T.C.

BAHCESEHIR UNIVERSITY

GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE EDUCATION HEAD OF THE DEPARTMENT

THE EFFECTS OF MINDFULNESS EXERCISES ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE WRITING ANXIETY AND WRITING SKILLS AMONG YOUNG LEARNERS

MASTER'S THESIS

EYLÜL SEZEN CAMBAZ

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THESIS ADVISOR

Assoc.Prof. Enisa MEDE

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Program Name:	English Language Education
Student's Name and Surname:	Eylül Sezen Cambaz
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Prof. Dr. Ahmet ÖNCÜ

Institute Director

This thesis was read by us, quality and content as a Master's thesis has been seen and accepted as sufficient.

	Title/Name	**Institution**	**Signature**
Thesis Advisor's	Assoc. Prof. Enisa MEDE	Bahçeşehir University	
Member's	Asst. Prof. Merve SELÇUK	Altınbaş University	
Member's	Asst. Prof. Rukiye Özlem ÖZTÜRK	Bahçeşehir University	

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Name, Last Name: Eylül Sezen Cambaz

Signature:

ABSTRACT

THE EFFECTS OF MINDFULNESS EXERCISES ON FOREIGN LANGUAGE WRITING ANXIETY AND WRITING SKILLS AMONG YOUNG LEARNERS

Cambaz, Eylül Sezen

Master's Program in English Language Education

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This study investigated the effects of mindfulness exercises on foreign language writing anxiety and skills among 5th grade, 10-11 years old primary school young learners (YLs) at a private school in Turkey. The participants included 32 Turkish students, divided into an experimental group and a control group. Over a period of ten weeks, guided mindfulness exercises were implemented in the experimental group. In this mixed-method study following a sequential explanatory design, quantitative data were collected through the Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) pre- and post-tests, as well as students' writing scores before and after the intervention. The qualitative data were obtained from the teacher's reflective journal and an open-ended student survey. The results revealed that the implementation of mindfulness exercises significantly reduced writing anxiety levels and led to improvements in writing skills among the experimental group. Additionally, the young learners demonstrated positive perceptions of mindfulness exercises, reporting increased levels of focus and creativity. The gathered findings were further supported by the teacher's observations in the reflective journal, which highlighted enhanced student participation and attentiveness.

Key Words: Foreign Language Writing Anxiety, Writing Skills, Young Learners, English as a Foreign Language

ÖZ

"MINDFULNESS" ALIŞTIRMALARININ İLKOKUL ÖĞRENCİLERİNİN YABANCI DİL YAZMA KAYGILARI VE YAZMA BECERİLERİ ÜZERİNDEKİ ETKİSİ

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Bu çalışma, "mindfulness" egzersizlerinin İstanbul, Türkiye'de özel bir okulda eğitim gören 10-11 yaşındaki ilköğretim 5. sınıf öğrencilerinin yabancı dilde yazma kaygısı ve becerileri üzerindeki etkisini araştırmıştır. Katılımcılar, deney grubu ve kontrol grubu olmak üzere 32 Türk öğrenciden oluşmaktadır. Deney grubuna on haftalık bir süreçte rehberli farkındalık egzersizleri uygulanmıştır. Açımlayıcı sıralı bir tasarım izleyen bu karma yöntemli çalışmada, İkinci Dil Yazma Kaygısı Envanteri (SLWAI) ön ve son testleri ile uygulama öncesi ve sonrası öğrencilerin yazma puanları aracılığıyla nicel veriler toplanmıştır. Niteliksel veriler, öğretmenin yansıtıcı günlüğünden ve açık uçlu bir öğrenci anketinden elde edilmiştir. Sonuçlar, farkındalık egzersizlerinin uygulanmasının, deney grubu arasında yazma kaygısı düzeylerini önemli ölçüde azalttığını ve yazma becerilerinde gelişmelere yol açtığını göstermiştir. Ayrıca, genç öğrenciler dikkat egzersizlerine ilişkin olumlu algılar sergilemiş, artan odaklanma ve yaratıcılık seviyeleri bildirmişlerdir. Bu bulgular, öğretmenin yansıtıcı günlüğündeki artan öğrenci katılımını ve dikkat artışını vurgulayan gözlemleriyle de desteklenmiştir.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Mindfulness, Yabancı Dilde Yazma Kaygısı, Yazma Becerileri, Genç Öğrenciler, Yabancı Dil Olarak İngilizc

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CLIL	Content and Language Integrated Learning
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
ESL	English as a Second Language
FLA	Foreign Language Anxiety
SLWAI	Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory
TRJ	Teacher Reflective Journal
YLs	Young Learners

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter briefly explains the difficulties the young learners (YLs) experience during in-class activities or at-home assignments on writing. The reasons YLs experience writing anxiety are mentioned. In order to resolve the aforementioned situation, the study focuses on the impact of mindfulness exercises on improving YL's writing skills by reducing their anxiety level and increasing their concentration. Frequently encountered problems faced in/outside of the classroom are mentioned. Following, the significance and the purpose of the study are presented. The introduction chapter ends with the definitions of key terms that are -and will be mentioned throughout the study.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

Writing a very challenging skill to develop throughout the language learning journey (Hyland, 2003; Manchón et.al., 2009). It frustrates both students and teachers as takes longer time to teach and learn compared to other skills. Writing is a productive skill that is involved in expressing and creating meaning. Writing is one of the most effective methods for an individual to express his or her thoughts and desires and convey an understanding of the other party's thoughts and requests. (Turkben, 2021). Besides mastering grammatical rules, vocabularies, spelling, and syntax; writing exercises also require mind-mapping, creative thinking, and transferring thoughts or spoken language into written language. For all these reasons, transferring verbal language to any form of text is often perceived as a complicated process by many learners. Although it is crucial for learners to master in order to reach a successful level in the use of a foreign language; writing practices and exercises are considered the most challenging ones for students in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms (Hyland, 2003; Matsuda & Silva, 2014). When students are studying a foreign language, the process of writing becomes much more challenging and demanding, which can lead to increased feelings of unease and anxiety in the students. Especially, most of the YLs, who mostly lack motivation to write in English, have apathy towards writing (Hedge, 2001; Graham et.al., 2005). Here, the teacher's role plays a crucial part

as a “facilitator” and a “motivator” in the class who creates an atmosphere to overcome challenges, guides, and encourages the learners to take the initiative, rather than just being a “moderator”.

Anxiety is the state of being nervous or worried that something bad going to happen according to *Oxford Learners Dictionaries Online.* Foreign language learning causes anxiety for most of the learners. Approximately 50% of EFL learners experience a kind of anxiety throughout their learning process (Worde, 1998). MacIntyre and Gardner (1994) also defined anxiety as a “feeling of tension and apprehension experienced by the learners in the foreign language classroom.” (p.284). According to Csikszentmihalyi (1997), when a person's competence level is low but the difficulty level of the task he or she is expected to perform is high, anxiety is there to be expected. When discussing the process of learning a foreign language or a second language, the term "anxiety" refers to the sensation of being extremely concerned about the new language that is being learnt. (Ekmekçi, 2018, p.158) Most of the students are capable of expressing their ideas orally when asked or answering short questions with good use of language. However, when it comes to putting them on paper, they feel negative about writing. Besides, they frequently make mistakes in language use. They tend to make the same mistakes even if they are capable of using them in a spoken way or in any other exerciseAnxiety when writing is one of the most essential things that slows down the maturation of writing abilities. A negative attitude about writing among students is a contributing factor in the development of writing anxiety among those students over time (Turkben, 2021). Above that, especially YLs often struggle to keep track of their thoughts while writing. They have difficulty developing their ideas fluently. They are required to think, organize and produce a good piece at the end, and these expectations often make them nervous before writing. There might be several reasons behind this issue such as lack of time, inability to have creative thinking skills, having trouble organizing thoughts or not having known how to organize thoughts, having a short attention span, lack of concentration, demotivation to write, fear of making mistakes, and so on. It is possible due to their incapacity of listing thoughts or putting them in order because of their poor concentration or metacognitive thinking skills, so YLs can often produce pieces that need lots of revision and editing. In light of this information, the feeling of failure and inability of thinking might negatively affect their organization and concentration skills. This might

be the biggest demotivator in writing for YLs, as their negative attitudes towards writing might cause them to have writing anxiety for a period of time.

Many EFL teachers realize that writing is a skill that includes mental processes, as well as physical activities. Many factors negatively affect students' writing performances mentally and academically such as stress, lack of concentration, anxiety, and so on (Alnufaie and Grenfell, 2013; Sabti, et.al, 2019; Wahyuni, 2017).

These factors have the potential to affect and handicap abilities for learning, remembering information, being creative, performing existing knowledge, focusing attention, planning, and organizing thoughts. EFL learners all around the world at every level from elementary to graduate level face similar challenges. High levels of anxiety are likely to demolish students' psychological functioning to the extent that memory, attention, and concentration are badly affected (Rains, 2004 as cited in Franco, Mañas, Cangas, & Gallego, 2011). Anxiety and stress are examples of the main factors that detrimentally affect the academic performances of the learners; we may consider seeking help from mindfulness exercises. Maintaining one's focus on the present moment and one's attitude of acceptance toward that moment are believed to be the two most important aspects of the practice of mindfulness meditation, which is considered to be an essential part of the practice (Bishop, et.al, 2004). It consists of specific practices used to focus a person's attention – meditation, yoga, breathing, and single-pointed concentration on an object (Broderick & Jennings, 2012). As mentioned in Meiklejohn, et.al's article (2012), The practice of using mindfulness-based techniques with children and adolescents is a relatively new subject that is still developing, but the available research suggests that these approaches are acceptable and doable with young people. According to them, the institutional framework of the school provides the ideal atmosphere in which to practice mindfulness treatments, which encourage stress resilience and good brain functioning.. To to their research, regular practice of mindfulness exercises strengthens students' ability to self-regulate attention through the development of attentional control through repeated and intentional focusing, maintaining, and altering of attention.

The practice of mindfulness was found to enhance one's degree of concentration while simultaneously lowering levels of distraction (Mortimore, 2017). Academic performance can be also improved by the practice of mindfulness due to its ability to

assist reduce inhibitions, increase memory, and enhance cognitive functioning (Reilly, 2020).

Mindfulness has attracted the attention of educators as a crucial, though historically neglected, talent that might assist both cognitive and social–emotional skills in kids and improve academic and behavioral results. In Caballero et.al's (2019) study, mindfulness was connected not only with present academic performance but also with academic performance improvement from the previous year. Mindfulness was associated with academic outcomes; and there was a correlation between higher levels of mindfulness and more successful academic achievements. Meditation and other forms of mindfulness help learners become more motivated (Olga, 2020). Both directly and indirectly, mindfulness is a positively and consistently predictive factor of motivation to learn a foreign language (Ghanizadeh, 2019). It also offers an approach to learning languages that emphasizes collaboration and assistance (Moafian et al., 2019). Due to the aforementioned reasons, the effects of mindfulness exercises on the change in students' concentration, motivation, and academic achievement levels would probably be positive.

Mindfulness has started to be used in FL teaching recently, especially on foreign language anxiety, academic success and performance (Fallah,, 2016; Koçali, 2020; Skelly and Chichon, 2021; Strickland and Selwyn, 2019; Zeilhofer, 2020). Many studies revealed that mindfulness exercises and mindful learning strategies help students improve their skills and use the language more effectively (Harpin et.al, 2016; Langer, 2004; Mrazek et.al, 2013). Based on the previous studies, it also helps students to develop student's awareness, and increase their memory, creativity, concentration, and competence (Brady, 2004; Wang and Liu, 2016; Zeilhofer, 2020).

As mindfulness covers awareness, concentration, rethinking, refining, and formulating meaning; it is mostly expected that it will help students generate brighter ideas, cultivate their creativity, build meaning, think critically and reflect what is in their mind smoothly by integrating mindful writing into the curriculum. Langer (2000) stated that mindfulness can result in "an increase in competence; a decrease in accidents; an increase in memory, creativity, and; a decrease in stress. In a world filled with distractions, stress, and frequent suffering—all of which can impede creativity

and wellness—the practice of mindfulness becomes an important component for supporting learners in educational practice.

Through the use of various mindfulness methods, the vast majority of students said that they had experienced a reduction in stress and an improvement in their ability to concentrate, despite the fact that there was no difference seen in the overall course scores. Rajkumar et al. (2021). Mindfulness is an important aspect for helping learners in educational practice. Teachers are in a unique position to assist students in managing their thoughts and feelings, developing coping mechanisms for stress, and improving their academic performance when they utilize treatments that are grounded in mindfulness. In his book, Boice (1994) stated that mindful writing helps with writing fluency and creativity. Another pilot research shows that mindfulness can reduce foreign language anxiety in bilingual primary schools. The findings suggest that mindfulness techniques in the primary school may help language and attentional abilities by generating a calmer environment. The intervention was widely viewed as favorable by the class instructor, who saw a calmer classroom environment and increased student focus on class material following each mindfulness session (Mortimore, 2017). Moghadam et.al (2020) researched the relationship between mindfulness-based instruction and EFL learners' burnout and receptivity. The posttest results demonstrated that mindfulness-based practices significantly reduced burnout in control and experimental groups. The improvement of receptive abilities was also favorably influenced.

Critical components of the writing process are students' writing skills, the teacher's instructional approach, and students' engagement. The strategy for teaching writing should not only emphasize language aspects, but also help students develop critical thinking and problem-solving abilities (Saputra, Piscayanti, & Agustini,2020). To this end, traditional approaches to improve YL's writing skills might not be enough as we should be helping our learners to focus on what they know and how they need to use their knowledge most effectively. First, as teachers, we need to wash away YL's emotional discomfort and negative feelings toward writing. Then, we need to help them focus, listen to themselves, think, and write their brilliant ideas in a contextual way Mindfulness and writing both enhance self-awareness and self-regulation when practiced with discipline. Mindfulness training cultivates reflective skills regarding one's thoughts and emotions, whereas writing training cultivates reflective skills

regarding one's ideas and language (Waldman &Carmel, 2019). For all these reasons, it would be highly beneficial to integrate mindfulness exercises in the lessons to improve YL's writing skills and increase concentration and thinking skills.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The idea of conducting this study arose when the researcher realized that most of her students have difficulty or demotivation towards writing. According to Nunan (1989) writing is an extremely difficult cognitive activity which requires the learner to have control over various factors. Whether in class activities or homework assignments, students do not seem to pay attention to writing rules, punctuation, spelling, and language in use, although all these rules are deliberately taught in the course content. They often tend to write very short answers, repeated sentences, paragraphs without coherence and cohesion, or evasive pieces of writing.

Almost all EFL learners experience difficulty in writing throughout their language-learning journey. Writing being one of the hardest productive skills to acquire, it seems contradictive with the natural process. It is necessary to mention that the mentioned students are almost all B1-level YLs. The group of learners mentioned above can fluently speak and express their ideas during the class, fluent in grammar use, good in pronunciation and spelling during any exercise, have a good vocabulary, even able to find mistakes in coursebooks and have the chance to communicate with their parents in English most of the time. That is to say, it has been observed that there is a mismatch between these YLs' language mastery and writing skills.

The reasons behind this issue may vary from internal to external factors. One of the reasons might be that it is a challenging and time-consuming task, and they tend to write carelessly and unguardedly. Students might have lack of motivation, confidence, or productivity. They might be experiencing some kind of writing anxiety, concentration problems, or being affected by other extrinsic factors. Even Covid-19 and the online education process, which is likely to increase the level of anxiety, might have triggered students to have focusing and concentration problems. Since students need to have adequate writing skills for their future success and earnings, the reasons behind these mismatches must be found.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

As a requirement of being a conscious 21st-century student, foreign language learners must be capable of finding creative ideas, thinking critically, organizing ideas logically, and fluently expressing themselves and their ideas. However, students seem highly demotivated, unconcerned, or inattentive in the writing lessons or homework assignments. The main issue is that students often struggle to find ideas, provide details or develop upon what they want to talk about the topic. They also have trouble getting their thoughts together and putting them in order. Other than the mentioned problem, they tend to make some minor mistakes, within the mentioned problems above, like spelling and punctuation, too. It is hypothesized that the reason behind the mentioned problems are not the students' level of English, but some kind of attention and concentration problems, that leads them to be anxious.

Based upon the mentioned problems and the given information, this study aims to investigate the effectiveness of mindfulness exercises on increasing YL's metacognitive awareness, and concentration and strengthening the way they focus on their writing. This study intends to observe the changes in YL's writing abilities and the difference between their writing scores before and after the implementation of mindfulness exercises. Lastly, the study attempts to find out if YL's feelings towards writing will change and if anxiety levels will reduce throughout the process.

1.4 Significance of the Study

Many learners experience difficulties in writing classes as stated above. There are many studies on enhancing YL's language skills and revealing positive influences of using mindfulness exercises for various reasons in the FL classroom.

In their study, Bazzano, Anderson, Hylton, & Gustat (2018) found that interventions facilitated stress and anxiety management among elementary school students. They stated that the students in the experimental group demonstrated an obvious improvement in their emotions compared with the control group. In another study, Wang and Liu (2016) came up with the findings that mindfulness facilitated creativity and intelligence and provided an opportunity to gain awareness of their learning and think critically in college-level learners. The findings of another study revealed that students who practiced mindfulness exercises showed better content organization with a better flow; it didn't only affect the learners', but also the teaching

staff's well-being in school as it also helps them to reduce stress. Besides, these exercises helped learners to focus and achieve better writing comprehension.

The main and most distinctive feature that distinguishes this study from others is that it focuses more on the effect of mindfulness exercises on students' metacognitive awareness, attention, and organization of ideas of YLs in the writing activities. The study might reduce the effects of preformed issues that occurred, especially in the near past, during the online learning process about focusing and attention.

As there aren't many studies on this topic with primary school learners, the results might be highly valuable. Therefore, this study may lead to a new way for in the writing lessons to integrate mindfulness exercises in the curriculum of YLs writing classes to reduce the level of anxiety and increase learners' attention on their writing. In line with the previous research, there is no doubt that the benefits of this study will contribute a lot to the teaching of writing in YLs classes.

1.5 Research Questions

In line with the aforementioned issues and considerations, this study intents to answer the following research questions:

1) Is there any significant difference in learners' writing performances between the mindfulness based vs. non-mindfulness based group?

2) Is there any significant difference between the mindfulness based and non-mindfulness based group in terms of writing anxiety level?

3) What are students' perceptions about integrating mindfulness exercises before the writing lessons in the experimental group?

4) What are the teacher's perceptions about the mindfulness exercises and observed benefits of integrating them into the classroom?

Chapter 2

Literature Review

2.1 Definition and Scope of Mindfulness

The term “mindfulness” is generally defined as paying high levels of attention and being aware of one’s experiences and surroundings, both in internal and external ways as they happen. It comes from the Sanskrit word ‘Smrti’ which literallytranslates to “that which is remembered”; and it is an English translation of *sati*, whichcomes from and old Buddhist tradition that relates to awareness, attention and remembering (Williams, et.al. 2004; Germer, et al, 2013).

Mindfulness is actually an ancient Buddhist philosophy dating back about 2500 years in history, which is used by many people to support their spirituality and religious beliefs. As Shonin et al. (2015) stated, back in time, The Budha was an expertin human emotions and needs. He was aware of the mind’s propensity for distraction,which inspired him to look for methods for being completely present in the moment and teach these methods to others. “…mindfulness is ‘at the heart of the Buddha’s teaching.”, “…When we are mindful, our thinking is Right Thinking, our speech is Right Speech, and so on. Right Mindfulness is the energy that brings us back to the present moment. To cultivate mindfulness in ourselves is to cultivate the Buddha within” (Hyland, T. 2011).

Although it is an ancient Buddhist practice, there is a lot of relevance for our current lives when it comes to mindfulness. Through the investigations and science, the use of mindfulness and its popularity increased in different fields such as psychology, education, physical health and many different disciplines today. However, Buddhism or becoming a Buddhist are never implied by this relevance. It is one of the most popular issues in psychology and has a lot of benefits when practiced such as reducing stress levels, promoting general well-being, improving focusing and working memory. According to Kabat-Zinn (1994), mindfulness suggests discovering who we are, reflecting on our perspective of the world and our place within it, and being appreciative of the richness of each time we blossom. It is a “…non-judgmental

consciousness, developed by paying attention in a particular way,…as open heartedly as possible" (Kabat-Zinn, 2015).

Mindfulness is highly related to metacognitive processes and self-consciousness (Bishop et al., 2004). An awareness of mindfulness is the ability to pay attention to what is happening around you, to be aware of the external stimuli or experiences and to be aware of what our internal reactions are to them. It helps people to get rid of their routines and look at things from different perspectives (Germer, 2004). Langer (1997) stated that a mindful person is creative, open to creation, and aware of multiple perspectives. Langer (2014) also defined mindfulness as "an active state of mind characterized by novel distinction-drawing that results in being (1) situated in the present; (2) sensitive to context and perspective; and (3) guided (but not governed) by rules and routines." and adds: "When we recognize that we don't know the person, object, or situation as well as we thought we did, our attention naturally goes to the target." By attending to variability, the hallmark of mindfulness, eventually we stop confusing. According to Göktem (2019), better concentration, focus and reasoning; increased calmness, understanding of others and self; decreased anxiety and stress levels and overall well-being are some of the benefits of mindfulness in general. For all these reasons, it is virtually obvious why mindfulness is closely linked to education in the modern world, too. Supporting this matter, McConville et al. (2017) stated that correct mindfulness based interventions help reduce learners' the negative effects of stress, anxiety and depression; so that their self-efficacy and empathy improves.

In brief, metacognitive processes, anxiety level and self-consciousness are closely connected to the practice of mindfulness. A mindful person is creative, open to creation, and aware of multiple perspectives. Learners who participate in appropriate mindfulness-based interventions have less of the negative consequences of stress, anxiety, and sadness. For all these reasons, mindfulness is closely linked toeducation in the modern world, too.

2.2 Mindfulness in Education

The application of mindfulness-based practices in educational settings can be advantageous. In recent years, mindful learning and mindfulness exercises have been used frequently in many fields and branches of education. According to Ie et.al. (2014),

mindfulness interventions found as promising, generally acceptable, and well-liked by the young people and teachers who participate, and no harm of these interventions were mentioned based on some reviews (Burke, 2010; Harnett& Dawe, 2012; Meiklejohn et al., 2012). There are variety of studies on mindfulness level of students, mindfulness-based interventions, their effects and educational benefits on children and adolescents in school contexts (Brannon, 2010; Carsley et al., 2015; Carsley and Heath, 2018; Doss et al., 2018; Crowley et al., 2022; Franco et al., 2015; Harpin et al., 2016; Leland, 2015; Meiklejohn et al., 2012; Moore et al., 2021; Rajkumar et al., 2021; Ricarte et.al, 2015; Tural et al., 2021).

In his book, Armstrong (2019) mentioned how mindfulness might be integrated in math, science, social studies, art and so on. Armstrong also stated that mindfulness can even be integrated in art lessons by listening mindfully of different genres of music or choreographing a dance made up of mindful stretching poses. Langer (1997) identified the traits of a mindful person as creative, open to innovation and new ideas, has awareness of the existence. The consistent practice of mindfulness exercises also helps students to improve their ability to self-regulate their attention. This is accomplished by establishing attentional control via the practice of concentrating, maintaining and changing attention in a purposeful and deliberate manner. In his research, Langer (1997) used concepts of mindfulness in the classroom, where they demonstrated the value of mindfulness in terms of broadening thinking and fostering psychological flexibility, both of which enhance learning more creative ways of thinking. Furthermore, Napoli et.al (2005) found out that following mindfulness training, there is an evidence that children's attention levels increased in measurable ways. Because of the aforementioned reasons, making the connection between education and mindfulness is indeed very easy to conceptualize.

Students at any level start to reap the benefits of a mindful classroom when teachers start to implement it into their lessons. Schools are places where teachers prepare students to overcome the problems in and outside of the school. With the help of mindfulness-based interventions, teachers can help learners to control their thoughts and emotions, cope with stress, or achieve better academic success. A daily practice of mindfulness for a few minutes can aid in the growth and reinforcement of the mind. A strong tool that may assist pupils as well as teachers in reshaping and transforming their own brains to become smarter, calmer, and more compassionate human beings is

the practice of mindfulness and the associated attitudes that come along with it (Weare, 2014). Reber (2014) introduced two ways to implement mindfulness in school contexts; situational and dispositional. The researcher also added that situational mindfulness is when teachers arrange instructions and assignments that promotes mindfulness in students. If mindfulness is fostered in a long-term or as a personal trait, it is called dispositional mindfulness. Additionally, Reber (2014) also pointed out that in most of the recent research, interventions aimed at increasing situational mindfulness. Scherer, Talley and Hill (2021) mentioned some ways that can be incorporated into the daily classroom activities such as; mindfulness of breathing exercise to increase attentional awareness, mindfulness of balance exercise to notice shifts in emotion, yoga to use excess energy in a healthy way or silent sitting to generate a sense of inner peace and focused awareness.

Reviewing some of the previously conducted research, Leland (2015) included a discussion of numerous educational uses of mindfulness and the outcomes of those applications in his study review. It was found out that the applications and mindfulness education was helpful for students who has high stress and some kind of learning disabilities. According to the review of studies, students who trained mindfulness can focus better on the tasks, improve study habits and increase their test scores. Furthermore, Leland (2015) claimed that the exercises had an effect on minimizing the impacts of bullying between students.

Rajkumar et al. (2021) investigated the impact of mindful breathing in class by implementing breathing techniques such as square breathing, alternate nostril breathing and victorious breathing. Although no differences was observed in the overall course scores, most of the students stated that their stress level was reduced, and focus was improved at the end of their implementation. The ability to carefully focus on one's attention and keep it there is essential to the learning process. Being easily or regularly distracted can be harmful to direct instruction, which can lead to learning and comprehension gaps. In a similar vein, a lack of attention and focusing can lead to unfinished or missed assignments, as well as bad marks. It has been shown that practicing mindfulness can increase the brain's capacity to selectively concentrate one's attention (Jha et.al, 2007). Harpin et al. (2016) tested a 10-week mindfulness program with 4th grade students in their morning sessions daily. To find out the behavioral and academic situation of the experimental and control group, they

compared the pre and post intervention data in the groups. The results yielded that the experimental group outperformed the other group academically. There were also differences in their emotional and behavioral regulation in school and at home. Teachers also stated that implementation of mindfulness made students focus more easily and more relaxed in the classroom. In another study, Ricarte et.al (2015) implemented Mindfulness-Based Intervention (MBI) program in a rural school with students aged from 6 to 13 for six weeks. The researchers trained learners' attention to focus on breathing, the senses and the body. Following the completion of the intervention, the experimental group shown significant improvements on their level of attention, as well as their auditory-verbal memory. It was seen that mindfulness training improved both memory and focus. This program did not only decreased anxiety but also boosted well-being, as evidenced by the significant drop in that factor.

Another study by Franco et al. (2011) analyzed the effect of a mindfulness program in a public school with secondary school students. In line with previous studies, the results showed us that the academic performance of the experimental group was higher in all subjects. This study also proved that the mindfulness program significantly reduced both state anxiety (how students feel at the moment) and trait anxiety (how they generally feel) levels of students. Napoli et al. (2005) also implemented a 24-week long mindfulness exercises that includes berating, body-scan and sensorimotor awareness activities with first, second and third grade students and aimed to look for their measures for attention. The results provided distinctions as there was an increase in selective attention and a reduction of test anxiety between the experimental and control groups. The effectiveness of mindfulness-based coloring activity for test anxiety was examined in children (Carsley et al., 2015) and in adolescents (Carsley & Heath, 2018). The results of both experiments revealed a significant decrease in test anxiety and an increase in state of mindfulness after the implementation. In the study with young learners, male students showed a decrease of anxiety after free coloring activities; females only benefited from mandala exercises. On the other hand, females reported a greater decrease in their test anxiety in the free condition compared to males in the experiment with the adolescents group. These results also reminds us to consider the age and the level of the learners we perform the interventions. A very recent study by Crowley et al. (2022) also aimed to answer the following research question: "1) Do college students enrolled in a mediation class

exhibit increases in mindfulness and happiness, and/or decreases in anxiety?" The results yielded that participants in the mediation course reported higher levels of average subjective satisfaction as well as enhanced levels of mindfulness attention awareness. Students who took part in the mediation session shown greater improvements in their levels of mindfulness and anxiety than the other group.

All in all, a variety of mindfulness-based exercises and practices were put into practice. The benefits of mindfulness-based activities were proven many times that learners of all ages and levels benefited from them in terms of their ability to deal with stress, overcome test anxiety, behave in a more appropriate and calm manner, increase academic achievement, focus the tasks better, and so on.

2.2.1 Mindfulness and language learning. As mentioned in the previous part, there has been many studies that reveal the benefits of mindfulness and mediation; hence, are frequently used in education for various reasons (Carsley et al., 2015; Carsley and Heath, 2018; Crowley et al., 2022; Franco et al., 2011; Harpin et al., 2016; Leland, 2015; Rajkumar et al., 2021). The practice of mindfulness methods has also been started to be included into the process of teaching English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Following the investigation of mindfulness in the educational setting, researcher communities developed an interest in researching and analyzing the use of this interventions in classes of foreign languages to improve different language skills or to reduce students' negative attitudes towards language learning. Moafian et.al (2019) stated that even though learning a foreign language and practicing mindfulness might be considered as different fields of study, these two are connected within a dynamic system, as there are similarities between the principles that underpin the mindfulness philosophy and the current developments in the language teaching and acquisition. Mozzon-McPherson (2019, p.103) compiled some of the sample mindfulness-based exercises that can be used for language learning. Some of these exercises are as follows;

> *"Breathing or body scan mediation to increase quality of attention and decrease anxiety, Observe-Notice-Describe to heighten focus and concentration, improve memory connections and process emotions; Stream of Consciousness to focus on strategies to anchor and develop memories of the*

language experience, improve memory connections and process emotions; Loud/Silent and tandem reading exercise to focus on accessing self and learning environment; Rapping/Chanting (individual or collective) to focus on intention, attention and determination and sharpen perception and self-awareness."

Just like in other fields, mindfulness has proven to reduce levels of stress and anxiety in many studies in language learning contexts. As will be explained detailly below with example studies which were carried out, the implementation of mindfulness frequently resulted in reduction of stress for both teachers and students. In the context of English teaching and learning, mindfulness also provides the opportunity to help maintain or increase the positive energy and the motivation level in the classroom. As Langer (2000) stated mindfulness can provide "an increase in competence; a decrease in accidents; an increase in memory, creativity, and positive affect; a decrease in stress; and an increase in health and longevity" (p. 220). It significantly assists students paying more attention to the process of learning, concentrating, focusing attention, lowering learners' affective filter, and figuring out how to be more productive in order to achieve better academic results. That is to say that language learners who engage in mindful practices develop a sense of personal responsibility for their own education (Wang & Liu, 2016).

It was discovered that anxiety slowed down and imprecisely learned new language throughout all three phases of cognitive processing, which are encoding, storage, and retrieval (MacIntyre and Gardner, 1994). The correlation between language anxiety and academic performance in second language acquisition is also explored by Horwitz (2001). Based to the author's argument, the presence of language anxiety can impede language acquisition and lead to a protraction in the attainment of linguistic proficiency. Based on these evidence it could be said that anxiety can be a significant factor that causes delays in learning.

There is a significant body of evidence suggesting we may assist our learners to acquire a new language and enhance their performance in the classroom by lowering anxiety and stress level; while raising motivation (Beauchemin, Hutchins & Patterson, 2008; Horwitz, Horwitz & Cope, 1986; Young, 1991). Given this information, it is highly probable that anxiety impairs learners' academic progress in English language

learning, too. Therefore, including mindfulness techniques into foreign language lessons has the potential of decreasing affective filter that students have. According to the Affective Filter Hypothesis, learners who have a low affective filter try to discover and obtain more input, speak with confidence and tend to be more open to the input which is given to them (Krashen, 1982). As a result, these learners are more successful learners. On the other hand, worried learners have a strong affective filter, which makes it difficult for them to acquire new information. (Krashen, 1985; Richards & Rogers, 2001). Anxiety over acquisition of English language was shown to be connected with seven aspects, including listening and speaking activities, fear of failure, attitudes of teachers, learning environment, and so on (Baş, 2014).

Examining several studies undertaken on this topic, Fallah (2016) conducted a study on the effect of mindfulness on English language anxiety and discovered a clear correlation between increased mindfulness and decreased English language anxiety. In another study Fallah (2017) also explored the relationship between mindfulness, self-efficacy and foreign language anxiety (FLA) with Iranian EFL learners. Results revealed there was a significantly and negatively correlated relationship between the components; as the learners with higher levels of mindfulness were the ones with lower anxiety levels. In 2020, Kocali studied on the relationship between mindfulness and FLA in a state university in Turkey. It was shown that practicing mindfulness has an effect of overall FLA level of the students, it was regarded as an alternate method for successfully managing anxiety brought on by learning a foreign language. The results of this study provided credence to the idea that practicing mindfulness can assist students in better coping with stress and anxiety. Önem (2015) wanted to investigate whether or not mediation may be helpful in reducing anxiety and improving vocabulary retention on students whose native language was Turkish. At the end of the study, mindfulness mediations had a positive effect was observed in students' anxiety level and their vocabulary learning in the intervention group. The purpose of the study carried out by Charoensukmongkol (2019) was to determine if the level of mindfulness had an influence on the anxiety level of marketing students in Thai in public speaking sessions. Students who reported having high degrees of mindfulness while speaking tended to experience lower level of anxiety during their presentations.

In order to learn a language, at least some level of attention must be paid to the input; otherwise, nothing will be learnt. It is generally acknowledged that one of the most important skills for learning a second or a foreign language is the ability to direct and focus cognitive activity on particular stimuli for extended periods of time (Moafian et.al, 2019). The need of using mindfulness and mediation to boost the ability to focus attention was investigated (Jha, Krompinger & Baime, 2007). Learning becomes a process in which students are actively and cognitively involved in observing and identifying new observation they receive. Students also pay attention to distinctions, views and settings; and in this way, learning becomes a process in which students learn (Langer, 1997). According to observations made by Thich Nhat Hanh (2017) the practice of mindfulness will assist students in concentrating, paying attention and achieving greater level of comprehension, the foundation of all learning processes. Mortimore's (2017) research revealed an increase in the capacity of the YLs to take in and learn new information, as well as a heightened awareness of how they feel. The outcomes of the study as a whole indicated that using mindfulness methods in the foreign language classroom in primary school may be useful in producing a more tranquil atmosphere that promotes language acquisition and attentional skills development. Furthermore, the teacher of the class stated that "…after each session, they can learn new knowledge more easily. They are more attentive. Calmer." The observations suggest that the mindfulness sessions may have momentarily generated a calmer learning environment, which may have aided the acquisition of the language better.

Brady (2004), who is both a practitioner of mediation and a teacher, concurred with the notion that if we become aware of the negative thoughts and feelings that we and replace them with positive ones, our learning process, achievements and accordingly; level of happiness would be enhanced. In his study, students wererequired to mediate either before or during the activities in the classroom at least oncea week. The results showed at the end of the intervention that if they were motivated to study, the students were better able to concentrate better and attain higher level of success. Waldman and Carmel (2019) also stated that mindfulness bring great self- awareness and self-regulation. Mindful writing in a pleasant social environment helpedstudents generate new thoughts and become aware of their thinking in Northeastern University in China (Wang & Liu 2016). When students were present in the moment

and the material they were being taught was engaging, they were able to focus better and make more progress in their studies. It facilitated their learning processes, cultivation of creativity and intelligence and provided the students with the opportunity to discover their awareness, learn from others, and think critically. It has been proved that mediation helped students to feel motivated in the activities and their concentration and achievement was increased.

The benefits of mindfulness and mediation in achieving this kind of atmosphere were mentioned above. Learners will be able to learn and perform more efficiently and will experience less stress when it comes to language learning, if teachers are able to establish an atmosphere in the classroom that is enthusiastic and relaxing. Increases in learners' academic achievement were also observed depending on the decreased anxiety and stress; and increased attention levels. Several research investigate the potential impact that implementing mindfulness and mediation may have on test results, operating on the assumption that these are reliable indicators of academic progress.

In a literature review Skelly and Chichon (2021) aimed to investigate how mindfulness could help to improve adolescents' ability to regulate their attention, emotion, behavior and thinking, and ability to learn and perform better in EFL. Findings strongly suggested that as a result of the decreased stress and anxiety levels experienced by adolescents when mindfulness is incorporated as a part of a consistent daily routine, mindfulness could be a highly effective strategy for improving the ability of Obligatory Secondary Education (OSE) students in Spain to learn EFL. To answer the research question "What effects does the implementation of mediation have on learning of a foreign language?" Zeilhofer (2020) conducted a research in respect to SLA awareness and its connection to mindfulness techniques and awareness. According to the findings, significant evidence of academic performance, improved self-awareness were exhibited in contrast to the comparison group; and these findings might result in promoting metacognitive awareness in SLA. Pupils had a favorable attitude toward mediation techniques in general. These findings pointed to the possibility that contemplative practices might play a part in the process of conceiving and developing unique, mindful instructional approaches to obtain an increase in academic achievement by students' self-regulation in forms, vocabulary, gasps in language and so on. The meta-analysis that Erbe and Lohromann (2015) conducted

also indicated a substantial improvement in academic performance as a result of mindfulness to enhance attention and cognitive function.

The positive effects of mindfulness can even be observed in a short period of time. The participants in Strickland and Selwyn's (2019) study were only shown a three-minute guided video of mindfulness and were exposed to mindfulness for a total of two weeks. They used a test called the Single Letter Cancellation to determine the mistake rates of the pupils both before and after in two weeks. As a result, they found out that the students in the experimental group made a much lower percentage of mistakes on the exam compared to the students in the control group. In another previous study Mrazek et.al (2013) also found significant improvements in students' vocabulary test scores, even though mindfulness was implemented via guided videos daily as ten minutes exercises for two weeks. Furthermore, a learners' awareness of themselves can direct them toward the use of most effective and relevant approaches and learning strategies during language acquisition. In the research carried out by Garretson (2010), it was shown that the practice of mindfulness in an English as a Second Language (ESL) class helped students improve their reading and writing abilities. The researcher asserted that being more aware of inner processes and regularly practicing on purpose had the ability to cause learners to perceive reading as an experiential process and flourish stronger reflective skills in writing.

"Being mindful leads us to greater sensitivity to context and perspective, and ultimately to greater control over our lives" (Langer, 2000, p. 220). Practicing mindfulness can help one learn a language more effectively in a variety of different ways. As mentioned and explained in this chapter, practicing mindfulness is more than simply a concentration-building activity; it is also a way for learners in all ages and levels to get a head start in recognizing their own well-being and cultivating an awareness of the importance of their satisfaction in learning. If mindfulness strategy is applied withing the framework of language learning and acquisition, it has the potential to improve the role of learners by making them more actively involved, focusing on meaning, boosting their attention and lowering stress. Integrating the four components of Langer's theorization of mindfulness "novelty seeking, novelty producing, engagement and flexibility" (Langer,2004) which were explained in the previous chapter can also highly contribute to effective language learning, as learning a second or a foreign language might be something entirely foreign to the learners and

it could be considered as an interesting and frustrating experience. As a result of practicing mindfulness, learners will be more successful and less anxious when confronted with anything unfamiliar. Both teachers and students in EFL classes can benefit from stress-reduction techniques of mindfulness mediations. Learners who practice these exercises are better able to concentrate, and there able to find joy and purpose in the material they study. They also become more effective, creative, productive, and have higher academic achievement. Besides, they can pursue a life that is richer in awareness and fulfillment, both within and outside of the classroom.

In an essence, it is highly probable that anxiety impairs learners' academic progress in EFL; and mindfulness has proven to reduce levels of stress and anxiety in many studies in language learning contexts. Including mindfulness techniques into foreign language lessons has the potential of decreasing affective filter and anxiety that students have. Students who engage in the practice of mindfulness will have an easier time concentrating, paying attention, and increasing their level of comprehension, all of which are critical components of the learning process. Due to these factors, it is important to give some thought to the efficacy of mindfulness exercises and the benefits they offer throughout the process of language learning.

2.3 The Importance of Teaching Writing

Writing is one of the most efficient ways for an individual to express his or her thoughts and wishes, as well as to convey comprehension of the other party's views and demands and it is a means by which one generation of people may pass on their knowledge, information, views, and opinions (Deane, 2018). It is often regarded as an essential ability for achieving satisfactory outcomes in language acquisition. When it comes to writing in English, which is extensively utilized for worldwide communication and understanding of the necessary knowledge, its significance grows because of the widespread usage of the language. Also, as a communicative process, written English has a significant influence on the whole education as English is the major source of information in the modern world.

Writing process presents huge challenges for both instructors and students. As will be cited and explained in the following parts, students frequently cite writing as the most difficult component of learning a foreign language. Because it requires

handwriting, correct spelling, grammar, and syntax, as well as the structuring of paragraphs and ideas, it is widely considered to be the hardest talent to acquire (Ioannou & Pavlou, 2003). However, as language teachers, we know that students should place a primary emphasis on developing their writing abilities, as writing is a mode of self-expression, communication and information gathering (Grabe & Kaplan, 1996).

As a challenging cognitive ability, writing and the student to have command over a variety of different aspects such as good grammar, syntax, conceptualization, punctuation, handwriting, organization etc.; as well as thinking and the ability to bring ideas together in a meaningful and coherent way (Ariyanti, 2016; Rahmatunisa, 2014; Tanyer,2015; Toba et al., 2019). It is a process that is "…viewed as the result of complex processes of planning, drafting, reviewing and revising" (Richards & Schmidt, 2002, p.592) and it requires attention to follow all these steps for communicative purposes. Writing contributes to the development of several talents since it is connected with both mental and verbal skills. It aids students in expanding their minds, organizing their information, using language, enhancing their understanding and mental dictionaries. Furthermore; literacy, which is a linguistic competence, depends upon the ability to write. For an individual to become literate, it is important for him/her to acquire the proper writing skills (Karahan, 2021), as language and language skills are required in many areas of life.

The process writing approach is a prevalent technique of teaching English. The Process Writing Approach is a widely recognized instructional method that emphasizes the writing process as a series of recursive and collaborative stages. It is designed to foster students' development of writing skills through a systematic and reflective approach. The approach consists of several key stages. During the pre-writing stage, students engage in brainstorming, generating ideas, and planning their writing. Techniques such as mind mapping, freewriting, or outlining are commonly used to organize their thoughts (Murray, 1985). In the drafting stage, students begin to write their first drafts, focusing on expressing their ideas without excessive concern for grammar or mechanics. The emphasis is on fluency and generating content(Hyland, 2018). The revision stage is where students review and revise their initial drafts to improve clarity, coherence, and organization. They may work individually or collaboratively, incorporating feedback from peers, teachers, or engaging in self-

assessment (Flower & Hayes, 1981). Following the revision phase, the editing phase follows. Students refine their writing by addressing issues with grammar, syntax punctuation, and sentence structure. This stage seeks to improve linguistic precision and usage (Vivian, 1982). Finally, the publishing stage involves sharing and presenting the revised and edited piece of writing. Students may share their work with the class, create a class publication, or publish their writing digitally (Calkins, 1994).

The process writing approach has been extensively studied and continues to demonstrate numerous positive effects on students' writing skills and overall writing experience. . It encourages students to actively engage in the writing process, promoting their development as effective writers. By guiding students through each stage, this approach allows for reflection, collaboration, and the opportunity to refine their writing skills (Silva & Matsuda, 2002). Recent research has highlighted the following key findings. Firstly, studies have shown that the Process Writing Approach improves students' writing skills, including their ability to generate ideas, organize content, and revise effectively (Hyland & Hyland, 2019). Engaging in the different stages of the writing process enhances students' motivation and engagement, as they have opportunities for self-expression and ownership of their writing (Ferris, 2003). Furthermore, the Process Writing Approach fosters the development of critical thinking skills. Recent research has emphasized the importance of the approach in encouraging students to think critically about their ideas, evaluate evidence, and revise their arguments accordingly (Hyland, 2019; White & Arndt, 1991). It also promotes the development of metacognitive skills, as students engage in reflection and self-assessment, becoming more aware of their writing processes and strategies.

The process writing approach also offers several advantages in contemporary educational contexts. It provides students with an authentic writing experience that aligns with real-world writing tasks in academic and professional settings (Matsuda & Silva, 2014). Moreover, the approach allows for individualization and differentiation, accommodating students' diverse needs and learning preferences as they progress through the writing process. Collaborative learning is also emphasized, with the process writing approach facilitating peer interaction and feedback, promoting a supportive writing community. Lastly, the skills developed through the Process Writing Approach are transferable, benefiting students in various writing tasks across disciplines and fostering lifelong writing competence (Hyland & Hyland, 2019).

Today, it continues to be a valuable and effective instructional method for enhancing students' writing skills, motivation, critical thinking, and metacognitive abilities. Its advantages in promoting authentic writing experiences, individualization, collaboration, and transferable skills make it a relevant and beneficial approach in contemporary educational settings.

As a communicative process, written English has a significant influence on the whole education as English is the major source of information in the modern world. Writing contributes to the development of several talents since it is connected with both mental and verbal skills. For an individual to become literate, it is important for him/her to acquire the proper writing skills, as language and language skills are required in many areas of life. In this context, the precise acquisition of language abilities is a matter that necessitates consideration. Due to its' significance, early identification and resolution of any issues that may hinder or stop writing are required.

2.3.1 Writing anxiety. Writing, which is acknowledged to be a skill that is more difficult to acquire than other abilities, may cause individuals to develop negative attitudes toward writing (Grabe & Kaplan,1996; Nodoushan, 2015). Due to these negative attitudes, demotivation to write, and complexity of the procedures involved; writing anxiety appear as one of the most significant obstacles that to the development of writing abilities. Writing anxiety is a response to the act toward writing when writing is required in forms of feeling of anger, fear and even physically, as cramps (Zorbaz,2011). Erkan and Saban (2021) have provided a definition of writing anxiety as "the tendency of a person to avoid the process of writing-particularly when it is to be evaluated in some way" (p. 181)). Itis one of the affective factors that might hinder or stop the writing process. Students have increased levels of stress and anxiety as a result of writing anxiety, which ultimately leads them to avoid or give up writing (Blasco, 2016).

In a foreign language learning setting, the writing process becomes significantly more difficult and demanding, causing learners to feel more uncomfortable and anxious. Lack of understanding of the subject, incorrect application of spelling rules, or fear of criticism may contribute to writing anxiety. In research conducted at all educational levels from primary school to university, and it has been found that high levels of anxiety had a detrimental effect on the ability to express oneself in writing,

as well as the quality of writing and the level of success achieved in writing (Erkan & Saban, 2011; Hassan, 2001).

Anxiety is also one of the critical factors that contributes to each deliberately. Various research have been conducted to study the connection that exists between writing anxiety and motivation, self-efficacy, confidence and achievement (Alico, 2016; Jebreil, 2015; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Sabti et.al, 2019). Students with lower levels of writing anxiety tend to produce higher quality written pieces and have higher levels of self-esteem (Hassan, 2001). In his research, Ekmekçi (2018) found out that 60% of the participants had anxiety about writing in English. It is seen in many research that lack of knowledge or skill are among the elements that affect students' anxiety levels. EFL learners' degrees of anxiety was examined in Jebreil's (2015) study. The results indicated that EFL students in an Iranian context generally had a significant level of writing anxiety. In addition, it was discovered that students at elementary-level experienced higher degree of writing anxiety than those at the intermediate and advanced levels.

Despite being a cognitive activity, writing competency is linked to motivation, either. Writing anxiety and motivation to learn a language are both affective factors that are integrally tied with each other. Kırmızı and Kırmızı (2015), for example, highlighted the fact that "anxiety gives rise to demotivation and discouragement on the part of the students and as a result they may develop negative self-efficacy and attitudes towards writing" (p.57). The analyses in another study Alico (2016) showedthat the degree of writing anxiety decreased when there was an increase in the amount of language learning and motivation. Another crucial conclusion about writing anxietyis that having higher level of writing anxiety can be associated with having lower writing performance; while having a higher level of self-efficacy and motivation can lead to higher levels of writing performances (Sabti et.al, 2019). The majority of theseresearch have contributed to the conclusion that writing accomplishment, writing and self-efficacy may significantly increase writing performance of the learners, while writing anxiety may significantly impact one's capacity to write in ways that are critical.

2.3.2 ***Mindfulness and Writing.*** In the 21st century, possessing strong writing and critical thinking skills is essential for foreign language learners to thrive as conscious and engaged students. The ability to generate creative ideas, think critically, organize thoughts logically, and fluently express oneself and ideas are highly valued in academic, professional, and personal contexts. However, many students exhibit demotivation, disengagement, and inattentiveness during writing lessons and assignments. They often struggle to find ideas, provide elaboration, and maintain coherence in their writing. Additionally, minor errors in spelling and punctuation further impede their ability to effectively communicate their thoughts. These challenges can be attributed not to the students' English language proficiency, but rather to attention and concentration issues that induce anxiety. Mindfulness practices offer a promising approach to address these writing-related challenges and mitigate the negative effects of anxiety. By cultivating present-moment awareness and non-judgmental acceptance, mindfulness enables students to focus their attention on the writing task at hand. As a result, students can think critically, tap into their creativity, and access their linguistic resources more effectively. The practice of mindfulness enhances students' ability to stay present and engage fully in the writing process, alleviating the anxiety that inhibits their expressive abilities. Through mindfulness, students develop heightened self-awareness, enabling them to identify and regulate anxious thoughts and emotions that often interfere with writing. By reducing anxiety levels, mindfulness can help teachers to create a conducive environment for students to think critically and engage in a more fluid and creative writing process. Moreover, mindfulness facilitates cognitive flexibility, allowing students to generate multiple perspectives and explore diverse ideas, thereby enhancing their critical thinking skills (Kang, et.al. ,2014).

It is inevitable that the reaction to writing would have a detrimental impact on the quality and the success of writing. The complexity of writing as a talent that must be acquired may increase EFL students' anxiety and demotivate them to exert effort to complete a particular writing assignment, which might result in a poor, disappointing performance. Waldman and Carmel (2019, p.15) have eloquently described the link and parallelism between mindfulness and writing as follows:

> *"Mindfulness practice develops reflective abilities about one's thoughts and feelings, while writing practice develops reflective abilities about one's ideas*

and language. Both meditation and writing are usually done in silence. Meditation is done in silence so one can be aware of thoughts and feelings as they arise, and writers often write in silence to connect to thoughts and language processes."

When practiced diligently, the effects of mindfulness mediation on writing yield higher rewards. Mindfulness becomes an important factor for assisting learners in educational practice in a world rife with distraction, stress, and frequently suffering, all of which can impair creativity and wellness. Previous research has shown that employing mindful learning in the classroom helps students develop their ability to focus, their capacity to relax, and their self-esteem, self-confidence, and motivation (Bazzano, 2018; Piscayanti, 2018; Henriksen et.al.,2020). It also fostered creativity and intelligence (Boice, 1994; Wang & Liu, 2016; Siegel, 2007).

Mindfulness also enables pupils to boost their engagement and motivation during the instructional process (Piscayanti, 2018). Implementing mindful learning in writing instruction is viewed as very beneficial since the learning process is anticipated to be more active because it is based on the Mindful Learning feature. The results in Saptura's (2020) study demonstrated that students who were taught utilizing mindful learning had a higher level of writing comprehension. In terms of language components such as grammar, vocabulary, and other measured features such as content organization and mechanics, the experimental group was superior to the control group.

Inattention and poor concentration can lead to incomplete or missedassignments, as well as bad grades (Parker & Kupersmidt, 2016). Mindfulness helps increasing a person's capacity to focus (Sedlmeier et al., 2012). Students are better able to focus and be more engaged in class as a result of the practice of mindful learning (Tuyan & Kabadayi, 2018). Sabtura (2020) stated that "Mindful learning allowed students to be actively involved in the learning process by searching for and finding their own written review concepts based on students' own opinions. It allowedstudents to use their thinking skills to obtained material from various sources such as books, their own experiences, and material from the teacher." In addition, according to research focused on mindfulness and creativity: "Although famous creators are sometimes absentminded, creativity seems to require mindfulness" (Lebuda et al.

2016, p.24). Mindful writing helps writing fluently and creatively (Boice, 1994). Mindful mediations tend to enhance individuals' inventiveness, creativity and performance. Both mindfulness and creativity have been separately promoted as complicated domains in educational methods. Henriksen et.al. (2020) also proposed that the impacts of mindfulness extend to other talents and capacities, including creativity.

The association between anxiety and language acquisition in Turkey has inspired several scholars to perform anxiety-related research as well. Writing abilities and degrees of writing anxiety of Turkish learners and the underlying causes for this phenomenon has also attracted the attention of many researchers and several studies to date have demonstrated that writing anxiety among students is generally high in Turkey (Atay et.al, 2006; Ekmekçi, 2018; Güneyli, 2016; Kara,2013; Kırmızı et.al,2015, Koçali, 2020).

Regarding issues associated with the teaching of writing in Turkey, Karatay's (2011) research is noteworthy. In addition to teacher-related and external issues, Karatay highlighted student-related issues that might create anxiety, such as the fear of committing grammar errors. Furthermore, Ekmekçi (2018) stated that in a foreign or second language setting, the writing process becomes significantly more difficult and demanding, causing pupils to feel more worried and insecure. The findings of a research done by Ekmekçi with prospective English teachers attending an ELT department at a Turkish public university revealed that 60% of the participants experience moderate levels and various types of anxiety about writing. In the research carried out by Koçali (2020) it was discovered that the participants had a moderate level of anxiety towards language learning. Recalling that the majority of studies found that mindfulness helps individuals effectively manage anxiety and stress, it focused on the relationship between mindfulness and FLA, and it found that mindfulness has an effect on the level of FLA among university students.

Mindfulness is a unique technique that may be utilized to positively alternegative arousal in the language classroom and generate superior learning settings, asstated in earlier sections. Considering that Turkish students are highly and moderatelyanxious about foreign language and foreign language writing, it may be advantageous to incorporate mindfulness activities similar to those seen in other backgrounds.

Consequently, including mindfulness into FL teaching may influence the conscious regulation of reactions to classroom situations and provide a less stressful learning environment in Turkey. The author of this study drew attention to the fact that there are insufficient number of studies which examined the relationship between mindfulness and writing anxiety of young learners in Turkey, and aimed to achieve a result that will reveal the relationship between these two.

The cultivation of proper writing and critical thinking skills is crucial in the 21st century, and mindfulness offers a promising strategy to address the challenges associated with writing anxiety. By fostering attention, reducing anxiety, and increasing creativity, mindfulness empowers students to think critically, express themselves effectively, and navigate the demands of writing in an increasingly complex and interconnected world. In the light of all this information obtained, it is possible to conclude that both to eliminate the harmful consequences of writing anxiety and to boost learners' levels of creativity, attention and focus; it could be a good idea to teach them how to cope with it through mindfulness techniques. It is also crucial to address these issues at a young age, before the errors get calcified and the incentive to write is destroyed.

2.4 Conclusion

As stated in the preceding sections, mindfulness-based meditations taught in schools have resulted in a number of positive outcomes for children and adolescents including enhancements in coping and self-control skills, decreases in stress and anxiety; increases in motivation and achievement. Students, especially kids, often struggle to find the motivation to write because of variety of reasons, including an innate fear of not being able to create a proper piece or not being able to gather their ideas together. YLs who lack metacognitive awareness are likely to find the writing process challenging and difficult to navigate as it requires predicting, planning, monitoring, assessing their work and metacognitive control (Annevirta & Vauras, 2006; Bai, 2015).

It is evident that writing anxiety impacts writing skills of secondary school pupils and he development of necessary skills and their feelings about them should be highlightened (Karahan, 2021). Although students' ability to write is one of the most

crucial abilities they need to develop or improve if they want to do well (academically and mentally) in the school, the major context of English for the EFL learners in primary or secondary contexts has not received much attention when it comes to write in a foreign language. Writing is an essential part of communication in the EFL context, and it is an ability that has to be cultivated at a young age. The following study will investigate the effects of mindfulness-based therapies on the writing abilities and anxiety of YLs.

According to Bazzano et.al (2018), it is possible that programs based on mindfulness might help learners with their anxious symptoms. They also state that activities such as yoga and mindfulness mediation may help primary kids better manage their stress, and they may be introduced to existing social and emotional and complementary activities. Zenner et.al (2014)'s systematic review and meta-analysis evaluating the effects of school-based mindfulness programs in a variety of situations has shown promising outcomes in terms of enhancing children's cognitiveperformance and their resistance to the negative effects of stress. Of course, it is important to highlight that finding and implementing appropriate exercises for YLs is crucial. Armstrong (2019) pays attention to the importance of age and level of studentsto adapt practices to suit the developmental need of different groups, as mindfulness was originally developed for adult use. For example, is a good idea to practice activities that will help with sensory-motor skills like mindful stretching in a kindergarten; while teaching how to use mindfulness in daily life to a high school student to deal with stress.

Based on the overviews, educating YLs and motivating them to acquire a language successfully is a vital part of any educational endeavor. The teacher needs to be able to motivate the students and release their level of stress in order for the process to be successful. Considering the effects of mindfulness on improving motivation and success and lowering stress and anxiety, it appears prudent to utilize mindfulness-based practices with YLs in their writing classes, where they experience anxiety, lack of motivation and accuracy.

Chapter 3

Methodology

This chapter discusses the study's methodology by presenting the research design, details about the setting and participants, data collection instruments and the process of data collecting in which the research is conducted. Finally, the chapter finishes with a discussions of the limitations of the study which investigates the effectiveness of implementing mindfulness exercises before the writing lessons.

The following study questions were formulated to get insight into the interrelationship between mindfulness exercises and students' writing performances and writing performances and writing anxiety levels:

1) Is there any significant difference in learners' writing performances between the mindfulness based vs. non-mindfulness based group?

2) Is there any significant difference between the mindfulness based and non-mindfulness based group in terms of writing anxiety level?

3) What are students' perceptions about integrating mindfulness exercises before the writing lessons in the experimental group?

4) What are the teacher's perceptions about the mindfulness exercises and observed benefits of integrating them into the classroom?

3.1 Research Design

This study was planned with the purpose of determining the relationship between mindfulness and writing anxiety among secondary school students at a private Turkish institution in Turkey. To answer the aforementioned research questions, a mixed-method research (MMR) design was adopted. For the quantitative part pretest-posttest design was implemented; and for the qualitative part open-ended surveys and teachers' reflective journal (TRJ) was used to gather data.

Tashakkori and Creswell (2007) provided a definition of MMR design as: "…research in which the investigator collects and analyzes data, integrates the

findings, and draws inferences using both qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study or program of inquiry" (p.4). Qualitative data can provide researchers a better contextualized database than quantitative data. However, data analysis is ideal when both approaches are used effectively and ethically, as MMR allows us to study a single research subject from a range of angles. MMR increases the strengths while eliminating the weaknesses by combining qualitative and quantitative approaches; provides multi-level analysis for complex issues and improved validity and enables researchers to reach multiple audiences (Dörnyei, 2007).

Ivankova et al. (2015) also mentioned about the advantages of using MMR design in the field of applied linguistics as follows: "…the application of MMR potentially provides a more multidimensional and accurate view of the processes of learning a language as well as social, cultural and political factors that influence the development of communicative competence as individuals' cross boundaries, real and virtual." As also Mackey & Gass (2015) stated, MMR design is advantageous as provides greater validity, enables researchers to investigate variety of research questions, gives better explanation of the results, provides a wider picture of a phenomenon and so on.

As cited in Creswell, 2012 (p.540), there are six MMR design types which the first four as basic designs and the last two as complex designs that is started to become more popular: "…the convergent parallel design, the explanatory sequential design, the exploratory sequential design, the embedded design, the transformative design, and the multiphase design." (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In this study, explanatory sequential design was adopted as the quantitative data collection and analysis will follow up with qualitative data collection and analysis for the interpretation and better understanding of the results. The researcher gave equal priority to both quantitative and qualitative data and considered them as equal sources of information and compared the results from both data sets to determine if they yielded similar results or not.

The mixed-methods sequential explanatory design contains two parts: the quantitative and the qualitative (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). "The rationale for this approach is that the quantitative data and results provide a general picture of the research problem; more analysis, specifically through qualitative data collection, is

needed to refine, extend, or explain the general picture." (Creswell, 2012). As Creswell and Clark (2017) stated, explanatory sequential design is easy to design, simple to implement and can be conducted by a sole investigator. Furthermore, when attempting to explain the correlations in quantitative data and offer additional insight on the causes of those relationships, this type of design can also be quite helpful for unexpected discoveries (Creswell & Clark, 2017). McBride (2019) also stated that, sequential explanatory design studies have two-phase design in which quantitative data collection follows qualitative data collection. Later on, the second phase of collecting qualitative data is used either to explain the quantitative findings or further examine them in greater detail, as well as to assist with the interpretation of the quantitative results. The principle behind this strategy is that a high-level comprehension of the study subject may be attained via the collection and analysis of quantitative data. By delving deeper into participants' perspectives, the qualitative data and analysis clarify and explain the statistical findings. (Rossman and Wilson 1985; Tashakkori and Teddlie 1998; Creswell 2003 as cited in Ivankova et al. 2006).

In this mixed method study, quantitative data included students' writing scores before and the implementation of mindfulness exercises, assessed by the classroom teacher using Cambridge Writing Assessment Scale for A2 level (See Appendix O). Also, The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) by Cheng (2004) which has 22 items and designed in a Likert scale was carried out as pretest and posttest to determine students' level of writing anxiety. In the qualitative part, student surveys consisting of five open-ended questions was conducted with the students from the experimental group after the mindfulness-based interventions. Also, teacher journal was kept weekly during the intervention by the researcher and then analyzed to compare and enhance the results gathered from the analysis of the survey, and results obtained from the quantitative part of the research.

3.2 Setting and Participants

This study was conducted with 32 5th grade students aged between 10 to 11 and their teacher at a private secondary school in Turkey during 2022-2023 academic year. The researcher was the writing teacher for two classes and both classes had equal number of students. The researcher was assigned to teach those two classes at the

beginning of the semester. In the experimental group there were 7 male 9 female; and in the control group 7 male and 9 female students.

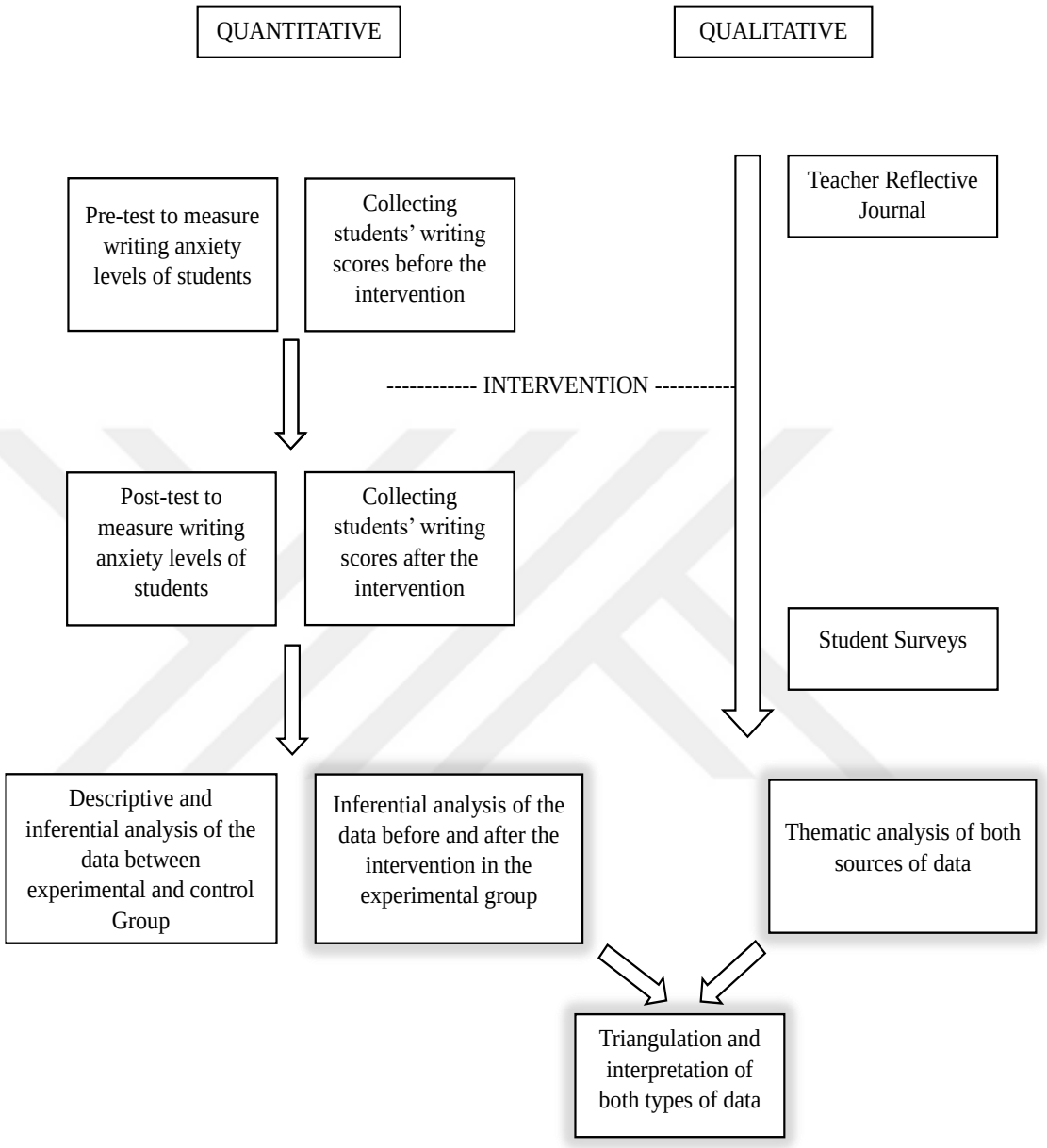

Figure 1. Visual Representation of the Research Design.

All of the students in this study were Turkish. The majority of the students have studied in the same school since their first year of school and started to learn English since then. The students have been exposed to English for a long time and continued their education in this school, which has intensive English lessons and lesson hours. They had sufficient speaking skills, vocabulary and expressions; high in-class participation and exam grades. None of the students had any physical or psychological

disabilities. Demographic distribution of the student-participants is given in the Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency of participants' gender, age and years of studying English

		Experimental		Control		χ^2(p)
		n	%	n	%	
Age	9	1	6.3	0	.0	1.35 (0.51)
	10	12	75.0	14	87.5	
	11	3	18.8	2	12.5	
Gender	Male	7	43.8	7	43.8	0.00 (1.00)
	Female	9	56.3	9	56.3	
Years of Studying English	4 years	2	12.5	2	12.5	0.00 (1.00)
	5 years	4	25.0	4	25.0	
	above 5 years	10	62.5	10	62.5	

Chi-square test, *p<0.05

The school environment was safe and healthy. During the academic year, all lessons were held face-to-face. Both groups had English lessons every day; and had writing lessons weekly or, sometimes biweekly because of the everchanging schedules. Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) based teaching approach was followed by the institution in the English lessons. All students had accessto any kind of materials and equipment whenever needed. All in all, students were in a positive atmosphere both in the school and in the English lessons. The teacher researcher has been teaching English for five years and she had her experience for teaching YLs for four years. The researchers' realization of the contradiction betweenstudents' general language abilities and writing skills was the starting point of this research.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

Due to mixed-method nature of this experimental investigation, both quantitative and qualitative data collection instruments were used. Beginning with quantitative tools, this part provides an in-depth explanation of the methods of data collection—

both quantitative and qualitative that were put to use in the process of this thesis's investigation.

3.3.1 Quantitative data collection instruments. Quantitative data is collected data with a distinct numerical value. Researchers can utilize this measurable data for mathematical calculations and statistical analysis to make meaningful judgements based on the mathematical calculations. In this study, two quantitative data collection instruments were used. The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI) by Cheng (2004) and students' writing scores were used to collect data in the first part of the study.

3.3.1.1 The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory (SLWAI). In order to determine whether or not there would be a change in the anxiety level of students before and after mindfulness-based exercises, SLWAI was performed at the beginning and the end of the intervention period. SLWAI (see Appendix A) is a test which is developed by Cheng (2004) to collect data about students' level of writing anxiety. Cheng intended for his inventory to be applicable not just to situations involving English but also to for other languages. The SLWAI is a 5-point Likert-scale that ranges from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The study conducted by Ateş's (2013) provided the basis for the modified version of SLWAI (See Appendix B) and it was utilized in this investigation. The SLWAI is categorized into three subcategories: cognitive, somatic and avoidance behavior. Cheng (2004) determined that SLWAI had 0.91 percent reliability, 0.85 test-retest reliability. In this study, the SLWAI pretest had an estimated reliability of 0.89 (using Cronbach's alpha). Due to constraints such as time and limited access to participants, a pilot study was not conducted prior to the main study. However, efforts were made to ensure that the research design and methodology were appropriate and feasible for the study. Coefficient alpha for the SLWAI was found to be 0.94 by Liu and Wang (2014), showing strong internal consistency. Correlations with other measures of writing anxiety provided more evidence of convergent validity. In addition, the SLWAI has strong internal consistency, as stated by Wu and Li (2019) with their coefficient alpha of 0.91. Furthermore, a confirmatory factor analysis and concurrent validity with other

measures of writing anxiety provided evidence of construct validity, and a test-retest correlation value of 0.86 indicated high test-retest reliability.

3.3.1.2 Students' writing scores. In order to assess students' writings Cambridge English Writing Assessment Scale for A2 level regarding Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) was used as the assessment rubric. It is designed to test students' understanding and ability in terms of effective use of English. The subscale of the rubric consists of content, organization and language and marks them from 1 to 5 according to the given criteria. Students' pre- and post-intervention writing tasks were collected and graded. Their writing scores were marked before and after the mindfulness-based activities to be able to observe any difference in students' writing performances. The results were collected to interpret any possible advantage/disadvantage of implementing mindfulness-based exercises before their writing lessons. In the data collection process, the written texts produced by the students were collected both as pre and post measures. To ensure consistency and comparability, the texts followed the same structural format. They were assessed and evaluated using standardized criteria, including content, organization, and language proficiency. The evaluation process utilized the Cambridge English Writing Assessment Scale for A2 level, which provided a standardized framework for evaluating the students' writing performance. By employing this assessment scale, the texts were evaluated consistently and objectively, allowing for a reliable comparison of the students' writing abilities before and after the intervention.

3.3.2 Qualitative data collection instruments. Qualitative data is non-numeric information related to the study area to get a better understanding of the phenomena being studied. Qualitative data can be gathered in many different ways. Some of the most common data collection methods are ethnographies, case studies, interviews, diaries or journals, etc. (Mackey & Gass 2015). In this study, open-ended surveys and a teacher journal was benefited in order to investigate the research topic in more depth and relate the findings with the collected quantitative data.

3.3.2.1 Open-ended surveys. In educational research, open-ended surveys are a form of data collection approach in which participants are invited to reply to a series of questions or prompts in their own words, unrestricted by predetermined response alternatives or scales. Open-ended surveys allow participants to express their thoughts, opinions, and experiences in their own words, as opposed to closed-ended surveys, which often require participants to pick from a list of preset response alternatives (Creswell, 2014). Typically, open-ended survey responses are evaluated using qualitative data analysis techniques, such as thematic analysis or content analysis, in order to uncover patterns or themes within the data. These strategies entail methodically evaluating and classifying participant replies in order to uncover recurring themes or patterns across the data collection. Also, open-ended surveys may be tailored to the requirements and interests of individual respondents. Researchers can modify the questions or prompts to generate replies that are relevant to the unique experiences or viewpoints of each participant.

Open-ended surveys can enhance the validity and reliability of the data obtained. When all respondents are presented with the identical questions, researchers may compare and evaluate the results in a more methodical manner (Mack, et.al., 2005). Lastly, it can be a more time- and cost-efficient way of data gathering. Several participants can be interviewed simultaneously, allowing researchers to avoid scheduling and logistical obstacles that often emerge with in-person interviews (Dörnyei, 2007).

In this study, after the results of pre and posttests of the SLWAI and students' writing scores before and after the mindfulness-based exercises were examined, the outline of the survey was determined, and questions were formed. All students in the experimental group have participated in the survey (See Appendix C) to reveal the detailed results of the study. The survey was conducted in Turkish (See Appendix D) to obtain to minimize misunderstandings. Thematic analysis was used to interpret the results.

In order to analyze the open-ended survey data collected from participants, a content analysis procedure was employed. The procedure involved several steps to systematically analyze and interpret the translated responses. First, the translated data were carefully reviewed and familiarized to gain an understanding of the content.

Then, a coding framework was developed, consisting of relevant categories or codes that captured the main themes and patterns in the data. Using this framework, the data were systematically coded, assigning appropriate codes to segments of the responses. Consistency and reliability were ensured through intercoder reliability checks and discussions to resolve any discrepancies. Once the data were coded, the coded segments were analyzed to identify recurring themes, key ideas, and insights. Interpretations and explanations were then derived from the analyzed data, providing a comprehensive understanding of the participants' responses. Throughout the process, rigorous measures were taken to enhance the trustworthiness of the analysis, such as member checking and peer debriefing. The findings from the content analysis were subsequently reported, presenting the identified themes and supporting evidence from the participants' translated responses.

3.3.2.2 Teacher's reflective journal. Dewey (1933) described reflective inquiry as the "active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in light of the grounds that support it and further conclusions to which it tends" (p. 9). Research journals are diaries kept by the researchers themselves during the course of a research project rather than by the participants of a study concerning the topic of the investigation (Dörnyei, 2007). Keeping reflective journals enables teachers to monitor their professional growth, reflect on their behaviors, manage time and plan (Silverman, 2015), so that they can evaluate how the inquiry process going, show how to proceed with appropriate measures, or help them to interpret the outcomes collected from other data collection instruments.

In this study, the teacher kept a weekly journal throughout the study to strengthen the qualitative part of the study by correlating qualitative observations with quantitative findings. The teacher noted the observed effects of mindfulness exercises on students' feelings, performances and progress. Data collected from TRJs were used to determine the teachers' perceptions about teaching mindfully and being a mindful role-model in the class, referring to the fourth research question.

3.4 Data Collection Procedures

By outlining the course of study week by week with regards to sample kinds, quantitative and qualitative research instruments, this part aims to provide understandable insights on the efficacy of the mindfulness based exercises.

To investigate the effectiveness of mindfulness practices in reducing writing anxiety, a mixed-method study was conducted using a quasi-experimental approach. Participants were asked a series of questions regarding their ages, genders, and years of English study before the implementation phase began. In order to avoid any problems with adopting activities that entail breathing or physical motions, information regarding their physical and psychological health and well-being was gathered from the school's psychological counselor about the students in the experimental group. Only one of the pupils tested positive for diabetes.

3.4.1 Specific benefits of mindfulness-based exercises. Students usually starts the lesson with lots of questions and hesitations in their mind. When students enter the classroom, teachers want them to be ready to learn, to accept and remember information. However, students are unable to accomplish this with so much on their thoughts. An anxious pupil will probably struggle to learn the language and will be unable to concentrate. As Krashen (1982) indicated “Low anxiety appears to be conducive to second language acquisition, whether measured as personal or classroom anxiety.” Empirical results suggest that anxiety influences student communication techniques, and “more anxious students tend to avoid attempting difficult or personal messages in the target language” (Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope, 1986).

There are several personal advantages of integrating mindfulness and mediation into language learning such as a reduction in blood pressure, an improvement in focus, a lessening of worry and tension, a sharpening of memory, and an improvement in both cognitive processing and emotional stability. (Mozzon-McPherson, 2019). Schwester (2022) also stated that the affective filter can be lowered by practices like mindfulness, meditation, and yoga, which can then assist language acquisition and production by reducing anxiety and possibly promoting risk-taking in the foreign language classroom. Therefore, a student’s ability to focus and remember informationcan be enhanced via regular meditation (Machado, 2014).

There are many mindfulness or mindfulness-based exercises that teachers can practice in the language classroom. The body scan, for instance, focuses one's curiosity and attention on bodily sensations, as sensations, all over the body and increases attention. (Ie, et.al, 2014). On the other hand, “Breathing exercises can be helpful for students to increase their focus and feel less anxious. Because when we breathe, it connects to our brain and, our emotions, and goes through our body.” (Koike, 2018). Mozzon-McPherson (2019) also mentioned that breathing and body-scan mediation helps language learners to increase quality of attention and perception and decrease anxiety levels before an exam or any stressful moment. Mindful coloring was also found to increase capacity of concentration, awareness and enhanced functioning in Dresler & Perera’s (2019) qualitative study. The participants indicated that they used coloring books to enhance their concentration. Carsley et al., 2015 and Carsley & Heath, 2018 also discovered that mindfulness based coloring activities were also helpful in reducing anxiety levels both for adults and children.

Furthermore, as yoga includes various physical postures and directives, such as the TPR method Morgan (2011) related Total Physical Response (TPR) approach and yoga practices and modeled some lessons for teaching a foreign or second language. According to the TPR approach, learners' memories are improved and helped by physical activity (Asher, 1966). For example, Morgan (2011) mentioned that “Awareness of Mind and Body” exercise can be used before a quiz or an exam, which the teacher knows her learners are anxious about, as it promotes concentration and awareness. Shin (2006) also mentioned the impact of yoga practices and said learners can benefit from taking a break from technology and becoming more aware of the present moment, their physical surroundings, and the job at hand when simple yoga positions and visualization activities are taught in the classroom. According to The Harvard Health Blog, yoga reduces anxiety and stress; while improving classroom behavior and increasing concentration and memory in children.

As mentioned previously, we may give basic mindful exercises as warming up activities to help students focus on the tasks at hand and prepare them to move to the English learning mode. Meditation and mindfulness exercises may also be utilized as a tool for classroom management, as a means of introducing a new topic, and as a quick means of creating an atmosphere that promotes relaxation, focus, and academic success so that our students will be better able to concentrate and retain knowledge

after meditating. Considering the effects of the aforementioned exercises and practices above, the treatment included mindful breathing, yoga and coloring exercises as they help students to focus attention, reduce anxiety, and increase creativity.

3.4.2 Treatment and implementation. The implementation of mindfulness-based exercises in the writing lessons was carried out for 10 weeks with 5th grade students in the experimental group. Process writing approach was used in the lessons throughout the semester both in the experimental and control group. Process writing is an approach which treats all writing as a creative act which requires positive feedback and time (Stanley, 1993). That is why, YLs didn't come up with a whole written product after each lesson, but they followed the steps that leads to the final product. As Steele (1992), Process Writing Approach involves eight stages - brainstorming, planning, mind mapping, writing the first draft, peer feedback, editing, final draft, evaluation and teachers' feedback. Process writing allows for the reality that no text can be flawless, but that a writer will grow closer to perfection through producing, thinking on, discussing, and revising drafts of a text (Nunan, 1991).

Mindfulness-based exercises were practices at the beginning of all writing lessons for 10 weeks. Calming music or sounds are frequently used in mindfulness exercises. So, plus the mindfulness-based exercises, a soft, calming music was also played while YLs were writing, as an extra intervention to help them calm and focus. Same lessons with the same objectives were conducted in the control group, without the existence of mindfulness exercises. During the implementation process of the study, a specific time allocation was made to ensure that both the control and experimental groups had equal opportunities to complete their writing tasks. To achieve this, an additional 10-15 minutes were incorporated just before the start of the lesson for the implementation of mindfulness exercises. This ensured that both groups had the same amount of time available to focus on their writing. Prior to the implementation of mindfulness exercises, clear instructions were provided to the students in the experimental group, outlining the purpose and procedure of the exercises. These instructions aimed to guide the students in engaging in mindfulness activities effectively. On the other hand, the control group followed the regular lesson plan without any mindfulness exercises. This approach ensured that any observed

differences in the writing outcomes between the two groups could be attributed to the implementation of mindfulness exercises rather than variations in the time allocated or instructions given.

3.4.2.1 Week 1: Introduction and balloon breathing. In the first writing lesson with mindfulness-based exercises, the concept of mediation and mindfulness was explained by the teacher, and the possible benefits of these exercises were discussed in the lesson. Following this brainstorming, 2-3 minutes Balloon Breathing mediation was conducted. The teacher read the prepared script (see Appendix E) as a smooth and short start to introduce mindfulness exercises to the learners. The practice was repeated twice. Since some YLs may be hesitated about closing their eyes, the first exercise was done with eyes open as a warm-up, by following a guided video (see Appendix F). The teacher opened a video of a swinging balloon to help learners get used to the practice, and YLs followed the video and teachers' instructions while the teacher was reading the prepared script. The teacher didn't read the second step in the first practice (Close your eyes). When it was observed that the YLs were comfortable, the second exercise was done with the eyes closed. Following the exercise, the usual weekly writing lesson was conducted. The objective of the lesson was to brainstorm about the main idea of the sample text and analyze it by means of the comprehension activities. It was an informative text about different traditions about making a wish around the world. The definition, statistics and some facts about the topic was given in the text. At the end of the lesson, the teacher asked YLs what they have noticed about how they felt before and after the breathing exercise to get an overall quick feedback. The teacher assigned them homework to do some research about other traditions and find facts, statistics, etc. and provide examples.

3.4.2.2 Week 2: Forward bend and mindfulness mediation. In week 2 YLs had two writing lessons. Having known about the concept of mindfulness, the lesson started with a yoga exercise named Forward Bend (See Appendix G). After the teacher greeted the class, and created the quiet and calm atmosphere, she started to read the script. They repeated this exercise 3 times. The objective of the lesson was finding ideas about the topic, drawing a graphic organizer by using the research they have

made and writing topic sentences for each paragraph to get prepared for writing their first drafts in the next lesson.

In lesson 2; a mindfulness mediation video was played for 3 minutes (see Appendix H) at the beginning. The video was consisted of sounds of a mindfulness bell. The teacher asked YLs to close their eyes and focus until the video stops. This time, they were required to organize their ideas and write the first draft of their texts. By referring to the sample graphic organizer, the teacher showed how to write an introduction paragraph by sharing her own text. Then, she played a soft background music for 3 minutes to write their introductions. The teacher then showed her body paragraph and asked them to write their own paragraphs approximately in 6 minutes. The background music was played again. Lastly, the teacher showed the example conclusion paragraph and asked them to write their conclusion in 3 minutes again with the background music. At the end of the lesson, the teacher asked some reflection questions to the kids such as “Did had any difficulty?”, “How did you feel? Boring, focused, happy, unpleasant?”, etc.

3.4.2.3 Week 3: Guided belly breathing. The teacher greeted the students in the class with a calm voice and created a comfortable atmosphere. She introduced the activities they are going to complete in this lesson briefly. The lesson started with a guided belly breathing mediation. (see Appendix I) Before they start the mediation, the teacher made sure all them are ready and quiet. Once they are ready, the teacher played the video, and they followed the instructions. After the mediation, the teacher reminded revising and editing techniques by referring to the poster on the wall and asked them to start revising first. She showed them an example of the revised version of her example draft and explained they can revise by adding words/sentences, by removing unnecessary words/sentences, by word placement, by substituting words or sentences for others. She gave them 5 minutes to revise their drafts and played a soft background music. After they completed revising, the teacher asked volunteers to share their writing. Moving on, the teacher very briefly showed how to edit a draft by correcting any mistakes related to capitalizations, usage, punctuation and spelling. She showed an example edited draft before they start. She gave them 5 minutes for editing

and the background music was played again. At the end of the lesson, volunteers read their revised and edited drafts and got peer-feedback on the final version of their texts.

3.4.2.4 Week 4: Buzzing bee. In this lesson, YLs in the experimental group started a new topic by working on a model text. Before the teacher had started the lesson, she introduced the breathing exercise they are going to practice. After all students settled, the teacher started to read the prepared script of Buzzing Bee mediation in a calm voice. (see Appendix J). Buzzing Bee is a version of the breathing technique Brahamari Pranayama, which is practiced in yoga for little kids. They repeated the exercise 3 times, and it took almost 5 minutes to complete.

After that, the teacher asked YLs to read the model text paragraph by paragraph. The text was about a boy who makes wishes for the people he knows. After they were done, the teacher asked them to decide on three wishes they would make and then, showed how "so" and "because" are used in the model text. She explained that "so" precedes resulting actions as it is a linking word that connects a cause to an effect and "because "connects reasons. The teacher also wanted YLs to refer to the model text to see the given examples there. Later on, she asked them to write down their wishes and the possible result of them by using these connectors. Some volunteers read their wishes and talked about the why they decided to make such wishes and the possible results of them. At the end of the lesson, the teacher showed a sample text with capitalization and punctuation mistakes and asked YLs to find them. She then revealed the answers.

3.4.2.5 Week 5: Mindful coloring. The lesson started with a coloring activity to get YLs focused. The teacher distributed the mindful coloring page (see Appendix K) and played a background music for the first 10 minutes. She asked them to color the page without interacting with their friends; quietly by only focusing on the music, shapes and colors. After 10 minutes, the teacher quickly reminded them what they talked about in the last weeks' lesson. Then, she asked YLs to create their graphic organizers by writing the three people they have chosen, the reasons why they have chosen these people, possible results of their wishes and a conclusion. At the end of the class, the teacher asked YLs about how did they feel; focused, calm or maybe

energetic? She wanted them to share their thoughts on this exercise to see if they feel any difference in their performances.

3.4.2.6 Week 6: Body scan. The teacher greeted the students as usual. She started the lesson with body scan exercise (see Appendix L) which helps learners to increase their awareness and focus better. The exercise took 4 to 5 minutes. After then, the teacher showed a sample graphic organizer she has completed and asked them to check if their organizers were ready, too. By referring their graphic organizers, the teacher asked YLs to write their topic sentences for their introduction, body, and conclusion paragraphs. The teacher showed the example topic sentences and expected them to write their own sentences in 10 minutes. A soft background music was played while they were working. At the end of the lesson, volunteers read their sentences. The teacher informed them that they are going to start writing their drafts in the lesson next week.

3.4.2.7 Week 7: Guided mindfulness mediation. The lesson started with a 6-minutes guided mindfulness mediation video (see Appendix M). The teacher started the video after all students are ready. After the mediation, the teacher quickly reminded them about the topic sentences they have written and directed YLs' attention to the sample text to show each section clearly (introduction- 3 body paragraphs-conclusion) once again before they start writing. She also drew their attention to the usage of "I wish" clauses (wish + past simple to talk about a situation in the present that we want to be different). (Prior to this writing lesson, YLs have practiced "I wish" clauses in language in use lesson.) The teacher also reminded them to support each wish with a reason and effect by using "because" and "so". She told them to refer their graphic organizers and topic sentences they wrote. The teacher asked them to follow her lead – 3 minutes for introduction, 9 minutes for three body paragraphs, and 3 minutes for conclusion. The soft background music was played as usual during the writing process.

3.4.2.8 Week 8: Awareness of mind and body. The lesson started with the Awareness of Mind and Body exercise (see Appendix N). The teacher began the lesson by reading the instructions once all students were ready. After the mediation, the

teacher showed her sample text and the revised and edited versions. She reminded YLs the steps they need to check while editing (capitalization, language use, punctuation, spelling) and revising (adding, removing, moving, substituting). The poster about editing and revising was still there, and they were able to look at it in case they forget some of the steps. The teacher gave 8 minutes to edit and 8 more minutes to revise. Soft background music was played during these processes. Some volunteers shared the final version of their texts.

3.4.2.9 Week 9: Guided belly breathing. The teacher said hello to the students in a calm voice and made everyone feel at ease. She gave a brief description of the things they will do in this lesson. the teacher introduced the topic of the new writing task by showing an example text about music and its' effect in our lives and started a discussion by asking them about their favorite songs. After eliciting some information, the teacher introduced the model text on their students' book and confirmed the general understanding.

They continued the lesson with a guided meditation on belly breathing (see Appendix I). The teacher made sure that everyone was ready and quiet before they started the meditation. When the YLs were ready, the teacher played the video, and they did what it said. The teacher asked YLs to think about three important or memorable moments in their lives during the mediation. After the mediation, they noted down those moments and memories briefly into their notebooks. After that, the teacher asked YLs to think about songs for these memories and ages that would represent those moments in their lives. The teacher also reminded capitalization and punctuation rules about how to mention songs and singers/bands in the text by using capital letters, quotation marks and commas. The teacher had them complete the graphic organizer using the information to plan the outline of their task and played a background music. Later on, the teacher reminded how to use information to write their introduction, body and conclusion paragraphs. YLs later wrote their first draft by using their graphic organizers and listening to some songs. The teacher helped the ones who needed guidance at some points during the lesson as usual.

3.4.2.10 Week 10: Mindfulness bell sound. The lesson started with mindfulness bell sound. YLs closed their eyes and focused while listening to the sound. The teacher asked them to remember their first drafts and what they have written to elaborate on their text. Right after the short mediation, the teacher asked YLs to have a look at the draft they have written; and asked them to edit and revise their text in total of 10 minutes and played a background music while they do for them to peacefully work on it. After they finish editing and revising process, they have written the final version of their text and some volunteers read their text in front of the class.

3.5 Data Analysis

As previously mentioned at the beginning of the chapter, this research was a mixed-methods explanatory sequential design study, meaning that the quantitative data and results provide a general picture of the research problem; additional analysis, particularly through qualitative data collection, is required to refine, extend, or explain the general picture.

3.5.1 Quantitative data analysis. Following the completion of the research on the participants' demographics, the categorical variables were presented in the form of percentages. For the purpose of data analysis, the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, v26.0 (SPSS), was utilized. The evaluation of descriptive statistics included determining the mean, as well as the minimum and maximum scores. The pretest and posttest (SLWAI) findings and writing scores of the participants were compared using a Paired Samples t-test in order to determine whether or not there is a statistically significant difference between the two groups of data, and the differences in mean scores between the control group and experimental group were shown.

Table 2

Reliability Analysis Results of The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory Scores (SLWAI)

		Cronbach's alpha	N of Items
SLWAI	Pre	.92	22
	Post	.94	22

On the basis of all scale factors and items, the Cronbach's alpha method, which is one of the methods for analyzing reliability, was utilized. In this method, it is determined whether or not the questions on the scale express a homogeneous whole. It is calculated using the ratio of the question variances to the overall variance. It accepts numbers between 0 and 1. The range from .60 to .80 is highly reliable, as is the range from .80 to 1.00. In addition, caution is taken to ensure that the correlations between scale items do not fall below .30. Items above this threshold are omitted from the reliability analysis. The range of the second language writing anxiety inventory pre-post-test Cronbach's alpha coefficient was therefore determined to be between .92 and .94. The desired phenomenon has been measured accurately using these commonly used procedures, and a trustworthy result has been obtained.

3.5.2 Qualitative data analysis. In addition to the procedures of statistical data interpretation, qualitative data acquired through open-ended surveys and the teacher's reflective journal were utilized in order to support evidence for the quantitative findings. This was done in order to ensure that the data were accurate. During the qualitative analysis, the student-participants' identities were substituted with pseudonyms to maintain their confidentiality and protect their privacy. This approach was favored over giving them numbers in order to simplify the process of data interpretation both for the researcher and the reader. After the quantitative data from the SLWAI and students' writing scores obtained, survey questions were created to examine the data in depth. The surveys were conducted only with the students in the experimental group.

TRJ was also kept starting from the day the teacher started to implement mindfulness-based exercises in class; not necessarily in the day of implementation or in those specific lessons, but in any day whenever the teacher observed and realized something related to mindfulness. The teacher took the attendance in the days of writing lessons and noted any detail; a benefit or harm. Answers obtained from the reflective questions asked by the teacher at the end of the lessons were also noted. The findings were analyzed to be interpreted together with the surveys.

The data were analyzed using thematic analysis. For evaluating qualitative data such as open-ended surveys and teacher diaries, thematic analysis is a common

technique. The process of identifying patterns or themes in the data and sorting them into relevant categories is known as thematic analysis. It is a versatile method applicable to a variety of qualitative data types and research issues (Braun and Clarke 2006). In the case of open-ended surveys and teacher reflective journals, thematic analysis can be very helpful in discovering common patterns in the replies or experiences of participants. For instance, a thematic analysis of teacher diaries might indicate topics about classroom management, student involvement, or instructor self-reflection. A thematic analysis of open-ended survey responses might uncover themes relating to participants' attitudes, beliefs, or experiences about a specific issue (Braun and Clarke, 2019).

The open-ended student surveys were initially translated and transcribed. Afterwards, students' survey responses and RTJs were read from beginning to end to increase engagement with the data. Pseudonymization was utilized to secure participants' identities and ensure their confidentiality, especially while collecting sensitive data. The names of the participants were replaced by numbers. Using QDA Miner Lite Software, the raw data were encoded and compiled into larger categories for each data set type in the second reading (Provalis Research, n.d.).

To determine the degree of inter-rater reliability of the open-ended survey answers and TRJ, two English language teachers that work in the same institution reviewed the topics. In order to increase the reliability, the themes were created by both teachers. Relevant statements were compared and contrasted, and the main themes and their sub-themes were put together.

The researcher collected the surveys, translated and transcribed them to conducted content analysis by extracting themes and codes from the data. Following the processes outlined by Creswell (2014), teachers coded the responses to the survey and conducted it to extract the most useful information. Codes were assigned to sections of the replies based on their similarity to the predetermined categories. Finally, the numbers of replies with the identical codes in each category were counted to get the frequencies and percentages. A second set of eyes was used to verify the accuracy of the qualitative data analysis to ensure inter-rater reliability. Cohen's Kappa analysis was used for the Interrater reliability analysis. This value takes a value between -1 and 1. 0 - 0.20 is very weakly reliable, 0.21-0.39 is minimally reliable,

0.40-0.59 is weakly reliable, 0.60-0.79 is moderately reliable, 0.80-0.90 is strongly reliable, and above 0.90 is excellent reliability (Mchugh, 2012, p. 282). When the interrater reliability results of the research were evaluated, the open ended survey Cohen's Kappa result was 0.50 and the teacher reflective journal Cohen's Kappa result was 0.57. Both open ended survey and teacher reflective journal interrater reliability results are weakly reliable (0.40-0.59).

Table 3

Interrater Reliability Scores for Each Qualitative Datasets

	Open-ended survey	Teacher reflective journal
N. of codes included both raters	15	12
N. of codes excluded both raters	1	0
N. of codes included only by the first rater	1	1
N. of codes included only by the second rater	3	2
Total number of codes	20	15
Total number of categories	5	3
Cohen's Kappa	0.50	0.57

There could be multiple causes for this result. For instance, obtaining consistent ratings may be more challenging if the number of cases or participants is small, especially if the data is diverse or complex. This is due to the fact that a small sample size may not provide sufficient data to adequately encompass the range of responses or data variability. As a result, the raters may have less data to work with, making it more difficult to establish precise criteria or definitions and leading to rating inconsistencies (Koo, etl.al, 2016). Similarly, short answers or responses may not provide sufficient information for making precise evaluations or assessments. This is especially problematic if the response options are limited or the categories are not well-defined, as raters may have difficulty distinguishing between similar codes andthemes.

3.5.3 Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative data. Triangulation is a beneficial strategy for enhancing the credibility of qualitative research by validating the correctness of data and conclusions and offering a more solid and thorough grasp

of the issue under investigation (Maxwell, 2013). In the context of gathering information from individuals with various skills and views, triangulation might involve receiving input from individuals with distinct backgrounds, experiences, and points of view. Using several data collection methods, such as surveys and interviews, is another example of triangulation. By merging the outcomes of different methodologies, researchers can gain a more complete grasp of their area of study (Creswell and Creswell 2017).

In this study, both are used in the triangulation of data for this investigation. Initially, quantitative data were obtained from both student participants. Qualitative data collection methods were used both during (Teacher Reflective Journals) and after (survey with open-ended questions) the intervention.

3.6 Limitations

Although it may be argued that the current study achieved its objectives through the use of a range of data gathering technologies and a thorough data analysis procedure, it is important to stress the study's applicable limits. At the beginning of the school year, the teacher was given the responsibility of working with students of this age range and class. Due to this issue, the size of the sample, which was N = 32, was insufficient for the purpose of conducting a research. Unfortunately, the number of participants is too limited to make any broad statements on ELT, despite the fact that the research focuses on a unique area that hasn't been explored by a significant number of other academics. The fact that the teacher is not a qualified mindfulness instructor is also a disadvantage for the study. In order to address this issue, practices from other research and literature were incorporated into the sessions. Lastly, the duration of the intervention, which was just 10 weeks long, was a second restriction of the research. The minimum amount of time that was required in order to conform to the academic year and dates of the secondary school was the first consideration in the brief application. The implementation procedure was supposed to take 12 or more weeks, however due to unforeseen circumstances, it could only be carried out over the course of 10 weeks. Writing classes had to be skipped at times since the academic program that has to be followed, as well as the course load, project intensity, and general exam schedule of secondary school students, required that they be followed. A longer

longitudinal investigation may have resulted in a deeper grasp of the topic and conclusions that are more specific

Chapter 4

Findings

4.1 Quantitative Findings

This chapter presents the findings of a study that examined the impact of mindfulness exercises on the foreign language writing anxiety of secondary school students attending a private secondary school in Istanbul. In the following subsections, quantitative and qualitative data findings are presented sequentially.

Considering the analysis of the data, detailed statistics such as frequency, percentage, arithmetic mean, standard deviation, minimum and maximum were used. Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, which is one of the normality distribution tests, was used in the analysis of the data, and parametric tests were used since the normality conditions were met as a result of the analysis.

A paired samples t-test results were used to compare the means of 2 dependent groups, and independent sample t-test results were used to compare the means of 2 independent groups. Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used in the reliability analysis of the scales. All test results were evaluated at the 0.05 significance level.

In the study, 75% of the students in the experimental group were 10 years old; 43.8% were boys and 56.3% were girls; and it was seen that 62.5% of the students have studied English for more than 5 years. It was determined that 87.5% of the students in the control group were 10 years old; 43.8% were boys and 56.3% were girls; and again, it was seen that 62.5% of the students have studied English for more than 5 years. In addition, when the relationship between the experimental and control groups was evaluated with the chi-square relationship test, there was no significant relationship ($p>0.05$). The groups showed homogeneous distribution. The Kolmogorov Smirnov test revealed that the normality distribution of "Writing," "The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory," and "Writing Scores in Terms of Content, Organization, and Language" the scores showed a normal distribution ($p>.05$).

Table 4

Normality Distribution Analysis Results of The SLWAI and Writing Scores in Terms of Content, Organization and Language Scores

			Kolmogorov-Smirnov			Skewness	Kurtosis
			Statistics	df	p		
Writing	Experimental	Pre	.15	16	.07*	-1.42	1.08
		Post	.18	16	.20*	-.59	-.33
	Control	Pre	.20	16	.05*	-.13	.43
		Post	.20	16	.06*	-.64	-.85
SLWAI	Experimental	Pre	.19	16	.06*	-1.38	1.16
		Post	.13	16	.20*	-.67	1.00
	Control	Pre	.18	16	.06*	-.89	-.20
		Post	.09	16	.20*	.08	-.20
Content	Experimental	Pre	.17	16	.06*	-1.43	-1.15
		Post	.18	16	.06*	-1.38	-1.31
Organization	Experimental	Pre	.12	16	.09*	-1.11	-1.40
		Post	.14	16	.08	-.94	-.28
Language	Experimental	Pre	.21	16	.06	-.27	-.34
		Post	.21	16	.07*	-.64	-.03
Total	Experimental	Pre	.20	16	.07*	-1.42	-1.08
		Post	.18	16	.20	-.59	-.33

*p>.05

4.1.1 Results of student's writing scores. To respond to the initial research question, "Is there a significant difference between the writing abilities of learners in the mindfulness-based and non-mindfulness-based groups?" The subsequent tests were carried out and their findings were obtained. Using the dependent sample t-test, the pre-post writing test results of students in the experimental and control groups were compared. In the experimental group, theaverage score on the writing post-test (M: 86.25, SD: 12.52) was significantly higher than the average score on the writing pre-test (M: 63.75, SD: 23.85) (t (15): -3.80, p0.01). In the control group, there was no significant difference between the average pre-test and post-test scores for writing (t(15) = 1.62, p =.13, p>.05).

Table 5

Paired Samples T-Test Results of Writing Scores

			M	SD	t	df	p
Writing	Experimental	Pre	63.75	23.85	-3.80	15	.001***
		Post	86.25	12.52			
	Control	Pre	70.42	15.39	1.62	15	.13
		Post	62.08	24.55			

Paired samplest t test, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, Results of Writing Scores

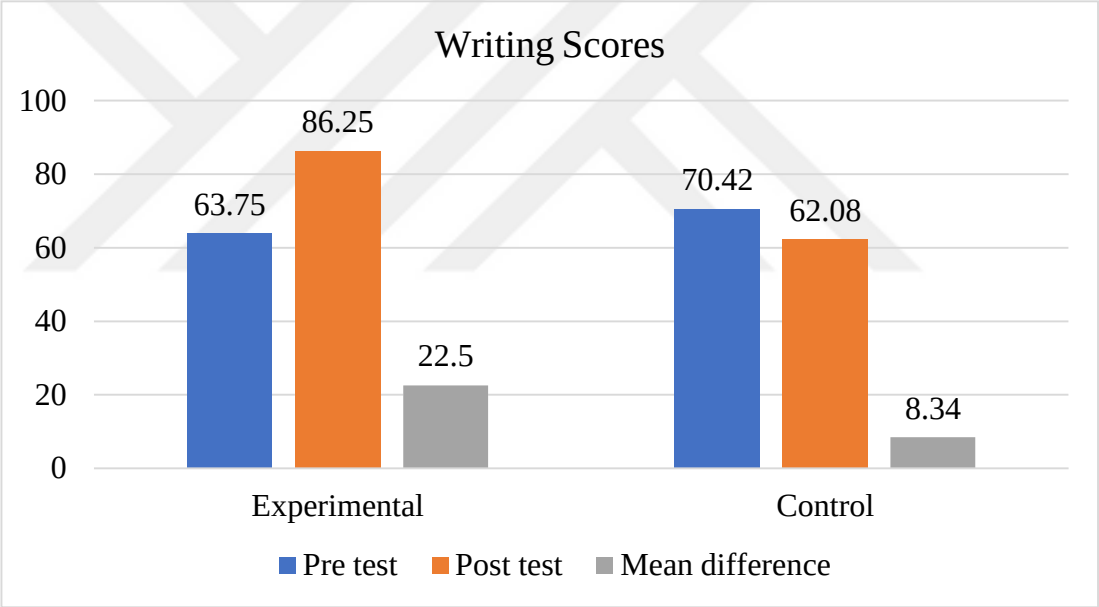

Figure 2. Mean differences in Overall Writing Scores

As per the experimental and control groups, the pre- and post-writing test results of the students in the study were also evaluated using the independent sample t-test. The control group's average writing pre-test score (M: 70.42, SD: 15.39) is higher than the experimental group's average writing pre-test score (M: 63.75, SD: 23.85), but the difference is not statistically significant (t(30): -.94, p>.05). The average writing post-test score of students in the experimental group (M: 86.25, SD:

12.52) was found to be significantly higher than the average writing post-test score of students in the control group (M: 62.08, SD: 24.55) (t(22.31): 3.51, p< .001).

Table 6

Independent Samples T-Test Results of Writing Scores

		N	M	SD	t	df	p
Pre-writing Scores	Experimental	16	63.75	23.85	-.94	30	0.35
	Control	16	70.42	15.39			
Post-writing Scores	Experimental	16	86.25	12.52	3.51	22.31	<0.00***
	Control	16	62.08	24.55			

Independent samplest t test, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, SLWAI: Writing Scores

To provide a deeper knowledge of the impacts of mindfulness on experimental group students' writing abilities, the pre- and post-test scores of students in the experimental group were compared in detail. The dependent sample was also evaluated using the t-test in terms of content, organization, and language as an addition. It was observed that the experimental group demonstrated an improvement in all categories. The post-test content mean score (M: 4.75, SD: .58) was significantly greater than the pre-test content mean score (M: 3.50, SD: 1.37) (t(15): -4.44, p=.001). The post-test mean score for the organization (M: 4.44, SD: 0.73) is significantly greater than the pre-test mean score (M: 3.19, SD: 1.38; t(15): -3.18, p=.006, p=.01). The mean post-test score for language (M: 4, SD: .89) was significantly higher than the mean pre-test score (M: 3,13, SD: 1.20) (t(15): -2.48, p: .025, p=.05). The mean post-test score (M: 12.94, SD: 1.8) was significantly higher than the mean pre-test score (M: 9.56, SD: 3.58; t(15) = -3.80, p = .002, p =.01).

Table 7

Paired Samples T-Test Results of Writing Scores in Terms of Content, Organization and Language

			M	SD	t	df	p
Content	Experimental	Pre	3.50	1.37	-4.44	15	<.001***
		Post	4.75	.58			
Organization	Experimental	Pre	3.19	1.38	-3.18	15	.006**
		Post	4.44	.73			
Language	Experimental	Pre	3.13	1.20	-2.49	15	.025*
		Post	4.00	.89			
Total	Experimental	Pre	9.56	3.58	-3.80	15	.002**
		Post	12.94	1.88			

Paired samplest t-test, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, Writing Scores in Terms of Content, Organisation and Language

4.1.2 Results of SLWAI scores. In order to answer the second research question, "Is there a significant difference between the mindfulness-based group and the non-mindfulness-based group in terms of writing anxiety?" the subsequent analyses were also utilized.

Table 8

Paired Samples T-Test Results of The SLWAI Scores

			M	SD	t	df	p
SLWAI	Experimental	Pre	69.25	14.28	8.30	15	<.001***
		Post	45.50	11.11			
	Control	Pre	66.75	14.48	.74	15	.47
		Post	65.31	11.26			

Paired samplest t-test, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, Writing Scores The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory Scores

When the pre-post test results of the students in the experimental and control groups on the SLWAI were analyzed using the dependent sample t-test, it was discovered that the students in the experimental group demonstrated a significant decrease in anxiety. Students in the experimental group scored significantly lower on the second language writing anxiety post-test (M: 45.50, SD: 11.11) than on the pre-test (M: 69.25, SD: 14.28) (t(15): 8.30, p=.001). There was no significant difference between the post-test and pre-test mean scores for second language writing anxiety among students in the control group (t(15) = .74, p = .47, p>.05).

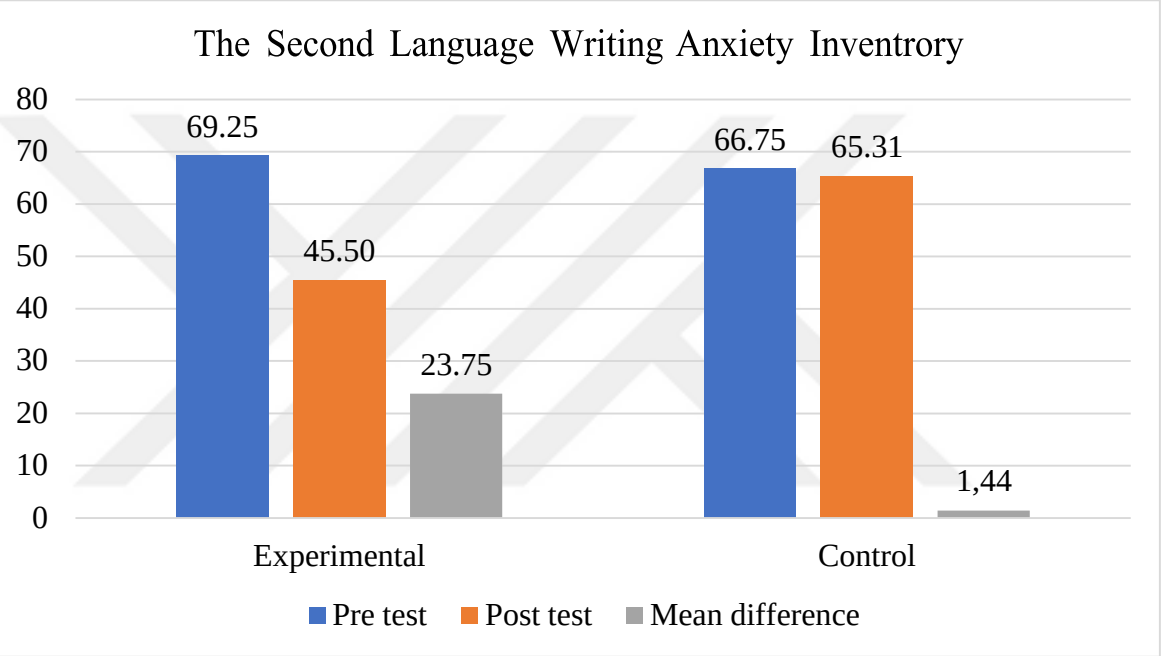

Figure 3. Mean differences in overall SLWAI Scores

When the pre and post SLWAI test results of the students in the study were analyzed using the independent sample t-test according to the experimental and control groups, there was no significant difference between the SLWAI pre-test and post-average scores of the students in the application and control groups (t(30) = .49, p>.05). The SLWAI post-test mean score of the application group (M: 45.50, SD: 11.11) was significantly lower than the post-test mean score of the control group (M: 65.31, SD: 11.26) (t(30): -5.01, p.001).

Table 9

Independent Samples T-Test Results of The SLWAI Scores

		N	M	SD	t	df	p
SLWAI	Experimental	16	69.25	14.28	.49	30	.63
	Control	16	66.75	14.48			
SLWAI	Experimental	16	45.50	11.11	-5.01	30	<.001***
	Control	16	65.31	11.26			

Independent samplest t-test, *p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<.001, SLWAI: The Second Language Writing Anxiety Inventory

4.2 Qualitative Findings

In this section of the findings, two subsections present the insights obtained regarding the incorporation of mindfulness exercises in English writing classes. The first section discusses the results of open-ended questionnaires distributed to all participants regarding the effectiveness of the exercises at the end of the intervention. The second subsection presents the instructor's insights regarding the implementation, experiences, and observations derived from the teacher's reflective journal.

4.2.1 Findings of student Surveys. This section will describe the findings of the open-ended student surveys in order to provide a response to the third study question: "What are students' perceptions of integrating mindfulness exercises before the writing lessons in the experimental group?" As shown in Table 10 below, the findings included a total of 5 categories and 17 codes.

The most frequently emerged codes in the survey were positive feelings towards writing, self-efficacy in writing, and increased focus. After participating in mindfulness exercises, the majority of students expressed good sentiments towards writing, demonstrating that mindfulness practices can favorably improve students' emotional and affective reactions towards writing. Furthermore, many students reported greater writing self-efficacy and attention after engaging in mindfulness exercises, which might contribute to improved writing abilities and overall writing experience.

Table 10

Frequency Distribution of Codes Sorted by Case – Student Surveys

CATEGORY	CODES	CASES	% CASES
Emotional and Affective Responses to Writing	Positive Feelings	13	81,3%
Writing Performance	Self-efficacy	9	56,3%
Positive Experiences About Mindfulness	Increased Focus / Concentration	9	56,3%
Writing Performance	Positive Affects Amidst Mindfulness	9	56,3%
Positive Experiences About Mindfulness	Satisfaction	8	50,0%
Writing Performance	Increased Creativity	5	31,3%
Emotional and Affective Responses to Writing	Ordinary Feelings	4	25,0%
Positive Experiences About Mindfulness	Reduced Stress	4	25,0%
Negative Experiences About Mindfulness	Loss of Concentration	4	25,0%
Negative Experiences About Mindfulness	Dislike / Rejection	3	18,8%
Emotional and Affective Responses to Writing	Compelled	3	18,8%
Emotional and Affective Responses to Writing	Negative Feelings	3	18,8%
No Change	No Change in Writing Skills	3	18,8%
Writing Performance	Average Performance	2	12,5%
No Change	No Change in Concentration	2	12,5%

Looking at each case individually, we find that the vast majority of students, who participated in mindfulness activities, reported having favorable feelings toward writing as a result of such exercises. Based on these findings, it appears that engaging in mindful practices might have a beneficial effect on the emotional and affective reactions that students have toward writing. In terms of writing performance, some students reported increased creativity, positive affects amidst mindfulness and self-efficacy after participating in mindfulness exercises. The findings illustrated that

mindfulness activities can help to improve students' writing skills and overall writing experience. The following excerpts could lend credence to the aforementioned conclusions:

> […] I feel like I can write better and faster. Music (mindfulness mediation sound) helps me write better, too. (Student 1, Student Survey, 06.01.2023)
>
> […] Actually, it (mindfulness exercises) makes me happy. My mind feel like my mind travels in different places. It is fun. I feel like I can write easily and when I do, I feel really happy. (Student 2, Student Survey, 06.01.2023)
>
> […] I think mindfulness works a lot, for example when we did mandala, I had completed all the events I will write about my text in my mind. (Student 4, Student Survey, 06.01.2023)
>
> […] When Ms. Eylül plays the concentration (mindfulness) video exercises I always come up with new ideas, however I used to struggle to find ideas in the past. When I first start writing in English (at the beginning of 5th grade) my English (writing) was bad, but now I can read and write my words almost without stopping. (Student 8, Student Survey, 06.01.2023)
>
> […] I often struggle while writing. However, music (mindfulness sound) makes things easier for me and I immediately feel like to write. (Student 13, Student Survey, 06.01.2023)
>
> […] In the previous lessons I didn't used to like writing lessons much, but now I like doing breathing exercises before the lesson. (Student 14,Student Survey, 06.01.2023)

Merely 18.8% of learners admitted to having negative experiences related to the mindfulness, which suggests that the vast majority of students did not have any favorable experiences while participating in mindfulness activities and experienced loss of concentration. Several pupils also (18.8%) claimed that their writing abilities had not changed. Finally, it is worth noting that a minority of participants have encountered adverse effects from engaging in mindfulness practices. According to the study, a subset of 12% of the participants reported that neither their concentration level, nor writing skills were positively impacted by mindfulness exercises, and, in

fact, they experienced adverse effects. The excerpts that are listed below might add credibility to the findings that were presented:

> […] Mindfulness exercises had a negative impact on my concentration because they distract my attention. (Student 6, Student Survey, 06.01.2023)
>
> […] It didn't help my concentration. There wasn't any change in my writing performance. Mindfulness exercises didn't help. (Student 9, Student Survey, 06.01.2023)
>
> […] I would prefer thinking in silence. When we inhale and exhale to think but when I focus on my breathing I cannot think. (Student 10, Student Survey, 06.01.2023)
>
> […] It (mindfulness) didn't help my concentration or writing. I think it is wasting the lesson time. (Student 11, Student Survey, 06.01.2023)

To summarize, just a small percentage of people reported having unfavorable experiences or seeing no increase in their ability to write or concentrate. The survey revealed largely good effects for the use of mindfulness exercises in writing sessions, as the majority of students reported having positive sentiments towards writing, and some students claimed improved writing abilities and creativity after partaking in mindfulness activities.

4.2.2 Findings of the teacher reflective journal. The results of the teacher-reflective reports are going to be reported in this part, as a means of providing an answer to the fourth research question: "What are the teacher's perceptions towards the mindfulness exercises and observed benefits of integrating them into the classroom?" As can be seen in Table 11 below, the findings comprised a total of 3 categories and 12 codes.

Table 11

Distribution of Codes by Frequency of Count – Teacher Reflective Journal

CATEGORY	CODE	COUNT	% CODES
Observed Impact of Mindfulness Exercises	Improved Focus	14	15,2%
Observed Impact of Mindfulness Exercises	Calmness /Relaxation	12	13,0%
Observed Attitudes Toward Mindfulness	Willingness to Practice	11	12,0%
Observed Attitudes Toward Writing Lessons	Increased Attentiveness / Participation	10	10,9%
Observed Impact of Mindfulness Exercises	Creativity	9	9,8%
Observed Attitudes Toward Writing Lessons	Increase in Motivation	8	8,7%
Observed Impact of Mindfulness Exercises	Improved Writing Quality	7	7,6%
Observed Attitudes Toward Mindfulness	Student Feedback on Effectiveness	6	6,5%
Observed Attitudes Toward Mindfulness	Hesitancy and Rejection	5	5,4%
Observed Attitudes Toward Writing Lessons	Satisfaction	4	4,3%
Observed Attitudes Toward Mindfulness	Emotional Connection	3	3,3%
Observed Attitudes Toward Writing Lessons	Willingness to Write	3	3,3%

A positive table was displayed in the teacher reflective journal as a result of the mindfulness activities, which was based on the observations made by the teacher-researchers. In comparison to the earlier writing sessions, the students shown a greater capacity for focused attention and a more relaxed attitude in the current writing classes, which was seen as the most promising aspect of the findings. The most commonly noticed code regarding observed attitudes towards writing lessons was "increased attentiveness/participation," indicating that mindfulness exercises may have assisted students in becoming more attentive and involved during writing classes. The second most prevalent code was "increase in motivation," indicating that mindfulness exercises may have increased students' writing motivation. Less common marks such as "satisfaction" and "willingness to write" suggested that mindfulness exercises had a

favorable influence on the writing attitudes of pupils. The following excerpts may lend credibility to the previously stated conclusions:

> […] I remember finding volunteers to read a sample before, however, today many students were ready to share their texts, compared to the previous lessons. (Teacher Reflective Journal, 02.11.2022)
>
> […] When I asked her "Are you happy with it?" she answered "Yes, I want to write my first draft really quick." (Teacher Reflective Journal, 09.11.2022)

The most common classification for observed attitudes toward mindfulness was "willingness to practice," indicating that students were typically willing to undertake mindfulness activities. The second most common signal was "student feedback on efficacy," indicating that students saw the activities as beneficial in some way. Other codes, such as "hesitancy and rejection" and "emotional connection," were less prevalent, but nonetheless gave insight into how students responded to mindfulness activities. The following passages may provide evidence to support those mentioned inferences:

> […] Some students shared that they felt focused and calm. One of the students also said this activity was a very nice brain-break for them, and they would like to do it again; and the others agreed. (Teacher Reflective Journal, 09.11.2022)
>
> […] Another student expressed that the breathing exercise was a source of inspiration for her writing because she was solely concentrated on what to write during the mediation and she was faster while completing the task. (Teacher Reflective Journal, 25.10.2022)
>
> […] Only one of my student seemed like he had difficulty staying still for the duration of the exercise, possibly due to restlessness or discomfort. (Teacher Reflective Journal, 29.11.2022)

Regarding the observed impact of mindfulness exercises, the most often noticed outcome of mindfulness exercises was "improved focus," indicating that these exercises helped students become more attentive and concentrated during writing activities. The second most prevalent classification was "calmness and relaxation," indicating that mindfulness activities may have helped to lower anxiety and stress levels among pupils. Less frequent codes such as "creativity" and "improved writing quality" indicated that mindfulness exercises had a positive effect on students' writing skills. The following extract may lend credence to the above conclusion:

> […] The students seemed to appreciate this, and I noticed that they were working diligently and quietly, without any distractions. When we finished the writing activity, a few students volunteered to read their sentences out loud and I was impressed by the quality of their work. (Teacher Reflective Journal, 07.12.2022)

The results indicated that mindfulness exercises may have a favorable effect on students' attitudes about writing, their motivation to practice mindfulness, and their capacity to focus and relax during writing tasks. Furthermore, the results show that students are typically eager to engage in mindfulness activities and may find them beneficial for lowering writing anxiety. Thus, it is not sufficient to rely solely on these outcomes. In order to present a broader picture of the research, the results obtained from teacher reflective diaries will be merged with the quantitative results in the next chapter.

4.3 The Interpretation of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

On the basis of the quantitative results, it appears that incorporating mindfulness exercises before writing courses improved students' writing performance and decreased their writing anxiety. In specifically, the experimental group demonstrated significant improvement in their writing scores and a reduction in their writing anxiety levels, whereas the control group did not demonstrate significant differences. The qualitative findings support the quantitative findings by emphasizing

the positive attitudes of students towards mindfulness exercises and their perceived benefits in terms of enhanced writing skills, creativity, concentration, and relaxation. The majority of students reported favorable attitudes toward writing, suggesting that the mindfulness exercises had a positive impact on their overall writing experience. In addition, qualitative findings indicate that students were enthusiastic to participate in the mindfulness activities and found them helpful in reducing their writing anxiety. This is consistent with the quantitative findings that demonstrate a significant decrease in writing apprehension among experimental group students. The TRJ was also likely to provide additional insight into the observed benefits of integrating mindfulness exercises into the classroom and the teachers' perceptions of this intervention. Overall, the combined qualitative and quantitative findings suggest that mindfulness exercises before writing lessons may be an effective intervention for enhancing students' writing performance and decreasing their writing anxiety.

Chapter 5

Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

This study aimed to investigate the effects of mindfulness exercises on primary-school students' foreign language writing anxiety and abilities. A mixed-method research design was adopted, combining quantitative and qualitative methods tocollect data.

The findings of the study suggested that incorporating mindfulness exercises before writing lessons improved students' writing performance and decreased their writing anxiety. The experimental group demonstrated significant improvement in their writing scores and a reduction in their writing anxiety levels, whereas the control group did not demonstrate significant differences. Qualitative findings emphasized the positive attitudes of students towards mindfulness exercises and their perceived benefits in terms of enhanced writing skills, creativity, concentration, and relaxation. Additionally, the majority of students reported favorable attitudes toward writing, suggesting that the mindfulness exercises had a positive impact on their overall writing experience. Qualitative findings also indicated that students were enthusiastic to participate in the mindfulness activities and found them helpful in reducing their writing anxiety. The TRJ provided additional insight into the observed benefits of integrating mindfulness exercises into the classroom and the teachers' perceptions of this intervention.

Overall, the combined qualitative and quantitative findings suggested that mindfulness exercises before writing lessons may be an effective intervention for enhancing students' writing performance and decreasing their writing anxiety. The study contributed to the literature on the benefits of mindfulness in education and highlights the potential of incorporating mindfulness exercises into language learning classrooms. The study also has practical implications for language teachers and curriculum designers, providing evidence for the effectiveness of incorporating mindfulness exercises into language teaching pedagogy. Future research could explore the long-term effects of mindfulness exercises on writing abilities and anxiety levels,

as well as the generalizability of the findings to other age groups and educational contexts.

In the sections that follow, the practical implications are mentioned briefly, and the discussion of results and practical implications are discussed. Upon a discussion of the limitations and conclusions, the chapter ends with suggestions for futureresearch.

5.2 Discussion of the Findings

The interpretation of the study's findings in regard to the research questions was offered in the following parts. The findings' implications for foreign language education and learning in terms of writing anxiety and performance were also examined.

5.2.1 Overall influence of mindfulness exercises on yl's writing scores and anxiety levels. The literature review revealed that previous studies on the effects of mindfulness exercises on academic achievement and writing scores have yielded positive results. For instance, Harpin et al. (2016) demonstrated that incorporating mindfulness exercises improved the academic performance of 4th-grade students. Similarly, Garretson (2010) found that mindfulness practice in an ESL class helped students enhance their reading and writing abilities. Lohromann (2015) also indicated a substantial improvement in academic performance through the use of mindfulness techniques to enhance attention and cognitive function. Additionally, Langer (2004) highlighted that practicing mindfulness exercises can result in higher academic achievement, increased creativity, and productivity.

The results of this study were parallel to these findings as the experimental group, which received mindfulness exercises before writing lessons, outperformed the control group in terms of writing performance. The average score on the post-test was significantly higher than the pre-test score in the experimental group, whereas there was no significant difference in the control group. Furthermore, the average writing post-test score of the experimental group was found to be significantly higher than the control group. These results suggested that incorporating mindfulness exercises before

writing lessons can be an effective intervention for improving students' writing performance. The findings of this study also aligned with Zeilhofer's (2020) research, which demonstrated that mindfulness techniques and awareness can promote metacognitive awareness in SLA and lead to improved academic performance. Additionally, the qualitative data collected in this study supported the notion that mindfulness exercises can positively impact students' attitudes toward writing, which can further enhance their academic achievements.

The present study also examined the impact of mindfulness exercises on students' anxiety levels, specifically their English Writing Anxiety, and builded upon the existing literature that suggests mindfulness-based interventions can help reduce negative emotions, including anxiety, and improve self-efficacy and motivation. Consistent with previous research, the results of this study showed that the implementation of mindfulness exercises leads to a significant reduction in anxiety levels among students in the experimental group, as evidenced by lower post-test scores on the SLWAI compared to their pre-test scores. In contrast, there was no significant change in the anxiety levels of the students in the control group. These findings are in line with previous research, which has consistently demonstrated that mindfulness-based interventions are effective in reducing anxiety levels among learners.

Furthermore, it is noteworthy that students with lower levels of writing anxiety tend to produce higher quality written pieces and have higher levels of self-esteem. Previous research has established a clear correlation between increased mindfulness and decreased English language anxiety (Fallah, 2016), and students with lower levels of writing anxiety tend to produce higher quality written pieces and have higher levels of self-esteem (Hassan, 2001). On the other hand, higher levels of writing anxiety can be associated with lower writing performance, while higher levels of self-efficacy and motivation can lead to higher levels of writing performance (Sabti et al., 2019). The results of this study have implications for educators and policymakers in developing effective interventions to help students alleviate anxiety related to second language writing. The findings suggest that incorporating mindfulness exercises into language learning programs may be a useful approach to reducing students' anxiety levels and improving their writing performance, self-efficacy, and motivation.

The literature and the findings of this study suggested that mindfulness exercises can have a positive impact on students' academic performance, including their writing scores. The results of this study can be used to contribute to the growing body of literature on the effectiveness of mindfulness exercises in language learning contexts and provide valuable insights for educators on how to improve their students' writing performance and overall academic achievement. Despite the positive outcomes observed in this study, it should be noted that anxiety reduction in language learning is a complex and multifaceted issue that requires a comprehensive approach. As such, future studies should aim to investigate the effectiveness of mindfulness exercises in conjunction with other interventions, such as cognitive-behavioral therapy or exposure therapy, to further explore the potential benefits of a multimodal approach in addressing language learning anxiety.

Based on the literature and the results of our study, it can be concluded that when the anxiety levels of students decrease, their academic achievement and writing performance tend to increase. McConville et al. (2017) and Rajkumar et al. (2021) have previously suggested that mindfulness-based interventions can help reduce the negative effects of stress and anxiety, improve self-efficacy and empathy, and enhance focus and motivation. In line with these findings, this study revealed a significant decrease in second language writing anxiety levels among students who underwent mindfulness exercises. This study added to this body of evidence by demonstrating that implementing mindfulness exercises in a classroom setting can be an effective way to reduce students' second language writing anxiety levels, which in turn can potentially improve their writing performance. The students in the experimental group demonstrated a significant decrease in anxiety levels, whereas there was no significant difference in anxiety levels between pre-test and post-test scores among the control group students. These results supported the notion that mindfulness exercises can help students manage their anxiety and improve their writing performance.

The quantitative findings of this study provide additional support for the positive effects of mindfulness exercises on levels of second language writing anxiety and suggest that reducing anxiety can contribute to enhanced writing skills in primary school YL’s. Therefore, educators may wish to consider incorporating mindfulness exercises into their classrooms to assist students in managing their anxiety and enhancing not only a specific skill, but also their overall academic performance.

5.2.2 Overall perceptions of YL's and their teacher. Based on the literature review and the findings of the study, it can be inferred that incorporating mindfulness practices in foreign language writing instruction can have a positive impact onstudents' emotional, affective, and cognitive reactions towards writing. Mortimore's (2017) study demonstrated that mindfulness practices can create a more tranquil learning environment that promotes language acquisition and attentional skills development in young learners. Similarly, the results of this study suggest thatmindfulness exercises can increase students' focus and motivation, leading to improved writing skills and a more positive attitude towards writing. Furthermore, theliterature review also suggests that mindfulness practices can enhance creativity and improve other cognitive abilities, such as reasoning and concentration (Henriksen et al., 2020; Langer, 1997; Napoli et al., 2005). The findings from the student surveys support these claims, as some students reported increased creativity and improved writing quality after engaging in mindfulness exercises. Additionally, the TRJ revealed that students demonstrated greater attentiveness, participation, and motivation duringwriting classes, indicating that mindfulness practices may have contributed to these positive outcomes.

Overall, the findings of this study supported the use of mindfulness practices in foreign language writing instruction as a means of promoting positive emotional and affective reactions towards writing, as well as improving students' cognitive abilities and writing skills. These results are consistent with previous literature on thebenefits of mindfulness practices in other educational settings (Göktem, 2019; Brady,2004; Waldman & Carmel, 2019; Jha et al., 2007). Therefore, educators may consider incorporating mindfulness practices into their foreign language writing instruction to help students develop a more positive attitude towards writing, increase their motivation and focus, and improve their overall writing experience. However, it is important to note that the use of mindfulness practices should not be seen as a panacea for all writing difficulties. Further research is needed to examine the specific types of mindfulness practices that may be most effective in improving students' writing skills and to explore the long-term effects of mindfulness interventions in foreign language writing instruction. Nonetheless, the qualitative findings of this study provide a promising starting point for other educators who seek to incorporate mindfulness practices into their foreign language writing instruction.

This study contributed to the existing literature on mindfulness-based approaches to foreign language writing by providing evidence of the positive impact of mindfulness practices on students' emotional, affective, and cognitive reactions towards writing. The findings suggested that incorporating mindfulness practices in foreign language writing instruction can promote a more positive attitude towards writing, increase students' focus and motivation, and improve their overall writing experience. These results have practical implications for foreign language teachers who may consider incorporating mindfulness practices into their writing instruction to enhance their students' writing skills and well-being.

5.2.3 Overview of the findings. Based on the quantitative and qualitative data collected, as well as the literature reviewed, it appeared that the use of mindfulness techniques in the foreign language classroom can have a positive impact on the language learning experience of primary school students. Specifically, the quantitative data indicated that students who engaged in mindfulness activities exhibited greater improvements in their writing skills in terms of content, language and organization compared to those who did not participate in such activities. Additionally, the qualitative data suggested that mindfulness activities can have a positive impact on students' emotional and affective reactions towards writing, as well as their writing skills and overall writing experience. There were no unexpected or counter-intuitive results observed in the study. The findings were consistent with previous research suggesting that mindfulness exercises can be effective in reducing anxiety levels, including writing anxiety, among students, leading to improved academic performance (Fallah, 2016; Rajkumar et al., 2021; Sabti et al., 2019).

These findings were consistent with previous research on the benefits of mindfulness practices, including increased attention, concentration, motivation, creativity, and overall well-being. The literature also suggested that mindfulness activities can help create a more tranquil and focused learning environment that promotes language acquisition and attentional skills development. Overall, the findings suggested that incorporating mindfulness activities into foreign language classrooms can provide a valuable tool for teachers to enhance students' language learning experience and foster a positive classroom environment. However, it is

important to note that further research is needed to better understand the long-term effects of mindfulness practices in the language classroom, as well as to explore the potential benefits for students with different language proficiency levels and cultural backgrounds.

This study provided preliminary evidence that incorporating mindfulness activities in foreign language classrooms can have a positive impact on language learning outcomes and students' emotional and affective reactions towards writing. These findings underscored the importance of creating a supportive and engaging learning environment in which students can thrive and reach their full potential. As such, teachers and educators should consider integrating mindfulness practices into their language teaching strategies in order to enhance students' language learning experience and promote overall well-being. It is worth noting that while the experimental group demonstrated a significant decrease in anxiety levels, there was no significant improvement in their writing performance compared to the control group. This may be due to a variety of factors, such as the length of the intervention or the specific writing tasks assigned to the participants. Previous research has suggested that the effects of mindfulness interventions may vary depending on the type and duration of the intervention, as well as the specific outcomes being measured (Burton et al., 2017; Lomas et al., 2015).

It is also possible that other factors, such as prior writing experience or language proficiency, may have influenced the writing performance of the participants. Future studies could explore these factors in more detail to better understand the relationship between mindfulness exercises, anxiety levels, and writing performance. In conclusion, the results of this study provided further evidence that mindfulness exercises can be an effective intervention for reducing anxiety levels, including writing anxiety, among students. While the study did not find a significant improvement in writing performance, the findings suggest that reducing anxiety levels may have broader benefits for academic achievement.

5.3 Practical Implications

The present study contributed to the growing body of literature on mindfulness-based approaches to foreign language writing. The findings of this study supported the notion that mindfulness exercises can help reduce students' writing anxiety levels and, consequently, enhance their writing performance. These results are consistent with previous studies that have investigated the effects of mindfulness interventions on various aspects of language learning, including students' anxiety, self-efficacy, motivation, and empathy (McConville et al., 2017; Rajkumar et al., 2021; Sabti et al., 2019). One practical implication of this study was that language teachers can incorporate mindfulness exercises into their writing classes to help reduce students' writing anxiety levels and improve their writing performance. By providing students with simple mindfulness techniques, such as deep breathing or body scan, teachers can create a more relaxed and supportive learning environment, which is conducive to better learning outcomes (Lomas et al., 2017). Another theoretical implication of this study was that it adds to our understanding of the complex relationship between anxiety and writing performance, as several previous studies have shown that high levels of writing anxiety can have a detrimental effect on students' writing performance, while low levels of anxiety can enhance it (Hassan, 2001; Kırmızı & Kırmızı, 2015; Alico, 2016).

This study provides further evidence that reducing students' anxiety levels can lead to better writing outcomes, highlighting the importance of addressing anxiety in foreign language writing classes. Overall, the findings of this study suggested that mindfulness exercises can be a valuable tool for language teachers to improve their students' writing performance by reducing their anxiety levels. These results provide support for the use of mindfulness-based interventions in language classrooms and warrant further investigation into the long-term effects of mindfulness exercises on foreign language learning outcomes.

The findings may also have practical implications for foreign language instructors and students. Firstly, this study suggests that incorporating mindfulness exercises into foreign language writing instruction can be an effective way to reduce writing anxiety among learners. Teachers may consider incorporating brief mindfulness exercises, such as deep breathing or body scans, at the beginning of

writing lessons or during moments of heightened anxiety. This can help learners to become more present, relaxed, and focused during the writing process, leading to improved writing performances. Furthermore, it highlights the potential benefits of incorporating mindfulness into language learning more broadly. As noted by Lomas et al. (2017), mindfulness practices may be particularly beneficial for languagelearners due to their emphasis on present-moment awareness and non-judgmental attitudes, which can help learners to become more comfortable with making mistakesand taking risks in the language learning process.

The use of mindfulness exercises in foreign language classrooms not only benefits students, but also has an impact on teachers. As seen in this study, the TRJ revealed the emerging themes of increased awareness, empathy, and focus. These themes are consistent with previous research that has shown that mindfulness practices can enhance a teacher's ability to be present, non-judgmental, and empathetic towards their students (Chiesa et al., 2011; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Additionally, mindfulness practices can help teachers manage their own stress and burnout, leading to increased job satisfaction (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009). Yet, more research is required to completely comprehend the effect of mindfulness exercises on the well-being and performance of teachers. Future research could investigate the effects of mindfulness practices on teacher fatigue, job satisfaction, and student outcomes over the long term.

Mindfulness exercises can also have a positive impact on teachers' reflective practice. In a study by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012), mindfulness practices were found to enhance teacher well-being and promote teacher self-reflection, which led to improved classroom practices. These findings suggested that incorporating mindfulness exercises in teacher training and professional development programs may lead to more reflective and effective teaching practices. Furthermore, mindfulness practices may also help teachers manage the demands and stressors of the profession.

Overall, the emerging themes from the teacher reflective journal in this study suggested that the use of mindfulness exercises in foreign language classrooms has the potential to positively impact both students and teachers. By incorporatingmindfulness practices into their classrooms, teachers can create a more supportive andempathetic learning environment, which can in turn enhance student learning and

achievement. In terms of future research, it would be beneficial to investigate the impact of mindfulness exercises on teacher reflective practice and well-being more specifically. Additionally, exploring the potential benefits of mindfulness practices for teacher-student relationships and classroom climate may also be valuable areas of inquiry. The findings of this study suggest that mindfulness-based approaches to foreign language writing instruction have the potential to improve writing performances and reduce writing anxiety among learners. Teachers and learners may benefit from incorporating mindfulness practices into their language learning routines in order to achieve these positive outcomes.

5.4 Conclusion

The findings from this study revealed that mindfulness exercises can have positive effects on primary school students' emotional and affective reactions towards writing. The students reported increased focus, self-efficacy, and motivation in their writing, as well as decreased anxiety levels. The teacher's observations also indicated improvements in student attentiveness and relaxation during writing classes. Additionally, the literature review suggests that mindfulness practices can benefit students' attentional skills development, language acquisition, creativity, and overall well-being. These results highlighted the potential benefits of incorporating mindfulness exercises in the foreign language classroom in primary school as a means of improving students' writing skills and overall writing experience. An expanding body of research indicates a correlation between anxiety, concentration, and writing performance. The results of this study also shed light on us from the other side that high levels of writing anxiety have the possibility to result in diminished concentration and motivation, which can ultimately contribute to poor writing performance.

When students experience lower levels of writing anxiety, they are more likely to be able to concentrate better and perform better on writing tasks (Eysenck et al., 2007; Pajares, 2003). This was also supported by the findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data in this study, which showed that the use of mindfulness activities helped to reduce students' writing anxiety, increase their focus, and improve their overall writing performance. Furthermore, the positive effects of mindfulness on students' writing performance and anxiety levels can be attributed to

its ability to promote emotional regulation and increase self-awareness (Chambers et al., 2009). By learning to manage their emotions and focus their attention, students are better able to overcome anxiety and perform better on writing tasks.

5.5 Limitations

Despite the fact that the results of this study suggest that mindfulness exercises may have a positive effect on foreign language writing anxiety and performance, it is important to acknowledge the limitations of this study. First, while the exercises were guided and taken from other studies, they were not led by a professional mindfulness expert, which may have affected the quality and consistency of the mindfulness intervention. However, prior research has suggested that even brief mindfulness interventions led by non-experts can still have significant benefits (Cavanagh et al., 2013). Second, there is an absence of research on the effectiveness of mindfulness exercises specifically with 5th graders, particularly in foreign language classrooms. This age group may have distinctive developmental characteristics that influence their capacity to engage in and benefit from mindfulness practices. Therefore, additional research with this age group is necessary to better comprehend the potential benefits and limitations of mindfulness exercises for foreign language acquisition in younger students. Additionally, the sample size was relatively small, consisting of only 32 participants, which limits the generalizability of the findings to other populations. Also, the time available for this study was limited due to the hectic schedule YL's have at school, which restricted the scope of the research questions and the methods used to investigate them. The study was conducted over a relatively short period of time, with only 10 weeks of intervention, which may not be sufficient to fully capture the effects of mindfulness on writing anxiety and performance in the long term. Finally, the study was conducted in a single classroom setting, which may limit the applicability of the findings to other instructional settings, such as online learning or different levels of language proficiency.

In brief, mindfulness and mindful exercises has gained popularity in language education in recent years and yields promising results. Considering the above mentioned limitations, future research should aim to address these limitations by conducting larger-scale studies, over longer periods of time, and in diverse

instructional settings, while also controlling for potential confounding variables. Yet, consistent with previous research, these findings suggest that mindfulness activities can be a useful instrument for enhancing students' writing skills and emotional well-being.

5.6 Recommendations for Future Research

Based on the findings and discussions presented, there are several recommendations for future research and implementation of mindfulness exercises in foreign language classrooms. Further research is needed to investigate the long-term effects of mindfulness practices on children's language acquisition and writing abilities. Although some studies have investigated the short-term effects of mindfulness practices on language learning, additional research is required to determine whether or not these effects are long-lasting. Future research could employ longitudinal designs to investigate the long-term impact of mindfulness practices on language learning outcomes. More research should investigate the effects of mindfulness on various age groups and languages, as well as the effects of mindfulness on various aspects of language acquisition, such as listening and speaking. Additionally, future studies can examine the impact of mindfulness practices on children who speak languages other than English.

Teachers should receive training on how to incorporate mindfulness practices into their language classrooms effectively. They play a crucial role in implementing mindfulness practices in language classrooms, but they may not have the necessary skills and knowledge to do so effectively. Future research could investigate the most effective ways to train teachers to incorporate mindfulness practices into their language instruction. School administrators also play a vital role in promoting the use of mindfulness practices in language classrooms by providing support and resources to teachers. The impact of school policies and resources on the implementation of mindfulness practices in language classrooms.

While some research has suggested that mindfulness practices may be beneficial for students with ADHD or dyslexia, more research is needed to confirm these findings and to determine the most effective ways to incorporate mindfulness practices into the instruction of students with different learning needs. Researchers should also explore

the potential impact of mindfulness practices on the motivation and engagement of language learners, as well as on their creativity and critical thinking skills. Mindfulness practices may have an impact on not only language learning outcomes but also on learners' motivation, engagement, creativity, and critical thinking skills. Future research could investigate the impact of mindfulness practices on these aspects of language learning. Finally, although it was not emphasized in this study, it was also observed after application that female students performed better than male students. So, another gender-specific research could be conducted on the effectiveness of mindfulness exercises.

By implementing these recommendations, including conducting research on the long-term effects of mindfulness practices on language learning and writing skills, exploring the effects of mindfulness on different age groups and diverse languages, and equipping teachers with proper training in incorporating mindfulness practices effectively, we can deepen our understanding of the potential benefits of mindfulness practices in language classrooms. This knowledge will provide valuable insights into how mindfulness can be harnessed as a powerful tool for enhancing language learning outcomes and promoting overall well-being among teachers and learners. By examining the sustained impact of mindfulness practices over extended periods, we can assess the long-term benefits and durability of these practices in fostering language proficiency and writing skills. Exploring the effects of mindfulness across different age groups and diverse languages will allow us to identify any potential variations or universal effects, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the applicability and effectiveness of mindfulness practices in various language learning contexts. Providing teachers with proper training in incorporating mindfulness practices effectively will empower them to create an inclusive and supportive learning environment, where students can cultivate mindfulness, self-regulation, and social-emotional well-being. By nurturing such an environment, teachers can enhance language learning outcomes and promote students' overall well-being and academic achievement in learning foreign languages. Ultimately, by embracing mindfulness practices in language classrooms, we can offer teachers and learners a valuable tool that not only supports their language learning journey but also fosters personal growth, self-awareness, and resilience.

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