scale that ranged from “very slightly or not at all” to “extremely.” Scale instructions and all PANAS items are reported in Appendix D.

Analyses

Data were analyzed using linear multiple regression. To answer RQ1, dispositional appraisal styles were used as predictor variables, while situated appraisals of problem- and emotion-focused coping served as outcome variables. Individual regression models were calculated for each vignette to examine the possible differences in predictive power (i.e., effect sizes) of appraisal dispositions on situated coping potential across different classroom scenarios. For

RQ2, appraisals of motivational (in)congruence, and interaction effects between appraisal disposition and emotion-focused coping and problem-focused coping, respectively, were used as predictor variables. Pleasant and unpleasant emotions were used as outcome variables. Similar to RQ1, individual regression models were calculated for each vignette to examine the differences in predictive power (i.e., effect sizes) across different classroom scenarios. All analyses were conducted in SPSS, Version 28.

RESULTS

Descriptive statistics and reliability coefficients, where applicable, for challenge and threat appraisal disposition, motivational (in)congruence, emotion- and problem-focused coping, as well as (un)pleasant emotions for each vignette are displayed in Table 1. Across vignettes,

participants reported more pleasant than unpleasant emotions, which is consistent with higher ratings of motivational congruence than incongruence in the supervisor and multitasking scenarios. However, the student attitude vignette slightly diverged from this pattern. It elicited higher motivational incongruence ($M = 3.62$, $SD = 1.12$) than congruence ($M = 2.30$, $SD = 1.09$), the highest mean of unpleasant emotions ($M = 1.96$, $SD = 2.29$), and lowest mean of pleasant emotions ($M = 2.68$, $SD = 2.43$). It also yielded the lowest scores for problem-focused coping ($M = 2.97$, $SD = 1.21$) and emotion-focused coping ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 1.26$). Notably, the reliability coefficient for both coping scales was somewhat higher in this vignette (.78) than in the supervisor and multitasking vignettes (.60 – .66), which still reached an acceptable value. In terms of appraisal disposition, participants reported a stronger tendency towards threat ($M = 27.54$, $SD = 8.18$) than challenge appraisal ($M = 13.38$, $SD = 2.83$).

Table 1. *Descriptive Statistics*

	N	M	SD	Min.	Max.	Cronbach's α
Challenge disposition	245	13.38	2.83	5	18	.75
Threat disposition	241	27.54	8.18	7	42	.91
Supervisor						
Pleasant emotion	254	4.48	3.07	0	10	.84
Unpleasant emotion	254	1.52	1.99	0	9	.88
Congruence	243	3.47	.90	1	5	–
Incongruence	244	2.36	.86	1	5	–
Emotion-focused coping	254	3.47	1.04	0	5	.61
Problem-focused coping	254	3.34	1.02	0	5	.66
Multitasking						
Pleasant emotion	253	5.08	3.19	0	10	.84
Unpleasant emotion	253	.64	1.38	0	7	.91
Congruence	237	3.86	.95	1	5	–
Incongruence	235	2.21	.95	1	5	–
Emotion-focused coping	253	3.59	1.23	0	5	.60
Problem-focused coping	253	3.59	1.18	0	5	.65
Student Attitude						
Pleasant emotion	253	2.68	2.43	0	9	.81
Unpleasant emotion	253	1.96	2.29	0	10	.88
Congruence	233	2.30	1.09	1	5	–
Incongruence	234	3.62	1.12	1	5	–
Emotion-focused coping	253	3.02	1.26	0	5	.78
Problem-focused coping	253	2.97	1.22	0	5	.78

The correlation matrix (Table 2) confirms expected relationships between variables across vignettes. Pleasant emotions, motivational congruence, both coping potentials, and challenge appraisal disposition are consistently positively associated, whereas unpleasant emotions show consistent negative associations with these variables and positive associations with motivational incongruence. However, the strength of these associations varies across

vignettes. Additionally, patterns emerge for appraisal dispositions. Challenge appraisal is significantly related to (un)pleasant emotions, motivational (in)congruence, and both coping types in the supervisor and multitasking vignette, but not in student attitude. In contrast, threat appraisal shows significant associations with (un)pleasant emotions, motivational (in)congruence, and both coping types only in the student attitude vignette.

Table 2. Correlation Matrix for Key Variables

	UPE	Con	Incon	EFC	PFC	Challenge	Threat
Supervisor							
PE	-.164**	.343**	-.190**	.329**	.461**	.314**	-.165*
UPE		-.275**	.412**	-.187**	-.131*	-.372**	.259**
Congruence			-.222**	.348**	.434**	.372**	-.062
Incongruence				-.230**	-.301**	-.195**	.149*
EFC					.727**	.425**	-.179**
PFC						.373**	-.126
Multitasking							
PE	-.067	.339**	-.133*	.550**	.529**	.343**	-.004
UPE		-.324**	.383**	-.153*	-.029	-.257**	-.039
Congruence			-.324**	.328**	.350**	.294**	.100
Incongruence				-.263**	-.167*	-.194**	-.069
EFC					.839**	.245**	-.016
PFC						.197**	-.022
Student Attitude							
PE	.108	.305**	-.089	.417**	.504**	.089	-.168**
UPE		-.257**	.191**	-.089	-.035	-.183**	.236**
Congruence			-.363**	.295**	.321**	.064	-.202**
Incongruence				.002	-.023	.084	.137*
EFC					.803**	.142*	-.223**
PFC						.125	-.190**
Challenge							-.227**

Notes. ** $p \leq .01$, * $p \leq .05$; PE – pleasant emotions, UPE – unpleasant emotions, Con – motivational congruence, Incon – motivational incongruence, EFC – emotion-focused coping, PFC – problem-focus coping.

RQ1 examined the relationship between language teachers' appraisal disposition and situated coping expectancies across the three vignettes. The regression models (Table 3) indicate that language teachers' challenge appraisal disposition was a consistent and significant positive predictor of their emotion-focused and problem-focused coping potential across all vignettes. In contrast, a threat appraisal disposition emerged as a less consistent predictor, only contributing uniquely to emotion-focused coping in the supervisor vignette and to both types of coping in the student attitude vignette.

In the supervisor scenario, dispositional appraisal style explained approximately 15% ($R^2 = .148$) of problem-focused coping and approximately 24% ($R^2 = .238$) of emotion-focused coping. These are considered medium effects (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014), reflecting that differences in appraisal disposition produce meaningful, observable differences in teachers' coping responses in this classroom scenario. In the multitasking and student attitude scenarios, the effects are smaller, supporting the claim that situated appraisals can vary as a function of situations or changes in the perception of stimuli in one's environment (Skinner & Brewer, 2002). Specifically, dispositional

appraisal style explained approximately 11% ($R^2 = .109$) of problem-focused coping and approximately 17% ($R^2 = .172$) of emotion-focused coping in multitasking, while the predictive power in the student attitude vignette dropped to

approximately 8% ($R^2 = .088$) for problem-focused coping and to approximately 9% ($R^2 = .094$) for emotion-focused coping.

Table 3. *Regression Models for Dispositional Appraisal and Coping Potentials Across Vignettes*

Supervisor	R^2	B	95% CI	t	β	sr^2
Problem-focused coping	.148	4.41	[3.12, 5.69]	6.74**		
Challenge		.21	[.14, .28]	5.95**	.36	.36
Threat		-.01	[-.03, .01]	-.83	-.05	
Emotion-focused coping	.238	4.55	[3.38, 5.72]	7.65**		
Challenge		.24	[.18, .31]	7.65**	.44	.44
Threat		-.02	[-.04, -.00]	-2.11*	-.12	-.13
Multitasking						
Problem-focused coping	.109	5.15	[3.81, 6.94]	7.59**		
Challenge		.18	[.11, .25]	5.05*	.33	.32
Threat		.00	[-.02, .02]	-.00	-.00	
Emotion-focused coping	.172	4.22	[2.90, 5.55]	6.27**		
Challenge		.24	[.17, .31]	6.69**	.42	.40
Threat		.00	[-.01, .03]	.49	.03	
Student Attitude						
Problem-focused coping	.088	6.31	[4.78, 7.83]	8.14**		
Challenge		.10	[.02, .19]	2.51*	.16	.16
Threat		-.04	[-.07, -.01]	-3.21*	-.21	-.21
Emotion-focused coping	.094	6.69	[5.13, 8.25]	8.45**		
Challenge		.10	[.01, .18]	2.29*	.15	.15
Threat		-.04	[-.07, -.02]	-3.44**	-.23	-.23

Notes. ** $p \leq .001$; * $p \leq .05$.

RQ2 examined the extent to which situated appraisals of motivational (in)congruence and coping, when moderated by trait appraisal dispositions, contributed to teachers' (un)pleasant emotions across the three vignettes. Based on the results of RQ1, only challenge appraisal, as a consistent predictor of coping potential across the vignettes, was considered as a moderator in the analysis.

The regression models (Table 4) confirm that motivational (in)congruence is a consistent predictor for the valence (i.e., pleasant or unpleasant) of emotions, as posited by appraisal theory. However, the results show that situated (in)congruence appraisals are not the only significant predictor for emotion valence. Instead, situated appraisals of incongruence and low emotion-focused coping, as moderated by dispositional challenge appraisal, both consistently explained high amounts of variance in the experience of unpleasant emotions across all classroom vignettes. Specifically, the explanatory power of the

regression models ranges from 42% ($R^2 = .422$) in student attitude to 46% ($R^2 = .465$) in multitasking to 54% ($R^2 = .540$) in supervisor. These are all considered large effects (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014), indicating that the interaction between a challenge appraisal disposition and emotion-focused coping potential has a substantial, noticeable impact on language teachers' experiences of unpleasant emotions across all vignettes.

Similarly, appraisals of motivational congruence and reports of high problem-focused coping, as moderated by dispositional challenge appraisal, both explained high amounts of variance in the experience of pleasant emotions in the supervisor ($R^2 = .448$) and student attitude ($R^2 = .419$) vignettes. Importantly, however, the model for the multitasking vignette deviates from this pattern. The model for multitasking indicates that higher situated appraisals of congruence and emotion-focused coping, when moderated by dispositional challenge appraisal, explained 53% (R^2

= .531) of the variance in pleasant emotions. While there is some variation in the effect sizes across the three vignettes from 41% to 54%, they are all considered large (Plonsky & Oswald, 2014). This suggests that the classroom scenario

plays a role in the interaction between challenge appraisal and type of coping and that the interaction has a substantial impact on language teachers' pleasant emotional experiences in all cases.

Table 4. Regression Models for (Un)pleasant Emotions Across Vignettes

Supervisor	R²	B	95% CI	t	β	sr²
Pleasant emotions	.448	-.06	[-1.50, 1.37]	-.08		
Congruence		.65	[.22, 1.08]	2.98*	.19	.18
Challenge x PFC		.07	[.03, .10]	3.97**	.41	.24
Challenge x EFC		-.02	[-.05, .01]	-1.16	-.11	
Unpleasant emotions	.540	1.85	[.80, 2.90]	3.48**		
Incongruence		.74	[.48, 1.00]	5.62**	.32	.34
Challenge x PFC		.00	[-.01, .02]	.32	.03	
Challenge x EFC		-.04	[-.06, -.02]	-4.02**	-.38	-.25
Multitasking						
Pleasant emotions	.531	-.75	[-2.23, .73]	-.99		
Congruence		.52	[.14, .91]	2.73*	.16	.17
Challenge x PFC		.02	[-.10, .06]	1.48	.16	
Challenge x EFC		.04	[.01, .08]	2.60*	.29	.17
Unpleasant emotions	.465	.71	[-.05, 1.49]	1.82*		
Incongruence		.45	[.27, .65]	4.94**	.30	.31
Challenge x PFC		.01	[-.00, .03]	1.17	.13	
Challenge x EFC		-.03	[-.05, -.01]	-3.21**	-.38	-.21
Student attitude						
Pleasant emotions	.419	.09	[-.81, .99]	.20		
Congruence		.47	[.20, .75]	3.42**	.21	.22
Challenge x PFC		.05	[.02, .07]	3.35**	.36	.22
Challenge x EFC		-.01	[-.03, .01]	-.69	-.07	
Unpleasant emotions	.422	2.79	[1.63, 3.95]	4.74**		
Incongruence		.42	[.18, .67]	3.42**	.20	.22
Challenge x PFC		-.00	[-.03, .02]	-.46	-.05	
Challenge x EFC		-.04	[-.07, -.01]	-3.09*	-.33	-.20

Notes. ** $p \leq .001$, * $p \leq .05$; PFC – problem-focused coping, EFC – emotion-focused coping.

DISCUSSION

Language Teachers' Appraisal Disposition and Coping Potential

RQ1 examined the role of language teachers' appraisal dispositions in their perceived ability to cope with the classroom situations described in vignettes. Regression results showed that only a challenge appraisal style, defined as the tendency to frame stressful situations as an opportunity for success and growth, positively predicted variance in language teachers' coping potential with effect sizes ranging from small to medium (Plonsky & Oswald,

2014) across all vignettes. In contrast, threat appraisal style, defined as the tendency to perceive stressors as a threat to one's identity or self-esteem, emerged as a negative predictor of coping potential in only some vignettes.

While these findings confirm Lazarus' (1991) hypothesis that dispositional challenge appraisal is linked to higher coping expectancy, they are noteworthy in two ways. First, teachers in the current study reported a stronger tendency towards threat ($M = 27.54$, $SD = 8.18$) than challenge appraisal ($M = 13.38$, $SD = 2.83$), yet the latter had a more consistent impact on coping expectancy. Second,

findings diverge from Skinner and Brewer's (2002) study with faculty, which found no significant associations between challenge appraisal and coping expectancy. In the current study, language teachers who tended to frame stressful situations (e.g., a supervisor visit) as opportunities for professional growth consistently reported greater confidence in their problem-focused coping (e.g., through classroom management) and emotion-focused coping (e.g., through emotion regulation) with situation-specific stressors.

In contrast, a disposition for threat appraisal only emerged as a negative predictor of language teachers' self-perceived coping skills in the supervisor and student attitude vignettes, albeit in different ways. This finding is noteworthy because it partially contradicts theoretical assumptions (e.g., Lazarus, 1991) and existing empirical findings (e.g., Skinner & Brewer, 2002). For example, in the supervisor scenario, which represents an evaluative situation with an unknown outcome, a tendency to anticipate an outcome that is threatening to one's self-image (e.g., being perceived as a 'bad teacher' by one's supervisor) only affected language teachers' confidence in their abilities to emotionally cope (e.g., through emotion regulation) with that outcome. However, it did not affect teachers' confidence in controlling the situation through classroom management or instructional behavior. In the student attitude vignette, students' disruptive and disrespectful behavior was the stressor, which affected the association between appraisal disposition and situated coping differently. Teachers' tendency to view this stressor as a threat to their wellbeing and/or self-image negatively impacted their confidence in their classroom management skills (i.e., problem-focused coping) and their ability to regulate the emotional outcomes (i.e., emotion-focused coping) of this situation.

Importantly, both vignettes do not specify teaching tasks but their contents center around observable behavior by different classroom participants. The supervisor and students respectively display behaviors that can be considered stress-inducing, depending on teachers' goals for the self and the other classroom participant(s). However, the power relationship between a teacher and both types of classroom participants differs. The relationship between teacher and student is often marked by frequent contact during a limited academic term, as well as an institutional power hierarchy that favors the teacher. These relationship

characteristics coupled with unexpected, undesired, and repeatedly disruptive and disrespectful behavior might have a direct and immediate negative effect on teachers' professional self-confidence and emotional wellbeing. In contrast, the relationship between a teacher and supervisor is not usually bound by an academic term, has less frequent interactions, and favors the supervisor in the institutional power hierarchy. Consequently, interactions with a supervisor usually have higher stakes and contain evaluative elements, such as classroom observations, which can affect the trajectory of a professional relationship and the teachers' long-term career.

It is possible that the relationship(s) and behavior(s) of classroom participants, while not fully explicit in the vignette text, affected language teachers' imagination of the scenarios and subsequently the trait appraisal-coping interaction. This speculation is partially supported by the fact that these patterns were not found for the multitasking vignette. The multitasking scenario specified teacher-centered tasks and did not detail the relationship or potentially unexpected or undesired behaviors from classroom participants. The lack of involvement of others in what constitutes the stressor in this vignette (i.e., the teachers' cognitive load) suggests a larger sense of self and situational control overall, thereby possibly diminishing the expected effect of a threat appraisal disposition on situated coping.

These observations raise important questions about the role of language teachers' relationships with students and supervisors and what situational aspects were perceived as stressors by individual language teachers. The current study did not triangulate quantitative data with qualitative insights into teachers' mental images of the vignette scenarios. Considering the current findings, a mixed-methods approach that details language teachers' mental images or uses video-based vignettes to alleviate effects of individual imagination might be a promising area for future research to better understand how the interplay of cognitive traits, situation factors and classroom relationships affect situation-specific coping processes.

Taken together, findings for RQ1 lend support to Skinner and Brewer's (2002) claim that appraisal-coping-emotion processes are situation-specific. While the challenge appraisal disposition produced more consistent results across vignettes, the differences in effect size demonstrate

that interactions between language teachers' appraisal dispositions and situated coping appraisals vary to some degree with situation features, such as the presence and behavior of classroom participants.

Cognitive Appraisals, Moderated by Challenge Appraisal, and Emotions

RQ2 examined to what degree language teachers' situated appraisals of motivational (in)congruence and coping, when moderated by teachers' challenge disposition, impacted their experience of (un)pleasant emotions across the vignettes. Results confirmed the pivotal role of motivational (in)congruence in determining emotional valence across all vignettes. At the same time, situated appraisals of coping, when moderated by challenge appraisal, also played an important role in (un)pleasant emotional experience. Together, appraisals of (in)congruence and moderated coping explained between 41% and 54% of the variance in language teachers' (un)pleasant emotion experiences across all vignettes. Overall, two general patterns emerged.

First, large amounts of variance in unpleasant emotions across all vignettes were explained by higher appraisals of motivational incongruence and lower appraisals of emotion-focused coping. The results for motivational incongruence confirm that teachers' situation-specific goals against which the vignettes are appraised play an important role in determining emotion valence (Frenzel, 2014). However, while language teachers' challenge appraisal disposition generally boosts their coping expectancies (see RQ1; Table 3), this effect is not sufficient to equip them with coping abilities that can universally thwart unpleasant emotional experiences across different classroom scenarios that are perceived as goal incongruent. The findings suggest that even language teachers who tend to frame classroom situations as growth opportunities could benefit from training or professional development that utilizes goal incongruent classroom situations as a base to help them build their psychological coping skills. Training that takes a situation-based approach (Gabryś-Barker, 2011) and integrates personal goals as a salient variable, while acknowledging teachers' trait appraisal style, could aid in building language teachers' confidence in their emotion regulation and emotional resilience (Hiver, 2018) in the classroom.

Second, large amounts of variance in pleasant emotions across two vignettes was explained by higher appraisals of motivational congruence and higher appraisals of problem-focused coping. Again, the results for motivational congruence confirm that teachers' situation-specific classroom goals play an important role in determining emotion valence (Frenzel, 2014). Additionally, the significant role of problem-focused coping might be expected. Results for RQ1 showed that language teachers with a tendency to frame stressful classroom situations as opportunities for growth are also more confident in their abilities to manage them (Table 3). If a classroom is already perceived as goal congruent, language teachers might feel very confident in their ability to keep the situation that way through their instructional behavior or classroom management. Alternatively, when a situation is perceived as goal congruent, language teachers may not perceive it as a stressor. Either way, since motivationally congruent classroom experiences present favorable situations and are connected to emotionally pleasant experiences, it is unsurprising that emotion-focused coping does not play a significant role here. Additionally, it might be that language teachers' confidence in their classroom management skills and instructional behaviors contributed to the evaluation of the vignette as goal congruent. However, this is speculative, as the relationship between situated appraisals was not a focus of the current study.

The only exception to this second pattern is found in the multitasking vignette, in which situated appraisals of motivational (in)congruence and emotion-focused coping uniquely contributed to the experience of (un)pleasant emotions. Like the results for RQ1, the situational character of the vignette might play a role in this finding (Rauthmann et al., 2015). The vignette description focused on a language teacher who simultaneously performs a multitude of actions during the debriefing of a task. The focus on the teachers' actions in this situation implies that teachers likely have situated goals for their own performance. Simultaneously, a focus on the self suggests that situated goals can likely not be achieved or maintained through the classroom management of others. This is supported by the insignificant findings for problem-focused coping, which captures the role of confidence in classroom management skills in the vignette-specific emotions.

Consequently, the perceived stressor in this situation might be related to the performance assessment and

performance outcome expectations for the self that teachers must process and regulate, thereby turning coping demands predominantly psychological. Lower confidence in these regulatory skills, coupled with perceived goal incongruence might have contributed to language teachers' unpleasant emotions, while higher confidence in regulatory skills and goal congruence might have contributed to more pleasant emotions. These differences in confidence could be related to previous teaching experiences, since multitasking is a frequent and common occurrence in many language classrooms. In their situated appraisal of whether they feel able to psychologically process the outcome of this situation, familiarity may have contributed to language teachers' confidence levels, while a lack of familiarity might have had an opposite effect. However, this was not controlled for in the current study.

Overall, the results for RQ2 suggest that there is some systematic interaction between language teachers' challenge appraisal disposition and situated appraisals of (in)congruence and coping. However, vignette characteristics and situated goals might also play key roles in language teachers' emotional experiences. Specifically, the findings for pleasant emotions, which were inconsistent in the multitasking vignette, indicate that some situation factors (e.g., task or performance focus, familiarity) may affect the interaction between teachers' appraisal style and their situated coping appraisals. This partially mirrors the RQ1 findings that highlighted the need to better understand situation variables in classroom emotion and appraisal processes.

IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND DIRECTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Better understanding language teachers' stress and emotions matters for teacher wellbeing and student learning alike. This study used appraisal theory to contribute meaningful insights into the processes that activate teacher emotions in potentially stressful classroom situations. It showed that not only individual differences but also the (perceived) characteristics of stressful classroom situations (e.g., presence of classroom participants, teaching tasks) might play a role in language teachers' emotion experiences. This situational aspect of affective variables is still largely neglected in empirical research (Rauthmann et al., 2015). However, zooming into situation variables (e.g., social

relationships, class size, performance goals) and how teachers' perceptions of them change in relation to changes in their emotions might be a fruitful new area for classroom emotion research, especially from a complex dynamic systems perspective (e.g., Cameron & Larsen-Freeman, 2007; MacIntyre et al., 2021).

Adopting a situation-based approach to better understand how IDs and situated appraisal affect classroom emotions can also have important implications for practice. For example, language teacher trainers could demonstrate the protective or positive effects of adopting a challenge mindset during stressful classroom situations. Using vignettes as stimuli in teacher training could be one approach to building cognitive reframing skills in teachers (i.e., from threat to challenge), who have a threat appraisal tendency. Here, researchers, teacher trainers, and language teachers could collaborate to share different perceptions and interpretations of stressful classroom events, helping one another to adopt new perspectives, to share classroom management strategies, and to discuss experiences with and approaches to emotion regulation. Previous empirical work on such a collaborative approach demonstrated positive effects on teachers' awareness of the appraisal-emotion link and their confidence in being able to manage critical classroom incidents (Gabrys-Barker, 2011).

Some limitations of the current work need to be mentioned. The study used a convenience sampling approach that limits the generalizability of its findings. The vignettes that formed the basis of the study design were text-based and researcher selected. Text-based vignettes raise validity concerns since mental images of participants cannot be controlled for, while the researcher-driven selection introduces bias (see Goetze (2023b) for a detailed discussion of the methodology). Relatedly, qualitative insights into teachers' mental images of vignettes are missing to scrutinize speculations about the role of situation variables and goals in the appraisal-emotion process. Lastly, findings are based and interpreted through a specific cognition and motivation-based framework of emotions, leaving scholars from other emotion paradigms to potentially draw different conclusions from the data and analysis presented here.

Future appraisal-based studies of language teacher emotions could substitute text-based vignettes with advanced video or virtual reality-based technologies to

reduce measurement error and increase (ecological) validity of situation-based emotion and cognition data (Goetze, 2023b). Scholars could also work collaboratively with language teachers or teacher trainers to develop context-specific vignettes. Such vignettes could be used to prepare novice language teachers for the emotional realities of their future classrooms or to train experienced language teachers in classroom management and/or emotion regulation skills to boost their confidence in situated coping capabilities. Lastly, the use of advanced statistical methods, such as path modeling or exploratory structural equation modeling (Alamer, 2022), could shed light on the direct and indirect interactions of IDs and situation variables on situated appraisal processes and resulting emotions more comprehensively than the separate regressions in the current study.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of the study was to examine whether dispositional appraisal style plays a role in language teachers' situated appraisals and their experiences of (un)pleasant emotions across different classroom situations.

Author Contributions

Julia Goetze participated in the design of the study, completed the data collection, worked on data analysis, participated in the interpretation of the results, and drafted the manuscript. She approved the final manuscript.

Ethics Approval & Consent to Participate

This study was approved by the University of Wisconsin – Madison's Research Ethics Committee (approval No. 2023–1198). All participants provided informed consent prior to enrollment and data collection in the study.

Declaration of GenAI and AI-Assisted Technologies

The author confirms that no part of the study conceptualization, original writing, analysis, or interpretation in this manuscript was generated using AI. AI-assisted technologies were used to improve the clarity and flow of the manuscript's prose, to assist with language refinement, and for stylistic editing. The author reviewed, verified, and takes full responsibility for the content of the final manuscript.

Funding

Support for this research was provided by the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research and Graduate Education at the University of Wisconsin – Madison with funding from the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation.

REFERENCES

Alamer, A. (2022). Exploratory structural equation modeling (ESEM) and bifactor ESEM for construct validation purposes: Guidelines and applied example. *Research Methods in Applied*

Findings revealed that a disposition for challenge appraisal was associated with higher emotion- and problem-focused coping potential in all vignettes, while a disposition for threat appraisal was a less consistent negative predictor of situated coping. Additionally, challenge appraisal emerged as a significant moderator of situation-specific coping appraisals that played a role in (un)pleasant emotion experiences.

Notably, effect sizes for both types of appraisal dispositions varied between vignettes, thereby suggesting the importance of considering situation variables (e.g., type of teaching task, interaction with different types of classroom participants, performance goals) in research of situated appraisal and emotions. Overall, the study highlighted the value of using appraisal as a framework for language teacher emotion research and added important insights into the role of IDs and situation variables in language teachers' emotional experiences. Specifically, findings of the current study reinforce the call to increase the focus on classroom situations as a unit of analysis in descriptive and observational studies of (language teacher) emotions in instructed second language acquisition.

Linguistics, 1(1), Article 100005.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rmal.2022.100005>

Becker, E. S., Keller, M. M., Goetz, T., Frenzel, A. C., & Taxer, J. L. (2015). Antecedents of teachers' emotions in the classroom: An intraindividual

- approach. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 6, Article 635. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2015.00635>
- Burns, K. R., & Egan, E. C. (1994). Description of a stressful encounter: Appraisal, threat, and challenge. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 33(1), 21–28. <https://doi.org/10.3928/0148-4834-19940101-06>
- Cameron, L., & Larsen-Freeman, D. (2007). Complex systems and applied linguistics. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 17(2), 226–240. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1473-4192.2007.00148.x>
- Chang, M. L. (2009). An appraisal perspective of teacher burnout: Examining the emotional work of teachers. *Educational Psychology Review*, 21, 193–218. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-009-9106-y>
- Devilly, G. J., & O’Donohue, R. P. (2021). A video is worth a thousand thoughts: Comparing a video mood induction procedure to an autobiographical recall technique. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 73(4), 438–451. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00049530.2021.1997553>
- Dewaele, J. M., Saito, K., & Halimi, F. (2022). How teacher behaviour shapes foreign language learners’ enjoyment, anxiety and attitudes/motivation: A mixed modelling longitudinal investigation. *Language Teaching Research*, 29(4), 1580–1602. <https://doi.org/10.1177/13621688221089601>
- Dreer, B. (2024). Teachers’ well-being and job satisfaction: The important role of positive emotions in the workplace. *Educational Studies*, 50(1), 61–77. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03055698.2021.1940872>
- Ergün, A. L. P., & Dewaele, J. M. (2021). Do well-being and resilience predict the foreign language teaching enjoyment of teachers of Italian? *System*, 99, Article 102506. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2021.102506>
- Fraschini, N., & Park, H. (2021). Anxiety in language teachers: Exploring the variety of perceptions with Q methodology. *Foreign Language Annals*, 54(2), 341–364. <https://doi.org/10.1111/flan.12527>
- Frenzel, A. (2014). Teacher emotions. In R. Pekrun & L. Linnenbrink-Garcia (Eds.), *International handbook of emotions in education* (pp. 494–519). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203148211.ch25>
- Frenzel, A. C., Fiedler, D., Marx, A. K. G., Reck, C., & Pekrun, R. (2020). Who enjoys teaching and when? Between- and within-person evidence on teachers’ appraisal-emotion links. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, Article 1092. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2020.01092>
- Frenzel, A. C., Goetz, T., Stephens, E. J., & Jacob, B. (2009). Antecedents and effects of teachers’ emotional experiences: An integrated perspective and empirical test. In P. A. Schutz & M. Zembylas (Eds.), *Advances in teacher emotion research: The impact on teachers’ lives* (pp. 129–151). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-1-4419-0564-2_7
- Frenzel, A. C., Pekrun, R., Goetz, T., Daniels, L. M., Durksen, T. L., Becker-Kurz, B., & Klassen, R. M. (2016). Measuring teachers’ enjoyment, anger, and anxiety: The teacher emotions scales (TES). *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 46, 148–163. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cedpsych.2016.05.003>
- Gabrys-Barker, D. (2011). Appraisal systems in teacher training: Focus on critical incidents (CI). *Linguistica Silesiana*, 32, 259–274. <https://bibliotekanauki.pl/articles/577055.pdf>
- Goetz, T., Keller, M. M., Lüdtke, O., Nett, U. E., & Lipnevich, A. A. (2020). The dynamics of real-time classroom emotions: Appraisals mediate the relation between students’ perceptions of teaching and their emotions. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 112(6), 1243–1260. <https://doi.org/10.1037/edu0000415>
- Goetze, J. (2018). *Linking cognition and emotion: An appraisal study of foreign language teacher anxiety* (Publication No. 10928580). [Doctoral dissertation, Georgetown University]. ProQuest.
- Goetze, J. (2023a). An appraisal-based examination of language teacher emotions in anxiety-provoking classroom situations using vignette methodology. *The Modern Language Journal*, 107(1), 328–352. <https://doi.org/10.1111/modl.12832>
- Goetze, J. (2023b). Vignette methodology in applied linguistics. *Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, 2(3), 100078. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rmal.2023.100078>.
- Goetze, J. (2025). A longitudinal examination of changes in language teachers’ anxiety and enjoyment using growth curve modeling. *Language Teaching Research Quarterly*, 48, 171–198. <https://doi.org/10.32038/trq.2025.48.11>

- Gregersen, T., & MacIntyre, P. (2024). Language teacher wellbeing: An individual–institutional pact. *ELT Journal*, 78(2), 179–188. <https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccad053>
- Gross, J. J. (2015). Emotion regulation: Current status and future prospects. *Psychological Inquiry*, 26(1), 1–26. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1047840X.2014.940781>
- Heckhausen, J., & Heckhausen, H. (2018). Motivation and action: Introduction and overview. In J. Heckhausen & H. Heckhausen (Eds.), *Motivation and action* (pp. 1–14). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-65094-4_1
- Hiver, P. (2018). Teachstrong: The power of teacher resilience for second language practitioners. In S. Mercer & A. Kostoulas (Eds.), *Language teacher psychology* (pp. 231–246) Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781783099467-018>
- Horwitz, E. K. (1996). Even teachers get the blues: Recognizing and alleviating language teachers' feelings of foreign language anxiety. *Foreign Language Annals*, 29(3), 365–372. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.1996.tb01248.x>
- Johnson, S., Cooper, C., Cartwright, S., Donald, I., Taylor, P., & Millet, C. (2005). The experience of work-related stress across occupations. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 20(2), 178–187. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02683940510579803>
- Jones, M., Meijen, C., McCarthy, P. J., & Sheffield, D. (2009). A theory of challenge and threat states in athletes. *International Review of Sports and Exercise Psychology*, 2(2), 161–180. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17509840902829331>
- Khajavy, G. H., Ghonsooly, B., Fatemi, A. H., & Frenzel, A. C. (2018). Antecedents of pleasant and unpleasant emotions of EFL teachers using an appraisal-theoretical framework. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 6(2), 39–55. <https://doi.org/10.30466/ijltr.2018.120559>
- Kosslyn, S. M., Thompson, W. L., & Ganis, G. (2006). *The case for mental imagery*. Oxford University Press.
- Krolak-Schwerdt, S., Hörstermann, T., Glock, S., & Böhmer, I. (2018). Teachers' assessments of students' achievements: The ecological validity of studies using case vignettes. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, 86(4), 515–529. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00220973.2017.1370686>
- Kuppens, P., Van Mechelen, I., Smits, D. J. M., De Boeck, P., & Ceulemans, E. (2007). Individual differences in patterns of appraisal and anger experience. *Cognition and Emotion*, 21(4), 689–713. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699930600859219>
- Lazarus, R. S. (1991). *Emotion and adaptation*. Oxford University Press.
- Lazarus, R. S. (1996). *Psychological stress and the coping process*. McGraw-Hill.
- Lazarus, R. S. (2001). Relational meaning and discrete emotions. In K.R. Scherer, A. Schorr, & T. Johnstone (Eds.), *Appraisal processes in emotion: Theory, methods, research* (pp. 37–67). Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195130072.003.003>
- Lazarus, R. S. (2006). *Stress and emotion: A new synthesis*. Springer.
- Liu, Y., Zhang, M., Zhao, X., & Jia, F. (2021). Fostering EFL/ESL students' language achievement: The role of teachers' enthusiasm and classroom enjoyment. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 12, Article 781118. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2021.781118>
- MacIntyre, P. D., Gregersen, T., & Mercer, S. (2020). Language teachers' coping strategies during the Covid-19 conversion to online teaching: Correlations with stress, wellbeing and negative emotions. *System*, 94, Article 102352. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2020.102352>
- MacIntyre, P., Mercer, S. & Gregersen, T. (2021). Reflections on researching dynamics in language learning psychology. In R. Sampson & R. Pinner (Eds.), *Complexity perspectives on researching language learner and teacher psychology* (pp. 15–34). Multilingual Matters. <https://doi.org/10.21832/9781788923569-003>
- MacIntyre, P. D., Ross, J., Talbot, K., Mercer, S., Gregersen, T., & Banga, C. A. (2019). Stressors, personality and wellbeing among language teachers. *System*, 82, 26–38. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.02.013>
- Moskowitz, S., & Dewaele, J. M. (2021). Is teacher happiness contagious? A study of the link between perceptions of language teacher happiness and

- student attitudes. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching*, 15(2), 117–130. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17501229.2019.1707205>
- Pekrun, R. (2006). The control-value theory of achievement emotions: Assumptions, corollaries, and implications for educational research and practice. *Educational Psychology Review*, 18, 315–341. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-006-9029-9>
- Pekrun, R. (2024). Control-value theory: From achievement emotion to a general theory of human emotions. *Educational Psychology Review*, 36, Article 83. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-024-09909-7>
- Plonsky, L., & Oswald, F. L. (2014). How big is “big”? Interpreting effect sizes in L2 research. *Language Learning*, 64(4), 878–912. <https://doi.org/10.1111/lang.12079>
- Putwain, D. W., Symes, W., & Wilkinson, H. M. (2017). Fear appeals, engagement, and performance: The role of challenge and threat appraisals. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 87(1), 16–31. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjep.12132>
- Rauthmann, J. F., Sherman, R. A., Funder, D. C. (2015). Principles of situation research: Towards a better understanding of psychological situations. *European Journal of Personality*, 39, 363–381. <https://doi.org/10.1002/per.1994>
- Robinson, M. D., & Clore, G. L. (2001). Simulation, scenarios, and emotional appraisal: Testing the convergence of real and imagined reactions to emotional stimuli. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 27(11), 1520–1532. <https://doi.org/10.1177/01461672012711012>
- Scherer, K. R. (1993). Neuroscience projections to current debates in emotion psychology. *Cognition & Emotion*, 7(1), 1–41. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699939308409174>
- Scherer, K. R. (2000). Psychological models of emotion. In J. C. Borod (Ed.), *The neuropsychology of emotion* (pp. 137–162). Oxford University Press.
- Scherer, K. R. (2001). Appraisal considered as a process of multilevel sequential checking. In K. R. Scherer, A. Schorr, & T. Johnstone (Eds.), *Appraisal processes in emotion: Theory, methods, research* (pp. 92–120). Oxford University Press.
- <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780195130072.003.0005>
- Schneider, K., & Dittrich, W. (1990). Evolution und Funktion von Emotionen. In K. R. Scherer (Ed.), *Enzyklopädie der Psychologie: Psychologie der Emotion* (pp. 41–114). Hogrefe.
- Shuman, V., & Scherer, K. R. (2014). Concepts and structures of emotions. In R. Pekrun & L. Linnenbrink-Garcia (Eds.), *International handbook of emotions in education* (pp. 13–35). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203148211.ch2>
- Siedlecka, E., & Denson, T. F. (2019). Experimental methods for inducing basic emotions: A qualitative review. *Emotion Review*, 11(1), 87–97. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1754073917749016>
- Skinner, N., & Brewer, N. (2002). The dynamics of threat and challenge appraisals prior to stressful achievement events. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 83(3), 678–692. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.83.3.678>
- Smith, C. A., & Lazarus, R. S. (1993). Appraisal components, core relational themes, and the emotions. *Cognition and Emotion*, 7(3–4), 233–269. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02699939308409189>
- Verduyn, P. (2021). Emotion duration. In C. E. Waugh & P. Kuppens (Eds.), *Affect dynamics* (pp. 3–18). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-82965-0_1
- von der Embse, N., & Mankin, A. (2021). Changes in teacher stress and wellbeing throughout the academic year. *Journal of Applied School Psychology*, 37(2), 165–184. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15377903.2020.1804031>
- Watson, D., Clark, L. A., & Tellegen, A. (1988). Development and validation of brief measures of positive and negative affect: The PANAS scales. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 54(6), 1063–1070. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.54.6.1063>
- Zhang, L. (2023). Reviewing the effect of teachers’ resilience and wellbeing on their foreign language teaching enjoyment. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 14, Article 1187468. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2023.1187468>

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A. Cognitive Appraisal Style Scale (Skinner & Brewer, 2002).

1. I tend to focus on the positive aspects of any situation.
2. I worry that I will say or do the wrong things.
3. I often think about what it would be like if I do very well.
4. I believe that most stressful situations contain potential for positive benefits.
5. I worry about the kind of impression I make.
6. I am concerned that others will find fault with me.
7. Overall, I expect that I will achieve success rather than experience failure.
8. In general, I look forward to the rewards and benefits of success.
9. Sometimes I think I am too concerned with what other people think of me.
10. I feel that difficulties are piling up so that I cannot overcome them.
11. I lack self-confidence.
12. A challenging situation motivates me to increase my efforts.
13. In general, I anticipate being successful at my chosen pursuits, rather than expecting to fail.
14. I worry what other people will think of me even when I know that it doesn't make any difference.
15. I am concerned that others will not approve of me.
16. I look forward to opportunities to fully test the limits of my skills and abilities.
17. I worry about what other people may be thinking about me.
18. I feel like a failure.

APPENDIX B. Vignette Texts and Instructions.**Supervisor**

Your supervisor announces a visit to your class to observe your teaching. During your class, your supervisor sits in the back of your classroom, continuously taking notes.

Multitasking

After the completion of a task, you asked students to contribute their answers as examples to share with the class. You turn to the board to note down their answers in written form. You have to listen to the student, provide feedback, and write down their answer all at the same time.

Attitude

It is the first week of classes and you are still in the process of getting to know your students. This semester, you encounter a group of students in your class who give you a lot of negative attitude. They especially overestimate their language abilities and do not take you seriously as an instructor. Specifically, they constantly make irritated faces at you and at each other and make disrupting remarks or jokes, which are unrelated to class content.

Every vignette was presented separately with the following instructions:

Please take a moment and read through the description of the classroom scenario below. This scenario might have already occurred or could potentially occur in your language classroom.

While you read, try to picture yourself in the scenario in your head and mentally create the thoughts and feelings you would have if you were in the described situation at the moment you are reading it.

Once you are aware of your thoughts and feelings, please answer the questions about them below, using the scales provided.

APPENDIX C. Situated (In)Congruence and Coping Items (Smith & Lazarus, 1993).

The following instruction preceded the situated appraisal scale:

Please answer the questions below by selecting a response on the rating scale to indicate what you were thinking.

Congruence:

- To what extent were there positive aspects of the situation (e.g., things you wanted to happen, aspects you were pleased about)?

Incongruence:

- To what extent were there negative aspects of the situation (e.g., things you did not want to happen, aspects you were not pleased about)?

Problem-focused coping:

- To what extent did you think that you had the ability to improve or maintain the situation so it would conform to your wishes and ideals?
- How certain were you that you had the ability to change (or keep) the situation to the way you ideally wanted it to be?

Emotion-focused coping:

- To what extent did you think that you had the ability to accept or adjust to the situation emotionally, regardless of its outcome?
- To what extent did you think that you had the ability to deal with the situation emotionally, regardless of its outcome?

APPENDIX D. Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS; Watson et al., 1988).

The following instructions preceded the situated emotion scales for each vignette:

Below are adjectives that describe different emotions or feelings. Please indicate the extent to which each adjective characterizes your feelings and emotions within the situation you just imagined yourself in, at the particular time you imagined it.

- | | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1. interested | 11. irritable |
| 2. distressed | 12. alert |
| 3. excited | 13. ashamed |
| 4. upset | 14. inspired |
| 5. strong | 15. nervous |
| 6. guilty | 16. determined |
| 7. scared | 17. attentive |
| 8. hostile | 18. jittery |
| 9. enthusiastic | 19. active |
| 10. proud | 20. afraid |