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Research Article

Using AI as an Emotion Regulation Sounding Board in Foreign Language Teaching

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the present study was to investigate Croatian foreign language teachers' emotional responses related to challenging situations encountered in their workplace, such as dealing with misbehaving learners, demanding parents, conflicts with colleagues, and unexpected scenarios causing discomfort. By adopting a qualitative, holistic approach, the study explored different facets of teachers' emotional responses (e.g., behavioral and cognitive), the emotion regulation (ER) strategies employed, as well as the use and perception of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in managing unpleasant emotions. The teachers in the study used an online diary to document their work-related emotional experiences. The findings revealed reports of different unpleasant emotions, predominantly anger, frustration, and irritability tied to varied causes, such as learner misbehavior, colleagues' unprofessional behavior, and relationship with parents. Emotional experiences were accompanied by various bodily and cognitive manifestations, such as shallow, fast breathing, tension, mental fatigue, and rumination, to name a few. To cope with the unpleasant emotions, the teachers resorted to different types of ER, predominantly those belonging to the response-focused category (e.g., swearing or listening to music), followed by seeking support from others, and cognitive reappraisal (antecedent-focused strategies). The teachers used AI as a sounding board for ER. They received advice emphasizing empathy, calmness, problem-solving, support-seeking, and boundary-setting to address emotional challenges. The participants reported mixed experiences with the advice they received, finding it helpful in some cases but often difficult to apply in practice due to its general nature. Lastly, the teachers observed that AI's lack of empathy and contextual understanding made it a less desirable choice compared to human support when addressing their emotional needs.

Keywords: emotions, causes of emotions, physical and cognitive manifestations, emotion regulation strategies, artificial intelligence, foreign language teachers

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INTRODUCTION

The world of foreign language teaching is an emotionally charged domain, filled with experiences that reflect teachers' identities, thoughts, motives, and behaviors. Emotions are "felt as lived performances, staged in classrooms, hallways, playgrounds" (Denzin, 2009, p. v). Within these contexts, foreign language teachers (FLTs) interact with others by expressing their thoughts, wishes, and emotions, both pleasant and unpleasant. Since teaching is deemed one of the most stressful professions, teachers often experience unpleasant emotions due to significant workload, sudden changes in their workplace, worries related to their duties, and poor rapport with their colleagues and superiors (Gkonou et al., 2020). All these factors have a deleterious impact on their overall performance, satisfaction, and well-being, often leading to burnout and decreased job effectiveness. These challenges are compounded by the profession's inherent rules of conduct and expectations regarding emotional expression, which can further strain FLTs' mental health (Zembylas, 2005). For instance, teachers are expected to regulate themselves in ways that promote the upregulation of pleasant emotions and downregulation of unpleasant emotions (Sutton, 2004). To comply with these unwritten rules of behavior, teachers employ a series of regulatory practices, especially in times of turmoil and significant emotional demand.

Recognizing these emotional challenges, scholars have expressed a notable interest in the development of artificial intelligence (AI) and its role in supporting FLTs attempts at managing undesirable emotions and safeguarding their emotional well-being. AI nowadays covers a wide range of functions in the context of foreign language learning and teaching, such as language processing, examination of patterns in learners' target language, automated assessment of writing, computerized dynamic evaluation of learner errors, tutoring, and speech recognition (Son et al., 2023). Interactive software relying on dialogues, also known as chatbots, is becoming increasingly attractive to both language learners and teachers. Many FLTs prefer to use web-based platforms, such as ChatGPT, because of their extensive databases and engaging way of interacting with their users. By emulating real-life conversations

and sometimes assuming roles (if requested), chatbots can engage their users emotionally, relying on different modalities, such as visual, audio, or textual content (Ayedoun et al., 2019). While there is growing interest in the role AI has in supporting FLTs emotional experiences, there is still a gap in existing studies related to the real-world applications of AI. To address this gap, this study adopts a qualitative perspective to explore FLTs emotional experiences in challenging situations. Specifically, it examines the emotions FLTs report, the cognitive and physical symptoms accompanying these experiences, as well as emotion regulation (ER) strategies used. Additionally, the study focuses on FLTs perceptions of AI tools, such as ChatGPT, as a possible resource for processing and managing their emotions.

THEORETICAL OVERVIEW

Emotions and Emotion Regulation

Emotions

Emotions are “multifaceted phenomena involving interrelated psychological processes” (Pekrun et al., 2018, p.1). Scherer (2005) identified five components: cognitive appraisals, physiological symptoms, motivational tendencies, motor expressions (e.g., facial or vocal), and subjective feelings. These processes unfold in iterative cycles: individuals experience or imagine situations, focus attention on specific elements, assess their relevance to personal goals, and react physiologically or behaviorally (Gross, 2015). Emotional responses also adapt dynamically to others' behaviors and expressions (Butler, 2015; Mainhard et al., 2018). Nonverbal cues often reveal hidden emotions; for instance, cheerful expressions foster approachability, while slumped postures may signal disinterest or lack of authority (Suhrobovna, 2020).

Emotions vary in valence, that is, the degree of pleasantness. In literature, there is a distinction between pleasant states, such as enjoyment and happiness, and unpleasant states, like anger or anxiety. Pleasant states enhance teaching strategies and engagement, while unpleasant states such as anger or anxiety can hinder classroom dynamics (Frenzel et al., 2009; Pekrun et al., 2018). Positive emotions like

pride foster confidence and active body language. In contrast, negative emotions such as boredom may lead to disengaged expressions and increased burnout risk (Frenzel et al., 2016; Sutton, 2004). Anxiety often arises from insufficient content knowledge and undermines effective classroom management. There are several frameworks that allow us to explore the nature of emotions, such as appraisal theory (Scherer, 1999), emotional geography theory (Hargreaves, 2001), Cross and Hong's (2012) ecological system that is rooted in Bronfenbrenner's (1979) theory, and phenomenological approach to evaluating pedagogical practice (Van Manen, 1982). In line with the present study, the following section will examine appraisal theory and Frenzel's (2014) reciprocal model on the causes and effects of teacher emotions. The present study draws on both control-value theory and Frenzel's reciprocal model to provide a comprehensive overview of teacher emotions. While Frenzel's model illustrates the dynamic relationship between teacher emotions and classroom situations, control-value theory focuses on the dimensions of control and value, which are essential in understanding the sources of teachers' emotional experiences in challenging situations.

Appraisal theory posits that emotions arise from subjective evaluations of a situation's significance (Scherer, 1999). Control-value theory further links emotions to perceived control over achievement scenarios and their importance (Pekrun et al., 2007). The greater the importance assigned to a specific event in the classroom, the stronger the teacher's emotion(s). Moreover, teachers' perceptions and goals are shaped by various factors, such as achievement behavior, motivational engagement, and social-emotional behavior (Frenzel et al., 2009). Even though control-value theory is mainly used with student emotions, it is also relevant for teachers because their perceptions of control over what is happening in their classrooms, alongside the value they attribute to their achievements, give rise to their emotional episodes during challenging situations. Frenzel's (2014) model embodies the relationship between teacher goals, their perceptions of student behaviors, classroom appraisals, emotions, and instructional behavior. In class, teachers pursue several pre-determined goals, and they appraise the completion of these goals by observing students' performance

and engagement, and by assessing their own competences. The emotions arise based on their appraisals, that is, the (in)congruence of students' behaviors with the teachers' goals.

Emotion Regulation

Emotion regulation is categorized under the banner of affect regulation, alongside coping, mood regulation, and impulse regulation (Gross & Thompson, 2007). This process transpires when an individual evaluates an emotion as good or bad, and when their appraisal triggers a goal to alter the emotion (Gross & Barrett., 2011). ER is viewed as the process through which an individual influences which emotions they experience, when they experience them, and how they display and manage them (Gross, 2002). To understand the process of ER we must consider it as a functional connection between two systems of valuation, that is, a primary valuation system that generates emotion is evaluated by a secondary valuation system that targets the emotion itself (Gross, 2015). The primary valuation system that an individual wishes to regulate can be directed either at themselves (self-focused ER), or at another person (other-focused ER). Both can be attained by means of nonsocial or social approaches (Gross & Ford, 2024). Nonsocial approaches imply relying on one's own resources, while social approaches involve utilizing the resources of at least one other individual.

Gross's (2002) process model of ER serves as a logical progression to investigate the intricacies of managing emotions because it provides a theoretical framework that underpins the present study. The model outlines five distinct types of ER strategies: (1) situation selection, (2) situation modification, (3) attentional deployment, (4) cognitive change, and (5) response modulation. Situational strategies aim to influence emotions by deciding which situations to interact with (situation selection) or by altering the dynamics within these situations (situation modification). Attentional strategies involve shifting one's attention to various elements of a situation with the aim of changing emotional responses. Cognitive strategies rest on the concept of changing one's mental representation of the situation or one's objectives. Finally, response modulation strategies focus on emotions by directly modifying the experiential,

behavioral, or physiological experiences tied to those emotions. Gross (2015) discerns between antecedent-focused and response-focused strategies. The author observes them through the lens of when they are utilized during the emotional process. Therefore, antecedent-focused strategies (e.g., cognitive reappraisal) are used before the emotional response has been experienced, while response-focused strategies (e.g., suppression) occur after the emotion has developed.

Unpleasant Emotions, Regulation, and Technology in Foreign Language Teaching

Research on the emotional experiences of foreign language teachers (FLTs) has gained traction over the last couple of decades. Since the early research focusing on teacher anxiety (Horwitz, 1996), scholars have begun to investigate FLTs' emotional experiences through a holistic lens, examining not only emotions, but their antecedents, effects, related classroom activities, and narratives, among others (Dumančić et al., 2022; Gkonou & Miller, 2020; Khajavy et al., 2018; Morris & King, 2018; Xie & Jiang, 2021). In alignment with the scope of the research, the following sections examine unpleasant emotions, their causes, ER, and the potential for AI to promote the process of managing emotions. Several L2 studies have documented unpleasant emotions among FLTs (Cowie, 2011; Dumančić, 2021; Hue Nguyen, 2018; Khajavy et al., 2018; Le, 2014; Lemarchand-Chauvin & Tardieu, 2021; Oxford, 2020; Yuan & Lee, 2014). These emotions are linked to different antecedents, such as interactions with learners, colleagues, professional networks management, and teachers' levels of proficiency. Specifically, learner misbehavior, lateness, low participation, lack of motivation and engagement have caused FLTs to experience anger, frustration, irritability, and even shock (Dumančić et al., 2022; Hue Nguyen, 2018; Khajavy et al., 2018; Morris & King, 2018).

Several scholars have inspected how FLTs regulate their emotional states and which strategies they employ (Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020; Dumančić et al., 2022; Han et al., 2024; Morris & King, 2020, 2023; Talbot & Mercer, 2018; Thumvichit, 2023). Research highlights the relational aspect of FLTs' ER, showing that adaptive

ER strengthens teacher-student rapport and benefits both teachers and students. Effective ER also helps FLTs protect their well-being and seek emotional support when needed (Gkonou & Miller, 2023). Regarding ER strategies, studies have noted the use of diverse teacher practices, such as reframing a negative situation to alleviate the effect of unpleasant emotions in class (Dumančić et al., 2022). Many FLTs utilize response-focused strategies, such as breathing deeply or suppression, as noted by Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2020) among Polish FLTs. Teachers also regulate themselves through venting (Dumančić et al., 2022) or relieving themselves by expressing commonly felt unpleasant emotions (Han et al., 2024). Other ER examples entail attentional deployment (e.g., distraction in the form of discussing other topics that were not associated with the task at hand), situational selection (e.g., FLTs directing learners to different language learning techniques), and situational modification (e.g. teachers using humor or creating a relaxing atmosphere) (Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020). The existing literature has extensively examined language teachers' use of ER strategies and their impact on language teaching practices, efficiency, and well-being. The present study builds on this foundation by extending the research scope to investigate how Croatian language teachers use AI as a novel way of processing and managing emotions following unpleasant episodes in their place of work. This line of research hopes to give new insights into technology-mediated forms of emotional support and their potential role in supporting teacher well-being.

In the context of FLTs' ER, the potential for AI to facilitate this process is emerging as an important area of investigation. While AI's role in education has been widely explored, research specifically addressing AI-assisted ER among FLTs remains scarce. Existing studies predominantly focus on learners' emotional experiences, including self-esteem, cognitive ER, academic enjoyment, and language success (Xiao et al., 2024). AI has been shown to support learners' ER by providing instant feedback, reducing anxiety, and promoting emotional resilience in language learning (Son et al., 2023). Although AI-driven emotion detection and adaptive learning systems are well-researched for students (Shi, 2024; Vistorte et al., 2024), fewer

studies examine how FLTs engage with AI for their own ER. One notable study by Liu and Chang (2024) investigated FLTs' emotional responses to AI use, revealing an initial sense of insecurity and hesitation that evolved into greater adaptability over time. This suggests that AI may offer valuable ER support to teachers, yet its effectiveness depends on familiarity and trust in technology.

Despite its potential, AI's ability to provide genuine emotional support remains limited. Current AI models rely on data-driven pattern recognition, which may misinterpret emotional cues and lack the empathetic depth required for complex ER needs (Sharadgah & Sa'di, 2022; Son et al., 2023). However, AI tools can still serve as a nonjudgmental space for FLTs to articulate emotions, functioning as a form of digital venting or self-reflection. Additionally, AI-driven emotion tracking offers insights into stress patterns over time, allowing teachers to refine their regulation strategies accordingly (Vistorte et al., 2024). In addition, there are still gaps in the literature regarding language teachers' emotional responses and the use of ER strategies. Given these gaps in research, this study aims to explore Croatian FLTs' emotional experiences in challenging situations, their ER practices, and their perceptions of AI assistance in managing unpleasant emotions.

The Current Study

This qualitative study examined Croatian foreign language teachers' (FLTs) emotional experiences—emotions felt, their antecedents, physiological and cognitive manifestations related to challenging work situations (e.g., disruptive learners, demanding parents, unexpected situations causing teachers discomfort, etc.), their ER practices, and their use and perception of AI assistance in processing unpleasant emotions. The study adopted a directed content approach to qualitative analysis (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). By integrating established theories on ER, the research aimed to confirm and expand these frameworks, while also allowing new insights into the teachers' experiences with AI as a sounding board for ER. To achieve this goal, the following research questions were posed:

RQ1: What emotions did the Croatian FLTs experience in challenging situations in their place of work?

RQ2: What were the causes of their emotions?

RQ 3: What were the physical and cognitive manifestations related to those emotions?

RQ 4: How did the teachers regulate their emotions?

RQ 5: How did the FLTs seek and assess the value of AI advice for processing and regulating emotions after challenging experiences?

RESEARCH METHODS

Sample

A total of 19 Croatian FLTs took part in the study, 17 females (89.47%) and 2 males (10.52%). The participants' average age was 44.63 (*SD* = 5.96), with an average teaching experience of 19.95 (*SD* = 5.79). Regarding employment, most of the participants were employed in high schools (52.6%), while the remainder were employed in elementary schools (47.4%). The participants were recruited through a call for participation sent via various channels, such as the Croatian Association of Teachers of English, the Education and Teacher Training Agency, as well as personal contacts representing County-level Professional Councils. These councils are formed to organize and coordinate professional development of language teachers within a certain county. By employing the snowballing sampling approach, the author hoped to encourage other colleagues to disseminate the invitation to others to reach a larger sample. However, due to the time-sensitive nature of the study, not many teachers could commit to participating.

Instrument

The study employed an online teacher journal created in Google Forms with five sections. The journal was adapted from Chahkandi et al.'s (2016) teacher diary to focus on unpleasant emotions (e.g., anger, powerlessness) experienced in challenging school situations.

Section 1 presented the aim, instructions, research ethics, and optional email confirmation for participation. Section 2 collected demographic information (gender, age, experience, workplace) and pseudonyms. Section 3 documented teachers' unpleasant emotions during challenging events, causes (e.g., anger was caused by…), physical/cognitive effects, and ER strategies (e.g., deep breathing, reframing), with ER defined in the journal as 'teachers' attempts to influence which emotions they experience and how they express them, avoiding unpleasant ones and enhancing pleasant ones', and examples provided to ensure comprehension without prior training (see Appendix). Section 4 instructed participants to describe events to Chat GPT, seek coping advice using the prompts provided (e.g., give advice on how to best cope emotionally), and reflect on its usefulness compared to human advice, and any limitations. Participants were instructed but not trained in AI use. Section 5 offered participants the opportunity to request participation confirmation.

Procedure and Data Analysis

Prior to conducting the study, the author submitted an official request form to the Ethics committee at his institution, requesting that his research proposal be reviewed. Once the study had been approved and an official confirmation letter received, the author started working on the online journal. The link to the journal was then disseminated among the FLTs by means of various teaching organizations and personal contacts. As for the ethical considerations, the author ensured that all parties involved were familiarized with them. The teachers were made aware of the objectives, their right to voluntarily participate or withdraw from the research, and the assurance that their

anonymity would be maintained throughout the entire process. To protect their anonymity, the author requested that teachers create and use their own pseudonym when accessing the online journal. These pseudonyms are also used when reporting findings of the study. Having agreed to participate in the study and giving their informed consent, the teachers were kindly asked to keep the diary for a 10-day period, making entries only when they faced an unpleasant situation at work. Moreover, the participants were also informed that their feedback would be needed once the author had completed the results section to ensure that their perspectives were properly represented. The data collection period occurred from early March to late May 2024, yielding a total of 27 entries from 19 participants: 11 teachers (Witcher, IvMi, Dijana, Artemis, Sarah, Chloe, Zubica, Freebyrd, Vilma, Justice for Barb, and Berliner) submitted one entry each, whereas five teachers (Yvette, Hannah, Dedobroje, JFK3, and Rodman) provided three entries each.

The qualitative data obtained underwent directed data analysis, using Taguette, a free and open-source qualitative data analysis tool. The first step of the analysis entailed transferring the data into specialized software. The author first performed a comprehensive review of the entire dataset to enhance understanding. The data was then organized into broader categories by employing a deductive coding approach aligned with the research questions. Directed content analysis was carried out, starting deductively with pre-determined categories from prior theory (e.g., ER strategies, AI usefulness) to structure initial coding. This was followed by inductive classification of new categories for uncoded data (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). The same directed content approach was applied to all research questions. For ER strategies (RQ4), initial codes were derived from Gross's (1998) process model (e.g., situation selection/modification, attentional deployment, cognitive change, response modulation). Remaining categories (emotions experienced, causes, physical and cognitive manifestations (RQ 1-3), as well as AI advice (RQ5) were initially coded deductively using categories derived from the structured sections of the research journal aligned with the research questions. Given the abundance of data, a qualitative codebook was developed to help with the analysis. It consisted of separate sections that aligned with the main

categories and research questions. This, and the use of color coding, helped the author create a comprehensive framework of the data acquired. In addition to this, the author also kept personal notes with the aim of maintaining the clarity and accuracy of the coding system. Following thematic coding, the responses were organized according to several major categories: emotions experienced, causes of emotions, physical and cognitive manifestations related to emotions, ER strategies, and seeking and assessing the value of AI advice received. To ensure data triangulation, the author enlisted the help of another language expert, in addition to having the participants review the results section to verify the accuracy of the presented data.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings are presented in order of frequency. While a variety of emotions and related experiences were reported by the teachers in this study, only the most salient ones will be discussed in detail. In-text, the author prefers to use the term ‘learners’ to refer to individuals who are involved in the educational process of foreign language learning in elementary and secondary schools. The participants in this study often use the word ‘students’ to refer to the same group. Additionally, the emotional terms used to describe the participants’ emotional experiences are those they personally chose.

FLTs’ Emotions and Their Causes

When faced with different challenging situations, the Croatian FLTs reported predominantly unpleasant emotions. In order of frequency, they experienced anger (*n* = 16), frustration (*n* = 16), irritability (*n* = 13), and powerlessness (*n* = 9). Among the less prominent unpleasant emotions were sadness (*n* = 6), shame/dislike (*n* = 4), hostility (*n* = 3), and guilt/fear (*n* = 2). The overview of the most frequently experienced emotions and their causes is shown in Table 1.

Table 1. *Most Frequently Experienced Emotions and Their Causes*

Emotions	Total Frequency	%	Primary Causes with Frequencies
Anger	16	84.2%	Learners (inappropriate behavior) (8) Colleagues (incompetence, unethical behavior, lack of sensitivity) (5)
Frustration	16	84.2%	Learners (inappropriate behavior, lack of motivation) (6) Colleagues (incompetence, lack of sensitivity) (6)
Irritability	13	68.4%	Learners (inappropriate behavior, inattention) (8) Colleagues (unethical behavior, incompetence) (2)
Powerlessness	9	47.3%	Parents (insensitivity towards teachers) (2) Learners (inappropriate behavior, fulfilling SEN learners' needs) (6) Supervisors (lack of professionalism, lack of support) (2) Parents (lack of objectivity) (1)

Regarding the causes, FLTs often experience unpleasant emotions, including anger, frustration, irritability, and powerlessness, stemming from interactions with learners, colleagues, parents, and supervisors. Learner misbehavior, such as rule violations or lack of motivation, frequently provoked all the emotions listed. For instance, Hannah recounted being angered by a student who violated school rules and claimed to possess a recording that jeopardized her job security. She stated that:

> (...) the sheer fact that the student and foremost decided to breech the school rules regarding carrying and using recording devices and then proceeded to openly threaten the teacher's job security in relation to the alleged recording of them that he supposedly possesses.

Teachers JFK3 and Dedobroje expressed anger because of disruptive learner behavior during class. JFK3 recalled one of their learners "using inappropriate language, who responded rudely to my comments while I was trying to stop them in what they were doing." Similarly, colleagues' incompetence or unethical behavior, lack

of sensitivity and showing disinterest in work caused anger, frustration, and irritability among FLTs. A teacher called Dedobroje expressed frustration over a colleague's inability to manage her class effectively and keep track of students. She felt angry because "(…) she [colleague] has no control over her work and doesn't know where her students were during her class." Moreover, she felt frustrated "by her behavior because situations like this happen regularly and she kept saying that she was not sure if those three students were in her class." Regarding teachers' unethical behavior, Artemis experienced anger and sadness due to her colleague's betrayal of confidence. Her colleague had divulged her personal views regarding a learner to their parent. Artemis stated that her emotions were caused by "(…) a colleague who told a student's parent my words, paraphrased and interpreted, which I told her in confidence."

Parents' bias toward their children also leaves teachers feeling powerless. Sarah described her irritation, disappointment, and powerlessness when a parent complained about her disciplinary actions despite clear evidence of cheating. The parent in question claimed that Sarah "(…) should have been more protective" and that she was "(…) too serious." The teacher's frustration and irritation were reflected in her thoughts: "Where does this world go? What message is this parent sending to her proper daughter and the rest?" Lastly, supervisors' unprofessional behavior adds to the emotional strain; for example, Indigo reflected on feelings of powerlessness during an unfair meeting with her principal. She felt "(…) powerless because I feel that those who do not agree with her opinion are treated in an unfair manner."

These findings can be observed through the prism of control-value theory of achievement and emotions (Pekrun et al., 2007) and reciprocal model on causes and effects of teacher emotions (Frenzel, 2014). Since FLTs come to work with pre-set goals related to learner behavior, activities, engagement, and social skills, they assess the importance of their goals, the alignment of current events with their aims, and their ability to cope. Learner misconduct seems to have derailed Croatian FLTs from their intended path, thus evoking strong unpleasant emotions. Language learners have frequently been cited as a prominent cause of FLT emotions (Cowie, 2011; Dumančić

et al., 2022; Khajavy et al., 2018; Morris & King, 2018; Nguyen HTM, 2010; Xie & Jiang, 2021; Yuan & Lee, 2014). Unpleasant emotions were a clear sign of what Khajavy et al. (2018) call impediment to achieving one's goals in class. Emotions, like frustration, can present a significant obstacle for FLTs to overcome, as they test their teaching prowess, as well as coping potential (Frenzel, 2014; Morris and King, 2018).

Physical and Cognitive Manifestations Related to Unpleasant Emotions

In addition to exploring Croatian FLTs' emotions and emotional antecedents during unpleasant situations, another point of inquiry was the investigation of co-existing variables, such as physical and cognitive manifestations which occur almost simultaneously with these emotional episodes. Physical manifestations imply bodily sensations (e.g., increased heart rate, sweating) that are triggered by emotional experiences, while cognitive manifestations subsume thoughts that the teachers started having when they experienced certain unpleasant emotions (e.g., "I don't think I can do this. I'm not a good language teacher").

In this study, physical manifestations were classified into two main types: physiological responses and visible responses. Physiological responses include bodily reactions following emotional triggers, such as increased heart rate, high blood pressure, changes in breathing/tone of voice, sweating, headaches, weakness, and tiredness. Visible responses encompass outward signs of emotional states, like redness and facial expressions. Cognitive manifestations were segmented into six subcategories based on analysis from this research: emotional reactions (e.g., strong feelings like "I'd love to slap you"), self-doubt and reflection (e.g., questioning decisions: "What could I have done differently?"), concern for learners (e.g., thoughts about students' safety: "He might do something stupid on his way home"), frustration with the system (e.g., dissatisfaction with policies: "Why don't we have a principal who cares about the students?"), and practical problem-solving (e.g., solution-focused thinking: "Follow the steps. Do what you have to do and leave."). Physical manifestations are presented separately by emotion because the FLTs frequently tied

specific bodily reactions to certain emotional episodes. On the other hand, cognitive manifestations are collectively shown across emotions because similar types of thoughts occurred in relation to multiple emotions. These cognitive responses were categorized thematically rather than linked to specific emotions.

Table 2. *Physical Manifestations Tied to Unpleasant Emotions*

Emotions	Physical manifestations	Frequency	Percentage
Anger	Altered tone of voice, changed facial expressions	4	21%
	Face redness, fatigue, feeling hot, tension	2	11%
Frustration	Altered tone of voice	5	26%
	Fatigue, increased heart rate, changed facial expressions	4	21%
	Face redness, feeling hot, tension	3	16%
	Headache, sweating	2	11%
Irritability	Altered tone of voice	6	32%
	Increased heart rate, changed facial expressions	4	21%
	Fatigue, feeling hot	3	16%
	Sweating, hyperventilating, tension	2	11%
Powerlessness	Facial expressions Altered tone of voice	4	21%
	Tension, face redness, fatigue, feeling hot	2	11%

Table 3. *Cognitive Manifestations Tied to Unpleasant Emotions*

Emotions	Cognitive Manifestations	Frequency	Percentage
Anger	Emotional reactions	8	42%
Frustration Irritability	Self-doubt and reflection	5	26%
Powerlessness	Concern for the learners Frustration with the system Practical problem-solving	2	11%

The upcoming section briefly showcases the interconnectedness between the FLTs' emotional episodes, their physical and cognitive manifestations in their workplace. Zubica recalled an incident involving a learner she suspected of being

neurodivergent, possibly on the autism spectrum. The learner did something irregular and refused to connect or engage with her, leaving her feeling powerless, frustrated, and fearful. Reflecting on the event, Zubica noted physical manifestations like tiredness and migraines, alongside thoughts and fears about the learner's safety.

> I have been really (teacher) tired for some time (who hasn't?), and I've had a migraine for a week, so I was in pain, frustrated, afraid. I was afraid that he might do something on his way home from school or not go home at all.

A teacher named Rodman recalled feeling anger, irritability, and hostility during a school meeting where a colleague tried to shift blame onto him. Though he did not divulge the colleague's predicament, he described physical manifestations like feeling hot and suffocated, with "anger sweltering" in his body. Cognitively, Rodman experienced emotional reactions and frustration with the system's lack of accountability, reflected in thoughts such as, "Why is he so dumb? How can he be so self-centered? Why can't he accept his own responsibility?"

Sarah's example of a learner cheating on a test and a parent blaming her while defending the learner highlights physical and cognitive manifestations. She felt a range of emotions like anger, frustration, powerlessness, irritability, disappointment, disgust, and incredulity. To illustrate, she wrote:

> I also felt irritated and experienced a strong sense of frustration thinking– Where does this world go? What message is this parent sending to her proper daughter and to the rest? I love teaching but this kind of situation really get on my nerves and I feel mad and sad at the same time.

During the episode, Sarah "(…) felt very tense and I altered my voice, developed a headache, and was overthinking the situation for the rest of the day." Her cognitive manifestations included emotional reactions, self-doubt, and reflection, questioning herself with thoughts like "OMG, is it worth it?" and expressing incredulity about the parent's actions.

Croatian FLTs expressed thoughts reflecting emotional intent, uncertainty, and dissatisfaction with the education sector, often seeking immediate solutions. These findings highlight the complexity of emotions as described by Scherer (2005), particularly the neurophysiological aspects like sweating and increased heart rate, alongside action tendencies and motor expressions. They emphasize the dynamic relationship between emotions, bodily responses, and cognitive evaluations during interpersonal interactions (Donker, 2020). Although not directly examined here, body language is closely tied to emotions and can significantly influence and reveal how teachers are perceived by learners (Frenzel et al., 2016). These emotions not only co-exist with physiological and cognitive manifestations but also necessitate choosing appropriate strategies to regulate them. The following section gives insight into FLTs active ER strategies during these episodes.

Strategies for Regulating Unpleasant Emotions

Following a holistic approach, in addition to FLTs emotions, causes, and various manifestations, this study also explored ER strategies used to mitigate unpleasant emotions. Croatian FLTs mainly used response-focused strategies when faced with emotionally challenging situations. Response-focused strategies are typically used after the emotion has already been experienced and may include examples such as meditating, running, taking a walk, listening to music, and swearing. Table 4 provides a summary of different ER strategies tied to the most frequently experienced unpleasant emotions.

During her emotionally charged episode, Dijana experienced a blend of anger, frustration, and disappointment after an unpleasant encounter with a misbehaving learner and her homeroom teacher who confronted Dijana] for having recommended a disciplinary measure. In her emotional state, Dijana "…replied to her colleague] politely but sarcastically. To manage her state, she engaged in response-focused ER strategies, such as taking deep breaths and walking around the school to regain composure.

Table 4. *Emotion Regulation Strategies for Managing Unpleasant Emotions*

Emotions	Families of Emotion Regulation Strategies	Frequency	Percentage
Anger	Response modulation (e.g., swearing, taking a walk, meditating, listening to music, stopping before reacting, etc.)	16	84%
	Self-focused social regulation (e.g., talking to someone)	7	37%
	Cognitive reappraisal (e.g., making fun of a situation to change perception of one's circumstances)	6	32%
	Attentional deployment (e.g., looking at one's phone to influence the emotional experience)	1	5%
Frustration	Response modulation	16	84%
	Self-focused social regulation	6	32%
	Cognitive reappraisal	6	32%
	Attentional deployment	2	11%
Irritability	Response modulation	11	58%
	Cognitive reappraisal	7	37%
	Self-focused social regulation	5	26%
	Attentional deployment	1	5%
Powerlessness	Response modulation	8	42%
	Self-focused social regulation	5	26%
	Cognitive reappraisal	4	21%

Note. Some participants used more than one ER strategy, which could influence the frequencies reported.

The second most frequent strategy was reaching out to someone in their surroundings for assistance. Croatian FLTs attempted to manage their emotions by talking to someone they trust, such as a trusted colleague or a friend. This type of social ER implies using another's resources to mitigate the unpleasant impact of the emotions experienced. Hannah remembered being treated unfairly compared to other colleagues in her school. This generated a feeling of irritability and hostility in her, since she was required to defend herself. Reflecting on her coping strategies, she reported that some of her colleagues had "(…) noticed I was getting overly worked up, so they tried to calm me and managed to an extent."

The range of documented ER strategies includes cognitive strategies aimed at altering emotional impact by changing how events are interpreted. This process, known as cognitive reappraisal, implies observing the situation in a new light to help change our feelings about it. Justice for Barb experienced irritability and frustration because of her demotivated and uninterested learners. Revealing how frustrated she

became after having to repeat things to them, she opted to reframe the situation by "(…) thinking that the lesson is only 45 minutes long and after that there is going to be time for me to forget about the feelings of frustration."

Some FLTs reported blending ER strategies to adequately cope with their emotions. Dedobroje shared an incident involving a learner who texted inappropriate messages to the school's pedagogue while unsupervised. The teacher in question was reprimanded by the principal, leaving her feeling ashamed, powerless, angry, and disappointed. To regulate her emotions, she talked to someone and cognitively reappraised the situation.

> I talked to my fiancé, and he managed to calm me down, we concluded that I really need this job so we can pay the rent and other costs we have. I decided to talk with the principal in a few days and try explaining the whole situation once again in order to prove that I didn't know what the student did while he was out.

Lastly, the data obtained indicated that Croatian FLTs infrequently attempted to manage their unpleasant emotions by redirecting their focus to different aspects of the situation they were in. When observed, such instances of attentional deployment involved looking elsewhere or using technology as a distraction method. The findings indicate that Croatian FLTs predominantly regulated themselves by listening to music, going for a walk, breathing deeply, counting to ten, refraining themselves from reacting and sometimes retorting to their interlocutor. They also relied on other people, such as colleagues or family members, when they required support or someone to vent or confide in. Some FLTs attempted to reframe a situation to alter their perception of it, thus diminishing the emotional impact. These findings can be analyzed using Gross's (2002, 2015) process model of ER, as the first group of strategies is response-focused, labeled response modulation. Turning to someone for support or unloading is a social approach in which a teacher engages in self-focused social regulation (Gross & Ford, 2024). Reframing a challenging situation belongs to the family of cognitive reappraisal

strategies and it is also considered to be antecedent-focused, meaning that regulatory techniques are employed prior or during the emotional event.

The results appear to be in line with some L2 studies (Bielak & Mystkowska-Wiertelak, 2020; Dumančić et al., 2022; Morris & King, 2018, 2020, 2023; Thumvichit, 2023). Morris and King (2020) found Japanese university EFL teachers managed emotions by suppressing unpleasant feelings to maintain professional conduct. Similarly, Croatian EFL teachers used suppression, deep breathing, and counting to cope with undesirable emotions, while also seeking emotional support through interaction, such as talking to colleagues (Dumančić et al., 2022). Venting frustration, as described by Morris and King (2018), and talking to someone both involve social interaction to relieve emotional burdens. Additionally, Bielak and Mystkowska-Wiertelak (2020) reported cognitive reappraisal among Polish university students and EFL teachers, who viewed errors as opportunities for growth in language learning. Like the FLTs in this study, Polish teachers encouraged cognitive reappraisal among students.

Seeking and Assessing the Value of AI Advice for Regulating Unpleasant Emotions

To expand the scope of examining Croatian FLTs' experiences with challenging events at work, participants were instructed to access Chat GPT, describe their challenging events, and request advice on how to cope with their emotions, using prompts provided (see Appendix). This approach juxtaposes the human experience of regulating emotions with machine-generated strategies provided to the teachers. The forthcoming section branches into three subsections, namely the one focusing on the advice teachers received from the AI (Chat GPT), the appraised usefulness of said advice, and the drawbacks of using AI in this capacity.

AI Advice Received

The analysis yielded five distinct categories of AI advice provided to the teachers. In order of frequency, they are as follows: practice empathy and understanding; stay calm and composed; focus on solutions and problem solving; seek support and

guidance; and set boundaries and expectations (for oneself and others). These categories are associated and intersect with the most frequently reported unpleasant emotions listed in Table 5. The most prominent category ‘Practice empathy and understanding’ advises teachers to empathize with others by listening and acknowledging their perspectives. The second category, ‘Stay calm and composed,’ suggests strategies like deep breathing, self-care, and maintaining composure. ‘Focus on solutions and problem-solving’ emphasizes finding solutions, such as collaborating with colleagues on assessment methods. ‘Seek support and guidance’ involves reaching out to mentors or colleagues for advice. Finally, ‘Set boundaries and expectations’ advises teachers to establish clear rules, like setting ground rules for parents during school visits.

To briefly exemplify, Berliner felt frustrated and angry because a colleague at work had overlooked her efforts and invested time. She explained that her frustration was “(…) caused by lack of possibility to change anything in the situation.” Berliner turned to ChatGPT for advice and revealed that it instructed her to “(…) take a breath, listen actively, stay composed, use ‘I’ statements, seek common ground, set boundaries, and reflect on the experience.” Witcher also consulted with AI after having experienced frustration, irritability, anger, and powerlessness caused by rude learners who interfered with her conversation. The advice she received also overlapped with several categories, ranging from seeking support from others, remaining calm and composed, to setting clear boundaries. Witcher was advised to “(…) schedule a private meeting with the school psychologist and your colleague. Approach the conversation calmly and respectfully.” Moreover, AI also instructed her to “(…) clearly communicate your expectations for behavior in the staff room. Explain the importance of creating a conducive environment for everyone to work and communicate effectively.”

Table 5. *AI Advice Received for Managing Croatian FLTs' Emotional State*

Emotions	AI Advice Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Anger	Practice empathy and understanding (acknowledging different perspectives)	13	68%
	Stay calm and composed (managing emotions, practicing self-care)	11	58%
	Focus on solutions/problem-solving	10	53%
	Seek support and guidance (seeking help from others, getting advice)	7	37%
	Set boundaries and expectations (for oneself and others)	3	16%
Frustration	Stay calm and composed Practice empathy and understanding	11	58%
	Seek support and guidance Focus on solutions/problem-solving	9	47%
	Set boundaries and expectations (for oneself and others)	5	26%
Irritability	Stay calm and composed	10	53%
	Practice empathy and understanding Focus on solutions/problem-solving	8	42%
	Seek support and guidance	6	32%
	Set boundaries and expectations (for oneself and others)	3	16%
Powerlessness	Practice empathy and understanding Focus on solutions/problem-solving	7	37%
	Stay calm and composed Seek support and guidance	5	26%
	Set boundaries and expectations (for oneself and others)	3	16%

Evaluating the Usefulness of AI Advice

This section presents participants' reflections on the usefulness of AI advice, collected in Section 4 of the online teacher journal. The analysis process resulted in three categories: Accepted with reservations; Warmly received; and Overly generic or situational. The first category, 'Accepted with reservations', indicates that the teachers found the advice reassuring, however it also presented challenges in application. Hannah considered the AI advice to remain calm and attempt to find a solution valid, however she pointed out that it is "(…) oftentimes the hardest part to control. If you are attacked, the natural response is counterattack, and most of us [people] succumb to the urge." Dijana also concurred that the advice is useful but challenging to implement.

She responded with “Sounds like it knows more than me. I find all the things mentioned but it’s nothing new to me. Putting it to practice is what I find challenging.”

‘Warmly received’ was used to denote advice that would most likely show positive results after being implemented by the teachers. To illustrate, Indigo wrote a positive review of the advice received, describing it as “(…) very useful, and although I know what to do, sometimes it’s difficult to remember this in the heat of the moment.” She commented on the writing style, saying: “(…) the manner in which the advice was written – it was quite lovely.” Artemis echoed the positive sentiment of her colleague, feeling encouraged to repeat the experience with AI. Demonstrating a sense of surprise, she explained that she had “(…) never thought of using AI in this way. I’ll have to do it more often.”

The final category ‘Overly generic or situational’ refers to advice that the FLTs feel is either too general or that it targets specific issues without considering the teachers’ needs and situations. Limited usefulness in this fashion indicates a lack of applicability. Witcher claimed that she was “(…) already familiar with most of the strategies that AI suggested, but I wasn’t really keen on applying them in this situation because they worked only in a particular situation.” Sarah deemed the advice to be: “non applicable and too generic.” Similar views were shared by Vilma, who echoed Sarah’s thoughts on limited usefulness of AI advice. Table 6 provides an outline of key categories related to Croatian FLTs’ thoughts on usefulness of AI advice.

Table 6. *Croatian FLTs’ Reflections on Usefulness of AI Advice*

Teachers’ Reflections	Frequencies	Percentages
Accepted with reservations	11	58%
Warmly received	5	26%
Overly generic or situational	4	21%

Drawbacks of using AI

This section presents the participants’ views on the disadvantages of using AI for processing and regulating emotions. FLTs were asked to consider how AI-generated

advice is compared to that of human counterparts. The analysis produced three distinct categories: Lack of emotional awareness; Limited context and understanding; and Impersonal and contextually limited advice. The first category implies AI's inability to empathize with the teachers, share personalized advice, and offer emotional support. Artemis found it neutral and useful but devoid of "(…) warmth and human touch." Chloe responded similarly, claiming that AI "(…) was an acceptable solution and it was interesting to see what AI says (…)" but "(…) nothing can replace human sources of support, especially if the teacher faces a serious classroom problem."

Next, 'Limited context and understanding' underscores the challenges AI faces when attempting to comprehend varied complex situations involving several factors. This is best depicted in Justice for Barb's comment contrasting AI's approach with her friends'. According to her, the difference:

> (...) would be that my friends would definitely provide their own input describing their experiences in similar situations and of course the solutions they have tried to deal with the situation - there would also be a possibility of learning from other people`s mistakes and being smarter at a given situation than they were which is not the case with AI supported advice.

Regarding 'Impersonal and contextually limited advice' this category puts forth the generality found in AI advice, alongside its impersonal nature. Among AI's shortcomings, Rodman listed "(…) not knowing the context (long time history of bad relationships with the problematic colleagues, the principal's attitude towards all of us, etc.)." Dedobroje felt that AI cannot encapsulate all the contextual intricacies of her school. When asked which she would choose, human or AI advice, she opted for the former, arguing that it would be "(…) someone who works with me and knows the students I was having a problem with because AI didn't help me with its advice, and it didn't comfort me." Croatian FLTs' reflections of limitations of using AI can be found in Table 7.

The findings from this inquiry highlight several key points regarding Croatian FLTs' perceptions of AI, which are discussed further below. The participants reflected on the

advice obtained, its usefulness, and any potential drawbacks of using AI in this capacity. Croatian FLTs found AI advice somewhat useful but quite challenging to implement. Some advice was deemed vague or not suited to their needs. This may have been caused by the fact that AI provides advice without accounting for specific teacher needs, various challenges faced, and emotional states experienced. Despite potential benefits of AI assistance, the participants were concerned about its effectiveness in the real classroom. When addressing drawbacks of AI, Croatian FLTs highlighted its lack of empathy and personalized support. The teachers believed that these qualities were of utmost importance in the language classroom. AI was also unable to comprehend complex circumstances evoking certain emotional responses, which is why many teachers claimed to favor human advice since it is accompanied by emotional connection. This was echoed by Gkonou and Miller (2023) who discussed the interconnectedness of different social contexts and FLTs emotional experiences, something which AI fails to consider. The present findings are supported by the existing literature on the role AI has in promoting ER in language learning and teaching. Xiao et al. (2024) stress that AI can foster cognitive ER and academic enjoyment. By extension, AI may offer FLTs tools to improve their emotional resilience and better cope with workplace stress. Still, the current study underscored certain concerns related to the limitations of AI, for instance, its inability to empathize and provide personalized responses. This corresponds to Son et al.'s (2023) claims that AI may support cognitive ER, but it lacks a personal element to engage with its users effectively. We can conclude that there is a need for further exploration of the role AI has in supporting FLTs emotional and regulatory practices. Future research could investigate how AI tools might be used alongside human colleagues or perhaps mentors to ensure more personalized and emotional feedback for FLTs. Blended AI-human approaches might offset AI's current drawbacks related to empathy and personal connection. In other words, such collaboration might balance these shortcomings and make AI a more viable option for not only processing emotions but also supporting FLTs ER process.

Table 7. *Croatian FLTs' Reflections on Drawbacks of Using AI*

Teachers' Reflections	Frequencies	Percentages
Lack of emotional awareness and support	11	58%
Limited context and understanding	6	32%
Impersonal and contextually limited advice	5	26%

CONCLUSION

The present study underscores the presence of unpleasant emotions in the aftermath of adverse circumstances that require Croatian FLTs to utilize their inner resources to maintain their professional demeanor, emotional balance, and ensure the well-being of their learners, as well as their own. Similar to other studies, this research has shown how taxing interactions with learners, colleagues, and superiors can be, especially when deviating from the goals set by the FLTs and testing their teaching and coping endurance. The participants in this study, as do many teachers, experience a multitude of emotional side effects, ranging from intense bodily signals, overwhelming cognitive manifestations, and emotionally driven intents that strongly impact their performance in the classroom. In addition to their emotional struggles, Croatian FLTs utilized various ER strategies to manage these emotions. To offset the negative effects of unpleasant emotions, the teachers in this study strived to modify the emotional impact as soon as it occurred by employing breathing and suppressive strategies. This was followed by exhibiting the desire to share their emotional burden with other people, thus showcasing the bidirectionality of ER. FLTs also expended effort into reframing challenging events to alter the impact of unpleasant emotions, consequently considering their learners' needs, and fostering teaching efficacy.

To contend with the burgeoning interest in AI, the present study attempted to illustrate how AI can be used as an ER sounding board for FLTs. The participants are aware of AI's potential benefits in supporting their well-being and regulatory practices. However, they also recognize its obvious drawbacks related to encapsulating the complex nature of their personal experiences and needs, yet they do not deny their existing potential.

While the existing study provides valuable insights into FLTs' emotional experiences and AI-driven emotion management, it has some limitations. The sample size could be larger and more diverse in terms of background, experience, and socioeconomic status. Expanding the short-term diary study into a longitudinal investigation might offer a deeper understanding of changes in FLTs' behaviors and regulatory practices over time. Future research could broaden the instrument to examine teaching content that evokes emotions and explore how FLTs request AI assistance. A mixed-methods approach combining quantitative measures of AI effectiveness with qualitative methods like interviews could yield richer data. Additionally, investigating teacher training programs to educate FLTs on using AI for ER and well-being could be a valuable next step.

Following the overview of key findings and limitations, the next step is to discuss the implications for educational practice. It is paramount that all stakeholders are aware of the importance of establishing support systems for all FLTs. The findings detailed in this manuscript could help inform the future attempts related to utilizing AI resources to promote the ER practices of future and present FLTs. Since it is not uncommon for teachers to feel isolated from their surroundings and have difficulty communicating their needs, these findings can perhaps encourage language educators to collaboratively create an environment where teachers can openly share their emotional experiences, serve as emotional outlets to each other, and organize professional development forums that would benefit the whole teaching community. FLTs well-being is a prerequisite for not only effective teaching, but also honest and empathetic learner-teacher rapport. This study will hopefully serve as a foundation for future scholarly work on how FLTs ER practices can be blended with state-of-the-art technology to empower teachers, learners, and safeguard their sense of well-being.

Authors' Contributions

DD was responsible for the conception and design of the work, data collection, data analysis and interpretation, drafting the article, revising it critically, and final approval of the version to be published.

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Declaration of GenAI and AI-Assisted Technologies

In the preparation of this publication, the author used ChatGPT to assist in developing prompts and task materials for the study. The tool was used to a limited extent. The author reviewed and edited the manuscript as needed and takes full responsibility for the final version of the publication.

Ethics Approval and Consent to Participate

This study was approved by the University Research Ethics Committee (KLASA: 114-06/23-01/07; URBROJ: 2198-1-79-15/23-02). All the participants were informed of the main aims of the study, their rights, and that by agreeing to participate, they were giving their consent.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX. Teacher Journal.

Section 1 – Overview and guidelines

The present online journal is designed to explore your emotions and emotional experiences related to challenging situations (e.g., misbehaving learners, demanding parents, unexpected situations causing discomfort, etc.) in your workplace. In addition, it will delve into your emotion regulation practices and your assessment of how well you cope with these emotions.

Emotion regulation can be explained by teachers' attempt to affect which emotions they experience and how they express them. Regulation also enables teachers to avert/avoid unpleasant emotions and enhance pleasant ones.

Here are brief instructions on using the online journal.

PROCEDURE

1. Fill out SECTIONS 2 and 3 of this online journal **as soon as you've experienced** some challenging emotional experiences.

2. Fill out SECTION 4 (consulting with Chat GPT) afterward. When you access Chat GPT, briefly describe what happened to you that day and instruct it to give you advice on how to best cope emotionally. The prompts provided in the journal will guide you.

* ***Please note that your 10-day period starts the day you make your first entry. You are encouraged to keep track of your 10-day period.***

***** Please make journal entries only when you experience or face a challenging situation during the 10-day period.***

Your contribution will provide invaluable insight into emotional experiences of Croatian teachers of English. Please note that the answers you provide will be used for research purposes only and by agreeing to participate in this survey you are giving your informed consent. Your responses are completely anonymous, so try to answer the questions as honestly as possible. They will be securely stored and accessed only by the author for research purposes. There are no right or wrong answers. Thank you so much!

Note: As part of this study, you have the option to provide your email address to receive written confirmation of your participation (SECTION 5). If you would like to receive this confirmation, please enter your email address in the designated field

below. Providing your email address is **voluntary** and will be only used **for the purpose of issuing participation confirmations**. Participation in the study is not contingent upon providing your email address. Your email address will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any third parties. Thank you for your participation.

Section 2 – Demographics section

Please enter a **pseudonym** or **code name** that you will use **every time you log in to the journal**. This name will help identify your entries while maintaining your anonymity.

_____

Gender:

Female

Male

Other: _____

Age: ___

Years of teaching experience: ____

Place of employment:

Elementary school

High school

University

Foreign language school/center

Other: _____

Section 3- Emotional experiences related to challenging situations

Which of the following emotions did you experience during the unpleasant/challenging event? Multiple answers are possible.

- Anger
- Disgust
- Boredom

- Anxiety
- Powerlessness
- Sadness
- Guilt
- Shame
- Frustration
- Disliking
- Irritability
- Fear
- Hostility
- Disappointment
- Sorrow
- Other: ____

What **caused** the emotion(s)? If more than one emotion was experienced, please specify the cause for **each of them** (e.g., anger was caused by…, fear was caused by…, etc.).

_____

How did you **feel physically** (bodily sensations) and what **thoughts** went through your mind when you experienced these emotions? Please address **both**.

_____

Please describe how you **regulated the emotion(s)**? Did you resort to a certain **strategy or technique** (e.g., deep breathing, counting to ten, changing the way you think about a certain situation, talking to someone, thinking about something joyful, etc.)?

_____

Section 4 – Using AI as an emotion regulation sounding board

In this section, we explore how EFL teachers seek and evaluate the usefulness of AI advice for managing and regulating unpleasant emotions following challenging experiences.

Please access Chat GPT (https://chat.openai.com/auth/login?sso) **using your Gmail account and briefly describe the challenging event(s) that occurred**. Then, **ask the AI for advice** on how best to **cope with the emotions experienced**. Use the prompts below to document your experiences.

Describe the **advice** you received from the AI for managing your emotional state(s).

_____

Reflect on the **usefulness** of the AI advice in addressing your emotional challenges.

_____

Reflecting on your experience with AI advice, how do you think it **compares to seeking advice from human sources** (e.g., colleagues, friends), and **were there any limitations or drawbacks** to using AI advice for processing and regulating your emotions?

_____

Section 5 – Obtaining confirmation of participation (Optional)

If you would like to receive a **written confirmation of your participation**, please enter your email address in the designated field below. Providing your email address is voluntary and will only be used for issuing participation confirmations. **Participation in the study is not contingent upon providing your email address**. Your email address will be kept confidential and will not be shared with any third parties. Thank you for your participation!

Provide the email address here: _____

THIS IS THE END OF THE SURVEY. THANK YOU FOR YOUR TIME AND EFFORT.