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One teacher's identity, emotions, and commitment to change: A case study into the cognitive–affective processes of a secondary school teacher in the context of reforms

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Abstract

This paper presents a cognitive social–psychological theoretical framework on emotions, derived from Richard Lazarus, to understand how teachers' identity can be affected in a context of reforms. The emphasis of this approach is on the cognitive–affective processes of individual teachers, enabling us to gain a detailed understanding of what teachers have at stake or what their personal, moral, and social concerns are. To illustrate the usefulness of this approach, a case of a reform-enthusiast Dutch secondary school teacher of Dutch language and literature is presented. The analysis of his emotions of enthusiasm for the reforms, and his emotions of anxiety, anger, guilt, and shame related to the way the reforms unfold in his school and influence his work, show the many ways his identity and concerns are affected, resulting in a loss of reform enthusiasm. The paper ends with a reflection on the possible risks of current educational policies to the commitment and quality of the current and next generation of teachers.

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Keywords: Teacher emotion; Professional identity; Educational reform; Teacher resistance

1. Introduction

In the recent innovation literature, the crucial role of teachers for successful implementation of reforms is more widely recognized than several decades ago when a more technical rationalistic approach to innovation predominated

(Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan, & Hopkins, 1998). Research has demonstrated that teachers' sense of professional and personal identity is a key variable in their motivation and commitment to change (Day, 2002; van Veen & Slegers, 2005). The way and extent to which teachers perceive, adapt, and realize reforms in their classroom will be influenced by the extent to which teachers challenge and reconstruct their existing identities (Drake, Spillane, & Hufferd–Ackles, 2001).

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Although research suggests that teachers' sense of identity with regard to subject, relationships, and role is affected—positively and negatively—by classroom experiences, collegial relationships, organizational structures, and external situational pressures, the key role of teachers' sense of professional and personal identity is almost completely ignored in reform strategies and educational innovation policy.

The main assumption of the current study is that teachers' professional identity is often at stake in the current reforms. However, what concerns (personal, social, and moral) of teachers are affected in the context of reforms and how their professional identity is at stake has not been the subject of extensive research and thus requires more in-depth analysis (Day, 2002). This study aims to contribute to this line of research by exploring one teacher's emotions to gain more insight into what important concerns of teachers may be affected in the context of reforms.

In educational research, the concept of emotions has gained more attention in the last decade, emphasizing the importance of attending to teachers' emotions as basically inseparable from their cognitions and providing valuable insight into what they have at stake (Hargreaves, 1998, 2000; Nias, 1996). Most research on teachers' reactions to change displays teachers' reactions in rather cognitive, rational terms, failing to articulate the layers of emotion that seem to be involved. Given that human interaction is so central to teachers' practice, and that teachers often get deeply personally involved in their work, recent educational research affirms that emotions constitute an essential element of teachers' work and identity (Hargreaves, 2001; Nias, 1996; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). Therefore, the analysis of emotions should provide deeper insight into the way teachers' experiences change, and the way their identity and commitment is affected by change. In the present study, the manner in which a teacher's professional identity is at stake within the current reform context will therefore be examined through the lens of emotions. It is assumed that the teacher's emotions when confronted with educational reforms should thus be approached in terms

of self- or identity preservation (cf. Kelchtermans, 1996; Nias, 1996).

Although several studies have examined teachers' emotions with regard to their work, a systematic understanding of their emotions is still missing (Hargreaves, 2001; Nias, 1996; van den Berg, 2002) and very little research has examined teachers' emotions in relation to the current reforms or within the framework of an explicit theory of emotions (cf. Nias, 1996; Sutton & Wheatley, 2003). In this paper, we would like to contribute to this issue by using a cognitive social-psychological theory on emotions, as put forth by Lazarus (1991, 1999), to explore what teachers have at stake in a context of reforms. To illustrate the usefulness of this theoretical framework, a case study of a reform-enthusiast secondary school teacher in the Netherlands, who teaches Dutch language and literature, will be presented. The analysis of the narratives of this teacher gives insights into being a secondary school teacher in Dutch language and literature in the context of the multiple reforms that are now taking place in the Netherlands. How does the teacher appraise and emotionally experience the multiple reforms? What personal, social, or moral concerns are affected? How does the teacher deal with the many different, and divergent, and sometimes even contradictory expectations in relation to his teacher colleagues and the management team of his school? What are the resources of support?

Our approach shows similarities with but also differs from the other approaches in the current special issue. The social-psychological approach focuses strongly on the identity and appraisal processes, the other theories pay more profound attention to how teachers' emotions are influenced by the various contexts in which they work, and by their interactions with others who are part of their professional lives. The focus of the current study is not so much on the role of emotion in the interactions among people or how the context shapes the emotions, but on the cognitive-affective processes of the individual teacher. In our study, we use the concept of cognitive-affective processes to analyze the way one teacher appraises and emotionally experiences different situational demands. By using this cognitive psychological focus

on emotions, we hope to make a contribution to our increasing understanding of the relationships between external reform, teacher identity, and the environments in which teachers work (Day, 2002).

2. Theoretical background

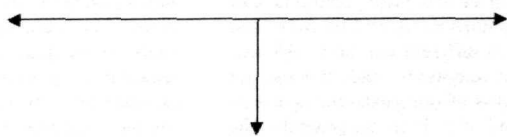
According to Keltner and Ekman (2000), there is widespread agreement on the definition of emotions as “brief, rapid responses involving physiological, experiential, and behavioral activity that help humans respond to survival-related problems and opportunities. Emotions are briefer and have more specific causes than moods” (p. 163). Contemporary psychological emotion theory conceptualizes the emotions as functional action tendencies (Frijda, 1986; Greenberg, Rice, & Elliot, 1993; Lazarus, 1991; Magai & McFadden,

1995). Cognitive psychological theoreticians emphasize that all our activities—including our thinking—are motivated by goals and that all our emotions and moral affects assume that cognitive processes are signaling that important concerns are at stake (Frijda, 1986; Lazarus, 1991). Emotions occur in the interaction between the individual and the social environment and are defined as the product of the appraisal of those environmental events that are perceived as most relevant to the individual’s goals and well-being (Oatley, 2000). Therefore, this perspective assumes the analysis of emotions will provide insights into “what a person has at stake in the encounter with the environment or in life in general, how that person interprets self and world, and how harms, threats, and challenges are coped with” (Frijda, 2000; Lazarus, 1991, p. 7, 1999). As mentioned earlier, we will use the concept of cognitive-affect-

Ego-identity:

Self- & social esteem
Moral values
Ego-ideals
Essential meanings/ideas
Other persons’ well-being
Life goals

Situational demands (SD)



Appraisals:

Goal relevance: are SD relevant for the person’s ego-identity?

Goal congruence: are SD congruent with ego-identity?

Goal content: which aspect of ego-identity is affected by SD?

Blame or credit: who is accountable for SD?

Coping potential: what can be done to change the SD?

Future expectancy: will the SD continue?

Emotions

Fig. 1. Schematization of Lazarus’ social-psychological emotion theory.

tive processes in our study to analyze the way one teacher appraises and emotionally experiences the different situational demands with which he is confronted (Frijda, 1986; Lazarus, 1991, 1999; Miltenburg & Singer, 1999, 2000). Cognitive-affective processes refer to “complex synthesizing structures integrating *cognition* (in the form of appraisals, expectations, and beliefs) with *motivation* (in the form of needs, interests, goals, action tendencies), *affect* (in the shape of physiological arousal and sensory and bodily feeling) and *actions* (in the form of motor responses and procedures and methods for acting” (Miltenburg & Singer, 1999, p. 6). To conceptualize the relationships between cognitive and affective processes, we use Lazarus’ (1991, 1999) social-psychological theory of emotions (see Fig. 1). According to Lazarus, the processes that give rise to emotions involve relational, motivational, and cognitive aspects (Lazarus, 1991). *Relational* implies that emotions always concern person-environment relations, which can either harm (for the negative emotions) or benefit (for the positive emotions) the individual in question. Person-environment relations can change with the circumstances and/or over time and thus give rise to different emotions. *Motivational* implies that emotions and moods are reactions to the status of our goals during everyday encounters and our lives in general. The concept of motivation helps clarify what makes a particular encounter relevant, either as a source of harm or a source of benefit, and thus emotional. *Cognitive* implies that emotions involve some basic knowledge and an appraisal of what is happening during a particular encounter. Basic knowledge consists of situational and generalized beliefs about how things work, and it is apt to be more cold than emotional. Appraisal involves an evaluation of the personal significance of what is happening during an encounter with the environment. In the case of a mature individual, the appraisal of a situation tends to be heavily influenced by social-cultural variables and personal development.

The social-psychological approach of Lazarus (1991, 1999) understands the meaning of emotions by analyzing the core relational theme and primary and secondary appraisals of each

emotion. A core relational theme is the central harm or benefit in an encounter that underlies each specific kind of emotion. Negative emotions are caused by harmful relationships between the individual and the environment, positive emotions by beneficial relationships (Lazarus, 1991). For the current research, relevant examples of negative emotions (as will be shown in Section 4) are anger, anxiety, guilt, and shame. The core relational theme in the case of anger refers to a “demeaning offense against me and mine” (Lazarus, 1991, p. 222). In the case of anxiety, the core relational theme refers to an uncertain, existential threat (p. 235). Guilt is generated by having done, or wanting to do, something which is regarded as morally reprehensible (p. 240). And shame refers to a failure to live up to an ego-ideal (p. 241). An example of a positive emotion, which will be relevant for the current research, is happiness or enthusiasm. Happiness occurs when the individual thinks he or she is making reasonable progress toward the realization of a goal (p. 267).

To determine the core relational theme, or which concerns are affected, the individual appraises the situation. This appraisal process is analyzed by Lazarus in terms of primary and secondary appraisals.¹ Primary appraisals refer to an assessment of whether something of relevance to the person’s concerns has occurred. The environment can constitute, as Lazarus describes them, situational demands, which can form harm or benefit for the individual. Lazarus distinguishes three primary appraisal components: goal relevance, goal congruence or incongruence, and goal content or type of ego-involvement. Goal relevance refers to the extent to which the situational demands touch on personal goals. If there is no goal relevance, there cannot be an emotion. Goal congruence or incongruence refers to the extent to which the situational demands are consistent or inconsistent with what the person wants—i.e., the

¹Lazarus distinguishes between primary and secondary appraisals because the primary appraisal components would determine the specific emotion and the emotional heat in an encounter. The secondary appraisal components are necessary to define the full significance of the encounter, but would determine less the emotional heat at the specific moment (Lazarus, 1991, p. 145).

extent to which it either thwarts or facilitates goals. Goal incongruence leads to negative emotions, and goal congruence to positive emotions. The third primary appraisal component, goal content, refers to what the individual has at stake in the encounter with the environment, which is related to the ego-identity² and the personal, social, or moral concerns that are affected. The specific goal content determines the specific emotion. Lazarus distinguished six types of ego-identity: self- and social esteem, moral values, ego-ideals, essential meanings and ideas, other persons and their well-being, and life-goals. These types should be viewed as collections of narrower goals, and any given type of ego-identity may be involved in some individual emotion. When a person's concern of self- or social esteem is threatened, this can evoke anger as well as fear. Anxiety, e.g., is related to an uncertain, existential threat to essential meanings. When moral concerns of a person are at stake, this can lead to feelings of guilt and shame because guilt depends on moral values and shame on ego-ideals. And in the case of happiness, it is an overall sense of security and well-being for oneself and others, which refers to personal and social concerns (Lazarus, 1991).

The secondary appraisal refers to the evaluation of the options and resources an individual has to cope with the situation and future prospects. Lazarus distinguishes three components here also: blame or credit, coping potential, and future expectancy. Blame or credit refers to the question of who is accountable or responsible for the situation, which can be directed internally (at oneself) or externally (at someone else). Coping potential refers to the question of whether and how the individual can manage the situational demands: it does not concern actual coping but rather an evaluation of the options to cope. Future expectancy has to do with the assessment of whether the situation will change for the better or worse in the sense of becoming more or less goal

congruent. In the case of the relevant emotions in the current research, the primary appraisal components play a role in all emotions. With regard to the secondary appraisals, there are some differences. In the case of anger, only blame or credit are relevant. In the case of anxiety, none of the secondary appraisals play a role: blame is irrelevant, and coping potential and future expectancy are uncertain. In the case of guilt and shame, blame directed internally plays a role. In the case of happiness, only future expectancy is relevant, which should remain positive (Lazarus, 1991).

According to Lazarus (1991, pp. 151–152), the six appraisal components are not sequential, though the description like a decision-tree format seems to suggest so. The aim of analyzing emotions with these appraisal components is to understand the theoretical or explanatory logic of appraisal but does not describe how an individual goes about appraising in the real world. Lazarus views this way of analyzing as a didactic device rather than a portrayal of how things work. There would still not be an established answer about how appraisal decisions are actually made. The aim of the current research, however, is not to explore how emotions actually arise, but to understand the cognitive-affective processes that contribute to emotions, for which the approach of Lazarus seems to be useful.

So, the analysis of emotions in terms of relational core themes and appraisal components, as summarized in Table 1, will be used to understand the way the teacher in our research appraises and emotionally experiences the current reforms.

3. Method

3.1. Data gathering and analyses

The teacher in the current research has taught Dutch language and literature for 25 years at a secondary school in the Netherlands and will be called David. He also collaborates with the Graduate school of Education of our university for the education of student-teachers. He is actively involved in the implementation of innova-

²Lazarus prefers the term 'ego-identity' instead of 'self', because 'self' is often used only to describe what is within the boundaries of the skin, whereas Erikson's (1950) concept of 'ego-identity' encompasses the person-in-the-world, which includes roles, relationships, and functions in society (Lazarus, 1991, p. 101).

Table 1
 Characteristics of anger, anxiety, guilt, shame, and happiness according to Lazarus

Emotions	Core relational theme	Type of ego-identity involved	Relevant appraisals
Anger	A demeaning offense against me and mine	Self- or social esteem	Goal relevance, congruence, and content + blame or credit
Anxiety	Facing uncertain, existential threat	Essential meanings	Only goal relevance, congruence, and content
Guilt	Having transgressed a moral imperative	Moral values	Goal relevance, congruence, and content + blame directed internally
Shame	Having failed to live up to an ego-ideal	Ego-ideals	Goal relevance, congruence, and content + blame directed internally
Happiness or enthusiasm	Making reasonable progress toward the realization of a goal	Sense of well-being	Goal relevance, congruence, and content + future expectancy

tions within his classroom and school. He also describes himself as 'enthusiastic' about the current innovations.

The data for the present study were collected during several rounds of semi-structured interviews. All interviews were audio recorded and transcribed to create written protocols. Before these interview rounds, the researchers and David had already discussed his work and the current changes. These discussions many times were not audio recorded, but used as input for the interview questions and for a global description of the contextual and personal contours of David's work as a Dutch language and literature teacher. The first interview took place in September, 2000, and lasted 2.5 h.

The interview instrument was semi-structured. We started the interview with a very global question: how would you describe yourself as a teacher? After this very global question, we asked David a series of concrete questions on the basis of our theoretical framework (cognitive-affective processes). These questions were designed to help David explain his perception of his professional identity.³ Furthermore, David was asked about

the situational demands (the current reforms as they unfold in David's school and are perceived by David, the expectations about the way David is supposed to work, and the extent to which David agreed with those expectations), and his concerns and emotions related to those situational demands. With regard to his concerns and emotion, questions were formulated to elicit comments about how he thought and felt about the reforms he mentioned, but hardly any of these questions were asked because David spontaneously shared his concerns and emotions with us while talking about the current situational demands.

Initial analyses of this interview were undertaken based on the theoretical framework to obtain a picture of David's story, and his professional and ego-identity, his appraisals of the current reforms, the emotions that he had experienced, and the personal, social, and moral concerns that were at stake. Next, the protocol and summary of the initial interview were sent to the teacher for validation. The second interview took place in November, 2000, (2 h) and was based on the written protocol and summary of the first

³The operationalization of professional identity was based partially on Kelchtermans' (1993) distinction of self-image, job motivation, task perceptions (see also van Veen et al.'s (2001) notion of teachers' perception of their professionalism),

(footnote continued)

self-esteem and future perspectives. Within the task perceptions, the subject matter perceptions and pedagogical content knowledge perceptions were emphasized. Finally, job satisfaction was also distinguished as an aspect of teachers' professional identity.

interview. The structure of the second interview was the same as the structure of the first interview, except for the opening question. The purpose of the second interview was to explore David's cognitive-affective process in greater detail and depth. A final respondent validation took place in April, 2002, when an early version of the present article was discussed in detail with David (1 h).

For the final analysis, David's different emotions were taken as a starting point. In line with Lazarus' approach, each emotion is related to specific situational demands and aspects of the person's identity. Furthermore, each emotion has a core relational theme and the relevant appraisals reveal the relationships between the situational demands and one's identity or what the person has at stake in the specific encounter.

3.2. Contextual background: different situational demands

As a Dutch language and literature teacher in the upper level of a secondary school, David is confronted with several innovations relating to both teaching and school organizational matters in Dutch secondary education. With regard to school organizational matters, teachers are expected to become involved in school policy matters. Government policy aimed at more autonomous schools on the financial and organizational fronts means that schools must become capable of making their own policies, and, as a result, teachers must be highly involved in the organization of the school (Slegers, Giesbers, & Bergen, 1994). In most Dutch secondary schools, this means that teachers must perform one or more organizational tasks within the school.

The most ambitious innovation at the upper levels of secondary school, called the Second Phase, consists of four elements: (1) the implementation of constructivist-based models of teaching and learning, called the Study House; (2) the use of student study profiles; (3) the introduction of new and more detailed student qualification structures; and (4) an extension of the number of final exam subjects from 7 to 14 in the upper level. Student study profiles refer to four clusters of subjects in the upper level, which each form a

route to a specific domain of study (Science and Engineering, Science and Health, Cultural and Social Studies, and Economy and Social Sciences) and are assumed to prepare students more accurately for post-secondary education. While schools are not obligated to implement the constructivist models of teaching, most schools are currently doing so; they are also free to implement the Study House model in the manner that they prefer.

For the subject of Dutch language and literature (which David teaches), the aforementioned changes have major implications. The shift to more constructivist-based models of teaching and learning, along with the introduction of some new examination guidelines within the framework of the new qualification structure is being operationalized in the form of reading and writing portfolios requiring students to map and document their process with respect to the reading of novels and writing of texts.⁴ The new examination guidelines emphasize process-oriented writing as opposed to product-oriented writing; similarly, students' opinions regarding the literature they read are considered important in addition to literary analysis and literary history. The introduction of reading and writing portfolios provides new roles for both students and teachers. The students themselves are responsible for their portfolios (i.e., the content and the planning). The teacher is expected to help the students by providing recommendations and asking reflective questions, which implies regular reading of the portfolios and regular meetings with individual students. In other words, the teacher in the Study House model of teaching and learning is expected to invest much more time in reading and guidance. This new manner of working has to be realized within the same time schedule and curriculum structure as before, however, and no extra time is

⁴The introduction of these portfolios mark the—at least temporary—end to long-standing discussions within the subject community of Dutch language and literature about the usefulness of reading and writing portfolios. The idea of working with portfolios was clearly formulated on the level of rhetoric—and sometimes already practiced—but now has a legal status.

typically given for the implementation of this new method of teaching and learning.

The current changes have to be implemented under certain conditions. The government assumed that this model of teaching could be implemented without the investment of extra funds. In addition to changing the manner of teaching, the implementation of this model has consequences for teaching timetables and the internal design of schools. In most schools, traditional subject lessons are either being replaced by or being supplemented with mentor hours and study hours. Space, in addition to the normal classroom space, is also needed to work independently or in small groups. Despite these conditions, the teacher in this study is still enthusiastic about the portfolios.

4. Results

In this section, the analysis of the case of David will be presented in two parts. The first part concerns a description of David's professional situation. In the second part, an analysis of David's emotions will be presented.

4.1. Descriptive case

David has been a high school teacher of mother tongue language for about 25 years and works full-time. David describes himself as enthusiastic about his work with the students and the school; as willing to invest time and energy; as collaborative; as always having an open-door classroom policy; and as always willing to learn.

He is very happy with the implementation of reading and writing portfolios for his subject, but nevertheless experiences an enormous lack of time to actually work with the portfolios. Many other teachers in Dutch language and literature also experience this problem of lack of time (Bonset & de Kruijk, 2001).

Working with portfolios requires a lot of time reading, assessing, and interacting with the students. In addition, the portfolios have to be checked each semester, which is three times a year. But in general the mother tongue language

teachers are not given any more time to do that, so David has to work with the portfolios in the same amount of time as he had before portfolios were implemented. Another cause of David's lack of time is related to the consequences of the introduction of new subjects in the curriculum, for which space in terms of contact hours had to be created. Whereas students were formerly required to take seven subjects at the upper levels of secondary school, they are now required to take fourteen. And, whereas each subject in general used to be given in 4 h/week, it is now given in 2 h. So, teachers have to give up some of their contact hours—which is justified by the constructivist models of teaching in which independent student learning is emphasized. So, David had fewer contact hours with his students and fewer teaching hours, but he was given two more classes with 30 students each to make up for the time he lost; as a result, David ended up with 60 more students, and therefore 60 more reading and writing portfolios to manage. A final cause of David's lack of time refers to his new task in the school organization: his membership on the innovation project team.

Given all these reforms and their consequences, David clearly lacked the time to do the kind of work he would like to do with each portfolio. In fact, he reflected that he only has "two minutes to read a portfolio and two minutes to talk about it with a student". 'Two minutes' if he keeps to his professional way of working. According to David, it takes at least 20 min to read a portfolio, and another 20 min to discuss it with a student. If David were to only do the minimal amount of work possible with his 240 students, he would need 320 h,⁵ or 8 weeks of full-time work, three times a year to complete his work.

David's two subject colleagues experience the time problem to a lesser extent. In contrast to David, they work part-time and spend considerably more personal time on their work. After a brief period of feeling overworked several years ago, David avoids further investment of his personal time whenever possible. Although David

⁵David has eight classes with 30 students, which would result in 240 times 20 min of reading and 20 min of discussing, for each of the writing and the reading portfolios.

understands his colleagues' choices, he considers their behavior as "unprofessional" because, like many other teachers, they are prepared to make such a high sacrifice of personal time in their work. Given such an investment of personal time, they are able to evaluate student portfolios in an acceptable manner and, as a consequence, David is the only one who does not manage to do this. As a result of this situation, David does not feel supported by his two colleagues.

The way David has to work now with the portfolios elicits clearly decreased pleasure in his work. The increased number of portfolios being introduced each semester has greatly reduced David's enthusiasm or, as he phrases it, "discouraged" him. With regard to the manner in which he must now evaluate the work of his students while his students have invested much more time, David reports feelings of shame and unhappiness.

At one point David actually approached the school management to discuss the lack of time he was encountering. He presented the evaluations of his teaching provided by the students, in which the students complained about the little time David was able to invest in their work. The school management told him that they could not solve his time problem and that he had to deal with the problem in "a creative manner". This answer of the school management makes him very angry, frustrates him, and gives him a feeling of no support.

David is aware that both the school management and the teachers have to operate under the financial conditions of the government. The Study House reform is implemented *without* extra financial support because the government assumed it to be only a minor organizational change. David concludes from this that the government, despite its rhetoric, views this reform as a financial saving instead of an educational improvement. This conclusion makes him sometimes feel very unhappy and anxious.

In the end, David decides to try to work in a 'creative' manner with the portfolios. He decides, e.g., to discuss the portfolios of two students at the same time. Furthermore, he decides to use all of his teaching contact hours for discussion of the portfolios. He mentions that it is possible to

handle the total number of portfolios in such a manner but that the quality of the evaluation and interaction is not particularly satisfying because, as he states, he is "working with such a file in a negative manner instead of a constructive manner". He considers the handling of the situation negative because the focus is largely on the management of his time. A last step talked about by David is simply to pass the problem on to the students and their parents. By telling the students that he only has 2 min for each portfolio, he can encourage them and their parents to complain to the school management (which David thought they should), which hopefully would result in the school management consulting with "the higher echelons".

To conclude, David experiences his work as very stressful. He feels good both physically and psychologically, still likes working with the students, sees the students themselves and the school as nice, and describes his private situation as very good both financially and personally. He would quit teaching if he did not feel the enthusiasm for his work that he now feels. However, the work is sometimes very stressful due to his current working conditions with regard to the portfolio issue, the related reactions of his students, subject colleagues, school management, and government, and the emotions that occur from this situation.

So, what is the result for David of the implementation of the reading and writing portfolios? David's initial enthusiasm for this new way of working disappeared and now he reports decreased work pleasure, increasing isolation, and feelings of anger, frustration, shame, and guilt. For a reform-enthusiast teacher, the result is striking and unexpected. However, why is this situation actually so problematic for David? Why, after 25 years of teaching, is lack of time such a problem when it is considered almost a normal working condition for teachers? What exactly is the importance of the portfolios for him? Why do the reactions of his subject colleagues and school management differ so much from his reactions? Apparently different issues and concerns are at stake for David. In Section 4.2, these questions will be explored by analyzing David's emotions

with the help of the social–psychological approach, as described above.

4.2. Analytic case

After the outline of the personal contours of David's professional life as described above, in this section an analysis of the cognitive–affective processes using David's emotions as a starting point will be presented. The analysis of emotions is complex because of the multiple goals that are operating at any given time and in the changes taking place from one moment to the next (Lazarus, 1991). Frijda (1986) emphasizes that in most situations several concerns are at stake and that the same concern can lead to different emotions (e.g., anxiety, anger, and curiosity). When several concerns are affected and several emotions are evoked a person has to prioritize certain goals and concerns. Nevertheless, to preserve clarity and to understand the meaning of each emotion, the analysis in the current research will focus on the single, individual emotion as much as possible.

To explore the cognitive–affective processes of David's emotions, and how he perceives himself as a teacher and his environment, Lazarus' concepts of relational core theme and appraisals will be used. In David's story, positive emotions (happiness/enthusiasm) and negative emotions (anxiety, anger, guilt, and shame) are reported.

4.3. Happiness/enthusiasm

David is enthusiastic about the notion of reading and writing portfolios. The relational core theme in the case of enthusiasm is, according to Lazarus, making reasonable progress toward the realization of a goal (see Table 1). In the case of David, the notion of portfolios corresponds strongly with the way he already liked to work. In the interviews, he explained how he struggled for years with the then normal teaching practices, which he did not like at all: a repressive classroom climate, in which students were not allowed to talk in the classroom, in which too much homework was given to students, and in which hardly any space was found for creative teaching. Students

did not enjoy going to school. From such a perspective, David experimented for years with different kinds of constructivist models of teaching, in which students enjoyed having him as a teacher.

In terms of the relevant appraisals in the case of enthusiasm, the portfolios refer to a core of his teaching for many years (goal relevance). The portfolios strongly correspond with his pedagogical views about teaching, and very specifically with his pedagogical subject orientations (goal congruence). According to David, students will learn more when they are challenged in a constructivist manner as they are in the case of the portfolios. Furthermore, for David, teaching is not so much the transfer of subject matter as it is teaching students to ask the right questions. His aim is to make his students independent thinkers, individuals capable of thinking for themselves, and thus individuals capable of asking the right questions. This perception of teaching is connected to his views on living in a society: People should develop and become independent thinkers; otherwise, as he says, "the world will deteriorate into complete barbarity". Therefore, he considers his work highly relevant. With regard to his pedagogical subject orientations, he considers the subject of mother tongue language particularly to be very well suited to teaching students to think: "Language is thinking, because that's what you do with language: shape your thinking." The portfolios expect students not only to read and to write, but also to reflect on their progress and the processes of reading and writing. The new portfolios approach clearly stimulates students to develop their thinking and their ability to ask questions.

With regard to goal content at stake, David's enthusiasm for working with portfolios is also related to essential meanings, other persons and their well-being, moral values, and his self-esteem and job motivation. His view of teaching has a strong ideological connotation when he refers to the society that should not deteriorate into barbarity (moral concern). He also reports perceiving his work as very relevant because of this. Furthermore, he is convinced that this way of teaching in a constructivist manner makes the students enjoy his lessons. This motivates him to

stay in the profession. He loves the contact with students (social concern). He would quit teaching if he did not feel the enthusiasm for his work that he now feels.

Another aspect that plays a role in his enthusiasm for working with the portfolios is that it gives him the opportunity to improve himself as a teacher (personal concern). To prevent stagnation and boredom in his work, he believes ongoing learning as a teacher to be very essential. David quotes Albert Camus' interpretation of the Greek myth of Sisyphus who has to roll a stone to the top of a mountain as punishment; every time he reaches the top, however, the stone starts rolling back down:

Just imagine that he gets it done, that the stone stays at the top, and he has nothing more to do. That would seem terrible to me. And if I were Sisyphus, I would simply give the stone a kick when it stays there. After that, I would roll it up again in a very nice manner (...). Realizing that this is not a punishment but actually a life assignment that can make one feel happy (...). The idea of getting into a rut seems awful to me. The stone has to be moved up, no matter how you feel about it, and so I have to make something out of the stone and its rolling.

More specifically, the portfolios give him the opportunity to improve as a teacher because he can focus more on the individual learning process (personal concern). In other words, the implementation of the portfolios is for David not only a different manner of working in an organizational way, but it also influences his professionalism in a positive manner as the following quote summarizes:

In my opinion, I'm becoming more of a 'Feinmechaniker' [German for instrument maker, AU] who is really searching for how to solve the learning problem of this student or how you can let the student solve it, instead of just teaching. In this respect, I'm becoming a more conscious teacher.

In conclusion, the analysis of David's enthusiasm for working with the portfolios shows the portfolios to be very important for him because of

who he is as a teacher and the way he likes to work. As shown, many concerns related to his professional and personal identity are at stake in this change. Working with portfolios will increase his motivation, strengthen his self-esteem, and give him opportunities for professional growth (personal concerns). David is also enthusiastic because he feels that working with portfolios enables him to realize to a larger extent his pedagogical ideals and ideological views about what his subject of Dutch language and literature is about (moral concern). Furthermore, working with portfolios will increase the relations with the students: he loves the contact with his students (social concern). From this it also follows that not being able to work with the portfolios the way he would like to work will cause strong negative emotions. The question of exactly what causes his negative emotions will be analyzed in Sections 4.4 and 4.5.

4.4. *Anxiety and anger*

David's story provides several examples of negative emotions (anxiety and anger). The relational core theme of anxiety is—in terms of Lazarus—an uncertain, existential threat. The following examples seem to indicate an uncertain threat for David.

A first example refers to David's emotions of anxiety caused by a decreased work pleasure related to his lack of time:

I think as a teacher you have the task of regularly confronting students in their school career with moments at which they have to reflect on how they should think. But I find that very difficult. Given the lack of time, I think it is a difficult task in any case, but it is a task that challenges me and that I would perform with pleasure. However, I'm not really able to perform the task in a good way any more and that also makes for less pleasure in doing it.

In terms of goal content in the case of anxiety, David formulates in this quote a pedagogical view on the learning of his students: students learning to reflect on their thinking. Furthermore, he reports that this task challenges him as a teacher, which, as the analysis of his enthusiasm showed, is relevant

for him to keep learning as a teacher. And he tells that this task gives him pleasure, which can be seen as an indication of his self-esteem and job satisfaction (personal concern). However, the lack of time means that he cannot really perform his task in a good manner according to his educational standards (goal incongruence). This causes his decreased pleasure and seems to constitute a kind of uncertain threat.

A second example of his anxiety refers to the number of portfolios that he has to evaluate each semester and that he has to return to his students in a manner he thinks is insufficient:

Each class produces reading and writing files every two months. So every two months, I must collect them and that is really discouraging, really [...]. And I get so tired of it, because it is really tiring [...]. And yes, if you evaluate them very quickly, it is not so discouraging with respect to the time investment. But it's again discouraging when you return the files to the students.

What is at stake for David here is his ability to evaluate the portfolios in such a way that he can stimulate his students to reflect on their way of working and thinking (goal content). Another aspect that increases his anxiety that he reports in this quote is that he has to return the portfolios to his students without sufficient consideration on his part (moral concern). The students form the core of his work and seem to be a high referent power for him. So, working in this way is not only in conflict with his views of teaching, but it also damages his relationships with his students (social concern). In the case of the analysis of David's guilt and shame, his relationship with his students will further be analyzed.

As mentioned earlier, there is also the problem of time: David experiences a conflict between the number of portfolios and the amount of time he has, and his way of evaluating the portfolios (goal incongruence). The number of portfolios is caused partly by the number of classes and students David has, which is related to choices of the school management. In the case of the analysis of David's anger, the choices of the school management will be further considered. The little time David has is

partly caused by his own choices not to invest his private time and only his professional time. In terms of goal content, a perception about a professional way of working as a teacher plays a role. This perception will be discussed in the next example with regard to the relationship with his subject colleagues.

A last example with regard to David's anxiety is the story of his subject colleagues who—in contrast to David—work part-time and invest private time in working with the portfolios:

What we [teachers, AU] do in education is to perform all these tasks *con amore*, working overtime. We have an unlimited willingness to work overtime, and my two subject colleagues are perfect examples of this (...). We say to our students: each assignment has to be done in a specific amount of time. Don't invest more time, that is not the aim of the assignment, and if you invest too much time, then you are doing something wrong. And besides, if really more time is required, then the assignment is not designed well. So I say [to his colleagues, AU], don't do it like that, do it my way (...). I think that my colleagues actually perform their work the wrong way. They should not make any overtime hours because then they will be forced to work in the same way that I do. They will then get angry as well.

David talks about a specific perception of working in a professional manner as a teacher: investing only the formal working hours and not the private hours (goal content). His colleagues' behavior is incongruent with his perception. The consequence for David of the behavior of his colleagues is that he now seems to be the only teacher with a time problem, which creates for him a position of isolation in relation to the school management (social concern). His colleagues' lack of support seems to form a threat for David, and it reinforces his emotions of anxiety.

With regard to David's anger, two examples can be found in his story. The relation core theme in the case of anger—according to Lazarus—is a demeaning offense. A first example refers to the school management, with whom David at one point talks about his time problem and his

inability to evaluate the work of students in what he feels is a professional way. He shares explicitly with the school management his students' complaints about the way he deals with the portfolio. In this conversation with the school management, David says:

This is happening at your school and I am the one doing it.

[The only response of the management was as follows, AU]

There is nothing we can do about it. We'll have to deal with this in a creative manner.

The response of the school management makes David very angry. In his eyes, the school management neglects his problem and refuses to give a solution: the 'we' that has to deal with the problem in a creative manner refers only to David and does not include the school management. This way of being neglected by the school management is perceived by David as a demeaning offense.

The previous analysis of his enthusiasm and anxiety made clear that essential personal, moral, and social concerns are affected. The issue David discusses with the school management is very relevant for him and he expects to be supported by the school management. However, the response of the school management is incongruent with his expectations. First, the meaning of dealing creatively is that the school management will not give David extra time or other options, but that he has to solve the problem in his own time and according to his own insights. Second, the response does not deal with the problem in a substantial manner, only in an organizational manner, which indicates that the school management perceives it only as an organizational problem that, moreover, only needs some creativity to be solved. In other words, David's problem is not so big at all in their eyes. So the response of the school management seems to disqualify David as a professional teacher, which contributes to his feeling of demeaning offense (personal concern: threat of self-esteem).

With regard to the appraisal component of blame, the anger is directed externally. David is convinced that the school management could do something to solve his problem. His lack of time is partly caused by choices of the school manage-

ment. Besides his teaching, David is expected to be active in the school organization, of which his membership on the innovation project team is an example. Furthermore, the school management gave David two extra classes when David had time left as a consequence of the extension of the subjects from 7 to 14 in the upper level. The school management apparently assumes that David, just like his subject colleagues, can perform his tasks in his professional time. The previously mentioned behavior of his subject colleagues means that David is having the meeting with the school management all by himself, and apparently also that he is seen as an isolated case by the school management.

A second example of David's anger refers to the role of the government in the implementation of the current reforms, more specifically to the fact that the Study House reform (of which working with the portfolios forms a part) is supposed to be implemented *without* extra financial support:

I am more and more being confronted with the fact that the Studyhouse innovations are actually a saving. Given the size of the changes, I don't believe that you can implement them without extra money. That's simply not possible. [...] There are moments I feel deeply unhappy because of this, really.

A similar appraisal as in the case of the school management seems to play a role here. David views the current reforms as profound, substantial changes, which require extra financial funding. The government seems to think differently and perceives the reforms as changes that can be done with the existing financial funding. However, David experiences in his daily work that the reforms require more time and investment. David's views of a substantial and important innovation are incongruent with the views of the government who apparently consider the changes only to be organizational. Moreover, David suspects the reforms to be a saving, which would indicate an even bigger disdain for the work he and his colleagues do (moral concern: not being fair). This demeaning offense makes David angry and deeply unhappy.

4.5. *Guilt and shame*

David reports emotions of guilt and shame in relation to his students. The relational core theme of guilt is, according to Lazarus, transgressing a moral imperative and in the case of shame failing to live up to an ego-ideal. In the following quote, David explains why he feels guilt and shame:

I have to respect that [the investment of the students, [AU] but I don't. And to respect means: 'My dear boy, come sit here. I read your reading file...' and then I have already invested half an hour [with regard to reading it, AU], which is impossible. I have to say, 'Did you ask yourself that question? What do you actually think about it? Is that really true? You write here that you learned this and that, is that really true? On this page, you made a mistake, and you should check that, there, once more. I'll explain this and that to you because I understand that it is difficult to get.' Those kinds of conversations. They are impossible. I don't even have time to read the files, so there is no time at all for such conversations.

With regard to guilt, the main concern that is at stake here is David's moral view of how to treat the work of students, and actually how to treat students: respecting the investment of your students (moral concern). Furthermore, another moral issue is at stake, namely the previously mentioned task perception: teaching students to think. So, the way he has to work now is incongruent with the way he wants to work from a moral point of view.

In terms of blame, David directs externally, referring to others giving him insufficient time and no support. However, he also seems to direct internally, referring to his decision to only invest professional time in his work. Though he considers this choice to be legitimate, still he feels guilty toward his students because he is their teacher and, as he says: "they are MY students" [emphasis from David, AU]. In other words, the circumstances seem to only partly relieve his feelings of guilt that he transgressed his own moral imperatives.

The same appraisals play a role in the case of his shame in relations with his students. His ego-ideal is to treat them with respect, meaning giving their work the attention it deserves according to his standards. Another ego-ideal is to teach them to think for themselves. He fails to live up to both ideals, and notwithstanding the circumstances of not getting enough time or receiving hardly any support, he feels ashamed toward his students.

As the previous analysis of David's enthusiasm showed, the students form one of the most important sources of happiness for David (social concern). As mentioned in the analysis of his anxiety, his time problem seems to damage his relationship with his students. Although he is enthusiastic about the reforms as opportunities to realize some of his pedagogical ideals and ideological views as a mother tongue language teacher, the way the educational reforms actually unfold makes realizing the educational reforms in his daily practice difficult. In this context, important moral and social concerns of David are at stake. Because these concerns are very much related to one of the most important sources for his professional identity, working with students, David has strong feelings of shame and guilt.

5. Conclusion and discussion

The social-psychological approach of emotions, used in this study, enabled us to analyze in depth what concerns a teacher can have at stake in a context of reforms, and how the personal and professional identity is affected by the reforms. In the case of the Dutch language and literature teacher in this study, the analysis of his emotions with regard to the implementation of reading and writing portfolios, as the embodiment of current reforms for him, showed the following. The analysis of his enthusiasm for working with the portfolios indicated that it is a way of working for which he has a long-standing preference. It also constitutes a way of working that his students enjoy, which is important for him because the students form the core of his work and his work pleasure. It is a way of working in which students will learn more than from teacher-centered

approaches to teaching. Furthermore, it corresponds with what he sees as his core teaching task: teaching students to think and reflect. This core teaching task is connected to his views on living in a society, which makes him consider his own work to be very relevant. Besides, it corresponds strongly with his subject, which, is mainly—according to him—about language, and language is thinking. Another aspect is that it gives him the opportunity to develop professionally and to prevent stagnation and boredom in his work. Finally, it makes him feel that he is becoming a better teacher.

The analysis of the negative emotions (anxiety, anger, guilt, and shame), which he experienced because of his problem with lack of time, the enormous number of portfolios each semester, and the lack of support from his subject colleagues, school management, and government, showed in detail that he has many concerns at stake:

- personal concerns related to his motivation, the weakening of and threat to his self-esteem, opportunities for professional growth and individual learning;
- moral concerns related to his teaching perceptions, which refer to how students learn, what they have to learn, and the core of his subject; his ideological views on the importance of becoming and being independent thinkers; and
- social concerns related to his relationship with students (which get damaged while he loves his students), and his position within the school and the relationships with his colleagues and the school management (he gets isolated because of his subject colleagues' behavior, and his perceptions of how to work in a professional manner when it comes to time investment).

This analysis of emotions illustrates how many different aspects of the personal and professional identity can be affected by reforms. Moreover, it shows the many different aspects in the environment that play a role in how the teacher experiences a reform, such as his working conditions, the school management, his subject colleagues, and students. Furthermore, it shows how the interplay of situational demands and the cogniti-

ve-affective processes constitute or shape different emotions. Therefore, we would argue that the social-psychological approach of emotions is very useful in understanding what teachers have at stake when confronted with changes.

Furthermore, these results form a contribution to research that explores the relationships between external reform and teacher identity (Day, 2002). By exploring in this way what concerns teachers have at stake and how their identity becomes affected, a better understanding of teachers' resistance toward reforms might be gained. Often teachers who show signs of resisting a particular innovation are characterized as traditional, conventional, lacking knowledge, recalcitrant, not having students' best interests at heart, or passive. However, the current study shows that the declining enthusiasm of this teacher cannot be explained by those factors. The analysis is in line with Gitlin and Margonis' (1995) notion of teachers' good sense in the case of reforms, which may refer to years of experience and common sense, different perceptions of what constitutes good education and teaching, or simply reflect different concerns and interests than in the innovation.

Although the social-psychological theory provides an elaborated theory of emotions, including definitions, various propositions concerning how the "emotion process" works, the important variables in the process, and the specific categories of emotions, it focuses mainly on the identity and appraisal processes, and pays less attention to the environment. The other theories in the current special issue pay more profound attention to how teachers' emotions are influenced by the various contexts in which they work, and by their interactions with others who are part of their professional lives. Because each theory questions the others in some ways and further explicates them in other ways, integrating them in one framework would provide a more comprehensive tool for understanding teachers' emotions than any previous research—using only one of the theories—has allowed. Such a framework can increase our understanding of the way teachers experience their work within the context of reform by analyzing the individual variations of their

emotions within the structural arrangements they work, and the different social-cultural contexts that mediate their action.

With regard to the current context of educational reforms, the case of David showed a reform-enthusiast teacher with a true educational concern, who does not feel supported by the government. On the contrary, in his perception the government is only interested in the management of education despite their rhetorical support. As others have also pointed out, despite an apparently teacher-friendly rhetoric, the current educational policies are full of contradictions and purely top-down technical treatment of the work of teachers (cf. Hargreaves & Goodson, 1996; Holmes, 1998; King, 1993; Slegers & Wesselingh, 1995; van Veen, Slegers, Bergen, & Klaassen, 2001). David's perception is also confirmed by Beare and Boyd's (1993) observation, namely that the goal of most of the large-scale educational reforms being undertaken today is the adequate management of the school within a national framework. Similarly, David's case can be viewed as an illustration of Blasé's statements that schools "exist in a vortex of government mandates, social and economic pressures, and conflicting ideologies associated with school administrators, teachers, students, and parents" (Blasé, 1991, p. 1).

Related to this, is the notion of work overload, which is also present in the work life of David. As Smylie (1999) notes, work overload seems to be almost a characteristic of the work of teachers historically. However, as Hargreaves (1994) and, more recently, Bartlett (2001, 2004) argue, teachers are expected to be more and more involved in the school, outside their classrooms. This expansion of the teacher role seems to result often in work overload. David's colleagues invest their personal time in their work. And since David refuses to invest personal time, he compromises on the quality of his classroom work, at considerable cost to both his relationships with his students (shame) and his colleagues (conflict). Bartlett (2001, 2004) shows teachers to be willing to expand their role because of understandings and commitment to internal notions of good teaching, collegial expectations, and the moral imperative of teaching to provide the best possible educational opportunities for stu-

dents. David's case confirms her findings that such notions of understanding and commitment to the work of teaching play a role in the situational demands confronting teachers. More explicit attention should be paid to notions of work overload as a factor in growing emotional negativity and decline in commitment or satisfaction.

To conclude, the case presented here showed how a reform-enthusiast teacher is at risk. As research from Huberman (1993) and Little (1996) suggest, governments and school managements have created more and more schools where such teachers are indeed at risk. The final consequences of this for the quality of education could be far-reaching. As Leithwood, Steinbach, and Jantzi (2000, p. 27) emphasized, the profession of teaching, historically, "has attracted a disproportionate number of people extraordinarily dedicated to the mission of children's welfare; most other types of organizations can only dream of approaching such levels of dedication to their corporate missions. Reform-minded governments would do well to consider what is lost by squandering such a resource, and what the costs would be of finding an equally effective replacement". In this context, we agree with Ingersoll (1999) that the recent discussion of the shortage of teachers should not only focus on short-term economic and managerial needs of how to attract more persons for the teaching profession, but also on the more long-term agenda to create attractive work conditions for existing and future teachers in schools.

This study, although exploratory in nature, has tried to make a contribution, using an explicit theoretical framework on emotions to increase our understanding of the impact educational reforms can have on a teacher's identity and commitment to change. More research into teachers' emotions and their workplace conditions is needed to show empirically the possible consequences of national, local, and school policies on the quality of teaching of the current and the next generation of teachers.

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Discursive practices, genealogies, and emotional rules: A poststructuralist view on emotion and identity in teaching

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Abstract

This paper invokes a poststructuralist lens—and, in particular, Foucauldian ideas—in conceptualizing teacher emotions as *discursive practices*. It is also argued that within this theoretical framework, teacher identity is theorized as constantly *becoming* in a context embedded in power relations, ideology, and culture. In terms of the methodology used when studying teacher identity and emotion through this lens, it is shown that long-term ethnographic investigations offer important advantages. This is shown through an ethnographic study of the emotions of teaching with one teacher over three years (1997–1999) and a semester long follow-up study with the same teacher four years later (spring 2003). The contribution of this study in what is presently known about teacher emotions in educational settings consists in the following three ideas: first, that emotional rules in teaching are historically contingent; second, that a teacher plays a part in her own emotional control; and third, that a teacher's identity is constituted in relation to the emotional rules in the context in which she/he teaches. The contribution of a poststructuralist perspective in research on teacher emotion is discussed and analyzed.

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Keywords: Poststructuralism; Discursive practices; Emotion; Teacher identity; Emotional rules

1. Introduction

In recent years questions of “teacher identity” have attained a remarkable attention within education discourses (Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Danielewicz, 2001; Haywood & Martin, 1997; Miller Marsh, 2002a, b; Moore, Edwards, Halpin, & George, 2002; Weber & Mitchell, 1995).

The construct of “teacher identity” as “coherent, bounded, individualized, intentional, the locus of thought, action, and belief, the origin of its own actions, the beneficiary of a unique biography” (Rose, 1998, p. 3) has been called into question in the light of wider social and cultural changes (e.g. globalization, neoliberalism) as well as theoretical developments in the human and social sciences (e.g. poststructuralism, deconstructionism). In particular, poststructuralist theorizations of identity (Cornell, 2000; Holstein & Gubrium, 2000;

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