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## THE VULNERABILITY OF NOVICE EFL TEACHERS IN FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL TEACHING ENVIRONMENT

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### ABSTRACT

Studies have investigated teacher vulnerability and its relation to teacher identity construction. Teacher vulnerability may emerge from internal and external conflicts based on teachers' experiences. Though studies covered internal and external challenges for teachers, they rarely compared the academic environment aspect. This research intended to see if environment variables as external factors caused different experiences and vulnerabilities in novice EFL teachers. Therefore, this research aimed to determine if the different academic environments in formal and non-formal settings posed distinct challenges for novice EFL teachers. This study used narrative inquiry with a reflection and interview to gather the data. The participants were four novice EFL teachers: two teachers from formal education (FE) and non-formal education (NFE). The results showed that FE and NFE teachers shared some challenges, including student participation and classroom management, that led to vulnerability. Still, FE and NFE teachers also shared their distinct challenges. The teachers had similar strategies to cope with their vulnerability, but FE and NFE teachers employed additional strategies to face their distinct challenges. This study may help teachers consider different teaching environments for identifying and overcoming vulnerability.

**Key Words:** formal education; non-formal education; novice EFL teachers; vulnerability

### ABSTRAK

Banyak studi telah meneliti kerentanan guru dan relasinya dengan pembentukan identitas guru. Kerentanan guru dapat tumbuh dari pertentangan internal dan eksternal, berdasarkan pengalaman para guru. Walau banyak studi telah mempelajari tantangan internal dan eksternal guru, namun belum banyak studi yang membandingkan aspek lingkungan akademik. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat apakah variabel lingkungan sebagai faktor eksternal menyebabkan perbedaan pengalaman dan kerentanan bagi guru Bahasa Inggris pemula. Maka dari itu, penelitian ini bertujuan untuk melihat apakah lingkungan akademik formal dan non-formal yang berbeda memberikan tantangan yang berbeda bagi guru Bahasa Inggris pemula. Penelitian ini menggunakan penelitian naratif dengan refleksi dan wawancara untuk mengumpulkan data. Responden studi ini adalah empat guru Bahasa Inggris pemula, dua orang dari pendidikan formal (PF) dan dua orang dari pendidikan non-formal (PNF). Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa guru pendidikan formal dan non-formal mengalami berbagai tantangan serupa, seperti partisipasi siswa dan manajemen kelas, yang merujuk pada kerentanan guru, namun guru PF dan PNF juga mengalami tantangan yang berbeda. Untuk mengatasi kerentanan mereka, guru juga menerapkan strategi yang serupa, namun guru PF dan PNF juga menerapkan beberapa strategi yang berbeda dalam mengatasi tantangan. Penelitian ini dapat membantu para guru untuk mempertimbangkan lingkungan mengajar yang berbeda dalam mengidentifikasi dan mengatasi kerentanan.

**Kata Kunci:** Pendidikan formal; Pendidikan non-formal; guru Bahasa Inggris pemula; kerentanan guru

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## INTRODUCTION

Teachers can experience vulnerability in their teaching experiences. Vulnerability is a complex emotional experience in various contexts (Lasky, 2005). The consequences of teachers' decisions (Manoj & Alex, 2017), along with the status of English and the culture around the teacher (Teng, 2020), may cause negative emotions that often lead to novice teachers' sense of powerlessness and failure (Teng, 2017). Those experiences influence a teacher's vulnerability, as in the teacher identity construction process, teaching experiences are often the source of both self-esteem and vulnerability (Teng, 2017). As teacher vulnerability can affect teachers' identity and, eventually, their classrooms (Anttila, Pyhältö, Soini, & Pietarinen, 2016; Lasky, 2005), teachers often hide or ignore it (Kelchtermans, 2018). However, teachers are suggested to embrace their vulnerability, as it is believed that embracing vulnerability makes better teachers (Kelchtermans, 2009), as it allows the teachers to be true to themselves and be adaptive in dealing with their vulnerabilities (Teng, 2020).

Teachers can identify and then deal with their vulnerability with reflection. To start dealing with their problems, teachers must first find and evaluate

their actions inside and outside the classroom. That way, the teacher can identify what the problems are and what the sources are. A reflection can be an appropriate tool for both identifying teacher vulnerability (Páez, Eudave Muñoz, Cañedo Ortiz, & Macías Esparza, 2020), as reflection does not only help teachers to consider the classroom space and "identify the knowledge immersed in it" (Páez et al., 2020, p. 13), including the problems and their causes but also their perception as the teacher (Alsup, 2018), including their strengths and weaknesses. The teachers can find ways to overcome vulnerability from the reflection results and use the qualities they possess.

Teachers' vulnerabilities arise from their teaching experiences. Teacher vulnerability often happens when teachers experience something out of their control, which affects them emotionally (Lasky, 2005). Both internal and external sources can cause teacher vulnerability. Both are interrelated and can cause displeasing feelings affecting teachers' decisions and performances. The internal aspects can be teachers' emotions, self-efficacy, and competence, while the external ones can be the school system and teaching environment.

Teachers' internal conflictions that may cause vulnerability include their

emotions, self-efficacy, and competence. Emotions can be the source of vulnerability (Yoo & Carter, 2017). As teachers find tensions, they inflict concerns (Francis et al., 2018) and stress (Gray, Wright, & Pascoe, 2017; Martins, Bispo, & Campos, 2016), which cause vulnerability. In addition, their inabilities, which may lead them to act outside of their own beliefs (Lasky, 2005), can cause teachers to feel powerless (Teng, 2017). Teachers need to have a grip on their emotions, as those can affect “their decision-making, interpersonal relationships, the trajectory of their teacher identity development, and the level of commitment they have to the profession overall” (Hong, Cross Francis, & Schutz, 2018). Teachers’ competence can also contribute to their vulnerability. The vulnerability may arise because of the teacher’s low sense of competence (Cattley, 2007; Florida & Mbato, 2020; Lasky, 2005). Novice teachers might not possess the knowledge or skills needed to interact and manage their new classes, and the emotional load from their self-consciousness in their competencies and autonomy are given to them can inflict vulnerability (Alsup, 2018; Cattley, 2007). Vulnerability can be caused by self-efficacy as well (Alsup, 2018; Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017). Teachers’ self-efficacy can emerge from

their emotions and competence. Teachers’ emotions and beliefs are interrelated (Barcelos & Ruohotie-Lyhty, 2018). While good emotions can inflict teachers’ pride and self-esteem (Teng, 2017), negative emotions can inflict low self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997; Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017). Related to competence, teachers’ perception of their abilities, especially from past failures and their mastery of their craft, can be the sources of low self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997).

Teachers’ internal conflicts may be caused by external factors that lead to unfavorable experiences. Not only teachers’ internal struggles (Jackson, 2018) stated that the environment around the teachers could cause stress. The interaction with the students might cause teachers’ powerlessness (Kelchtermans, 2009; Teng, 2017). Interacting with non-cooperative students makes teachers question their authority (Teng, 2017). The interactions with the other teachers and other parties (administrators, parents, etc.) also cause teachers discomfort (Zhu, Waxman, Rivera, & Burlbaw, 2018). Novice teachers seek acknowledgment from other significant parties (Kelchtermans, 2018), so the judgment, disagreement, or disapproval from colleagues or other parties on teachers’ decisions and autonomy can be the challenges that put them under

pressure or cause disappointment (Teng, 2017). The other external factor is the school system and regulation (Kelchtermans, 2009). The unsupportive regulations and policies challenge teachers' emotions (Teng, 2017). In addition, the systems where the teachers are judged based on their students' scores or where they cannot have the freedom to facilitate students' learning process (Kelchtermans, 2009) also confront teachers' agency. In coping and overcoming vulnerability while constructing their professional identity in the process, the teachers need to first identify their vulnerabilities from both factors.

Novice teachers can reflect on their experiences to assess their vulnerabilities and combat them. Novice teachers lack practical experiences, which is a disadvantage as it can reduce teachers' sense of preparedness and confidence in facing the class (Colson, Sparks, Berridge, Frimming, & Willis, 2017). Reflection can help teachers assess their performances to develop skills and construct their identity (Florida & Mbato, 2020). Páez et al. (2020) investigated the vulnerability of teachers in higher secondary education. In their study, internal difficulties (lacking pedagogical and material mastery and promoting students' autonomous learning) and external

challenges (students' background knowledge and learning resources) were found through reflection and action. The respondents could come up with solutions to their challenges by figuring out their difficulties. Zhu et al. (2018) investigated the student teachers' professional vulnerability at school. Similar to novice teachers, student teachers lacked practical experience in schools. It revealed that the student teachers' professional vulnerability was caused by five experience categories: professional connections, teaching approaches, different responsibilities, hierarchical positions, and the regulations for teaching practicum. Those experiences affected especially the STs' emotions. Upon reflection on their experiences, the STs took elaborate actions to cope with their difficulties, especially in hierarchical and micropolitical aspects. In line with the strategies for coping with vulnerabilities, Florida and Mbato (2020) studied novice and experienced teachers' strategies in turning vulnerability into professional identity. Both novice and experienced teachers used reflection to assess their conditions and find the best solution. The challenge for the novice teacher was the others' judgment, while the experienced teacher's challenge was workload. Upon finding the best solutions for their respective challenges,

both teachers developed teacher identity. Teachers need to constantly reflect on their decisions and performances as “reflective practitioners” (Harrison & Lee, 2011) to identify their weaknesses and eventually better themselves.

Both internal and external sources of vulnerability previously discussed can be either their strength or weakness, depending on teachers’ nature and perspective when reflecting on their experiences. Teachers do reflection as it helps them “to recognize their strengths and weaknesses” (Florida & Mbato, 2020, p. 9). In addition, knowing vulnerabilities can be the teacher’s strength, as it is the first step in their transformation (Andrzejewski, Baker-Doyle, Glazier, & Reimer, 2019). Teachers can then better themselves and overcome vulnerability by dealing with stress and keeping a positive relationship with the students (Florida & Mbato, 2020). The transformation process leads to teachers’ identity construction and resilience (Day, 2018).

As the internal and external factors in teachers’ academic experiences affect each other, different teaching environments may cause diverse vulnerability. The teaching environment includes all external aspects surrounding the teachers, such

as students, policies, culture, values, workload, colleagues, parents, and other parties (Florida & Mbato, 2020; Lasky, 2005; Teng, 2017) As the interaction with the environment surrounding the teachers is one of the sources of vulnerability, teachers in FE and NFE may have distinct experiences that cause internal confliction and therefore vulnerability. To achieve that, this study used narrative inquiry on teachers’ reflection to investigate this topic in both groups.

Internal and external sources inflict teacher vulnerability. Many types of research show identifying internal and external sources of vulnerability through reflection. In Páez et al. (2020), teachers identified teachers’ pedagogical competencies as their internal problem and students’ academic competencies as the external problem. Zhu et al. (2018) shared how the colleagues and mentors as the external causes affected the student teacher’s professional vulnerability. In Florida and Mbato (2020), the external sources, others’ judgment, and policy were the novice and experienced teachers’ challenges, respectively.

As previously mentioned, external factors can influence or even cause teachers’ internal conflicts. External factors are more challenging as teachers do not have the authority to control

them fully and, therefore, may harm their interactions and performances in teaching (Florida & Mbato, 2020; Kelchtermans, 2009). One instance of external factors is different teaching environments, such as formal and non-formal education. Pre-service teachers, even those who graduated from teacher education, are often not familiar with the distinct teaching environment in formal and non-formal fields, which triggers distinct vulnerabilities. As the teacher's surroundings often evoke teacher vulnerability, the different environments can cause distinct experiences and struggles. The teaching environment is different in formal and non-formal forms of education, as they have different values, curricula, policies, and purposes (BAN PAUD dan PNF, 2019). However, studies rarely compared how different teaching environments contribute to novice EFL teachers' vulnerability. Hence, this research aimed to determine the novice teachers' vulnerability in both teaching environments and how they cope with their vulnerability. The research questions for this study are "How did the different teaching environments between formal and non-formal education contribute to novice EFL teachers' vulnerability?" and "How did the novice EFL teachers in different teaching environments cope with their vulnerability?"

## METHOD

### Research design

This qualitative study identifies teachers' vulnerability in FE and NFE teaching environments and their ways of dealing with it. The qualitative study provides in-depth data and the narrative from the data analysis (Creswell, 2012). Several previous studies used this method to provide the teachers' vulnerability based on their unique conditions and experiences (Páez et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2018). The previous study by Florida and Mbato (2020) already implemented this method to investigate the vulnerability of novice and experienced teachers. This study, however, specifically used narrative inquiry design in addition to the qualitative method, which allowed the participants to reflect on their actions and experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This research design is characterized by the use of reflections, subjects' knowledge, and experiences (Creswell, 2012) in facing certain occurrences while respecting their cognitive, emotional, and evaluative capabilities. Therefore, narrative inquiry design encapsulates the subjects' narratives about the research topic. The researchers found narrative inquiry appropriate to be the research design of this study, as it enabled the researchers to find out the teachers'

whole experiences, perceptions, feelings, and thought processes in facing their vulnerabilities.

### Research site and participants

The chosen participants for this study were four novice EFL teachers, two from each FE and NFE group, selected using convenient sampling (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Razavieh, 2010), as not all teachers felt comfortable sharing their vulnerable experiences. Previous studies have investigated the vulnerabilities of novice teachers (Zhu et al., 2018), and some took a step further to compare novice teachers and experienced teachers (Florida & Mbato, 2020). Those studies also show the influence of the teaching environment on teachers. Due to that finding and the lack of research regarding the influence of the teaching environment, this study aimed to reveal the impact of different teaching environments on novice teachers. Thus, the participants from FE and NFE were chosen. This study limited the participants to EFL teachers who taught in senior high schools and English courses in Yogyakarta. Two participants, one FE teacher, and one NFE teacher, were in their first year of teaching, while the other two were in their second year of teaching.

### Data collection and analysis

The data were gathered using a semi-structured interview to reflect on their teaching experiences, concerning theories from Alsup (2018), Florida and Mbato (2020), Kelchtermans (2018), Teng (2020), and Zhu et al. (2018). Those theories regarding the teachers' vulnerability were put into five main semi-structured interview questions. The reflection included the teachers' positive qualities and their challenges inside and outside the classroom, as well as how they dealt with their challenges and what they learned from those experiences.

The data gathering process was conducted in August. The teachers were first contacted to be interviewed through Zoom or WhatsApp. The interviews were recorded and lasted around one hour. The results were then transcribed using the non-verbatim transcription. After being transcribed, the reoccurring themes or unique details were tabulated and categorized based on the found groups. The data then were analyzed by comparing and contrasting the previous studies, such as Alsup (2018), Florida and Mbato (2020), Kelchtermans (2018), Teng (2020), and Zhu et al. (2018), especially regarding the sources of teachers' vulnerabilities and the ways to handle teacher vulnerability. The data

presentation was in form of comparing and contrasting participants' results from both groups. This organization is similar to the previous studies by Florida and Mbato (2020), Páez et al. (2020), and Zhu et al. (2018).

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### Findings

#### Formal Education (FE) and Non-formal Education (NFE) Novice EFL Teachers' Vulnerability

The participants from both FE and NFE shared their reflections on their vulnerability. Table 1 shows teachers' perceptions of their qualities and how those helped them in their academic experiences.

Table 1. FE and NFE Novice EFL Teachers' Perception of Their Qualities

	FT 01	F T0 2	NFT0 1	NFT0 2
English proficiencies	✓	✓	✓	✓
Patience	✓	✓	✓	✓
Confidence	✓	✓	✓	✓
Communication skills	✓	✓	✓	✓
Teaching skills	✓	✓	✓	✓
Emotional management	✓	✓		
Adapting to changes	to ✓			✓

FE and NFE teachers had five common qualities: English proficiencies, patience, confidence, communication, and teaching skills. For example, regarding good communication and teaching skills, FT01 shared that she liked to teach and interact with the students, while NFT01 said she could teach well and was not shy.

*"For my qualities, I think my English is fine. If I am in the class, I am confident about my abilities. I like to teach and see students figure things out. I'm patient... and also like to interact with the students, like talking to them like they are my friends." (FT01)*

*"I think my English is good, and I'm patient. I can teach well, do other works, and I am not shy to talk to other tutors, principal, or owner." (NFT01)*

Teachers also shared distinct perceptions of their qualities. FTs shared good emotion management as their quality. In contrast, two teachers shared adaptability as teachers as their strength (FT01 and NFT02).

*"I can compose myself... and I can learn from other teachers or other sources to adapt to curriculum changes." (FT01)*

*"I can adapt well if there are changes in class, level, program, etc. because teaching those classes feels different." (NFT02)*



In addition to their qualities, the teachers also shared their challenges in teaching EFL classes. Table 2 shows teachers' challenges from their academic experiences inside the classroom.

Table 2. FE and NFE Novice EFL Teachers' Challenges inside the Classroom

	FT 01	F T0 2	NFT0 1	NFT0 2
Participation	✓	✓	✓	✓
Misbehavior	✓	✓		✓
Teacher's self-efficacy			✓	
Drop-out students				✓
Homeroom teacher responsibilities		✓		

Inside the class, FTs' challenges were students' online and offline learning behavior and low participation. Participation was also one of the NFTs' challenges, while misbehavior was also a challenge for NFT02.

*"Sometimes in Zoom, they just quiet, but when practicing, they say it's difficult. When offline, they chat or go out a lot, just some of them. Some students also really don't want to listen or don't have respect for teachers and just disrupt the class."* (FT02)

*"Sometimes they find ways to slack off, saying they are tired, or some of them don't want to do exercise. The working students*

*are busy, so they often late, miss the class, or assignment."* (NFT02)

Though teachers shared some similar challenges, FTs and NFTs had their challenges inside the class. For example, NFT02 had issues with students who could easily drop out of the course, while FT01 had to deal with responsibilities as a homeroom teacher. Though teachers perceived confidence as their strengths, NFT01 still had self-efficacy issues.

*"Some students drop out quite easily, and they're difficult to track."* (NFT02)

*"Some students are already smart enough, so I sometimes feel scared and not confident."* (NFT01)

*"I just don't think I'm prepared for the bigger responsibility of being a homeroom teacher."* (FT01)

In addition to teachers' challenges inside the class, they shared their challenges outside the class, as presented in table 3. Outside the class, the challenges included the curriculum, relation with other teachers, additional work, schedule, and training.

Table 3. FE and NFE Novice EFL Teachers' Challenges outside the Classroom

	FT 01	F T0 2	NFT0 1	NFT0 2
Curriculum demands	✓	✓		
Schedule			✓	
Additional work	✓	✓	✓	✓
Coordination				✓
Lack of training and guidance			✓	✓

As seen in Table 3, all teachers had challenges handling their additional work. The work included being a coordinator for events, finding teachers, and working aside from teaching.

*"I am new, so sometimes if there are events, other teachers want the younger ones to be the responsible ones." (FT01)*

*"We need to take additional work for course content like we just made a promotion video, and we took pics for our social media." (NFT01)*

*"We are kinda busy, and we have to work even without classes every day, so it's kinda hard if we must go try to find teachers." (NFT02)*

In addition to the common challenge, FTs and NFTs had more distinct challenges. The challenge that the FTs only faced was curriculum demands.

*"Probably understanding what the curriculum wants; sometimes we have a*

*training (diklat), but not quite helpful for the actual use at school." (FT01)*

*"In relation to curriculum, it's difficult to also provide the materials, like examples, readings, etc. that follow the curriculum but suit students' interests." (FT02)*

Similarly, some challenges were faced by only the NFTs. Those challenges were their schedule, coordination, and lack of training and guidance.

*"The worktime varies a lot, like one day I need to teach from eight to nine at night, which is super draining. We have other people responsible for our learning materials, and it's helpful for my workload, but if there are things I or my students cannot understand, I cannot directly solve it." (NFT01)*

*"Sometimes I don't know if I do things right because we lack supervision." (NFT02)*

### **Non-formal and Formal Novice EFL Teachers' Ways of Coping with Challenges**

After identifying their vulnerability, the participants also reflected on how they coped with it. The participants shared about the ways they solved problems inside and outside the class. Teachers perceived that their qualities helped them inside the classroom, as presented in Table 4.

Table 4. FE and NFE Novice EFL Teachers' Coping Strategies inside the Classroom

	FT 01	F T0 2	NFT0 1	NFT0 2
Managing emotion	✓		✓	✓
Improving and teaching English better	✓	✓	✓	✓
Negotiating with students	✓		✓	
Teaching flexibility	✓	✓		
Learning materials			✓	
Varying classroom delivery		✓		✓
Keeping a good relationship with students	✓			✓

By reflecting on their qualities and challenges, the teachers could identify how their strengths helped them solve their challenges and cope with their vulnerability. Teachers mentioned how improving their English and teaching it properly helped their self-efficacy.

*"I could learn English and improve quickly, and I felt that I rarely got critics about my language or my media uses when teaching."* (FT02)

In addition, some similar strategies were shared by FTs and NFTs. Teachers' strategies included managing emotion, negotiating with students, varying classroom delivery, and maintaining good student relationships.

*"When I face troublesome students, I try not to get carried away with my*

*emotions, keep being logical and calm."* (NFT01)

*"I can adapt myself well so when I have to make changes in my teaching. I could learn quickly and apply them."* (FT02)

*"I think I could communicate well with my students. To solve problems, I started to negotiate things with students. That way, I also tried to befriend the students, made them feel like they could share their feelings without being afraid or shy."* (FT01)

Though the teachers shared some common strategies, FTs and NFTs shared some distinct ones. FTs shared about being more flexible, while one NFT shared about learning teaching materials herself.

*"I think my English is good, and I learn quickly, but materials like IELTS were never taught in uni, so I learned them myself."* (NFT01)

*"I tried to be more flexible. For example, if students had good reasons for late submissions, for example, I can excuse them."* (FT02)

Teachers also had strategies to solve problems outside the class that was unrelated to teaching. The teachers shared those strategies in Table 5.

Table 5. FE and NFE Novice EFL Teachers' Coping Strategies Outside the Classroom

	FT 01	F T0 2	NFT0 1	NFT0 2
Communicating with parents or other teachers	✓	✓	✓	✓
Managing emotion	✓	✓		
Being discipline	✓	✓		
Solving issues in the institution			✓	✓
Communicating workload			✓	✓

The teachers' common strategy was to communicate with other teachers or parents. They collaborate with others to support students' needs or solve problems outside the class.

*"I communicate things with others, the homeroom teacher, and the parents, not to lecture the student, but to find the best solutions. If there are problems with other teachers, we just talk things out." (FT02)*

FTs only shared some strategies. Those strategies included managing emotions and being disciplined.

*"I think it's important not to be emotional also with other teachers, or with parents, a problem happens." (FT01)*

*"I always tried to follow the rules. I rarely got any warnings from misbehavior; good for me, for my supervisor, and good role model for my students." (FT02)*

Similarly, some strategies were only shared by NFTs. Those strategies

were working together to solve issues and communicating workload.

*"We can share ideas to solve things like marketing, interviewing tutors, etc. it's good to take part in solving problems." (NFT02)*

*"I started to initiate communication about my workload and students' condition with my class assistant so we can follow up troubled students" (NFT01)*

## Discussion

### Non-formal and Formal Novice EFL Teachers' Vulnerability

The teachers' awareness of their job helps them position themselves in their working environment and adjust their expectations. Both FTs and NFTs were aware of their job demands and their positions in it. FTs had low expectations of their salary and workload. Yet, those did not stop them from being teachers, as their experiences building the students' morale and knowledge were enjoyable and desired. Those were in line with Florida and Mbato (2020) that although their experience differed, they received similar emotions and found their purpose. Like FTs, NFTs knew that their classroom management might be easier than school teachers but with more difficult English subjects. Though their experience differed from FTs teachers, as they did not focus on

students' moral development, through their experience, the NFTs found their purpose to support the students' understanding of English in different areas that they could not get in schools (Florida & Mbato, 2020).

The teachers' qualities differ from one to another, and by identifying those qualities, teachers can use them in dealing with difficult situations. The qualities that the FTs and NFTs shared included their teaching and communication skills, English proficiencies, confidence, and patience, which were their internal strength. They are in line with Alsup (2018), Cattle (2007), Florida and Mbato (2020), Gangloff and Mazilescu (2017), and Lasky (2005). Inside the class, FTs and NFTs could utilize those qualities in their teaching, dealing with students' problems and avoiding emotional burnout, which could help them overcome their vulnerability and increase resilience (Alsup, 2018; F. Teng, 2020). Outside the class, their qualities helped with their relationship with other teachers (FTs and NFTs), and FTs also mentioned their behavior regarding policies. The peer pressure from other teachers and the unsupportive policies may induce stress and disappointment (Kelchtermans, 2018; Teng, 2017), but the teachers' strengths helped them prevent those negative emotions. In

addition, only two teachers from each form of education mentioned emotion management and adaptability. They show that those qualities are not easily possessed but can support teachers' teaching and avoid burnout (Lasky, 2005; Teng, 2020).

Aside from their qualities, teachers also mentioned their challenges in their academic experiences. For inside the class, all teachers mentioned students' participation as their challenge. Despite their confidence in communication and classroom management, FTs and NFTs still had challenges engaging the students in the learning process. Their decisions in the classroom may affect the way students behave (Manoj & Alex, 2017), so students' low participation may lower teachers' self-efficacy (Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017), sense of authority (Teng, 2017), and ultimately their emotions, as stated by Hong et al. (2018), which lead to vulnerability. NFTs also mentioned their teaching efficacy, students' motivation, and dropping out. Those challenges can relate to each other. The students can easily drop out of English courses as it is not formal education and is just supplementary. That mindset may cause lower motivation for students, as they can get out anytime once they do not feel any benefit from the course or other personal reasons. That influences

teachers' efficacy, as they may feel that their teaching is insufficient to keep the students motivated (Bandura, 1997; Gangloff & Mazilescu, 2017). For outside the class, FTs mentioned curriculum and school events. The frequent changes in the curriculum may make teachers lack a sense of preparedness which can lower their teaching efficacy (Kelchtermans, 2018). The school events are related to the additional workload that requires more effort, and inexperienced teachers may find pressure and expectations from other teachers (Kelchtermans, 2018). NFTs also mentioned additional workload and payment. Those are related as they need to handle more work, sometimes outside of teaching, to gain more salary.

### **Non-formal and Formal Novice EFL Teachers' Ways of Coping with Challenges**

The teachers reflected on their performances in the classroom to identify the causes of their vulnerability and acted upon them. FTs and NFTs dealt with their problems by being communicative with the students and other workers outside the classroom, along with individual learning. Being communicative helped them in maintaining interpersonal relationships with others to avoid emotional burnout

from a bad working atmosphere, like stress, low cooperation, self-consciousness, anxiety, and uncertainty, in line with Alsup (2018), Francis et al. (2018), Gray et al. (2017), and Teng (2017). Individual learning helped them increase their competence and improve their teaching self-efficacy, as stated by Cattley (2007), Florida and Mbato (2020), and Lasky (2005). Regarding the FTs' strategies, they included being patient and being understanding, which could also help their emotion management and interpersonal relationship with others, in line with Hong et al. (2018), and Lasky (2005).

In contrast, NFTs dealt with their problems by adjusting themselves to additional work, enjoying the work, collaborating with their co-workers, and clearing up job descriptions. NFTs work in shifts depending on the class they teach, and they need to get accustomed to working outside their shifts to cover other classes. As they alter their attitude toward their work, they will find their working experience more enjoyable (Florida & Mbato, 2020). NFTs also avoided peer pressure by making sure they understood their job descriptions and, at the same time, collaborated and helped other workers (Kelchtermans, 2018).

From their reflection, teachers found ways to deal with their problems

and learned to better themselves as a teacher. Their self-reflection helped them overcome their vulnerability and develop their identity as teachers, supporting Alsup (2018) and Zhu et al. (2018). FTs and NFTs learned that their emotion management influenced the way teachers presented themselves in the classroom, and that influenced students' emotions, and reduced burnout, in line with Florida and Mbato (2020) and Lasky (2005). Classroom management increased their self-efficacy, reducing their vulnerability and burnout, as stated by Barcelos and Ruohotie-Lyhty (2018). FTs also included time management, which is included in their classroom management and maintaining good interpersonal relationships with students and other teachers in line with Kelchtermans (2018).

## CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

This study explored the vulnerability of FE and NFE novice EFL teachers and the ways they coped with their vulnerability. FTs and NFTs were aware of their job demand and positioned themselves in the said working environment. They shared similar qualities, including patience, English proficiencies, confidence, communication skills, and teaching skills, while some teachers added

emotion management and adaptability. Those helped them in their teaching, dealing with the students, and working with other teachers, while FTs added about being disciplined and NFTs added about individual learning. For challenges, their similar challenges included student participation, while NFTs added dropping out students, which is a more common phenomenon in courses compared to in schools. The teachers coped with their vulnerability by increasing communication and individual learning. FTs also shared being patient and understanding, while NFTs' ways were adjusting to shifting changes, enjoying work, being collaborative, and making clear their tasks. From their experience, they learned the importance of classroom and emotion management, while FTs added time management and good interpersonal relationship. This study is still limited to the number of participants. Future researchers can vary the types of teachers, types of education, and types of subjects and include more participants. The implication of this study is for teachers to use reflection to identify their vulnerability and find ways to deal with it.

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