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Teaching Style Preferences as a Function of Self-Efficacy, Emotion Regulation, Reflective Teaching, and Mindfulness in Teaching: A Voice from an EFL Context

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Abstarct

The mental health of teachers is an important issue in education. However, few studies have examined how self-efficacy (S-E), emotion regulation (ER), reflective teaching (RT), and mindfulness in teaching (MT) affect teachers' teaching style (TS). This study aimed to explore the correlation between S-E, ER, RT, and MT with TS in EFL teachers in Iran. The Teaching Style Inventory (TSI), the Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), the Language Teacher Emotion Regulation Inventory (LTERI), the English Language Teacher Reflective Inventory (ELTRI), and the Mindfulness in Teaching Scale (MTS) were used to measure S-E, ER, RT, MT, and TS. The results showed that S-E, ER, RT, and MT were positively correlated with TS. The findings indicated that EFL teachers who had high S-E, high ER skills, high RT practices, and high MT awareness were able to use more effective TS strategies to facilitate students' learning. The study suggests that enhancing S-E, ER skills, RT practices, and MT awareness among EFL teachers can improve their TS preferences and outcomes. The study also provides some pedagogical implications for relevant stakeholders and opens up new avenues for further research.

Keywords: self-efficacy, emotion regulation, reflective teaching, mindfulness in teaching, teaching style, EFL teachers

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Introduction

In the English as a Foreign Language (EFL) context of Iran, teaching style assumes a crucial role within the dynamic educational landscape (Richards, 2020). EFL teachers' teaching style (TS), according to Zhang et al. (2020), encompasses their instructional approaches, strategies, and overall demeanor in the classroom, exerting a profound impact on students' language learning experiences and outcomes. Essentially, teaching style (TS) represents the perspective of L2 instructors and their practical approach (Abdar & Shafaei, 2022; Kazemi & Soleimani, 2013). As teachers strive to create effective and engaging learning environments, understanding the importance of TS in this context becomes essential.

One significant psychological construct that has garnered substantial attention in educational research is teacher self-efficacy (S-E). Teacher S-E refers to teachers' beliefs in their own abilities to positively influence students' learning and attainment (Tompson & Dass, 2000). L2 teachers' S-E is a fundamental concept that expresses an instructor's ability to assess their potential in creating an effective L2 learning environment (Putwain & von der Embse, 2019). As highlighted by Martin and Mulvihill (2019), S-E is closely related to the strategies and procedures employed by instructors in their professional work. S-E beliefs shape the way L2 teachers set objectives and design classroom activities (Ma, 2022). When exploring TS, teacher S-E emerges as a significant aspect to consider, as it directly influences the instructional choices and behaviors that teachers incorporate into their teaching practices. By understanding the correlation between TS and teacher S-E, valuable insights can be gained regarding how specific TSs contribute to increased confidence and efficacy among EFL teachers in Iran.

Another salient aspect of teacher psychology with implications for TS is emotion regulation (ER). According to Taylor et al. (2020), ER encompasses teachers' ability to effectively manage and control their emotions during classroom interactions. The emotional states of teachers can significantly impact their TS, influencing their instructional approaches, classroom management strategies, and the overall dynamics of teacher-student relationships (Chang & Taxer, 2020; Namaziandost et al., 2023). By delving into the correlation between TS and ER, it becomes possible to shed light on how different TSs might be associated with the emotional experiences encountered by EFL teachers in Iran and how these emotional experiences, in turn, shape their instructional choices.

Reflective teaching (RT), characterized by teachers' contemplation and evaluation of their instructional practices (Aslan et al., 2022; Farrell, 2015), holds great importance as a pedagogical practice. As noted by Kharlay et al. (2022), it involves reflecting upon classroom experiences, analyzing teaching strategies, and making informed adjustments to enhance learning outcomes. Investigating the correlation between TS and RT offers valuable insights into how specific TSs contribute to heightened levels of self-reflection, subsequent professional growth, and overall improvements in instructional practices among EFL teachers in Iran.

Within the field of EFL education, mindfulness has gained recognition as a transformative approach. Mindfulness, defined as the intentional focus on the present moment without judgment (Emerson et al., 2017), holds potential for enhancing teacher-student relationships, instructional effectiveness, and overall well-being. Simply put, mindfulness refers to the awareness that arises from deliberate reflection (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Mindfulness in teachers (MT) can be defined as an awareness that allows individuals to recognize both internal and external experiences as they occur (Brown et al., 2007). By understanding how TM correlates with TS, valuable insights can be obtained regarding the impact of incorporating mindfulness practices on the selection, execution, and adaptation of TSs by EFL teachers in Iran.

Given the points above, this study explored the correlation between TS with S-E, ER, RT, and MT in the EFL context of Iran. This study holds significant value as it is the first of its kind conducted within the EFL context of Iran. By addressing the correlation among the constructs, it pioneers the investigation of these relationships specifically in the Iranian EFL setting. The novelty of this study contributes to filling a gap in the existing research and expands the literature on TSs in the context of Iran. By examining these relationships, the findings of this research have the potential to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in EFL education and provide practical implications for EFL teachers seeking to enhance their teaching practices and overall effectiveness.

Literature Review

Self-Efficacy

The concept of S-E relates to individuals' beliefs in their ability to perform a specific behavior that will lead to desired outcomes (Bandura, 1997). This construct influences both affective and cognitive factors, including self-perception and the ability to regulate behavior accordingly (Bong & Clark, 1999). Within the field of education, teacher S-E specifically refers to an instructor's confidence in their competence to make decisions and take actions necessary for effective teaching (Schunk & Pajares, 2002). It has been found that teacher S-E impacts various aspects of teachers' personal and professional lives (Martin & Mulvihill, 2019) and is a significant predictor of teachers' self-determination, commitment, enjoyment, and overall professional well-being (Amirian et al., 2022).

Teacher S-E can be traced back to Bandura's (1997) self-efficacy theory, which emphasizes educators' confidence in their ability to engage in instructional processes and effectively handle challenges (Tompson & Dass, 2000). According to Bandura (1997), the development of S-E is influenced by multiple factors, including experiences of competence, emotional arousal, interpersonal or linguistic encouragement, biological or emotional states, and social or verbal reinforcement. Among these factors, experiences of competence have the highest predictive potential for S-E (Bandura, 1997). Helsin (1997) suggested that to achieve mastery, individuals should first break down complex problems into simpler components, which can increase their likelihood of success. The second influential factor contributing to the development of S-E is emotional arousal, which suggests that observing the

successful performance of others can impact an individual's S-E (Tompson & Dass, 2000). Another influential factor is interpersonal or linguistic encouragement, which depends on an individual's interpersonal relationships (Schunk & Pajares, 2002). Additionally, physiological or affective states can either facilitate or hinder an individual's S-E tendencies, and achieving emotional balance can affect S-E levels. All sources of efficacy are subject to automatic and cognitive evaluation (Bandura, 1997).

Reviewing the literature reveals the positive impact of S-E on teachers. For example, Amirian et al. (2022) discovered that the combination of S-E and higher-order thinking skills predicted university teachers' inclination to apply various TSs. Similarly, Buric´ and Kim (2020) demonstrated that S-E influenced teachers' management of classroom and cognitive activities. Besides, the findings of Fathi et al. (2020) suggest that teacher S-E can predict their psychological health and professional satisfaction. Likewise, Namaziandost et al. (2023) disclosed that university teachers with healthy emotional regulation states possessed higher levels of S-E beliefs and were more engaged in job duties. Additionally, Barni et al. (2019) found that motivation significantly predicted teacher S-E and openness to change. What is clear from these studies is that the correlation between teacher S-E and TS has not been explored in the Iranian EFL context. Thus, this study aims to address this gap.

Emotion Regulation

In teaching, emotions play an essential role as both positive and negative emotional experiences can either facilitate or hinder teachers' daily activities (Namaziandost et al., 2023). Attribution theory and appraisal theory have been proposed to elucidate the role of emotions in individuals' daily lives (Frenzel, 2014). Attribution theory focuses on the specific causal evaluations of events, whereas appraisal theory takes a broader perspective and examines people's mental appraisals of events to determine if they are consistent with or conflict with stated objectives (Jacob et al., 2017). Frenzel et al. (2020) have identified several major appraisals for teacher emotions, including teachers' goals, coping potential, motivation, and the interrelationships between teachers and students. Emotions can be conceptualized in two ways: the first conceptualization characterizes emotions as transitory and relatively intense experiences, while the second conceptualization characterizes emotions as continuous states, in contrast to the first conceptualization of emotions as transitory experiences. Additionally, emotions can be viewed in a more trait-like manner where they are considered almost fixed in time (Gross & Barrett, 2011). To have a deeper understanding of ER process in teachers, the trait-like perspective of emotions is often adopted, with a concentration on the emotions that are typical of teachers in the workplace (Wood et al., 2008).

In order to manage and adjust experienced emotions, the concept of ER has been defined as the result of biological, psychological, and cognitive mechanisms that educators utilize to modify their emotions in various situations (Frenzel, 2014). These processes give rise to ER, which can be viewed as a dynamic process that allows instructors to regulate their emotions as they become more apparent over time

(Gross, 1998a). As part of this process, the duration, onset, and intensity of teachers' emotional experiences may change (Taxer & Gross, 2018). To provide a clearer understanding of the meaning of ER, it has been further defined into two types: intrinsic ER and extrinsic ER (Gross & Barrett, 2011). Intrinsic ER occurs when teachers feel a sense of responsibility to manipulate and modify their emotions, while extrinsic ER relates to circumstances where teachers attempt to manage the emotions of others (ER in others).

Over time, various theories have been proposed to explain the processes involved in ER. The Hot / Cool System, developed by Mischel and Ayduk (2004), draws a parallel between ER and willpower. The cool system is thought to operate in adulthood and helps regulate strong emotional reactions (Sutton et al., 2009). The Strength Model, proposed by Schmeichel and Baumeister (2004), defines ER from the perspective of self-regulation theory. Gross (1998a, 1998b) presented a process model of ER that introduces five temporal steps involved in emotion modification. The process model of ER comprises five stages, namely situation selection (SS), situation modification (SM), attentional deployment (AD), cognitive transformation (CT), and response modulation (RM). Antecedent-focused behavior is believed to take place during SS, SM, AD, and CT stages, while RM involves making changes to the emotional response generated (Gross & Thompson, 2007).

Heydarnejad et al. (2021b) have proposed a model for L2 teacher ER that includes six facets: SS, SM, AD, reappraisal, suppression, and seeking social support (SSS). This model is built upon Gross' (1998a, 2014) process model of ER and the literature on ER (e.g., Gross & Thompson, 2007; Gross, 2014; Taxer & Gross, 2018) and teacher ER (e.g., Richards, 2020; Chen & Cheng, 2021). The basis for SS, SM, and AD in this model is derived from Gross' (1998b, 2014) process model for ER, while the concepts of reappraisal and suppression were developed following the research of Gross and John (2003). The final factor, SSS, which analyzes the social aspects of teachers' work lives in balancing their emotional experiences, was based on the output of Jennings and Greenberg (2009).

The proliferation of scholarly investigations into the topic of teacher ER has yielded novel insights into its potential benefits for teachers' well-being. Morris and King (2018) inspected the traces of ER in enhancing teachers' confidence. Their research findings suggest that a healthy state of ER can mitigate feelings of frustration and stress among university teachers. Furthermore, Chang and Taxer (2020) demonstrated that equipping teachers with effective ER techniques can reduce the likelihood of losing one's composure when faced with disruptive behavior from students. In addition, Fathi et al. (2021) unraveled that ER could mediate the association between teacher S-E and burnout. Following a similar research trajectory, Namaziandost et al. (2022) honed in on the interplay between ER and immunity within the context of L2 education at the tertiary level. Their study results disclosed that the cultivation of higher-order thinking skills and ER can bolster effective immune function. These findings underscore the importance of maintaining a healthy state of ER in balancing the demands of teaching activities. However, the

aforementioned studies revealed that it is essential to explore the association between ER and TS in the EFL context. This gap is addressed in this study.

Reflective Teaching

John Dewey (1933) established reflection as a more complex thought process that requires one to carefully examine a piece of information or knowledge in the context of its reasons. Reflective teaching (RT) comprises two distinct components: reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Schon, 1983). Reflection-in-action pertains to the reflective process that occurs during instructional activities, whereas reflection-on-action occurs either prior to or following instructional activities (Akbari et al., 2010). The practice of RT serves to counteract impulsive and habitual behaviors (Farrell, 2015) and affords instructors the opportunity to reflect upon and evaluate their progress.

Farrell (2015) asserts that RT can alleviate instructors' indecisiveness and facilitate improved instruction. To this end, Akbari et al. (2010) put forth a five-dimensional model of RT encompassing pragmatism, cognition, learner (affect), metacognition, and critical thinking. The practice of RT involves a progression from theory to application, with reflection serving to activate instructional competence and foster professional autonomy (Lawrence-Wilkes & Ashmore, 2014). Through the practice of RT, teachers gain enlightenment and ensure their professional advancement (Malmir & Mohammadi, 2018). Aliakbari et al. (2020) arrived at a similar conclusion, noting a strong association between RT, job satisfaction, and autonomy. The teachers who engage in higher levels of RT experience burnout and demotivation less frequently (Rashtchi & Sanayi Mashhour, 2019). Furthermore, Shirazizadeh et al. (2019) demonstrated that RT is positively correlated with teacher resilience. Besides, Ayoobiyan et al. (2021) uncovered that Iranian EFL teacher resilience was affected by their RT. Recently, Namaziandost et al. (2023) uncovered that RT was a strong predictor of the EFL teachers' ER and an immunity in Iran. The review of the literature discloses that the connection between EFL teachers' RT and TS has received scant attention in Iran. Accordingly, this lacuna was a major impetus to conduct this study.

Mindfulness in Teaching

The roots of the notion of mindfulness lie in Eastern religions, such as Hinduism and Buddhism (Baer et al., 2012). Mindfulness is the deliberate and unbiased monitoring of current moment occurrences (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Davis and Hayes (2011) further describe mindfulness as an ongoing process, while Brown et al. (2007) view it as a means of attending to various aspects of experiences. The cultivation of mindfulness is linked to a healthy state of self-awareness and self-understanding, as people with a significant amount of mindfulness are capable of successfully managing their affections and thoughts (Iani et al., 2019). The mechanisms involved in mindfulness can be classified into two categories: self-regulation of attention and a consciousness that is not closed off but rather open and receptive to the here and now (Bishop et al., 2004).

Given its educational significance, mindfulness has been increasingly incorporated into teaching practices, including L2 teaching. For example, the study by Flook et al. (2013) found that MT had positive effects. Participants experienced reduced psychological symptoms and burnout, improved classroom organization and performance on a computer task related to emotional attention, and increased self-compassion. Moreover, in a systematic review, Emerson et al. (2017) found that TM was a strong predictor of ER among teachers. Additionally, Kuru Gönen (2022) investigates practical methods for developing MT within the L2 teaching context. The study findings suggest that teachers should acquire and implement strategies that foster MT, such as engaging in meditation and breathing exercises. These studies indicated that the association between MT and TS has not been well explored in the EFL context of Iran. Given this gap, the present study aims to fill in this lacuna.

Teaching Style

TS preferences are indicative of an instructor's philosophy, thoughts, and respect toward the many components that are involved in the process of education and instruction (Jarvis, 2004). In essence, TS encompasses all pedagogical activities and strategies employed by teachers in their classrooms (Cooper, 2001). Various classification schemes have been proposed to explicate the concept of TS, with the most comprehensive and well-known being that of Grasha (1996). Grasha's categorization places TS between the extremes of teacher-centered and student-centered styles and introduces five distinct TSs: 1) expert, 2) formal authority (FA), 3) personal model (PM), 4) facilitator, and 5) delegator. Expert, FA, and PM are considered teacher-centered TS, while facilitator and delegator are indicative of student-centered TS.

Teachers who perceive themselves as experts and structure class activities with comprehensive information tend to adopt an expert style of teaching. In contrast, the formal authority (FA) style of teaching involves teachers assuming the role of authority figures who supervise their students, with less attention paid to students' emotional factors. Personal model (PM) teachers expect their students to emulate their strategies and approaches. In the facilitator style of teaching, educators prioritize self-learning, self-assessment, and self-discovery, and assign tasks that promote learner autonomy. Teachers with a delegator style of teaching design tasks that promote group collaboration and instill self-confidence in their students (Grasha, 1996).

Teacher-student interaction (TS) has been shown to be highly correlated with teacher personalities, according to studies. For example, Cooper (2001) argued that introverted teachers tend to assign individual tasks and written assignments to their students, while extroverts prefer group and oral activities in their classrooms. Moreover, Karimnia and Mohammadi (2019) found that TS is influenced by teachers' gender, teaching experience, and brain dominance, while Mousapour and Khorram (2015) reported that emotional intelligence impacts teachers' TS. In studies focused on TS, the effect of self-regulatory constructs in guiding student-centered TS was evident (e.g., Evans et al., 2008; Heidari et al., 2012).

Aims of the Study

In light of the crucial role played by the aforementioned constructs in enhancing L2 instruction and the dearth of research investigating their interrelationships, this investigation endeavored to inspect the contributions of S-E, ER, RT, and MT to TS in the Iranian EFL context. Drawing on relevant literature and theoretical frameworks, a conceptual model was developed to depict the dynamic interplay between S-E, ER, RT, MT, and TS. The proposed model was then subjected to a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and a structural equation modeling (SEM), two powerful statistical techniques commonly employed to examine the structural validity of latent variables and relationships among multiple variables, respectively. SEM, in particular, is an increasingly popular multivariate approach for analyzing causal connections in scientific research (Riazi, 2016) and was employed in this study to assess the proposed model's validity. The followings are the research questions (RQs) that were formulated to achieve the aims of this study:

RQ1. Does EFL teachers' self-efficacy influence their teaching style?

RQ2. Does EFL teachers' emotion regulation influence their teaching style?

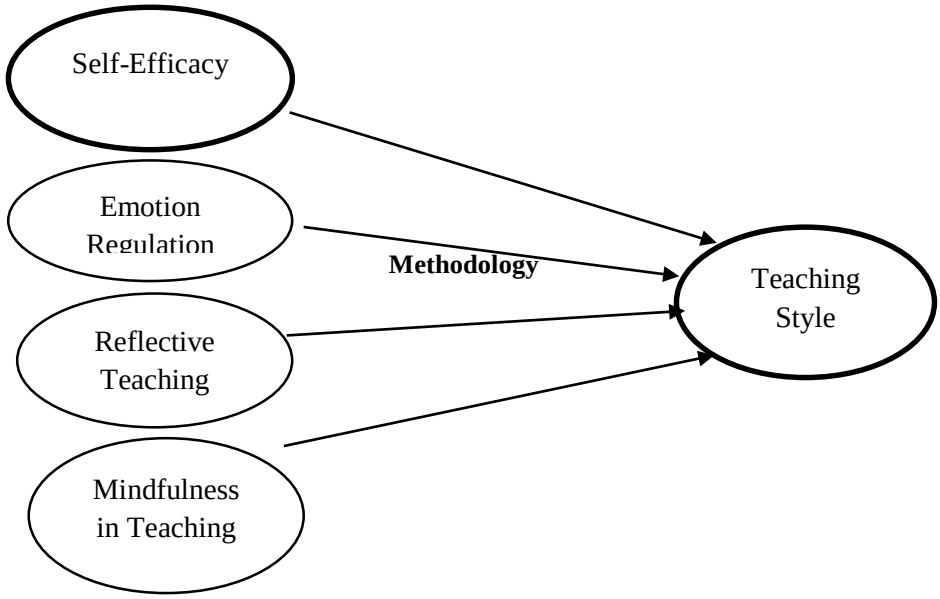
RQ3. Does EFL teachers' reflective teaching influence their teaching style?

RQ4. Does EFL teachers' mindfulness in teaching influence their teaching style?

To present a clear illustration of the aforementioned concepts, Figure 1 portrays the interrelationships among S-E, ER, RT, MT, with TS. The diagram postulates that the TS of EFL teachers can be significantly influenced by their S-E, ER, RT, and MT.

Figure 1

The Suggested Model



Methodology

Participants

The study involved the recruitment of 492 EFL teachers from private language institutes (n = 24) in Mashhad, Iran, using purposive sampling to select participants with a minimum of three years of teaching experience in EFL contexts. Participants who did not meet this criterion or did not teach EFL were excluded. The teachers taught English to students at different levels, including intermediate 1, intermediate 2, advanced 1, advanced 2, and advanced 3, with various academic backgrounds, including TEFL, English Literature, English Translation, Linguistics, Ph.D., M.A., or B.A. The authors administered a self-report questionnaire adapted from previous studies on EFL teachers' perceptions and practices, which measured demographic characteristics, teaching experience, academic qualifications, teaching methods, teaching materials, teaching challenges, teaching satisfaction, and teaching motivation. The questionnaire was administered online using Google Forms. The sample size was calculated using a power analysis based on a previous study, with a significance level of .05 and a desired effect size of d = .3 for our correlation analysis, resulting in a sample size of 492 participants with a power of .8 at $\alpha = .05$ and d = .3. Ethical approval was obtained from the Ferdowsi University, and informed consent was obtained from all participants, who were provided with detailed information on the purpose, procedures, risks, benefits, confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, withdrawal rights, data protection policies, and contact information. Participants were also given copies of their responses before submitting them.

Instruments

The Teaching Style Inventory

In order to gauge the participants' TS preferences, the authors used the Teaching Style Inventory (TSI) which was designed and validated by Gasha (1996). TSI comprises 40 Likert-type scale items rated on a seven-point scale. The inventory encompasses the following sub-components: expert, FA, PM, facilitator, and delegator TSs. The TSI has been shown to possess an acceptable level of reliability coefficient, including a coefficient range from 0.841 to 0.887. The validity of the TSI was evaluated by two experts through a review of the instrument's face and content validity. After their evaluation, they confirmed that the scale was valid in terms of both face and content.

The Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale

In 2001, Tschannen-Moran et al. (1998) designed and validated the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) for measuring teachers' S-E. This instrument was used to assess the participants' S-E. TSES comprises 24 questions in three subscales, each rated on a 9-point Likert scale: instructional tactics, classroom management, and student involvement. The individual components of the TSES demonstrated acceptable levels of reliability, as confirmed by Cronbach's alpha values (ranging between 0.839 to 0.879). Two experts evaluated the face and content validity of the TSES to establish its validity. Following their assessment, they confirmed that the scale was valid in terms of both face and content.

The Language Teacher Emotion Regulation Inventory

The authors employed the Language Teacher Emotion Regulation Inventory (LTERI) to examine the ER strategies of the participants. Heydarnejad et al. (2021) developed this scale, which consists of 27 items and six sub-factors: SS, SM, AD, reappraisal, suppression, and SSS. The items of the LTERI are rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (never) to 5 (always). The internal consistency of the LTERI was deemed satisfactory for this study, as determined by Cronbach's alpha (ranging from 0.846 to 0.901). To assess the validity of the LTERI, two experts reviewed the instrument's face and content validity. After their assessment, they confirmed that the scale was valid in terms of both face and content.

The English Language Teacher Reflective Inventory

The English Language Teacher Reflective Inventory (ELTRI) by Akbari et al. (2010) was utilized to measure the participants' RT. LTRI consists of 29 likert-scale questions, with responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The sub-factors of the LTRI include practical, cognitive, learner (affective), metacognitive, and crucial elements. The evaluation of LTRI's internal consistency revealed that the instrument was reliable (ranging from 0.861 to 0.894). To establish the validity of the LTRI, two experts conducted a review of the instrument's face and content validity. After their evaluation, they confirmed that the scale was valid in terms of both face and content.

The Mindfulness in Teaching Scale

In this study, the MTS was used to assess MT. The Mindfulness in Teaching Scale (MTS) was developed and validated by Frank et al. (2016) and consisted of 14 items; each rated on a Likert scale from one to five points. The MTS is composed of two sub-components: the intrapersonal mindfulness component (9 items) and the interpersonal mindfulness component (5 items). The reliability of the MTS was deemed satisfactory, as indicated by the Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient (ranging from 0.845 to 0.897). To establish the validity of the MTS, two experts conducted a review of the instrument's face and content validity. After evaluation, they confirmed the validity of the scale in terms of both face and content.

Data Collection Procedures

The research study was conducted from February 2023 to April 2023 using an online platform. The participants were given an electronic survey through Google Forms. The authors decided to conduct the survey in English because all the EFL teachers were proficient in the language, and it helped avoid any unrelated factors. The electronic survey allowed the authors to collect data from different age groups, cultural backgrounds, and locations resulting in 492 forms received, which resulted in an 87.4% response rate. The survey's structure ensured that no data was excluded.

Data Analysis Procedures

To analyze the data, the authors utilized LISREL 8.80 software to conduct CFA and SEM. SEM is a robust statistical method that allows for the evaluation of

confirmatory hypotheses related to the proposed structural theory (Schreiber et al., 2006). An SEM model comprises two key elements: the measurement model which investigates the connections between observed and latent variables (Weston, R., & Gore Jr, 2006), and the structural model which identifies the relationships between the latent variables.

Results

In this section, the results of the study are presented. The descriptive results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

The Results of the Descriptive Statistics

Instruments	Sub-Scales	N	Min	Max	M	S. D
TS	Expert	492	8	52	31.770	10.809
	FA	492	8	54	29.970	9.590
	PM	492	8	56	30.152	9.970
	Facilitator	492	8	56	31.805	11.496
	Delegator	492	8	52	31.833	8.630
S-E	Instructional Strategies	492	8	48	32.659	7.106
	Classroom Management	492	8	52	30.547	8.614
	Student Engagement	492	8	48	33.313	6.973
ER	SS	492	5	25	17.0624	4.742
	SM	492	5	25	15.923	4.748
	AD	492	4	20	12.734	4.366
	Reappraisal	492	5	25	17.065	4.687
	Suppression	492	4	20	13.112	3.733
	SSS	492	4	20	13.659	3.730
RT	Practical	492	11	30	21.455	4.006
	Cognitive	492	8	25	18.461	3.812
	Learner (affective)	492	13	29	22.242	3.816
	Metacognitive	492	12	30	21.701	5.085
	Critical Elements	492	7	30	21.577	5.174
MT	Intrapersonal Mindfulness	492	12	45	32.465	7.323
	Interpersonal Mindfulness	492	10	25	18.419	3.551

The results indicate that among the sub-components of TS, the delegator TS (M = 31.833, SD = 8.630) and the facilitator (M = 31.805, SD = 11.496) had the highest average ratings overall. Within the S-E factors, the student engagement (M =

33.313, *SD* = 6.973) was selected most frequently by the participants. In relation to the LTERI, the reappraisal was the most commonly utilized ER strategy among the EFL teachers (*M* = 17.065, *SD* = 4.687). Furthermore, among the sub-components of the LTRI, the metacognitive strategies (*M* = 21.701, *SD* = 5.085) were the most endorsed strategies. Lastly, regarding the sub-scales of the MTS, the intrapersonal mindfulness (*M* = 32.465, *SD* = 7.323) emerged as the predominant strategy.

After that, to determine the normality of the collected data, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test was utilized.

Table 2

The Results of Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test

Scales	Sub-Scales	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
TS	Expert	0.679	0.746
	FA	0.814	0.521
	PM	1.341	0.055
	Facilitator	0.498	0.965
	Delegator	1.091	0.185
S-E	Instructional Strategies	0.944	0.335
	Classroom Management	0.635	0.814
	Student Engagement	0.604	0.859
ER	SS	0.815	0.520
	SM	0.945	0.333
	AD	0.875	0.428
	Reappraisal	0.732	0.658
	Suppression	0.977	0.296
	SSS	1.159	0.136
RT	Practical	0.678	0.747
	Cognitive	1.031	0.238
	Learner (affective)	1.017	0.252
	Metacognitive	0.873	0.432
	Critical Elements	0.954	0.322
MT	Intrapersonal Mindfulness	0.693	0.724
	Interpersonal Mindfulness	1.160	0.136

Table 2 displays the significance levels greater than 0.05. The results of Table 2 revealed that the collected data were normally distributed, suggesting the suitability of using parametric statistical methods. Consequently, CAF and SEM were employed to examine the structural relationships among TS, TSE, LTER, ELTR, and MT. To conclude this section, various model fit indices were assessed, including the chi-square statistic, the Root Mean Squared Error of Approximation (RMSEA), the normed fit index (NFI), the goodness-of-fit index (GFI), and the comparative fit index (CFI). Jöreskog and Sörbom (1990) recommends that the chi-square / df ratio should be below three and that the chi-square should not be significant. Additionally, it is suggested that the RMSEA value should be less than 0.1, and the NFI, GFI, and CFI should all exceed 0.90 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1990).

Table 3

Model Fit Indices

Fitting Indexes	**χ2**	**df**	**χ2/df**	**RMSEA**	**GFI**	**NFI**	**CFI**
Cut Value			< 3	< 0.1	> 0.9	> 0.9	> 0.9
Model 1	527.39	179	2.946	0.063	0.940	0.921	0.938
Model 2	4241.88	1457	2.860	0.062	0.931	0.910	0.925

Based on Table 3, the chi-square / df ratio (2.946), RMSEA (0.063), GFI (0.940), NFI (0.921), and CFI (0.938) in Model 1 all satisfy the recommended fit criteria. Considering Model 2, the chi-square / df ratio (2.86) and RMSEA (0.062) meet the acceptable fit standards. Furthermore, the GFI (0.931), NFI (0.910), and CFI (0.925) values are considered satisfactory.

Figure 2

A Symbolic Representation of the Path Coefficients Values for the Interplay Among S-E, ER, RT, MT, and TS (Model 1)

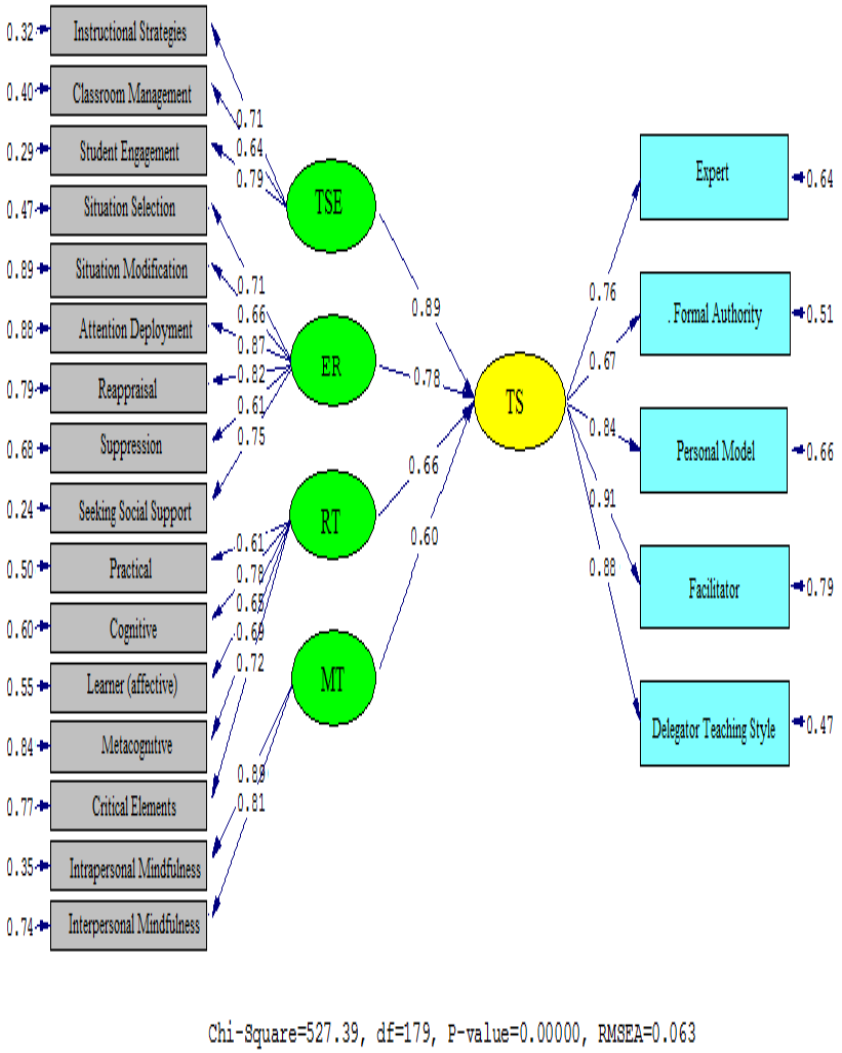
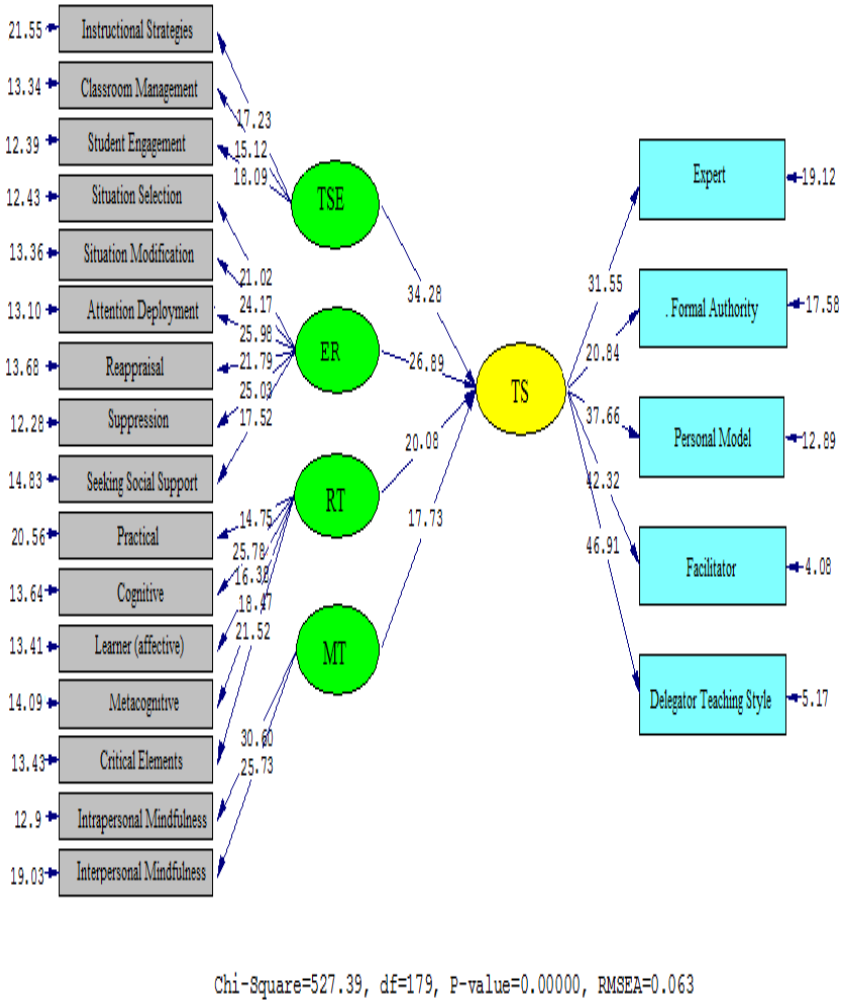


Figure 3

T Significance Values for Path Coefficients (Model 1)



The standardized estimates and t-values reported in Figures 3 and 4 suggest that TSE, LTER, ELTR, and MT may predict TS preferences. Specifically, the positive influence of TSE (β = 0.89, t = 34.28), ER (β = 0.78, t = 26.89), RT (β = 0.66, t = 20.08), and MT (β = 0.60, t = 17.73) on TS was found to be statistically significant.

Figure 4

A Symbolic Description of the Path Coefficients Values for the Relationship Between S-E, ER, RT, MT, and TS Sub-Factors (Model 2)

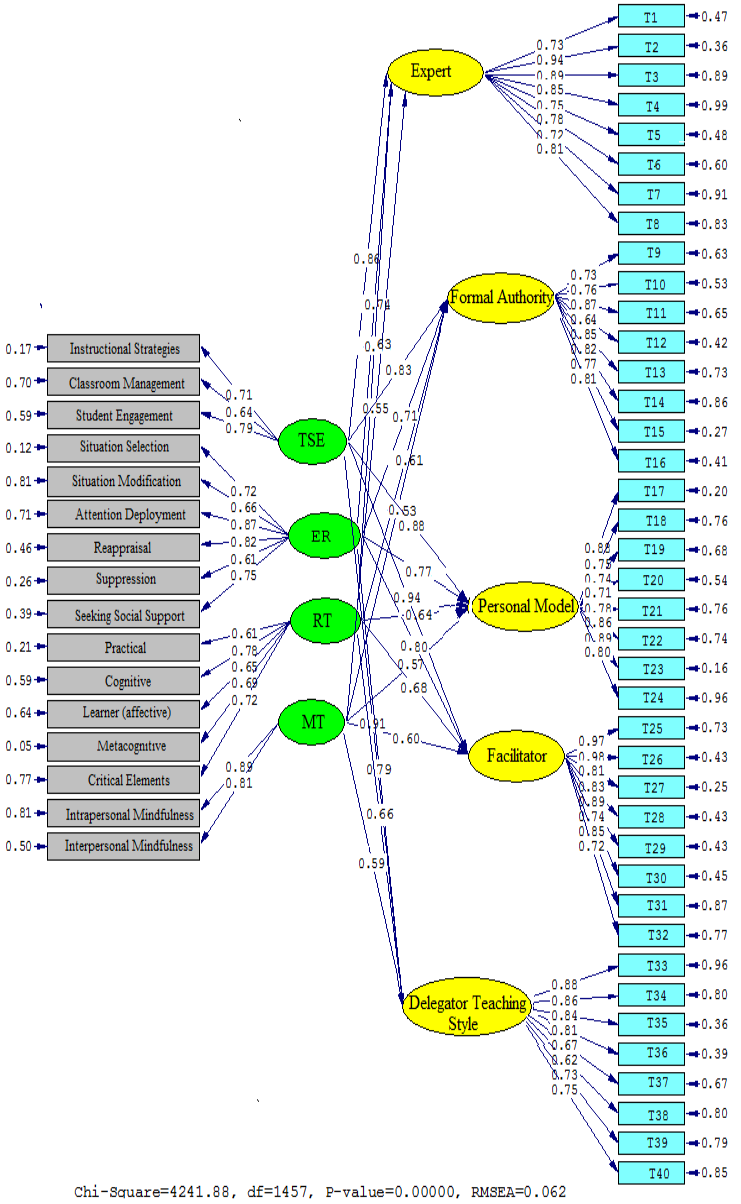
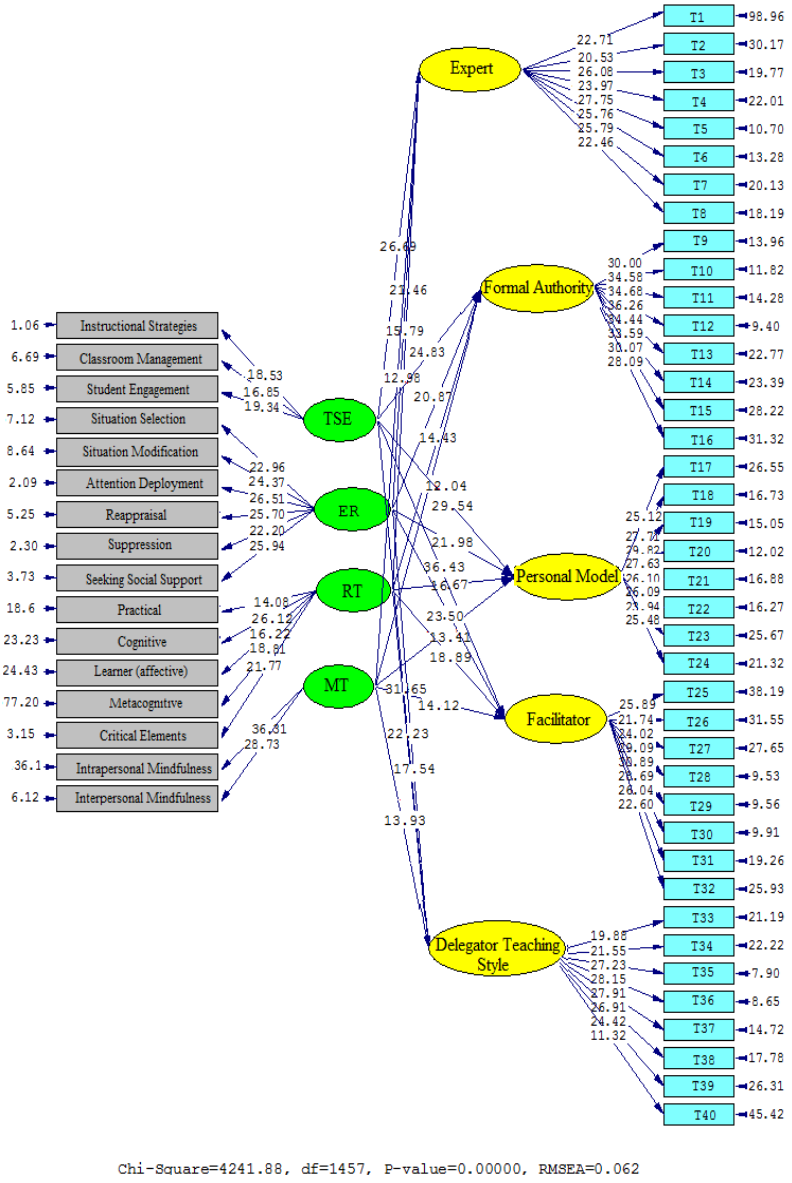


Figure 5

T Significance Values for Path Coefficients (Model 2)



Figures 4 and 5 display a diagrammatic description of the path coefficient values depicting the interaction between S-E, ER, RT, MT, and TS sub-factors. The outcomes suggest a significant interplay among SE and the following TS sub-factors:

the expert (β = 0.86, t = 26.69), FA (β = 0.83, t = 24.83), PM (β = 0.88, t = 29.54), the facilitator (β = 0.94, t = 36.43), and the delegator (β = 0.91, t = 31.65). Similarly, between ER and TS sub-factors, the association was significant: the expert (β = 0.74, t = 21.46), FA (β = 0.71, t = 20.87), PM (β = 0.77, t = 21.98), the facilitator (β = 0.80, t = 23.50), and the delegator (β = 0.79, t = 22.23). Positive and significant relationships were also evident between RT and TS sub-factors: the expert (β = 0.63, t = 15.79), FA (β = 0.61, t = 14.43), PM (β = 0.64, t = 16.67), the facilitator (β = 0.68, t = 18.89), and the delegator (β = 0.66, t = 15.67).

A Pearson product-moment correlation was conducted to explore the magnitude of the interplay among the S-E, ER, RT, MT, and TS sub-factors.

Table 4

Measures of Agreement Among the S-E, ER, RT, MT, and TS Sub-Factors

	Expert	**FA**	**PM**	**Facilitator**	**Delegator**	**S-E**	**ER**	**RT**	**MT**
Expert	1.000								
FA	0.550**	1.000							
PM	0.589**	0.608**							
Facilitator	0.603**	0.654**	0.589**	1.000					
Delegator	0.621**	0.598**	0.574**	0.562**	1.000				
TSE	0.884**	0.858**	0.904**	0.960**	0.931**	1.000			
ER	0.768**	0.736**	0.796**	0.828**	0.815**	0.566**	1.000		
RT	0.659**	0.639**	0.661**	0.706**	0.684**	0.548**	0.627**	1.000	
MT	0.574**	0.552**	0.591**	0.625**	0.613**	0.601**	0.668**	0.655**	1.000

***.*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

As Table 4 displays, a strong positive association was found between TSE and TS sub-components: the expert (r = 0.884), FA (r = 0.858), PM (r = 0.904), the facilitator (r = 0.960), and the delegator (r = 0.931). Similarly, there was a substantial

positive association between ER and TS sub-components: the expert (r = 0.768), FA (r = 0.736), PM (r = 0.796), Facilitator (r = 0.828), and the delegator (r = 0.815). Additionally, RT and TS sub-components are closely connected: the expert (r = 0.659), FA (r = 0.639), PM (r = 0.661), the facilitator (r = 0.706), and the delegator (r = 0.684). The results also suggest a positive correlation between MT and TS sub-components: Expert (r = 0.574), FA (r = 0.552), PM (r = 0.591), the facilitator (r = 0.625), and the delegator (r = 0.613).

Discussion

The current research sought to determine the degree to which S-E, ER, RT, and MT were significantly associated with TS. The findings of this research documented that S-E, ER, RT, and MT were all positively and significantly linked with the TS that the EFL teachers opted for. In exact terms, the first research inquiry gauged if the EFL teachers' S-E could offer any useful insights into their TS. The findings obtained from the study unveiled that the proficient teachers tend to prefer TS that prioritize learner satisfaction, such as the facilitator and delegator styles. The outcomes mirrored that the S-E was positively associated with their inclination to adopt teaching methods. In other words, the EFL teachers who exhibited dominant TS such as expert, FA, and PM, scored lower on S-E. The outcomes of the current investigation support prior findings found by Heidari et al. (2012), Kozikoglu and Babacan (2019), and Zarrinabadi et al. (2022), indicating that teacher S-E was a strong predictor of their job performance. Additionally, Zangenehvandi et al. (2014) and Barni et al. (2019) have also discussed that creating a fair learning atmosphere, particularly in classroom interactions and interpersonal associations, can promote teachers' mental and pedagogical well-being.

In tune with the literature, two possible reasons for the gained findings may be offered. First, the EFL teachers with higher S-E might tend to have greater confidence in their abilities to effectively teach English as a foreign language (Kozikoglu & Babacan, 2019). This confidence might influence their TS, leading them to adopt more innovative and student-centered approaches. Such EFL teachers may be more inclined to use interactive teaching methods, offer constructive feedback, and create an engaging classroom environment (Namaziandost et al., 2022; Zangenehvandi et al., 2014). These teaching practices were likely to positively impact the learning outcomes of EFL students. Second, the teachers' belief in their own efficacy might impact student engagement and motivation. When the EFL teachers display confidence and use effective instructional techniques, it might inspire students to feel more motivated and involved in their learning (Barni et al., 2019; Fathi et al., 2020). Students may perceive their teachers as competent and skilled, which could enhance their self-beliefs regarding their own language learning abilities (Buric´ & Kim (2020). This positive relationship between S-E and TS may contribute to a supportive and stimulating learning environment for Iranian EFL learners.

The second research question aimed to determine if the EFL teachers' ER could predict their TS. The present outcome evidenced that the EFL teachers who

demonstrated effective regulation of their emotions had a tendency to implement student-centered pedagogical strategies in their classrooms. These teachers did not position themselves as the sole authority in the classroom but instead preferred to involve their students in the learning process. Accordingly, Model 2 demonstrated that ER was positively correlated with the facilitator, delegator, PM, expert, and FA styles, respectively. The outcomes are congruent with the study performed by Frenzel et al. (2021) who demonstrated that instructors' emotions, in general, and their quality, in particular, could serve as significant obstacles or inspirations for their teaching practices. This implies that the EFL teachers who possessed a healthy state of ER might create a classroom learning environment that fostered the intellectual and emotional development of all students.

The gained results can be justified from two perspectives. First, the effective ER by the EFL teachers might contribute to creating a positive and supportive classroom atmosphere. When the teachers were able to regulate their emotions and maintain a calm and composed demeanor, it could enhance rapport and cooperation with students (Frenzel et al., 2021). This positive emotional climate might have a direct impact on the TS employed by the EFL teachers. In other words, the EFL teachers who were emotionally regulated were more likely to adopt student-centered approaches, might show empathy, and adjust their teaching strategies according to the individual needs and emotional states of the learners (Frenzel, 2014; Mischel & Ayduk, 2004). This alignment between ER and TS could positively influence the learning experience and outcomes of Iranian EFL learners. Second, the ER skills might facilitate effective teacher-student interaction and communication. When the EFL teachers were skilled at managing their emotions, they were more likely to respond to student's needs and challenges in a calm and patient manner (Chang & Taxer, 2020; Namaziandost et al., 2022a). This might result in improved communication, understanding, and mutual respect between the EFL teachers and students (Frenzel et al., 2021). As a consequence, the EFL teachers with better ER abilities may be more open to feedback, display effective problem-solving skills, and create a safe and inclusive classroom environment. These factors might shape the TS by promoting interactive and collaborative teaching methods, active listening, and supportive feedback practices among Iranian EFL learners.

The next research question aimed to inspect whether the EFL teachers' RT could provide any useful insights into their TS. The study's findings documented that the EFL teachers' RT can indeed influence their TS. It can be inferred that deep thinking and metacognition can enable the EFL teachers to effectively implement efficient TS. Furthermore, there is a higher probability of teacher-centered classes in situations where there is limited reflection experience. Reflective teachers evaluate their TS by carefully considering their strengths and limitations. These findings are not surprising, as previous literature has evidenced that teachers who engage in reflective thinking are more inclined to create autonomous L2 learning situations that foster student engagement and participation (Shirazizadeh et al. 2019; Rashtchi & Sanayi Mashhour, 2019).

Two probable reasons may be presented for the findings of the study. Initially, RT practices might encourage the EFL teachers to engage in a systematic

and purposeful process of self-reflection, self-evaluation, and continuous professional development (Malmir & Mohammadi, 2018). The EFL teachers who actively engaged in reflective thinking and analysis of their teaching practices were more likely to critically examine their instructional methods, content delivery, and classroom management strategies (Shirazizadeh et al., 2019). This deliberate self-reflection could allow the EFL teachers to identify areas of improvement, adapt teaching techniques, and implement effective instructional methods that align with the specific needs and learning styles of Iranian EFL learners (Rashtchi & Sanayi Mashhour, 2019). Consequently, a positive correlation between RT and TS may suggest that the EFL teachers who engaged in reflective practices tend to adopt more student-centered, innovative, and adaptable TSs, which could enhance the learning experience for EFL learners. Secondly, RT might encourage the EFL teachers to consider the individual needs, interests, and progress of their students. Through reflection, the EFL teachers could gain insights into the learning preferences, strengths, and weaknesses of Iranian EFL learners (Rashtchi & Sanayi Mashhour, 2019). As argued by Lawrence-Wilkes and Ashmore (2014), this knowledge might allow the EFL teachers to adopt learner-centered approaches such as differentiated instruction, personalized learning, and task-based activities. By tailoring their TS to the unique characteristics of their students, reflective teachers could create a more engaging and inclusive classroom environment (Shirazizadeh et al., 2019). This correlation between RT and TS might suggest that the EFL teachers who prioritized student-centeredness and individualization were more likely to engage in reflective practices, aligning their TS with the specific requirements and aspirations of Iranian EFL learners.

The final research objective was concerned with examining whether the EFL teachers' MT could impact their choice of TS. The study's results disclosed that teachers' MT and awareness could increase the likelihood of implementing student-centered teaching methods among the EFL teachers. Model 2 indicated that the EFL instructors with a strong awareness of MT were more likely to favor the facilitator and delegator teaching approaches, which prioritize student-centered learning, as opposed to the PM, expert, and FA styles, which prioritize teacher-centered learning. These outcomes are in accord with those of Meyer and Eklund (2020) who demonstrated that university teachers who developed MT tended to implement efficient teaching strategies in their classes to optimize learning. These strategies emphasize the importance of students' affective factors and classroom participation.

Drawing from the relevant literature, one potential reason for this is that MT practices, such as meditation and self-reflection, might enhance the EFL teachers' ability to be present in the classroom and attuned to their students' needs. By developing a mindful awareness of their thoughts, emotions, and sensations, the EFL teachers could cultivate empathy and a deeper understanding of their students' experiences (Davis & Hayes, 2011; Kuru Gönen, 2022). This heightened empathy might influence the EFL teachers to adopt a more compassionate and student-centered TS that takes into account the diverse backgrounds, preferences, and learning needs of Iranian EFL learners. Furthermore, the MT practices support ER, enabling the EFL teachers to manage stress, frustration, and other negative emotions

that may arise during teaching (Baer et al., 2012; Iani et al., 2019). By having better emotional control, the EFL teachers could maintain a calm and supportive classroom atmosphere, promoting effective communication, and facilitating a positive learning environment.

Conclusion and Implications

As discussed earlier, this study intended to inspect whether the Iranian EFL teachers' S-E, ER, RT, and MT serve as strong predictors of their TS preferences. The results disclosed that EFL teachers' S-E, ER, RT, and MT all provided valuable insights into their TS preferences. Specifically, the results demonstrated that the EFL instructors with higher levels of S-E tended to adopt more effective TS. Similarly, the EFL teachers who demonstrated effective regulation of their emotions tended to employ student-centered pedagogical strategies in their classrooms. Furthermore, reflective thinking and metacognition enabled the EFL teachers to effectively implement efficient TS. Finally, the results suggested that MT could increase the likelihood of implementing student-centered teaching methods among the EFL teachers. Additionally, it is implied that the EFL instructors with higher levels of S-E, ER, RT, and MT tended to exhibit more successful TS preferences.

Considering the crucial influence of psychological factors on TS preferences, the study findings offer some implications for policymakers, educators, and L2 teachers. Specifically, the results underscored the predictive capacity of S-E, ER, RT, and MT in determining the quality of instruction. L2 teachers must recognize the importance of improving their physical and mental well-being to facilitate effective and productive teaching practices. Additionally, L2 teachers should develop psychological strategies and techniques to promote a calm and supportive classroom environment. Therefore, the study recommends the inclusion of psychological training courses in the form of training classes for instructors.

Despite the significance of the findings, this research is subject to several limitations that must be acknowledged. Firstly, all the data gathered in this study were self-reported, which could have introduced potential errors. Future research could address this limitation by employing experimental manipulation or intervention training to further explore the relationships between these constructs. Secondly, this research failed to account for participants' demographic information, such as age or gender. Prospective studies in the future could examine whether EFL teachers' demographic characteristics influence S-E, ER, RT, MT, and TS. Thirdly, this research utilized a convenience sampling method, and thus, further testing and verification are required to generalize the research findings. Additionally, more studies are needed to triangulate the findings of this research. Therefore, it is recommended that prospective research addresses these limitations to enhance the validity and generalizability of the results.

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