

Developing resilience in language teaching

Overview

While language teaching is an emotionally rewarding vocation, the professional lives of language teachers are also rife with potential stressors, such as unsatisfactory student achievement, fluctuating motivation in the classroom, accountability pressures, and increasing workloads. The aim of this workshop is to help language teachers maintain their professional wellbeing by attending to their resilience, i.e., their ability to cope with adversity in their professional contexts. In the workshop, participants will be provided with an overview of resilience, in which we will juxtapose different ways in which the construct can be understood, and we will outline its components. Through structured discussion tasks, we will trace connections between the informing theory and the participants' professional lives. Building on this background, we will then engage with practical tasks, which are intended to help participants reflect on the inner strengths, relationships and learned strategies that make up their resilience systems. In addition, we will demonstrate and practice skills and techniques that can empower teachers, helping them to cope with professional adversity in effective ways. Another set of activities will focus on the possibilities of peer support as a resilience-building mechanism, and participants will also be encouraged to reflect on how these activities and skills might be transferred to their own teaching practice, in order to foster learner resilience. The workshop will conclude with the development, by the participants, of personal resilience development plans. The key outcomes that participants will derive from the workshop will be: (a) awareness of resilience and its role in the professional lives of language teachers; (b) enhanced skills for monitoring and developing resilience; and (c) familiarity with techniques and activities that can be used to foster their own resilience and the resilience of their colleagues and students.

Suggested outline

09:00 – 09:15: Introduction

09:15 – 10:30: What is resilience?

10:30 – 10:45: *Coffee break*

10:45 – 12:15: Practical Module 1: Exploring our resilience systems

12:15 – 13:15: *Lunch break*

13:15 – 14:00: Practical Module 2: Dealing with adversity in language teaching

14:00 – 14:45: Practical Module 3: Developing resilience together with others

14:45 – 15:00: *Coffee break*

15:00 – 15:45: Connecting the workshop to our professional lives

15:45 – 16:00: Concluding remarks & feedback

Bionote

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