

How Do EFL University Teachers Regulate Their Negative Emotions While Teaching in the Classroom? Stories From Vietnam

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Abstract

Research in the area of EFL teachers' emotion regulation in the classrooms is notably underdeveloped (Li, 2023). In fact, Namaziandost et al. (2022) called for studies to find out why and how teachers make use of certain emotions in their classrooms and regulate their negative emotions that occur during their lessons. The current phenomenological study responds to these calls on the topic to explore the layers of meanings and experiences of emotions while teaching of EFL university teachers in Vietnam. Their classroom teaching was video recorded to select incidents in which their emotions were captured. They then were involved in stimulated recall interviews and writing journals for reflections and explanations why they expressed and regulated their emotions in those incidents. The findings indicate that the teachers' unpleasant emotions were mainly evoked by students' behaviours in the classrooms, including their discipline matters, lack of engagement in the lessons, and failure to give correct answers to the teachers' questions. To handle emotions of irritation and disappointment, the teachers applied the strategy to adjust their attention and manipulated the reappraisal strategy to eliminate their negative emotions by immersing into an alternative teaching activity or context for refreshment. Implications from these findings are provided for EFL teachers to reduce negative emotions for better moods in teaching English.

Keywords: *Emotion; emotion regulation; EFL teachers.*

Introduction

Emotions of language teachers in general and of EFL teachers in particular have been found to exert impact on learners' language proficiency and instructors' teaching practices (Derakhshan, et al., 2023; Hu & Wang, 2023; Zhi et al., 2023). Teachers' emotions while teaching is apparently a worthy topic for exploration since a teacher in the classroom, especially an EFL classroom has to work with from 30 to 40 individual students who are unique and their behaviour in the classroom may directly influence teachers' emotions. Thus, an investigation EFL teachers' emotion regulation to provide measures to better regulate their emotions while teaching is of practical significance in enhancing their professional capabilities (Wijaya, 2021). However, "research in this area is notably underdeveloped" (Li, 2023, p.273). In fact, Namaziandost et al. (2022) called for studies to find out why and how teachers make use of certain emotions in their classrooms and regulate their emotions due to various irritations and frustrations that occur during their lessons. Given the necessity of exploring EFL teachers' emotions while teaching, the current study was set out to answer the following two questions:

1. What kinds of emotions do EFL university teachers experience while teaching English in the classrooms?
2. How do they regulate these emotions?

Emotions are in the center of life because people make decisions based on their emotions. However, defining emotion or responding to the question "what is emotion?" is a far more difficult undertaking. According to Hockenbury and Hockenbury (2007), emotion is "a complicated psychological state including three unique components: a subjective experience, a physiological response, and a behavioral or expressive response" (p.117). In the EFL setting, teachers' emotions obviously are aroused by factors related to teaching English and student matters. A teacher may have positive emotions such as happiness, pride, satisfaction and negative ones including shame, irritation, unhappiness, or disappointment.

Emotion regulation is thought to play a significant effect in reducing work-related stress and significantly contribute to the development of pleasant emotional states (Chang, 2009; Greenier et al., 2021; Gross, 2002). Emotion regulation is defined as "capabilities in handling undesirable and current emotions rendered by internal or external factors" (Wijaya, 2021, p.99). Similarly, Koole (2009) considers emotion regulation to be the set of processes whereby people manage all of their emotionally charged states from being happy

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to being irritated. EFL teachers with strong emotion regulation are more likely to use their understanding of their own emotions and others' emotions to get and save resource (Gross, 2015). Additionally, in situations that lead to job burnout or under stress, it is necessary for EFL teachers to choose effective coping strategies, which contributes to positive mental health (Chang & Davis, 2009; Gross & John, 2003).

The theoretical framework of the current study refers to Gross's (1998) process model of emotion regulation. This model closely follows the situation-attention-appraisal-response loop of emotion creation and has been extensively utilized in education (Heydarnejad et al., 2021) and studies of EFL teachers' emotion regulation (e.g. Li & Akram, 2023; Moris & King, 2020; Su & Lee, 2023; Talbot & Mercer, 2018). The model suggests that when individuals are faced with an emotionally charged situation, their attention is quickly captured by the cause, and they engage in a thorough and thoughtful evaluation.

The process of emotion regulation involves five distinct types of strategies, as illustrated in Figure 1. Situation selection and modification tactics are employed at the situational stage, allowing individuals to choose or modify their environment to regulate their emotions. Attention deployment strategies are focused on the attention stage, involving the redirection of attention to manage emotions. Cognitive change strategies aim to address the appraisal stage by altering one's thoughts and interpretations of a situation. Lastly, reaction modulation strategies are directed at the response stage, involving techniques to directly influence emotional responses.

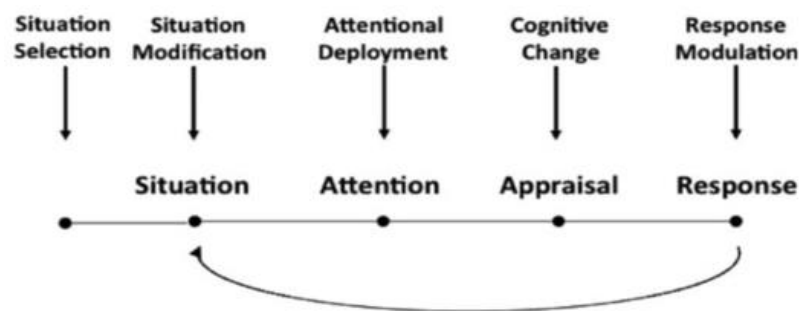


Figure 1. The process model of emotion regulation (Gross, 2015).

For example, when teaching English, EFL teachers can use different strategies to manage their emotions and create a positive learning environment. They can avoid dull topics and include enjoyable activities to prevent boredom (Suri & Gross, 2015). They can also change tasks to reduce negative feelings or extend engaging activities to prolong positive experiences. Teachers can focus on the positive aspects of a lesson to avoid stress and reinterpret challenges as opportunities for better teaching and student learning (Blechert *et al.*, 2015). Finally, they may hide or control their emotional responses to maintain a professional image, for example, by suppressing negative emotions.

The process model by Gross (2015) outlines two main methods of emotion regulation: antecedent-focused and response-focused emotion regulation. Antecedent-focused regulation occurs before the emotion is evoked and includes cognitive reappraisal and distraction. Response-focused regulation takes place after the emotion is produced and includes strategies such as expressive suppression, faking, masking, and self-care (Gross, 1998; Bahl & Ouimet, 2022). This model is valuable for understanding and explaining the complex layers of EFL teachers' emotions and how they manage their emotions through the situation-attention-appraisal-response loop (Bahl & Ouimet, 2022; Sutton & Harper, 2009),

Research on emotions and emotional regulation among EFL (English as a Foreign Language) teachers has been conducted more frequently in the past decade due to an increased interest in promoting teachers' well-being. Previous studies have also delved into the specific strategies that teachers use to manage their emotions. For instance, Wijaya's (2021) study aimed to investigate the strategies EFL teachers employ to regulate their emotions through narrative inquiry and interviews, providing a more comprehensive understanding of how teachers handle their emotions during specific teaching periods. The findings of this study revealed that effective management of EFL teachers' negative emotions could contribute to better learning outcomes for students. Essentially, teachers who were able to control their negative emotions were more likely to create positive and enjoyable learning environments, leading to improved learning experiences for their students.

In Li's (2023) study, the focus is on the impact of emotional regulation (ER) strategies on the professional development of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers in Chinese higher educational institutions. The research, which utilized a survey approach and structural equation modeling, highlighted the adept use of ER strategies by EFL teachers to address classroom challenges effectively. "Situation Selection" was found to be the most frequently utilized strategy, while "Suppression" was identified as the least frequently used. The study emphasizes the high level of professional development among EFL teachers and advocates for the incorporation of ER training in teacher education programs to create a more conducive learning environment.

Namaziandost et al. (2023) conducted a study with 278 voluntary EFL university professors to explore the impact of emotion regulation on self-efficacy, work engagement, and anger management. The findings underscored the significant impact of emotion regulation on these areas, emphasizing the need for university professors, especially those teaching English as a foreign language, to master emotional regulation. This research highlights the pivotal role of university professors in shaping students' future readiness through emotion regulation.

In a study on emotion regulation in teaching, Thumvichit (2023) explored the strategies used by 44 Thai EFL teachers to manage emotions in response to classroom challenges. The study identified four types of emotion regulation strategies: adaptive, expressive, suppressive, and avoidant. One group of teachers sought support from peers to mitigate stress from poor student performance, while another group used situation modification to manage stress related to self-esteem and student engagement.

In their study, Morris and King (2023) explored emotion regulation among L2 teachers, focusing on instrumental emotion regulation. This form of regulation involves using emotion regulation techniques strategically to achieve specific teaching objectives. They identified six key emotion regulation strategies: reappraisal, suppression, humor, venting, distraction, and social support, shedding light on the complex nature of emotional management in the teaching environment.

The final study discussed in this review, conducted by Xiao and Tian (2023), focuses on a qualitative investigation involving three Chinese EFL teachers. The researchers used reflection, face-to-face interviews, class observations, and field notes to explore the intricate interpersonal emotion regulation strategies employed by the teachers. These strategies included deconstructing emotional barriers through companionship, reconstructing emotional strength through trust, and collaboratively constructing emotional pedagogy through dialogues to effectively manage the emotions of both the teachers and their students.

To put it in a nutshell, the existing body of research has delved into the underlying reasons for English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers' regulation of their emotions within the classroom setting. It has also pinpointed various emotion-regulation strategies employed by these educators, including adaptive, expressive, suppressive, and avoidant approaches. However, what sets this inquiry apart is the absence of stimulated recall interviews, a method that allows for the immediate capture of teachers' emotions following classroom incidents that elicit strong emotional responses. This unique approach promises to unveil a deeper understanding of teachers' tangible feelings and reflections on their emotional behaviors, ultimately enriching the development of a more intricate model of emotion regulation in the context of teaching.

Method

Data and Source of Data

This study concentrated on the participants' experiences with emotion regulation in English classrooms; thus, it employed a phenomenological approach. A phenomenological investigation is defined as "describing meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon" (Creswell & Creswell, 2017, p.50). The focus of this qualitative empirical phenomenological data collection was to extract episodes of classroom recordings which captures incidents in which teachers expressed their emotions and conduct stimulated recall interview with the teachers to elicit their responses related to how and why they expressed their emotions as in the video extracts. Besides, the participants were invited to keep journals after their teaching that had been recorded. This phenomenological study aimed at exploring the participants' experiences, and reflections in order to create an authentic picture of the teaching lives of

the participants (Creswell, 2007). Through the stimulated recall interview and journals, the participants were encouraged to talk about their lived experiences in the classrooms, particularly in terms of managing their negative emotions.

Participants

The study was conducted at a university in Vietnam which offered a range of majors among which English major is enrolled by the largest number of students. The participant selection employed convenience sampling since the target population's participants met certain convenient requirements, including "easy accessibility, geographical proximity, accessibility at a specific time, and participation volunteerism" (Dörnyei, 2007). The three EFL teachers at this university responded to an invitation to participate in the current study. They had roles and responsibilities in teaching and administrative duty within the faculty, such as supervising students, creating English language teaching materials over the books used in the programs, invigilating end-of-term exams, and teaching courses in a limited amount of time. They were given pseudonyms in this study such as Nicole, Helen, and Hannah.

Instruments

Video-recorded classroom observations

The educators generously provided consent to be filmed delivering their English lessons. Each teacher's instructional sessions were meticulously documented for about two hours across two distinct classes. A camera discreetly positioned at the rear of the classroom diligently captured the entirety of the 50-minute teaching sessions. These recordings were conducted once a week over a month, providing an in-depth and comprehensive portrayal of the teaching and learning process without any intrusion.

Stimulated Recall Interview

The interview was carried out right after a collection of video recordings that captured poignant instances of teachers openly expressing their emotions. Subsequently, the researchers extended a warm invitation to the participant teachers to immerse themselves in these evocative video vignettes alongside one of the researchers. During this interview, the teachers were encouraged to delve into their emotional responses to the video clips, articulating the intricate interplay of thoughts and feelings that colored their reactions.

Journal

The purpose of journal which should be used in accordance with Gross's (1998) process model of emotion regulation, is to encourage teachers to explain what was occurring in their teaching in the classes, how they feel about it, and the basis for their evaluations. A journal writing frame is comparable to stimulated recall interview to give information in their own frame rather than in an interview, when evading or sidestepping potentially face-threatening questions might be difficult.

Data Collection

On the day of the video recording, the three teacher participants and students were informed of the purpose of the video recordings. The researcher set up the camera on the stand and initiated automatic recording. This approach aimed to create a conducive environment for teachers and students to freely engage in their teaching-learning activities. This was followed by a stimulating recall interview, during which the teachers were encouraged to delve into their emotional responses to the video clips, articulating the intricate interplay of thoughts and feelings that colored their reactions. Furthermore, the interview sought to unravel the elaborate web of strategies and techniques employed by the teachers to navigate and regulate their emotional states. A journal entry with guiding questions was required for the participants to report what happened in their classes, what emotions they experienced, how they felt and regulate their emotions.

Data Analysis

The meticulous process of transcribing and translating the video recordings from Vietnamese to English was undertaken by the researchers to ensure accuracy and comprehension. They carefully selected a segment that captured an instance where the classroom teacher displayed emotions such as irritation, anger, or disappointment. Through a comprehensive review of the stimulated recall interview and journal data,

they conducted a detailed thematic analysis to explore the spectrum of emotions expressed, the underlying triggers, and the strategies employed by the teachers to regulate their emotions.

Results

EFL University Teachers' Emotions While Teaching English

Irritation Due To Students' Discipline Matters

In the the following extract, Nicole was asking students to read the answers for the exercises.

Extract 01:

Student: Miss.....Miss.....

Teacher: How do you correct 'Love'? Add '-s'. Why do you add '-s'? ok, because of 'Neither'. What does 'neither' mean? Ok, It means 'not either of two things or people'. Neither your brother nor your sister loves ice cream. That is the reason why there should be '-s' behind 'love'. You cannot answer the question, so you cannot get any mark. Don't use the mobile phone in the class. Be careful, this question may be the one in the final exam.

As can be seen from Extract 01, the student could not give the correct answer. The teacher was expected to understand the grammar point which was taught and the teacher thought that she did not do so. The transcript in Extract 02 indicates some irritation or disappointment and negative emotion of the teacher when the students could not provide the correct answer. Her disappointment also was from the fact that the students' learning did not meet her expectation.

In the following extract, the teacher (Helen) was walking to and fro to observe and support students working in groups for the assignment. Extract 02 is from the recording of her class.

Extract 02:

Teacher: Oh my god, it turns out you were playing a game the whole time. Do you keep playing games and only focusing on games? Now, answer the questions on the board and give examples.

As can be seen from Extract 02, when the teacher went to the end of the class, she noticed a male student playing game on the mobile phone. She asked the student to answer two questions. However, he only worked on well with the first one. The transcript in Extract 02 indicates some disappointment and irritation of the teacher.

Disappointment Due to Students' Lack of Engagement in the Lessons

In the following extract, Hannah was teaching grammar to the third-year students.

Extract 03:

Teacher: Nobody agrees that teachers are happy when their students make a lot of wrong answers. I feel rather tired. Why can't you do it write? Well, related to forms, for example, if the word "me" is underlined, yes? You cannot write that "me" is a noun because it is wrong. You have to write "UW". Is it ok with you? You need to understand and absorb this. There is the information in the book for it but you did not read it.

In Extract 03, it is apparent that the students struggled to comprehend the lesson on nouns following the teacher's explanation. This difficulty arose from their apparent failure to engage with the relevant chapter in the coursebook prior to the lesson. The teacher had anticipated that the students would have thoroughly studied and grasped the grammar point in the coursebook, but it was evident that this was not the case. The transcript in Extract 03 vividly portrays the teacher's disappointment and negative emotions as the students faltered to provide the correct answer. This disappointment was compounded by the students' failure to meet the teacher's expectations in their learning.

In the following extract, Helen was teaching Phonetics. She was asking the students to do the assignment in group after lecturing the lesson. Extract 04 is from the recording of the class that teacher Helen was teaching.

Extract 04

Teacher: Why are you alone? Oh my God! Then who do you group with? You don't have a group yet?
Come here! You must work with others? Why do you keep sitting quietly?

As can be seen from Extract 04, when the teacher walked to the end of the class, she recognized some students goofing off and not paying any attention to the assignment. They even did not know which group to work in. The transcript in Extract 04 indicates some disappointment of the teacher when the student was not active in the classroom learning.

Disappointment Due to Students' Failure to Give Correct Answers in the Classes

In Extract 05 below, Hannah was teaching syntax. The teacher was explaining a grammatical point and the students were listening to her. Extract 05 is from the recording of the class that teacher Hannah was teaching.

Extract 05:

Teacher: What is this? What kind of sentence structure is this? It has not been long since I taught you this kind of sentence. And take a look at this, can you see the mistake?

In Extract 05, the teacher was visibly disheartened as she explained a fundamental grammatical concept, only to find that the majority of students were unable to provide the correct answer. The transcript reveals her disappointment when a student struggled to identify the sentence structure or pinpoint the error. This sense of letdown stemmed from the students' failure to live up to her expectations. She had hoped that they would review previous lessons at home and apply that knowledge in subsequent classes, but it seemed that they had not done so.

In the following extract, Nicole was teaching grammar and she was calling one student to answer a multiple-choice question after explaining this grammatical point. Extract 06 is from the recording of the class that Nicole was teaching.

Extract 06

Teacher: What is the difference? Which one has the same meaning with “almost no”? Minh, please!

Student: Madam, a few and little, Ugh....

Teacher: Why do you make a mistake with an answer with only two options? Oh my God, 50/50, you are still wrong.

In Extract 06, it is clear that the student was tasked with comprehending a specific grammatical concept and demonstrated understanding by answering the question correctly. However, despite this understanding, the student was unable to provide the correct response. The teacher's disappointment and negative emotions are palpable in the transcript from Extract 06, underscoring the significance of the student's inability to give the correct answer.

How Teachers Regulate Their Negative Emotions While Teaching

This section presents data related to the teachers' negative emotion regulation. Their reflections from stimulated recall interview and journals are analyzed.

Table 1. Helen's emotion regulation while teaching.

Teacher's emotion	Teachers' emotion regulation: Suppressing negative emotions	
	Stimulated recall interview	Journal
Irritation and disappointment because the student used mobile phone to play games during the lecture.	I disguised my anger by saying some funny words and asked him to answer the questions on the screen. I would not like to disturb the working atmosphere of the other students.	I learned from the previous case, so I was able to control my emotions and not let myself get involved into too many negative emotions. In the previous lesson, I ran out of time, so this time, after handling students' discipline matter, I immediately returned to the lecture.

In the data presented in Table 1, it is clear that Helen frequently chose to conceal her emotions while teaching. This behavior was explained in the stimulated recall interview and her journal, where she expressed her intention to ensure that her students remained attentive and to successfully finish her lectures.

Hannah's emotion regulation is presented in Table 2 as follows.

Table 2. Hannah's emotion regulation while teaching.

Teacher's emotion	Teachers' emotion regulation: Adjusting emotion and teaching	
	Stimulated recall interview	Journal
Feeling disappointed because the students could not have a correct response.	I explained the grammatical point again instead of going on with the my lesson plan.	I thought calmness and patience not only demonstrated flexibility but also prevented the disruption from affecting the flow of the lesson. This helped maintain the students' focus and interest.

Hannah, a dedicated teacher, had high hope as she posed a thought-provoking question to her students. However, to her surprise, the students were unable to provide an answer. Despite feeling a sense of disappointment, Hannah composed herself and decided to maintain her composure in order to carry on with her lesson.

Table 3 below presents Nicole's emotion regulation.

Table 3. Nicole's emotion regulation while teaching.

Teacher's emotion	Teachers' emotion regulation: Adjusting teaching attitudes	
	Stimulated recall interview	Journal
I was disappointed because the student could not provide the answer for the exercise in the book. The reason could be that she did not pay enough attention to her study.	I explained the grammatical point again and emphasized the point in the lesson that day could be part of the end-of-term exam. It was also a review for other students who lacked knowledge for that grammatical point.	I should not let negative emotions get too high, because it will make me angry and have harsh attitudes and words. In this case, after being reminded, the two students also felt that what they were doing was not right and returned to focusing on listening to the lecture.

Nicole, much like Helen and Hannah, exhibited a similar approach to managing her emotions. She was very mindful and made a deliberate effort to ensure that her feelings of disappointment did not interfere with her teaching or interactions with students during the lesson.

Table 4. Helen's reappraisal strategy.

Teacher's emotion	Teachers' emotion regulation: Reappraisal Strategy	
	Stimulated recall interview	Journal
Diappointment and worry because most of students refused going to the board to do the exercises.	I continuously encouraged students, but they remained quiet. Some kept surfing the mobile phones.	The atmosphere in the classroom at that time was so quiet that it made me feel very worried because if it continued like that, the learning outcome would be very bad. After a moment of hesitation, I began to change my attitude. I became more active; I stirred up the class by encouraging students to go to the board to do exercises and do not care about whether the results were right or wrong. I moved around the classroom, especially stopping for a long time at the last row of desks where a group of students often chose to sit to avoid the lecturer's attention and to use the phones.

Helen captivated her audience as she eloquently shared her thought process and techniques for maintaining composure and effectiveness in her teaching. She provided a vivid and detailed account of how she navigated her emotions in challenging classroom scenarios, particularly when faced with inattentive students.

Table 5. Nicole's reappraisal strategy.

Teacher's emotion	Teachers'emotion regulation: Reappraisal Strategy	
	Stimulated recall interview	Journal
I was disappointed because the students did not answer a very basic and easy question about grammar.	To deal with this situation, usually the teacher will use a little humor to stir the class atmosphere up and make the other students in the class not feel stressed about whether a certain student cannot answer the question. I also asked peers in the group for support.	I knew that gen Z students do not like things that are not practical, and grammar is a theory-based subject. Therefore, I became more patient and tried to encourage students to take part in my teaching.

Discussion

This study investigated the EFL teachers' emotions in the classrooms while teaching English and how they regulated their negative emotions. Data were collected from recorded classroom observations with videos, stimulated recall interview with the teachers after the video recordings, and journals. In this study, the definition of emotion is re-defined from that of Schutz and Lanehart (2002). It is a teacher's cognitive interpretations and assessments of particular situations which are the foundation of the teaching process, lessons, or when students repeated mistakes, the teachers felt unhappy and disappointed.

Teachers often experience a wide range of emotions while teaching, including both positive and negative feelings. Positive emotions can include happiness, pride, and pleasure, while negative emotions may consist of fear, anger, guilt, and boredom. A recent study has specifically focused on the negative emotions that teachers experience while teaching, aiming to provide solutions to address this issue. The study revealed that the teachers often experienced negative emotions related to student discipline issues, leading to feelings of irritation and disappointment. Additionally, when students struggle to provide correct answers during lessons or repeatedly make mistakes, teachers may feel unhappy and disappointed.

Viewing from the process model of emotion regulation by Gross (2015), it could be explained that the teachers' emotions were cognitive and assessment processes. While teaching, they observed the students' behaviours and interpreted and assessed of the classroom situations in which they were influenced by students emotionally as pointed out by Schutz and Lanehart (2002). To be more specific, the EFL teachers' emotions were mostly influenced by students' misbehaviors and their inadequate engagement while in the classes in university. These findings were confirmed by the teachers' reflections in their journals where all of the recorded EFL teachers admitted their disappointment and negative emotions because of students' lack of attention in the classroom and using mobile phones for their personal purposes, which were characterized as Generation Z who are commonly criticized for being sluggish and reliant on technology in the classrooms (Miller & Mills, 2019; Mosca et al., 2019).

On the first glance, the participants in the study tried to control their emotions as one of the decisive factors leading to a successful teaching hour. However, in some situations, the extrinsic factors such as students' misbehaviors and a lack of engagement navigated EFL teachers' emotions to an uncontrolled state which needed a timely adjustment for the expected teaching outcome at the end. Most of the EFL teachers in the study chose to suppress their disappointment in order to encourage students to fulfill their tasks. They decided to turn a blind eye to the students' discipline matters which are not easy to deal with as they reflected in their journals and stimulated recall interviews.

As seen from the teachers' reflections in the journals, most of them tended to try to keep their images calm and controlled in front of their students. Actually, it is usually pointed out that the teachers really need positive, personal interactions with students (Spilt, et al., 2011), and their emotions shape their teaching success. The current study demonstrated that teachers' emotions during teaching involved socio-psychological elements. On the one hand, they tried to control themselves emotionally to complete the lessons and consider students' characteristics and classroom situations. On the other hand, they experienced complexed feelings from irritation, disappointment, unhappiness and other negative feelings inside themselves. The findings of this study did not explore whether these feelings affected their life after the lessons, but it is worth exploring this topic.

The findings of the current study reiterate what were found in the study by Heydarnejad et al. (2022) which disclosed that EFL teachers became angry after being upset over a student, their coworkers, the system, or

their parents, in that order. Among the factors, student-related one was named first in the study by Heydarnejad et al. (2022). The current study, however, focused on teachers' emotions in the classrooms and revealed various forms of emotions aroused in the teachers. Thus, their emotion was related to students' behaviour mainly.

In the context of negative emotions arising from student behavior in classrooms, Gkonou and Miller (2019), Khajavy et al. (2018), Agudo (2018), and Oxford (2020) all presented similar findings regarding the impact on teachers. For instance, while Khajavy et al. (2018) did not identify the same prevalent negative emotions as this current study, they revealed that English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers often experienced worry, anger, and boredom, which were largely attributed to their students. Specifically, anger was a result of student disobedience, and boredom stemmed from students' unwillingness to participate.

Another focus of the current study is teachers' emotion regulation strategies which are defined as the acts that are employed to change the direction of emotions. Emotion control tactics can range in complexity, focusing on the external environment, attentional systems, cognition, or the componential effects of emotional episodes (Gross, 1998). With different emotions recorded and expressed by the teachers in this study, their strategies and ways to deal with those emotions were explored stimulated recall interviews and journals. Emotion regulation strategies are understood not only as ways that EFL university teachers apply to regulate undesirable emotions, but also a tool with which they can more effectively support their students in learning languages in the English classrooms.

Overall, the reflections of the teachers via stimulated recall interview, journal and semi-structured interview indicate their intrapersonal emotion regulation which is defined as "the process by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express these emotions" (Gross, 1998, p. 275). One of the strategies reported by the teachers was adjusting their teaching attitudes and situation modification as reflected by Nicole, Helen, and Hannah. In other situations that involved teachers' emotions of irritation and disappointment, the teachers reported not to let their emotions interfere with teaching. The stimulated recall interviews viewing the videos with the participants and their journals also documented the teachers' responses to apply the strategy to adjust their attention and ignore students' misbehaviors, for examples, Nicole journal reflections for the extracts 1 and 6; Helen for extracts 2 and 4; and Hannah for extracts 3 and 5. The teachers' use of the emotion strategies was similar to what was reported in Talbot and Mercer (2018) which pointed out that one of the most successful forms of behaviour management motivated emotion regulation was a form of situation modification known as problem directed action, referring to actions that are taken to solve problems so that they may not continue to be an issue.

One more common strategy for teachers to employ to handle their emotion is reappraisal strategy which Gross (2015) defined to involve manipulating the appraisal component. When applying this strategy, a teacher adjusts their feelings about an emotional stimulus. To be more specific, a teacher may reclassify a misbehaving student as something generally well-behaved so as to reduce any negative emotions that classroom teachers are experiencing. Reappraisal strategy was reported to be used by the teachers in the current study. In the interviews, Helen further more indicated that they were aware of their emotions and tried to regulate those feelings for the smooth lessons and for the sake of students' learning.

Overall, from the teachers' stimulated recall interview and journal, it can be seen that the most frequently used strategies reported to be used in the teachers in the current study was intrapersonal, with reappraisal strategy and attention re-direction because all the participants aimed to achieve their teaching outcomes under any coming unexpected obstacles in which students' misbehaviors were considered unpleasant. As a result, cognitive reappraisal could successfully affect overall later emotional behaviors, particularly when used to down-regulate negative emotions, which efficiently reduced both the behavioral and experiential components of negative emotion.

Conclusion

The study examined the emotions of EFL university teachers while teaching English and how they regulate those emotions in the classroom. It found that teachers experienced unpleasant emotions due to students' behaviors such as lack of attention and engagement, as well as failure to participate effectively. To manage their emotions, the teachers reported not letting their feelings interfere with teaching and employed

strategies such as adjusting their attention and ignoring misbehaviors. They also used the reappraisal strategy to change their feelings about the emotional stimuli related to students. Overall, the teachers employed intrapersonal emotion regulation strategies to adjust teaching contexts and attitudes to align with teaching goals and promote learning, helping them eliminate negative emotions by engaging in alternative teaching activities or contexts for refreshment.

The current study recommends that teachers should exhibit positive attributes and conceal negative traits, while also regulating their emotions by staying calm, understanding students' characteristics, and considering classroom contexts. It suggests that teachers should redirect their attention from negative feelings and employ humor and encouragement to create a more positive classroom environment. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of emotion regulation as an essential skill for teachers and suggests that they may need to adapt their teaching practices to manage their emotions effectively. It also proposes that EFL teachers could benefit from additional training that encourages reflection on how their worldview and personality influence their emotion regulation strategies, ultimately enhancing their effectiveness in supporting student autonomy and academic achievement.

The study utilized a phenomenological qualitative approach to investigate teachers' emotions in language classrooms (Creswell, 2009; Mills & Morton, 2013). It employed stimulated recall interviews and journals to delve into the deep layers of teachers' emotions during teaching, setting it apart from previous studies. By using these tools, the study captured teachers' emotions through their verbal utterances and reflections on emotionally charged classroom incidents. Stimulated recall interviews conducted right after video recordings allowed teachers to freshly recall their emotions and explain their reactions. Additionally, recorded classroom observations and stimulated recall interviews with journal entries further enriched the exploration of EFL teachers' emotions. This combined approach provided a comprehensive understanding of the EFL teachers' emotion regulation while teaching, offering deeper insights into their experiences and perspectives. Overall, the study aimed to help teachers better understand and address their emotional reactions during teaching, leading to improved strategies for managing emotional challenges.

Besides, the process model of emotion regulation should not be understood as being stimulus-reponse process or teachers being affected by external factors leading to their emotional responses. It is a looping process in which their emotions come and go and may be repeated. As shown in the transcripts of the classrooms in the current study, the teachers seemed to experience repeated emotions of irritation, dissatisfaction and anger and the seven teachers experienced similar emotions. This could be due to they all worked at the same institution and were all teaching English. Again, the subject matter, and the teaching and learning contexts both are specific matters leading to certain kinds of emotions of the EFL teachers in the current study.

One limitation of the current study comes from the tools for data collection. Non-verbal expressions related to teachers' emotions were not used for data analysis due to the scope of the study. Future studies thus can explore EFL teachers' emotions by combining verbal and non-verbal behaviours. Getting in-depth understanding of emotions is considered to be demanding and needs viewing from different perspectives. Future researchers should collaborate with researchers from other fields, such as a psychologist, to establish a more theoretical and reasonable insight into EFL teachers' emotional labor in relation to their teaching efficacy. The current study does not attempt to claim generalization from the phenomenological study approach since it only purposed to capture deep layers of meanings of EFL teachers' emotions while teaching.

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