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# LANGUAGE TEACHERS' EMOTIONS WHEN WORKING WITH STUDENTS THAT EXHIBIT ADHD-TYPE BEHAVIOURS

ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER
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Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder or ADHD may affect additional language learning and teaching. Students that display ADHD-type behaviours may be challenging to teach, and as a result, their teachers may experience various emotions. Yet, empirically this has not been investigated. Therefore, the present study focused on the effect of behaviours associated with ADHD on language teachers' emotions. The participants were 51 teachers of English as a foreign language, of different age and teaching experience, working in pre-, primary, and high schools in Poland. Data were collected by means of a questionnaire, where the participants were asked to indicate their first and other emotions for inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms. The findings revealed context-related emotion tapestries, but overwhelmingly with the presence of less pleasant emotions. Thus, the topics of teacher agency and well-being are discussed.

**Keywords:** ADHD, language teaching, inattention, hyperactivity/impulsivity, teacher emotions

## INTRODUCTION

Typical manifestations of Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) may be challenging to manage by teachers for many reasons. They may affect the learning of an individual with the condition and be detrimental to the learning of all students in the classroom (Kałdonek-Crnjaković, 2022). Teachers'

attitudes and emotions may also be impacted negatively as these students' behaviour may be regarded as aggressive (Skibska, 2013).

Research on ADHD is abundant; however, little focus has been given to second language learning and teaching (Kałdonek-Crnjaković, 2022). Considering that 'Teaching and learning a second language are both emotionally-charged activities.' (Richards, 2022: 225) and that ADHD may have various effects on language learning and use in the classroom setting (Kałdonek-Crnjaković, 2018), emotions of language teachers may be unique compared to other school subject teachers. Furthermore, investigating emotions in additional language learning and teaching is important because of teacher agency and well-being (Prior, 2019).

In response to the recent 'emotional boom' in the field of applied linguistics (Mavrou et al., 2022), this study investigated teacher emotions related to students with ADHD-like behaviours using the diagnostic measured of ADHD symptoms as specified in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual, the fifth edition (DSM-V; American Psychiatric Association, 2013).

The participants in the present study were teachers of English as a foreign language (EFL) working in different educational settings in Poland. The research questions enquired about teacher emotions experienced for ADHD-type behaviours and emotions related to specific ADHD presentations: inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity. Based on the previous research findings on ADHD and teacher emotions, it was hypothesised that a range of emotions would be reported, showing the complexity and dynamism of teacher emotions.

## THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

### Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder

ADHD is a neurobiological disorder (Adler et al., 2015), hereditary in origin (Barkley, 2006) that is experienced by five per cent of children (Smith, 2017). It is not gender-specific but males tend to be diagnosed more frequently (Barkley, 1997). Females display more symptoms of inattentiveness and develop more effective coping strategies (Quinn & Madhoo, 2014), and thus their behaviour may appear less disruptive (Barkley, 2006). Age may be salient as well: older individuals show fewer hyperactivity-impulsivity symptoms (Biederman, 2011). The cooccurrence of ADHD with other difficulties or disorders is high, mostly with dyslexia (DuPaul et al., 2013; Pennington et. al., 2009), which may impact the identification of ADHD. The diagnosis may also be influenced by perceptions of different members of an individual's

surroundings (Hamed et al., 2015), cultural influences, and societal burdens (Asherson et al., 2014).

The three manifestations of ADHD are inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity with two presentations, that is, inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity (Tannock, 2013). In brief, the symptoms of inattention include a lack of attention to detail, inability to keep attention for a longer time or follow instructions, poor organisational strategies, forgetfulness, and being easily distracted by an external stimulus. Hyperactivity may cause, for example, frequent hands and legs movement, walking or running, and fidgeting, whereas impulsivity is associated with lower self-control, impatience, extensive talking, unintentional destruction, and disturbing others (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Due to these symptoms, an individual may find it difficult to automatise behavioural rules, experience emotional oversensitivity, appear intolerant, and lack motivation for learning (Barkley, 2006).

## Language teachers and students with ADHD-like behaviours

Studies involving teachers mainly focused on teachers' knowledge of ADHD and attitudes toward students with this condition. Many variables were identified that might influence these two aspects. The findings are however inconclusive.

Overall, teachers were found knowledgeable on symptoms and diagnosis of ADHD, but had poorer knowledge of its treatment and had many misconceptions that might stem either from a lack of knowledge or a teacher's personal experience in teaching students with ADHD. Though general teaching experience and prior experience with students with ADHD were salient for correct knowledge of ADHD in some studies (Bekle, 2004; Kos et al., 2004; Sciutto et al., 2000) but not in others (Frigerio et al., 2014; Jerome et al., 1999; Liang, & Gao, 2016). Similarly, some studies found that higher knowledge of the disorder positively correlated with teacher attitudes (Bekle, 2004; Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Greenway & Rees Edwards, 2020); others found no such relation (Liang & Gao, 2016).

Research findings also indicated that the majority of teachers considered ADHD as a problematic educational issue (e.g. Greenway & Rees Edwards, 2020; Mulholland et al., 2015, 2023). Bornman and Donohue (2013) found that ADHD behaviours were regarded as highly disruptive with a negative effect on the classroom atmosphere, but the teacher participants' attitude toward students with ADHD was positive and they were for including these students in the mainstream classroom. Similarly, the teacher participants in Mulholland et al.'s study (2023) reported a positive attitude toward the stu-

dents with ADHD but found ADHD behaviours irritating when they occur in the classroom context.

Contrast this with the findings of the study by Degroote et al. (2022): teacher participants were more willing to suspect ADHD in a student who displayed higher levels of ADHD-like behaviours and higher levels of cognitive ability. Although this attitude may lead to unnecessary labelling, the suspicion of ADHD may be, as the authors suggest, 'a process of blame removal' (Degroote et al., 2022: 9), where ADHD is explanatory of the ADHD-like behaviours, which may detrimentally hinder the potential of high cognitive abilities.

## Language teacher emotions

Teacher emotions have been under psychological investigation since the 1990s; however, emotion research has been prejudiced because of the belief that emotions are complex and thus difficult to understand and challenging to be gauged empirically (see the review by Chen, 2021). But studying teacher emotions seems to be paramount because educators experience emotion labour daily. As recently observed by Chen (2021), recent research on teacher emotions is promising: teachers can regulate their emotions effectively (Beltman & Poulton, 2019), and their agency correlated with emotion management (Burić, 2019), which eventually will positively shape teacher well-being (Chen, 2021).

Language teacher emotions gained a considerable focus in recent years (De Costa et al., 2018). The examples of the issue explored include emotion labour (Benesch, 2017), emotional costs and rewards (Miller & Gkonou, 2018), and engagement and caring while dealing with students' anxiety (Gkonou & Miller, 2019) and the learning struggle caused by specific learning difficulties (Kałdonek-Crnjaković & Fišer, 2021). Language teachers experience various emotions, pronouncedly the positive ones, that shape their identity, agency, and practice (Dumančić et al., 2022; Kałdonek-Crnjaković & Fišer, 2021; Miller & Gkonou, 2018; Sung, 2022).

Positive emotions are undoubtedly valuable because they broaden our options and enhance our skills; however, difficult emotions should not be disregarded as they 'offer helpful learning experiences that strengthen dedication and prepare the way for greater skills' (Oxford, 2020: 255). Moreover, emotions should not be denoted as 'good' or 'bad' in order not to misrepresent or oversimplify an emotional experience (Kong, 2019: 541).

Language teaching is thus an emotional rollercoaster as 'Emotions are not static but can instead fluctuate over time and across settings' (Gkonou et al., 2020: 1). Emotions experienced by language teachers can have 'countless forms, strengths and shadings', 'vary in duration', 'can be conscious or below

consciousness' (Oxford, 2020: 247–248), and reveal 'complex, dynamic and bidirectional' relationships (Sung, 2022: 12). Ambivalence is common: happiness may occur with relief, anxiety with care (Oxford, 2020), and excitement with fear (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014). A recent study by Oxford (2020) illustrated the emotional shifts of language teachers. One of the analysed narrative accounts showed a variety of positive emotions ranging from happiness, eagerness, pleasure, and joy to anxiety, worry, anger, guilt, frustration, and sadness in different clusters and sequencing. For example, anxiety and eagerness or anger and guilt were closely experienced. Therefore, emotions in language teaching should be studied from 'a holistic and malleable' point of view to gauge their contextualisation and relation nature (Kong, 2019: 541).

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study aimed to investigate teacher emotions related to teaching students with ADHD-like behaviours. Given the issues related to the diagnosis of ADHD and previous studies involving teachers, as discussed in the literature reviews, the term used in this study referred to ADHD manifestations and possible behaviours associated with them rather than the ADHD condition as a whole. The following research questions were posed:

1. What teacher emotions arise toward students displaying ADHD-like behaviours?
2. What teacher emotions arise in the context of specific ADHD presentations?

Considering previous studies related to teaching students with ADHD and teacher emotions, it can be hypothesised that teacher participants will report a range of emotions, showing *a dynamic emotion tapestry*, depending on the specific context related to ADHD manifestations.

### Participants

The participants were 51 English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers in Poland, working in preschool institutions (21%), primary grades 1-3 (31%), primary grades 4-8 (31%), and secondary schools (17%). All the participants were females of different ages and lengths of teaching experience (between 2 and 15 years).

### Data collection

To understand the dynamism of emotions experienced by teacher participants across contexts, the questionnaire investigated teacher emotions related to ADHD in general, its specific manifestations, and major presentations. The first emotion and other emotions experienced were distinct to observe the

first reaction to ADHD manifestations and a potential emotional rollercoaster (Gkonou et al., 2020).

The data were gathered using an online questionnaire (a Google form). The first question asked about the first emotion associated with ADHD-type behaviours, followed by a question on other emotions that might be experienced when teaching students with ADHD-type behaviours. The next 19 statements in the form of vignettes (Table 1) display the symptoms of two presentations of ADHD (inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity) as indicated in the DSM-5 (American Psychiatric Association, 2013). Participants were asked to report their first and other emotions experienced in a given situation. For each situation, a list of emotions (Zembylas, 2005: 220 with the added item by Miller & Gkonou, 2019: 57) was provided.

*Table 1. Data collection instrument: 19 symptoms of inattention and hyperactivity/impulsivity presentations*

| Inattention | Hyperactivity/impulsivity |
|---|---|
| 1. The student often fails to give close attention to details. | 11. The student often fidgets with or taps hands or feet, or squirms in the seat. |
| 2. The student often makes careless mistakes in schoolwork or with other activities. | 12. The student often leaves seats in situations when remaining seated is expected. |
| 3. The student often has difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities. | 13. The student often runs about or climbs in situations where it is inappropriate (Note: In adolescents may be limited to feeling restless). |
| 4. The student often does not seem to listen when spoken to directly. | 14. The student is often unable to play or engage in leisure activities quietly. |
| 5. The student often does not follow through on instructions and fails to finish schoolwork. | 15. The student is often "on the go" as if driven by a motor (e.g., is unable to be or uncomfortable being still for an extended time; may be experienced by others as being restless or difficult to keep up with). |
| 6. The student often has trouble organising tasks and activities. | 16. The student often talks excessively. |
| 7. The student often avoids, dislikes, or is reluctant to encourage in tasks that require sustained mental effort. | 17. The student often blurts out an answer before a question has been completed (e.g., completes people's sentences; cannot wait for their turn in conversation) |
| 8. The student often loses things necessary for tasks or activities. | 18. The student often has difficulty waiting for his or her turn. |
| 9. The student is often distracted by extraneous stimuli. | 19. The student often interrupts or intrudes on others (e.g., butts into conversations, games, or activities; may start using other people's things without asking or receiving permission; for adolescents, may intrude into or take over what others are doing) |
| 10. The student is often forgetful in daily activities. | |

## Data analysis

The data were analysed by presenting the overall number of participants that reported a given emotion and the percentage of the total number of reported emotions. The organisation of the subsequent section of the paper includes the results for the first reported emotion and other emotions associated with ADHD-type behaviours in general (Table 2 and 3, respectively), the results for the first reported emotion and other emotions associated specifically with inattention symptoms (Table 4 and 5, respectively), the results for the first reported emotion and other emotions associated specifically with hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms (Table 6 and 7, respectively).

## Ethical considerations

The study was approved by the ethical committee of the research institution of the author of this paper on 11th February 2022 under the number 123/2021 according to the ethical standards of research involving human participants.

# RESULTS

*Table 2. The first emotion experienced by participants when teaching students that exhibit ADHD-type behaviours*

| The first emotion | No. of participants | % |
|---|---|---|
| frustration | 20 | 39 |
| anxiety | 8 | 15.5 |
| irritation | 8 | 15.5 |
| hope | 5 | 10 |
| empathy | 4 | 8 |
| confusion | 3 | 6 |
| powerlessness | 3 | 6 |
| Total | 51 | 100 |

*Table 3. Other emotions experienced by participants when teaching students that exhibit ADHD-type behaviours*

| Emotion | No. of occurrence | % |
|---|---|---|
| patience | 42 | 10.5 |
| tiredness | 28 | 7 |
| empathy | 28 | 7 |
| powerlessness | 27 | 6.5 |
| fascination | 25 | 6.2 |
| caring | 23 | 5.5 |
| frustration | 21 | 5.2 |
| irritation | 21 | 5.2 |
| tolerance | 20 | 5 |
| anxiety | 19 | 4.7 |
| helplessness | 18 | 4.5 |
| impatience | 18 | 4.5 |
| confusion | 16 | 4 |
| enthusiasm | 16 | 4 |
| fear | 12 | 3 |
| anger | 11 | 2.7 |
| annoyance | 10 | 2.5 |
| disappointment | 10 | 2.5 |
| hope | 7 | 1.75 |
| satisfaction | 7 | 1.75 |
| wonder | 7 | 1.75 |
| disillusion | 5 | 1.25 |
| guilt | 5 | 1.25 |
| despair | 4 | 1 |
| sadness | 3 | 0.75 |
| Total | 403 | 100 |

*Table 4. The first emotion reported by participants for inattention symptoms*

| Emotion | No. | % | No. of contexts (out of 10) | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| frustration | 98 | 19.20 | 8 | absent in symptoms 3,10; the highest in 6,8 |
| empathy | 97 | 19.00 | 10 | the highest in 8; the least in 4,5,9 |
| irritation | 83 | 16.30 | 9 | absent in 7; the highest in 3 |
| sadness | 34 | 6.75 | 4 | present in 1,4,7, 10; the highest in 1,7 |
| tiredness | 27 | 5.30 | 2 | present in 5,6; the highest in 5 |
| anxiety | 24 | 4.70 | 5 | present in 3,4,5,7,10 |
| helplessness | 22 | 4.30 | 2 | present in 9,10 |
| tolerance | 18 | 3.50 | 3 | present in 1,2,9 |
| impatience | 15 | 3.00 | 2 | present in 2,9; the highest in 2 |
| powerlessness | 15 | 3.00 | 3 | present in 3,8,10; the highest in 10 |
| patience | 13 | 2.50 | 1 | present in 4 |
| annoyance | 11 | 2.15 | 1 | present in 7 |
| disillusion | 11 | 2.15 | 2 | present in 4,5 |
| fascination | 11 | 2.15 | 2 | present in 2,9 |
| wonder | 10 | 2.00 | 2 | present in 1,7 |
| anger | 8 | 1.50 | 1 | present in 4 |
| disappointment | 8 | 1.50 | 1 | present in 3 |
| confusion | 5 | 1.00 | 1 | present in 1 |
| Total | 510 | 100 | | |

*Table 5. Other emotions reported by participants for inattention symptoms*

| Emotion | No. | % | No. of contexts (out of 10) | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| empathy | 181 | 9.5 | 10 | the lowest in symptoms 5,8 |
| patience | 175 | 9.3 | 10 | the lowest in 8 |
| frustration | 171 | 9.1 | 10 | the lowest in 6,7 |
| disappointment | 149 | 8 | 10 | the lowest in 6; the highest in 5 |
| helplessness | 142 | 7.5 | 9 | not present in 8 |
| tiredness | 133 | 7 | 9 | absent in 8; the lowest in 6 |
| irritation | 112 | 6 | 10 | the lowest in 2,3; the highest in 5 |
| impatience | 111 | 5.9 | 9 | absent in 8; the lowest in 1,2 |
| powerlessness | 85 | 4.4 | 10 | |
| anxiety | 82 | 4.3 | 10 | |
| hope | 80 | 4.2 | 10 | |
| annoyance | 71 | 3.6 | 10 | the highest in 8,9 |
| caring | 62 | 3.3 | 9 | absent in 8 |
| sadness | 60 | 3.2 | 8 | absent in 9,10 |
| tolerance | 59 | 3.1 | 8 | absent in 4,5 |
| disillusion | 51 | 2.7 | 4 | present 1,2,4,7 |
| anger | 35 | 1.8 | 6 | absent in 1,6,8,9 |
| confusion | 32 | 1.7 | 8 | absent in 6,8 |
| boredom | 28 | 1.4 | 8 | absent in 5,8 |
| awe | 25 | 1.3 | 7 | absent in 8,9,10 |
| guilt | 24 | 1.2 | 6 | absent in 3,8,9,10 |
| wonder | 15 | 0.8 | 4 | present in 2,6,8,9 |
| fascination | 9 | 0.5 | 3 | present in 3,5,10 |
| fear | 5 | 0.2 | 2 | present in 1,5 |
| Total | 1897 | 100 | | |

*"Table 6. The first emotion reported by participants for hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms*

| Emotion | No. | % | No. of contexts (out of 9) | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| irritation | 115 | 25 | 9 | the highest in symptoms 11,12,18,19 |
| frustration | 74 | 16 | 9 | the highest in 14 |
| empathy | 49 | 10.75 | 9 | least present in 16,17 |
| annoyance | 34 | 7.75 | 3 | present in 12,17,18; the highest in 17 |
| sadness | 34 | 7.75 | 7 | absent in 12,18 |
| tolerance | 29 | 6.5 | 4 | present in 11,14,16,17 |
| helplessness | 26 | 5.5 | 3 | present in 13,15,19 |
| powerlessness | 25 | 5.25 | 2 | present in 14,19 |
| anxiety | 20 | 4.25 | 3 | present in 11,12,18 |
| impatience | 19 | 4 | 3 | present in 14,15,18 |
| confusion | 8 | 1.75 | 1 | present in 13 |
| fascination | 8 | 1.75 | 1 | present in 15 |
| wonder | 7 | 1.5 | 1 | present in 12 |
| patience | 6 | 1.25 | 1 | present in 18 |
| awe | 5 | 1 | 1 | present in 16 |
| Total | 459 | 100 | | |

*Table 7. Other emotions reported by participants for hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms*

| Emotion | No. | % | No. of contexts (out of 9) | Comments |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| patience | 152 | 11.5 | 9 | |
| irritation | 138 | 10.5 | 9 | |
| empathy | 122 | 9 | 9 | |
| frustration | 121 | 8.5 | 9 | |
| impatience | 104 | 7.75 | 9 | |
| tiredness | 98 | 7.25 | 9 | |
| annoyance | 83 | 6.75 | 8 | absent in symptom 14 |
| powerlessness | 74 | 5.15 | 8 | absent in 14 |
| anxiety | 73 | 5 | 9 | |
| tolerance | 58 | 4 | 9 | |
| helplessness | 46 | 3.5 | 8 | absent in 14 |
| fascination | 37 | 2.75 | 7 | absent in 12, 13 |
| disappointment | 33 | 2.5 | 9 | |
| hope | 33 | 2.5 | 9 | |
| caring | 32 | 2.25 | 9 | |
| wonder | 25 | 2 | 4 | present in 11,12,13,15 |
| anger | 23 | 1.75 | 4 | present in 11,13,14,16 |
| sadness | 16 | 1.25 | 3 | present in 13,14,17 |
| guilt | 15 | 1.15 | 3 | present in 13,18,19 |
| disillusion | 13 | 1 | 3 | present in 12,13,16 |
| restlessness | 13 | 1 | 2 | present in 11,16 |
| love | 12 | 0.9 | 3 | present in 11,12,13 |
| confusion | 9 | 0.75 | 2 | present in 16,18 |
| boredom | 8 | 0.5 | 2 | present in 13,19 |
| enthusiasm | 8 | 0.5 | 2 | present in 13,17 |
| awe | 4 | 0.25 | 1 | present in 18 |
| | 1350 | | | |

## DISCUSSION

As hypothesised for the first research question (What teacher emotions arise toward students displaying ADHD-like behaviours?), teaching languages to learners with ADHD-like behaviours evoke a range of emotions, creating a true 'emotional rollercoaster' (Gkonou et al., 2020: 1) or a dynamic emotion tapestry, intertwined with more and less pleasant emotions. However, the findings of this study showed that most of the emotions teacher participants experienced were less pleasant (62.75%). These were mainly frustration, anxiety, and irritation. There was also confusion, powerlessness, helplessness, impatience, fear, anger, annoyance, disappointment, disillusion, guilt, despair, and sadness. Teaching students displaying ADHD behaviours can be tiring as well. Conclusively, working with students that show ADHD-like behaviours may be challenging. Less pleasant emotions may be experienced because of various challenging behaviours, including aggressiveness (Skibska, 2013), that are usually associated with ADHD. These findings contrast to some extent previous findings on teacher attitudes toward students with ADHD (e.g. Bornman & Donohue, 2013; Mulholland et al., 2023).

But, the participants reported a range of positive emotions, including patience, empathy, caring, tolerance, hope, enthusiasm, satisfaction, and wonder. As frustration was the top emotion reported as the first (39%), patience was the top reported when asked about other emotions (10.5%). These findings show that teacher participants attempted to balance their emotions in the pursuit of teaching-as-caring and engagement (Gkonou & Miller, 2019) regardless of emotion labour (Benesch, 2017) with many emotional costs and rewards (Miller & Gkonou, 2018). Without positive emotions such as patience or empathy, the participants would not be able to exercise their agency, which eventually would detrimentally affect their teacher well-being.

### Inattention symptoms

Similar findings were observed as to the specific presentations of ADHD (The second research question: What teacher emotions will arise in the context of specific ADHD presentations?). Inattention symptoms rose mostly to less pleasant first emotions (70.85%). However, the top first emotions were frustration (19.2%) and empathy (19%). Moreover, when asked about other emotions, the top reported emotions were positive: empathy (9.5%) and patience (9.3%), though immediately followed by a less pleasant one: frustration (9.1%). Overall, other emotions were less pleasant in the majority (69.3%).

The first emotions such as frustration, empathy, and irritation were reported in most of the contexts with varied intensity. Frustration was reported for

all symptoms but when the student experienced difficulty sustaining attention in tasks or play activities (symptom 3) or when they were forgetful in daily activities (symptom 10). But, the former was found highly irritating. In contrast, teacher participants found it most frustrating when the student had trouble organising tasks and activities (symptom 6) and when they frequently lost things necessary for tasks or activities (symptom 8); yet, the latter also generated a lot of empathy. In other words, teachers feel frustrated when the student often loses the things necessary for class activities, but at the same time, they understand that the student may struggle with keeping their things.

In contrast, participants did not express much empathy when the student often seemed not to listen when spoken to directly (symptom 4), when they did not follow through on instructions and failed to complete schoolwork (5), and when they were distracted by extraneous stimuli (9). Poor listening skills also evoked anger but also patience, whereas the frequent lack of following instructions and failure in schoolwork completion also left many participants tired and anxious.

Anxiety was also reported in situations when the student struggled to sustain attention when performing tasks or activities (symptom 3), when they often seemed not to listen when spoken to (4), when they often avoided or were reluctant to encourage in tasks that require sustained mental effort (7), and when the student was forgetful in daily activities (10). These situations also left many participants sad. Frequent forgetfulness also evoked the feeling of helplessness and powerlessness, whereas the unwillingness to be engaged in tasks that require sustained mental effort was, on the one hand, annoying, and on the other, evoked the feeling of wonder. Similarly, the situation when the student often fails to give close attention to details evoked a mixture of emotions ranging from sadness, tolerance, wonder, and confusion.

Other emotions that occurred in most of the inattention context were empathy, patience, frustration, disappointment, helplessness, tiredness, irritation, impatience, powerlessness, anxiety, hope, annoyance, caring, sadness, tolerance, disillusion, anger, confusion, boredom, awe, and guilt. Participants felt disappointed and showed little empathy when the student often did not follow through on instructions and failed to complete schoolwork (symptom 5). Similarly, participants found it annoying when the student lost things necessary for tasks or activities; little empathy and patience were expressed in this situation. Organisational difficulties (6) were found least tiring, frustrating, or disappointing. In contrast, the lack of following instructions and poor schoolwork completion (5) were reported as irritating and disappointing.

## Hyperactivity and impulsivity symptoms

Hyperactivity and impulsivity symptoms overall evoked less pleasant first emotions in the majority: 78.25%, which was eight percentage points higher than in the case of inattention symptoms. The top first emotion was irritation (25%), followed by frustration (16%). However, empathy was the third reported emotion (10.75%). Similarly, other emotions were mostly less pleasant (64.55%). However, patience was the top reported emotion (11.5%) but immediately followed by irritation (10.5); empathy was in the third position (9%).

Concerning the first emotion, irritation, frustration, empathy, and sadness were reported for all or most of the symptoms. Fidgeting (symptom 11), leaving their seat (12), inability to engage in leisure activities quietly (14), difficulty waiting for their turn (18), and interrupting and intruding (19) were the most irritating and frustrating situations for the participants. Leaving their seats (12) and difficulty waiting for their turn (18) were also found annoying and caused anxiety. But the former left some participants wondering, and for the latter some participants expressed patience. Anxiety was also reported for fidgeting.

Additionally, participants showed less empathy for extensive talking (symptom 16) and blurting out an answer before a question has been completed (17). The former also evoked a feeling of awe, whereas the latter was reported as highly annoying. Yet, in these situations, some participants showed tolerance. Fidgeting (11) and difficulty in participating in leisure activities quietly (14) also drew some tolerance.

Helplessness and powerlessness were experienced in situations when the student interrupted and intruded on others (symptom 19). Participants also felt helpless when the student ran about and climbed (13) and when they were ‘on the go’ (15). The former may be also confusing for some participants. In contrast, the inability to play quietly (14) made some participants powerless and impatient. Impatience was also reported when the student was ‘on the go’ (15); however, some participants found it fascinating.

As for other emotions, patience, irritation, empathy, frustration, impatience, tiredness, annoyance, powerlessness, anxiety, tolerance, helplessness, fascination, disappointment, hope, and caring were reported for all or most of the situations related to hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms. Impatience was reported most for talkativeness (symptom 16), interrupting and intruding on others (19) as opposed to fidgeting (11), and being ‘on the go’ (15), which drew a lot of empathy and tolerance. Many participants also understood that the student might not be able to engage in activities quietly (14). In contrast,

frustration was highly present in the situations when the student left the seat (12) and ran or climbed (13), whereas talkativeness (16), blurting out an answer (17), and interrupting and intruding on others (19) were highly irritating for the participants. Annoyance, powerlessness, and helplessness were not reported when the student could not play quietly (14), whereas fascination was absent for leaving the seat (12) and running or climbing (13).

Fidgeting (symptom 11) evoked anger, and restlessness but also wonder and love. Similar emotions were present in the situation when the students ran about or climbed (13), along with boredom, disillusion, guilt, but also enthusiasm. Boredom and guilt were also reported for interrupting and intruding on others (19). Some participants wondered why their students were 'on the go' (15) and were unable to stay seated (12). In addition, the latter evoked love but also left some participants disillusioned. In contrast, difficulty to engage in leisure activities or play quietly (14) made participants angry and sad, whereas talkativeness (16) was found disillusioning, restless, and confusing. The difficulty of waiting for their turn (18) evoked the feeling of guilt and awe.

The two distinctive ADHD presentations evoked similar emotions. The most frequently reported were less pleasant emotions such as frustration and irritation. It needs to be noted that the hyperactivity/impulsivity symptoms generated a higher number of less pleasant emotions. This finding may be important regarding teacher attitude and agency. Individuals with the hyperactivity/impulsivity presentation, which is more common among males (Quinn & Madhoo, 2014), may be positioned by their teachers as more disruptive, affecting class management and the learning of other students in the classroom. This finding is in line with the previous research studies: ADHD was regarded by teachers as a problematic educational issue (e.g. Greenway & Rees Edwards, 2020; Mulholland et al., 2015) and teacher participants found the behaviour of students with ADHD irritating (Mulholland et al., 2023).

However, previous studies also reported teachers' positive attitudes towards students with ADHD (e.g. Bornman and Donohue, 2013). Similarly, in the present study, the tapestry of emotions included a number of positive emotions, such as empathy, patience, and tolerance. These emotions seem to balance the less pleasant emotions, which consequently may positively affect the teachers' attitude, agency, and well-being.

Approaching the emotions in the context of specific ADHD symptoms allowed to generate teacher emotion at the micro-level. Thus, the findings have more specific pedagogical implications. For example, language teachers expect their learners to listen when spoken directly, follow the instructions,

and complete their schoolwork, not to talk extensively or blurt out an answer before a question has been completed. In contrast, fidgeting or the 'on the go' attitude of students with ADHD are tolerated. These findings are informative for all school stakeholders, but especially for students with ADHD and their teachers, in light of more effective classroom management.

## CONCLUSIONS

Emotions undoubtedly play a role in teachers' everyday work as shown by this study's findings. They form 'the complex, dynamic and bidirectional relationship' (Sung, 2022: 12) in different areas of teaching practice, agency, and interaction with students, which eventually lead to context-related tapestries weaved with interlacing threads of positive and less pleasant emotions. Nevertheless, the findings revealed that ADHD-like behaviours evoked mostly less pleasant emotions. This needs to be recognised considering teacher agency and well-being when working with students that exhibit such behaviours or have a diagnosis of ADHD.

Students with this or similar conditions are common in today's language classroom as a result of honouring diversity and inclusivity. Therefore, the discussion about teacher emotions should be part of language pre- and in-service teacher training. Stressing and acknowledging the complexity and dynamism of emotions related to different contexts may lead to higher teacher agency and well-being. Discussing potentially toxic emotions such as anger, anxiety, and guilt, and how they can be balanced with positive emotions such as hope and caring, may insulate teachers from burnout, which is common these days in the teaching profession and one of the main causes of leaving the profession, as pointed out by many internet sources (e.g. Chapple, 2022; Kamenetz, 2022).

Future studies in the area of ADHD and emotions in language teaching and learning should be approached qualitatively and quantitatively as well as include the voices of teachers and learners to understand further the complexity of emotions in the language classroom. Potentially, as teaching students with ADHD-like behaviours are challenging and may frequently evoke a range of negative emotions, the future discussion should be formed around 'classroom well-being' (Kałdonek-Crnjaković & Czopek, 2023), where well-being of all is considered separately and collectively.

## DECLARATION OF INTEREST STATEMENT

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

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