Job Crafting as a Tool for Cultivating Reflective Teaching: Insights from Iranian EFL Teachers

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Abstract: This study explores Iranian EFL teachers' perceptions of integrating job crafting interventions with reflective teaching to enhance their teaching practices and well-being. Using a grounded theory approach, 25 experienced EFL teachers (minimum 5 years of teaching experience) were selected through purposive sampling to participate in a multi-phased intervention based on the PERMA model. The intervention included training workshops, self-set job crafting assignments, and reflective practices. Data were collected through semi-structured and focus-group interviews and analyzed to identify recurring themes. The findings revealed three themes: 1) reflective mindset, 2) sense of belonging and engagement, and 3) reflective avoidance. Results indicate that job crafting improved teachers' self-efficacy, motivation, and resilience, though some experienced challenges in implementation. Practical implications suggest incorporating job crafting strategies into teacher training programs to foster reflective teaching and enhance teacher well-being. This research contributes to the field by bridging positive psychology and reflective practices in SLA contexts, emphasizing the value of teacher-centered interventions in professional development.

Keywords: EFL Teachers, Grounded Theory Approach, Job Crafting Intervention, Teachers' Attitudes, Positive Psychology, Reflective Teaching.

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Introduction

Second/foreign language education presents a significant challenge globally, intertwining the complexities of teaching with emotional dynamics (Derakhshan, 2022; MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014; Mercer, 2020). The effectiveness in this domain requires cultivating the language teachers' awareness and skills to simultaneously empower them to handle several job-related issues and psycho-emotional fluctuations (MacIntyre & Mercer, 2014). Arguably, teachers are the most valuable and costly part of an educational system (Maslach & Leiter, 1999). In this vein, teacher educators have highlighted the significance of reflective teaching (RT) as a means for teachers to evaluate their instructional beliefs and methods critically and continually to enhance the quality of their teaching (Wright, 2010). Reflective practice enables teachers to break away from routine teaching approaches by continually evolving and gaining insights into their teaching effectiveness. While the benefits of reflective practice are widely acknowledged, the paucity of research on its psycho-emotional outcomes is missing from RT studies. To address this drawback, researchers have tried to approach RT practices in innovative and effective ways to deepen the impact and significance of RT within L2 contexts. However, the number of studies that have considered the integration of RT practices with the psycho-emotionality of teachers has yet to be discovered. In other words, language teaching as an emotionally intense occupation calls for psychologically driven interventions to be infused within RT practices. Most research on reflective teaching focuses on traditional self-reflection methods, often neglecting how positive psychology strategies like job crafting can improve teachers' perception, engagement, and well-being. Grounded in the PERMA positive psychology model, job crafting has demonstrated the potential to foster a deeper sense of workplace autonomy, competence, and relatedness However, its application to reflective teaching, especially in the specific context of Iranian EFL teachers, remains largely unexamined. Besides, previous studies on job crafting primarily focus on organizational settings or specific aspects of job design without sufficiently considering its potential in educational settings. Moreover, there is a lack of research on how teachers can apply job crafting systematically and reflectively to enhance their professional development, particularly in contexts such as Iran. Therefore, this study aims to address the gap by exploring the Iranian EFL teachers' perception of the transformative effects of reflective teaching, mainly through integrating positive psychology-driven strategies, such as job crafting within reflective teaching practices, to cultivate teachers' reflective abilities in their teaching practices. Specifically, it investigates how job crafting, when aligned with positive psychology principles, can help cultivate teachers' reflective abilities, enhance their

engagement with their teaching tasks, and promote well-being. While reflective teaching is gaining attention, its application in EFL contexts still faces significant theoretical and practical challenges (Akbari, 2008; Cuban, 1989). The significance of this study lies in its contribution to the existing literature by exploring EFL teachers' insights on how reflective teaching practices coupled with positive interventions can impact their reflective abilities in instructional settings. Functionally, there is an opportunity to explore positive psychology interventions (PPIs) in real-world educational settings, primarily since more organizational leaders and human resource managers are investing in teachers' reflective teaching and well-being.

Literature Review

Reflective Teaching

Reflection, introduced by Dewey (1933) in the SLA context, is a structured process where each thought builds on the previous one, promoting coherent insights. Within the realm of teaching, pedagogical reflection, or RT, involves a deliberate examination of one's instructional practices to identify successful strategies and areas for improvement. This process encompasses a critical self-dialogue that enables teachers to investigate, evaluate, and challenge not only their teaching beliefs but also their competency, along with their methodologies; therefore, it leads to cultivating personal growth and the evolution of teaching practices (Cirocki & Widodo, 2019). Reflectivity is considered an invaluable activity among teachers, particularly EFL teachers. Fulfilling psychological needs is considered a key benefit of RT. RT enables teachers to cultivate positivity and self-assurance. By reflecting on their teaching practices, educators identify areas for improvement, leading to enhanced delivery of lessons, improved teaching practices, and better student outcomes. Consequently, observing positive changes in performance and student achievements boosts teachers' confidence. Collaborative reflection activities foster a supportive environment where teachers share experiences, offer guidance, and provide emotional and professional support (Dewert et al., 2003). Thus, reflection equips teachers with a profound understanding of context-specific pedagogy and the ability to make informed decisions, thereby elevating the quality of teaching practices (Loughran, 2002).

Recent studies in Iran emphasize the benefits of reflective practices for EFL teachers. Ayoobiyan and Rashidi (2021) demonstrated that reflective teaching significantly enhances teacher resilience and instructional effectiveness, improving classroom management and student outcomes. Besides, Shirazizadeh and Karimpour (2019) highlighted that reflection

can reduce burnout and perfectionism among Iranian EFL instructors, making it an essential component of professional development. Such findings align with broader research on reflection's role in fostering emotional regulation and professional growth (Fathi et al., 2021). Similarly, teachers who actively engaged in self-reflective practices successfully resolved specific teaching issues and mitigated negative factors such as stress and anxiety, benefiting students and teachers (Shirazizadeh et al., 2019; Tabassi et al., 2020). Besides, studies showed that self-efficacy, professional development, and reflective teaching could improve EFL teachers' job performance (Soodmand Afshar & Hosseini Yar, 2019). The psychological well-being of language teachers is significantly influenced by factors like reflective teaching, highlighting the importance of incorporating RT practices into teacher training programs to enhance their professional fulfillment and mental health (Ismail et al., 2023).

Despite the advantages of RT, a review of relevant literature reveals that this approach faces several challenges. Understanding these barriers is essential for promoting reflection within educational contexts (Akbari, 2008; Harun & Al-Amin, 2013). Research has also examined these barriers, particularly the resistance to reflection due to institutional problems, self-directional problems, and problems with reflective teaching principles (Tajik & Ranjbar, 2018). Akbari et al. (2010) delves into specific practical barriers, such as limitations imposed by textbooks and assessments, financial and administrative challenges, and the inability of some educators to engage in reflective practice effectively. However, there appears to be limited research addressing the psychological barriers associated with RT practices. A review of related literature indicates the reflection processes from external experiences to internal insights. For instance, conflicts can prompt individuals to guide the reflective process inward, which is in contrast with the core reflection model proposed by Korthagen and Vasalos (2005). They recommended that the core reflection model is a rewarding experience where individuals apply their inner potential as a foundation for acting.

Job Crafting Interventions

Job crafting is defined as proactive employee behavior that involves modifying job resources, challenges, and demands to enhance job satisfaction and performance (Tims et al., 2012; Petrou et al., 2012). Specifically, seeking resources involves mobilizing additional job support, such as soliciting feedback or pursuing learning opportunities, which aligns with the conservation of resources theory (Hobfoll, 2001) that emphasizes the importance of resource accumulation for motivation. Additionally, seeking challenges—such as taking on new tasks or responsibilities—helps avoid boredom and foster personal growth (Harju et al., 2016;

Guskey, 2002). Job crafting encompasses both expansion-oriented strategies (seeking resources and challenges) aimed at increasing internal and external resources for meaningful work, and reduction-oriented strategies focused on minimizing job demands and optimizing workload to alleviate stress and mental strain.

Applied Linguistics is currently in the early stages of recognizing job crafting as a potential strategy that can be used to improve well-being, and the paucity of research in this regard calls for more consideration. Influenced by the introduction of PP to the language teaching profession, researchers have shown that both contextual factors (such as school climate) and individual factors (such as job crafting) significantly impact teacher wellbeing (Nazari & Alizadeh Oghyanous, 2021; Viac & Fraser, 2020). Interestingly, the impact of job crafting appears to be greater than the school climate (Dreer, 2022). Through an empirical inquiry, Dreer (2022) examined that teachers' well-being is indeed attributed to the school climate and individual job crafting, highlighting the importance of school climate and job crafting for supporting teacher wellbeing. Within the Iranian context, Nazari and Alizadeh Oghyanous (2021) explored factors influencing teacher well-being, such as occupational stress, turnover intentions, and grit. While their findings highlight the importance of addressing wellbeing in a high-stress educational environment like EFL teaching, they did not specifically examine job crafting as an intervention. Their findings underscore the potential of job crafting as a proactive tool for addressing challenges specific to high-stress educational environments, including EFL teaching. This aligns with international research by Van Wingerden et al. (2017), demonstrating that job crafting enhances teacher resilience and engagement, particularly when integrated with reflective practices. Besides, Zheng et al. (2024) examine the intricate interactions between gratitude, job crafting, teacher psychological well-being, and teacher-student relationships among EFL Chinese teachers, highlighting meaningful links. It is needless to say that previous research, however, indicates that reducing and hindering job demands has been found to have no apparent relationship (Tims et al., 2012) or even a negative connection with work engagement (Petrou et al., 2012). While it is conceivable that job crafting has a favourable impact on the work environment, it may also lead to energy depletion, and the short-term energetic costs of job crafting may outweigh the benefits of job crafting (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019; Tims et al., 2012), resulting in undermining momentary and daily work engagement. These findings suggest that the job crafting process may have unexpected effects, as indicated by Petrou et al. (2012), who found a negative relationship between daily reducing job demands and daily work engagement, contrary to the expected positive relationship.

In summary, the literature review indicates that, although there has been considerable research on reflection and RT, the number of studies on implementing teaching programs to address teachers' reflectivity, especially from the teachers' point of view, is limited, and L2 teachers' perceptions from the psychological perspectives regarding reflective teaching and job crafting practices have not been adequately explored, especially in Iranian contexts. To attend to this neglect, this research seeks to address this gap by exploring the EFL teachers' perceptions of integrating RT methodologies with job crafting intervention within the context of language education, aiming to provide valuable insights into how such an integrated approach can positively influence language teachers' reflective practices. Specifically, the study addressed the following research question:

RQ1: What are the outcomes of applying a job crafting intervention program to Iranian EFL teachers' reflective practices?

Method

Participants and Context

Twenty-five Iranian EFL teachers with teaching experience of 8 to 12 years were recruited as the study participants, using a purposive non-random sampling method for the semi-structured interviews. According to Creswell (2014), the purpose of this qualitative research is to intentionally select participants who can offer valuable insights into the research questions or issues. In this case, 25 Iranian EFL teachers were intentionally selected based on the criteria that required a minimum of 5 years of experience in EFL teaching and the application of reflective teaching practices, such as journaling or other relevant reflective techniques. Specifically, teachers with a minimum of 5 years of EFL teaching experience were chosen to ensure they possessed sufficient professional background to effectively reflect on and engage with the concepts of reflective teaching and job crafting. The decision to select experienced teachers was driven by the assumption that individuals with considerable teaching experience are more likely to have developed a nuanced understanding of their teaching practices and possess the reflective capacities required for the job-crafting intervention. Moreover, experienced teachers are better equipped to evaluate and adapt their practices, making them ideal participants for exploring the transformative effects of job-crafting strategies on reflective teaching.

Their prior exposure to reflective teaching techniques, such as journaling or peer feedback, ensured they were familiar with these methods and could meaningfully engage with the intervention. The sample comprised approximately fourteen females (56%) and

eleven males (44%), aged between 20 to 31 years old, who were recruited from four private schools in Tehran, where each institutional term consists of eighteen 45-minute sessions that are held twice a week and the assessment is based on a written examination and spoken interviews to ensure that students have mastered a certain level in language proficiency framework before going on into the next educational level. All the educators completed a teacher training course at their institution as part of a standard certification requirement. The curriculum was designed based on an integrated multi-skilled syllabus, emphasizing communicative language teaching and offering discussion classes addressing speaking skills. The participants work at different schools of the same organization. The organization conducts monthly workshop sessions that focus on various pedagogical strategies, with a particular emphasis on reflective journaling among EFL instructors, encouraging participants to integrate reflective practices into their teaching methodology, including the application of journals as a tool for professional growth and self-assessment. All the teachers volunteered to participate and were not compensated for their contribution. Concerning their academic degrees, the majority of the participants (72%) were M.A. holders (N = 18), and the rest were (20%) B.A. holders (N = 5) and (8%) Ph.D. candidates (N = 2). Participants were graduates of several English-related majors, including Applied Linguistics (N = 17), English Language Translation (N = 5), and English Language Literature (N = 3). A focus-group interview was organized with teachers based on their availability and willingness to participate.

Semi-structured Interview

Based on existing literature, one semi-structured interview was developed for this study (Appendix). After the intervention phase of the study, the interview questions aimed to investigate teachers' perceptions towards their reflective teaching practices with techniques to redesign their jobs through interview questions. The interviewer probed further with follow-up questions to encourage participants to elaborate on their responses. The first interview initially solicited general descriptions of the situation felt the effectiveness of the intervention on their reflective teaching practices and then provided examples if participants required additional clarification. In this study, the interview consisted of three open-ended questions to explore EFL teachers' perceptions towards implementing PPIs (e.g., job crafting) in their reflection practices. The participants were interviewed until data saturation was achieved and no new information was obtained (O'Reilly & Parker, 2013). This decision was made collaboratively between the researchers and an independent reviewer or advisor. All interviews were carried out in Persian to maximize respondents' ease. Indeed, it was

essential to elucidate that the interview protocol was initially developed in Persian to ensure linguistic coherence and cultural relevance. Participants could add any additional information at the end of the interviews. To ensure linguistic transparency and relevance, four academicians from ELT departments reviewed the interviews. After the interview questions were modified and ambiguities were clarified, they were piloted among eight similar non-participants (Nassaji, 2020). The interview sessions were transcribed verbatim in Persian following the interviewees' informed consent. Each interview took approximately 50 minutes, and the respondents were free to terminate the interview without providing a reason.

Procedure

Data were collected through semi-structured and focus-group interviews to understand EFL teachers' perceptions of their reflective teaching through applying job crafting intervention. One week after the treatment, all the teachers' participants were interviewed after signing a consent form guaranteeing ethical considerations. Furthermore, qualitative data were collected through interviews and analyzed using the grounded theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) to gain insights into the experiences of EFL teachers in redesigning their jobs. The focus-group interviews also included some key questions that were aligned with semi-structured interviews, allowing participants to elaborate on their attitudes toward their reflective teaching and the outcomes released as a result of applying job crafting intervention. The researchers served as facilitators and encouraged all participants to participate actively in the discussion. The semi-structured interview and the focus-group interview, on average, lasted 45 min and 75 min, respectively. During this, different thoughts and ideas were shared, and for ease of communication and idea exchange, interviews were conducted in Persian. Data were transcribed to English and analyzed using the grounded theory approach, which applied all three levels of grounded theory coding: open, axial, and selective. To ensure the trustworthiness of the data analysis, member-checking was employed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), wherein interviewees' opinions on the derived themes and codes were sought, and their agreement was obtained.

Furthermore, the data analysis was evaluated using cross-case participants (Nassaji, 2020), demonstrating the transferability of the findings since the EFL teachers were from different cases with different perspectives. Finally, to ensure the confirmability of data analysis, 30% of the emerging codes and themes were presented to a colleague with experience in qualitative data coding and checked using cross-source comparison to review

our interpretations and explanations. A Cohen's Kappa analysis was calculated between the first and second data sets.

Content

The intervention utilized in this current research project is a multi-phased approach involving three steps (Table 1). In the first phase of the intervention, the teachers were encouraged to modify their jobs to align with their fulfilment and well-being. This was achieved through a six-day workshop focused on the PERMA model, Job crafting theory, and reflective teaching. The first session explained the job crafting theory; the following session focused on introducing reflective teaching techniques, including peer feedback, a diary or booklet and peer observation in which these reflective teaching techniques were practiced during each session. The teachers were engaged with the benefits of applying reflective teaching methods. The subsequent sessions focused on different elements of the PERMA model and related job crafting techniques. At the end of each session, the participants were asked to categorize their tasks into three types (e.g., tasks they spent much time on, tasks that need to be done often, and tasks that had to be done sometimes) and reflected on their job tasks and sub-tasks to identify their job demands and job resources relevant to their job requirements they would like to change to increase positive emotions, engagement, relatedness, meaningfulness, and a sense of achievement. They were then encouraged to brainstorm crafting ideas for these changes inspired by the specific PERMA element discussed. The participants received support and feedback to refine their ideas. This peer-to-peer sharing and support encouraged participants to develop more effective crafting ideas that aligned with their strengths and values. The trainers helped the participants during exercises, and each session ended with preparing a Personal Crafting Plan (PCP), which included specific actions to implement the identified changes. Indeed, the PCP included specific crafting actions that participants undertook to apply in the implementation phase. In this vein, they identified the work situations or characteristics they wanted to change, utilizing crafting techniques considering various PERMA elements. Participants were also encouraged to take notes of their goals, plans, and achievements in a small booklet, which recorded their progress and was a tool for reflection on their journey throughout the training in the future-oriented phase.

The second phase involved implementing weekly job crafting experiments within the employees' routine work settings, using a diary or logbook to document progress. Following this, participants were instructed to execute their action plans in their work settings for the subsequent four weeks. This approach aligns with the principles of proactive goal setting

([Parker et al., 2010](#)), which signifies that the goals set by teachers should be structured toward the short term. The choice of four weeks was based on both theoretical and practical considerations. Consistent with the proactive goal-setting principles, a short-term strategy enables employees to maintain focus, and a 4-week period is sufficient for participants to cultivate PERMA elements in their work and craft their jobs to adjust their job demands and resources. During this Job crafting intervention, participants must perform a series of job crafting actions extracted during the workshop sessions in a specific order per week (Table 1).

Subsequently, the respondents evaluated the degree of achievement attained by their self-generated job modifications for four weeks. Indeed, they participated in one session to share their experiences of teaching based on the applied intervention, discussing the opportunities and challenges. This process allowed them to gauge the effectiveness of their personalized job crafting method and its contribution towards their professional growth and development.

Table 1. Schematic of Job Crafting Intervention

Phase	Description
Phase one: workshop sessions---	Introducing Teachers to the concept of job crafting and its benefits.
	Introducing Teachers to the concept of RT, its techniques, and benefits.
	Teachers were familiarized with techniques to Enhance:
	1) Positive emotion
	• Gratitude journaling: to encourage teachers to write down three things they are grateful for each day)
	• Mindfulness exercises (e.g., deep breathing exercises and progressive muscle relation, to teach teachers to calm their minds and physical tensions)
	• Providing fun activities (i.e., talent shows, games, and movie days)
	• Incorporating humor into lessons and interaction with students, by sharing funny anecdotes or using light-hearted jocks related to the lesson materials
	• Developing the ability to forgive the mistakes of others and reflecting on mistakes without judgment.
	• Cultivating optimism and hope
	• Trying something new once a month (e.g., learning a new skill, exploring a new interest, and traveling)
	• Receive support and feedback to refine their ideas
	• preparing a PCP
	• Registering goals, plans, and achievements in a small booklet

Phase	Description

2) Engagement:

• Searching for challenging jobs or tasks in line with one's preferences (e.g., developing a new curriculum, school project, script writing and performance)

• Encouraging collaboration and teamwork among teachers (e.g., co-developing a lesson plan, organizing a school event, and creating a system of celebrating collaborative success)

• Receiving support and feedback to refine their ideas

• Preparing a PCP

• Registering goals, plans, and achievements in a small booklet

3) Positive Relationship:

• Fostering positive relationships by being kind and helpful towards others.

• Acknowledge and honor the successes of others through sharing and celebration.

• Teachers anonymously share the challenges they are facing through the Anonymous feedback box.

• Recognizing and expressing thankfulness and admiration towards colleagues through gratitude and appreciation.

• Receiving support and feedback to refine their ideas

• Preparing a PCP

• Registering goals, plans, and achievements in a small booklet

4) Crafting meaning:

• Encouraging teachers to reflect on their values and motivations for working in education.

• Encouraging teachers to find purpose and meaning in their work by focusing on the impact they have on students' lives (e.g., sharing stories of students' achievement and growth to inspire teachers)

• Receive support and feedback

• Preparing a PCP

• Registering goals, plans, and achievements in a small booklet

5) Accomplishment:

• By goal-tracking journals where teachers can write down their goals, and strategies; Monthly check-ins where teachers share their goals and progress with peers for accountability and support)

• Celebrating and acknowledge successes and accomplishments in both individual and team contexts (e.g., a success wall where teachers can post their accomplishments and shouts-out to each other)

• Receive support and feedback to refine their ideas

Phase	Description
	• Preparing a PCP
	• Registering goals, plans, and achievements in a small booklet
Phase Two: Job crafting self-set assignments	• Teachers put their plan into action • using a diary or logbook to document progress
Phase Three: Reflection	• Teachers reflected on the changes they have made

Data Analysis

Data were collected through semi-structured and focus-group interviews to understand EFL teachers' perceptions, strategies, and experiences regarding the intervention. The interviews were transcribed to English and analyzed using the grounded theory approach, which involves applying all three levels of grounded theory coding: open, axial, and selective. The first step involved open coding, where each interview transcript was read multiple times to identify initial themes and concepts. During this stage, the researchers carefully labeled significant statements and phrases that reflected EFL teachers' perceptions of reflective teaching, particularly about the job crafting intervention. These initial codes were categorized based on their content, allowing for the emergence of key themes related to the teachers' experiences and views on integrating positive psychology-driven strategies in their teaching practices. After open coding, axial coding was applied to organize the identified themes into more abstract categories. The researchers examined the related themes and grouped them around central concepts. This process involved identifying connections between the themes, such as how job crafting impacted teachers' engagement with their work. The axial coding phase helped refine and consolidate the themes into core categories representing the teachers' overall perceptions of the intervention. In the final phase, selective coding was used to integrate the core categories identified in axial coding into a cohesive narrative. This stage

focused on developing a comprehensive model explaining how teachers perceived restructuring their teaching practices through the job crafting intervention. The researchers identified a central category that encapsulated the main outcomes of the intervention while also linking all other categories to this central theme, ensuring a clear, systematic representation of the teachers' experiences and perceptions. Throughout the analysis process, the researchers constantly compared data across interviews to ensure consistency and depth in the emerging categories.

Results

A semi-structured and focus-group interview was conducted to determine how the teachers responded to the intervention implemented. The justification of our attempt lay in the argument that language teaching is "an emotionally intense practice" (Agudo & de Dios, 2021, p. 520) and to help facilitate a positive integration of reflective teaching into English language teaching contexts; therefore, equipping teacher with solutions in applying reflective teaching principles is of utmost significance in their reflective teaching practices. In this vein, the authors followed the principles of the grounded theory approach (Corbin & Strauss, 1990) to analyze interviews conducted with 25 EFL teachers. As depicted in Figure 1, three major themes emerged from the analysis. Two of these themes are positive outcomes- reflective mindset and a sense of belonging and engagement- while one indicates negative outcome- reflective avoidance.

Reflective Mindset

Participants argued that the intervention significantly contributes to acquiring positive constructs such as self-efficacy, motivation, resilience, and self-esteem. Reflective efficacy was the salient construct that emerged from the responses, which pertained to the strategies employed by the individuals to hone their language teaching skills and become more efficient and knowledgeable teachers. In doing so, 19 teachers mentioned that the intervention helped them to feel more efficacious in the process of reflection. Many emphasized how students' performance reinforced their confidence in their teaching abilities, particularly in their reflective teaching practices:

> Teacher#12: *"Through this experience, I've seen how celebratory events, like the school publication party, boost my confidence and motivation. This awareness*

has deepened my embrace of reflective teaching practices, helping me combat self-doubt and reinforce my belief in my effectiveness as an English educator."

Teacher#6: "*I faced the challenge of vulnerability in reflecting on my teaching...Now, I see reflection as a chance for growth rather than criticism, which has improved my confidence. Even small adjustments in my approach can significantly benefit my students.*" *Finding ways to make tasks more engaging enriches my student's learning experience and enhances my fulfilment as an educator. Besides, keeping a reflective diary has been crucial for ongoing refinement and improvement.*"

Nearly all participants (N = 21) reported experiencing a sense of joy and a stress-free atmosphere during the intervention sessions, which in turn fostered a conducive environment for self-reflection:

Teacher#13:" *… It made me more mindful and attentive to my students' needs. By incorporating humor and fostering positive emotions, I create a better environment for reflection. When I feel happier and less stressed, I'm more open to self-reflection... Furthermore, having a supportive supervisor and colleagues promotes trust and openness, creating a safe space to experiment and share my ideas without fearing mistakes.*
Teacher#9: " *…Peer feedback was eye-opening, helping me identify strengths and areas for growth while alleviating stress…*"

Our findings indicate that the integrated intervention inspired participants to look for challenging tasks and responsibilities. Throughout the study, participants frequently discussed their sense of achievement, evidenced objectively -through honor and awards received- and subjectively, reflecting their personal feelings of success. In this context, EFL teachers frequently expressed confidence in their ability, which resulted in their reflectivity.

Teacher#15: "*... My colleague and I asked for more responsibilities, such as designing engaging and relevant lesson plans; therefore, peer feedback was very helpful.… After the accomplishment and mastery, the success is attributed internally, and rather than feeling overwhelmed, I think, what can I change in this moment to make it better? .…*"

Applying the integrated approach also helped teachers to reform their beliefs of failure and success in their approach to coping with different challenges:

Teacher#25*: "... Before, using reflective teaching practices was overwhelming due to lack of support and resources...Now, I adapt my teaching strategies to make the most of available resources. For example, some students no longer enjoyed the program and felt isolated. To address this, I introduced project-based activities like making a scenario to play or writing a book..."*

Teacher #10*: "... Through reflection, I can identify unproductive activities and inefficiencies within my instructional methods, managing the time constraints... For instance, during workshop sessions, I learned to break tasks into subtasks, helping me focus on tasks that directly improve student learning...."*

Moreover, the reflective mindset cultivated among teachers demonstrated feelings of empowerment regarding their ownership of the professional development journey:

Teacher#16: "... The administrators allow us to be involved in student learning decisions and our professional development...I'm more committed to decision-making when working with peers and the supervisor, strengthening my involvement in reflective teaching and self-evaluations."

Teacher#15: " *.... By engaging in reflective teaching and job crafting activities, I have developed a stronger sense of ownership over my teaching practices and gained confidence in making positive changes... For instance, after reflecting on my classroom management, I realized that student-led discussions could improve engagement... Besides, reflecting on our values and motivations gives me a sense of meaningfulness at work...."*

The Sense of Belongings and Engagement

The next theme that emerged from the data were the sense of belonging and engagement, which involves becoming deeply involved in activities such as teaching, often referred to as "flow" (Oxford, 2016). Data from the interview revealed that participants felt a strong sense of engagement in their tasks, often losing track of time when engaged in enjoyable activities. Teachers reported a noticeable increase in emotional and cognitive engagement due to the intervention. Many participants (N = 19) expressed that during the

intervention, they had received support from their colleagues and experienced feelings of love, support, and gratitude at work, highlighting the importance of positive intimate relationships for reflectivity. All participants acknowledged the support they received from their peers, which helped them shape their roles, receive practical feedback, and boost their intrinsic motivation for reflection on their teaching methods. Further, they stated that the structured workshops created a reflective and discussion-friendly environment, allowing them to reevaluate their teaching practices.

Teacher#16: *"While finances contribute to happiness, my main focus is the connection I build with my coworkers.... The book writing and cooking meeting sessions fostered a sense of community, which energized me and strengthened my reflective teaching practices... When I encounter misbehavior in the classroom, I feel supported by my peers .... Previously, I felt stressed when addressing misbehaviors."*

Teacher #7: *" .... Kind words from others foster a sense of belonging... Organizing school events and celebrating our successes has made my colleagues feel like a second family... I became more open to asking for help... Before, I hesitated to share my reflections due to fear of criticism...."*

Teacher #5: *"The atmosphere at school was incredible... Everyone was motivated to enhance students' learning through enjoyable activities like cooking and writing sessions.... Understanding my students' needs and strengths also made reflective journaling much easier... Previously, I didn't feel part of a team and received little feedback on the journaling task.... By taking time to reflect on my classes and seeking input from colleagues, managing my journal has become much easier."*

Teacher# 6: *"A supportive workplace climate is one where teachers feel psychologically safe and empowered to tackle complex tasks... I found this safe environment through the intervention. I hesitated to share my reflections in the past because I doubted their value. Now, I enjoy collaborating with my colleagues, who are encouraging me to self-criticize."*

Teacher#15: *"...I worked in a school with limited opportunities to develop my teaching skills. However, the team highly recommended reflective techniques such as journaling, but they weren't effectively presented in practice... I thought*

about how important it is to expose my perceived inadequacies in a system with little support... We now collaborate in a positive atmosphere....”

Reflective Avoidance

Job crafting may have mixed effects; while it might address the benefits, some teachers opted to limit their responsibilities and efforts, resulting in reflective avoidance.

Teacher #14: " ...I feel overwhelmed by organizational changes, leading to a heightened workload and pressure.... This crafting feels complex, and it put me under stress involving my mind to do my best... I don't think this intervention helped my reflective teaching ... Reflective teaching takes time and effort, and applying this intervention just doubled my difficulties...”

Teacher#1: "... I try to minimize meetings and time spent communicating with colleagues... Some things inside stopped me from being accompanied by colleagues at work. It might be because of a sense of self-protection by not disclosing critical information.... Besides, I dislike power conflicts that may arise when working with colleagues on their reflective journey."

Teacher#8: "I feel powerless ..... I'm not of these types of characteristics... Prosocial or goal orientation characteristics are useful in increasing the sense of reflectivism... I'm not really into these types of behaviors in my occupation...."
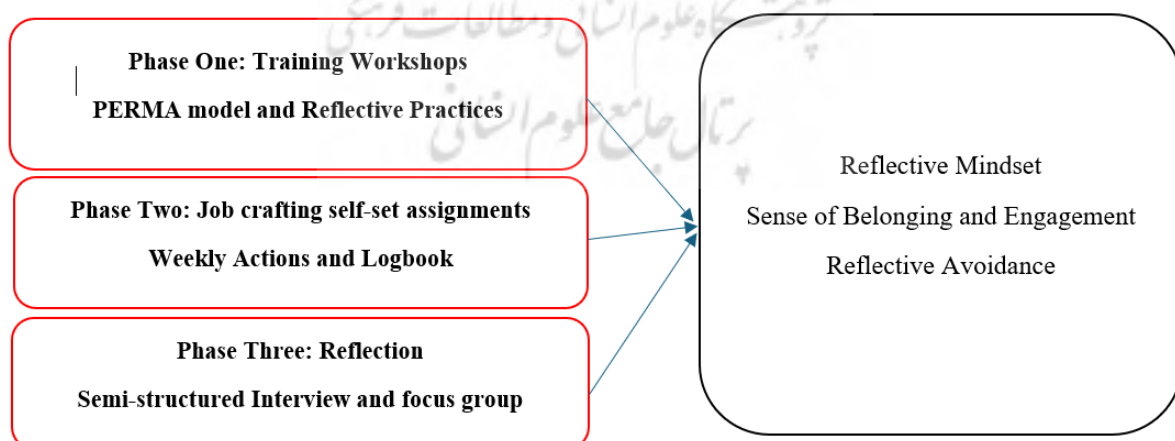

Figure 1. Overview of Study Phases and Key Findings

Discussion

This study contributes to the growing body of research on reflective teaching by integrating job-crafting strategies rooted in positive psychology. The findings demonstrate that job crafting interventions can enhance teachers' reflective capacities, fostering a reflective mindset that includes self-efficacy, motivation, and resilience. This aligns with Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, which posits that belief in one's capabilities influences performance outcomes. These evolving perceptions further motivate educators to invest more effort into refining their professional roles. Further, in alignment with job crafting theory, job crafting originates from an individual's desire to modify certain aspects of their work. Specifically, participants in our study articulated various factors that influenced their reflective teaching practices due to job crafting interventions. They identified personal traits that sometimes supported their goals while, at other times, posed challenges to achieving intended job crafting objectives related to reflection in their teaching processes. Also, as induced from the findings, job crafting practices can trigger teachers' desire to share their thoughts with colleagues and satisfy their need to negotiate the problems raised due to theoretical and practical insufficiency. The idea is justifiable relative to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), who discussed that motives like the need for autonomy, the desire for social connections, and the pursuit of a positive self-image are pivotal for those aiming to alter their job quality. Thus, through engagement in job crafting, teachers may experience an uptick in self-confidence, leading to enhanced dedication to job crafting efforts aimed at fulfilling their objectives (Batova, 2018; Buonocore et al., 2018; Janssen et al., 2016), including the application of reflective teaching practices as highlighted in this study.

Furthermore, personal characteristics, such as prosocial tendencies (Batova, 2018) or a goal-oriented mindset (Cohen, 2013), emerge as beneficial factors that support teachers in pursuing reflective teaching practices and enhancing their overall performance in the present study. In research on promoting reflection within professional development courses, teacher educators often encounter many cases where the reflection process seems ineffective, suggesting something deeper (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005). This study explores a recent trend in psychology, emphasizing that rather than merely addressing problems, the goal is to cultivate individuals' best qualities, highlighting the significance of positive traits or character strengths. This aligns with Peterson and Seligman (2003) that character strengths lead to positive outcomes, such as contributing to personal fulfillment, illustrating the connection between these strengths and one's identity with a sense of purpose (Korthagen & Vasalos, 2005). They also mention that when individuals identify their strengths, it often connects to a

feeling of authenticity and excitement in expressing those traits. In the present study, teachers were about to adjust their mindset when they were introduced to job crafting. Thus, the gradual introduction of this new perspective typically helps participants move beyond old patterns, leading to increased enthusiasm about the progress they witness in themselves.

The emergent theme of a sense of belonging and engagement highlights the role of supportive environments in promoting teacher well-being. Teachers who received peer feedback and participated in collaborative activities reported greater professional fulfillment and a stronger commitment to reflection. These findings support Bakker and Demerouti's (2007) job demands-resources model, which emphasizes the importance of social and emotional resources in enhancing job engagement. Data analysis revealed that the positive work atmosphere derived from job crafting promotes teachers' reflective teaching practices. In other words, job crafting is a response to unfavorable work conditions such as work overload, lack of resources, and interpersonal conflict, focusing on coping strategies in terms of an unfavorable work atmosphere and thus gaining control over the job rather than solely an individual desire to promote meaning and performance at work (Berg et al., 2010; Sturges, 2012). EFL teachers consistently noted the effectiveness of their involvement in treatment sessions on their reflective teaching practices. This sense of community and support makes them feel more motivated to persist in their effort, encouraging a more reflective approach to their teaching practices. Our results thus align with previous research (Audenaert et al., 2020; Kerksieck et al., 2019), showing that teachers are more likely to seek more resources when they possess social resources (i.e., colleague support). Besides, the data analysis reveals colleague support as a protective mechanism, enabling FL teachers to cope with the hindering demands of their jobs without being concerned about negative interpersonal consequences from their peers, which aligns with Plomp et al. (2019). However, colleague support might inadvertently highlight the negative aspects of one's job (Gray et al., 2019), thus discouraging individuals from pursuing new opportunities. Research also demonstrates the importance of various contextual factors affecting job crafting. The more a supportive work environment enhances proactive and reactive motivations, promoting positive forms of job crafting, the less a restrictive work environment leads to avoidance-based job crafting, irrespective of the underlying motivations (Berg et al., 2010; Petrou et al., 2012). Job resources are considered essential drivers of motivation, equipping individuals with the means to achieve their professional objectives. Environments enriched by adequate resources such as autonomy, social support, constructive feedback, and opportunities for professional development are inherently motivating, allowing individuals to flourish and fulfill their needs for autonomy,

competence, and belonging (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Resource-rich settings also have an extrinsic motivational component, encouraging individuals to exert more effort in their work. Effective work engagement occurs when individuals possess adequate resources to implement reflective teaching practices, thus mitigating the adverse impact of job demands while promoting personal development and fulfillment (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The present study's findings align with the previous ones, indicating that enhancing job resources through job crafting notably fosters teachers' engagement in reflective teaching practices. Interventions to strengthen personal resources enhance engagement by positively influencing individuals' self-evaluations. Positive self-assessments are theoretically associated with positive constructs such as resilience (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). This sense of self-efficacy and optimism enables them to persist and remain committed to their work in pursuit of their objectives.

However, the theme of reflective avoidance underscores potential barriers to implementation. Factors such as time constraints, increased workload, and lack of intrinsic motivation were identified as significant challenges (Berg et al., 2010). For instance, Van Wingerden et al. (2013) declared that insufficient time is a severe factor in implementing new collaborative work methods. Besides, once individuals begin job crafting, they might find that their goals must be realistic and attainable. If these goals are perceived as too ambitious, frustration or abandonment of efforts can occur. Moreover, individuals often understand the complexities of job crafting—such as pursuing promotions—only after experiencing the realities, which can lead to challenges in coping with increased workloads or responsibilities, making the expected benefits harder to achieve (Buonocore et al., 2018; Kossek et al., 2016). These results suggest that while job crafting can be beneficial, its success depends on contextual and personal factors. Future teacher training programs should address these barriers by offering targeted support, such as structured time for reflection and peer collaboration.

Implications

This study provides several actionable insights for teacher education programs. Firstly, this study suggested that teacher education programs should incorporate job-crafting practices aimed at helping teachers deal with reflective avoidance. These programs can empower teachers to promote positive experiences for L2 learners by embedding job crafting techniques into the curriculum. For example, programs could include specific workshops on job crafting techniques, peer feedback, and structuring reflection into everyday teaching

practices. This enhances teachers' awareness regarding their learners' needs and is responsive to specific L2 classroom issues. This highlights the need for practical workshops and strategies that improve teachers' reflective mindsets and effectiveness. In this vein, programs should include job crafting workshops emphasizing goal setting, peer feedback, and reflective journaling. Besides, the study implied that teacher educators should prioritize psychologically driven courses wherein teachers feel encouraged to share their reflections, collaborate on challenges, and be prepared to address diverse L2 class issues through a reflective and responsive mindset. By doing so, teacher education programs can prepare educators equipped with enhanced reflective mindsets, senses of belonging, and engagement, as implied by the findings, hence increasing instructional quality and learner achievements. In addition, the gradual integration of job-crafting techniques into teaching routines can help mitigate the initial resistance and workload concerns associated with such interventions. Specifically, teachers can focus on different phases of the job crafting procedures to diagnose the areas of their teaching that require more attention and improvement. By addressing these factors, educational institutions can foster a culture of continuous professional development that benefits both teachers and students.

Conclusion

This study confirms that theoretical foundations underlying reflective teaching can be effectively implemented in practical settings by developing teacher education programs that prioritize putting theory into practice through PPIs. The present study shed light on EFL teachers' multifaceted attitudes toward applying an integrated approach to their reflectivity. The themes from the data (a reflective mindset, a sense of belonging and engagement, and reflective avoidance) offer valuable insights into the potential benefit of incorporating job crafting intervention within reflective teaching into an SLA context. The findings also suggest that integrating job crafting interventions within reflective teaching practices can help address barriers like reflective avoidance, creating a more supportive and sustainable environment for teachers and a more responsive learning context for the learners. This approach underscores the importance of systematically incorporating such interventions into teacher training programs to bridge the gap between theory and practice, ensuring educators have the tools to engage in continuous professional growth.

From a theoretical standpoint, our findings align with a large body of literature supporting the integration of PP into teacher education. This approach not only enhances reflective practices but also contributes to the overall well-being of educators, encouraging a

holistic perspective that values emotional and psychological health as fundamental components of effective teaching. The study further demonstrates that integrating job-crafting strategies into reflective teaching practices can enhance teacher self-efficacy and foster more meaningful teaching experiences. The study also highlights that job crafting can lead to higher job satisfaction, personal growth, and a stronger connection to the teaching profession.

However, the researchers in this study primarily obtained short-term insights into EFL teachers' practices, indicating a need for further investigation in this area. Longitudinal studies could provide a more comprehensive understanding of how job-crafting interventions influence teachers' reflectivity and professional growth over time. In addition, efforts should be made to broaden the scope of reflective teacher education programs to include more participants so researchers can more reliably connect changes in teaching practices to job crafting strategies, especially in Iranian contexts. Expanding the diversity of teacher training programs will ensure that findings are applicable across various educational contexts, enhancing this research's generalizability and practical value. Further research should also explore how job crafting can impact students' engagement, motivation, and language proficiency, as these factors are critical not only for improving EFL learners' academic performance and well-being but also for evaluating of job crafting-based teacher education courses. Besides, exploring PP principles to foster teacher reflectivity may present promising venues for boosting teacher satisfaction, resilience, and performance in language education while reducing turnover intentions. Besides, conducting comparative research across various educational settings and cultural contexts could deepen our understanding of the elements that affect EFL teachers' perspectives on implementing job crafting and their reflective practices.

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Declaration of Conflicting Interests

No conflicting interest.

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Appendix

The purpose of this interview is to explore your perspectives on incorporating interventions into your reflective teaching practices. There are no correct or incorrect responses, as we're interested in your personal insights, experiences, and opinions. We will ask you three primary questions, and depending on your responses, we might ask additional questions. Feel free to add whatever you think describes you as an English teacher:

1. How do you believe intervention has influenced your ability to critically evaluate your teaching practices?

2. Can you provide some examples of how intervention has prompted you to adjust your teaching strategies or goals for ongoing improvement?

3. Have you found any challenges or barriers in implementing reflective teaching practices and positive psychology strategies in your classroom? How do you overcome these challenges to ensure continuous growth and improvement?