



**EXPLORING MINDFULNESS AND LANGUAGE LEARNING: EFL
STUDENTS' JOURNEY COPING WITH SPEAKING ANXIETY**

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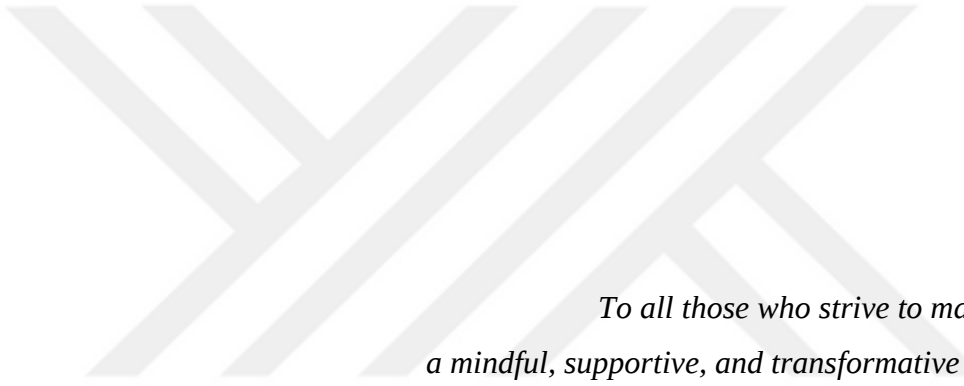
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*To all those who strive to make learning
a mindful, supportive, and transformative experience.*

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ÖZ

Bu çalışma, Yabancı Dil Sınıfları için Farkındalık Temelli Müdahale Programı'nın (MBI-FLC), 15 Türk üniversite öğrencisi üzerinde İngilizce'yi yabancı dil olarak öğrenirken yaşanan konuşma kaygısına (FLSA) etkisini incelemektedir. Karma yöntem yaklaşımı kullanılmış; nicel veriler müdahale öncesi, sonrası ve 6 ay sonraki gecikmeli ölçümlerle toplanmış, nitel veriler ise yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmeler, öğrenci günlükleri ve ilgili oturumlar sırasında tartışma sorularına verilen yanıtlar yoluyla elde edilmiştir. Nicel sonuçlar, özellikle gecikmeli ölçümlerde olmak üzere FLSA'da bir azalma olduğunu göstermiştir; ancak bu azalma istatistiksel olarak anlamlı bulunmamıştır. Ayrıca, korelasyon analizleri, "dış deneyimlerin farkındalığı" ve "yargılayıcı olmayan tutum" gibi bazı farkındalık boyutlarının FLSA ile negatif bir ilişki sergilediğini, ancak "düşüncelerin göreceliliği" boyutunun FLSA ile karmaşık ve pozitif bir ilişki gösterdiğini ortaya koymuştur. Nicel bulguların yanı sıra, araştırmanın nitel kısmında katılımcılar, duygusal dayanıklılıklarının arttığını, hata yapmaya karşı toleranslarının yükseldiğini ve dil öğreniminde daha farkındalıklı bir katılım sergilediklerini belirtmişlerdir. Ancak, etkilerin zamanla değişiklik gösterdiği gözlemlenmiş ve bu durum, farkındalık pratiğinin sürdürülebilir olması gerektiğini vurgulamaktadır. Bulgular, farkındalığın duygusal iyi oluşu ve konuşma güvenliğini artırma potansiyeline işaret etmekte; dil öğretimine farkındalığın entegre edilmesi için pratik öneriler sunmaktadır.



Anahtar Kelimeler : Bilinçli farkındalık, bilinçli farkındalık temelli müdahale, yabancı dil konuşma kaygısı, İngilizceyi yabancı dil olarak öğrenme, ikinci dil edinimi.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of a Mindfulness-Based Intervention Program for Foreign Language Classes (MBI-FLC) on Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA) among 15 Turkish university EFL students. A mixed-methods approach was utilized, combining quantitative measures through pre-, post-, and 6-month delayed post-intervention questionnaire/scale and qualitative insights from semi-structured interviews, learner journals and students' answers to the discussion questions during the relevant sessions. The quantitative results demonstrate a decrease in FLSA, especially in delayed posttests although it is statistically non-significant. Moreover, correlational analysis reveals that some mindfulness facets, such as "awareness of external experiences" and "nonjudgmental orientation," displayed a negative relationship with FLSA, while the "relativity of thoughts" facet showed a complex, positive correlation with FLSA. In addition to quantitative findings, in the qualitative part of the research, the participants reported enhanced emotional resilience, increased tolerance for mistakes, and a more mindful engagement in language learning. However, effects varied over time, emphasizing the need for sustained mindfulness practice. The findings highlight the potential of mindfulness to improve emotional well-being and speaking confidence in EFL contexts, offering practical implications for integrating mindfulness into language pedagogy.

Key Words : Mindfulness, mindfulness-based intervention, foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA), English as a foreign language (EFL), second language acquisition.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CHIME - A	Comprehensive Inventory of Mindfulness Experiences -Adolescents
CHIME	Comprehensive Inventory of Mindfulness Experiences
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ELT	English Language Teaching
FLA	Foreign Language Anxiety
FLSA	Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety
FLSAQ	Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Questionnaire
L2	Second Language
MBCT	Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy
MBI	Mindfulness-Based Intervention
MBI-FLC	Mindfulness-Based Intervention Program for Foreign Language Classes
MBSR	Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction
PP	Positive Psychology
SEL	Social Emotional Learning
SLA	Second Language Acquisition

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“You can’t stop the waves, but you can learn to surf.”

Jon Kabat-Zinn

This chapter presents the research area and background of the study to provide a better understanding of the research. First, the aim of the study is introduced, the research questions and significance of the study are followed. Finally, some limitations and assumptions are presented to make the study more comprehensible.

Statement of the Problem

The process of learning a second or foreign language is complex, involving not only cognitive and linguistic factors but also emotional and psychological dimensions. Among these dimensions, the role of affective variables has been recognized as critical in shaping the language learning experience and outcomes (Krashen, 1987). Affective factors, including attitudes, motivation, and anxiety, are crucial in the process of language learning (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). Foreign language learning often prompts strong emotional responses, and it can either facilitate or hinder the process.

Research has persistently shown that foreign language anxiety (FLA), and more specifically, foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA), have been described as significant barriers to effective communication and learning, and often leading to decreased confidence, performance, and willingness to communicate among learners (Baran-Lucarz, 2014; Huang, 2018; Saito & Samimy, 1996; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). In a study with 18 B1-level Turkish EFL students, affective factors, such as anxiety, fear, and lack of confidence, were

found to limit students' classroom participation, which, in turn, may have affected their communicative competence (Gül-Peker & Erdemir, 2021).

The classroom context often triggers more FLSA. Traditional language teaching practices, mainly prioritizing accuracy and correctness, unwittingly foster a fear of making mistakes. In Han, Takkaç-Tulgar, and Aybirdi's (2019) study, investigating student demotivation and fear of negative evaluation by the teachers was one of the themes that the students highlighted. Furthermore, opportunities for authentic communication are limited, and students frequently feel pressured to attain native-like fluency. This fear is especially pronounced in EFL settings. Since Turkish EFL students have limited exposure to native speakers for real-life communication, interacting with them may heighten their anxiety (Çağatay, 2015). In addition to these challenges, limited speaking practice can be an effective factor in FLSA. Over the years, the duration of foreign language teaching in Turkish high schools has declined (Ergüder, 2015), and students have less opportunity to practice speaking English. Finally, language proficiency is another key determiner in FLSA. Although there are studies suggesting a negative relationship between language proficiency and FLSA (Liu, 2006), Karatas, Alci, Bademcioglu and Ergin (2016) could not find a significant relationship between the two variables. In other words, students with high language proficiency levels might still experience FLSA. In line with all these, Akkuş's (2021) meta-analysis, investigating FLSA in Türkiye, revealed that fear of making mistakes, teachers' attitudes, fear of negative evaluation by peers, lack of self-confidence and lack of knowledge in foreign language were the most articulated reasons for the speaking anxiety in EFL classes. Overall, FLSA is influenced by various factors, including fear of negative evaluation, pressure to achieve native-like fluency, limited opportunities for authentic communication, and traditional teaching methods that emphasize accuracy over fluency. In the Turkish EFL context, these challenges are further intensified by limited exposure to native speakers, a decline in speaking practice due to reduced foreign language instruction in high schools, and classroom environments that may unintentionally heighten students' FLSA levels.

Despite decades of research on FLSA, interventions addressing its underlying reasons remain scarce. Most approaches focus on alleviating symptoms rather than promoting long-term emotional resilience. Given the importance of affective factors in language learning process, recent practices such as social emotional learning (SEL) and positive psychology (PP) with an emphasis on well-being and emotional regulation, offer a promising framework

for addressing language anxiety holistically. As one of the branches of these practices, mindfulness, rooted in ancient Buddhist traditions, has evolved into a widely recognized secular practice supported by scientific evidence across various settings, including schools. In the last several years, mindfulness has gained attention as an evidence-based practice for improving emotional control (Nie, Zuo, Wang & Chen, 2024; Sederstrom, 2024), reducing anxiety (Gallego, Aguilar-Parra, Cangas, Langer & Mañas, 2014; Monsillion, Zebdi, & Romo-Desprez, 2023), and increasing attention (Ojell, Palohuhta & Ferreira, 2023; Taghavi-Nejad, Fallah & Lotfi Gaskaree, 2024).

While traditional approaches to second language acquisition (SLA) have largely focused on cognitive and linguistic aspects, there is a growing recognition of the need to address these emotional and psychological challenges. This study aims to look into the possibility of mindfulness to improve the language learning process, particularly in terms of minimizing the effects of FLSA and creating a more supportive and engaged environment for students. Within this purpose, this chapter sets the stage for the study by discussing the research problem, purpose, significance, and scope. It situates the study within the broader context of SLA and educational psychology while emphasizing the need for innovative approaches to address challenges such as foreign language speaking anxiety.

Although there is a growing number of studies on mindfulness in second language education, most of them rely on pre-designed mindfulness interventions or basic meditation practices that are not specifically tailored to the language learning context. To the best of our knowledge, there are no—or very few—studies that integrate mindfulness principles directly into second language (L2) teaching materials or instructional activities. This represents a critical limitation in the current research landscape, as mindfulness-integrated materials have the potential to provide learners with contextually relevant tools for managing anxiety and improving performance. This study seeks to address this gap by developing and implementing a mindfulness-based intervention program that integrates mindfulness techniques into L2-specific tasks and materials.

Purpose of the Study

The present study first aims to design, implement, and evaluate a mindfulness-based intervention program for foreign language classes (MBI-FLC) tailored to the needs of EFL learners. This eight-week program integrates mindfulness techniques such as mindful

breathing body scanning, and mindful listening into language learning activities. By fostering present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, the intervention aims to empower learners to manage their L2 speaking anxiety and enhance their overall language learning experience. Moreover, the study seeks to answer whether this program has any effect on students' foreign language speaking anxiety at a state university context in Central Anatolia. Based on the purpose of the study, four research questions were formulated as follows:

1. What are the self-asserted experiences and perceptions of EFL students regarding mindfulness before and after the intervention?
2. What are the self-asserted experiences and perceptions of EFL students regarding FLSA before and after the intervention?
3. How do EFL students describe the influence of their mindfulness practices on their experiences of FLSA, including its manifestations, coping mechanisms, and overall impact on language learning?
4. What are the perceptions and reflections of EFL students on integrating the MBI-FLC program?

In doing so, the study aims to contribute to the development of innovative pedagogical strategies that address both the cognitive and emotional dimensions of language learning.

Significance of the Study

This study is significant for several reasons, grounded in both theoretical and practical considerations in SLA and mindfulness research. First, traditional SLA approaches have predominantly focused on cognitive and linguistic dimensions, often neglecting the emotional and psychological challenges faced by learners. According to G. Wang (2005), when an individual's basic physical and psychological needs are not met, they may struggle to fully engage in language learning. Affect, or emotional well-being, is not only essential for the body's basic needs but also serves as the foundation for all other physical and mental activities (Wang, 2005). Similarly, Lei (2007) highlights that the humanistic approach to education prioritizes the learner's internal world, emphasizing the significance of their thoughts, feelings, and emotions in all aspects of personal development. This approach places the individual's emotional and psychological experiences at the core of their learning

process. As the role of emotions and affective domains in both general learning and foreign/second language learning has been widely recognized, it is inevitable to discuss the place of anxiety in L2 learning. Research has consistently shown that FLA, particularly FLSA, significantly hinders learners' confidence, willingness to communicate, and overall performance (Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; Teimouri, Goetze & Plonsky, 2019). Although the research documents the prevalence of FLSA and its negative effects, practical solutions remain limited. This study addresses a critical gap by integrating mindfulness practices into language learning, offering a novel approach to mitigating FLSA and enhancing emotional resilience.

Second, language learning strategies play a crucial role in helping learners develop autonomy, enhance their proficiency, and overcome challenges in acquiring a new language. Among these, affective strategies, which encompass techniques such as relaxation, positive self-talk, and emotional regulation, have been found to play a critical role in reducing language anxiety and enhancing learner confidence (Mostafavi & Vahdany, 2016). Research indicates that explicit instruction in affective strategies fosters self-efficacy and motivation, essential components for effective language acquisition (Rossiter, 2003). Mindfulness, which cultivates focused awareness and emotional regulation, aligns with the goals of affective strategy training by helping learners develop resilience. In another study with Turkish EFL students, Gürman-Kahraman (2013) found that socio-affective strategy and emotional intelligence training significantly reduced foreign language anxiety among Turkish EFL university students, particularly in speaking classes. By considering these similar techniques and promising findings, this study seeks to offer a holistic approach that not only enhances linguistic competence but also nurtures students' psychological well-being, ultimately fostering a more effective and sustainable language learning experience.

Third, mindfulness has attained recognition in educational contexts for its ability to reduce stress, improve focus, and enhance emotional regulation (Gallego et al., 2014; Nie et al., 2024; Nur'aini & Patry, 2024; Paulsen, 2018). While mindfulness-based interventions have shown promising results in general education, their application in foreign language education remains underexplored. Recent studies conducted abroad (Charoensukmongkol, 2019; Cheng, 2023; Choomchaiyo & Varma, 2021; Mortimore, 2017) highlight the potential of mindfulness to reduce FLA, particularly FLSA, and foster greater engagement. Similarly, it is possible to observe promising research findings in Turkish context as well. In several studies conducted with Turkish EFL learners, employed mindfulness activities and trainings

were found to have a positive effect on students' willingness to communicate and speaking anxiety (Eraldemir-Tuyan & Kabadayı, 2018; Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022). Moreover, studies offering sample activities and teaching ideas integrating mindfulness into foreign language education are also available in the literature (Erdemir & Yeşilçınar, 2024). Yet, there is a lack of research tailoring these practices to the specific challenges of language learning. This study bridges this gap by exploring mindfulness-integrated materials and activities designed directly for L2 contexts.

Fourth, in today's globalized world, proficiency in English is not just an academic requirement but a key determinant of career success. In Türkiye, there are many programs using English as the medium of instruction completely or partially. For these programs, preparatory classes are offered mostly for a year and students have intensive language learning before they start their majors. Thus, the main goal of preparatory programs is to equip students with necessary language skills so that they can follow their classes in L2. After graduation, many students wish to work in a prestigious company or institution which mainly depends on using L2. On the other hand, for Turkish students, overcoming FLSA is critical for participating in academic programs, securing employment in international settings, and engaging confidently in cross-cultural communication. The persistent challenges in foreign language education in Türkiye highlight the critical need for innovative approaches that address both systemic and learner-centered issues. Despite significant investments in foreign language teaching, Türkiye continues to face low proficiency rates, ranking below global and regional averages (Oktay, 2015). Research identifies multiple barriers, including overly grammar-focused instruction, teacher-centered classroom practices, insufficient exposure to communicative activities, large class sizes, and inadequate language learning environments. These challenges are compounded by students' low motivation and limited active participation, which undermine language acquisition outcomes (Oktay, 2015). This study holds particular significance in addressing these issues. By integrating mindfulness into L2 pedagogy, it proposes a learner-centered approach that enhances emotional resilience and motivation, thereby mitigating key obstacles identified in Türkiye's foreign language teaching landscape. Mindfulness techniques, which foster emotional regulation, focus, and a growth mindset, directly counter the anxiety-inducing, performance-oriented focus prevalent in many classrooms. Furthermore, by incorporating these techniques into teaching materials and practices tailored to the EFL context in Türkiye, this study aims to create a more supportive and effective learning environment, aligning with

the broader societal and professional needs of Turkish EFL learners. When all these are taken into consideration, any improvement in EFL classes would create a meaningful difference both in individuals and the workplace.

Finally, mindfulness practices have the potential to enhance other aspects of language learning, such as listening comprehension (Pan, Wang & Chen, 2019), reading comprehension (Lusnig, Hofmann & Radach, 2023), and intercultural communication (Khukhlaev, Novikova & Chernaya, 2022). Mindfulness fosters greater attentiveness (Xue, 2023), empathy (Kappelmayer, Czar, Tresca, D'Adamo & Lozada, 2023), and openness to new experiences (Langer, 1997), all of which are essential for successful language acquisition. By promoting a growth mindset, mindfulness encourages learners to embrace challenges and view mistakes as opportunities for learning rather than as failures.

Limitations

While this study offers valuable insights, it is not without limitations. The small sample size (15 participants) limits the generalizability of the findings. Additionally, the study is situated within a specific cultural and institutional context, which may influence participants' responses to the intervention. For example, Turkish students may have distinct attitudes toward mindfulness due to cultural or educational norms, which may not represent learners in other contexts.

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, including qualitative (e.g., interviews and reflective journals) and quantitative tools (e.g., pre- and post-intervention questionnaire and scale). While this combination provides a more comprehensive understanding of learners' experiences, self-report measures still have inherent limitations. For instance, participants may not have fully articulated their experiences in journals or interviews, or their responses on the questionnaire and scale might have been influenced by factors such as social desirability bias. Future research could build on this by including longitudinal data collection or alternative measures, such as physiological indicators of anxiety, to further validate and enrich the findings. Finally, the eight-week duration of the intervention, while sufficient for preliminary exploration, may not be long enough to observe sustained changes in anxiety levels or language performance. Longitudinal studies are needed to assess the long-term impact of mindfulness on language learning outcomes.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter, review of literature, is allocated to discuss major theories, key concepts of mindfulness and foreign language speaking anxiety. Prominent research studies related to concepts in educational contexts are presented with the aim of underlying the current situation in the field.

Mindfulness

The term "mindfulness" derives from the Pali word "sati" found in ancient texts, encompassing concepts of awareness, attention, and remembrance. (Pali is the language in which the original teachings of the Buddha were recorded.) The earliest translation of "sati" as "mindfulness" can be traced back to 1921, as documented by Davids and Stede (1921/2001).

Brown and Ryan (2003) place awareness and attention within the larger framework of consciousness. Consciousness includes both awareness and attention. Awareness serves as the underlying "radar" of consciousness, constantly observing internal and external surroundings. Attention is a process that involves concentrating conscious awareness, resulting in increased sensitivity to a specific, limited set of experiences (Brown & Ryan, 2003). The other cognate of the sati, "remembering," does not mean residing in memories; rather, it entails the act of remembering to shift our focus and awareness towards the present moment in a wholehearted and open manner. This redirection necessitates the deliberate effort to detach our attention from daydreaming and to fully engage with the here and now (Germer, 2016).

As a meditative practice, mindfulness has been around for thousands of years and has been researched in mainstream psychology since the 1970s (Williams & Kabat-Zinn, 2013). Increasing interest in mindfulness research and interventions has led mindfulness to evolve into an interdisciplinary field of study ranging from psychology and neuroscience to education and business. Over the years, various definitions have been proposed for mindfulness, each aiming to provide an operational definition. Some of these definitions by scholars studying mindfulness are listed below:

1. Jon Kabat-Zinn, the pioneer researcher transforming mindfulness into a scientific and secular term, defines mindfulness as “moment-to-moment, non-judgmental awareness, cultivated by paying attention in a specific way, that is, in the present moment, and as non-reactively, as non-judgmentally, and as openheartedly as possible” (Kabat-Zinn, 2015, pp. 1481). Mindfulness is examining who we are by questioning our view of the world and our place in it and by raising some appreciation for the fullness of each moment we are alive (Kabat-Zinn, 1994).
2. Mindfulness is “the clear and single-minded awareness of what actually happens to us and in us at the successive moments of perception” (Nyanaponika, 1972, pp. 5).
3. Mindfulness is “keeping one’s consciousness alive” (Hanh, 1999, pp. 11).
4. Mindfulness is “self-regulation of attention so that it is maintained on immediate experience, thereby allowing for increased recognition of mental events in the present moment..... and adopting a particular orientation toward one’s experience that is characterized by curiosity, openness, and acceptance” (Bishop et al., 2004, pp. 232).
5. Mindfulness is “the awareness that arises intentionally attending in an open, caring, and discerning way” (Shapiro, Wang & Peltason, 2015, pp. 17)
6. Germer (2016) shortly defines mindfulness as the *awareness of present experience with acceptance*.

Numerous efforts have been made to establish an operational definition of mindfulness and mindful awareness. However, the most commonly encountered definition of mindful awareness runs something along the lines of “present-centered, non-judgmental attention.” (Young, 2016). This definition underscores the practice of maintaining awareness of the present moment while refraining from attaching evaluative judgments to thoughts, emotions, or experiences.

Shapiro says that “mindfulness isn’t just about paying attention. It’s about how we pay attention” (2020, pp. 9). Shapiro describes the three vital psychological elements of mindfulness as follows:

- Intention – guiding our actions with the heart as a compass, aligning with our deepest hopes and values;
- Attention – cultivating focus and anchoring the mind in the present moment;
- Attitude – approaching the present with a mindset of compassion and curiosity.

Engaging in mindfulness is a deliberate and purposeful act. It involves directing our attention to the here and now, treating it with acceptance, compassion, and discernment. Mindfulness is not just about the mind; it's also about the heart, encouraging both an open-minded and open-hearted perception of the world, reminding us of its inherent goodness and beauty (Jennings, 2015). This dual focus reminds individuals of the inherent goodness and beauty present in their surroundings, creating a foundation for emotional resilience and deeper connections with themselves and others.

The word "mindfulness" can refer to both state of mind and a more personal trait which is generally referred to as state (i.e., transitory conditions) and dispositional/trait (i.e., persistent feature) mindfulness in the relevant literature. Trait mindfulness is defined as "the general tendency of a person to show characteristics of nonjudgmental awareness of present-moment experience in their everyday life" (Krägeloh, 2020, pp. 64). Intrinsic mindfulness traits may stem from genetic and temperamental predispositions or from early experiences of secure attachment with a caregiver (D. Siegel, M. Siegel & Parker, 2016).

Interventions like mindfulness-based stress reduction and mindfulness-based cognitive therapy can improve state mindfulness (Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Segal, Teasdale, Williams & Gemar, 2002). According to Hofmann, Sawyer, Witt & Oh (2010), these interventions have been demonstrated to have a positive impact on psychological outcomes like anxiety and mood disorders. As a result of the success of these applications, there is now more theoretical interest in mindfulness, encouraging research into whether mindfulness is an inherent human ability or trait. It has been discovered that the prevalence of dispositional mindfulness varies among the population, regardless of mindfulness training (Brown, Ryan & Creswell, 2007). Although studies propose that some individuals may have an innate predisposition for mindfulness (Brown & Ryan, 2003), they also indicate that with time and effort, the mindful state becomes increasingly accessible and ingrained as a personal trait. Regular mindfulness

practice has been shown to raise the trait (van den Hurk et al., 2011), suggesting that mindfulness-based therapies may be able to provide effects beyond momentary state shifts. Mindfulness-based interventions (MBI) contend that individuals can increase their inclination toward trait mindfulness by regularly stimulating the state of mindfulness across meditation sessions (Davidson, 2010; Vago & Silbersweig, 2012). Siegel, Germer, and Olendzki (2009) suggest that mindfulness, like physical fitness, can be developed through consistent and intentional practice, akin to how regular physical exercise enhances bodily health.

Individuals who lose their connection with the present moment and live unconsciously avoid experiencing difficult emotions by focusing on being elsewhere (Hayes, Levin, Plumb-Villarda, Villatte & Pistorello, 2013). This avoidance, while momentarily comforting, can lead to a diminished capacity for emotional regulation and an overall sense of disengagement from life. In contrast, mindfulness is defined as the nonjudgmental and accepting focus of attention on what is happening now (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). By fostering awareness and acceptance of current experiences, mindfulness enables individuals to confront and process challenging emotions rather than avoiding them, promoting emotional resilience and psychological well-being.

In order to be in the present moment and to focus attention, the attitudes of the individual are crucial. Kabat-Zinn (1994, 2005) specifies seven basic attitudes of mindfulness as follows: non-judging, patience, beginner's mind, trust, non-striving, acceptance and letting go.

There is a constant tendency to *judge* and react to everything we encounter, both internally and externally. We often label and categorize things based on how they affect our emotions, classifying them as "good," "bad," or "neutral." (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). To deal with automatic judging, Kabat-Zinn (2005) first recommends being aware of this judging feature of mind and simply acknowledging it; there is no need to judge the judging. Since judgment is inevitable, we must observe everything that arises in the body or mind and acknowledge it without persisting or criticizing it (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). All feelings, benevolent or irritable, should be embraced, acknowledged, and treated equally, as both are a part of who we are (Hanh, 1999).

Kabat-Zinn (2005) addresses *patience* as a form of wisdom, highlighting the understanding of the fact that sometimes things must develop in their own time. Patience, in essence, is always available as an antidote to the restlessness and impatience that frequently plague our

minds. Underneath impatience is frequently anger, resulting from a failure to accept the current situation as it is and an inclination to blame someone or something, possibly including oneself. You can still respond rapidly when necessary, but you can do so mindfully and slowly if you make a conscious decision to do so (Kabat-Zinn, 1994).

Frequently, we let our ideas and preconceived notions of what we "know" to keep us from seeing things for what they truly are. We often fail to recognize the extraordinary in the ordinary because we take it for granted (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). As another important attitude of mindfulness, *beginner's mind* is the awareness of perceiving things from a new and fresh perspective as if it was the first time with a sense of curiosity (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019). To appreciate the richness of the present moment, we must nurture a beginner's mind; a mind eager to observe everything as if for the first time (Kabat-Zinn, 2005).

Trust is a sense of assurance or certainty that events will unfold within a steady framework that represents order and integrity. When we put our confidence in a process or an ideal, we can find a tremendous stabilizing aspect within the trust that embraces security, balance, and openness (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). Trust also involves believing and honoring yourself and your feelings (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). The spirit of meditation highlights being your own person and what it means to be yourself.

Being *non-striving* entails being there and not attempting to get anyplace. There is no clutching, antipathy towards change, or turning away from whatever is present at any given time when one possesses this kind of consciousness (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019). If we try too hard to reach our goals (e.g., being a calmer person, getting rid of the pain), the practice of mindfulness might be hindered as we miss what is happening (Kabat-Zinn, 2005).

Acceptance is simply acknowledging things as they are (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019). It is critical to recall that accepting what is happening in the present does not equate to giving up (Kabat-Zinn, 1994) or having a passive attitude toward everything (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). Similarly, acceptance does not refer to acknowledging the inappropriate behavior (Germer, 2016). In other words, acceptance is merely admitting that something exists; it doesn't necessarily mean you like it or want it to be there (Goldstein, 2016).

Similar to acceptance, *letting go* or letting be involves allowing things as they are without trying to let whatever is present (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019). It is a deliberate choice to let go and fully welcome the unfolding present moments as they come (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). We sometimes prefer to hold on to some thoughts and feelings as they make us feel good while

we sometimes try to get rid of unpleasant thoughts and feelings. Whenever we catch ourselves passing judgment on our experiences, Kabat-Zinn (2005) suggests letting go of judgmental ideas by acknowledging and choosing not to pursue them further. We let them go because we allowed them to be. In the same way, we let go of ideas about the past or the future by only observing with an open and non-judging mind.

In addition to these seven attitudes of mindfulness, Kabat-Zinn adds gratitude and generosity later (2013). The feeling of *gratitude* encourages us to be aware of and thankful for the present moment, rather than taking things and life for granted (Kabat-Zinn, 2013). Niemiec and Lissing (2016, pp. 17) define gratitude as “being aware of and thankful for the good things that happen and taking time to express thanks”. As for *generosity*, it assists you in perceiving the value of giving your presence over holding onto things (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019).

Mostly similar to Kabat-Zinn’s attitudes of mindfulness, Stahl and Goldstein (2019) assert ten attitudes essential to mindfulness practice. They are beginner’s mind, nonjudgment, acknowledgment, non-striving, equanimity, letting be, self-reliance, self-compassion, gratitude, and generosity. Different from Kabat-Zinn's definition, Stahl and Goldstein identify equanimity, self-reliance, and self-compassion as the attitudes of mindfulness. *Equanimity* includes balance and encourages wisdom. It enables a thorough comprehension of the nature of change and enables you to accept it with more intuition and compassion (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019). The cultivation of equanimity may help practitioners be less responsive when confronted with unpleasant circumstances (Treadway & Lazar, 2009).

Mindlessness

Mindlessness is essentially the opposite of mindfulness. The term "mindlessness" is often used in the context of mindfulness practices to highlight the contrast between being on "auto-pilot" and intentionally cultivating awareness and presence. Carson and Langer (2006) define mindlessness as a strict mental attitude in which one is blind to context or perspective. Being stuck in the past, acting automatically without paying attention to new signals, and acting from a singular point of view are all signs of mindlessness (Langer, 2016). Mindfulness entails being fully present, aware, and conscious in the present moment, whereas mindlessness is a state in which an individual is separated from the present moment and their own experiences. People in a state of mindlessness frequently carry out acts or

thoughts without full consciousness, concentration, or intention. Mindlessness is basically like being in auto-pilot mode.

Frequently, we function in a state of automaticity, where our minds are focused in one place while our bodies are physically elsewhere (Siegel et al., 2009). The majority of our time is typically consumed by thoughts of past memories and future fantasies. Common characteristics of mindlessness include:

Auto-Piloting: During auto-pilot mode, our mind and body are basically in different places (Siegel et al., 2009). In other words, auto-piloting could be defined as a moment of desynchronization between the mind and the body. When we fulfill the tasks or activities in this mode, the actions become routine and mechanical without much thought or awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2005). Developing an awareness of auto-pilot mode is essential in mindfulness techniques for comprehending and eventually breaking free from automatic, reactive behaviors. According to Langer (1989) and Kabat-Zinn (1994), mindfulness research highlights the value of paying attention to the present moment and practicing nonjudgmental awareness of one's thoughts and behaviors. Individuals can build a stronger capacity for a purposeful, mindful life by recognizing auto-pilot tendencies. Mindfulness-based therapies, such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), have been shown to be beneficial in assisting people to disengage from autopilot mode, promote emotional regulation and improve general well-being (Grossman, Niemann, Schmidt & Walach, 2004; Kabat-Zinn, 1990; Segal et al., 2002).

This mode is present in classrooms as well. Jennings (2015) mentions the importance of mindful communication in the classroom and highlights several examples of *dysfunctional communication patterns*. Teachers might operate on auto-pilot mode based on their educational background and previous experience. When Jennings (2015) observed classrooms and teachers, she discovered some common fallacious patterns that teachers think or say without much thinking about them. Teachers' own mindfulness could assist them to leave the auto-pilot mode and interact with students in a more present, conscious and connected manner (Siegel et al., 2016). As the other party in the classroom context, the awareness of auto-pilot mode is crucial for students. Teachers generally complain about students' short concentration span and it is obvious that it gets shorter and shorter with the fast-growing technology. They quickly get bored and seem as if their bodies are sitting in the classroom, but their minds are somewhere else. This is a typical moment of auto-piloting

and when students are there, it is unlikely that they hear and understand what the teacher is saying.

Rumination: Rumination refers to a type of conscious thinking characterized by repetitive thoughts centered on a specific theme or goal, occurring even when there are no immediate external triggers necessitating such focus (Martin & Tesser, 1996). Rumination is a type of unproductive, negative, recurrent thought (Raes, 2010). It is living in the past or worrying about the future, rather than being fully engaged in the present. This mental state does not lead to problem-solving or emotional well-being. Several studies investigating rumination in an educational context have found that rumination positively correlates with stress, depression, anxiety, and procrastination (Constantin, English & Mazmanian, 2018; Morrison & O'Connor, 2005). Students dwelling in the past, lost in repetitive thoughts might be more susceptible to emotions causing psychological distress.

Lack of Awareness: Missing out on sensory experiences, details, and emotions in the present moment due to mental distraction can significantly diminish one's ability to engage meaningfully with their surroundings. This state often stems from being consumed by automatic thoughts, habitual patterns, or preoccupations with the past and future, leaving little room for present-centered awareness. When individuals operate on "autopilot," they may overlook the richness of their current experiences, including subtle emotions, bodily sensations, or interactions with others.

In educational contexts, a lack of awareness may manifest as students failing to fully grasp classroom material, misinterpreting instructions, or disengaging from tasks due to a wandering mind. Mind wandering, which involves diverting attention away from a task to focus on unrelated thoughts, has been linked to diminished performance across various domains, including working memory capacity, fluid intelligence, and SAT (Scholastic Assessment Test: a standardized test widely used in the United States for college admissions) scores (Mrazek et al., 2012). Without conscious effort to cultivate awareness, individuals may find themselves stuck in cycles of inattention and disconnection, missing opportunities for learning, emotional growth, and meaningful engagement.

Judgment and Criticism: A tendency to be overly critical of oneself or others can hinder emotional balance and personal growth. This pattern often involves a focus on perceived flaws, mistakes, or shortcomings, leading to a skewed and unbalanced perspective. Self-criticism, in particular, can be described as a process where individuals harshly evaluate themselves, often stemming from feelings of inadequacy or shame (Gilbert & Procter, 2006).

Self-criticism has been shown to negatively impact educational outcomes by reducing engagement in academic and social activities, fostering avoidance of evaluative situations, and contributing to fewer years of education completed, as self-critical individuals often struggle with fear of failure and harsh self-evaluation, which hinder their ability to fully participate and persevere in academic environments (Zuroff, Koestner & Powers, 1994).

Although mindfulness isn't a cure-all for solving all of the world's issues, it offers a useful method for dealing with reality in the moment. Certain aspects of life, career, and home may be unchangeable, but mindfulness might provide the power to alter how we see those unchangeable elements. The change in our perspective might bring more alternatives about how life unfolds.

What is NOT Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is a practice and concept that has been widely studied and implemented, but it is equally important to address what mindfulness is not, as misconceptions can dilute its essence and effectiveness.

According to Kabat-Zinn (2015), mindfulness is not merely relaxation or stress relief, even though these can be secondary benefits of the practice. Mindfulness involves active engagement with the present moment, including uncomfortable thoughts, emotions, and sensations, rather than an attempt to bypass or suppress them. The practice is also not about forcing the mind to be blank or free of thoughts; instead, it encourages an openhearted and non-reactive stance toward whatever arises in awareness (Kabat-Zinn, 2015).

Germer (2004) expands on this, noting that mindfulness is not zoning out or living on autopilot. Mindlessness, in contrast to mindfulness, includes behaviors like rushing through tasks without attention, forgetting someone's name immediately after hearing it, or eating without realizing what or how much is consumed. These examples highlight how the mind often becomes preoccupied with the past or future, disconnecting individuals from the present moment. Mindfulness is the antidote to such automatic, inattentive behaviors by fostering deliberate and sustained awareness.

Chiesa (2013) clarifies that mindfulness is not purely a cognitive activity. While it may involve intellectual understanding, mindfulness encompasses a broader engagement that includes emotions, physical sensations, and environmental awareness. Furthermore, mindfulness is not a solution to "fix" problems or a tool for eliminating difficulties. Instead,

the practice teaches individuals to approach challenges with curiosity, acceptance, and equanimity, cultivating resilience in the face of adversity.

Mindfulness is also not about achieving a specific emotional state, such as perpetual calmness or happiness (Kabat-Zinn, 2015). It is not a passive process but an active cultivation of awareness that can include challenging or even distressing experiences. This perspective ensures that mindfulness remains grounded in its core principles of present-centered, nonjudgmental awareness rather than being misinterpreted as a quick-fix or avoidance strategy.

These distinctions help refine the understanding of mindfulness by highlighting what it is not. Mindfulness is not mindlessness, not escapism, not relaxation alone, and not a tool to rid oneself of discomfort. Instead, it is a comprehensive practice that invites individuals to engage fully with their present experience, whatever that may be. By understanding what mindfulness is not, individuals can avoid common misconceptions and approach the practice with openness and curiosity, creating space for genuine growth and transformation.

Mindfulness Practices

All mindfulness practices incorporate a type of meditation, and particularly in Western cultures, there are numerous misconceptions regarding mindfulness and meditation (Siegel et al., 2009) as touched upon in the previous section. Mindful awareness can be cultivated through both formal and informal practices. Formal mindful awareness practices (MAPs) encompass activities such as sitting meditation and contemplative movements like yoga and tai chi, which involve deliberate, slow, and mindful movements (Jennings, 2015).

Conventional formal mindfulness practices center on focusing on and being aware of immediate experiences such as breathing, listening, observing thoughts, or bodily sensations. These practices involve intentionally nurturing a mindful state throughout the practice session (Joseph, Murphy & Patterson, 2016).

There are various ways that mindfulness meditation can be practiced. The five types of mindfulness meditations that Roeser (2016) identifies are body scan, focused attention, open awareness, mindful movement, and loving kindness. Each type emphasizes unique aspects of mindfulness, from cultivating a deep sense of connection with one's body to fostering compassion and emotional well-being.

In addition to formal practices, informal mindfulness practices emphasize integrating mindfulness into daily routines—often referred to as "mindful moments"—such as eating, walking, or even engaging in routine chores with a deliberate focus on sensory experiences (Birtwell, Williams, Van Marwijk, Armitage & Sheffield, 2019). For example, informal practices like mindful dishwashing have been linked to improvements in mood and stress reduction, highlighting the accessibility and practicality of mindfulness in everyday life.

Critically, discussions about the authenticity of modern mindfulness practices point to the potential "dilution" of traditional approaches into more commercialized, superficial forms, often termed "McMindfulness" (Van Gordon & Shonin, 2020). This critique underscores the need for mindfulness interventions to retain their ethical and spiritual foundations to ensure meaningful outcomes.

Second-generation mindfulness-based interventions (SG-MBIs) address these concerns by integrating contemplative elements such as compassion, ethics, and non-attachment, drawing closer to traditional mindfulness roots (Van Gordon & Shonin, 2020). SG-MBIs have been shown to promote outcomes such as greater self-compassion and personal growth, complementing first-generation models like Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR).

Overall, mindfulness practices—whether formal or informal—offer versatile pathways to cultivate attentiveness, well-being, and resilience. However, their effectiveness often hinges on how closely they align with foundational mindfulness principles, suggesting a balance between tradition and adaptation for diverse contemporary applications.

Mindfulness-Based Intervention Programs

Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR): The program developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn is the most well-known and cited mindfulness intervention in the literature. According to the Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts, more than 24,000 people have benefited from the MBSR program since the center launched in 1979 (Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, 2017). Mainly, straightforward, secular meditation techniques are employed in MBSR to train attention. Through decreasing emotional reactivity and enhancing cognitive appraisal, the program attempts to change our relationship with stressful thoughts and events (Teasdale, Segal & Williams, 1995).

Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT): MBCT was developed by therapists Zindel Segal, J. Mark G. Williams and John Teasdale by integrating cognitive therapy with MBSR

(Mackenzie & Kocovski, 2016). MBCT relies on the principles of cognitive therapy by using techniques such as mindfulness meditation to teach people to consciously pay attention to their thoughts and feelings without placing any judgments upon them (Sipe & Eisendrath, 2012).

There are several mindfulness-based programs built upon MBSR as a model. Some of them are as follows: Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention (MBRP) program for overconsumption of alcohol by college students; Mindfulness-Based Eating Awareness Therapy (MB-EAT) for overeating disorders; Mindfulness-Based Mind Fitness Training (MMFT) for deployed military units and their families; Mindfulness-Based Elder Care (MBEC) for elder care; Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction-Art Therapy (MBSR-AT) for arts therapy with patients with cancer; Mindful Birthing and Parenting (MBCP) for birthing and parenting and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy for Children (MBCT-C) for anxiety regulation in children (Kabat-Zinn, 2013).

In addition to the aforementioned intervention programs, there are mindfulness-based interventions tailored for school settings aiming to improve students' cognitive, emotional, and social well-being. Below are some well-established programs designed specifically for school environments (Meiklejohn et al., 2012):

1. *Inner Kids Program* teaches "The New ABCs" (Attention, Balance, and Compassion) through games, activities, and mindfulness practices like body scans and mindful breathing, with age-appropriate adaptations for Pre-K through 8th grade students.
2. *Inner Resilience Program (IRP)* focuses on integrating mindfulness with social and emotional learning to support self-regulation and attention for both teachers and students through classroom practices and professional development workshops.
3. *Learning to BREATHE (L2B)* offers a six-session curriculum for adolescents focusing on emotion regulation, stress management, and mindfulness techniques like breathing exercises and reflective practices.
4. *Mindfulness in Schools Project (MiSP)* provides the ".b" curriculum, which adapts mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) practices for high school students, teaching techniques like mindful breathing and body scans in a nine-week course.
5. *Mindful Schools* delivers a 15-session program designed for K-12 students, focusing on mindfulness of emotions, breath, and body, with additional training for educators to support classroom integration.

6. *MindUP*: A 15-lesson program emphasizing social and emotional awareness through mindfulness, gratitude, and sensory practices, aiming to improve focus and emotional regulation for Pre-K through 8th grade students.
7. *Sfat Hakeshev (The Mindfulness Language)*: A program from Israel for ages 6–13 focusing on mindful awareness of breath, body sensations, and emotions to support cognitive and emotional development.
8. *Still Quiet Place* teaches mindfulness through practices like mindful listening and loving-kindness meditations, offering flexible lesson structures for students from Pre-K to 12th grade.
9. *Stressed Teens (MBSR-T)*: An eight-week mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) program for adolescents, teaching practices like body scans, walking meditation, and mindful stopping to address stress and emotional challenges.
10. *Wellness Works in Schools™* focuses on health and wellness for ages 3–18, integrating mindfulness practices with resilience and problem-solving lessons in 8–15 structured sessions.

Mindfulness in Education

Mindfulness has been suggested and implemented in educational contexts as well as in a variety of other contexts such as medicine, business, and psychology. In particular, Elen Langer (2016), one of the leading researchers in mindfulness, offered a new approach called “sideways learning” for teaching new skills in educational contexts with the aim of cultivating a mindful state (ibid, pp. 22). The five components defined for this type of learning aim to enable “the creation of new categories, openness to novelty, awareness of multiple perspectives, alertness to distinctions, and orientation in the present” (ibid, pp. 22). In such a state of mind, basic skills and information direct our behavior in the present rather than running it like a computer program (ibid). In other words, mindful learning helps students use the material relevant to their own needs and interests rather than absorbing it from one fixed perspective (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000). As a result, mindfulness-based approaches in education hold the potential to empower learners by promoting adaptability, creativity, and a deeper connection to the learning process.

There are several initiations to include mindfulness in education. Parker and Kupersmidt (2016) analyzed two universal mindfulness education programs (The Master Mind and Moment) for elementary and middle school students and discussed that these programs included common core mindfulness activities. These activities are listed as (a) mindful breathing (to be aware of breathing and to follow the inhale/exhale process), (b) mindful meditations (short, guided meditations to become aware of sensations and emotions with non-judgemental reflection), (c) mindful movements (some basic yoga moves which can be done at or next to the desks), (d) real-world applications (transferring newly learned mindful skills to everyday problems and discussions), and (e) daily practices in the classrooms or at home to create routines of mindfulness. These activities aim to embed mindfulness as an integral part of students' daily lives, fostering emotional balance, attention regulation, and self-awareness.

Mindfulness-based practices have been adapted from traditional meditative practices and secularized for diverse applications, including educational settings, where they aim to address challenges like stress, attention deficits, and emotional dysregulation among students. Several studies have demonstrated the efficacy of mindfulness in enhancing self-regulation and attention. For example, Ojell et al. (2023) conducted a qualitative analysis of mindfulness practices during mathematical problem-solving tasks among Finnish fourth-grade students. The findings indicated significant improvements in self-regulation, with students displaying increased engagement and reduced signs of disengagement after mindfulness exercises. These results align with broader evidence showing that mindfulness positively influences attention-related behaviors and enhances emotional stability, which are critical for learning (Sederstrom, 2024).

Mindfulness has also been linked to improved academic outcomes and resilience. Bordbar, Ahmadinejad, Bahmaei, and Yusefi (2024) found that mindfulness significantly impacted students' academic achievement through its positive effect on adaptability. In a recent study, Mahama, Amoako, Nandzo, and Eshun (2024) identified mindfulness as a predictor of academic resilience among Ghanaian high school students, alongside self-regulated learning and school engagement. These findings underscore the role of mindfulness in fostering the cognitive flexibility and emotional resilience needed to navigate academic challenges.

Moreover, the integration of mindfulness into social-emotional learning (SEL) frameworks has shown promise in promoting holistic student development. Nie et al. (2024) explored a mindfulness-based SEL program for college students, which enhanced emotional awareness,

interpersonal communication, and social adaptation. By embedding mindfulness into SEL curricula, such programs not only address individual well-being but also foster a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) have also been employed to mitigate emotional and behavioral challenges. For instance, Monsillion et al. (2023) reviewed school-based MBIs and found consistent evidence for their effectiveness in reducing anxiety, depression, and stress among students. Programs such as Learning to BREATHE and MBCT-C (Mindfulness-based cognitive therapy for children) have demonstrated success in teaching emotional regulation and reducing internalizing symptoms, such as anxiety, in children and adolescents. These interventions have also been associated with improved school climate, fostering positive relationships between students and teachers (Monsillion et al., 2023).

While the benefits of mindfulness in education are well-documented, several challenges hinder its effective implementation. A recurring critique is the commodification of mindfulness, often referred to as "McMindfulness," where its foundational principles are stripped down into marketable products that prioritize quick fixes over sustained, meaningful practice (Hyland, 2016). This reductionist approach risks undermining the transformative potential of mindfulness by focusing solely on immediate outcomes, such as attention regulation, rather than fostering deeper ethical and spiritual growth. Additionally, Lee, Gerard, and Takaishi (2023) highlighted barriers such as low attendance rates in university mindfulness programs and a disconnect between administrator and student perceptions, which complicates the integration of mindfulness practices into institutional settings. These structural and cultural obstacles often limit mindfulness programs to superficial interventions rather than embedding them as part of a holistic educational framework.

Moreover, concerns have been raised about the decontextualization of mindfulness from its spiritual roots, which can dilute its ethical dimensions (Hyland, 2016). The absence of a robust ethical foundation may result in mindfulness being used instrumentally, such as in corporate or military settings, to enhance productivity rather than address broader goals of compassion and well-being. This tension is particularly problematic in educational environments, where mindfulness should ideally support the development of moral and emotional resilience alongside cognitive skills. Addressing these challenges requires a deliberate effort to preserve the integrity of mindfulness by reconnecting it with its ethical and transformative origins and tailoring interventions to meet the diverse needs of students and educators.

In summary, integrating mindfulness into education has demonstrated significant benefits for cognitive, emotional, and social development. While challenges remain in optimizing its implementation, the growing body of evidence supports mindfulness as a valuable tool for fostering resilience, enhancing academic outcomes, and promoting holistic well-being in educational settings.

Mindfulness and Second Language Acquisition

In recent years, researchers and practitioners have held a more holistic approach to language learning, and in this vein, interdisciplinary studies have gained importance. In second language acquisition (SLA) literature, for instance, it is quite common to find studies originating from psychology as a natural result of educational psychology research. Foreign language anxiety, burnout, well-being, and self-efficacy are some of the most investigated psychological constructs in SLA literature. Likewise, mindfulness has emerged as a new study field in foreign language education, especially in the last 5 years.

The use of mindfulness practices has shown to be effective both in various psychological developmental objectives and educational goals. Furthermore, it was discovered that mindfulness practices appear to enhance the mechanisms that tend to support general learning (Zeilhofer, 2020). Therefore, it would appear to be beneficial to investigate whether mindfulness exercises might help students learn languages. Furthermore, by comprehending how concepts from both mindfulness and SLA appear in these specific domains, educators may be better able to foster a supportive learning environment. When applied to the context of SLA, mindfulness could have several implications for foreign language learning:

Reducing Anxiety:

Mindfulness practices have been linked to stress reduction and anxiety management. SLA theories, such as Stephen Krashen's Affective Filter Hypothesis (1987), highlight the negative impact of anxiety on language acquisition. By fostering mindfulness, learners may be better equipped to manage language learning anxiety, creating a more conducive environment for acquisition.

Enhancing Focus and Attention:

SLA involves a significant cognitive load as learners process and internalize new linguistic information. Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1992) highlights the importance of

comprehensible input, suggesting that learners acquire language most effectively when exposed to input slightly beyond their current proficiency level ($i+1$). However, for this input to become intake, learners must be able to actively process and engage with it. Mindfulness practices, which improve focus and attention, can enhance learners' ability to stay present and attentive, increasing their capacity to comprehend and retain linguistic input.

Schmidt's Noticing Hypothesis (1990) further emphasizes the role of attention in SLA, asserting that learners must consciously notice specific linguistic features in the input for acquisition to occur. This means that merely being exposed to language is not enough; active and focused attention on linguistic elements, such as grammar or vocabulary, is essential. Mindfulness practices can help learners cultivate this awareness, enabling them to notice these key features more effectively and transform input into intake.

From a broader perspective, Cognitive Theories of SLA, such as McLaughlin's Information Processing Model (1983), stress the importance of controlled processing in the early stages of language learning. These theories argue that language learning involves a transition from effortful, conscious processing to more automatic processing. Attention and working memory play a central role in managing the cognitive load during this transition. Mindfulness practices, by improving executive functions such as sustained attention and working memory (Bishop et al., 2004), can reduce cognitive overload and support learners in processing and internalizing new linguistic information more efficiently.

Promoting Language Learning Autonomy:

Autonomy is a key concept in SLA theories such as Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory and Littlewood's Autonomous Learning Model. According to Vygotsky (1978), learners construct knowledge through social interaction and scaffolding, eventually developing the ability to self-regulate their learning. Similarly, Littlewood (1996) highlights the importance of learner autonomy, emphasizing the capacity to take responsibility for one's own learning by setting goals, monitoring progress, and making decisions about learning strategies.

Mindfulness, by promoting self-reflection and self-regulation, fosters the cognitive and emotional skills required for autonomous learning. Mindful learners are better equipped to recognize their strengths and weaknesses, set realistic goals, and sustain motivation.

Facilitating Language Output:

According to Swain (1985), producing language (speaking or writing) is crucial for SLA because it allows learners to notice gaps in their knowledge, test hypotheses about language

use, and refine their linguistic accuracy and fluency. Output is not merely a reflection of learned knowledge but an active process that drives language development by pushing learners to restructure their interlanguage. When considering the role of mindfulness on executive functions like working memory and cognitive flexibility, which are critical for organizing and structuring output in real-time, educators can support learners in improving the quality and confidence of their language output.

Cultural Sensitivity and Empathy:

Mindfulness emphasizes compassion and empathy. In the context of SLA, acknowledging and appreciating cultural nuances is crucial. The Intercultural Competence Model, proposed by Byram (1997), highlights the need for learners to develop attitudes of openness, knowledge of cultural practices, and skills for interpreting and relating to cultural differences. Mindfulness practices can contribute significantly to fostering these competencies. By encouraging learners to approach new cultural contexts with curiosity and acceptance, mindfulness helps reduce ethnocentric biases and enhances learners' ability to empathize with speakers from different cultural backgrounds.

While the integration of mindfulness into SLA is a relatively emerging field, the potential benefits are evident. Research at the intersection of mindfulness and SLA continues to evolve, with practical applications for language teaching and learning. In addition to all these, it appears to be useful to discuss mindfulness-related research topics such as positive psychology and well-being which already hold an important place in SLA literature.

Positive Psychology and its Integration into SLA

Positive psychology is a discipline that promises to increase the quality of life and avoid disorders that emerge when life is desolate and meaningless (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000). As for Peterson (2006), positive psychology is "the scientific study of what goes right in life, from birth to death and all stops in between" (pp. 4), emphasizing the exploration of strengths, resilience, and factors that contribute to human flourishing.

The introduction starting like "Languages are both taught and learned by people—human beings with hopes and fears, strengths and limitations, goals and frustrations" in MacIntyre, Gregersen, and Mercer's (2019, pp. 262) article could be one of the best explanations about the place of positive psychology in SLA. As can be inferred from that statement, it appears to be quite natural to explore the extent and practice of positive psychology in EFL/ESL

contexts. In contrast to classical positive psychology theory, which disapproves of negative emotions and separates them from their positive counterparts, positive psychology in L2 education questions the credibility of the negative-positive polarity of emotions and asserts that negative and positive emotions cannot be easily segregated and, in many cases, even complement each other (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012). Positive emotions can make L2 instruction and learning more fun and personally meaningful, as well as help L2 instructors and learners be more resilient in the face of diverse instructional problems (Gregersen, 2013).

Rebecca Oxford's (2016) EMPATHICS framework has been instrumental in integrating positive psychology into SLA. The model identifies nine key dimensions—Emotion, Meaning, Perseverance, Agency, Time, Hardiness, Intelligences, Character strengths, and Self-factors—that together foster well-being and language learning success. These dimensions emphasize the interplay between cognitive, emotional, and social factors in promoting resilience, motivation, and engagement in language learning (Oxford, 2016). For instance, perseverance (encompassing resilience, hope, and optimism) equips learners to overcome challenges, while emotional intelligence aids in managing feelings and fostering empathy in communication contexts.

The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions further supports this integration by highlighting how positive emotions like joy, love, and interest expand cognitive and behavioral repertoires, fostering creativity and building psychological and social resources (Huppert, Baylis, Keverne & Fredrickson, 2004). In SLA, positive emotions have been associated with enhanced foreign language enjoyment, which plays a pivotal role in reducing anxiety and promoting greater engagement and achievement (Wang, Derakhshan & Zhang, 2021). Research on Chinese EFL learners, for instance, revealed that higher emotional intelligence was linked to increased foreign language enjoyment, which mediated improvements in perceived and actual language performance (Li, 2020).

Empirical studies also emphasize the duality of positive and negative emotions in language learning. While anxiety has traditionally been seen as detrimental, recent findings suggest that it can coexist with enjoyment, contributing to a nuanced emotional landscape in the classroom (Dewaele, Chen, Padilla & Lake, 2019). However, fostering a predominantly positive emotional environment remains crucial, as it enables learners to absorb and process language input more effectively, promotes resilience, and enhances long-term motivation (MacIntyre & Gregersen, 2012).

Overall, the integration of positive psychology into SLA marks a significant advancement, offering tools to enhance both learner well-being and academic outcomes. By focusing on strengths and fostering positive emotional experiences, this approach helps create more dynamic and supportive language learning environments.

Well-Being

Well-being is increasingly recognized as a multifaceted construct essential for successful language acquisition. Defined as a state of optimal experience and functioning (Ryan & Deci, 2001), well-being includes emotional, psychological, and social dimensions that influence language learners' motivation, engagement, and resilience. Positive psychology offers a valuable framework for exploring how well-being can be enhanced in language learning contexts by focusing on strengths, positive emotions, and supportive environments.

A key model within this framework is Rebecca Oxford's (2016) EMPATHICS model, which identifies 21 elements of well-being relevant to language learners, including empathy, motivation, resilience, and identity. Three recently added components—identity, investment, and imagination—play pivotal roles in shaping learners' experiences and outcomes. For instance, a strong sense of identity and meaningful investment in language learning correlate with increased motivation and positive self-concept (Oxford, 2016).

The significance of well-being in language learning becomes even more pronounced when considering specific learner populations, such as third-age learners. For older learners, language acquisition is not merely about proficiency but also personal fulfillment and social engagement. Studies have shown that older adults derive significant well-being from savoring the process of learning, which includes appreciating moments of discovery and connection during language classes. This enhances their sense of purpose and contributes to lifelong learning (Matsumoto, 2019). Similarly, for immigrant language learners, well-being is closely tied to language proficiency and its impact on settlement and employment. Research indicates a positive correlation between language skill gains and perceptions of settlement well-being. However, employment alone does not guarantee well-being; instead, the ability to use language effectively within social and professional contexts plays a critical role (Kim, Ehrich & Ficorilli, 2012).

Beyond present learning experiences, past experiences with language learning also play a crucial role in shaping learners' attitudes and outcomes. Falout's (2016) research emphasizes

the influence of past selves on language learning outcomes. Positive past language experiences are linked to greater resilience and adaptability, while negative experiences may hinder progress unless reframed positively. Interventions like gratitude exercises and strengths identification help learners reconstruct their self-narratives, fostering a positive outlook that supports both learning and well-being (Falout, 2016). Practical interventions grounded in positive psychology can be seamlessly integrated into language curricula. For example, exercises such as identifying “three good things” about learning experiences, reflecting on personal strengths, and building positive classroom interactions have demonstrated significant improvements in learners’ emotional states and academic outcomes.

Well-being is a cornerstone of effective language learning, influenced by a combination of emotional, social, and cognitive factors. Positive psychology offers powerful tools to enhance learners’ experiences by fostering positive emotions, resilience, and meaningful engagement. Future research should continue exploring the complex interplay between well-being and language learning to inform practices that support diverse learner populations.

Mindfulness Integration into L2 Learning

In a recent systematic review on mindfulness studies in second/foreign language learning contexts, Koçali and Asik (2022) found a high increase in the number of studies in language learning settings, particularly after 2017. According to the findings obtained from studies conducted in different countries, it was found that mostly studied variables were FLA and language performance concerning mindfulness practices (Koçali & Asik, 2022). In addition to FLA (Charoensukmongkol, 2019; Fallah, 2017; Mortimore, 2017; Parker & Kupersmidt, 2016), and language performance (Choomchaiyo & Varma, 2021; Li, Cai, Elias, & Wilson-Jones, 2019; Mortimore, 2017; Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021; Zeilhofer, 2020), self-efficacy (Choomchaiyo & Varma, 2021; Fallah, 2017; Morgan, 2019; Waldman & Carmel, 2019) and stress (Taghavi-Nejad et al., 2024; Wolfe & Akhmedov, 2024) are other variables investigated regarding mindfulness and L2 education.

Conducted in differing contexts, promising findings for mindful learning in L2 classes were revealed in most studies. Fallah (2017) investigated the relationship between mindfulness, coping self-efficacy, and FLA with 295 Iranian EFL learners. In his paper, the researcher only examined students' trait mindfulness which is the tendency to be aware of one's

emotions (Brown & Ryan, 2003). Namely, trait mindfulness is what a person brings with them throughout their life, regardless of whether they know about mindfulness (Morgan & Katz, 2021). In conclusion, Fallah (2017) found an inverse relationship between mindfulness and FLA; higher mindfulness correlates with lower FLA. Similarly, a negative correlation was found between mindfulness and FLA in Charoensukmongkol's (2019) study with 333 Thai students and Önem's (2015) with 61 Turkish students. Furthermore, it was found that mindfulness practices have a positive influence on L2 motivation both directly and indirectly through an increase in self-fulfillment (Ghanizadeh, Makiabadi & Navokhi, 2019).

Mindfulness significantly mitigates stress, a prevalent challenge in L2 learning. Wolfe and Akhmedov (2024) demonstrated that mindfulness training reduced perceived stress among Uzbek EFL students, highlighting its role in fostering emotional balance and enhancing academic focus. Similarly, mindfulness was found to alleviate the stress associated with academic procrastination by enhancing attention control and self-regulated learning, as evidenced in studies by Taghavi-Nejad et al. (2024).

Beyond stress, mindfulness addresses boredom, a critical yet often overlooked barrier to engagement in language classrooms. L. Cheng (2023) explored the relationship between mindfulness, boredom, and creativity in young EFL learners, finding that mindfulness practices not only reduced boredom but also enhanced creative thinking by encouraging learners to remain curious and engaged with the learning material. These findings underline the potential of mindfulness to transform monotonous classroom environments into stimulating spaces of exploration.

Burnout, often resulting from sustained stress and emotional fatigue, is another significant issue in L2 learning. Wu and Zhao (2023) revealed that mindfulness mediates the relationship between engagement and burnout, helping learners maintain enthusiasm and resilience in high-pressure academic settings. This aligns with the findings by Xue (2023), who emphasized the importance of mindfulness and teacher compassion in mitigating disengagement and fostering a supportive educational environment.

Grit, defined as perseverance and passion for long-term goals, has also been linked to mindfulness in language learning. Tu and Shi (2024) investigated the interplay between mindfulness and grit among Chinese EFL students, concluding that mindfulness strengthens learners' ability to persist in the face of challenges, thereby enhancing their academic outcomes and emotional well-being.

From a cognitive perspective, mindfulness enhances attention, memory, and retention, which are crucial for language acquisition. Zeilhofer and Sasao (2022) highlighted the role of mindfulness in improving vocabulary retention, identifying "acting with awareness" as a key factor in learning new language elements. Kang (2024) further demonstrated that mindfulness aids in mastering complex linguistic structures, such as phrasal verbs, by promoting focused and non-reactive engagement.

Moreover, mindfulness promotes learner autonomy and self-reflection, essential for independent learning. Demirci (2022) explored this relationship in EFL contexts, finding that mindfulness enables students to better regulate their learning processes and make informed decisions about their study strategies. Similarly, Hammad Al-Rashidi and Aberash (2024) showed that reflective thinking combined with mindfulness fosters resilience, self-evaluation, and academic growth.

Previous studies suggest that several different strategies and types of integration are used for mindfulness integration, such as employing a ready-made curriculum designed by an organization (Thomas & Atkinson, 2016; Torres Colón, 2020), implicit integration of mindfulness into teaching language skills (Butto, 2018; Reilly, 2021) and using meditation applications (Huberty et al., 2019; Sexton et al., 2022). It is possible to find several resources aiming to integrate mindfulness into education but there are few or no resources specifically designed for foreign language classes. Therefore, as pointed out by Morgan and Katz (2021), context-sensitive, targeted mindfulness activities for language learners could be commendable. It is also acknowledged that mindfulness practices need specific knowledge, expertise, and experience to be implemented in classrooms. In this regard, teachers might first consider mindfulness teacher training opportunities before delving into mindfulness integration in language classes. Currently, there are many available teacher training certificate programs, both international and national. For accredited certificate programs, the website of International Mindfulness Teachers Association could be checked (International Mindfulness Teachers Association).

The integration of mindfulness into language teaching frameworks, such as the Mindfulness-Enhanced Language Teaching (MELT) model proposed by Gönen (2024), has provided educators with practical tools to foster reflective learning and emotional regulation. These approaches are complemented by Hollenback (2012)'s findings, which highlight the role of mindfulness in building inclusive and culturally aware classroom communities.

In summary, mindfulness integration in L2 learning addresses a wide range of challenges, including stress, boredom, burnout, and grit, while enhancing cognitive and emotional capacities. It fosters a supportive and engaging learning environment, enabling learners to overcome obstacles and achieve their full potential. Future research should explore scalable mindfulness-based interventions and their long-term effects across diverse linguistic and cultural settings.

Foreign Language Anxiety

Krashen’s Affective Filter Hypothesis (1987) suggests that emotional factors play a crucial role in second language acquisition. According to Dewaele and C. Li (2020), emotion research in SLA, as illustrated in Figure 1, has progressed through three phases: the Emotion Avoidance Phase (1960s–1980s), where emotions were largely overlooked in favor of cognitive factors; the Anxiety-Prevailing Phase (1980s–2010s), which centered on anxiety as the dominant emotional focus; and the Positive and Negative Emotions Phase (2010s–present), characterized by a holistic exploration of both positive and negative emotions and their dynamic interactions in language learning.

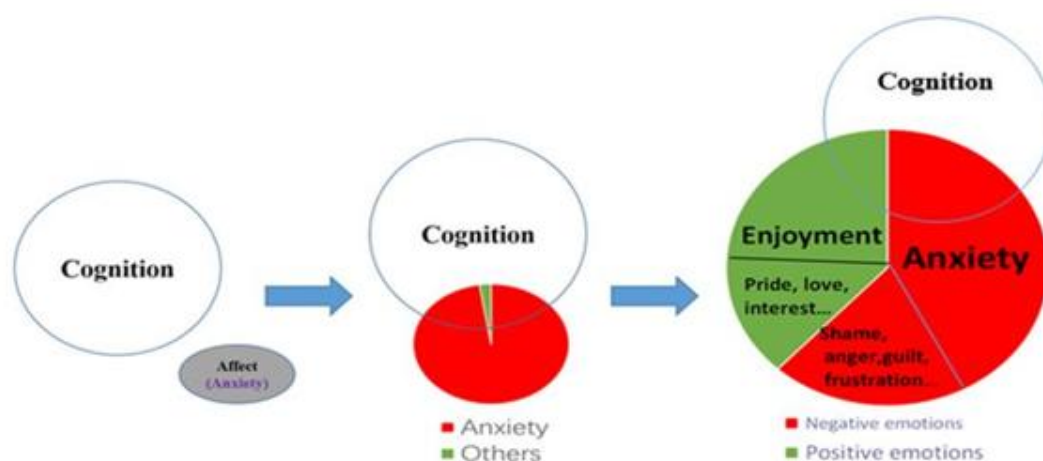


Figure 1. Three stages of emotion research in SLA literature (Dewaele, J.-M., & Li, C. (2020). Emotions in second language acquisition: A critical review and research agenda. Foreign Language World, 196(1), 34-49.)

(Researchers’ note: The figure is only meant to visualize general trends, with approximate proportions)

Elements such as motivation, self-confidence, and anxiety directly influence a learner's ability to acquire a language. In Cambridge Dictionary, anxiety is simply defined as “the

feeling of being very worried”. The term is defined as “subjective feeling of tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with an arousal of the autonomic nervous system” by Spielberger, Gorsuch, Lushene, Vagg, and Jacobs (1983, pp. 15). Similar to how anxiety can hinder success in areas like mathematics, many individuals find learning a foreign language, particularly in classroom settings, to be highly stressful (Horwitz et al., 1986). When anxiety is evaluated in the context of language learning, it is categorized as a specific type of anxiety. Psychologists refer to this as a "specific anxiety reaction" to distinguish between those who experience anxiety broadly across various situations and those who only feel anxious in specific contexts (Horwitz et al., 1986).

As one of the prominent studies in foreign language anxiety (FLA) research, Horwitz et al. (1986, pp. 128) define foreign language classroom anxiety (FLCA) as “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process”. It is essential to note that this form of anxiety is specifically linked to classroom-based language learning rather than language acquisition in naturalistic environments, such as immersion through travel or living abroad (Russell, 2020). Described as a type of situation-specific anxiety, FLA differs from trait or state anxiety. Trait anxiety is seen as a habitual or personality-based characteristic, while state anxiety refers to a temporary psychological and/or physical reaction to a particular adverse situation (Roos et al., 2015). FLA combines elements of both, as it tends to recur whenever a learner encounters language learning challenges, but it is also temporary since it is confined to specific situations. General types of anxiety differ from language-specific anxiety, noting that "situation-specific constructs can be seen as trait anxiety measures limited to a given context" (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1991, pp. 90).

Language anxiety can be considered a type of social anxiety since it centers on the challenges of interacting and communicating in the target language being learned (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). Furthermore, Horwitz et al. (1986) identify three primary components of this specific type of anxiety:

1. *Communication Apprehension*: This refers to fear or anxiety about engaging in verbal communication, particularly in contexts involving limited proficiency in the target language. It encompasses difficulties in speaking and listening, often exacerbated by the perceived lack of control over the communicative situation.
2. *Test Anxiety*: This is a fear of failure in performance evaluation, which is common in academic settings. For foreign language learners, frequent testing and the possibility of

oral evaluations can heighten anxiety, as even well-prepared students are prone to making errors.

3. *Fear of Negative Evaluation*: This involves apprehension about being judged negatively by others, whether peers or instructors. Unlike test anxiety, it is not limited to exam situations and can occur in any evaluative context, such as classroom participation. This type of anxiety is intensified in language classes where constant evaluation is inherent to the learning process.

These three components, while distinct, collectively contribute to the unique challenges faced by learners in foreign language classrooms (Horwitz et al., 1986). Moreover, Wilang and Singhasiri (2017) found that language anxiety arises from both linguistic and non-linguistic factors. Linguistic-related anxiety includes concerns about speech accentedness, participants' linguistic knowledge, and speech rate, while non-linguistic factors involve the interlocutor's communication skills, attitudes, familiarity with others, fear of negative evaluation, and topic knowledge, among other aspects.

Foreign language anxiety plays a complex role in language learning, where it can have both facilitating and debilitating effects. Facilitating anxiety, described as a positive form of stress, can motivate learners to put in more effort and perform better by increasing their drive (Chastain, 1975; Young, 1991). For example, learners who embrace risks as part of the learning process may benefit from this type of anxiety. On the other hand, debilitating anxiety negatively impacts learning by hindering language performance, reducing confidence, and even leading to withdrawal from language classes. This form of anxiety often discourages learners, limits their ability to take risks, and affects overall achievement (Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1989). Building upon the understanding that debilitating anxiety negatively impacts language performance and overall achievement, a comprehensive meta-analysis by Teimouri et al. (2019) further elucidates this relationship. Analyzing 97 reports encompassing 105 independent samples with a total of 19,933 participants across 23 countries, the study found a significant negative correlation ($r = -.36$) between second language (L2) anxiety and language achievement. This indicates that higher levels of anxiety are consistently associated with lower language performance. The analysis also revealed that this negative effect varies across different types of language achievement measures, educational levels, target languages, and anxiety types, underscoring the pervasive and detrimental impact of anxiety on language learning outcomes.

Additionally, social and personal variables such as self-confidence, individual attitudes toward language learning, and comfort with interlocutors play significant roles in shaping anxiety. For instance, learners may feel less anxious during pair or group work compared to presenting alone, as familiarity and collaborative environments often reduce stress (Liu, 2016). Understanding these dynamics is crucial for developing strategies to mitigate debilitating anxiety while harnessing its facilitative potential to enhance learning outcomes.

Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

As a specific type of anxiety, students might experience foreign language anxiety in various tasks such as reading and writing (Charoensukmongkol, 2019), but speaking in an L2 context is generally regarded as the skill which causes the most anxiety respectively (Cheng, Horwitz & Schallert, 1999). Nunan (2003) suggests that speaking is challenging because it happens spontaneously leaving no time to learners to revise and get ready.

Through factor analysis, Mak (2011) identified five key contributors to speaking-in-class anxiety among Hong Kong students: speech anxiety and fear of negative evaluation, discomfort when interacting with native speakers, negative perceptions of the English classroom, negative self-evaluation, and fear of failing the class or consequences of personal failure.

Several other factors contribute to FLSA, which can be broadly categorized into personal, classroom-based, and sociolinguistic influences:

1. Personal Factors:

- *Fear of negative evaluation:* Learners often fear being judged by peers or teachers, leading to avoidance of speaking opportunities. This fear is intensified in competitive classroom settings (Horwitz et al., 1986; Kitano, 2001).
- *Low self-perception of ability:* Students with lower confidence in their language skills, especially in comparison to peers, are more prone to speaking anxiety (Price, 1991).
- *Perfectionism:* Highly anxious learners tend to be perfectionists, overly concerned with grammatical accuracy and pronunciation, which further heightens their anxiety (Gregersen & Horwitz, 2002).

2. *Classroom-Related Factors:*

- *Teaching practices:* Traditional, teacher-centered methods, oral presentations, and a lack of supportive feedback increase speaking anxiety (Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009).
- *Testing and evaluation:* Oral exams and unprepared speaking activities are common triggers of FLSA, as learners often associate speaking with formal evaluation (Woodrow, 2006).
- *Teacher-student interactions:* The teacher's personality and behavior significantly influence students' anxiety levels. A positive rapport and supportive environment can reduce anxiety, while rigid or overly critical behavior exacerbates it (Yan & Horwitz, 2008).

3. *Sociolinguistic and Cultural Factors:*

- Cultural norms and expectations regarding public speaking can amplify anxiety, particularly for learners from collectivist cultures where social harmony and face-saving are prioritized (Tanveer, 2007).

The relationship between proficiency level and FLSA is complex and not always linear. Some studies suggest that lower proficiency learners exhibit higher anxiety due to a lack of linguistic competence, while others indicate that advanced learners may feel pressured to meet higher expectations, maintaining or even increasing their anxiety (Batumlu & Erden, 2007; Saito & Samimy, 1996). Additionally, learners at intermediate levels may experience less anxiety as they begin to achieve communicative competence (Balemir, 2009).

Research highlights several strategies to address and reduce FLSA, such as creating a supportive classroom environment, providing constructive feedback, and gradual exposure to speaking tasks. Building a collaborative and non-competitive atmosphere can alleviate anxiety. Techniques like group work and project-based activities have proven effective (Kitano, 2001; Tsiplakides & Keramida, 2009). Moreover, teachers should focus on positive reinforcement and treat errors as part of the learning process rather than failures (Gregersen, 2003). Starting with low-pressure activities and gradually progressing to more complex speaking tasks can also help learners build confidence (Tanveer, 2007).

Overall, FLSA is a significant barrier to effective language acquisition, influenced by personal, classroom, and cultural factors. While proficiency level plays a role, addressing

FLSA requires a multifaceted approach that fosters a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Mindfulness and Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety (FLSA) presents a significant barrier to effective language learning, often undermining learners' confidence, engagement, and overall performance. Despite its prevalence, research exploring the role of mindfulness in addressing FLSA remains limited, though emerging studies provide promising evidence of its potential benefits. Studies have demonstrated that mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs) can alleviate the emotional distress associated with speaking in a foreign language. For example, Öz (2017) implemented a six-week mindfulness meditation program for EFL learners in Turkey, finding significant reductions in speaking anxiety and an increase in learners' willingness to communicate (WTC) in the target language. These findings are corroborated by Ersanlı and Ünal (2022), which also reported improved mindfulness awareness and reduced speaking anxiety among EFL learners exposed to mindfulness training.

The impact of mindfulness on FLSA is often mediated through its effects on cognitive and emotional regulation. Castañeda Aguirre, Acosta Chamorro, and Villegas Gómez (2024) explored the role of mindfulness in enhancing fluency and confidence in Colombian students learning English, concluding that mindfulness practices significantly reduced their anxiety during oral activities. Similarly, mindfulness has been shown to improve learners' focus and self-awareness, which are critical for managing the stress and cognitive overload associated with speaking tasks.

Despite these promising findings, the number of studies focusing specifically on mindfulness and FLSA is relatively small. This gap is particularly notable given the extensive documentation of FLSA as a pervasive issue in language learning. The limited research highlights the need for more comprehensive investigations to understand the mechanisms through which mindfulness alleviates FLSA and its long-term impacts on learners' performance and well-being.

Existing studies also highlight the practical implications of integrating mindfulness into language education. Mindfulness-based classroom activities, such as guided meditations, breathing exercises, and reflective discussions, have been shown to foster a supportive and

inclusive learning environment. For instance, Castañeda Aguirre et al. (2024) employed mindfulness workshops to reduce anxiety and improve speaking skills among Basic English students, emphasizing the adaptability of mindfulness practices to diverse educational contexts.

In conclusion, while the research on mindfulness and FLSA is limited, existing evidence underscores its potential to transform language learning experiences by addressing one of its most challenging affective barriers. Future studies should aim to expand this body of knowledge by exploring mindfulness interventions across different learner populations and cultural contexts, assessing their long-term efficacy, and identifying the most effective practices for mitigating FLSA.



CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methodological approach used in the design of this study. It covers basic principles, participants, research context, data collecting instruments, process, and data analysis.

Research Design

The current research study employs a mixed method research design based on the purpose of the study. In mixed method research, both qualitative and quantitative data are combined or integrated in a research study (J. W. Creswell & Creswell, 2018). For example, a mixed method design might involve the use of a qualitative method (e.g., to describe some experience) with an additional quantitative strategy to measure some dimension of the experience. The qualitative description of the phenomenon under investigation is embellished by measuring a dimension of this experience (Morse, 2016). In other words, quantitative data provide generalizable findings, while qualitative data contextualize these findings within the participants' unique circumstances. In the present study, quantitative data collection instruments were used to measure the level of mindfulness and foreign language speaking anxiety namely.

The literature reports on around forty different mixed methods study designs (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Among them, the most employed and cited study designs are concurrent and sequential mixed methods studies. In a sequential design, data collection occurs in phases: either qualitative data informs quantitative data collection or vice versa. In a concurrent design, both qualitative and quantitative data are collected simultaneously, allowing for cross-validation and deeper insights. This study employs a mixed method sequential

explanatory design. In this type of research, the researcher initially gathers and examines the quantitative (numerical) data. The qualitative data reviewed second in the sequence, clarify or expand on the quantitative conclusions of the first phase. The study's intermediate stage connects the two parts, with the second, qualitative phase expanding on the first, quantitative phase. (Ivankova, Creswell & Stick, 2006). This strategy is supported by the fact that although the quantitative data provides a general grasp of the study topic, the qualitative data expands on this understanding by offering in-depth interpretations of the statistical findings from the viewpoints of the participants (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). For this study, the mixed method sequential explanatory design was selected to ensure that each method complements the other, enhancing the credibility of the findings.

Research Context and Sampling

The universe of the study consists of students from a School of Foreign Languages (SFL) of a state university in Central Anatolia, Türkiye during the 2022-2023 educational year. The SFL mainly offers English preparatory programs for departments with English as medium of instruction. In the relevant academic year, 52 students were registered in the English preparatory program. However, the number of actively participating students was 38. At the beginning of the semester, the students were assigned to two classes randomly regardless of their language proficiency level because of the small number of students. Besides, the first midterm exam (about seven weeks after the beginning of the fall semester) demonstrated that the classes were homogenous in terms of language proficiency level.

The participants of the study are selected through non-probability sample types (purposive and convenience sampling). In purposive sampling, the researcher intentionally is interested in a population with certain knowledge, experience, or history (Akar, 2019), while convenience sampling is employed when a group of elements are accessible to the researcher (Clark, 2017). For the present study, the researcher decided to work with a small group of students taking an intensive English preparatory program. The basic reason was that the study mainly was qualitatively driven. The researcher gathered a great amount of qualitative data from the participants through semi-structured interviews before and after the intervention and learner journals throughout the intervention. In order to manage the process thoroughly and to investigate the research questions in depth, working with a small group appeared to be a better choice in that case. Second, the group was formed based on voluntary participation when the universities decided to switch to online education due to the massive

earthquake which hit Türkiye on February 6. Together with the unique and specific conditions in the current study, similar studies practicing MBI with a small group of students have also been observed in the literature (Balci, Kuchler, Ebert & Baumeister, 2024; Castañeda Aguirre et al., 2024; Ojell et al., 2023).

For the current study, 16 B1-level EFL students first volunteered to participate in the study. One of the students had to withdraw from the study in the first week because her schedule did not fit with the schedule of the intervention. Right after her withdrawal, another student decided to join the study in the first week and filled out the pre-intervention scales before starting the intervention. However, one student dropped out during the third week due to personal reasons. In conclusion, 15 students (12 females, 3 males) accepted to participate in the study, and their age ranged between 17-21 with an average of 19. The participants completed all eight sessions. For emergent or unplanned situations preventing the participants from joining the sessions, all sessions were recorded and shared on the learning management system. Although most of the activities were done synchronously together with the group, few students completed the activities by watching the recordings later.

Mindfulness-Based Intervention Program for Foreign Language Classes (MBI-FLC)

For the present study, an 8-week mindfulness-based intervention program for foreign language classes (MBI-FLC) was developed by the researcher. The program was designed as an eight-week intervention, with each session lasting between 45 to 60 minutes. Notably, widely recognized programs such as Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT), also span eight weeks but typically involve longer sessions, averaging around 120 minutes. While the eight-week format is prevalent, variations exist. Some studies have explored abbreviated versions of MBIs. For example, a quasi-experimental pilot study compared the efficacy of eight-session and four-session MBI programs in a non-clinical population. The findings suggested that both formats improved mindfulness and psychological well-being, though the eight-session program yielded more substantial benefits (Demarzo et al., 2017).

In the present study, the duration of the sessions was deliberately kept shorter for several reasons. Firstly, the participants' age and associated attention span were taken into account, as adolescents are known to have a shorter attention span compared to adults. Research indicates that adolescents' attention spans are generally shorter than those of adults, with

developmental experts suggesting that a 14-year-old typically has an attention span ranging from 28 to 42 minutes, while a 16-year-old's attention span extends from 32 to 48 minutes (Samba-Recovery, 2024). Secondly, the session length was adjusted to align with standard school class periods (typically 45 minutes), a timeframe with which students are already familiar. Finally, meta-analytical studies suggest no significant relationship between intervention duration and effect size (Carmody & Baer, 2009). In other words, there is no practical difference in effectiveness between an intensive MBSR program with weekly sessions totaling 2.5 hours and a more condensed program. Therefore, this intervention was designed to be shorter and more concise, similar to the approach adopted in Gldal's (2019) study, to enhance feasibility within a school setting and appropriateness for the targeted age group.

The MBI-FLC program was developed and implemented by the researcher. The implementation of the intervention by a trained teacher rather than an outside facilitator might enhance the feasibility and sustainability of the practices (Carsley, Khoury & Heath, 2018). In addition to being a full-time English teacher for six years, the researcher has done a 12-hour basic mindfulness course, an 8-week mindfulness course, and a 120-hour mindfulness training in the last two years. In addition to these trainings, the researcher completed a 200-hour mindfulness teacher training course from an international institution accredited by the International Mindfulness Teachers Association and qualified to teach mindfulness to others.

MBI-FLC is an adapted program inspired by various resources such as MBSR and MBCT by considering the dynamics of foreign language learning. In other words, both formal (e.g., meditation practices, mindful breathing) and informal (e.g., brushing your teeth mindfully) mindfulness and mindfulness integrated L2 activities were included in the program. For the relevant program, the researcher blended her pedagogical knowledge about teaching English as a foreign language and the content knowledge and the insights gained from the various trainings she had taken. While doing this, the researcher employed current and valid approaches regarding material development. A text-driven approach (Tomlinson, 2003) is highly effective in SLA-based material development, as it prioritizes engaging texts over isolated language points. Learners interact with texts through response activities, critical thinking, communication, and creative writing, alongside language awareness tasks and supplementary materials. According to Tomlinson (2013), effective materials should:

- provide meaningful language exposure,

- foster emotional and cognitive engagement,
- stimulate cognitive processes,
- enable purposeful communication,
- help learners recognize linguistic features.

Similarly, for principled development of language teaching materials, Mishan and Timmis (2015) suggest that internal and external factors need to be considered. The internal factors are related to the learners' affective (emotions) and cognitive (rationality) domains, while external ones are the language, the teacher, and the learning environment.

In line with these principles, the materials developed for MBI-FLC, integrate both cognitive and affective domains by engaging learners in activities that promote critical thinking, self-reflection, and emotional connection to language learning. Moreover, the materials incorporated authentic resources rather than pre-designed pedagogical texts. For instance, YouTube videos not originally created for language teaching were selected to provide rich, natural input. Additionally, texts from reliable native sources were adapted by integrating comprehension activities to enhance engagement and understanding. These strategies ensured exposure to meaningful, real-world language while fostering awareness and deeper cognitive processing.

The weekly schedule of the MBI-FLC program is presented as both a visual figure (see Figure 2) for an overview and a detailed table (see Table 1) for specific information.

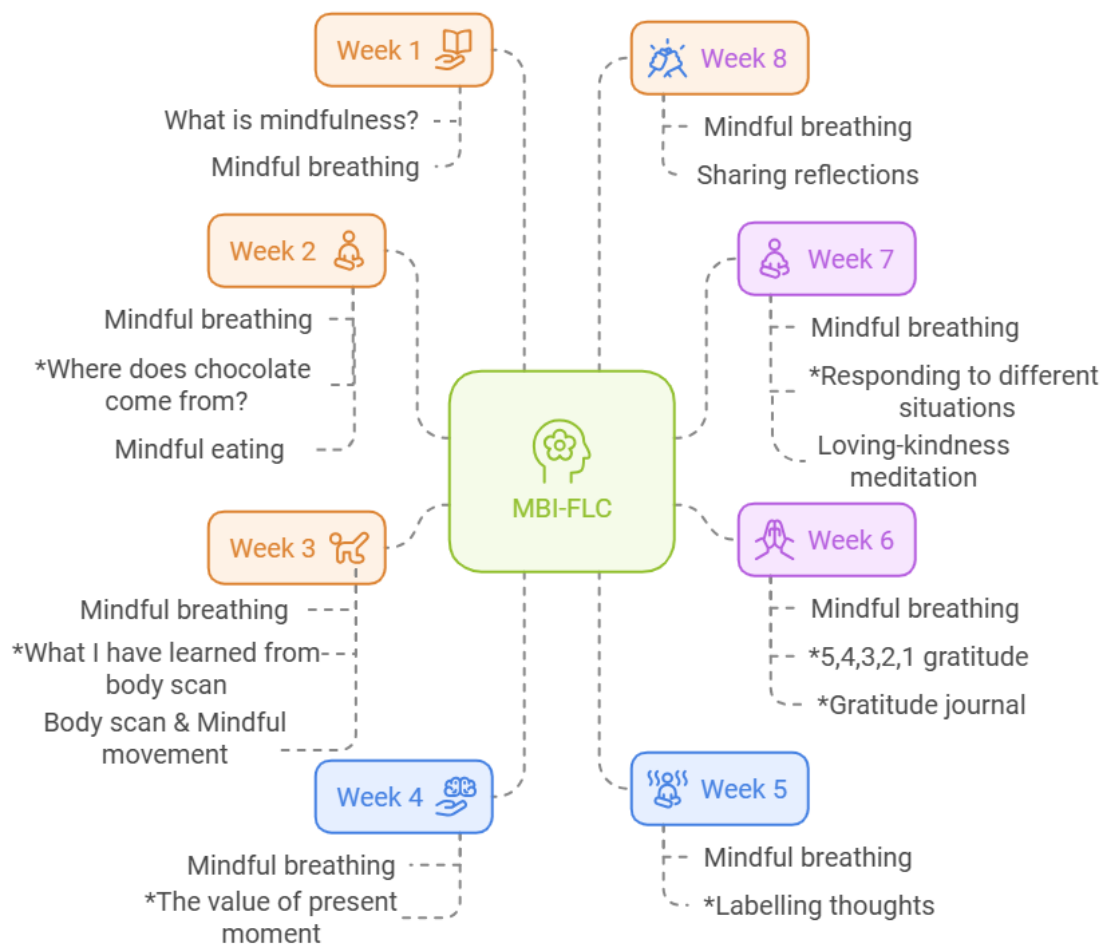


Figure 2. The overview of MBI-FLC

Notes:

*Mindfulness-integrated language learning materials covering different language skills such as reading and listening.

**Each different colour represents the focused area of mindfulness practices. Orange represents the practices focusing on the awareness of sensations, blue for the awareness of thoughts, and purple for the awareness of emotions. Thus, the last week is shown in each of these colours involving them all.

Table 1

Weekly Schedule of MBI-FLC

Week	Date	Focused area	Name of the activity	Homework
1	April 3 rd 2023	Awareness of sensations	*Introducing mindfulness (reading & writing) *Mindful breathing	*FOLLOW-UP 1: How did you feel after mindful breathing meditation? *Mindful breathing
2	April 10 th 2023	Awareness of sensations	*Mindful breathing *Where does chocolate come from? (reading & writing) *Mindful eating	FOLLOW-UP 2: How did you feel after mindful eating? *Mindful breathing *Write about a routine activity done in a mindful way (REFLECTION 1)
3	April 17 th 2023	Awareness of sensations	*Mindful breathing *Watching a short video about body scan exercise (listening & speaking) *Body scan *Mindful movement	FOLLOW UP 3: How did you feel after body scan and mindful movement exercise? *Mindful breathing *ALTERNATIVELY: Mindful movement/Body scan
4	April 24 th 2023	Awareness of thoughts	*Mindful breathing *The present moment discussion (reading & speaking)	*Mindful breathing *ALTERNATIVELY: Body scan/Mindful eating/Mindful movement (Choose one and practice it during the week)
5	May 1 st 2023	Awareness of thoughts	*Mindful breathing *Labelling thoughts-wolf story (listening & speaking)	*Mindful breathing *ALTERNATIVELY: Body scan/Mindful movement/Mindful eating
6	May 8 th 2023	Awareness of emotions	*Mindful breathing *5,4,3,2,1 Gratitude (speaking)	FOLLOW-UP 4: How did you feel after the gratitude activity? *Mindful breathing *ALTERNATIVELY: Body scan/Mindful movement/Mindful eating *Write one thing that you are grateful for the next 6 days. On the seventh day, complete the gratitude reflection. (REFLECTION 2)
7	May 15 th 2023	Awareness of emotions	*Mindful breathing *Giving reaction to different situations (speaking) *Loving-kindness meditation	FOLLOW-UP 5: How did you feel after the loving-kindness meditation? *Mindful breathing *ALTERNATIVELY: Body scan/Mindful movement/Mindful eating/ Loving-kindness meditation
8	May 22 nd 2023	Wrap-up	*Mindful breathing *Sharing reflections (writing) *Strategies to keep practicing (speaking)	-

Components and Features of the Suggested MBI-FLC Program

The purpose of the program, learning objectives, weekly activities, the contents, and implementation processes employed in the program are presented in this section.

The main purpose of the program is to raise awareness towards mindfulness and encourage students to cultivate it in their English learning journey as a helper to deal with foreign language speaking anxiety. During the design of the study, various sources were examined and relevant components were employed to form a program which is in line with mindfulness philosophy and foreign language learning pedagogy. In the following part, the program and the activities included are described week by week and the rationale behind all components and features is also introduced. The activities given to the participants are presented in Appendix 6.

Week 1: Introducing Mindfulness and Mindful Breathing Exercise

The 8-week MBI-FLC program was divided into three in terms of focused areas which are respectively awareness of sensations, awareness of thoughts and awareness of emotions. In the first week, awareness of sensations was practiced through mindful breathing. Many other mindfulness programs start with mindful breathing practice because it is easier to notice and pay attention to physical sensations such as the rising and falling of the belly during breathing and the air we feel through our nose. Therefore, mindful breathing exercise was included in the first week of MBI-FLC. However, an introduction about mindfulness through a reading lesson was added before practicing mindful breathing. The main reason was to provide a basic background knowledge to the students so that they could understand the extent of the practices in the following weeks.

Activity 1: What is mindfulness?

The lesson started with warm-up questions (*Have you heard about mindfulness before? If yes, what do you know about it? If not, can you guess what it might be from the word itself?*)

to activate the students' prior knowledge that we employ during the comprehension process so that actually shaping our understanding (Duke, Pearson, Strachan & Billman, 2011). Following the warm-up step, a text-based vocabulary activity was generated to introduce the possible new vocabulary to the students before reading and to increase the comprehensibility of the text. In this activity, the students were required to match the target words from the text with the correct definition. After introducing target words, the students were prompted to read the text about mindfulness followed by two post-reading activities. Through the reading lesson, the students gained a basic understanding of mindfulness/mindlessness, the benefits of mindfulness, and some main mindfulness practices.

Activity 2: Mindful breathing

After the reading lesson was completed, the session continued with a mindful breathing exercise, which was one of the mindfulness practices introduced in the reading text. In addition to that short introduction about mindful breathing, the instructor provided detailed explanations about the exercise and encouraged the students to pay attention to their breath as much as possible. Next, the students practiced mindful breathing with the guidance of the instructor. The script of mindful breathing exercise was generated by the researcher in three steps. First, several mindful breathing exercise scripts (Atalay, 2019; Kabat-Zinn, 2013; Williams & Penman, 2011) were examined and a new script was formed based on students' age, language level and familiarity with meditation/mindfulness. Second, the script underwent language and content check by two English teachers, one of whom was a yoga teacher as well. Finally, the script was piloted with three students and some changes were carried out. The most important feedback was about the language of the exercise, the students stated that they would prefer to practice mindful breathing in their native language (Turkish) so that they could feel more relaxed and would not have to worry about understanding the instructions. Therefore, the script was translated and adapted into Turkish and language and content check was carried out by the two English teachers (their native language is Turkish, too) again. Aforementioned three steps were employed for all other meditation scripts created for this program. After the mindful breathing exercise, several open-ended questions

inquiring students' reflections about the exercise were asked and the responses were collected through Google Forms.

Week 2: Mindful Eating

In the second week of the MBI-FLC program, the focus remained on enhancing awareness of sensations through different activities designed to engage the senses and promote mindfulness in daily practices. The week began with a continuation of the mindful breathing exercise introduced in Week 1, followed by a thematic reading and writing lesson on the origins of chocolate, and concluded with a mindful eating exercise. This combination of activities aimed to deepen the students' understanding of mindfulness and its application in various contexts.

Activity 1: Mindful breathing

To build on the foundations laid in the first week, the session started with a 2-minute mindful breathing exercise. Formalized mindfulness training practices, such as the cultivation of mindful attention to one's breathing, constitute foundational elements of numerous mindfulness-based interventions (Creswell, 2017). Semple, Droutman, and Reid (2017) reviewed ten mindfulness-based programs that have been applied in school contexts and mindful breathing/awareness on breath was discovered to be one of the key components in all those ten programs. In this vein, mindful breathing was included as the core component in this program and meant to be repeated every eight weeks of the MBI-FLC program. This exercise aimed to reinforce the students' ability to focus on their breath and notice the physical sensations associated with it. The instructor provided a brief review of the mindful breathing technique, emphasizing the importance of maintaining awareness of the breath and gently bringing attention back whenever the mind wandered. The practice was conducted in Turkish, ensuring that students felt comfortable and could fully engage with the exercise without language barriers.

Activity 2: "Where does chocolate come from?"

The second activity of the week was a reading and writing lesson centered around the theme of food which was chocolate in this specific lesson. The lesson began with warm-up questions to activate prior knowledge and stimulate interest. Students were asked: "Do you like chocolate? Do you know where chocolate first came from? From Asia, America, or Africa?"

Before diving into the reading text, students participated in a vocabulary activity where they matched photos with words/phrases related to chocolate production, such as grind, cocoa pod, cocoa nib, and cocoa liquor. This activity was intended to familiarize students with key terms and improve text comprehension (Brett, Rothlein & Hurley, 1996). Moreover, the extent of challenging vocabulary in a text serves as the most significant indicator of its difficulty, while a reader's overall vocabulary proficiency is the most reliable predictor of their text comprehension ability (Anderson & Freebody, 1981). Next, students read a passage titled "Where Does Chocolate Come From?" which detailed the history of chocolate and the process of transforming cocoa beans into chocolate bars. The rationale behind including the story of the food (the process it goes under before coming to us) was to extend our appreciation for all resources which are all woven into the very essence of that food and provided the foundation for its existence and our own (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019). Reflecting on food in this manner before consuming it genuinely embodies a sense of grace (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019). Thus, a thematic lesson plan was designed to encourage students to think about the food in detail and get ready for the following exercise -mindful eating.

The text provided interesting facts, such as the use of cocoa beans as currency by ancient civilizations and the various stages of chocolate production. After reading, students completed a comprehension check through a true/false exercise. Comprehension check activities are crucial because they prompt students to go beyond surface-level understanding and instead actively engage with the text by posing questions, evaluating its content, and reflecting on their interpretations (Bishop, Reyes & Pflaum, 2006). The lesson concluded

with discussion questions to encourage students to reflect on their reading and share personal experiences.

Activity 3: Mindful Eating

The final activity of the week was mindful eating exercise, designed to bring students' awareness to the sensory experience of eating. The exercise involved three raisins (or other small food items such as dried fruit, nuts, or chocolate). The script for this exercise was formed by the researcher and the same procedure in the writing phase of mindful breathing meditation script was employed in mindful eating practice as well. The students were guided through the script to explore the food mindfully.

After the exercise, students were invited to reflect on their experience and share their observations. They discussed the sensations they noticed, any surprising elements, and any thoughts or memories that arose during the practice.

To extend the practice of mindfulness beyond the classroom, students were assigned a reflective task to be completed during the week. They were asked to choose a routine activity and perform it mindfully, then reflect on the experience. The assignment aimed to encourage students to integrate mindfulness into their daily lives, promoting sustained awareness and reflection. For this assignment, first students chose a routine activity such as brushing their teeth, taking a shower, listening to music, going for a walk, cooking, or setting the table. Then, they were asked to reflect on their chosen activity using the provided prompts. The questions were designed to guide students through a mindful reflection process, helping them to notice and articulate their experiences (Palouse Mindfulness, 2015). By practicing mindfulness in routine activities, students could develop a deeper understanding of mindfulness as a practical and adaptable tool for enhancing daily life.

Week 2 of the MBI-FLC program successfully integrated mindful breathing, a thematic reading and writing lesson, and a mindful eating practice to enhance students' awareness of their sensations and thoughts. By engaging with mindfulness through various activities, students deepened their understanding and application of mindfulness in both their daily

lives and language learning contexts. These practices not only promoted a greater sense of presence but also highlighted the importance of slowing down and paying attention to the present moment, fostering a more mindful approach to both eating and learning.

Week 3: Body Awareness

In the third week of the MBI-FLC program, the focus was on enhancing body awareness through a series of mindfulness practices, including mindful breathing, body scan, and mindful movement. These activities aimed to deepen students' connection with their physical sensations and promote a greater sense of presence and relaxation.

Activity 1: Mindful Breathing

The session again began with a mindful breathing exercise, continuing the practice from previous weeks. This exercise reinforced the students' ability to focus on their breath and notice the physical sensations associated with it.

Activity 2: Watching a Short Video about Body Scan Exercise

The second activity involved watching a short video on body scan meditation. This exercise combined listening and speaking skills with mindfulness practice, helping students understand the concept of body scan meditation. Students first read the definition of "scan" and discussed what a "body scan" exercise might entail. Next, students watched the video "What I Have Learned From Body Scan Meditation" and completed two comprehension activities. The activities aimed to help students grasp the principles of body scan meditation and its benefits through listening comprehension and discussion.

Activity 3: Body scan meditation

Following the video, students participated in a guided body scan meditation. This practice aimed to help students develop a deeper awareness of their physical sensations and promote relaxation. By increasing awareness and acknowledging bodily sensations, along with any thoughts or emotions that arise, the body scan technique can effectively aid in managing

stress, anxiety, and physical discomfort (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019). The instructor guided students through a detailed body scan script (created by the researcher), encouraging them to notice sensations in different parts of their body without judgment. After the body scan, students reflected on their experience, discussing the physical sensations, feelings, and thoughts they noticed during the practice.

Activity 4: Mindful movement -yoga

The final activity of the week was a mindful movement exercise, guided by an experienced yoga teacher who was also an ELT expert. This practice aimed to combine mindfulness with gentle physical activity, helping students develop greater awareness of their body in motion. The reason why yoga was included in addition to body scan is that yoga is an inherently mindful physical practice and it is also a rejuvenating practice offering many health benefits such as keeping aging bones, joints, muscles and organs healthy and flexible (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019).

The yoga teacher guided students through a series of gentle movements, encouraging them to focus on their breath and the sensations in their bodies. Students were instructed to stand comfortably with their feet hip-width apart and arms relaxed by their sides. They took a few deep breaths to center themselves. Then, the instructor guided students through a series of gentle stretches and movements, such as raising and lowering their arms, bending and straightening their knees, and rotating their shoulders. Students were encouraged to move slowly and mindfully, paying attention to the sensations in their bodies and breathing deeply. The session ended with a few minutes of gentle stretching and deep breathing, allowing students to relax and release any remaining tension.

Week 3 of the MBI-FLC program effectively integrated mindful breathing, body scan meditation, and mindful movement to enhance students' awareness of their physical sensations and promote relaxation. By engaging in mindfulness practices, students learned to cultivate greater body awareness and presence, which are critical components in reducing anxiety and improving focus (Kabat-Zinn, 2005; Shapiro, Brown & Astin, 2011), both of

which are beneficial in language learning contexts. These activities also highlighted the importance of slowing down and being attentive to the present moment, which can help students manage stress and anxiety more effectively during language learning tasks (Gregersen, Macintyre & Meza, 2014). This approach can foster a more mindful and reflective attitude towards both movement and relaxation, contributing to a supportive environment for acquiring new language skills. By integrating mindfulness into their routines, students can enhance their cognitive, emotional, and linguistic abilities, making them more engaged and effective learners in their ELT journey.

Week 4: Present Moment Awareness

In the fourth week of the MBI-FLC program, the focus was on deepening students' understanding of the value of the present moment through a combination of mindful breathing and a thematic lesson plan that exercised primarily reading and speaking skills. These activities were designed to help students cultivate an awareness of the present moment and reflect on its significance in their lives.

Activity 1: Mindful breathing

The session began with a mindful breathing exercise, continuing the practice from previous weeks.

Activity 2: A thematic lesson -The value of the present moment

The second activity of the week was a thematic lesson plan focusing on the value of the present moment. This lesson aimed to enhance students' reading and speaking skills while encouraging them to reflect on the importance of living in the present. The lesson began with a warm-up activity where students read and discussed quotes related to the present moment. The quotes included:

- Life gives you plenty of time to do whatever you want to do if you stay in the present moment. —Deepak Chopra

- Today is the first day of the rest of your life. — American Proverb
- Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That is why it is called the present. — Alice Morse Earle

Using quotes is a common classroom activity that teachers might prefer to use as a warm-up activity or ice-breaker (Yagcioglu, 2017). Students were asked to interpret the message of these quotes and discuss their thoughts with the class.

The core of the lesson involved reading a story about a princess who spent her life in a remote castle due to a prophecy that she would be killed by a snake on her 18th birthday. The story served as a metaphor for the importance of living in the present moment and the potential consequences of living in fear of the future. The use of short stories in EFL classrooms offers numerous pedagogical benefits, enhancing both linguistic and sociol-cultural competence of learners. According to Pathan (2013), short stories provide authentic contexts for language use and can significantly boost language acquisition by presenting language in varied and engaging contexts. Moreover, they are effective tools for transmitting cultural values and fostering socio-emotional growth, as students can relate to the characters and their experiences on a personal level (Pathan, 2013). Pardede (2021) further supports this by highlighting that short stories can develop students' intercultural communicative competence, allowing them to appreciate the richness and diversity of the target language culture while reflecting on their own. These elements not only make learning more enjoyable but also help students internalize important moral and social lessons, ultimately contributing to their overall personal growth and intellectual development.

Students were given a fill-in-the-blank exercise to complete the story, which included key phrases such as "once upon a time," "however," "unfortunately," and "because." This activity helped students practice their reading comprehension and vocabulary skills. After completing the story, students answered comprehension questions to ensure they understood the narrative. Students were then asked to imagine themselves as the king and write an alternative ending to the story with a partner. This activity encouraged creative thinking and

allowed students to practice their writing and speaking skills. Engaging in an authentic creative writing process enables students to view and analyze the texts they read from a unique perspective, allowing them to focus on the material with the critical eye of a writer (Glenn, 2007). After completing the alternative endings, students discussed their alternative endings and the messages they took from the story.

Finally, students reflected on the message of the story and how it related to the value of living in the present moment. They shared their reflections with the class, facilitating a deeper discussion on the topic.

Week 4 of the MBI-FLC program effectively integrated mindful breathing and a thematic lesson plan to emphasize the value of the present moment. Through these activities, students enhanced their awareness of the present moment and reflected on its significance in their lives. By engaging with mindfulness in the context of reading and speaking, students not only developed their language skills but also cultivated a deeper understanding of mindfulness principles. This approach highlighted the importance of being present and attentive, fostering a more mindful and reflective attitude towards both their daily lives and language learning efforts.

Week 5: The Awareness of Thoughts

In the fifth week of the MBI-FLC program, the focus was on helping students recognize and label their thoughts and emotions through mindful practices. This week's activities included mindful breathing and a thematic lesson plan that revolved around a Native American story involving wolves, which primarily focused on thought awareness.

Activity 1: Mindful breathing

As with every week, the session began with mindful breathing, the core exercise of our mindfulness practice. This foundational practice helps students center themselves and prepare for the activities ahead.

Activity 2: A thematic lesson- Labelling thoughts “wolf story”

The second activity of the week was a thematic lesson plan focusing on labeling thoughts through the story of two wolves, a metaphor for the conflicting emotions within us. Metaphors serve as powerful tools for conceptualizing abstract concepts, making them more accessible and relatable to students (Thu, 2019). This lesson aimed to help students recognize and manage their thoughts and emotions mindfully while enhancing their listening and speaking skills.

Students began by reflecting on their own experiences with having many thoughts in their minds and discussing how they felt and what they did in such situations. This warm-up activity aimed to activate prior knowledge and set the stage for the story. Next, students matched key vocabulary words with their definitions to prepare for the listening activity.

Students watched a short video titled "How Mindfulness Empowers Us". A video was preferred in the relevant lesson since audiovisual materials, such as videos, can significantly enhance listening comprehension skills (Chien, Y. Huang & Huang, 2020). While watching the video, students filled in the blanks in a passage about the story. The story describes an elder telling a child about two wolves fighting in his heart—one representing negative emotions and the other positive emotions. The elder explains that the wolf that wins is the one he chooses to feed. This exercise helped students practice listening comprehension and understand the importance of attention and choice in managing thoughts and emotions.

After watching the video, students marked statements as True (T) or False (F) to reinforce their understanding of the key concepts from the video. Next, students were asked to notice the thoughts running through their minds and write them in thought bubbles. This activity aimed to help students become more aware of their thoughts.

Finally, students decided which thoughts they would choose to feed and which they would let go of, writing their responses. This exercise encouraged students to apply mindfulness principles to their thoughts, promoting emotional regulation and self-awareness.

The session concluded with a reflective discussion on the metaphor of the two wolves and its relevance to their own experiences. Students shared their insights and discussed how mindfulness could help them manage their thoughts and emotions more effectively.

Week 5 of the MBI-FLC program focused on recognizing and labeling thoughts and emotions through mindful breathing and a thematic lesson involving the story of two wolves. By engaging in these activities, students enhanced their listening and speaking skills while learning valuable mindfulness techniques for managing their inner experiences. These practices highlighted the importance of noticing and accepting all thoughts and emotions, fostering a more mindful and reflective attitude towards their cognitive and emotional processes. This approach not only supported their emotional well-being but also contributed to their language learning by promoting better focus and self-regulation.

Week 6: Gratitude

In the sixth week of the MBI-FLC program, the focus was on cultivating gratitude through mindful practices. This week's activities included mindful breathing, a gratitude exercise, and a week-long gratitude assignment, designed to help students develop a deeper appreciation for their surroundings and enhance their mindfulness skills.

Activity 1: Mindful breathing

As with every week, the session began with mindful breathing, the core exercise of our mindfulness practice. This foundational practice helps students center themselves and prepare for the activities ahead. By consistently starting with mindful breathing, students are reminded of the importance of grounding themselves and becoming present in the moment before engaging in other mindfulness activities.

Activity 2: Gratitude exercise

The primary activity of Week 6 was the 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 gratitude exercise, which aimed to help students cultivate a sense of gratitude by focusing on their senses and immediate

environment. This exercise encourages students to identify and appreciate five things they can see, four things they can touch, three things they can hear, two things they can smell, and one thing they can taste.

First, the instructor introduced the concept of gratitude and its benefits, explaining how cultivating gratitude can improve mental well-being and foster a positive outlook on life. Gratitude was included in this week's activities because it is recognized as one of the fundamental attitudes of mindfulness, as outlined by Kabat-Zinn (2013). Starting with gratitude helps students to anchor their awareness in positive emotional states, setting a constructive tone for exploring and managing more complex emotions. This heightened awareness enables people to savor the present moment with a sense of appreciation and respect (Stahl & Goldstein, 2019).

Furthermore, the decision to incorporate a senses-based activity was intentional, as sensory experiences are concrete and easily accessible, making them an effective entry point for students new to mindfulness practices. By engaging with their immediate sensory environment, students can develop a heightened awareness of the present moment, which is a core principle of mindfulness. This approach aligns with the findings of researchers who emphasize that sensory-based mindfulness exercises can effectively ground individuals in the here and now, reducing abstract cognitive processes that may lead to rumination and anxiety (Groves, 2016).

Followingly, the students discussed their understanding of gratitude and shared experiences where they felt grateful. Then, students were guided through the gratitude exercise. The instructor provided step-by-step instructions as follows:

- Look around and write down five things you can *see* now (e.g., phone, pen, bag, window).
- Find four things you can *touch*. Take them in your hand and feel their texture (e.g., pencil, laptop, T-shirt, hair).
- Pay attention to three sounds that you can hear around you (e.g., cars, birds, people).

- Recognize two things you can smell (e.g., the air, your clothes, perfume).
- Notice one thing you can taste (e.g., food or drink from earlier).

Students completed a pyramid worksheet according to these instructions, promoting awareness of their senses and fostering a sense of gratitude for these everyday experiences. After completing the exercise, students reflected on their experiences and shared their thoughts. They discussed the importance of having these five senses in their daily lives and how this exercise made them feel. Gratitude is crucial because it enhances our appreciation of life's positive aspects, preventing us from taking them for granted. By valuing what we have, gratitude helps us fully engage in life and celebrate its goodness rather than merely adapting to it (Emmons & Smith, 2020). Finally, students wrote detailed reflections on what they understood from the exercise and how it made them feel.

To extend the practice of gratitude beyond the classroom, students were assigned a reflective task to be completed over the next six days. Each day, they were asked to write down one thing they were grateful for, focusing on specific, everyday occurrences rather than general concepts like family or health. On the seventh day, students were required to complete a gratitude reflection, summarizing their experiences and reflecting on how the exercise made them feel. Students were encouraged to write their reflections in detail, promoting a deeper understanding of the impact of daily gratitude on their overall well-being (Emmons & McCullough, 2003).

Week 6 of the MBI-FLC program successfully integrated mindful breathing, the gratitude exercise through five senses, and a week-long gratitude assignment to enhance students' awareness and appreciation of their daily experiences. By engaging in these activities, students not only cultivated a sense of gratitude but also developed their ability to be present and mindful in their daily lives. These practices highlighted the importance of recognizing and appreciating the small, everyday moments, fostering a more positive and mindful approach to both their personal well-being and language learning.

Week 7: Loving-Kindness and Self-Compassion

In the seventh week of the MBI-FLC program, the focus was on cultivating loving-kindness and self-compassion through a series of mindful practices. The activities included mindful breathing, reacting to different situations to compare responses to oneself versus others, and loving-kindness meditation. These exercises aimed to help students develop empathy and compassion towards themselves and others.

Activity 1: Mindful breathing

As with every week, the session began with mindful breathing, the core exercise of our mindfulness practice.

Activity 2: Responding to different situations

The second activity focused on students' reactions to different situations involving themselves and their friends. This exercise was designed to highlight the difference in compassion and kindness students exhibit towards others compared to themselves. According to Marlatt and Kristeller (1999) mindfulness includes examining one's experiences "with an attitude of acceptance and loving kindness" (pp. 70). Similarly, Kabat-Zinn (2003) emphasizes that mindfulness embodies an affectionate and compassionate quality, characterized by an openhearted, friendly presence and genuine interest.

Students were given six situations to respond to, three involving their best friend and three involving themselves. Students wrote their immediate responses to these situations. This activity aimed to reveal the common tendency of being kinder to others than to oneself. Following the written responses, students read a definition of kindness and watched a video on the subject. They then discussed the following quotes and questions:

- You will never speak to anyone more than yourself in your head, be kind to yourself. – Unknown
- Be kind to yourself so that you can be happy enough to be kind to the world. – Misha Collins

Discussion questions included:

- Do your responses for yourself and your best friend differ? If yes, in what ways?
- Do you think being kind to yourself is selfish?
- Do you think we are less kind to ourselves?

This exercise and discussion aimed to foster awareness of self-compassion and the importance of treating oneself with the same kindness and understanding they extend to others.

Activity 3: Loving-kindness meditation

The final activity of the week was a loving-kindness meditation, designed to cultivate compassion towards oneself and others. The instructor guided students through a detailed loving-kindness meditation script which was formed by the researcher. The meditation exercise began with initial relaxation through bringing awareness to their breath and heart, and silently repeating phrases such as "May I be safe" and "May I be happy and healthy." Students then extended these phrases to themselves, a loved one, a neutral person, someone they dislike, and finally, to all beings (Salzberg, 1995). After the meditation, students reflected on their experience, discussing the sensations, feelings, and thoughts they noticed. This meditation fosters feelings of unconditional love, affection, and empathy by progressively extending friendly wishes from close relationships to all of humanity (Kappelmayer et al., 2023).

Week 7 of the MBI-FLC program focused on cultivating loving-kindness and self-compassion through mindful breathing, reflective exercises, and loving-kindness meditation. By engaging in these activities, students developed greater empathy and compassion towards themselves and others. This practice not only enhanced their emotional well-being but also supported their language learning by fostering a supportive and compassionate internal dialogue. Recognizing the importance of being kind and compassionate to oneself is crucial in reducing anxiety and building personal initiative and curiosity (Neff, 2011), both of which are essential for effective language acquisition.

Week 8: Final Reflection and A New Start

In the final week of the MBI-FLC program, the focus was on reflecting on the mindfulness journey and planning for continued practice. This week's activities included mindful breathing, sharing reflections through writing, and discussing strategies to maintain mindfulness practice.

Activity 1: Mindful breathing

As we did every week, we started the session with mindful breathing, which serves as the cornerstone of our mindfulness practice. This essential exercise helps students ground themselves and set the stage for the subsequent activities.

Activity 2: Sharing reflections

The second activity involved students sharing their reflections on their experience with the MBI-FLC program through writing. To guide this reflective writing, an example was provided to illustrate how to structure their thoughts and experiences effectively. A sample of reflective writing was shared with students to help them understand how to articulate their experiences, what went well, what was challenging, and what they learned overall. The sample emphasized the importance of personal insights and practical applications of mindfulness. This task aimed to consolidate students' learning and encourage them to internalize the benefits of mindfulness by reflecting on their journey and identifying strategies for ongoing practice.

Activity 3: Strategies to keep practice

The final activity of the week involved discussing strategies to maintain mindfulness practice beyond the program. The instructor shared several practical suggestions to help students integrate mindfulness into their daily lives such as daily life integration, morning practice, body scan, non-judgmental awareness and so on (Jonkabat-zinn.com, 2023). Students discussed these strategies and shared their own ideas on how to maintain a regular mindfulness practice. The discussion emphasized that mindfulness can be a flexible and

adaptable practice, integrated into various aspects of daily life to enhance overall well-being and support ongoing language learning efforts.

Week 8 of the MBI-FLC program focused on reflecting on the mindfulness journey and planning for continued practice. Through mindful breathing, reflective writing, and discussions on maintaining mindfulness, students consolidated their learning and prepared to integrate mindfulness into their daily lives. These activities emphasized the importance of ongoing practice and the flexibility of mindfulness, ensuring that students could continue to benefit from the skills they developed throughout the program.

Data Collection Instruments

The present study employed mixed method research design with both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments. The quantitative data were gathered through questionnaires developed and validated by the experts.,

Comprehensive Inventory of Mindfulness Experiences-Adolescents

In order to measure mindfulness, the Comprehensive Inventory of Mindfulness Experiences-Adolescents (CHIME-A) (Johnson, Burke, Brinkman & Wade, 2017) was utilised. In the last 20 years, several mindfulness scales and questionnaires were developed and employed in hundreds of studies. From these, the most cited and used ones are Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) (Brown & Ryan, 2003) and Five-Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) (Baer, Smith, Hopkins, Krietemeyer & Toney, 2006). MAAS is a one-dimension scale with 15 items while FFMQ is a five-dimension questionnaire with 35 items. Likewise, the other mindfulness scales differ in terms of dimensions and constructs of mindfulness. There is no consensus about the conceptualisation of mindfulness, that is, some scales are based on a narrow conceptualisation of mindfulness while others supply a broader semantic coverage of the construct (Bergomi, Tschacher & Kupper, 2013). Comprehensive Inventory of Mindfulness Experiences (CHIME) scale was developed in an

attempt to provide a comprehensive scale for mindfulness (Bergomi, Tschacher & Kupper, 2014). The scale was adapted for adolescents by Johnson et al. (2017) and contains 25 items spread over 8 sub-scales. The measure is designed as a 5-point Likert scale, with higher scores indicating greater levels of mindfulness. The scale's last section consists of eight reverse-coded elements. The factors are as follows: Awareness of internal and external experiences, acting with awareness, nonjudgmental acceptance, decentering and nonreactivity, openness to experience, the relativity of thoughts, and insightful understanding.

Although the scale's overall internal consistency coefficient is quoted as .80, factor loading analyses indicate weak internal consistency on the premise of a single overriding factor. As a result, it has been indicated that a general overarching factor does not exist. The internal consistency coefficients for each factor are reported separately for females and males respectively: Awareness of Internal Experiences (.63 and .69), Awareness of External Experiences (.79 and .70), Acting with Awareness (.72 and .63), Nonjudgmental Acceptance (.78 and .73), Decentering and Nonreactivity (.73 and .72), Openness to Experience (.63 and .66), Relativity of Thoughts (.80 and .74), and Insightful Understanding (.69 and .74).

Comprehensive Inventory of Mindfulness Experiences for adolescents (CHIME-A) by Johnson et al. (2017) was translated into Turkish by Kırca and Eksi (2018) (see Appendix 2). For each dimension of the scale, average scores are calculated independently to obtain separate scores for each mindfulness facet. Consistent with the original structure of the scale, no total score is calculated. The confirmatory factor analysis conducted to evaluate the fit of the scale's eight-dimensional model revealed that the 8-factor structure demonstrates a good fit, consistent with the findings of the original study ($\chi^2= 568.143$., $sd= 247$, $\chi^2/sd= 2,3$, $RMSEA= ,056$, $GFI= .90$, $AGFI= .87$, $CFI= .85$, $SRMR= .074$). As for the reliability, the internal consistency coefficients for the sub-dimensions of the scale range from .48 to .69, while the overall internal consistency coefficient is calculated as .70. The corrected item-total correlation coefficients vary between .20 and .55, indicating acceptable reliability for the scale (Kırca & Eksi, 2018).

A notable strength of the CHIME-A lies in its eight-factor model, which offers a nuanced framework for identifying the specific dimensions of mindfulness enhanced through MBIs. This is especially significant in light of the growing body of research on mindfulness and its interplay with neurodevelopment (Goodman, Madni & Semple, 2017). The CHIME-A has been correlated with the CAMM (Child and Adolescent Mindfulness Measure), bolstering its construct validity (Johnson et al., 2017). In this study, the Turkish version of the scale was used to avoid any misunderstanding and comprehension problems.

Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Questionnaire

As the second investigated construct in the study, an adapted version of Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz et al., 1986) was utilised. Foreign language speaking anxiety questionnaire (FLSAQ) (see Appendix 3) was designed by selecting 18 items from the 33 items of FLCAS. Saltan (2003) made use of this 18-item scale in her study, and revealed the instruments' direct relation to foreign language speaking anxiety. The scale was found to be reliable across various studies. Öztürk and Gürbüz (2013, 2014) used the FLSAQ in their studies and found Cronbach's alpha coefficient as .91, suggesting high reliability.

Saltan (2003) adapted the FLSAQ into Turkish through back translation techniques by getting help from two American bilingual teachers and her supervisor (see Appendix 3). In this study, the Turkish version of foreign language speaking anxiety questionnaire was employed to prevent any misinterpretation of the items by the participants.

Interview Questions and Learner Journals

For the qualitative part of the study, semi-structured interviews and learner journals were employed. Through semi-structured interviews, it was aimed to gain deeper insights for mindfulness and foreign language speaking anxiety. The interviews were carried out both before and after the mindfulness intervention to explore students' level of mindfulness and

FLSA and their reflections about the intervention program. The interview questions were developed by the researcher based on the relevant literature and the concepts investigated through the scales (see Appendix 4). Some adaptations were carried out based on the feedback collected from one ELT professor and one English instructor in terms of comprehensibility and language. After this stage, the interview questions were piloted with a small group of students who were not the actual participants. Some minor adaptations were implemented after the piloting and the final version of the semi-structured interview questions was attained.

During the MBI-FLC program, students were required to complete two learner journals based on the topic studied in the relevant week (see Appendix 6.2 & 6.6). The two journals were assigned as homework to encourage students to reflect on what they learned and practice mindfulness outside the class as well. The main goal of the learner journals was to help the students reflect on their mindfulness practice. In addition to the journals, the students' responses to open-ended questions about some activities during/after the class were also used as data and analysed.

Data Collection Procedure

Before data collection, the purpose of the study and data collection procedures were explained to the students. Next, a consent form was provided to the students to ensure that their participation was voluntary (see Appendix 5). After gathering the consent forms, data collection instruments were employed in the order shown in Figure 3.

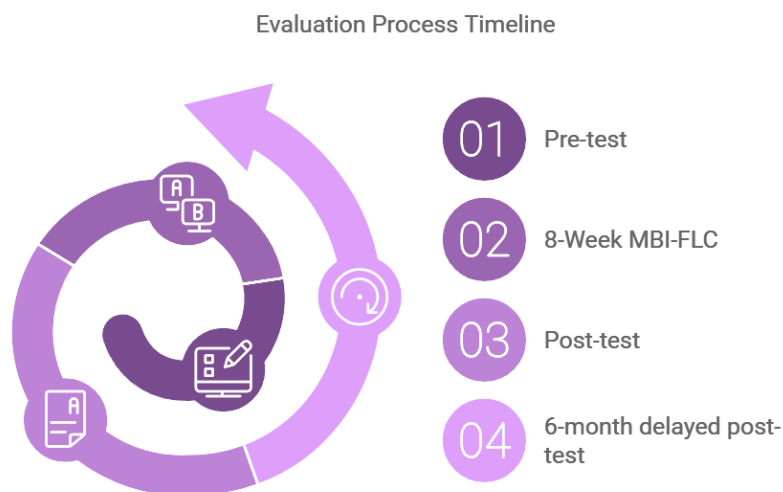


Figure 3. Data collection procedure

Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analysed through Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25. In order to analyse the data gathered through the scales, descriptive statistics and some non-parametric tests were run. It is appropriate to use non-parametric tests in situations when the sample size is small, such in the case of 15 participants. Conventional parametric tests assume homogeneity of variances and a normal distribution, which are difficult premises to meet when dealing with few data points. Non-parametric tests are appropriate when the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variance required by parametric tests cannot be reliably met (Field, 2018).

First, the reverse-items in CHIME-A (items between 18-25) were recoded before starting the analyses. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were used to summarize participants' levels of mindfulness and foreign language speaking anxiety (FLSA). Additionally, non-parametric tests, such as the Wilcoxon Signed-Rank Test, and Spearman's Rank Correlation, were employed to address specific research questions. Wilcoxon signed-rank test was employed to examine differences between pretest and posttest scores. The Wilcoxon test is ideal for paired comparisons in small samples, as it

does not assume normality and accounts for the direction and magnitude of differences (Field, 2018). Spearman's rank correlation test, a non-parametric test involving ranking data and applying a modified Pearson's formula to these ranks (Field, 2018), was utilized to determine the strength and direction of relationships between mindfulness levels and FLSA scores.

For the qualitative part of the study, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and learner journals. These interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim, and the transcribed data underwent a systematic process of qualitative content analysis. Open coding was used initially to label significant phrases with specific codes. This phase allowed for an inductive approach, where codes emerged from the data itself, which is particularly effective when exploring less understood phenomena (J. W. Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). The codes were then grouped into categories based on shared meanings, creating a structured framework for the data. This iterative process ensured that categories accurately reflected the underlying data patterns while maintaining their inductive origins (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008). Constant comparison techniques ensured that the emerging themes were robust and reflected the data comprehensively.

Learner journals were also analyzed using a similar inductive content analysis process, allowing recurring patterns to emerge from the data systematically. This approach helped ensure that the findings remained closely aligned with participants' expressed experiences and reflections.

Reliability and Validity

To ensure the reliability of the quantitative data, Cronbach's alpha was calculated for each dimension of the CHIME-A and FLSAQ at three different time points: before the intervention (pretest), after the intervention (posttest), and three months following the intervention (follow-up). Cronbach's alpha is a measure of internal consistency, with values above 0.7 generally considered acceptable (Tavakol & Dennick, 2011). The Cronbach's

alpha values for each sub-dimension of CHIME-A and FLSAQ are presented in Table 2, 3, and 4.

Table 2

Cronbach's Alpha Values (Pretest)

Scale	Sub-scales	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
CHIME-A	Awareness of internal experiences	0,826	3
	Awareness of external experiences	0,735	3
	Acting with awareness	0,765	3
	Accepting and non-judgmental orientation	0,800	3
	Decentering and nonreactivity	0,737	3
	Openness to experience	0,750	4
	Relativity of thoughts	0,719	3
	Insightful understanding	0,757	3
FLSAQ	-	0,904	18

Table 3

Cronbach's Alpha Values (Posttest)

Scale	Sub-scales	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
CHIME-A	Awareness of internal experiences	0,737	3
	Awareness of external experiences	0,772	3
	Acting with awareness	0,729	3
	Accepting and non-judgmental orientation	0,774	3
	Decentering and nonreactivity	0,775	3
	Openness to experience	0,869	4
	Relativity of thoughts	0,773	3
	Insightful understanding	0,807	3
FLSAQ	-	0,919	18

Table 4

Cronbach's Alpha Values (6-Month Follow-Up)

Scale	Sub-scales	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
CHIME-A	Awareness of internal experiences	0,859	3
	Awareness of external experiences	0,772	3
	Acting with awareness	0,891	3
	Accepting and non-judgmental orientation	0,774	3
	Decentering and nonreactivity	0,741	3
	Openness to experience	0,744	4
	Relativity of thoughts	0,727	3
	Insightful understanding	0,879	3
FLSAQ	-	0,934	18

As seen in Tables 2, 3, and 4, all dimensions have Cronbach's alpha values above 0.7, indicating good internal consistency. Notably, FLSAQ consistently shows excellent reliability, with values above 0.9 across all time points.

In addition to the quantitative data, qualitative data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which were transcribed and coded by the researcher. To enhance the reliability of the coding process, inter-rater reliability was calculated by having an independent rater code a subset of the data. Following the independent coding, the two coders compared their results. A discussion was held to resolve any discrepancies and reach consensus on the final set of themes and codes. This collaborative process ensured that the themes were consistently applied across the data set and adequately captured the participants' experiences.

After identifying the number of agreements and disagreements between the coders, inter-rater reliability was calculated using the formula provided by Huberman and Miles (2002): [reliability = number of agreements / number of agreements + disagreements]. Based on this calculation, the inter-rater reliability was determined to be 0.86, which can be named as the "almost perfect agreement" range according to (Landis & Koch, 1977). This high level of agreement suggests that the coding scheme was reliable and that the themes were consistently applied by both coders.

The peer review process, combined with the inter-rater reliability calculation, provides strong evidence that the themes and codes accurately represent the qualitative data. By ensuring consistency between coders, the process strengthens the trustworthiness of the qualitative findings and enhances the overall accuracy of the study.

To sum up, several strategies were employed to ensure the validity of the study's findings:

Content validity: The instruments used in this study were based on a validated scale and a questionnaire with established content validity. Expert feedback was also sought to ensure that the items were suitable for the target population and the research context.

Triangulation: To enhance the credibility of the findings, both quantitative and qualitative data were collected. Triangulating the data sources allowed for a richer understanding of

how mindfulness and foreign language speaking anxiety interact. This method of cross-validation improves the study's validity (J. W. Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Peer review: To enhance the reliability and validity of the qualitative data analysis, a peer review process was conducted. The qualitative data collected through interviews were initially transcribed and coded independently by two coders, including the primary researcher. Each coder reviewed the data separately, identifying potential themes and coding the data based on predefined categories derived from the research questions and theoretical framework.



CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This chapter presents information about the findings of the data analysis. The findings on the levels of mindfulness and foreign language speaking anxiety of the participants and their reflections on the 8-week MBI-FLC intervention program are introduced in this chapter.

RQ1: What are the Self-Asserted Experiences and Perceptions of EFL Students Regarding Mindfulness Before and After the Intervention?

The first research question aimed to explore how EFL students perceived and experienced mindfulness, highlighting their reflections both prior to and following their participation in the intervention program.

Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

As a study employing mixed method research design, both quantitative and qualitative methods were utilized to extensively explore mindfulness in the relevant participant group. The quantitative findings related to students' level of mindfulness were measured through the CHIME-A. For an extensive investigation, the scores obtained from the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest were analyzed through the Friedman test to determine any possible difference in the scores before and after the intervention. Since the scale is not appropriate for calculation of a total mindfulness score (Kırca & Eksi, 2018), separate analyses were conducted on the eight dimensions of the scale. The findings are presented in Table 5 below:

Table 5

Level of Mindfulness Before and After The Intervention

Subscales of CHIME-A		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Chi-Square	Sig.
<i>Awareness of internal experiences</i>	Pretest	15	3,6	,82	,565	,754
	Posttest	15	3,71	,76		
	Delayed posttest	15	3,66	,88		
<i>Awareness of external experiences</i>	Pretest	15	3,6	,78	,292	,864
	Posttest	15	3,6	,75		
	Delayed posttest	15	3,57	,75		
<i>Acting with awareness</i>	Pretest	15	3,17	,73	,857	,651
	Posttest	15	3,35	,86		
	Delayed posttest	15	3,33	,75		
<i>Accepting and non-judgmental orientation</i>	Pretest	15	2,93	,85	1,849	,397
	Posttest	15	2,80	,66		
	Delayed posttest	15	2,97	,70		
<i>Decentering and nonreactivity</i>	Pretest	15	3,02	,84	1,815	,404
	Posttest	15	3,15	,86		
	Delayed posttest	15	2,88	,88		
<i>Openness to experience</i>	Pretest	15	2,83	,98	,148	,929
	Posttest	15	2,78	1,02		
	Delayed posttest	15	2,86	,93		
<i>Relativity of thoughts</i>	Pretest	15	2,44	,65	8,346	0,015*
	Posttest	15	2,51	,56		
	Delayed posttest	15	3	,9		
<i>Insightful understanding</i>	Pretest	15	2,33	,94	1,811	0,033*
	Posttest	15	2,64	,96		
	Delayed posttest	15	2,91	1,08		

The table illustrates statistical information about the eight dimensions of CHIME-A. As can be seen in Table 5, a significant difference was observed in the relativity of thoughts and insightful understanding ($p < .05$). The majority of the subscales exhibit marginally different mean scores at the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest. Nevertheless, none of these modifications are statistically significant, with the exception of the relativity of thoughts and insightful understanding dimensions. The large increase in mean scores over time suggests that the intervention has a noteworthy effect on these two dimensions relatively.

Although the intervention may have improved certain elements of mindfulness, according to our research, these improvements may not have been statistically significant overall across all evaluated dimensions. In order to increase and expand the scope of the study, students' mindfulness experiences and perceptions were inquired through semi-structured interviews. The data revealed that the EFL students' experiences and perceptions regarding mindfulness

are characterized by an initial unfamiliarity with the concept. All students indicated that they had never heard of mindfulness before. Followingly, the participants provided some diverse and sometimes insightful guesses about its meaning. Several examples were as follows:

S2: "Maybe being aware of ourselves....being aware of our own being?"

S11: "I think mindfulness can mean that we do things knowing they are good or bad."

S12: "Is it something like acting consciously towards values and events?"

The students demonstrate an open-minded attitude and a readiness to explore and understand mindfulness suggesting potential for further education and integration of mindfulness practices in their learning environment. Except for two students, all made an effort to guess the meaning of mindfulness. Some students clearly expressed their curiosity while some mentioned their expectations from the intervention program. The following quotes exemplify students' interest and open-minded attitude.

S3: "In fact, when you opened the WhatsApp group, I researched mindfulness and the Turkish equivalent (bilinçli farkındalık) on the internet.

S9: "...So, you know, you will raise our awareness? We will have an awareness of the environment."

Overall, the data reflects a propitious ground for introducing mindfulness concepts to enhance students' awareness. The students' familiarity with mindfulness was scarce and they demonstrated a positive and willing attitude to learn and practice mindfulness.

Upon completing the 8-week MBI-FLC program, another semi-structured interview was conducted with all of the 15 participants. Some of the interview questions were the same while some new questions were added to investigate any possible difference in students' mindfulness experience and perceptions.

The participants' responses indicate a significant shift in their understanding and application of mindfulness. Initially unfamiliar with the concept, the students now associate mindfulness with enhanced awareness, relaxation, and self-reflection. The intervention appears to have

helped many participants become more attuned to their internal and external environments. A notable number of students (n=9 / 60%) report an increased ability to focus on the present moment, engage in mindful breathing, and appreciate the subtleties of everyday experiences. However, some still struggle with being mindful in their daily lives. Some quotes are provided below representing emerged themes in the interviews:

Enhanced awareness and relaxation

S4: "...the emotional transitions within myself, the sounds, images and smells around me....mindfulness is like being aware of these; not living like a robot...

S1: "Mindfulness is something relaxing for the ones doing the exercises."

Self-reflection

S3: "Mindfulness, well, is a little bit like finding one's own self and soul... You know, completing ourselves, our soul... like defining our inner self... That's how I perceived it."

S14: "I think mindfulness is focusing on ourselves."

Practical implications in daily life

S5: "Well, mindfulness is doing things with more awareness. For example, thanks to the practice of mindful eating or breathing exercises, we learned that we need to do things that seem very ordinary to us in daily life, with awareness, that is, knowing what we are doing and understanding it better."

S13: "Mindfulness is like meditation... something like that. You feel everything. For example, I eat, I feel it. I feel how I eat and move."

Self-assessment of mindfulness

S4: "I actually used to describe myself as a mindful person, but after the things we did with you, I realized that I was not. I was a bit robotic in some matters. After the practices we had done with you, I was able to focus a little more. I am now aware of most things."

S10: "...after this 8-week period, I became more... for example, I was a very careless person. I really started to be more aware of what was going on around me. I pay attention to everything now."

Challenges in being mindful

S9: "So I don't think I'm a very mindful person... I'm a stressful person and I don't feel comfortable in my general life."

S14: "No, I'm not mindful... Because I'm not free, most of the time."

Moreover, many participants reported a newfound ability to notice subtle changes in their surroundings, illustrating a greater sensitivity to their immediate context. Below, quotations from students illustrate how their awareness of external experiences are shaped after the intervention.

S4: "I started paying attention to the trees and flowers around me; I never noticed how they change,"

S5: "I didn't really notice it, but after a few lessons I tried to look around me more carefully. The simplest thing is, as you said, the trees... for example, the ones here were in bloom. They are just beginning to fall. I noticed them. And, rainy or sunny day issue.... I didn't pay much attention to it, but I follow these things now. Let me give you an example about it. When I feel that the weather is going to be clear, for example, I feel happy. I feel peaceful, I realize this. I can say that I realize that I am happy. It is actually a very simple thing, but I realized that it is something that makes me happy."

Overall, the data indicate a positive trajectory in the students' mindfulness journeys, marked by a transition from unfamiliarity to a deeper understanding and practice of mindfulness. The insights shared by the participants reflect significant links to various aspects of mindfulness, including awareness of internal and external experiences, acting with awareness, accepting and nonjudgmental orientation, and a growing openness to new experiences. Their reflections highlight the importance of ongoing practice and support in cultivating a sustained mindfulness practice that can enrich their personal and academic lives.

These answers show that students have a complex grasp of mindfulness. It seems that the intervention has had an effect since it has encouraged individuals to become more self-aware and reflective. In an attempt to explore students' mindfulness experiences in depth, a delayed posttest was conducted six months after the intervention. In addition to the scale (CHIME-A), one open-ended question, inquiring students' mindfulness practice over six months, was added to the form.

The analysis of the delayed posttest responses reveals that a significant number of students engaged in various mindfulness practices introduced during the intervention. A prominent theme was the frequent use of mindful breathing exercise (n=5). The following quotes show how students used mindful breathing for different situations such as managing stress, improving sleep and dealing with test anxiety.

S7: "I practiced mindful breathing. It made me relaxed when I have trouble sleeping because of stress."

S9: "I tried mindful breathing. I did it because of the stress and panic I experienced for my midterm exam. I felt a bit calmer after the practice."

Mindful walking and body awareness practices were also prevalent among the students (n=4). Some highlighted awareness of external experiences such as the environmental stimuli around while some touched upon the benefits of the practice both physically and mentally.

S6: "I practiced mindful walking. I saw and felt what was happening around me better. For example, I became more aware of the sounds of birds and the sounds trees make in the wind."

S13: "I practiced body awareness in this program. It was very good for me both mentally and physically. I felt very good. I was doing this practice even when I was sad."

Positive emotional experience (n=2) was another emerging theme reported by students who practiced mindfulness activities with others or focused on sensory exercises.

S5: "I cooked...We did it together many times with the people I love, being aware of the moment, and these moments made me feel so good."

Despite these positive reports, two students explicitly stated that they did not practice mindfulness during the period in question due to personal reasons or workload.

S1: "No, I didn't, I did it last year, it was good, but I was confused this semester. I changed my department so I couldn't do it, I had a lot of work to do."

S12: "I didn't do any of them"

Overall, the qualitative data indicate that students perceived various benefits from mindfulness practices, particularly in stress management and awareness of the present moment. Although the statistical analysis showed no significant difference in mindfulness facets in the pretest, posttest, and delayed posttest, except for a notable change in the

relativity of thoughts and insightful understanding, qualitative data obtained from both posttest and delayed posttest suggest that students' awareness and perception of their thoughts have been affected.

Findings from the Lessons

Individuals may exhibit mindful behaviors in one moment, characterized by heightened present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, yet may demonstrate mindlessness in another context marked by distraction or automaticity. This variability underscores the need for comprehensive longitudinal studies and multifaceted assessments that capture mindfulness as a process rather than a static attribute. Long-term interventions, such as the 8-week program conducted here, provide invaluable insights into how mindfulness practices manifest and evolve over time, offering a deeper understanding of their impact on cognitive, emotional, and behavioral domains. By incorporating diverse data sources beyond momentary assessments, such as participant reflections and discussion notes from the lessons, can more accurately depict the complex nature of mindfulness and its transformative potential across diverse settings and populations. In this vein, several open-ended questions were added to some lesson plans to observe and explore the traits of mindfulness in depth and time.

In the fourth week's lesson plan, students were given a short story about a princess who spent all her life in a remote castle due to the prophecy that she would be killed by a snake. (see Appendix 6.4). After completing story-related comprehension activities, students were first asked whether they agreed with the king (having the princess live in a castle because of the fear of losing her). Most of the students (n=11 / 73%) expressed disagreement with the king's decision suggesting that the princess was too young and she should have been with her family. Followingly, students were required to write an alternative ending to the story (it ends with a sad ending since the princess is really killed by a snake). Various themes emerged from the students' responses such as preventive measures and protection (n=7),

family bond and quality time (n=6), rejection of isolation (n=2) and accepting the faith (n=1).

Some sample quotations are provided below:

S7: "If I were a king, instead of locking my daughter in a castle, I would have a good time with her until her 18th birthday and have her around the house sprayed regularly. And for the 18th birthday party, instead of inviting people I don't know from all over the country, I would organize a birthday party among ourselves."

S6: "If I had known that my daughter would die at the age of 18, to make her life better, I would not have restricted anything. On the contrary, I would even help her do what she wanted. I would spend more time with her. Whatever she wanted to do most, we would do it together as a family."

S14: "If my daughter were to die one day, I would not keep her in a cage and let her enjoy her life until she was at least 18 years old, and I would not make her a prisoner. I would allow her to use her life and opportunities."

S1: "If God commanded, I wouldn't do anything. I would tell her everything because we are all powerless before God. I would pray that he would protect her and reject the troubles because everything was in God's hand."

In the seventh week of the MBI-FLC program, the lesson (see Appendix 6.7) focused on cultivating loving-kindness and self-compassion. Students were presented with six scenarios and asked to respond with the first thing that came to their minds. Three of the scenarios were about a close friend, while the other three were about the students themselves. The scenarios are given below in Table 6.

Table 6

Scenarios to Explore Loving Kindness and Self-Compassion

For the close friend	For yourself
1. Your best friend has an important exam tomorrow and he/she feels anxious. What would you tell him/her?"	4. You have an important exam tomorrow and you feel anxious. What would you tell yourself?
2. Your best friend has an exam tomorrow and he/she feels anxious. He/she got a low grade on her previous exam. That's why he/she needs to get a high grade for tomorrow's exam! What would you tell him/her?	5. You have an exam tomorrow and you feel anxious. You got a low grade on your previous exam. That's why you need to get a high grade for tomorrow's exam! What would you tell yourself?
3. The exam results were announced. Your best friend failed! What would you tell him/her?	6. The exam results were announced. You failed! What would you tell yourself?

This activity aimed to foster empathy and self-compassion, crucial elements of mindfulness. The students' responses were categorized into different themes, revealing their innate reactions and thought processes when faced with these scenarios. Additionally, it became

evident that while students were supportive and compassionate towards others, they were often harsher and less forgiving towards themselves.

In the first three scenarios, several themes emerged from the students' responses, including encouragement, reassurance, motivation, consolation, and practical advice. Although the number of the frequencies of these themes differ within the first three questions, no negative language use was detected in students' responses. In other words, they carefully selected their language to motivate and help their close friend. Some examples were as follows:

S11: "I would tell him to calm down. I would tell him that he could achieve anything he wanted and that I would be by his side no matter the outcome."

S7: "You may have done poorly in the previous exam, but this time I believe you will study harder and get a better grade. I will pray for you."

S10: "It's still not too late, there are make-up exams, we can work together and figure it out. I will help you. If you are having difficulty, I recommend taking private lessons."

When students' responses to the last three scenarios were analyzed, similar themes such as self-encouragement, self-reassurance and self-consolation emerged. However, some negative responses were also discovered this time such as feeling regretful, blaming oneself, and wishing to be alone. Sample quotes exemplifying these themes are provided below:

S13: "Don't worry my dear. I believe in you. Everything will be nice. Don't be afraid."

S14: "...it doesn't matter, I will try harder next time. I know I will succeed. This was an incident. Failure is the bridge to victory."

S2: "Why wasn't I more careful? But I knew! I need to pull myself together."

S8: "I would feel very sad and would go back to my dormitory and sleep without letting anyone know that I was upset or angry."

The analysis of students' responses to the various scenarios in Week 7 highlights a notable discrepancy in the way they extend kindness and support to others versus themselves. When responding to their friends' anxiety about exams, students frequently offered encouragement, reassurance, and practical advice, showcasing empathy and a supportive attitude. Phrases like "Calm down, I believe that you'll succeed." (S1) and "Don't worry, you studied hard. You'll do it." (S2) illustrate this compassionate and positive approach.

However, when addressing their own anxieties and failures, students were often more critical and less forgiving. For example, S2's response to personal failure was, "Why wasn't I more

careful? But I knew! I need to pull myself together" which reflects a self-critical stance rather than the reassurance given to others. Similarly, S1's worry about his family's reaction, "How should I tell my family? My father will be very angry." contrasts sharply with the supportive advice he offered to a friend.

This tendency indicates a common pattern where individuals are more inclined to offer kindness and support to others while being harsher and more self-critical towards themselves. The lesson in week seven successfully drew attention to this disparity, emphasizing the importance of cultivating self-compassion alongside compassion for others. By recognizing this pattern, the lesson continued with a loving-kindness meditation exercise in which students sent good wishes to themselves and to the others as well. Right after the exercise, students reflected on their loving-kindness meditation experience. Some quotes from students are presented below:

S1: "It had a good effect, but I feel under pressure because my mind is on the exam. Actually, the practice we do in class is very nice, but the fear of not passing the exam bothers me.... Positive thoughts came to my mind, I think everything will be fine. I hope it will be."

S4: "While doing this practice, I realized that I had no tolerance for myself. In other words, while I was consoling the other person in the best way, I was not aware that I was being very cruel when it came to me. I felt quite relaxed."

S7: "This practice made me feel happy, making good wishes for someone I didn't know or couldn't warm up to very much created positive energy in me."

The reflections from the lessons provide valuable insights into the self-asserted experiences and perceptions of EFL students regarding mindfulness following the intervention. The week four lesson highlighted the importance of present-moment awareness through a thought-provoking story, leading students to explore themes such as family bonds, preventive measures, and acceptance of fate. These themes reflected the students' ability to engage deeply with the material and consider alternative perspectives.

The lesson in week seven focused on loving-kindness and self-compassion, revealing a significant discrepancy between how students treated others versus themselves. While students consistently offered encouragement, reassurance, and practical advice to their friends, they often displayed self-criticism and less compassion towards their own anxieties

and failures. This tendency underscores the need for mindfulness practices that promote self-compassion, a crucial aspect often overlooked in traditional educational settings.

Overall, the MBI-FLC program's focus on mindfulness practices, such as loving-kindness and self-compassion, not only supported students' emotional well-being but also had the potential to positively impact their language learning journey. The students' reflections highlight the transformative potential of integrating mindfulness into EFL education, promoting a more holistic and compassionate approach to language learning.

RQ2: What are the Self-Asserted Experiences and Perceptions of EFL Students Regarding FLSA Before and After the Intervention?

In line with the purpose of the study, the second research question investigated the self-asserted experiences and perceptions of EFL students regarding FLSA following the intervention. Friedman test was carried out to determine the students' level of FLSA before and after the intervention. Figure 4 illustrates the mean FLSA scores of students at three different time points: before the intervention (pretest), immediately after the intervention (posttest), and 6 months following the intervention (delayed posttest).

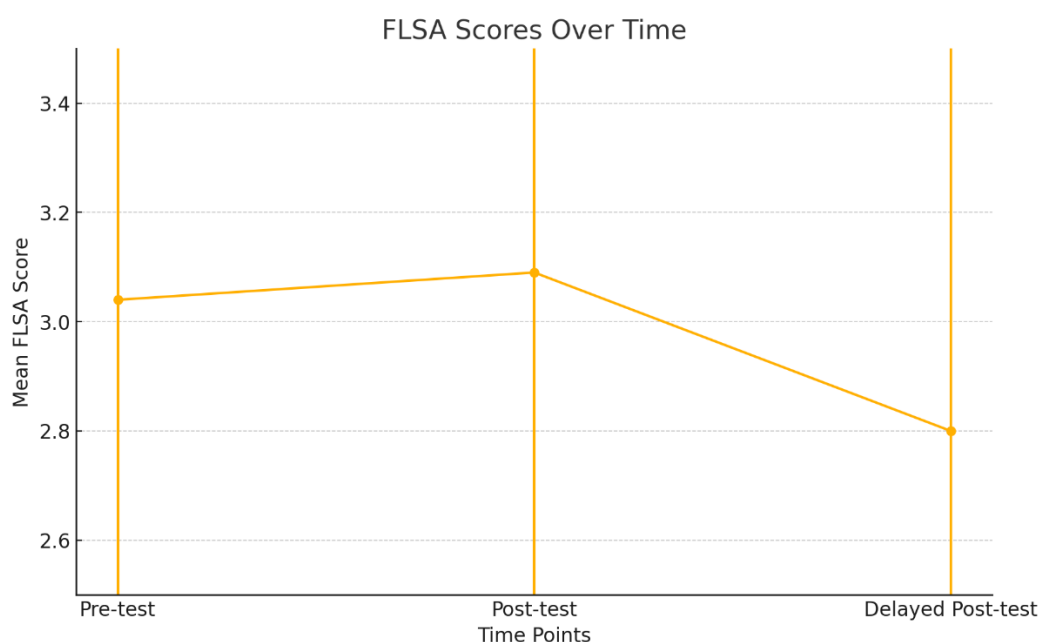


Figure 4. Students' FLSA scores over time

The error bars represent the standard deviation for each time point. The graph shows a slight increase in FLSA scores immediately after the intervention, followed by a noticeable decrease in the delayed posttest. This suggests that while the intervention may have initially led to a small increase in anxiety, the effects appeared to diminish over time, with anxiety levels eventually falling below the pretest levels. Still, it is difficult to ascertain that these changes are statistically significant in the absence of significance values ($p>.05$).

The students' FLSA experiences and perceptions were inquired and examined in detail through semi-structured interviews. The self-asserted experiences of EFL students before the intervention reveal a nuanced spectrum of emotions and coping strategies when speaking English. In exploring their feelings, a notable pattern emerges between positive and negative emotions. EFL students reported positive sentiments, including feelings of confidence and satisfaction, indicative of moments when they feel at ease and proficient in English communication ($n=5$). Conversely, a significant majority expressed negative emotions and encountered challenges ($n=12$), such as anxiety, frustration, and hesitation. These emotions highlight the complexities and inherent difficulties students face in navigating EFL speaking contexts. Quotations from the semi-structured interviews that exemplify these emerging themes are presented below.

S3: "I feel very happy when speaking English....when people ask about my major and congratulate me that I study English."

S14: "Generally relaxed...because I am better at English now."

S5: "Feeling so nervous and stressed....with the fear of making a mistake."

S12: "I feel a bit stressed...I feel as if I have to memorize lots of vocabulary."

S10: "...when I can't speak, I feel sad...feeling frustrated."

In addition to the data obtained from the semi-structured interviews, similar themes were also observed in one of the lessons during the 8-week MBI-FLC program. In week five (see Appendix 6.5), the focus was on the awareness of thoughts and at the end of the lesson, the students were required to write down the thoughts running through their minds at that moment. The students mentioned school related issues and some general things such as family, money and future anxiety. While most students referred to the anxiety resulting from

the exams, assignments and the lessons (n=13), three students specifically expressed the speaking anxiety they experience.

In response to these emotional challenges, students demonstrated various coping strategies aimed at managing stress and enhancing their communication effectiveness. Stress management strategies (n=3) were observed, illustrating efforts to alleviate anxiety and pressure during language interactions. Additionally, students actively sought support (n=2) from peers or teachers, underscoring a collaborative approach to address language barriers and improve proficiency. Moreover, mental strategies (n=6), including positive visualization and cognitive reframing, emerged as crucial tools students employed to bolster confidence and adaptability in English-speaking environments. Figure 5 displays the coping strategies used by the students.

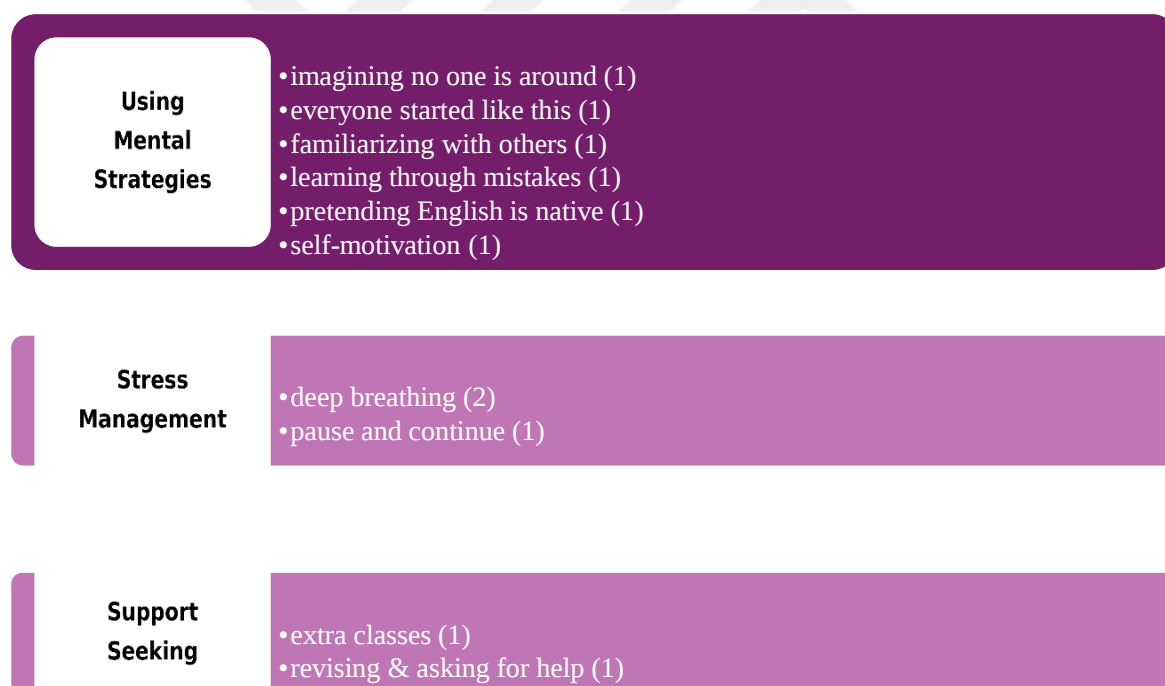


Figure 5. Coping strategies used by the students for FLSA

Student quotes exemplifying the aforementioned themes are as follows:

S15: "I pause for a moment and try to put together the ideas...and then continue."

S10: "...I revise the topics which I can't fully understand or ask for help from my teachers."

S6: "I think as if there is no one around me."

S13: "I say somethings to myself...such as -don't worry, everything is okay...such things."

The analysis of students' feelings about speaking English following the 8-week intervention reveals a spectrum of emotional responses. A significant proportion of students (n=7) indicated persistent challenges and uncertainties. Among these, some students (n=3) reported ongoing nervousness, suggesting that despite the intervention, anxiety remains a prevalent emotion in English-speaking contexts.

S3: "I still feel nervous while speaking English."

S14: "I feel worried and...sometimes excited."

Conversely, positive shifts in emotional responses were also evident among the students (n=5). A notable number (n=3) mentioned feeling a bit better about speaking English post-intervention, indicating a moderate improvement in confidence levels. Furthermore, one student (n=1) specifically noted feeling actually relaxed when engaging in English conversations, suggesting a significant positive transformation in their emotional state. Another student (n=1) highlighted a reduction in stress levels compared to their earlier experiences, indicating a positive trend towards improved emotional well-being in language contexts.

S4: "I don't feel as stressed as I used to do."

S7: "I feel okay...a bit better. Because....even I enjoy speaking English."

These results reveal a complex interplay between intervention effectiveness and emotional responses in language learning environments. They highlight the variability in students' experiences, where ongoing challenges coexist alongside significant improvements in emotional well-being and self-confidence.

Moreover, the analysis of students' feelings about speaking English following the 8-week intervention reveals a spectrum of emotional responses related to specific factors, including the preparation status, the identity of the interlocutor, and responses to making mistakes.

Preparation Status (Prepared vs. Unprepared): Before the intervention, a clear preference for prepared speech was noted among 73% of the students (f=11), who felt more confident and less anxious when prepared. However, post-intervention data reveals an increase in comfort with unprepared speech for 5 students, suggesting that the intervention may have helped some students feel more natural and less stressed in spontaneous speaking scenarios. As an example, Student 7's statements about speaking with/without preparation are provided below to display the positive shift after the intervention.

Pre-intervention - S7: "Prepared speech is a little bit better for me, I feel better then. Because when I speak without preparation, as I said, I have a lot of thoughts in my head at that time and because I get stressed when I speak English...well, should I focus on speaking or should I focus on relaxing myself? These things bother me a lot. That's why prepared speech makes me feel better.

Post-intervention - S7: "When I speak prepared, if I compare it to an unprepared speech, of course I feel better, but when I speak unprepared I get a bit more nervous.... well, I can still do it. I can form sentences in my own head...

On the other hand, some students (f=2) expressed feeling more anxious when speaking spontaneously in English compared to their earlier statements in pre-intervention interviews. This might be an explanation for the slight increase in FLSA scores after the intervention.

Interlocutor's Identity (Friend, Teacher, Native Speaker): Students consistently reported feeling most comfortable when speaking with friends (f=13). However, anxiety was common when speaking with teachers (f=11) arising mostly due to the fear of making mistakes and being judged/evaluated by the teacher. As for speaking to a native English speaker, most students articulated such emotions as anxious, nervous and stressed (f=10) before the intervention. Some students attributed this type of anxiety to the level difference between themselves and the native speaker or to the fear of making mistakes and not being understood by the interlocutor. A quote is provided below as example:

S12: "I am a little more comfortable talking to my friends because at least we can laugh when we make mistakes. But when I talk to my teachers, I think I need to speak more properly and correctly. That's why I get a little nervous at those times. Especially when task points are to be given, I get extremely nervous. When I talk to someone whose native language is English... I don't really want to talk around them... I mean I can't talk to that person anyway. At most, I look

up most things in the translation and say them so that I don't make mistakes, so as not to risk myself, so as not to be misunderstood.”

Post-intervention interviews revealed a reduction in anxiety for several students (f=4) when speaking with a teacher or a native speaker, indicating a growing confidence in their language abilities. For instance, student number 12 refusing even to try speaking to a native speaker due to the fear of making a mistake, sounded more flexible (i.e. asking for help, situations depending) in post-intervention interviews.

S12: “When I talk to my friends, as long as they don't laugh, we are all on the same level anyway. That's why I'm not affected too much. On the contrary, if he knows, I say, "Help me, teach me." I also ask for help.... When I talk to my teacher, as I said, my teacher's approach towards me affects me. And when I talk to a native speaker, I definitely get into trouble. Maybe he won't understand me, maybe he won't understand what I'm saying, that's why I can get into trouble. Of course, when I get into trouble, I try to get help.

A change was observed only in one student's statement which was more positively inclined before the intervention. Comparatively, the student expressed feeling nervous when speaking with the teacher.

Mistake Tolerance and Self-Perception: Pre-intervention interviews showed that mistakes often led to feelings of guilt or frustration for 8 students. Post-intervention, the number of students expressing unpleasant feelings about mistakes dropped to 5, three students showing increased acceptance of mistakes as part of the learning process. This suggests that the mindfulness intervention positively impacted students' emotional resilience and ability to handle errors. Below, sample quotations are given to compare the student's statement before and after the intervention.

Pre-intervention - S1: “...a little bad. I mean, if I say a word I know wrong, I feel a little bad. For example, I know the word but I said it wrong. Then someone tells me the correct one but I know the correct one too. So I feel a little bad there, I know I knew it but why did I say it like that?

Post-intervention – S1: “When I make a mistake, I don't feel embarrassed or ashamed, yes I made a mistake but my mistake was corrected. I mean I don't think I made a big mistake there. For example, if I misused a word, the teacher corrected it. So that it can stay in my mind, I mean, I'll say it correctly from now on.

These findings highlight both the effectiveness and limitations of the intervention in addressing FLISA. While the data indicates improvements in specific areas, such as increased

comfort with spontaneous speech and improved mistake tolerance, it also reveals that anxiety, especially in interactions with teachers and native speakers, persists for some students.

RQ3: How do EFL Students Describe the Influence of Their Mindfulness Practices on Their Experiences of FLSA, Including its Manifestations, Coping Mechanisms, and Overall Impact on Language Learning?

The third research question examines how EFL students articulate the impact of mindfulness practices on their experiences with FLSA, focusing on its effects, their strategies for managing it, and the broader influence on their language learning journey. In order to examine any possible relationship between mindfulness and FLSA, the Spearman correlation test was run both before and after the intervention. The findings are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

The Relationship Between Mindfulness and FLSA Before the Intervention

Pretest	FLSA	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
FLSA		1,000	.	15
Awareness of internal experiences		-,048	,864	15
Awareness of external experiences		-,365	,181	15
Acting with awareness		-,548*	,035	15
Accepting and nonjudgmental orientation		-,419	,120	15
Decentering and nonreactivity		-,021	,940	15
Openness to experience		-,145	,607	15
Relativity of thoughts,		,411	,128	15
Insightful understanding		,483	,068	15

Before the intervention, a significant negative correlation was found between FLSA and "acting with awareness" ($r=-0.548$, $p=0.035$), suggesting that EFL students who were more mindful in their actions reported lower speaking anxiety levels. This implies that the ability to act with awareness can play a critical role in reducing FLSA. It highlights the importance of present-moment focus and conscious action in managing anxiety related to foreign language speaking.

Other mindfulness facets did not show significant correlations with FLSA. Although some negative correlations were observed (e.g., awareness of external experiences, accepting and nonjudgmental orientation), they were not statistically significant, suggesting that, before the intervention, these aspects of mindfulness were not strong determinants of FLSA levels among the students.

Following the 8-week intervention, both scales were applied again to explore any difference that the interventions might have on students' mindfulness and FLSA. The results of the analysis can be seen in Table 8.

Table 8

The Relationship Between Mindfulness and FLSA After the Intervention

Posttest	FLSA	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
FLSA		1,000	.	15
Awareness of internal experiences		-,188	,503	15
Awareness of external experiences		-,555*	,032	15
Acting with awareness		-,430	,110	15
Accepting and nonjudgmental orientation		-,559*	,030	15
Decentering and nonreactivity		-,237	,395	15
Openness to experience		-,237	,396	15
Relativity of thoughts,		,710**	,003	15
Insightful understanding		,198	,478	15

After the intervention, significant negative correlations were found between FLSA and both "awareness of external experiences" ($r=-0.555$, $p=0.032$) and "accepting and nonjudgmental orientation" ($r=-0.559$, $p=0.030$). These findings suggest that increased awareness of external stimuli and a nonjudgmental attitude towards experiences were associated with lower FLSA. This indicates that the intervention may have helped students to better observe their surroundings and accept their language learning experiences without harsh self-judgment, leading to reduced anxiety.

Interestingly, a significant positive correlation was observed between FLSA and "relativity of thoughts" ($r=0.710$, $p=0.003$). This suggests that students who recognized the relativity of their thoughts experienced higher levels of FLSA. This could indicate that while

understanding that thoughts are not absolute might help in some contexts, it could also lead to increased self-doubt or over-analysis in the context of foreign language speaking anxiety.

Other mindfulness aspects did not show significant correlations with FLSA. This suggests that while some aspects of mindfulness were beneficial in reducing FLSA, others did not have a strong impact immediately following the intervention.

For further investigation, a delayed posttest was employed in this study to explore whether there is any difference over time. The statistical analysis results are presented in Table 9.

Table 9

The Relationship Between Mindfulness and FLSA 6 Months After the Intervention

Delayed posttest	FLSA	Correlation Coefficient	Sig. (2-tailed)	N
FLSA		1,000	.	15
Awareness of internal experiences		-,258	,354	15
Awareness of external experiences		-,412	,127	15
Acting with awareness		-,278	,316	15
Accepting and nonjudgmental orientation		-,309	,263	15
Decentering and nonreactivity		-,326	,236	15
Openness to experience		-,316	,251	15
Relativity of thoughts,		-,099	,727	15
Insightful understanding		-,128	,650	15

In the delayed posttest, none of the mindfulness aspects showed a significant correlation with FLSA. The lack of significant correlations in the delayed posttest suggests that the immediate effects of the mindfulness intervention on reducing FLSA did not persist over time. This indicates the potential need for ongoing mindfulness practice to maintain its benefits in managing FLSA. The initial posttest benefits seen in external awareness and nonjudgmental acceptance may fade without continual reinforcement.

The findings highlight the importance of ongoing mindfulness practice in maintaining its benefits in reducing FLSA among EFL students. The immediate post-intervention improvements suggest that mindfulness can be an effective tool for managing language learning anxiety, but its long-term efficacy requires continuous practice and reinforcement.

Following the 8-week MBI-FLC program, students shared their ideas about the program and how it might foster foreign language learning and alleviate foreign language speaking anxiety. One-third of the students (n=5) stated that the exercises and activities they did during the program helped them deal with the speaking anxiety they experienced.

S2: "Well, I think it would definitely help because mindfulness seems to have such a relaxing effect. That's how I feel right now. I think it would also be beneficial for English because it reduces anxiety.

S9: "I can make myself relax with mindful breathing when I experience speaking anxiety."

S10: "...I think it helped. I mean, at first, it seemed ridiculous to me, to be honest. I was wondering, why are we doing something like this? What purpose could it have? But I think it's very, very useful. I was already relaxed. Let me tell you, it made me feel more relaxed. So, now I'm starting to attend classes more. Even though I am unprepared, I can say, "I can do it; I can answer it." So, I started not to hesitate. I don't know, it made me feel very relieved about this."

Apart from direct references to the relationship between mindfulness and FLSA, students highlighted some other important points related to foreign language learning. The themes of students' remarks are provided below:

Developing self-confidence

S15: "Of course, mindfulness changed my attitude towards anxiety a bit. I think I can do something, but there was never such a thought before. I was directly saying, "I can't do it."

The language of the program

S11: "We participated in this program as a class. You know, we inevitably speak English there too. Of course, this helps because we are exposed to English more. But if this program were not in English, I personally do not think it would contribute that much."

Including more specific activities regarding FLSA

S8: "Well, it might help... I think it might be helpful if we work directly on speaking anxiety."

Helpful for attention

S5: "I only tried mindful breathing practice a few times when I was angry. And I saw the effect, I mean it relaxes, doing it that way, trying to focus on something. I was challenged while doing it because of attention deficiency. But I think of it as something that could be good for attention deficiency."

Finally, three students could not articulate decisive remarks about mindfulness and FLSA together. In other words, they did not state that mindfulness was completely unhelpful regarding FLSA; rather, they referred to some factors that they thought to be useful, such as allocating more time.

S6: "I don't think that mindfulness could help ease the speaking anxiety...So, thinking from myself... I don't know. I think it won't help. Or we need to focus more on this. Not eight weeks like this, but more. We need to incorporate it into our lives thoroughly."

S5: "Speaking in a foreign language.....so I won't be able to say yes to that. The activities we did, didn't help me with my anxiety about speaking a foreign language, or I don't know if they did."

The findings from the study indicate a nuanced relationship between mindfulness practices and foreign language speaking anxiety among EFL students. Before the intervention, a significant negative correlation was found between FLSA and "acting with awareness," suggesting that students who were more mindful in their actions experienced lower levels of speaking anxiety. This highlights the critical role of present-moment focus and conscious action in managing anxiety related to foreign language speaking. However, other facets of mindfulness did not show significant correlations with FLSA at this stage, implying that these aspects were not strong determinants of FLSA levels among the students before the intervention.

Post-intervention results demonstrated that increased awareness of external experiences and a nonjudgmental orientation towards experiences were associated with lower FLSA, suggesting that the intervention helped students better observe their surroundings and accept their language learning experiences without harsh self-judgment. This reduction in anxiety was complemented by a significant positive correlation between FLSA and "relativity of thoughts," indicating that while recognizing the relativity of thoughts can be beneficial, it may also lead to increased self-doubt or over-analysis in the context of language speaking anxiety. Despite these immediate benefits, the delayed posttest showed no significant correlation between mindfulness facets and FLSA, indicating that the effects of the intervention did not persist over time without ongoing practice. This underscores the necessity for continuous mindfulness practice to sustain its benefits in managing FLSA.

Qualitative feedback from the students further elucidated the impact of the mindfulness intervention. Many students reported that mindfulness exercises and activities helped them manage their speaking anxiety, with some noting an increase in self-confidence and a more relaxed attitude towards language learning. Students highlighted the importance of the language of the program, with several suggesting that conducting the program in English contributed to their language exposure and learning. They also emphasized the need for more specific activities targeting FLSA and suggested that a longer duration for the intervention might yield more substantial benefits. These insights underline the potential of mindfulness practices to alleviate FLSA, while also pointing to areas for improvement and the importance of sustained practice for long-term efficacy.

RQ4: What are the Perceptions and Reflections of EFL Students on Integrating the MBI-FLC Program?

This part presents the findings from the analysis of EFL students' perceptions and reflections on integrating the Mindfulness-Based Intervention Program for Foreign Language Classes (MBI-FLC) program. The data were gathered through semi-structured interviews conducted with students who participated in the 8-week program. The analysis aims to explore the students' experiences, the impact of mindfulness practices on their language learning and speaking anxiety, and their overall perception of the program. The emergent themes and codes provide a comprehensive understanding of how mindfulness practices were perceived and their influence on students' anxiety and mindfulness. Figure 6 presents the emerging themes with frequencies, while Table 10 details the key themes identified from the data, supported by examples from the participants' responses.

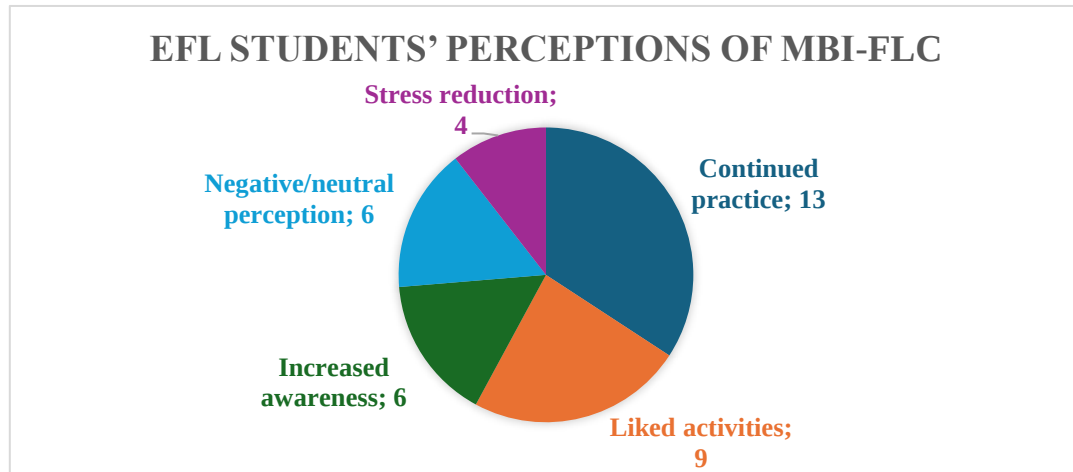


Figure 6. Emerging themes of EFL students' perceptions of MBI-FLC

Table 10

EFL Students' Perceptions of MBI-FLC

Codes	Frequency	Quotes
Continued practice	13	S2: "I continue to practice mindful eating. As I said, that taste... you know, for example, I cook a meal. According to mindfulness, I would like to practice it by closing my eyes and feeling it." S3: "So, I can't say anything about the others, but there is only one thing I will definitely continue: Mindful breathing. I don't plan on leaving it." S5: "We wrote something we were grateful for every day for a week. I think I will do that from now on....I mean, I think it will be a good thing for me. When I look at it after a few months, just to remember...I think I can do that....because I'm a very forgetful person, I don't really remember the good things that happened during the day or the things I'm grateful for. But at the end of 6 days, for example, when I look at what I wrote, I think that it went well, I did this and that. That's why I would like to continue this exercise from now on." S12: "I continue the mindful breathing exercise. I was already doing it before, I stopped and I'm thinking of doing it again. Because it helps me a lot." S14: "I'd like to continue practicing loving-kindness meditation."
Liked activities	9	S6: "Well, mindful breathing exercise was nice. And mindful eating, but I couldn't participate in it. Then I watched your recording; it was good, too." S13: "For example, there was this mindful breathing. It helped me, I liked it. Mindful eating, for example, I liked that too. Then, there were short stories, and you were reading them (meditations). Some words helped me there." S15: "Even though I am skinny, I eat a lot. Mindful eating caught my attention and became one of the exercises that appealed to me."
Increased awareness	6	S2: "I think I realized something inside and outside myself a little bit during these 8 weeks." S3: "First of all, breathing exercise.... It added something better to our life.... Then this gratitude....taking notes of all the activities we do daily, the good things in our lives that day, and then opening and reading them to make ourselves happy when we suddenly feel bad... So doing these brings awareness to me, and it did, for example, while doing homework." S12: "As I said at the beginning, I realized some things after the program. For example, I didn't realize that the heat made me angry, but now I say that it makes me angry. Or the harmony of any vegetable I eat with this mouth-chewing movement, etc. Now I immediately think of the things we did in this program. I realized these."
Negative / neutral perception	6	S3: "...we did the mindful eating exercise.... actually a little more carefully. Normally, we eat every day in the morning, at noon or in the evening. We eat at every moment of our day, but I don't know, I couldn't see any difference in this exercise regarding eating experience. Even though we ate more carefully, this mindful eating exercise did not raise awareness for me." S14: "Yes, I liked the program. But the lessons confused me a little. I couldn't attend most of the lectures, but I watched them all at once. I was confused and couldn't understand. I think it would have been better now if I had attended classes on time. I could understand and learn meditation better." S15: "Mindful breathing didn't really appeal to me. I'm not a person who can stay still very much. Well, I need to move every 5 seconds. That's why it wasn't really for me."
Stress reduction	4	S1: "I was stressed most of the time. A word would suddenly come out, it was a little stressful to speak. But this program helped me become a little more relaxed. There is still stress, but a little." S5: "I have only tried mindful breathing practice a few times when I was angry. And I saw the effect, I mean it relaxes me, breathing in and out, I mean doing it that way, trying to focus on something."

The integration of the MBI-FLC program has yielded significant insights into the perceptions and reflections of EFL students. The findings from the semi-structured interviews provide a nuanced understanding of how the program influenced students' mindfulness, stress levels, and foreign language speaking anxiety. Several key themes emerged from the data, each highlighting different aspects of the students' experiences and the impact of the program.

The most prominent theme was the continued practice of mindfulness activities, with many students expressing their intention to maintain these practices beyond the program. This indicates a lasting positive impact, suggesting that the mindfulness exercises introduced during the program were not only beneficial but also practical and engaging enough for students to incorporate into their daily lives.

The theme of liked activities revealed that students particularly enjoyed specific mindfulness exercises such as mindful breathing and mindful eating. These activities were frequently mentioned as favorites, indicating their effectiveness in engaging students and potentially contributing to stress reduction and increased awareness.

Increased awareness was another significant theme, with students reporting a heightened sense of mindfulness and awareness of their thoughts, feelings, and surroundings. This enhanced self-awareness is a critical component of mindfulness practice and underscores the program's success in fostering this attribute among participants.

Stress reduction was another important outcome, with several students noting a decrease in their stress levels, particularly in relation to speaking English. This reduction in anxiety is a crucial benefit of mindfulness practices, suggesting that the MBI-FLC program effectively addressed one of the main challenges faced by EFL students.

However, not all feedback was entirely positive. The negative/neutral perception theme highlighted some challenges and mixed reactions to certain activities. Some students did not find specific exercises, like mindful eating or mindful breathing, particularly impactful or suitable for their personal preferences and lifestyles. Additionally, logistical issues, such as

not attending classes on time, also contributed to some students' neutral or negative perceptions.

Overall, the findings indicate that the MBI-FLC program was well-received and had a positive impact on the students' mindfulness and stress levels. The willingness of students to continue mindfulness practices beyond the program highlights the practical value and relevance of these exercises. However, the mixed reactions to certain activities suggest that future implementations of the program could benefit from more personalized and flexible approaches to better serve individual preferences and needs.



CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the self-asserted experiences and perceptions of EFL students regarding mindfulness and FLSA before and after a mindfulness-based intervention. The findings highlighted nuanced changes in mindfulness and FLSA, indicating that mindfulness-based practices have the potential to influence students' language learning experiences and reduce speaking anxiety. This chapter discusses these findings in detail, drawing comparisons with existing literature, considering the implications for theory and practice, and proposing directions for future research.

Changes in Mindfulness: Before and After the Intervention

The implementation of an 8-week mindfulness intervention for EFL students yielded intriguing results, particularly in the dimensions of "relativity of thoughts" and "insightful understanding." While overall mindfulness scores did not demonstrate statistically significant improvements across most subscales, the notable changes in these specific areas warrant a deeper exploration of their implications in the context of existing literature.

The concept of "relativity of thoughts" aligns closely with the principles of mindfulness, which emphasize the importance of recognizing thoughts as transient and subjective experiences rather than absolute truths. This finding aligns with previous research that highlights the interplay between cognitive flexibility and mindfulness (Moore & Malinowski, 2009). Cognitive flexibility refers to the human capacity to adjust thinking

strategies to respond effectively to novel and unforeseen situations (Canas, Quesada, Antoli & Fajardo, 2003). Meanwhile, Ellen Langer's concept of mindful learning aligns with cognitive flexibility, encouraging openness to new information and adaptability to different perspectives (Langer, 2016). These are essential skills for navigating the complexities of foreign language learning, where learners often encounter unfamiliar structures and cultural contexts. This adaptability allows language learners to approach challenges with curiosity and resilience, fostering a mindset that can reduce anxiety and enhance learning effectiveness in foreign language environments.

The ability to view thoughts as impermanent can reduce over-identification with negative thoughts, a key aspect of mindfulness practice (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). This perspective is also supported by Wang and Liu, who noted that mindfulness practices can enhance students' awareness of their cognitive processes, leading to a more nuanced understanding of their thoughts and feelings (Wang & Liu, 2016). The ability to perceive thoughts as relative can significantly reduce cognitive distortions and promote a healthier mental state, which is particularly beneficial in high-stress environments such as language learning. Çetin and Bölükbaşı Macit (2022) revealed the role of cognitive flexibility in foreign language learning in their study with 314 EFL students, that is, they found that cognitive flexibility fully mediates the relationship between foreign language learning motivation and foreign language anxiety. In other words, preparatory students with strong motivation to learn a foreign language tend to have greater cognitive flexibility, which in turn helps to lower their foreign language anxiety (Çetin & Bölükbaşı Macit, 2022). These findings resonate with previous research indicating that mindfulness can foster cognitive flexibility, enabling learners to adapt their thinking patterns in response to new information and experiences.

Moreover, the increase in "insightful understanding" among participants suggests that mindfulness practices may enhance metacognitive awareness, allowing students to reflect on their learning processes more effectively. In Johnson and Wade's (2017) study with 499 secondary school students, the relativity of thought was one of the mindfulness facets that showed variance over time, while insightful understanding demonstrated a significant

interaction of sex and time. Lin (2020) highlighted the role of mindful learning in promoting engagement and self-regulation among university students. By cultivating a deeper understanding of their learning strategies and emotional responses, EFL students may become more adept at navigating the complexities of language acquisition (Lin, 2020). This insight is crucial, as it empowers learners to take ownership of their educational journeys, fostering a sense of agency.

Interestingly, while the overall mindfulness scores did not show significant improvements, the targeted changes in specific dimensions may indicate that mindfulness interventions can have differential effects on various aspects of cognitive and emotional functioning. The meta-analysis by Carsley et al. (2018) indicates that mindfulness interventions in school settings can lead to improvements in mental health outcomes. These effects, however, vary based on several factors, such as the age of participants, the type of mindfulness activity, and the identity of the facilitator, highlighting that different mindfulness dimensions and program characteristics play a role in their effectiveness (Carsley et al., 2018). In the current study, despite employing activities focusing on three main areas of awareness -sensations, thoughts and emotions, some of these activities might have addressed better to the students. The nuanced nature of these findings suggests that future research should focus on the specific components of mindfulness that are most beneficial for EFL learners, potentially leading to more tailored and effective interventions.

In the context of EFL education, the ability to understand the relativity of thoughts and develop insightful understanding can significantly impact students' language learning experiences. Fostering these dimensions in EFL contexts might have promising results as automatization presents a significant challenge within the classroom learning environment (DeKeyser, 2007; Yenkimaleki & van Heuven, 2023). By encouraging a mindset that embraces the relativity of thoughts, EFL students may become more open to engaging with the language, experimenting with new structures, and learning from their mistakes without the fear of judgment. This shift in perspective is essential for language acquisition, as it encourages risk-taking and exploration, which are critical components of effective learning.

Additionally, the lack of significant improvements in overall mindfulness scores across most subscales may reflect the challenges inherent in implementing mindfulness interventions in educational settings. Teaching mindfulness in school settings requires careful consideration of the specific needs and contexts of learners (Lawlor, 2014). It is possible that the duration of the intervention or the specific mindfulness techniques employed may not have been sufficient to elicit widespread changes across all dimensions of mindfulness.

After evaluating the quantitative data cautiously due to the small sample size, qualitative data were reviewed in depth, and the interviews revealed a shift from initial unfamiliarity to a more profound understanding of mindfulness. Students described mindfulness as involving enhanced awareness, relaxation, and self-reflection, with many indicating that they had never considered these aspects before the intervention. This is consistent with research by Brown and R. M. Ryan (2003), which underscores mindfulness as a state of enhanced awareness and attention to present-moment experiences. Further supporting this, recent research by Zeilhofer (2023) indicates a positive relationship between mindfulness practices and increased scores in some facets of mindfulness, such as noticing/observing and awareness dimensions. This suggests that mindfulness interventions may foster a more attentive and observant mindset, which could directly benefit language learning by helping students become more conscious of linguistic forms, vocabulary, and learning gaps (Zeilhofer, 2023). Likewise, Zeilhofer (2023) states that different types of meditation appear to influence distinct facets of mindfulness. For example, guided meditation directs students' focus, potentially toward specific aspects of language learning. Thus, implementing targeted mindfulness practices could enhance learners' general awareness while also refining their focus on language-related details, providing a dual benefit in fostering both mindfulness and language acquisition.

The participants' reports that mindfulness helped them feel more relaxed and aware align with previous research, which highlights the role of mindfulness in alleviating stress (Baer, Carmody & Hunsinger, 2012; Carmody & Baer, 2008; Charoensukmongkol, 2014), reducing anxiety (Charoensukmongkol, 2019; Choomchaiyo & Varma, 2021; Fallah, 2017;

Goldin & Gross, 2010; Mortimore, 2017) and mitigating burnout (Loi & Pryce, 2022; Moghadam, Ghanizadeh & Ghonsooly, 2020). These findings suggest that mindfulness could be valuable for supporting language learners by fostering a relaxed state conducive to focused, productive study.

Mindfulness practices enhance awareness and relaxation by encouraging a present-focused, non-judgmental mindset (Kabat-Zinn, 1994). This approach might help students observe their thoughts without becoming overly reactive, which can reduce automatic stress responses associated with language learning challenges. The observed improvements in relaxation and awareness could also support academic outcomes beyond emotional regulation (Graziano, Reavis, Keane & Calkins, 2007). Relaxed and focused learners are better able to concentrate and retain information, essential for tasks like vocabulary acquisition and mastering grammatical structures.

To optimize mindfulness interventions in language learning, it is essential to consider the potential long-term benefits and determine which mindfulness practices are most effective for enhancing awareness and relaxation in an EFL context. Different practices, such as mindful breathing, body scans, and guided meditations, may influence different aspects of mindfulness, and some may be better suited to the specific needs of language learners. For instance, the students in Morgan and Katz's (2021) study reported that mindfulness meditation practice helped them, especially in some anxiety-provoking cases such as exams and giving presentations.

In conclusion, the findings from the 8-week mindfulness intervention for EFL students reveal important insights into the potential benefits of mindfulness practices in enhancing cognitive and emotional aspects of language learning. While all mindfulness facets did not show statistically significant improvements, the notable changes in the "relativity of thoughts" and "insightful understanding" dimensions highlight the nuanced effects of mindfulness interventions. Moreover, the findings underscore the potential of mindfulness as a supportive tool in language learning environments, where it can enhance relaxation, alleviate anxiety, and improve overall learning outcomes. These findings suggest that

mindfulness can play a critical role in fostering a more adaptive and engaged approach to language learning, ultimately contributing to improved outcomes for EFL students.

Changes in FLSA: Before and After the Intervention

The findings from the current study provide nuanced insights into EFL students' experiences with FLSA following a mindfulness-based intervention. Quantitative data from the Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Questionnaire showed an initial, minor increase in FLSA scores immediately after the intervention, followed by a decrease in anxiety levels in the delayed posttest. While this pattern might suggest some transient sensitivity to mindfulness practices, the lack of statistical significance in these changes ($p > .05$) implies that the intervention's impact on FLSA was limited. Shapiro, Siegel, and Neff (2018) discuss how mindfulness involves accepting experiences as they are, which often means becoming fully aware of discomfort and suffering without immediately seeking to change them. This acceptance is described as a process of "allowing things to be as they are" (Shapiro et al., 2018, pp. 1695), which can initially feel counterintuitive, particularly for those who seek mindfulness to relieve discomfort. While there is an observed trend toward reduced anxiety over time, it is essential to interpret these results cautiously and avoid overgeneralizing the findings.

The limited impact of the current mindfulness-based intervention on FLSA contrasts with findings from similar studies, which generally report more pronounced effects of mindfulness on speaking anxiety. For example, Ersanlı and Ünal (2022) found that mindfulness training significantly reduced EFL learners' speaking anxiety and increased their willingness to speak. Similarly, Öz (2017) reported a significant decrease in speaking anxiety following a mindfulness meditation-based program, with participants also showing an increased willingness to communicate in English. These results indicate that mindfulness training can enhance both emotional regulation and motivation in speaking contexts.

In another study, Teksöz (2024) investigated mindfulness practices combined with mindfulness-based speaking tasks and observed a significant reduction in students' speaking

anxiety and an increase in self-efficacy related to speaking. The findings of the study imply that the integration of mindfulness with specific language tasks may be particularly effective for mitigating anxiety in foreign language contexts. Teksöz's (2024) findings highlight that while mindfulness alone may benefit learners, targeted interventions that address specific speaking-related challenges could yield more consistent results.

Given the limited number of studies focusing specifically on mindfulness and FLSA, this discussion also draws on research concerning general FLA and mindfulness. FLSA is widely recognized as one of the most intense manifestations of FLA due to the real-time processing, performance pressure, and social evaluation it entails (Horwitz et al., 1986). Thus, while FLA encompasses multiple language skills, findings from broader FLA studies can provide useful insights into the effectiveness of mindfulness for speaking anxiety.

For instance, Morgan and Katz (2021) conducted a 13-week mindfulness meditation intervention in a foreign language classroom and found a general reduction in foreign language classroom anxiety among participants. Although the effects varied, the study indicated that students gained practical strategies for managing anxiety and stress in learning contexts, with many participants expressing positive views on using mindfulness to mitigate FLA. Similarly, Fallah (2017) found that higher mindfulness levels were correlated with lower FLA and higher coping self-efficacy among Iranian EFL learners, suggesting that mindfulness can help students better manage anxiety in foreign language settings.

Another study by Choomchaiyo and Varma (2021) examined the indirect effects of mindfulness on FLA through irrational thoughts and self-efficacy among Thai English learners. The study reported that mindfulness practices led to reduced irrational thoughts, which in turn decreased FLA and boosted self-efficacy, highlighting a pathway by which mindfulness may enhance learners' confidence and emotional resilience in foreign language tasks. Further, Gao (2023) explored the relationship between mindfulness, anxiety, and burnout among foreign language learners, finding that mindfulness was associated with reduced anxiety and burnout. The study underscores the potential of mindfulness to support

language learners' mental well-being more broadly, which could be relevant for students facing speaking anxiety, a common source of burnout and stress.

Finally, Mortimore (2017) conducted a pilot study on the effects of mindfulness in a bilingual primary classroom and noted modest improvements in attention and reduced anxiety among students. While the results were inconclusive, they suggest that even brief mindfulness interventions could potentially lower FLA in younger learners by enhancing focus and reducing classroom disturbances.

The current study offers valuable insights into the potential of mindfulness-based interventions to alleviate FLA among EFL students, with a particular emphasis on changes over time. Although the immediate post-intervention data showed minimal change in FLA levels, the delayed posttest results revealed a notable trend of reduced anxiety, suggesting that the effects of mindfulness may gradually strengthen with time. This delayed reduction indicates that mindfulness practices might not produce immediate relief from anxiety but could foster a long-term shift toward emotional resilience and adaptability.

These findings align with broader research on mindfulness and foreign language anxiety, which often highlights mindfulness as a tool for enhancing emotional regulation and focus (Fallah, 2017; Morgan & Katz, 2021). The observed trend of anxiety reduction over time suggests that consistent engagement with mindfulness techniques may allow students to internalize strategies for managing anxiety, particularly in speaking contexts where real-time performance pressures are high.

Qualitative data from semi-structured interviews, conducted to gain richer insights towards FLA, reveal mixed responses. Before the intervention, most students reported experiencing anxiety, frustration, and self-doubt in English-speaking contexts, reflecting the common challenges associated with FLA. In post-intervention, some students continued to express nervousness, particularly in high-stakes or spontaneous speaking situations. However, others described feeling more at ease, especially in unprepared speech scenarios. Regarding coping strategies, students demonstrated various approaches to managing FLA. Initially, most

students relied on preparation and peer support, with fewer mentions of internal coping methods. Post-intervention interviews, however, reveal a shift towards internal strategies, such as positive visualization and cognitive reframing. These strategies align with Fallah's (2017) finding, suggesting a positive relationship between mindfulness and coping self-efficacy. In the current study, students' increased awareness might have helped them develop coping strategies regarding FLSA and supported students' confidence in unstructured speaking scenarios.

A noteworthy finding is students' reported tolerance for mistakes. Before the intervention, many expressed feelings of guilt or frustration following errors. After the intervention, however, some students reported greater acceptance of mistakes, reflecting a potentially beneficial shift in their emotional responses to errors. This development aligns with a mindful approach suggesting to reflect on past mistakes and viewing them from various angles to uncover insights, inspire positive change, or identify ways to share valuable lessons with others (Carson & Langer, 2006). Langer's (2005) observation that making mistakes signals a willingness to engage with one's surroundings and take risks, even in the face of uncertainty, aptly reflects the important role of mistakes in language learning.

Despite these changes, certain social situations, such as speaking with teachers and native speakers, continued to provoke anxiety for several students, even after post-intervention. This suggests that while mindfulness may help reduce general speaking anxiety, its effectiveness in specific evaluative or hierarchical interactions may be limited. Anxiety in these contexts may be more resistant to change, potentially due to ingrained fears of judgment or inadequacy when speaking in high-stakes environments. Li (2016) reports that the factors influencing English-speaking anxiety are connected to socio-psychological variables that interact within the classroom's specific context. By adapting the FLCAS with modifications to include items relevant to the Chinese EFL setting, the researcher concludes that English-speaking anxiety is understood to stem primarily from low self-confidence, fear of making mistakes, and fear of losing face—key elements impacting the willingness to communicate in a second language (Li, 2016).

In their meta-analysis, Buric, Farias, Driessen and Brazil (2022) found that meditation outcomes vary widely across individuals, with those experiencing higher psychopathology or depression sometimes facing worsened mental health, while individuals with stronger interpersonal skills, motivation, or mindfulness levels often benefit more. Demographics and psychological traits, like age or self-concept, had minimal impact on outcomes (Buric et al., 2022). These findings highlight the need for personalized approaches to meditation interventions. Future studies could explore these individual differences to determine which students benefit most from mindfulness practices in EFL settings.

Overall, this study suggests that while the immediate impacts of mindfulness on FLSA may be limited, sustained practice has the potential to reduce speaking anxiety over time. While some students benefited from improved coping strategies and reduced anxiety in spontaneous speech, others continued to face challenges, particularly in socially demanding situations.

The Impact of Mindfulness on Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety

The study aimed to examine how mindfulness practices influence EFL students' experiences of FLSA, including its manifestations, coping mechanisms, and broader impacts on language learning. The findings revealed a nuanced interaction between specific mindfulness components and FLSA, suggesting that mindfulness interventions could be beneficial, though their long-term effectiveness may require sustained practice.

Initial Observations: Pre-intervention

The pre-intervention results of this study revealed a significant negative correlation between FLSA and the mindfulness facet of "acting with awareness" ($r=-0.548$, $p=0.035$). This suggests that students who approached their actions with mindful intention—staying focused on the present moment—reported lower levels of speaking anxiety. This finding aligns with studies highlighting the role of present-moment focus in managing anxiety. For instance,

Çalışkan, Akme Mehmet-Şekerler, Kızıltepe, Aydın Sünbül and Börkan (2023) found that mindfulness was positively associated with college adjustment and negatively with anxiety, suggesting that present-moment awareness might help students manage stressors by focusing on immediate experiences rather than anticipated outcomes. Zhao et al. (2024) also identified “acting with awareness” as a key predictor of emotional stability in academic settings, linking it to reduced negative emotions and improved engagement, though not all mindfulness facets showed this effect on anxiety-related emotions.

Further, T. Liu, Liu, Zhang, and Mu (2023), in a longitudinal study of dispositional mindfulness among adolescents, found that certain facets like “acting with awareness” were more effective in reducing anxiety over time compared to other aspects of mindfulness. Their results indicated that mindfulness facets involving self-regulation, such as present-moment awareness, play a more consistent role in managing anxiety symptoms. However, they noted that facets such as “observing” did not display a strong relationship with anxiety without specific intervention or training.

Interestingly, while “acting with awareness” was linked to reduced FLSA, other mindfulness facets, such as “awareness of inner/external experience” and “nonjudgmental orientation,” showed no significant correlation with FLSA in this study. F. Zhao et al. (2024) similarly found that “non-judging” did not consistently enhance emotional regulation in academic contexts, and T. Liu et al. (2023) suggested that mindfulness facets without a direct focus on self-regulation, like “observing,” may not strongly impact anxiety. These findings imply that while some mindfulness facets, like present-moment awareness, help manage anxiety, others may require targeted mindfulness training to impact FLSA meaningfully.

Immediate Impact: Post-intervention

Post-intervention results highlighted the beneficial effects of two additional mindfulness facets: “awareness of external experiences” and “accepting and nonjudgmental orientation,” both showing significant negative correlations with FLSA. These findings suggest that the

intervention may have helped students enhance their ability to observe external stimuli without judgment, fostering a less critical view of their language abilities. This shift could be especially beneficial in reducing anxiety by allowing students to perceive language challenges without harsh self-evaluation. Interestingly, the positive correlation between FLSA and "relativity of thoughts" raises questions. While recognizing the flexibility of one's thoughts can be empowering, it might also contribute to over-analysis or self-doubt, possibly intensifying FLSA in some students.

The analysis of five studies investigating the relationship between mindfulness facets and anxiety highlights valuable insights, though the findings are nuanced and at times inconsistent (Mizera, Bolin, Nugent & Strand, 2016). Across the studies, certain facets of mindfulness (observe, describe, act with awareness, nonjudgment, and nonreactivity), showed stronger associations with anxiety reduction following mindfulness-based interventions (MBIs). Based on the examined literature, no obvious correlation was found; nonetheless, these findings suggest that the aspect of nonjudgment may be more strongly associated with a reduction in anxiety (Mizera et al., 2016).

Studies on MBIs support the idea that mindfulness plays a critical role in managing anxiety by promoting a more receptive and less judgmental stance toward one's immediate environment and experiences. Several studies support the effectiveness of mindfulness in reducing anxiety. For example, Gallego et al. (2014) found that university students in a mindfulness program showed a significant decrease in anxiety and stress compared to control groups, suggesting that mindfulness practices can provide relief from these symptoms. Similarly, Bamber and Schneider (2016), in their review of mindfulness-based interventions, observed that most studies showed a significant decrease in both anxiety and stress levels in college students following mindfulness training. Their review points to mindfulness as a promising approach for managing anxiety. In Bearden, Turnbull, Wallace, Prosser, and Vincent (2024), college students who participated in an eight-week mindfulness course reported lower levels of stress and anxiety as well as increased mindfulness and self-

compassion, compared to a control group. This suggests that mindfulness courses may be beneficial in improving emotional well-being among college students.

D. K-w. Young et al. (2023) conducted a study on a low-intensity online mindfulness-based intervention and found that participants experienced a significant reduction in anxiety symptoms at post-intervention, with effects that persisted for three months. This study highlights the potential for online mindfulness programs to alleviate anxiety among university students. In their meta-analysis, Lal and Vinod Kumar (2023) reported that mindfulness-based interventions across studies were associated with moderate reductions in anxiety and improvements in mindfulness among students. They suggest that mindfulness has broad psychological benefits in student populations. Lastly, Cary et al. (2023) examined an adapted MBSR program within a college course and found that the program significantly reduced anxiety, with self-regulation playing a mediating role in these reductions. Their findings indicate that mindfulness-based programs embedded in coursework can help students manage anxiety more effectively.

As a specific type of anxiety, FLA has been widely recognized as a significant barrier to language learning, impacting students' ability to acquire and use a second language effectively. MBIs have emerged as a promising tool to address these challenges. Mortimore (2017) conducted a pilot study in primary bilingual classrooms, finding that mindfulness techniques helped reduce FLA by increasing students' attentional control and emotional awareness. The study suggested that mindfulness creates a more supportive classroom atmosphere, lowering the affective filter and enabling students to process language input more effectively. Similarly, Shen (2022) demonstrated that mindfulness and resilience significantly predicted lower anxiety levels among Chinese EFL learners, highlighting the role of mindfulness in fostering emotional stability and cognitive focus.

A similar finding to the current study is found in Morgan and Katz's (2021) study, suggesting that post-intervention mindfulness is positively associated with post-intervention foreign language anxiety. In other words, mindfulness practices did not uniformly reduce FLA for all participants, nor did other factors influence this relationship. Nevertheless, the

intervention group still shows a clear reduction in anxiety, suggesting that the mindfulness program had a beneficial overall effect, despite the unexpected relationship between mindfulness and anxiety levels (Morgan & Katz, 2021). This result may display complexities in how mindfulness interacts with anxiety and highlights the need to explore individual differences or the nuances of how mindfulness was practiced.

FLSA, a subset of FLA, poses additional challenges as it is specifically tied to oral communication tasks. Öz (2017) found that a six-week mindfulness intervention led to a significant reduction in FLSA among university-level EFL students. Participants reported feeling more confident and willing to communicate in the target language, with these changes reflected in improved speaking performance. The program's effectiveness was attributed to its focus on fostering present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, which helped students approach speaking tasks with greater composure. Similarly, Kuit (2024) highlighted that mindfulness training enhanced self-efficacy, a critical factor in reducing speaking anxiety. By increasing students' belief in their ability to perform well, mindfulness reduced the physiological and psychological symptoms of anxiety during public speaking activities.

In classroom settings, mindfulness has proven to be an effective strategy for reducing FLSA and improving speaking skills. Castañeda Aguirre et al. (2024) implemented mindfulness-based techniques, such as body scans and focused breathing, in EFL classrooms and observed improvements in students' fluency, accuracy, and overall confidence. The interventions also created a more inclusive and supportive learning environment, which encouraged students to take risks and engage more actively in speaking tasks. Additionally, mindfulness practices helped students develop resilience, enabling them to recover quickly from errors or setbacks during oral communication (Castañeda Aguirre et al., 2024; Öz, 2017).

In conclusion, mindfulness-based interventions provide a valuable approach to managing both FLA and FLSA, addressing the cognitive and emotional challenges associated with language learning and speaking. By promoting self-regulation, resilience, and a present-

focused mindset, mindfulness helps learners navigate the demands of language acquisition with greater ease and confidence, ultimately enhancing their overall performance and well-being in the language classroom.

The Need for Sustained Practice

The delayed posttest did not show any significant correlations, indicating that the observed post-intervention benefits in FLSA reduction did not sustain without continuous practice. This suggests that ongoing mindfulness exercises may be essential for maintaining lower anxiety levels in language learning. The temporary nature of the intervention's effects underscores the importance of incorporating mindfulness as a regular practice rather than a one-time program.

The study by Gomes, Vieira dos Santos, and Vieira (2021) investigated the effects of transcendental meditation (TM) on anxiety, resilience, and behavioral outcomes among preadolescents and adolescents using a pretest and a three-month posttest design. The results showed no significant differences between the experimental group and the control group in terms of changes in anxiety or resilience over the three-month period. While both groups exhibited general improvements in anxiety and strengths (e.g., prosocial behaviors), these effects were attributed to contextual factors rather than the intervention itself. The study noted that improvements were likely influenced by shared experiences or expectations surrounding the intervention rather than regular TM practice. Overall, the findings suggest limited long-term effects of TM on anxiety without consistent practice (Gomes et al., 2021).

Another study evaluated the effects of three interventions—mindfulness only, mindfulness combined with present control, and a psychoeducational stress management comparison—on anxiety, stress, and other mental health outcomes among college students (Greer, 2015). Participants in all groups reported significant reductions in anxiety, stress, and depression immediately after the intervention and at the first follow-up (2–3 weeks post-intervention). However, by the second follow-up (4–5 weeks post-intervention), the reductions were less

consistent, with some measures showing limited or no further improvement. The study also noted small differences between groups, with the mindfulness plus present control group showing slightly greater reductions in anxiety and stress compared to the mindfulness-only group (Greer, 2015). Overall, the findings suggest that while these interventions can reduce anxiety and stress, the effects may not persist without continued practice or additional follow-up support.

Furthermore, student reflections provide additional context, revealing that many felt an immediate reduction in FLSA thanks to mindfulness practices. Some students expressed increased self-confidence and a relaxed approach to language learning, which aligns with quantitative findings. Additionally, participants highlighted the value of conducting mindfulness training in English, as it allowed for more language exposure. They also recommended more specific FLSA-targeted activities and a longer intervention period to deepen the impact of mindfulness. These insights suggest that tailoring mindfulness interventions to target FLSA directly and extending the program duration could offer even more substantial benefits.

Güldal (2019) examined the effects of an eight-week mindfulness-based psychoeducation program on high school students, focusing on their character strengths, mindfulness levels, and academic achievement. Similar to the current study, the participants in Güldal's study reported gains in mindfulness, including increased self-awareness, relaxation, calmness, and the ability to focus their attention.

The qualitative findings in Morgan and Katz's (2021) study align closely with the results of the current study, offering further insights into the effects of mindfulness on reducing FLSA. Many participants reported immediate stress relief and a more relaxed approach to language learning, which parallels the current study's finding that mindfulness practices helped reduce anxiety and foster a sense of self-confidence. Additionally, participants highlighted improvements in focus and readiness to transition into class time, aligning with the current study's observation that mindfulness enhanced participants' language learning experience. However, some participants expressed mixed or negative views, noting that mindfulness did

not work or was not related to FLSA, (Morgan & Katz, 2021) which supports the current study's recommendation for tailoring interventions to address the specific needs of learners. Moreover, suggestions for extending the intervention period and incorporating more targeted FLSA activities are consistent with the current study's conclusion that a longer intervention could deepen the impact of mindfulness practices. Together, these findings underscore the potential of mindfulness to reduce anxiety while highlighting the need for well-designed, sustained, and context-specific interventions to maximize its effectiveness in addressing FLSA.

EFL Students' Reflections on MBI-FLC

The findings from the semi-structured interviews offer valuable insights into EFL students' perceptions and reflections on the Mindfulness-Based Intervention Program for Foreign Language Classes (MBI-FLC). These perceptions are essential for understanding how mindfulness practices influence students' language learning experiences and FLSA.

The qualitative findings from various studies in general educational settings provide valuable insights that align with the themes emerged in the current study. A recurring theme across studies is the sustained engagement with mindfulness practices. Altinyelken (2022) highlighted that university students continued mindfulness practices after interventions due to the development of self-compassion and reduced self-judgment, which motivated them to incorporate these techniques into daily routines. Similarly, Tran, Vo-Thanh, Soliman, Khoury, and Chau (2022) observed that mindfulness enhanced psychological well-being and positive emotion, leading to prolonged engagement with these practices beyond the structured sessions.

The theme of increased awareness aligns with findings from Hutson (2022), who noted that mindfulness interventions helped first-year composition students gain a deeper understanding of their emotions and thought patterns, promoting reflective academic

practices. This parallels the reports in the current study, where students described heightened recognition of internal and external influences on their well-being.

Another critical outcome is stress reduction, which Nur'aini and Patry (2024) found to be a significant benefit of MBSR techniques. High school students in their study reported decreased stress levels and improved emotional well-being following an eight-week mindfulness intervention, mirroring the reduced anxiety described by the participants in the current research. Similarly, Heath (2021) observed that digital mindfulness interventions effectively reduced anxiety in university students, emphasizing the adaptability of mindfulness to various delivery formats.

Finally, mixed perceptions of mindfulness interventions are a common theme. Thomas (2020) documented that while many participants valued contemplative practices for fostering connection and attentiveness, others noted challenges in maintaining consistent engagement, particularly when interventions were not personalized. This resonates with our findings, where some students reported neutral or negative experiences, suggesting that mindfulness activities must be tailored to individual needs for maximum impact.

These studies reinforce the relevance of mindfulness interventions in educational settings, demonstrating their capacity to foster self-awareness, reduce stress, and promote continued practice while acknowledging the variability in individual responses. These connections provide a robust framework for situating the findings within the broader educational literature.

As for the findings from studies in EFL/ESL contexts, they provide valuable parallels to the themes emerging from the current study. These studies underscore the role of MBIs in language learning environments, particularly in enhancing emotional regulation, self-awareness, and performance in foreign language tasks.

A prominent theme across these studies is the sustained engagement with mindfulness practices. Castañeda Aguirre et al. (2024) found that mindfulness techniques not only improved students' confidence and fluency in speaking but also encouraged continued

practice by reducing apprehension during oral tasks. Similarly, Smith (2023) highlighted that ESL students appreciated the mindfulness lessons for equipping them with tools to handle language learning stress, motivating them to integrate mindfulness into their daily lives.

The theme of increased awareness aligns with findings from multiple studies. Piscayanti, Mujiyanto, Yuliasri, and Astuti (2024) reported that mindfulness in EFL poetry classes helped students explore their inner thoughts and emotions, enriching their creative output and linguistic expression. Hollenback (2012) emphasized that mindfulness cultivated an enhanced awareness of the learning process and a stronger connection to cultural and linguistic nuances, reflecting a deeper engagement with language learning.

Stress reduction emerged as another key benefit of mindfulness interventions. Morgan and Katz (2021) demonstrated that mindfulness meditation effectively reduced foreign language classroom anxiety, fostering a more relaxed and receptive learning environment. Likewise, Zhao (2024) found that mindfulness meditation alleviated negative emotions, such as stress and anxiety, while enhancing motivation and enjoyment in English learning.

Finally, mixed perceptions of mindfulness practices were evident in some studies. For instance, Smith (2023) noted that while most ESL learners found mindfulness beneficial, a subset of participants expressed reservations about its relevance or struggled to see immediate benefits. These findings mirror the variability in student responses observed in the current study, suggesting the need for tailored and context-sensitive mindfulness interventions.

These connections highlight the relevance of mindfulness-based practices in reducing stress, enhancing self-awareness, and supporting sustained engagement in language learning. They reinforce the broader applicability of the findings, situating them within the growing body of research on mindfulness in EFL/ESL contexts.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This chapter provides a comprehensive summary of the study, highlighting its key findings and contributions to the understanding of mindfulness and its relationship with FLSA among Turkish EFL students. Additionally, it discusses the practical and theoretical implications of these findings for language education and mindfulness practices. Finally, the chapter offers suggestions for future research and pedagogical approaches, aiming to guide educators and researchers in further exploring this intersection of mindfulness and language learning.

Summary of the Study

This study aimed to design a mindfulness-based intervention program for foreign language classes (MBI-FLC) and investigate the relationship between the designed program and foreign language speaking anxiety. The study was conducted with 15 B1-level university students studying at a state university in Central Anatolia. The research combined qualitative and quantitative methods to provide a comprehensive understanding of the impact of mindfulness on students' language learning experiences and speaking anxiety levels.

The study began by identifying the challenges that FLSA poses for learners and explored mindfulness as a potential tool for addressing these issues. Drawing on the theoretical underpinnings of mindfulness and its integration into education, an 8-week tailored mindfulness program was designed, the MBI-FLC, specifically for EFL learners. The

program incorporated formal mindfulness practices (e.g., mindful breathing, body scans, and loving-kindness meditations) and mindfulness-integrated language activities (e.g., reflective writing and thematic discussions).

The data were collected through a combination of pre- and post-intervention surveys, semi-structured interviews, and learner journals to capture changes in mindfulness levels, FLSA, and the students' perceptions of the program. Quantitative findings revealed a mild reduction in FLSA levels, accompanied by improvements in some mindfulness facets such as insightful understanding. Qualitative data enriched these findings, highlighting how students perceived mindfulness practices as beneficial for managing anxiety and enhancing focus, self-regulation, and emotional resilience during speaking tasks.

The results demonstrated that mindfulness helped students develop greater self-awareness and acceptance, reducing the affective filter that impedes language learning. Participants reported increased confidence in speaking English, better coping mechanisms for anxiety, and a newfound ability to approach challenges with curiosity and compassion. The findings also underscored the importance of context-sensitive mindfulness activities tailored to language learners' needs.

Despite its promising outcomes, the study acknowledged several limitations, including the small sample size and the reliance on self-reported data, which may have been influenced by social desirability bias. The study was also conducted in a specific cultural and educational context, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Nonetheless, the research contributes to the growing body of literature on the intersection of mindfulness and SLA by offering practical insights for educators seeking to incorporate mindfulness into their teaching practices.

Pedagogical Implications

The current study makes a significant contribution by designing and implementing a tailored mindfulness-based intervention program for foreign language classes. Apart from common

mindfulness interventions, MBI-FLC integrates mindfulness with language-specific tasks, such as reflective writing and thematic skill-based lessons, ensuring its direct relevance to language learning. Considering the cognitive and affective demands of the EFL students, the program presents a structured but flexible approach that is open to adapt. When the necessary requirements, such as teacher training, and context-sensitive materials, are met, mindfulness can be recognized as an integral part of holistic language education that supports both linguistic competence and emotional resilience.

The findings of this study offer several practical implications for EFL teaching and learning, particularly in reducing FLSA through mindfulness practices. By integrating mindfulness into language education, instructors and institutions can create more supportive and effective learning environments. The key pedagogical implications are as follows:

1. Incorporating mindfulness practices into language classrooms

The study highlights the benefits of incorporating structured mindfulness practices, such as mindful breathing, body scans, and gratitude exercises, into EFL classrooms. These practices can help students manage anxiety, improve focus, and develop emotional resilience. Language instructors can use short, targeted mindfulness activities at the beginning or end of lessons to help students transition into a learning mindset and reduce anxiety.

2. Mindfulness as a tool for reducing speaking anxiety

Teachers can use mindfulness techniques to address the specific challenges of speaking anxiety. Activities like loving-kindness meditations or reflection exercises can help students develop self-compassion and reduce self-critical thoughts that worsen FLSA. Encouraging students to focus on the present moment can alleviate worries about potential mistakes or judgments, fostering a more relaxed and confident approach to speaking tasks.

3. Mindfulness training for language teachers

To effectively implement mindfulness in classrooms, educators may benefit from professional development in mindfulness techniques. Training programs and workshops can equip teachers with the knowledge and skills to guide mindfulness practices and tailor them

to their students' needs. This aligns with the broader goal of creating a mindful and empathetic classroom culture.

4. Developing context-specific materials

The study emphasizes the importance of designing mindfulness activities that are contextually appropriate for language learners. Mindfulness exercises should be aligned with students' linguistic levels and cultural backgrounds to ensure they are engaging and accessible. For example, integrating mindfulness into thematic reading or speaking activities can enhance both language skills and mindfulness awareness simultaneously.

5. Promoting emotional well-being alongside academic achievement

The results underscore the value of addressing students' emotional well-being as part of their overall language education. By normalizing discussions around anxiety and stress and equipping students with mindfulness-based coping mechanisms, educators can create a more holistic and inclusive learning experience.

6. Fostering autonomy through mindfulness

Mindfulness practices encourage students to reflect on their thoughts, emotions, and behaviors, fostering greater self-awareness and self-regulation. These traits align with promoting learner autonomy, a critical factor in language acquisition. Mindfulness can empower students to take responsibility for their learning, manage their anxiety, and approach language challenges proactively.

7. Integration into curricular and extracurricular activities

Mindfulness does not need to be confined to standalone activities. It can be integrated into the curriculum through mindful approaches to teaching core language skills, such as mindful listening during audio tasks or reflective writing in journals. Furthermore, extracurricular mindfulness workshops or clubs could provide additional opportunities for students to practice mindfulness in a supportive environment.

8. Creating a supportive classroom environment

A mindful classroom environment fosters empathy, patience, and acceptance. Teachers can model these attitudes to encourage students to feel safe and supported. By embedding mindfulness principles, such as nonjudgmental awareness and compassion, into classroom interactions, educators can reduce the fear of making mistakes and promote a culture of open communication.

Further Studies and Suggestions

This study has provided valuable insights into the relationship between mindfulness and FLSA in EFL contexts, but it also opens avenues for further research and development. Future studies can expand upon these findings in the following ways:

1. Exploring long-term effects of mindfulness on language learning

While this study focused on an 8-week intervention, future research could investigate the long-term effects of mindfulness practices on language learning outcomes and anxiety reduction. Longitudinal studies could examine how sustained mindfulness practice impacts students' speaking proficiency, confidence, and overall well-being over time.

2. Diverse contexts and populations

This study was conducted with a small group of Turkish EFL learners in a university preparatory program for English. Replicating the study in different cultural, linguistic, and educational contexts can help generalize the findings and explore whether mindfulness-based interventions are equally effective across diverse populations, age groups, and proficiency levels.

3. Integrating technology and mindfulness

With the increasing role of digital tools in education, future research could explore how mindfulness-based mobile applications or online resources can be integrated into language

learning. Investigating the potential of virtual mindfulness programs to enhance accessibility and engagement would be particularly relevant in today's digital age.

4. Teacher perspectives and training

While this study focused on student outcomes, further research could examine teachers' experiences with implementing mindfulness in language classrooms. Studies could explore the effectiveness of mindfulness training programs for teachers and how their mindfulness practice influences their teaching strategies and interactions with students.

5. Quantifying the cognitive mechanisms

Future studies could investigate the cognitive and neurological mechanisms underlying the observed reduction in FLSA through mindfulness. Using tools like neuroimaging or cognitive task analysis, researchers could explore how mindfulness affects attention, memory, and emotional regulation during language learning.

6. Development of mindfulness resources for language classes

There remains a need for more structured and validated mindfulness resources specifically tailored for language learners. Future research could focus on designing, piloting, and validating mindfulness-based language learning materials, such as guided meditations, reflective journals, or thematic lesson plans.

7. Examining mindfulness and motivation interactions

This study primarily addressed speaking anxiety. While there are few studies investigating how mindfulness interacts with other psychological constructs, such as motivation, self-efficacy, and resilience, which are critical for language learning success, the scope and the variety of these studies could be increased and improved.

8. Policy Implications

Finally, future research could explore how mindfulness practices can be integrated into institutional policies and curricula. This would require collaboration with policymakers to ensure sustainable implementation and support for teachers and students.

All in all, the study concludes by emphasizing the potential of mindfulness to transform language learning environments by fostering well-being and reducing anxiety. Recommendations for future research include exploring the long-term effects of mindfulness on language performance, testing the program in diverse contexts, and investigating its applicability across other aspects of language learning. Additionally, the study highlights the need for teacher training programs to equip educators with the skills to implement mindfulness effectively in the classroom. This research marks a step forward in bridging the gap between mindfulness and SLA, advocating for a holistic approach to language education that addresses both cognitive and affective dimensions of learning.

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APPENDICES



Appendix 1. Ethics Approval

Evrak Tarih ve Sayısı: 23.02.2023-E.595589



T.C.
GAZİ ÜNİVERSİTESİ REKTÖRLÜĞÜ
Etik Komisyonu

Sayı : E-77082166-302.08.01-595589
Konu : Bilimsel ve Eğitim Amaçlı

23.02.2023

Dağıtım Yerlerine

Üniversitemiz Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü Yabancı Diller Eğitimi Ana Bilim Dalı **Doktora Öğrencisi Zeynep KOÇALI'nin, Doç.Dr.Asuman AŞIK'ın** danışmanlığında yürüttüğü *"The Investigation of the Relationship Between a Mindfulness Based Intervention Program and Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety"* adlı tez çalışması ile ilgili konu Komisyonumuzun **07.02.2023** tarih ve **02** sayılı toplantısında görüşülmüş olup,

İlgilinin çalışmasının, yapılması planlanan yerlerden izin alınması koşuluyla yapılmasında etik açıdan bir sakınca bulunmadığına oybirliği ile karar verilmiş ve karara ilişkin imza listesi ekte gönderilmiştir.

Bilgilerinizi rica ederim.

Araştırma Kod No: 2023 - 184

Prof. Dr. İsmail KARAKAYA
Komisyon Başkanı

Ek:1 Liste
DAĞITIM
Gereği:
Sayın Doç. Dr. Asuman AŞIK

Bilgi:
Eğitim Bilimleri Enstitüsü Müdürlüğüne

Appendix 2. Comprehensive Inventory of Mindfulness Experiences-Adolescents (CHIME-A)

Son iki haftanızı düşünerek size en uygun ifadeyi işaretleyiniz. Lütfen olmasını istediğiniz şekilde değil, gerçekte yaşadıklarınıza göre seçim yapınız.

		Hiçbir zaman	Bazen	Sıklıkla	Çoğu zaman	Her zaman
1.	Ruh halim değiştiğinde anında fark ediyorum.					
2.	Gökyüzünün rengi, ağaçların ve bulutların şekilleri gibi doğadaki ayrıntıları fark ediyorum.					
3.	Kendime fazla yüklenmeden hatalarımın farkına varıyorum.					
4.	Kendimi rahatsız edici duygu ve düşüncelerin içinde bulduğumda bunu hemen fark edip kendimi bir adım geri çekiyorum					
5.	Düşüncelerimin her zaman gerçeği yansıtmadığının farkındayım.					
6.	Bazı şeyleri gerçekte olduğundan daha karmaşık hale getirdiğimi fark ettiğimde kendi halime gülüyorum.					
7.	İnsanlarla konuştuğum sırada hissettiğim duyguları fark ediyorum. (Örneğin sinirli olduğumu ya da mutlu olduğumu)					
8.	Saçlarıma değen rüzgâr, yüzüme vuran güneş gibi şeylerin yaşattığı duygulara dikkatimi veriyorum.					
9.	Büyük bir hata yaptığımda bile kendime karşı iyi ve sabırlıyım.					
10.	Duygu ve düşüncelerimi, içinden çıkılmaz hale getirmeden fark edebiliyorum.					
11.	Bakış açımın her zaman gerçeklere dayanmadığının farkındayım.					
12.	Kendimi boş yere gerdiğimde bunu fark edip kendime gülebiliyorum.					
13.	Hissettiğim duyguları, onlar gerçekleşirken fark ediyorum.					
14.	Geçen arabaların sesleri ya da kuşların cıvıltıları gibi çevremdeki sesleri fark ediyorum.					
15.	Duygu ve düşüncelerimin farkına varıyorum; ayrıca bir adım geriye çekilip onları uzaktan izleyebiliyorum.					
16.	Bakış açımın değişebileceğinin farkındayım.					
17.	Küçük bir problemi büyük bir sorun haline getirdiğimi fark ettiğimde kendi kendime gülüyorum.					
18.	Aklım başka bir yerde olduğu için bir şeyleri kırıp dökabiliyorum.					
19.	Bazı duygu ve düşüncelerden kurtulmak için kendimi sürekli bir şeylerle meşgul ediyorum.					
20.	Hatıralarım ve kurduğum hayaller dikkatimi dağıtıyor.					
21.	Başa çıkmakta zorlandığım duygulara kapıldığım zaman onları kafamdan atmak için bir şeylerle meşgul olmaya çalışıyorum.					
22.	Dersler arasında koridorlarda yürürken aklım hep başka yerlerde oluyor.					
23.	Öfkeli olmayı ya da korkmayı sevmiyorum, bu yüzden bu duygulardan kurtulmaya çalışıyorum.					
24.	Hatalarım ya da zayıf yönlerimden dolayı kendime kızıyorum.					
25.	Duygusal acılardan mümkün olduğunca kaçınmaya çalışıyorum.					

Appendix 3. Foreign Language Speaking Anxiety Questionnaire (FLSAQ)

Item	Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1	I am never quite sure of myself when I am speaking in English.					
2	I am afraid of making mistakes in English classes.					
3	I tremble when I know that I am going to be called on in English classes.					
4	I get frightened when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English.					
5	I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English classes.					
6	I get embarrassed to volunteer answers in English classes.					
7	I feel nervous while speaking English with native speakers.					
8	I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.					
9	I don't feel confident when I speak English in classes.					
10	I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.					
11	I can feel my heart pounding when I am going to be called on in English classes.					
12	I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.					
13	I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.					
14	I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in English classes.					
15	I get nervous when I don't understand every word my English teacher says.					
16	I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English.					
17	I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.					
18	I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.					

1=Strongly disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Not Sure; 4=Agree; 5=Strongly Agree

Turkish (Translation)

Madde	İfade	1	2	3	4	5
1	İngilizce derslerinde konuşurken asla kendimden emin olamıyorum.					
2	İngilizce derslerinde konuşurken hata yapmaktan korkuyorum.					
3	İngilizce derslerinde sıranın bana geleceğini bildiğim zaman çok heyecanlanıyorum.					
4	İngilizce derslerinde öğretmenin ne söylediğini anlamamak beni korkutuyor.					
5	İngilizce derslerinde hazırlıksız konuşmak zorunda kaldığımda panikliyorum.					
6	İngilizce derslerinde sorulan sorulara cevap vermekten çekiniyorum.					
7	Ana dili İngilizce olan insanlarla İngilizce konuşurken kendimi gergin hissediyorum.					
8	Öğretmenin hangi hataları düzelttiğini anlamamak beni endişelendiriyor.					
9	İngilizce derslerinde konuşurken kendime güvenmiyorum.					
10	İngilizce öğretmenimin yaptığım her hatayı düzeltmeye çalışması beni korkutuyor.					
11	İngilizce derslerinde sıra bana geldiğinde kalbimin daha hızlı attığını hissediyorum.					
12	Diğer öğrencilerin daima benden daha iyi İngilizce konuştuklarını düşünüyorum.					
13	Diğer öğrencilerin önünde İngilizce konuşurken kendimi çok tedirgin hissediyorum.					
14	İngilizce derslerinde konuşurken hem heyecanlanıyorum hem de kafam karışıyor.					
15	İngilizce öğretmenimin söylediği her kelimeyi anlamadığım zaman tedirgin oluyorum.					
16	İngilizce konuşmak için öğrenmem gereken kuralların sayısı beni kaygılandırıyor.					
17	İngilizce konuşacağım zaman diğer öğrencilerin bana gülmesinden korkuyorum.					
18	İngilizce öğretmenim cevabına önceden hazırlanmadığım sorular sorduğunda heyecanlanıyorum.					

1= Kesinlikle Katılmıyorum; 2= Katılmıyorum; 3= Kararsızım; 4= Katılıyorum; 5= Kesinlikle Katılıyorum

Appendix 4. Semi-structured Interview Questions

Before the Intervention:

1. Have you ever heard of the concept of mindfulness before? If not, can you guess what it might mean?

Mindfulness (bilinçli farkındalık) kavramını daha önce duydun mu? Duymadıysan ne anlama geldiğini tahmin edebilir misin?

2. How do you feel when you need to speak in English? If you feel uncomfortable or anxious, how do you manage these feelings? What coping strategies do you use, and what actions do you take?

İngilizce konuşman gerektiğinde kendini nasıl hissediyorsun? Kendini rahatsız ya da kaygılı hissediyorsan, bu duygunu nasıl yönetirsin? Başa çıkma stratejilerin nelerdir, neler yaparsın?

3. How do you feel in the following situations?
 - a. Speaking with preparation vs. speaking without preparation
 - b. Speaking with a friend/teacher/someone whose native language is English
 - c. When you make a mistake while speaking

Aşağıdaki durumlarda kendini nasıl hissediyorsun?

a. Hazırlık yapıp konuşma ya da hazırlıksız konuşma

b. Bir arkadaş / öğretmen / anadili İngilizce olan biri ile konuşma

c. Konuşurken hata yaptığında

4. Are you aware of the things around you? For instance, do you notice things like the leaves falling or changing color on trees, the feeling of wind on your face while walking, your neighbor's flowers blooming, the melody of a song you're listening to, or any changes along the path you walk every day? Do you notice such details?

Etrafındaki şeylerin farkında mısındır? Mesela; ağaçların yaprak dökmesi/rengi değiştirmesi, yürürken rüzgarın yüzünde bıraktığı his, komşunun çiçeklerinin açması,

dinlediğin şarkının melodisi, her gün yürüdüğün yolda herhangi bir değişikliğin olup olmadığı.... Bu gibi detayları fark ediyor musun?

5. Are you aware of your emotions? Can you easily identify them? Once you identify or name an emotion, what do you do with it? For example, if you feel sad after receiving a low grade, what do you do?

Duygularının farkında mısındır? Onları kolayca tanımlayabilir misiniz? Peki tanımladığında /o duyguyu adlandırdığında, o duyguyla ne yaparsın? Örneğin, düşük not alıp üzülmediğinde ne yaparsın?

After the Intervention:

1. What does mindfulness mean to you? Can you describe yourself as a mindful person?

Sana göre mindfulness (bilinçli farkındalık) nedir? Kendini mindful bir insan olarak tanımlayabilir misin?

2. How do you feel when you need to speak in English? If you feel uncomfortable, how do you manage it? What coping strategies do you use?

İngilizce konuşman gerektiğinde kendini nasıl hissediyorsun? Kendini rahatsız hissediyorsan, bunu nasıl yönetiyorsun? Başa çıkma stratejilerin nelerdir?

3. How do you feel in the following situations?

- a. Speaking with preparation vs. speaking without preparation
- b. Speaking with a friend/teacher/someone whose native language is English
- c. When you make a mistake while speaking

Aşağıdaki durumlarda kendini nasıl hissediyorsun?

- a. Hazırlıklı/hazırlıksız konuşma;
- b. Bir arkadaş / öğretmen / anadili İngilizce olan biri ile konuşma;
- c. Konuşurken hata yaptığında

4. Are you aware of the things happening around you? For instance, can you notice seasonal changes, like the transition from spring to summer? How does that make you feel?

Çevrende olup bitenlerin farkında mısınız? Mesela mevsimlerin nasıl değiştiğini (ilkbahardan yazı) fark edebiliyor musun? Bu sana nasıl hissettiriyor?

5. Are you aware of your emotions? Can you easily identify them? Once you identify an emotion, what do you do with it? For example, if you feel sad after receiving a low grade on an exam, what do you do?

Duygularının farkında mısınız? Duygularını kolayca tanımlayabilir misin? Duygunu tanımladığında, o duyguyla ne yaparsın? Örneğin, düşük aldığın bir sınav notu için üzüldüğünde ne yaparsın?

6. What do you think about the 8-week MBI-FLC program? Do you feel it has been beneficial? Do you think mindfulness can help you cope with foreign language speaking anxiety? Which activities did you like the most and the least? Do you plan to continue practicing mindfulness? Do you have any suggestions or comments?

8 haftalık MBI-FLC programı hakkında ne düşünüyorsun? Bundan fayda gördüğünü düşünüyor musun? Farkındalığın yabancı dilde konuşma kaygısıyla başa çıkmana yardımcı olabileceğini düşünüyor musun? En çok ve en az hangi etkinlikleri sevdin? Mindfulness pratiğine devam edecek misin? Herhangi bir öneri veya yorumun var mı?

Appendix 5. Consent Form

GAZİ UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATIONAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION

Title of the Study: The effect of an 8-week mindfulness-based intervention program on foreign language speaking anxiety

Responsible Researcher: Lect. Zeynep Koçali

Name of the Participant: _____

1. I consent to participate in this project, the details of which have been explained to me, and I have been provided with a written plain language statement to keep.
2. I understand that the purpose of this research is to explore Turkish EFL learners' reflections about the 8-week MBI-FLC program and to investigate its effect on foreign language speaking anxiety.
3. I understand that my participation in this project is for research purposes only.
4. I acknowledge that the possible effects of participating in this research project have been explained to my satisfaction.
5. In this research, I will be required to complete two questionnaires, conduct interviews and write reflections when asked.
6. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw from this project anytime without explanation or prejudice and to withdraw any unprocessed data that I have provided.
7. I have been informed that the confidentiality of the information I provide will be safeguarded subject to any legal requirements; my data will be password protected and accessible only by the named researchers.
8. I understand that after I sign and return this consent form, it will be retained by the researcher.

Participant Signature: _____

Date: ____/____/____

Appendix 6. MBI-FLC Program

Appendix 6.1. Week 1

Activity 1: What is Mindfulness?

MBI-FLC
Week 1 / Activity 1

Reading & Writing/B1
What is mindfulness?

Have you heard about mindfulness before? If yes, what do you know about it? If not, can you guess what it might be from the word itself?

A. Vocabulary: Match the words/phrases with the correct definition.

1. ____ Mindlessness

2. ____ Awake

3. ____ Conscious

4. ____ Be aware of

5. ____ Pay attention

6. ____ Judge

7. ____ Reduce

8. ____ Inhale/exhale

a. to know about something

b. to take/send air into/out of your lungs

c. giving or having little attention or care

d. to know that something is present or that something is happening

e. to look at or listen to someone or something carefully

f. to make something less

g. not asleep

h. to consider and form an idea of; to estimate; to criticize for doing wrong

Read the text and do the following exercises.

Mindfulness

Have you ever driven somewhere and realized when you arrived that you couldn't really remember anything about the journey? Or have you ever eaten a whole packet of biscuits when you were planning to only have one? Or have you stayed up much later than you planned, or even all night, watching 'just one more' episode of a TV series? All of these are examples of **mindlessness**. When we live this way, we are not fully **awake** and not fully living our lives.

What exactly is mindfulness?

When we are mindful, we are more **conscious** of our thoughts, our actions and what is happening around us. We might notice a beautiful sunset or really listen carefully to a friend rather than planning what we're going to say next. We are also more **aware of** our own feelings and our thoughts. Dr. Jon Kabat Zinn, one of the prominent researchers in mindfulness, says mindfulness is: '**Paying attention**, on purpose, in the present moment, and without **judging**.' So we are consciously deciding what to pay attention to, we are not worrying about the past or planning for the future and we are not trying to control or stop our thoughts or feelings – we're just noticing them.

What are the benefits of mindfulness?

Research shows that mindfulness **reduces** stress and depression. It can help you concentrate, have a better memory and to think more clearly. It can also help people manage pain better and to improve their sleep, and it can even help you lose weight because you won't eat that whole packet of biscuits without thinking!

How to become more mindful

A very simple technique that you could try right now is to bring awareness to your breath. While you breathe, just focus on your breath. Try to notice the air through your nose while you **inhale** and **exhale**.

Another technique is to focus on a piece of food, for example a raisin. Instead of eating it without thinking, slow down. Look carefully at it and notice how it feels in your fingers. Smell it. Then put it on your tongue and taste it. Only then start to eat it slowly, noticing how it feels and how it tastes.

Both techniques help you slow down and focus on the present moment, and there are plenty of other ideas you can find online if you want to try mindfulness for yourself.

B. Comprehension check: Mark the sentences True (T) or False (F).

1. ____ Really noticing a beautiful sunset is an example of mindfulness.
2. ____ To be mindful we need to stop ourselves from thinking.
3. ____ Technology has made our lives busier.
4. ____ Mindfulness can help you feel calmer and happier.
5. ____ Mindfulness won't help you lose weight.
6. ____ To eat a raisin mindfully you should eat it quite quickly.

C. Are these actions examples of being mindful (M) or of not being mindful (NM)? Write

2 more examples (1 mindful and 1 not mindful)

1. ____ Being aware of your own feelings.
2. ____ Accidentally doing something you didn't plan or want to do.
3. ____ Checking social media when listening to a friend.
4. ____ Being conscious of your thoughts.
5. ____ Focusing on what is happening right now.
6. ____ Worrying about the exam which is next month.
7. ____
8. ____

Adapted from British Council ([Mindfulness](#) | [LearnEnglish](#))



Activity 2: Mindful Breathing

MBI-FLC
Week 1 / Activity 2

Meditation/B1
Mindful breathing

NOTE: Remember, it's normal for your mind to wander, and you may become aware of physical sensations or feelings in your body. You don't need to analyze or give these thoughts or feelings or images any meaning at this moment. Simply acknowledge them without judgment and gently bring your attention back to your breath.

Read or listen to the script. After you finish, you may take short notes about how the practice went.

Script

Find a comfortable place to sit. Put your feet flat on the ground and try to straighten your posture. If possible, sit well away from the back of the chair so that your spine stands on its own. Rest your hands gently on your lap or your thighs. Now gently close your eyes or leave them half-open as you prefer...

Bring awareness to your breath and allow yourself to continue to breathe naturally. Inhale through your nose. Exhale through your nose again. Where do you feel your breath most? In your nose, neck, chest, belly, or somewhere else...

You can put your hand on your belly or chest to feel the sensations of the breath on your body. Notice how your belly/chest rises on the inhalation and how it falls on the exhalation. Imagine that your belly is a balloon: fill it with air and then watch it come back down. Simply keep this awareness of breath, breathing in and out...

During practice, the mind may start to wander; thinking about plans, responsibilities, exams, and assignments.... It is very normal and natural. When you notice that your attention is not on the breath, simply notice and accept it. You have come back, and you are in the present moment again! Gently bring your attention back to the breath...

Continue to breathe normally and naturally without changing or manipulating the breath. Just be aware of the breath as it comes and goes...

Where is your mind now? Each time the mind wanders, gently bring your awareness to the breath. It is not a mistake or failure. Congratulate yourself for reconnecting with yourself at the present moment. Simply continue to watch your breath...In and out...

Continue to focus on your breathing. As you come to the end of this meditation, congratulate yourself for taking this time to be present. When you are ready, slowly open your eyes and finish the meditation.

Follow up:

1. What was your experience like?
2. What sensations did you notice in your body? Any pain, tenseness, discomfort, or relaxation?
3. What feelings did you feel? Relaxed, strange, happy, sad?
4. What thoughts came to your mind?

Appendix 6.2. Week 2

Activity 1: Where Does Chocolate Come from?

MBI-FLC
Week 2 / Activity 1

Reading & Speaking/B1
Where does chocolate come from?

Do you like chocolate? Do you know where chocolate first came from? From Asia, America or Africa?

A. Vocabulary: Match the photos and words/phrases.

grind / cocoa pod / cocoa nib / cocoa bean / roast cocoa beans / cocoa liquor



Read the text and do the following exercises.

Have you ever heard about the World Chocolate day? It is celebrated every year on July 7. Let's read about the fascinating journey from cocoa bean to chocolate bar.

The history of chocolate

More than 3,500 years ago, in Central America, chocolate was first used as a drink. The Olmec, one of the earliest civilizations in Latin America, drank an ancient chocolate drink during rituals and used it as medicine. The cocoa beans were so important that the Aztecs used them as currency. Cocoa was first grown in Ecuador, and it was the world's top producer of cocoa beans. Although it remains one of the top ten producers, more than 70% of the world's cocoa beans now come from West Africa.

From cocoa tree to chocolate bar

The journey of chocolate starts from the tree. Before chocolate arrives you with its amazing taste, it needs to go through a series of process. First, people collect cocoa pods by hand to protect the tree. They cut the pods with knives and take out the beans. The beans are then left for fermentation for five to seven days. After fermenting, the cocoa beans are spread out and left to dry in the sun for about six days. The cocoa beans are roasted for 15 minutes and the beans leave their shells during this process. Now we have the cocoa nibs, the basic ingredient for chocolate. The next step is to grind the cocoa nibs to get cocoa liquor. While mixing and cooking the cocoa liquor, they add other ingredients such as sugar and milk. The cocoa liquor needs to be heated, cooled, and then heated once more to create a solid mass before it can be transformed into solid chocolate. The journey from bean to bar is finally finished.

B. Comprehension check: Mark the sentences True (T), False (F) or No Information (NI).

1. ____ Chocolate is not a very old food.
2. ____ Old civilizations used chocolate beans as money.
3. ____ More than half of the cocoa beans come from West Africa.
4. ____ Chocolate is quite rich in calorie.
5. ____ Ingredients other than cocoa beans are not added to the making of chocolate.

C. Discussion: Answer the questions below.

1. When do you prefer to eat chocolate? When you feel sad/happy/stressed/hungry, etc.? Why?
2. How often do you eat chocolate?
3. Have you ever thought about the journey of chocolate from tree to bar?

Activity 2: Mindful Eating

MBI-FLC
Week 2 / Activity 2

Meditation /B1
Mindful eating

NOTE: Remember, it's normal for your mind to wander. You don't need to analyze or give these thoughts or feelings or images any meaning at this moment. Simply acknowledge them without judgment and gently bring your attention back to the food.

For this meditation, you will need 3 raisins (any other dried fruit or small nuts, e.g., dried plump, walnut, peanut, olive, or a piece of chocolate).

Read or listen to the script. After you finish, you may take short notes about how the practice went.

Script

Take one raisin (or the food you have) in your hand. Explore it as if it is the first time you saw such an object... Bring your full attention to the seeing of the food. How is its shape? Is it round? Is it smooth? What color is the food?

Now, turn the food and play with your fingers. Notice the sensations it has in your hand and fingers. Take the food with your fingers and turn it around to explore it from all sides. Feel the texture of it. Do you feel softness, hardness, stickiness, or smoothness?

While doing this, thoughts such as "What is the point of this?" "Why am I doing this?" "It is ridiculous." may come. Just notice them and if you can, accept that they are just thoughts. Then, gently bring your awareness back to the object.

Bring the food to one ear. Move it between your fingers, squeeze it. Do you hear anything?

Now bring the food to your nose. Notice any smells coming from the food. Does this smell remind you of something?

And when you are ready, slowly bring the food to your mouth. Gently put it in your mouth but not biting yet. With your tongue, move the food in your mouth and notice the sensations it creates.

Now bite the food and notice the aroma and the taste it gives. It may or may not have any specific flavor. Just observe. Observe the taste without judgment, just notice the taste without judging it as good or bad, tasty, or tasteless.

Slowly start to eat the food. Notice the sensations on your teeth. Continue to eat slowly.

When you feel ready to swallow, if you can, consciously notice the intention to swallow. Then notice the sensations of swallowing while the food's going down to your throat on its way to your stomach.

Now have the second food and eat it in a mindful way based on your first experience.

Finally, without thinking eat the last food in the way that you always do.

Follow-up

1. How was your experience?
2. What sensations did you notice (sight, smell, taste, touch, and sound)?
3. Was anything surprising? Did any thoughts or memories pop up while doing this?

Activity 3: Daily Mindfulness (Journal 1)

MBI-FLC
Week 2 / Journal 1

Writing/B1
Daily mindfulness

Learner Journals

Journal 1: Write a reflection about a routine activity done mindfully

Please think about the exercises we did this week (mindful breathing and mindful eating).

During the week, I want you to do a routine activity mindfully and write your reflections here.

Here are some routine activities that you can try:

<i>brushing your teeth</i>	<i>taking a shower</i>	<i>listening to music</i>
<i>going for a walk</i>	<i>cooking</i>	<i>setting the table</i>
<i>looking after plants/flowers</i>	<i>doing sports</i>	<i>surfing on the internet</i>
<i>drinking tea/coffee</i>	<i>dancing</i>	<i>doing puzzle</i>
<i>doing/folding the laundry</i>	<i>singing</i>	<i>painting/drawing</i>
<i>driving</i>	<i>waiting in the line</i>	

Name Surname: _____

Date:	What was the activity you did? Where were you, who were you with, what were you doing?	What feelings, thoughts, sensations did you notice before you decided to experience this mindfully?	What feelings, thoughts and sensations did you notice WHILE doing this mindfully?	What did you learn from doing this?	What feelings, thoughts and sensations are you noticing NOW as you write this?
Sample answers	<i>Washing the dishes after dinner.</i>	<i>I was feeling hurried, shoulders and stomach tense, thinking "I wish Chris hadn't used so many dishes!"</i>	<i>I actually felt the warm water on my hands, enjoyed seeing the dishes sparkle, time seemed to stop for a moment.</i>	<i>Paying attention to physical sensations brings me into the here and now and a boring task becomes more interesting.</i>	<i>Feeling the support of the chair I'm sitting on, the feel of the pen, and feeling thankful that a long day is over.</i>

*The questions and sample answers are taken from a free online MBSR manual shared by Palouse Mindfulness [Online MBSR/Mindfulness \(Free\) \(palousemindfulness.com\)](http://palousemindfulness.com)



Appendix 6.3. Week 3

Activity 1: What I Have Learned from Body Scan

MBI-FLC
Week 3 / Activity 1

Listening & Speaking/B1
Body scan

Read the definition of “scan” and try to guess what “body scan” exercise might be like.

scan: to examine something carefully.

Watch the video and complete the following activities.

[What I Have Learned From Body Scan Meditation - YouTube](#)



A. Complete the sentences while watching the video.

observe / improve / pay attention / non-judgmental / sensations

1. Body scanning is a meditation that brings _____ awareness to the sensations of inner body.
2. “_____ to whatever you can feel... Just focus on the feeling. Your body is coming alive.”
3. Observation 1: Directing the attention to inner body helps _____ emotions and feel them better.
4. Observation 2: Body scan has made her less afraid of the _____ of the body.
5. Observation 3: Body scan _____ her general sense of *flow during the day.

**flow: a state of mind in which a person becomes fully involved in an activity*

B. Mark the statements True (T) or False (F).

1. ____ Thanks to body scanning, now she observes her body sensations calmly rather than panicking immediately.
2. ____ The body scan exercise cannot be less than 10 minutes.
3. ____ She does body scan exercise every night before she sleeps.
4. ____ Whenever her mind starts wandering, she brings her awareness back to her hands or feet.

Activity 2: Body Scan Practice

MBI-FLC
Week 3 / Activity 2

Meditation/B1
Body scan

NOTE: Remember, it's normal for your mind to wander. You don't need to analyze or give these thoughts, feelings, or images any meaning now. Simply acknowledge them without judgment and gently bring your attention back to your body.

Read or listen to the script. After you finish, you may take short notes about how the practice went.

Script

Find a comfortable place to sit. Put your feet flat on the ground. Try to sit straight but in a comfortable position for you. Let your shoulders drop down. Gently close your eyes or leave them half open as you prefer.

Bring your awareness to the physical sensations in your body. Notice the sensations where your body contacts the chair and the floor.

Now bring your attention to the belly area. Notice how your abdomen rises and falls on each inhale and exhale. Observe this constant, natural movement without trying to change it.

After connecting with your body in the belly area, bring the focus of awareness down the left leg, into the left foot, and out to the left toes. Try to send your breath there too. As if you inhale through your toes and exhale through your toes again... You can imagine that the breath enters your lungs and then passes down the abdomen, into the left leg, the left foot, and out to the left toes. Notice any sensations in your toes. Warm, cold, ease, tingling... If you feel nothing, it is normal. Just notice the feeling of "not feeling anything".

When you are ready to leave your left toes, bring your attention to the bottom of your left foot and then your ankle.

If you notice any feelings of tension, "breath in" to that part and let it go on the exhale.

When you notice that your mind starts wandering, gently accept it. It is normal and natural. Notice where your mind is and gently bring your awareness back to your breath and the area you focused on.

Continue to bring awareness to the rest of your body. Keep breathing through each area while observing the sensations. When I say the name of the body part, bring your awareness there together with your breath. The left leg... the right toes... the right foot... the right leg... the pelvic area... back... abdomen... chest... right fingers... right hand... right arm... left fingers... left hand... left arm.

Bring your awareness to the shoulders, the neck, and the face. Notice the sensations. If you notice any tension, breath in and out through that area.

Finally, notice the sense of the body as a whole. Bring your attention to your breath. Take a few more breaths.

When you feel ready, gently open your eyes. Please take your time. Move slowly and stretch.

Follow-up

1. How was your body scan experience?
2. What physical sensations did you notice in your body? Any feeling of tension, pain, discomfort, numbness, itchiness, relaxation, etc.?
3. How did you feel? Were you relaxed, strange, happy, sad, etc.?
4. What thoughts came to your mind?

Activity 3: Mindful Movement - Yoga

MBI-FLC
Week 3 / Activity 3

Meditation/B1
Mindful movement

NOTE: Remember, it's normal for your mind to wander, and you may become aware of physical sensations or feelings in your body. You don't need to analyse or give these thoughts or feelings or images any meaning in this moment. Simply acknowledge them without judgement and gently bring your attention back to your breath.

Read or listen to the script. After you finish, you may take short notes about how the practice went.

Script

(Introduction)

Yoga helps to connect your body, mind, and heart. This practice will help you feel open, calm, and be aware of yourself and your surroundings.

- Open your heart: Notice the good things around you.
- Calm your mind: Let your thoughts slow down and focus on the present moment.
- Free your body: Feel your body and pay attention to how it moves and feels.

(Steps for the Practice)

1. Notice how you sit:

Sit on a chair with your feet flat on the floor. Sit up straight and notice your breath. Let your breath flow naturally.

2. Raise your arms up:

Slowly lift your arms to the sides and over your head. Then, lower them back down. Repeat this movement five times. Inhale and exhale.

3. Move your shoulders:

Place your hands on your shoulders. Make circles with your elbows, moving them forward and backward. Do this gently in both directions.

4. Open your chest:

Put your hands behind your back and hold them together. Pull your shoulders back and feel your chest open. Stay in this position for a few breaths.

5. Stretch your arms forward:

Stretch your arms straight in front of you. Push your hands forward and round your back. Feel the stretch in your upper back.

6. Stretch to the side:

Hold the side of the chair with one hand. Lift your other arm over your head and stretch to the side. Repeat on the other side.

7. Stretch your neck:

Turn your head to look over your right shoulder, then your left shoulder. Slowly lower your right ear toward your right shoulder. Do the same on the left side.

8. Twist your body:

Sit up straight. Turn your body to one side and hold the side of the chair. Stay for a few breaths and then repeat on the other side.

9. Hip Opener with Forward Fold:

Sit comfortably: Sit on a sturdy chair with your feet flat on the floor, hip-width apart, and your spine tall.

Position your leg: Lift your right leg and place your right ankle on your left thigh, just above the knee, forming a figure-four shape. Flex your right foot to protect your knee.

Adjust as needed: Ensure your right knee is pointing outward to the side. If this is uncomfortable, lower your leg or adjust the position to avoid strain.

Engage your core: Sit up tall, lengthening your spine and engaging your core muscles.

Begin the forward fold: Inhale deeply, and as you exhale, hinge forward from your hips, bringing your chest closer to your legs. Keep your spine long and avoid rounding your back.

Feel the stretch: You should feel a stretch in your right hip and possibly in your lower back. Only go as far as is comfortable.

Hold the pose: Stay in this position for 5–10 deep breaths, relaxing into the stretch with each exhale.

Return to starting position: Inhale to slowly come back up to a seated position.

Switch sides: Lower your right leg and repeat the same steps with your left leg on your right thigh.

10. Stretch your legs:

Open your legs a little wider than your hips. Bend forward gently and rest your hands on your thighs. Let your upper body relax.

11. Stretch your wrists:

Extend one arm forward. Use your other hand to gently pull back your fingers. Repeat with the other arm.

12. Bend forward with support:

Hold the chair for support. Slowly bend forward and let your upper body relax completely.

13. Knocking on Heaven's Door:

Sit or stand. Gently twist your body left and right. Let your arms swing freely like soft ropes. Move slowly and feel relaxed.

Follow up:

1. What was your experience like?
2. What sensations did you notice in your body? Any pain, tenseness, discomfort, relaxation?
3. What feelings did you feel? Relaxed, strange, happy, sad?
4. What thoughts came to your mind?

Appendix 6.4. Week 4

Activity 1: The Value of Present Moment

MBI-FLC
Week 4 / Activity 1

Reading & Writing/B1
The value of present moment

Read the quotes below. What do you think the message is?

- “Life gives you plenty of time to do whatever you want to do if you stay in the present moment.”
— Deepak Chopra
- “Today is the first day of the rest of your life.” — American Proverb
- “Yesterday is history. Tomorrow is a mystery. Today is a gift. That is why it is called the present.” — Alice Morse Earle

Read the story and complete the following activities.

A. Complete the story with a word/phrase from the list.

*when	*although	*once upon a time	*however
*soon after that	*because	*unfortunately	*so that

_____, a king and a queen were living in a beautiful palace. On a sunny afternoon, they have a pretty baby girl. The king wants to learn about her future. He calls a fortune teller and asks her about the princess' future. _____, the fortune teller does not say nice things. She says that a snake will bite the princess when she turns eighteen. When the king and the queen hear that they feel very sad. _____, the king decides to build a castle in the middle of the sea for the little princess. He thinks that a snake cannot reach the castle so that his daughter will live a happy long life. _____ the castle is completed, the king sends her daughter to the castle and never lets her pass on the other side.

The beautiful princess spends all her time in the castle living far away from her father and mother. _____ her parents come and visit her in the castle, it isn't enough for the princess. She misses her parents and wishes to have more time with them. Sometimes she asks her father to go to the palace with them, but the king never lets her. He waits for her eighteenth birthday _____ they will go to the palace altogether.

Years pass like that, and the princess' eighteenth birthday arrives. The lonely princess is very happy because she can finally live with her parents. The king organizes a big party in the castle. They call people from all over the country to celebrate the princess' eighteenth birthday. Everybody brings presents for the princess. An old lady brings a basket of grapes from her garden _____ the princess loves grapes. The princess brings the grape basket to her room to eat them later. _____, the old lady has no idea that a snake went into the basket while she was picking the grapes.

The princess enjoys a lot on her birthday, spending time with her parents, and many other people. When the party finishes, the princess goes up to her room and falls asleep immediately. When she is sleeping, the snake comes out of the basket and bites her. Sadly, the beautiful princess dies on her eighteenth birthday.

B. Answer the questions according to the story.

1. Why does the king call a fortune teller?

2. Where does the king build the castle?

3. Is the princess happy living in the castle?

4. How does the snake come to the castle?

5. Do you think that the king made the right decision by sending the princess to a castle?

C. Imagine that you are the king. You learn that your daughter will die on her 18th birthday because of a snake bite. With a partner change the story and write your own alternative ending.

D. What is the message you get from the story?

Appendix 6.5. Week 5

Activity 1: Feeding the Thoughts

MBI-FLC
Week 5 / Activity 1

Listening & Speaking/B1
Feeding the thoughts

Before watching

Have you felt that you have a lot of thoughts in your mind? Then, how do you feel and what do you do?

A. Match the words and the definitions.

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| 1. feed (v) | b. a person who you dislike or oppose |
| 2. fearful (adj) | c. to give food to a person or an animal |
| 3. compassionate (adj) | d. to say that something is not true |
| 4. strengthen (v) | e. someone who you spend a lot of time with, friend |
| 5. deny (v) | f. having a feeling of sympathy for people who are suffering |
| 6. enemy (n) | g. to become stronger or make something become stronger |
| 7. companion (n) | h. very bad, frightened, or worried |

While watching

B. Complete the text with a word from the list in exercise A.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vzKryaN44ss>



There is a story usually attributed to Native American tradition which illuminates different ways of paying attention. An elder talking to a child, says “I have 2 wolves fighting in my heart. One wolf is _____. The other wolf is _____ and loving.” The child asks, “Which wolf will win the fight?” The elder response, “The one I _____.” That doesn’t mean we try to _____ or hurt or kill the angry wolf. If we did that we’d end up in a long battle, making that wolf more powerful through our fear. Instead, we calmly pay attention to the angry wolf and let go of believing that they have the answers. If we can do that, they end up lying down next to us, no longer an _____. We help strengthen the kind and loving wolf, giving it nourishment and support so that we can follow it. That peaceful wolf can become our steady _____ and show us the way through all kinds of different life experiences. Restful or chaotic, enjoyable, or disappointing experiences may come and go, but we can have a guide with us through it all. This is what mindfulness can help you do. Mindfulness allows us to see our thoughts and feelings as they are beginning. It is very powerful to know what we’re feeling as we’re feeling it. Know what we’re thinking as we’re thinking it. With mindfulness we can choose what will _____ and we can choose what we will gently let go of. We don’t have to be at the mercy of old habits or old ways of thinking, or old ways of being. We are empowered. It just takes practice.

After watching

C. Mark the statements True (T) or False (F).

1. ____ Mindfulness is ignoring bad and negative thoughts/feelings.
2. ____ Mindfulness is paying attention to just good and positive thoughts/feelings.
3. ____ Mindfulness is noticing and accepting all thoughts/feelings no matter if they are positive or negative, pleasant, or unpleasant.
4. ____ Life is full of different types of experiences.
5. ____ Mindfulness can help you decide what to make stronger and what to let go of.

D. Notice the thoughts running through your mind. Write them in the bubbles below.



E. Now you can decide which one(s) you will feed. Which one(s) will you make stronger or let go of? Write your response below.

"You are the sky. Everything else is just the weather." – Pema Chodron

Appendix 6.6. Week 6

Activity 1: Gratitude through Senses

MBI-FLC
Week 6 / Activity 1

Writing & Speaking/B1
Gratitude through senses

Read the introduction and complete the activities.

As human beings, we have wonderful skills. Thanks to these skills, we have observed and learned the life since our birth. When we are on autopilot or too busy with daily life, we may ignore our wonderful gifts. It might be a good idea to pay attention to those gifts to improve the feeling of “gratitude”.

**gratitude*: the feeling of being thankful, showing thanks

A. Complete the pyramid according to the instructions.

Look around and write 5 things you can see now (phone, pen, bag, window, etc.)
_____, _____,
_____, _____

Find 4 things you can touch. Take them in your hand and feel their texture (your pencil, laptop, T-shirt, hair, etc).
_____, _____,
_____, _____

Pay attention to 3 sounds that you can hear around you (cars, birds, children/people outside, etc).
_____, _____,

Recognize 2 things you can smell (the air, your clothes, perfume, etc.)
_____,

Notice 1 thing you can taste (maybe food or drink from earlier)

B. Now, look at your pyramid and pay attention to your 5 senses. Have you ever thought about the importance of having these 5 senses in your daily life?

Research shows gratitude isn't just a pleasant feeling—being grateful can also support greater health, happiness, and wisdom in ourselves and our communities.



[\(The Science of Gratitude - Mindful\)](#)

C. What did you understand from this exercise? How did it make you feel? Write your reflection in detail, please.

Activity 2: Gratitude (Journal 2)

MBI-FLC
Week 6 / Journal 2

Writing/B1
Gratitude

Learner Journals

Journal 2: Completing a weekly gratitude journal

- A. Write ONE thing that you are grateful for the next 6 days.** For this exercise, you can write things from your daily life rather than general things such as family, friends, or health. For example; *"I could catch the bus today."* *"My plant bloomed."* *The weather was great."* *"My parcel arrived earlier than expected."* *"I finished the book I was reading."* *"I watched an English video and understood most of it."* *"I could study as I planned."* *"I did exercise and now I feel refreshed."* *"I could wake up easily this morning."* *"I wasn't late for the class."* etc.

Today I am grateful for/that

DAY 1 - 4.5.2023:

DAY 2 - 5.5.2023:

DAY 3 - 6.5.2023:

DAY 4 - 7.5.2023:

DAY 5 - 8.5.2023:

DAY 6 - 9.5.2023:

- B. What do you think about this exercise (writing one thing that you are grateful for every day)? How did it make you feel?**

Appendix 6.7. Week 7

Activity 1: Responding to Different Situations

MBI-FLC
Week 7 / Activity 1

Writing & Speaking/B1
Loving kindness

- A. Think of one of your typical days. Who do you interact with? Do your behaviors change according to the person you talk to?**
- B. Read the situations below and write a response to each. Be honest and write what comes to your mind first.**

Situation 1:

Your best friend has an important exam tomorrow and he/she feels anxious. What would you tell him/her?

Your response:

Situation 2:

Your best friend has an exam tomorrow and he/she feels anxious. He/she got a low grade on her previous exam. That's why he/she needs to get a high grade for tomorrow's exam! What would you tell him/her?

Your response:

Situation 3:

The exam results were announced. Your best friend failed! What would you tell him/her?

Your response:

Situation 4:

You have an important exam tomorrow and you feel anxious. What would you tell to yourself?

Your response:

Situation 5:

You have an exam tomorrow and you feel anxious. You got a low grade on your previous exam. That's why you need to get a high grade for tomorrow's exam! What would you tell to yourself?

Your response:

.....

Situation 6:

The exam results were announced. You failed! What would you tell to yourself?

Your response:

.....

- C. Read the definition of "kindness" below and watch the video. Do you think kindness is only for other people?**

kindness: the quality of being generous, helpful, and caring about other people

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLGNj-xrgvY>



- D. Read the quotes below and say how they are different from the ones in activity C.**

"You will never speak to anyone more than yourself in your head, be kind to yourself." – (unknown)

"Be kind to yourself so that you can be happy enough to be kind to the world." – Misha Collins

- E. Discuss the following questions.**

1. Do your responses (in activity B) for yourself and your best friend differ? If yes, in what ways?
2. Do you think being kind to yourself is selfish?
3. Do you think we are less kind to ourselves?

Activity 2: Loving Kindness Practice

MBI-FLC

Week 7 / Activity 2

Meditation/B1

Loving kindness

NOTE: Remember, it's normal for your mind to wander, and you may become aware of physical sensations or feelings in your body. You don't need to analyze or give these thoughts or feelings or images any meaning at this moment. Simply acknowledge them without judgment and gently bring your attention back to your breath.

Read or listen to the script. After you finish, you may take short notes about how the practice went.

Script

Find a comfortable place to sit. Feet flat on the ground, shoulders back, and back straight. Now gently close your eyes or leave them half-open as you prefer...

Bring awareness to your breath and allow yourself to continue to breathe naturally. If you notice that your mind wanders, gently bring your attention back to your breath...

Now bring awareness to your heart from which all compassion and love spread. You can put your hand on your heart to feel all the good things coming from it...

Take a moment right now and repeat the following phrases silently and if you can, try to feel them deep in your heart...

May I be safe.

May I be happy and healthy.

May I be at peace.

May I be free from inner and outer harm.

Now think of someone you love and care a lot. A family member, friend, partner, or pet. Expand the loving-kindness to that person repeating the same phrases...

May he/she be safe.

May he/she be happy and healthy.

May he/she be at peace.

May he/she be free from inner and outer harm.

Pay attention to the feelings and sensations in your mind and body while sending good wishes to that person. Take your time, observe carefully, and keep paying attention to your breath...

When you feel ready to go on, think of a neutral person for you. Maybe the shop assistant in the supermarket or the delivery guy. Expand the loving-kindness to that person repeating the same phrases...

May he/she be safe.

May he/she be happy and healthy.

May he/she be at peace.

May he/she be free from inner and outer harm.

When you feel ready, think of someone you dislike (not someone you hate and have great difficulty). Pay attention to your feelings about this person and notice that he/she is a person who needs love and kindness, who has fears and hopes... like you and like other people. Try to expand the loving-kindness to that person repeating the same phrases...

May he/she be safe.

May he/she be happy and healthy.

May he/she be at peace.

May he/she be free from inner and outer harm.

Finally, send your loving kindness to all beings. May all beings be safe, happy, healthy, and at peace. May all be away from inner and outer harm.

As you are coming to the end of this exercise, bring your attention back to your breath. Take a few more breaths and when you feel ready, gently open your eyes.

Follow up:

1. What was your experience like? What effect did it have on you? Write whatever comes to your mind.
2. What **sensations** did you notice in your body? Any pain, tenseness, discomfort, or relaxation?
3. What **feelings** did you feel? Relaxed, strange, happy, sad?
4. What **thoughts** came to your mind?

Appendix 6.8. Week 8

Activity 1: Suggestions to Keep Your Practice

MBI-FLC
Week 8 / Part I

Reading & Speaking/B1
Discussion

Suggestions to keep your practice...

1. The real practice is how you live your life.
2. A good place to practice mindfulness is ~~in~~ the body.
3. Befriend with your breath. It is always with you.
4. Stay in your bed for a few minutes after you wake up. Pay attention to your breath.
Thank for being rested, awake, and healthy.
5. When you are still in bed, scan your body until you feel it as a whole.
6. When you notice that your mind wanders, don't judge it. It is what the mind does!
7. It is very easy to fall into the thought stream and get caught up in the future (worrying, planning) and the past (remembering, blaming). Listen to them but do not get caught up completely!
8. You can practice whenever, wherever and as much as you want. Walking, eating, lying, sitting, in the morning, in the evening, before you go to bed, for 2 minutes, for 10 minutes, etc.
9. You can practice mindfulness in your daily life. Brushing your teeth, taking a shower, talking on the phone, listening to music, running, doing sports, cooking, etc.
10. REMEMBER the real meditation is your life, and how you live it moment by moment.

Adapted from

https://static.oprah.com/download/pdfs/presents/2007/spa/spa_meditate_daily.pdf



Activity 2: Reflective Writing

MBI-FLC
Week 8 / Part II

Reflective writing/B1
Final reflection

Think about your experience with MBI-FLC (Mindfulness-Based Interventions-Foreign Language Class) in detail. Explain **what went well** and **what was challenging**, and **write what you learned in the process**.

➤ Use a structure like:

1. A short comment about the program (2-3 sentences)
2. Evaluate the most important things about your experience. What was good? What was challenging?
3. What did you learn overall?
4. How will you keep practicing mindfulness?

**Keep the focus on your learning process.*

Reflective Writing Sample

MBI-FLC
Week 8 / Reflective writing

Writing sample/B1
Final reflection

In January I spent three weeks volunteering as an English teacher in my town. I've been thinking about becoming an English teacher for a while so it was a good opportunity to see what it's like. The students had all just arrived to start a new life in the UK and they had a range of levels from beginner to intermediate. They came from a variety of countries and had very different backgrounds and experiences.

For me, the most important thing was the relationship with the students. I was nervous at first and did not feel confident about speaking in front of people. However, I found it easy to build good relationships with the students as a class and as individuals and I soon relaxed with them. It was a challenge to encourage the lower-level students to speak in English, but at least they understood a lot more at the end of the course.

At first, planning lessons took a really long time and I was not happy with the results. Classes seemed to be too difficult for some students and too easy for others, who finished quickly and got bored. I found it was better to teach without a course book, adapting materials I found online to suit their needs. I learned to take extra activities for students who finished early and that was much better.

I still need to continue improving my lesson planning. I would like more ideas for teaching mixed-ability groups and I want to plan the whole course better next time. That way students have a focus for each lesson and a sense of progress and of what they've covered. I'm also going to put more confident students with beginners when they work in pairs so conversation activities give everyone more chance to speak and students can help each other.

Overall, it was a really positive experience and I learned a lot. I've decided that I would like to become an English teacher in the future.

Tips

- Reflective writing is more personal than other types of academic writing. You can use the first person (I ..., My ..., etc.) and explain how you felt.
- Think about the experience in detail. Explain what went well and what was challenging, and say what you learned in the process.
- Use a structure like:
 - Short introduction to the situation
 - Evaluate the most important things about the experience, including solutions to problems
 - Say what you would do differently next time
 - Say what you learned overall.
- Keep the focus on your learning process and what you will do better in future.

*Adopted from British Council ([Reflective writing | LearnEnglish](#))





GAZİLİ OLMAK AYRICALIKTIR...