"It's Frustrating": EFL Novice Teachers' Emotional Experiences in Online Teaching during the COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Abrupt changes in the mode of instruction due to the COVID-19 pandemic have caused teachers to experience different demands and situations in their jobs. These changes have brought about emotional experiences that teachers have to tackle. This study aimed to explore how teachers have been emotionally affected and have regulated their emotions during online teaching. Two EFL novice teachers participated in this study and were requested to elaborate their emotional experiences and emotional labor strategies through reflective journals and in-depth interviews. Findings reveal students' misbehaviors, unequal distribution of

teacher education	resources, and time management, largely attributed to the teachers' emotional labor. These experiences made teachers feel frustrated, angry, and sometimes anxious that they needed to control their emotions in the best interests of their students, classes, and well-being. To cope with these emotions, the teachers employed such emotional labor strategies as surface acting, deep acting, and genuine expressing to better manage their emotional labor. The findings imply the needs to build up awareness in the teacher education program to address issues related to teachers' emotional labor and cater for the inquiry of emotional regulation strategies in the programs.

Introduction

As teaching involves not only transferring knowledge from teachers to their students but also establishing interactions during the process of teaching and learning, it is an emotional job by nature (Hargreaves, 1998; Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006). These relational exchanges require a considerable deal of emotional investment from teachers and students, making teaching recognized as emotional work (King, 2016). Loh and Liew (2016) reported that teachers experienced a significant level of stress in their attempts to make their students disciplined daily but were required to hide their real emotions to pique their students' attention. In the same vein, Song (2021) observed that school cultures expect teachers to display appropriate emotions for the profession, such as being empathetic, composed, and kind instead of being angry, anxious, or helpless, believed to give "bad" vibes for teaching and learning purposes. Thus, when teachers need to manipulate their real emotions to fulfill the expected emotional rules for their job, they may perform emotional labor (Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006).

Emotional labor is defined as modifying specific emotion displays that may include controlling, pretending, and enhancing one's real emotions required by the situation (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983). Managing emotion is believed to be part of teachers' skillsets (Hargreaves, 1998; Sutton, 2004), making it essential to investigate teachers' emotions and understand their emotion regulations. Hochschild (1983) suggested two strategies for teachers to regulate their emotions and emotional expressions. Surface acting modifying overt emotional expressions without changing real feelings requires teachers to conceal their inner feelings; they fake or hide their inner feelings. This

strategy is deemed to cause emotional dissonance and stress (Auger & Formentin, 2021). In contrast, deep acting modifies or alters one's real feelings into a more desired emotional display expected by the job. Grandey (2000) views emotional labor as having the same principles as Gross's (1998) emotion regulations, underscoring individuals' ability to regulate their emotions. This highlights that the strategies to perform emotional labor, either surface or deep acting, apply to emotion regulations. Knowing how to regulate emotions is important because it constitutes the characteristics of a good teacher. Such competence, however, is not adequately brought into focus in teacher education programs (Yin, 2016).

Research on emotional labor in the context of language teaching was not much introduced until the early 21st century (Gkonou & Miller, 2019). Previous studies have provided much data on EFL novice teachers' cognitions and actions, but published data on their emotional labor have to date remained scarce (Kocabaş-Gedik & Ortaçtepe Hart, 2021). Novice teachers encounter unique challenges as they need to cope with different moments of negotiating with school and classroom culture, handling students' behaviors, initiating preparation, and attending to organizational demands (Caspersen & Raaen, 2014). Moorhouse (2021) states that the transitions from pre-service to in-service teachers are exciting and overwhelming, even under normal conditions before the current COVID- 19 pandemic.

Teachers' challenges of the school closure due to the global COVID-19 pandemic get more complicated. Teachers are to drastically shift teaching into an online platform and face different demands resulting in a high level of stress (Martin & Mulvihill, 2021; Pressley, 2021). Besides, they must adapt to the new environment of instructional delivery without enough preparation and prior knowledge about online teaching (MacIntyre et al., 2020) while also encouraging and motivating students to engage in online instruction (Beames et al., 2021; Gupta et al., 2021). Teachers seem pedagogically and mentally exhausted with the sudden adjustments. As Farley et al. (2021) has found, changes in content and delivery, access to technology and software, engagement and motivation, and social challenges (work, home, life) contributed to the emotional labor of teachers.

Studies on novice teachers' challenges during the pandemic reported different complications necessary to learn. The abrupt changes in the teaching environment and technology adaptations made novice

teachers anxious, afraid, and lost as the new reality posed various pedagogically challenging and frustrating dilemmas (Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). Moorhouse (2021) found that newly qualified teachers reported their unreadiness to teach in August and September 2020. As reported in their reflections, the new circumstance of online instruction was challenging to handle. They struggled to make the students actively participate in the lesson and could not deal with students who refused to talk or submit their tasks online. These findings, unfortunately, do not focus on the novice teachers' emotional labor but their everyday struggles during online teaching during the pandemic. As the pandemic could extend for an indefinite period, teachers' coping mechanisms need to be brought to the surface. Gregersen et al. (2021) stated that a study on teacher resilience during pandemics offers valuable evidence of teachers' coping with emotional labor strategies.

Against this backdrop, this study seeks to explore novice teachers' emotional labor when adjusting to online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic in the Indonesian context. Although several studies have investigated the emotional labor experienced by teachers, previous studies have been conducted mostly before the pandemic and focused on teachers in general, leaving EFL novice teachers unexplored. Research on the impacts of COVID-19 on novice teachers' emotional labor is still scarce, especially in the Indonesian context. In general, prior work was limited to teachers' and students' perspectives and strategies in adapting to the new online teaching setting (Atmojo & Nugroho, 2020; Nartiningrum & Nugroho, 2021; Pasaribu & Dewi, 2021), leaving teachers' emotional labor unexplored.

The topic on emotional labor emerged as we analyzed teachers' reflections on their critical incidents during their first years of teaching. We framed our research by employing Grandey's interactive model of emotional labor theory (2000) to reveal EFL novice teachers' emotional experiences and their regulating strategies. Thus, the first purpose of our research is to gain insights into novice teachers' emotional experiences that induce emotional labor stemming from online teaching during COVID-19. The second purpose is to identify their strategies in managing their emotional labor in an online setting, which, according to Burić and Frenzel (2021), can provide valuable insights into teacher education programs, particularly concerning the regulation of emotions wisely for effective teaching and well-being. While the context for this article is

Indonesia, the experiences probably resonate with other teaching praxis at a global level. This study addressed two specific research questions:

RQ1: What emotional experiences did EFL novice teachers face during online teaching?

RQ2: How did EFL novice teachers regulate their emotional labor?

Method

This study is a part of an ongoing investigation into novice teachers' critical incidents. It specifically aimed to explore novice teachers' online teaching experiences and emotional labor strategies. We used a case-study design (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2011) because it enabled us to explore a unique case (EFL novice teachers' emotional labor) during a specific period of time (the COVID-19 pandemic) through multiple methods (teachers' reflections and interview). We scrutinized teachers' subjective views on emotional labor phenomena and constructed interpretations to generate patterns using the social constructivist approach (Creswell, 2014). The study was conducted after more than one year of online teaching due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which lent itself a deeper understanding of how teachers identified the impacts on their emotional labor and how they managed it.

Participants' Background

The participants of this study were two out of four EFL teachers who are parts of an on-going study. These two teachers taught at two different secondary schools in East Java, Indonesia. They were purposively recruited on the basis of the following criteria: (1) They were novice teachers with less than three years of teaching experience, (2) They adopted online classes during the pandemic, and (3) Their journal reflections reported emotional experiences during online teaching. The participants expressed their willingness to participate in the study by signing a consent form before data collection. We referred to them as Eka and Dwi (pseudonyms) for convenience data presentation and privacy protection. Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the participants.

Table 1

Demographic Information of the Participants

No	Pseudonym	Years of experience	Age	Other details
1.	Eka	Two years	25 years	A civil servant teaching in a rural junior public school with six classes a week.
2.	Dwi	Two years	26 years	A temporary-contract teacher teaching in a public vocational high school with eleven classes a week.

Data Collection

Our instruments included teachers' reflections and interview guidelines. The teachers' reflections mainly described the incidents that they considered critical in online teaching. Based on these reflections, we carried out further investigations by scheduling interviews with each participant. We used semi-structured interviews aimed at gathering teachers' emotional teaching experiences and their attempts to regulate emotions. Semi-structured interviews help us with a set of pre-prepared questions, but they still allow further elaboration on the issues being discussed (Dörnyei, 2007).

The interviews were scheduled based on the teachers' convenience through Zoom on a one-to-one basis and lasted for 60-90 minutes each, covering around four topics: 1) school context, 2) changes over teaching online during the pandemic, 3) teachers' emotional experiences, and 4) ways to express their emotions. The interviews were conducted in Indonesian to make it easier for them to respond to the questions and express their feelings. The recorded interviews were then transcribed. The two instruments helped us triangulate the data.

Data Analysis

This section explains the procedures in data-driven thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a qualitative data analysis method involving identifying patterns of meaning from the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Following Braun and Clarke's thematic analysis, we familiarized ourselves with the data by transcribing and reading the teachers' reflections and interview results to understand the content. The second step was reading through relevant expressions, words, and phrases and then putting them into codes. We identified teachers' experiences, emotions, and reactions. In the third step, we classified the codes into appropriate

themes based on common thoughts or emotions. Afterward, we reviewed the themes and refined the interim themes in the fourth step. Following the fourth step, the themes representing the most consistent patterns were organized. We applied inductive data analysis in the first place and moved to deductive one in the second process to compare the data to relevant literature on online teaching and emotional labor strategies to ensure trustworthiness of the data. These patterns illustrated the way we structured our findings and discussion. Table 2 shows the examples of refined coding in our data analysis, using English equivalents.

Table 2

Examples of Transcription in the Coding Stage

Transcript in English equivalents	Themes
It's hard. I have to do extra work in downloading, correcting, and compiling my students' work every week, but it's my duty as a teacher; so I was doing my best to do it-Dwi	Extra workload-Time management Deep acting (cognitive change)
At the end of the day, I used the most accessible yet unpractical method to explain the materials to the students. Sending my explanation via voice note to the WhatsApp group and providing them with some screenshots in case they could download it. *So discouraging-*Eka	Unequal access to technology Surface acting (Suppressing negative feeling)
I reprimanded the student directly via chat when this happened, whether in a group or private communication. Or if we met face to face, I explained the ethics of communicating with teachers-Dwi	Being Impolite Genuinely expressing

Findings

This section presents the prominent themes portraying the EFL novice teachers' emotional experiences that induced their emotional labor and the strategies deployed to manage their emotions in running online instruction during the pandemic. Relevant examples of excerpts

taken from teachers' self-reflections and interviews are provided to support the descriptions. Expressions found in the excerpts, translated into English, that reflect teachers' emotions are presented in italic.

Coping with Students' Misbehaviors

Students' Dishonesty

As student-teacher interaction was limited due to technical issues, teachers encountered difficulty assessing students' actual performance. They could directly see students work on their assignments or examinations in the offline class. However, during online teaching, the teachers were not present during the event, and some students seemed to take this chance to cheat.

> Some students suddenly got very high scores on the test/assignments, which surprised me. To the best of my knowledge, these students are not high achievers and passive during the class. I could not stop thinking negatively to see their results. Alternatively, I made different versions of problems so they could not cheat on their friends' work. They're really got on my nerves-Eka

Eka was anxious to see the students cheat. However, she did not have evidence to confront the students and prove her assumption. This assumption made her dissatisfied and suspicious while grading the students' work. Dwi also experienced a similar incident.

> It's hard to see whether the students did the assignment by themselves or not during online teaching. I felt angry when I noticed that some students' work results were exactly the same. I called them to redo their works and gave them more time to finish-Dwi

As Dwi explained in the interview, during online teaching, she could not directly observe the process of students' doing their tasks. She became more alert when correcting students' work. Being unable to prevent students from cheating made her anxious.

From the excerpts, both teachers expressed their frustration when they realized that the students cheated, yet at the same time, they could not do much about that. Their jobs as teachers required them to evaluate the students' academic progress. Unfortunately, with unsupervised online

learning, they were unable to convince themselves that the students were honest in working on their assignments. Eka and Dwi also expressed their dilemma as they knew that before the pandemic, the students had poor English proficiency and were overly dependent on them. With lack of personal interaction during online learning, some students found it more difficult to follow instructions and consequently affect their academic performance. By considering these factors, the teachers tried to restrain their anger thus managed to deal with the matter. They thought that their main goal was to hold a mandated evaluation; therefore, they did not focus on their frustration resulting from students' cheating but took care of the problem more wisely. Suppressing felt emotion is a strategy in surface acting.

Students' Demotivation

The teachers admitted that online classes lacked interaction yet could not think of interesting and accessible alternatives to deliver the materials because the choices of learning media were very limited. Asynchronous communication was the only possible instructional medium in their contexts (via WhatsApp), resulting in a monotonous lecture. With these constraints, teachers found it challenging to keep students participating during online teaching.

> I felt anxious when I couldn't see what my students were doing during my class. Once I tried to have a class discussion, I had to wait for 10 minutes for a student to respond to my question. It was extremely exhausting and annoying as I could not do anything-Eka

During online teaching, Eka was struggling to get students' responses. She was anxiously waiting for the students to show their presence during online class because many times students were silent or missing the class, as she described in her interview. This became a daily struggle that Eka had to encounter and helplessly endured for the sake of the class.

> I let my students answer my question privately on my phone if it made them engage in class. I did what I could do to keep the class running-Eka

Instead of modifying the inner feeling, Eka chose to control her emotional expression to react to the situation. Even though she felt annoyed, she lingered to her ultimate goal, keeping the students engaged in the online class. For that reason, she considered restraining negative feelings as the wisest choice. This strategy belongs to the surface acting one, suspending genuine emotions to help achieve goals. In contrast, Dwi reacted differently when she faced a similar incident.

> Many students did not submit their work on time. They skipped the class because they overslept or forgot the schedule. *I was upset by the students' attitude*, but I need to keep their motivations because it's my job -Dwi

Dwi said she tried to understand that her students might have difficulties during an online class. In addition to technical problems, such as the Internet connection and data plan, Dwi knew that her students were not ready to learn online, which demanded a high level of independence and motivation. Therefore, she attempted to put herself in her students' shoes. She reappraised the situation and tried to remain calm by reframing the situation that provokes negative emotions. Therefore, she employed a deep acting strategy that manifests in changing one's negative emotions through self-talk.

Students' Rudeness

The teachers said that some students used informal language when communicating via WhatsApp. They treated online interaction as if they were doing social media with their peers. The teachers considered this as impolite; they showed their annoyance to the students after several incidents. Although scolding the students via a written message was not as effective as the oral message, they thought it was worth trying.

> I scolded a student for being impolite (via text) one day. I did that because I wanted them to behave well. After that, when a student used improper language during online interaction, other students helped me remind their classmate-Eka

Both teachers expressed their anger to prevent similar negative acts from happening in the future. In the interviews, each teacher explained that they used different ways to express negative emotions.

Dwi used capital letters in her texts to express her anger, whereas Eka bolded her letters to highlight her intentions to her students. She also used formal language to provide a correct example for her students. They revealed that it was difficult to express their emotions during online teaching, as their students could not see them directly. The words could not depict their inner feelings, so they chose to suppress them most of the time, making it more upsetting for them. Anger is one of the emotions that they thought hard to control, especially when dealing with students' misconduct.

Coping with Unequal Distribution of Resources

As the pandemic has forced teachers to embrace online teaching without much preparation and sufficient infrastructure, they have worked hard to accommodate students in technology-mediated learning. However, this study revealed that both teachers struggled more with technical issues than their technological competence. They were unable to design an interactive class or take advantage of the Internet's extensive sources because not all students could participate due to unequal access to technology. This issue made the teachers frustrated and anxious as can be seen in the following excerpt from Eka

> I felt anxious about running an online class. First, many students did not have a cellphone. Second, only a few students had email or WhatsApp, making it difficult to create a Google classroom or WhatsApp group-Eka

Regarding this, Dwi stated as follows:

> Once I tried to use Zoom, only a few students were present. Some said they did not have cell phones; others said, no internet quota to access Zoom. I stopped using Zoom and moved my day-to-day teaching to WhatsApp. It's frustrating-Dwi

Dwi felt aggravated as her plan did not go well after the efforts she made. She could not proceed the lesson as many students were not able to access Zoom. WhatsApp was not an ideal online platform to hold real time communication but the easiest way to conduct online teaching in her context. As reported in the interviews, the limited technology choices that the teachers could use and other technical issues discouraged the teachers.

In addition, Eka thought that she could offer the students unlimited materials and explore online media. However, she gave up her ideas when she learned that many of her students did not have sufficient access to them.

> At the end of the day, I used the most accessible yet unpractical method to explain the materials to the students. Sending my explanation via voice note to the WhatsApp group and providing them with some screenshots in case they could download it. *So discouraging*-Eka

The lack of access to technology and internet connection forced Eka to design the teaching materials twice to accommodate students' learning. It took more time and effort to conduct an online class in this situation.

Both teachers tried to focus their attention on situations that benefited their job and well-being. They knew they could not change the situation. It was upsetting to keep thinking about it; thus, they suppressed their emotions. They concentrated on what worked for the students, although it was not ideal. The teachers employed a surface-acting strategy to suppress the felt emotions.

Coping with Time Management

The two teachers expressed that online teaching provided them with some convenience. For instance, they could handle multiple tasks at once and act casually as they did not need to face the students. However, more time was spent on preparing devices to accommodate online teaching.

> Many students sent their assignments after midnight because the internet quota was cheaper at midnight. I felt obliged to respond to any messages I received as confirmation or appreciation for finishing the task. *I was on call the whole day long; it's tiring*-Eka

Eka said that this new routine affected her work hours, leading to sleep deprivation. She had to answer similar questions from the students all day long, which irritated her. However, at the same time, she felt relieved as her students managed to do their assignments despite such

difficulties. Therefore, she kept her mind away from the frustration online teaching possibly caused and focused more on the good side to motivate herself and the students. This attention deployment strategy represents deep acting. Similarly, Dwi revealed,

> It's hard. I have to do extra work in downloading, correcting, and compiling my students' work every week, even on the weekend, but it's my duty as a teacher; so I was doing my best to do it-Dwi

During interviews, both teachers described that they used any means to accommodate the students' needs although this sacrificed their personal hours. They also emphasized that it was part of their job even though it was tiring. This motive explains why teaching is an emotional practice, as it involves teachers' emotions in supporting students' needs. These teachers subconsciously employed deep acting by modifying their cognition to mitigate negative emotions.

The study found that novice teachers mostly regulate their emotions by using surface acting; they tend to suppress their inner feelings. They focus more on how to finish their obligation and hide their own emotions. They sometimes employ deep acting when they empathize with their students' hardships. Caring for students is also one of the reasons why the teachers perform deep acting, as revealed in their accounts. Besides, teachers, as the gatekeepers of students' attitudes, drive them to genuinely express their emotions, especially when students act rudely.

Discussion

The present study has sought to investigate the emotional experiences resulting in emotional labor invested by EFL novice teachers and their emotional regulation strategies when carrying out online teaching. The teachers experienced emotional labor when dealing with students' misbehavior, unequal distribution of resources, and time management. The teachers employed three strategies of surface acting, deep acting, and genuine expression strategy to regulate their emotions. This next section discusses the key findings and their contributions to the existing literature.

EFL Novice Teachers' Emotional Experiences

The two EFL novice teachers in this study have identified some emotional experiences during their online teaching, which seem to be dominated by negative emotions. The only positive experience that the teachers reported was the flexibility of online teaching, which also resulted in negative consequences.

The most common emotional experience that makes teachers angry or frustrated is students' misbehavior. This finding is congruent with previous studies conducted before the pandemic among novice and experienced teachers (Alzaanin, 2021; Kitching, 2009; Taxer & Gross, 2018). This shows that students' misbehavior is a common issue that teachers have to deal with and mostly triggers negative emotions (Sutton, 2004). Students' misbehavior, despite being a contested term (Kyriacou & Ortega Martín, 2010), refers to any students' behaviors which "(a) annoys, upsets or distresses teachers, (b) is disruptive of good order in the classroom and causes trouble, and (c) leads teachers to comment continually" (Houghton et al., 1988, p. 299). Kitching (2009) explains that teachers' role as the agent of morals task with teaching good behaviors could trigger teachers' negative emotions, such as anger, frustration, and disappointment when there is ambivalence between teachers' expectations and students' actions. In this study, teachers are mainly emotionally provoked by academic dishonesty, demotivation, and disrespect.

One of the disadvantages of online teaching is the minimum supervision of teachers during online assessment, enabling students to cheat, primarily when the whole class works on the same problems. A study by Ninković et al. (2021) suggest that more than 50% of teachers agree that it is difficult to prevent students from cheating, which makes them dissatisfied with online assessment. In this study, the students cheated by copying their friends' work.

This study highlights another emotional experience the teachers encountered, that is, digital/social inequality. They felt regretful and frustrated because their efforts to engage students in the teaching-learning process met the deadlock. Teachers are also anxious, frustrated, and overwhelmed because they are unable to reach the students or engage them in online teaching-learning owing to financial situations (Baker et al., 2021). Most students experienced difficulties accessing the

materials or joining the class because they did not have a smartphone or could not afford to buy an Internet quota. Studies have found that vulnerable students or those in developing countries experience problems accessing online materials because of technological inequality in financial issues (Dhawan, 2020; Doll et al., 2021). Moreover, teachers feel emotionally distant from the students as they could not feel connected and are discontent with their teachings (Nyanjom & Naylor, 2021), resulting from faceless interactions. This explains why the teachers felt all negative emotions, as they could not care for their students well.

Although teachers know their responsibilities, shifting the teaching mode demands new tasks and time to plan. Previous studies have reported similar issues in adapting to the new online teaching setting, acknowledged to affect teachers' emotions and well-being (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020; Badiozaman, 2021). Teachers spend more time because they have to deal with professional development, material development, assessment instruments, and students consultation (Kruszewska et al., 2020). The flexibility of online classes requires good time management; otherwise, teachers suffer from anxiety and stress from having extra working hours (Palau et al., 2021).

EFL Novice Teachers' Emotional Regulation Strategies

Our findings show how EFL novice teachers manage their emotions to deal with their emotional experiences. As the research is grounded in online teaching, the findings underscore compelling evidence on how these novice teachers regulate their emotions. The three strategies of surface acting, genuine expressions and deep acting are found to be employed by both teachers. They may suppress, display, or modify emotions according to the situations and goals.

The employment of surface acting strategies was mostly due to students' behaviors such as being demotivated and dishonest. The teachers suppressed their behavioral expressions and kept teaching even when being ignored. This is in line with previous studies indicating that teachers sometimes hide, enhance, or masquerade their emotions for a specific purpose in their minds (Taxer & Frenzel, 2015). In this case, the teachers try to act calmly in dealing with the situations because they want to achieve the objectives. Sutton and Harper (2009) indicate that

teachers suppress their negative emotions such as anger and frustration by "forcing themselves to be calm."

Teachers sometimes feel the necessity to intensify their emotions, such as anger, to make the students understand their misconduct (Sutton et al., 2009), as demonstrated in this study when students acted impolitely. Another reason for expressing emotion genuinely is changing a situation to match teachers' goals, such as controlling students' behaviors and classroom atmosphere. Both teachers expressed that they chose to directly express what they felt as they considered some students' misbehaviors essential to tackle. Unlike other service workers, teachers have the privilege or authority to change the situation because the target audience is less mature and less powerful (Yin, 2016). It explains why teachers express themselves genuinely; they might feel superior to the students.

As teaching-learning happened during an emergency, teachers felt that everybody dealt with their struggles; thus, teachers learned to regulate their emotions by employing deep acting. Additional information that teachers know about their students is why teachers eliminate their negative emotions by engaging in deep acting (Horner et al., 2020). As Burić and Frenzel (2021) assert, one prominent reason teachers choose to perform deep acting is because of the nature of their job and student-teacher personal relationships. Both teachers mentioned that their main concerns about online teaching were students' characteristics and low language proficiency. Therefore, they chose to put aside their negative emotions and presented their caring characteristics to foster students' learning. A similar finding is reported by Nyanjom and Naylor (2021), who indicate that the teachers show their professionalism through their empathy and caring as they make an effort to imagine what the students are going through while learning online. It also proves that teachers are aware of their emotional job requirements, although this act may jeopardize their mental well-being (Isenbarger & Zembylas, 2006; Wang et al., 2019).

In this study, the teachers often hid their negative emotions because of the lack of visibility and low effectiveness. As one of the characteristics of computer-mediated communication (CMC) (except video conferencing), the absence of non-verbal cues prevents interlocutors from easily interpreting one's emotions, which influences the expressions of emotions (Derks et al., 2008). Communicating via online text requires careful planning and considerable effort because it

lacks spontaneity and can be misleading (Nyanjom & Naylor, 2021). Consequently, teachers tended to suppress their feelings, as they saw it was more practical in this case. The use of emoticons cannot represent their true feelings; thus, holding back is chosen as an alternative.

Conclusion

This study highlights the emotional experiences encountered by EFL novice teachers in the Indonesian context, inducing their emotional labor and strategies to manage their emotional expressions. That teachers' experiences were dominantly negative might have been partly caused by the fact that they had to tackle the sudden changes from face-to-face to online teaching. Complying with the new curriculum is not easy when teachers, students, and infrastructure are unprepared for the change. Students' indifference is also a classic issue leading to emotional labor. As the teachers unravel their emotional experiences, they struggle to regulate their emotions and become more aware of their emotionally demanding jobs. They manage to play specific roles with positive characteristics and hide the negative ones. These demands require different strategies to regulate emotions. Emotion regulation should be an essential skill alongside other teaching skills; thus, when teachers experience emotional dissonance, they can modify their pedagogical praxis while effectively managing their classes.

Wróbel (2013) suggests that it is crucial to make teachers aware of their emotions and of what triggers them. Learning how to regulate emotion before becoming worse and costing mental well-being is essential. In other words, teachers need to acquire this skill during their teacher training. Teacher education programs can formally train student teachers to observe their emotional experiences in the form of a diary to understand their emotional struggles during learning and discuss strategies to regulate negative emotions in particular.

This study has several limitations. The small number of participants teaching students with low socio-economic background suggests that the findings cannot be generalized to a broader context. Future research can address emotional labor and specific teaching episodes experienced by novice teachers in other contexts to see how different schools or students' characteristics affect teachers' emotion regulations.

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