

Table of contents:

List of tables.....2

Acknowledgements.....3

Abstract.....4

CHAPTER 1

 1.1 Introduction.....5

CHAPTER 2

 2.1 Literature Review.....10

 2.2 An introduction to Mindfulness.....10

 2.3 A brief history of Mindfulness throughout time.....11

 2.3.1 Methodologies used.....13

 2.4 Relationship with the body and the brain.....14

 2.5 How Mindfulness is used inside the classroom.....18

 2.5.1 Benefits of Mindfulness inside the classroom.....21

 2.5.2 Pros and cons of its usage.....23

 2.5.3 Benefits of Mindfulness in Language learning.....24

 2.6 Defining Suggestopedia and other Language teaching methods.....28

CHAPTER 3

 3.1 Methodology.....31

CHAPTER 4

 4.1 Aims and Results.....40

 4.2 Questionnaire Results.....52

CHAPTER 5

 5.1 Discussion & Conclusion.....56

REFERENCES.....59

APPENDIXES.....61

List of tables

Table 1: Aims and Activities for week one.....	33
Table 2: Aims and Activities for week two.....	34
Table 3: Aims and Activities for week three.....	35
Table 4: Aims and Activities for week four.....	36
Table 5: Aims and Activities for week five.....	37
Table 6: Aims and Activities for week six.....	38
Table 7: Aims and Activities for week seven.....	38
Table 8: Aims and Activities for week eight.....	39
Table 9: Results for each week.....	41
Table 10: Content analysis of the students’ questionnaire conducted at the Primary School “Drita” Gramacel.....	54

Acknowledgements

Forever grateful to my mentor Maja Muhic; your commitment made this paper reach this phase.

To my beloved family and friends for their support, without you I am no one.

And, to everyone who believed in me.

Abstract

Depression, high stress rates, anxiety are some of the recurrent phenomena that are causing imbalance in people's lives, even among youngsters. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to provide these young people with the willingness and potential to overcome these challenges in one of the easiest ways possible: through mindfulness.

Mindfulness methodologies were presented and applied for 8 weeks in English language classes with 150 pupils from Primary School "Drita" in Decan, Kosovo. In order to classify the activities and their outcomes, journals were used for each week in which you can find the aims, activities used and the outcomes. To compare the journal outcomes with pupils' thoughts and feelings, I conducted a questionnaire handed to 43 older pupils, aged 13 to 15, in which they explained their favorite activities and what they felt during the application. These methods and activities were focused to play the greatest role on pupils' emotional consolidation, behavioral changes, mental flexibility and their ability to learn English language better. Moreover, pupils were noticed to be a lot calmer and relaxed during the learning process, they also loved the activities very much.

The results extracted from these journals and pupils' questionnaire, when compared, prove that mindfulness as an approach, whose main goal is to teach children and provide them an easy way to deal with frustration and anxiety inside the classroom and reach more promising results in their learning process.

Keywords: English language, mindfulness activities, enhancement of the learning process.

CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

Studies have shown depression and stress levels even at the very beginning of childhood which makes it a serious problem among youngsters. As a matter of this fact, several years ago people started investigating the solution, even started practicing it. Many schools and organizations around the world started practicing mindfulness as an approach that turned out to be very beneficial and helpful among people. An approach that as its main goal has to teach kids at schools an easy way for them to be happy and healthy. With these kinds of exercises and activities their stress levels will have a gradual decrease which is going to help kids relax and have more promising results and higher performance. Mindfulness in the classroom implies teaching children how to be more focused and more balanced in the classroom, in their daily life as well. Simple activities like controlled breathing, guided imagery, and guided movement aim to bring students' attention into the present moment, experiencing stress and negative thoughts avoidance. Thus, when their attention is brought inside the classroom, there are way more chances for a class and a lesson to result effectively and successfully on its objectives.

Research in this approach has increased in the last decades and its application multiplied due to the success it demonstrated, not only at schools but also at work, home and each field of our daily life. But when it comes to schools and education, we already know that children get their brains shaped during their early stages of life, and in today's world, if you don't know how to control your mind and prevent further damage, you can easily lead an unbalanced anxious life.

Nowadays mindfulness activities are being used as a therapeutic technique which makes it a necessity not only for kids, but elders as well.

As I previously mentioned, during recent years, research on this field has been multiplied around the world. Unfortunately, in our living and learning area not many people are aware of the benefits this approach may bring. For the same reason I have decided to firstly educate myself

on this field and then bring it up among our society as it has been scientifically proven to be successful and beneficial.

A society that doesn't change is a society that cannot develop easily, thus, there must be someone to initiate changes for everyone to follow, especially nowadays when globalization and many other factors make life hard to be lived for some people. Throughout our life we encounter different obstacles and challenges that might have a tremendous negative impact in our personalities. This is one of the reasons why one should be able to take things in its own control in order to prevent further damage. Sometimes people get desperate because they can't learn something new, in our case, a new language, but if you eventually find the proper way to do it, it will result way easier than you thought.

The importance of this thesis correlates with the importance of successful English Language Learning among the new generations. Using mindfulness with the students will result in better 'digestion' of the new language. Also, spreading the awareness and proving the benefits that this approach may bring among students, especially at their early period of life and later on when they want to be something more than just a random person who doesn't contribute for better.

The research questions of this paper are:

- 1. How does mindfulness help English Language learning process?**
- 2. What are the positive and the negative effects of mindfulness activities inside the English language classroom?**
- 3. What are the necessities for English teachers to practice mindfulness with their pupils?**

Research Hypotheses

- 1. "Mindfulness in the classroom helps younger students develop a stronger awareness and mental flexibility".**
- 2. "Students that were involved in the process tend to have significantly reduced stress, anxiety, and negative emotions".**

- 3. “EFL students resulted to be more successful in their English language learning”.**
- 4. “Students that were part of the investigation declared being less stressed during exam period and had better results in their examinations”.**
- 5. “It resulted in a better atmosphere inside the classroom and more positive energy among students”.**

The independent variables of this thesis are the mindfulness activities which brought a change in children’s emotional consolidation, their behavior, mental flexibility, and their ability to focus and learn English better. These activities provided them with relaxation and made classes more interesting, cultivating a higher interest.

The limitations of this approach constitute mostly timing and environmental issues. During the application of the activities, it was Covid-19 pandemic period, and our lesson timing was limited to a shorter period. We tried to respect given conditions by the Health Institutions. The number of the pupils inside the classroom was also limited; distance being respected during the whole time made it impossible for us to perform some of the activities.

When it comes to environmental issues, some activities require a lot of space to perform; some others require soothing music and lower lighting for a period of time. This limited us in performing certain activities.

In order to notice the change among pupils, it would be easier for me to know more about their performance and their level of English, but I was appointed a substitute teacher for 6 months. This made another struggle which I overcame with time. The most important thing encountered among pupils was their level of relaxation and focus after the activities took place. Worth to be mentioned is also their satisfaction and enthusiasm before the class even started. I could notice their great will to start the English class even before entering the classroom. This is a crucial part to consider because in each field, a part of successful achievement is the willingness to learn and be part of that field.

Most of the hypotheses were proven after extracting the results from the activities. Mindfulness in the classroom tends to be helpful in developing a stronger awareness and mental flexibility.

Pupils claimed to be less stressed, anxious and having less negative emotions, even during their examination period, which resulted in an improved learning process. The atmosphere inside the classroom underwent an alteration; pupils were feeling more comfortable and expressed their clear thoughts, without the fear of being judged.

In the upcoming chapters of this paper you may find a review on the literature regarding mindfulness. Under the subtitle “Introduction to mindfulness”, you may find a short summary of what mindfulness activities represent and what they do not represent. After having a general description over mindfulness, in the next subhead “A brief history of mindfulness throughout time”, you may find a short history about the period of its first initiation; how it was previously used as a secular approach and how it reached beyond secular understanding, crossing the religious barriers; who was the first person to bring mindfulness into the modern world.

“Methodologies used” subtitle gives a short description on some of the most famous mindfulness-meditation methodologies that were used way before mindfulness got introduced into the modern world. A very important part is “Relationship with the body and the brain” in which you may find the scientifically proven benefits of mindfulness and meditation activities; changes made in our bodies and most importantly in our brains; the effect of positive and negative emotions that shape our brains.

The next part focuses on a rather different topic: “How mindfulness is used inside the classroom”. In this part you will find the main intention of mindfulness activities used inside the classroom; its first introduction into the classroom and some developed programs instructing the usage of these activities, followed by “Benefits of mindfulness inside the classroom”. Here you will find the results of some studies and their reported benefits. Some of the pros and cons of these activities are noted in “Pros and cons of its usage”.

Under the subtitle “Benefits of mindfulness in language learning” you will find explained some facts regarding the help of mindfulness activities in language learning, benefits which were extracted from studies conducted earlier.

Later on, the chapter Methodology provides the structure and the activities used during the 8 week period. Some of the specific aspects that the approach focused on and the aims of the activities. While the Results chapter focuses on the results retrieved from the application of the activities.

Seeing a successful result of the assessment, people would start considering this approach in their everyday life and the benefits it would bring. There would also be growing chances for higher educational institutions to bring qualified staff from other countries and be part of the training. They could even send interested students to be part of other successful schools that are having mindfulness implemented in their curriculum, for real life experience.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 An introduction to mindfulness

As a practice, mindfulness has often been misunderstood in some concepts. It does not do the impossible, stopping the thought process, or, it is not only about feeling positive emotions and suppressing negative ones, according to Bailey, Niel et al., mindfulness deals with directing attention, accepting it with self kindness and acceptance (Bailey, Neil et al.. Evidence Based Guidelines for Mindfulness in Schools - a Guide for Teachers and School Leaders, 2018, pg. 3). Sometimes it is called a state and sometimes it is called a practice, but Neil et al. in this same project clarify that these two titles connect with each other; with mindfulness being a state that can be developed using activities that are else known as meditation and mindfulness practice (Bailey, Neil et al.. pg. 3).

Grant Rix and Ross Bernay in their study define mindfulness as a practice through which we open up our hearts to what is happening awaiting and around us at the present moment (Rix G., Bernay R. *A Study of the Effects of Mindfulness in Five Primary Schools in New Zealand New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work*, Volume 11, Issue 2, 201-220, 2014. pg. 202).

Mindfulness or focusing attention on something can happen not only when we are sitting still, it can have many forms. Tracy L. Daniel perfectly shows us in her book "Mindfulness for children", that mindfulness activities can be of different kinds, including breath activities, yoga, even simple everyday activities like walking or coloring; according to Daniell all these practices share one goal: share a focus on sharpening attention and self-regulation skills in order to handle different challenges (pg. 13).

While we focus our attention on our sensations it is worthy not to judge our sensations or thoughts as bad or good ones. This statement arrived with mindfulness in particular, at the end of 1970s by Jon-Kabat Zin, who is considered to be the founder of mindfulness practices (find more at the chapter "A brief history of mindfulness throughout time"). Kabat Zin describes mindfulness as a practice that we use to pay attention in the present moment, non-judgmentally and with a purpose (1991).

To review, mindfulness is what a present day individual is in need of in order to deal with a “fast-life” environment like ours. It is a set of skills which are currently needed to take control and prevent many challenges that come in our life journey.

2.2 A brief history of mindfulness throughout time

“This ancient Way of Mindfulness is as practicable today as it was 2,500 years ago.

*It is as applicable in the lands of the West as in the East;
in the midst of life’s turmoil as well as in the peace of the monk’s cell”.*

Nyanaponika Thera, 1962: 7

If we were talking about mindfulness around 2,500 years ago, our main grasp would be of secular definition, however this definition might still be present in today’s understandings, though not inalienable. This applies in today’s mindfulness as an approach which is being practiced by everybody, regardless of the religion, pedigree, gender, or even age.

It is commonly thought that the origins of mindfulness practice lies in Buddhism, but according to this article in Blinkist Magazine (retrieved on January 17, 2021) the history of mindfulness can be linked to the yogic practices of the Hindu people. The Hindu religion is believed to have begun somewhere between 2300 BC and 1500 BC in the Indus Valley, near modern-day Pakistan, therefore preceding Buddhism — and therefore, Buddha himself (Blinkist Magazine, January 17, 2021).

An article on the basics of mindfulness (<https://welldoing.org> Retrieved on January 17, 2021) according to Buddha, mindfulness is a set of instructions, guides the practitioner to place attention on four aspects of experience, those are:

The body (e.g. the breath), **Sensations** or feelings, **The mind**/consciousness, **Mental contents**(www.welldoing.org).

These mindfulness practices are being applied in today’s mindfulness as well. Each practice must start with a special focus on the body or particularly on the breath- for better and faster results.

Considering these facts, now we can see a clearer picture of where the actual roots of mindfulness drive us. Nevertheless, an important matter to review is how these practices got wide spread from one side of the world to the other, especially crossing the religious barriers and biases. Amy Leonard for The Blinkist magazine gives us rather a plain article on this issue: Jon Kabat-Zin is being attributed as the person who helped the migration of mindfulness from eastern religions to modern western society, who at first was introduced to meditation by a Zen missionary while studying for his PhD. In 1979 he founded the Mindfulness-Based stress reduction (MBSR) Clinic at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center (Leonard A, for Blinkist magazine, *History of Mindfulness*, 2020). While removing any reference to Buddhism and framing his teachings scientifically, Kabat-Zin founded his famous MBSR program (Retrieved on January 17, 2021- <https://www.blinkist.com>).

Here is a short description about MBSR taken from its curriculum: “Ultimately, and in a very palpable way, the “curriculum” of MBSR is none other than your life and the lives of the people you’ll share with and engage with week by week in the classroom. The suffering, the inconstancy, the lack of a solid, concrete “self” - the wish for relief of suffering and the longing for wellbeing that you carry within you, and all the people you’ll ever work with carry within them - is the curriculum, the vital life of MBSR” (pg. 3).

Generally, the form matters not as much as the purpose of the usage of Mindfulness, which is helping people to end their suffering, clear their visions and make better and appropriate decisions about their future.

The success of this curriculum led to a widespread application into many areas of life, like healthcare institutions, education, sports, even in prisons and it can easily be referred to as “The Mindfulness Movement”.

2.2.1 Methodologies used

As it has already been noted, mindfulness has been present a long time ago among people. Although it was referred to by a different name, its purpose was always the same, to bring tranquility in the present moment.

Considering the fact that the world has evolved tremendously in the past millennia, the need for a slight change on the usage of mindfulness changed as well. In past times people used meditation and yoga as primary resources and they were merely backed by religious basis. And seven of the most used ones were presented on an article on Medical News Today:

Loving-kindness meditation- its purpose is to create an attitude of love towards everything. Loving-kindness meditation is also known as Metta meditation. Its goal is to cultivate an attitude of love and kindness toward everything, even a person's enemies and sources of stress.

Body scan or progressive relaxation- Progressive relaxation, sometimes called body scan meditation, is meditation that encourages people to scan their bodies for areas of tension. The goal is to notice tension and to allow it to release.

Mindfulness meditation- Mindfulness is a form of meditation that urges practitioners to remain aware and present in the moment.

Breath awareness meditation- Breath awareness is a type of mindful meditation that encourages mindful breathing.

Kundalini yoga- Kundalini yoga is a physically active form of meditation that blends movements with deep breathing and mantras. People usually learn from a teacher or do a class. However, someone can learn the poses and mantras at home.

Zen meditation- Zen meditation, sometimes called Zazen is a form of meditation that can be part of Buddhist practice. Many Zen practitioners study under a teacher because this kind of meditation involves specific steps and postures.

Transcendental Meditation- Transcendental Meditation is a spiritual form of meditation where practitioners remain seated and breathe slowly (Retrieved on January 18, 2021 from <https://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/320392-> no author).

Nevertheless, these methodologies, together with a lot more are still present in today's meditation and yoga practices, especially in parts where Buddhism is practiced as a religion.

2.3 Relationship with the body and brain

This is the part where we are going to observe some studies about the effect that mindfulness has on the brain, its vision and clearance to look forward into making better decisions on anything we feel anxious and doubtful about.

Here are few details about the brain and its construction:

Shapiro Sh.et al (2018, pg. 25) said about the brain that it is considered by scientists to be one of the most complex objects known to humankind; containing around 1.1 trillion cells among which 100 billion are neurons. The connections these neurons make are called synapses, creating a network of hundred trillion neurons. One reason why the human brain is called a triune is because it is made of three important parts: we use *the cortex* to think and self-reflect, It is the aware part of the brain that has the flexibility to respond. *The prefrontal cortex* is used to assess what is going on around us in the present moment, it is also known as the wise part (Shapiro Sh.et al 2018, pg. 25).

Whereas *the subcortical region* is the older part of the brain which is where our emotions come from, that is why it is more reactive, also known as the autopilot which ensures our survival. In *the limbic part* of the brain the amygdala, hypothalamus, and hippocampus are placed (Shapiro Sh.et al 2018, pg. 64).

Our brains start developing while we are in the womb and its basic structure and core architecture are constructed while still being “inside” the body. According to Daniel J. Siegel, there are two main factors that help in brain development from the very beginning of its formation. In his book “*The mindful brain*” Siegel explains that genetics is one of the most important factors that aid our brain into growing its neural connections: “in fact, half of our genetic material is either directly or indirectly responsible for neural structure, making genes very important in neural development” states he (pg. 10).

Second important thing to help in brain development is claimed to be ‘the experience’. “Experience” for the nervous system involves the activation of neural firing in response to a stimulus. When neurons become active, their connections to each other grow and supportive cells and vasculature proliferate. This is how experience shapes neural structure (Siegel D. 2007, pg. 31). In a shorter and understandable way, the more experience-the more chance to form new connections on the brain synapses (synapse definition -n. a gap between two nerve cells, across

which impulses pass by diffusion of a neurotransmitter –eng.&alb. dictionary), or even to strengthen the actual ones that have been previously linked. But this does not mean that the connections that have been formed once can never change again, in fact, it is possible and this process is called *neuroplasticity*. As mentioned above, experience is one of the factors that help in forming new connections, but specifically mindful awareness is to be considered one of the experiences that promote neural plasticity. When our attention is focused in a specific way, we activate the brain's circuitry by which the synaptic linkages in those areas are strengthened (Siegel D. 2007, pg. 33).

That experience has a tremendous impact on brain activity is clearly explained in the book *'Masters of Mindfulness Transforming Your Mind and Body'* by Shauna Shapiro et al. They stated that another word for experience is practice. While practicing, those brain areas grow larger and stronger, depending on what the individual is working on, creativity, attention, or learning. It is also known as cortical thickening (pg. 8).

Now that we are aware of the help that mindfulness has on neural changes, it should have a direct impact on the structure of the brain. When it comes to structure we can only be convinced when we see it ourselves, and that is possible through different brain scanning, but, there is also the impact that we don't need any scanner to experience it. And that is the changes in brain function, feelings and emotional balance, different mental experiences, also, bodily states, responses to stress and the immune system (Siegel D. 2007, pg. 40).

This is proof that each feeling, mental experience, everything we go through has an impact on our brain, even though we are not able to see them personally, it usually takes us some time to realize that these two are closely related and profoundly impact each other. Below you can find some examples on how different bodily states impact the brain function.

The region of the brain known as amygdala is associated with emotional processes. For instance, when in shame, the amygdala floods our system with adrenaline and norepinephrine, shutting down the learning centers of the brain, robbing the energy it needs to change. Apart from shame, kindness bathes our system with dopamine, turning on the learning centers of the brain and giving us the resources we need to change (Shapiro Sh., et al., 2018, pg. 6).

We should consider that not always we can take control of our feelings and emotions. In this certain situation our brain takes control over our emotional balance. For instance, there are moments when the brain activates the threat system response and we often lose control over it. One of the proven successful ways to overcome this situation is mindfulness practice because mindfulness practices support us in having a deeper connection with the prefrontal cortex whenever the threat system is engaged. Essentially while practicing, generating compassion and curiosity, taking deep breaths helps us take control of the emotional part of the brain and activating our prefrontal cortex (Shapiro Sh., et al., 2018, pg. 65).

Dr. Meera Joshi, a mindfulness expert stated for Bupa UK (2017) that mindfulness is some mental exercise for the brain and helps us focus on the present moment. According to Joshi, there are three important areas that experience change due to regular mindful practice:

- Mindfulness and stress. Research shows that after practising mindfulness, the grey matter in your brain's amygdala – a region known for its role in stress – can become smaller;
- Mindfulness and creativity. The prefrontal cortex is the area of your brain responsible for things like planning, problem solving, and controlling your emotions. The grey matter in this area can become thicker after practising mindfulness, showing increased activity in these areas of thought;
- Mindfulness and memory. An area of the brain known as the hippocampus helps your memory and learning. (Retrieved on January 9, 2021- <https://www.bupa.co.uk> - How does mindfulness affect the brain).

Shapiro et al., (2018) also said that while growing up we encounter situations that make us experience stress or any other brain-related disorder, the brain is affected by it, becoming a smoother or less healthy brain. But everything depends on how much you practice because if you just start and not stay committed to it, then there will certainly not be much progress. Research has shown that people who practice mindfulness in a long-term period, tend to have healthier brains and interestingly those same areas (training attention and control over thoughts) result in the improvement that once was just an unproven hypothesis. Some brain networks resulted in

less development to the people who practiced mindfulness regularly, usually the parts which are tied to mind wandering, etc. (pg. 1001).

We often tend to overreact and over focus on things that damage our well-being and sometimes happen to realize it a little late. Nevertheless, mindfulness, when rightfully and consistently practiced, will certainly lead us towards wellness and free us from the negative thoughts we have been bearing in ourselves. In broad terms, mindfulness training is a brain training strategy which results in success. All we need to do is have patience, hope and never give up believing in you.

2.4 How mindfulness is used inside the classroom

In recent years, the usage of mindfulness inside the classroom has experienced an enlargement and is growing on a daily basis. Same as it is growing the research on the impact and effectiveness of its usage inside the classroom. Moreover, these studies have generally shown a positive effect on the usage of this approach.

Mindfulness approach used inside the classroom has its main intention to facilitate the teaching and learning process by focusing on the students' overall wellbeing, physical and emotional one. Logically thinking about it, makes it understandable and easily processed into our sub-consciousness, because when we feel good we process things more naturally and preserve information for a longer lasting period of time.

Research shows that the first time mindfulness was introduced as an approach being used outside the secular terms was in the late 1970's, by Jon Kabat-Zinn. Since then it has been used and proved positive effects on almost each field that has been applied to. Anyway, when one decides to make use of this approach, he or she should be cautious and conscious about the proper use of it, otherwise it might end up being a danger for the participants, in our case, pupils and students. As we know, they are fragile and in-formation process beings which imbibe almost all of the things we present to them. One must be competent and trained for this program to

result successfully. Below you may find seven specific programs that were presented in “A Study of the Effects of Mindfulness in Five Primary Schools in New Zealand by Grant Rix and Ross Bernay (2014).

Mind Up (Hawn Foundation, 2011); **Inner Kids** (Kaiser Greenland, 2010); **Wellness Works** (Kinder, 2008); **Still Quiet Place** (Saltzman & Goldin, 2008); **Inner Resilience** (Lantieri, 2008); **Attention Academy** (Napoli, Roch Krech & Holley, 2005) and the **Mindfulness Schools Programme** (Biegel & Brown, nd).

Generally, children have been part of a modified series of activities which include focusing, calming activities over an 8 week period (pg. 4). If you Google each of these particular programs, you will notice that they share the same goal, facilitating and improving the child’s learning process. Rix and Bernay concluded benefits on the programs which included improvements in social-emotional competencies, stress reduction and coping, executive functioning, attention and general wellbeing (pg. 205).

At least, 30 different mindfulness programs for children are operating around the world (Albrecht, 2015), and many different books on the usage of special activities and exercises that are easily incorporated within a lesson. Some of the books that provide reliable exercises and activities are: “Learning to Breathe” by Patricia C Broderick; “Mindful Teaching and Teaching Mindfulness: A guide for anyone who teaches anything” by Schoeberlein and Seth (2009); “Mindfulness for children: 150+ Mindfulness activities for Happier, Healthier, Stress-Free Kids” by Tracy Daniel (2018). This last one was personally used by me and I would suggest any teacher to try the activities because they really are worth it. Not to conclude on these three, there are many other great books that present a range of mindful activities for inside the classroom.

According to Karen Ager, Nicole J. Albrecht and Prof. Marc Cohen, on their Mindfulness in Schools Research project (2015), for the reason that not much research has been done in the perception of how the children view these practices, the way they feel and reflect. Starting on this point, children reflect on their own comment they make directly after the meditation practices in order to be documented as closely as possible (Ager K, Nicole J. Albrecht and Prof. Cohen M, 2015, pg.

904). "Meditation Capsules", was the program they used; a mindfulness program for children developed in Australia by ETTY- Leal (2010). The goal of this program is "to enhance academic performance, compassion and general wellbeing". In their research, Ager, Albrecht and Cohen shared what the program was about: *Relaxation, Meditation and Self-awareness; Getting to Know the Body; Awareness of the Breath; Understanding the Stress Response; Words and their Emotional Power; The Sense of Sight, Smell, Sound, Taste and Touch; The Sense of Humor; Observation of Thoughts; Creativity; Stillness Meditation*. Moreover, this program is suitable for a range of ages as early as 4 years old to 18 years old and it can be used by teachers that have no experience with mindfulness practices (pg. 903). Whereas the student's writing about their feelings and experiences included:

- Illustrating and/or writing feelings and thoughts about the mindfulness session;
- Interpreting how others are feeling in pictures;
- Drawing representations of body feelings such as stress, happiness, loving kindness, focused attention;
- Illustrating and/or writing when mindfulness exercises would be helpful;
- Illustrating and/or writing about favorite feelings, places, parts of the mindfulness program (Ager K, Nicole J. Albrecht and Prof. Cohen M, 2015, pg. 904).

Participants in the study concluded about mindfulness: the experience boosted their awareness of their happiness and their feelings of happiness. Also, mindfulness activities enabled them to connect in a more meaningful way, to encourage responsibility and love; deep reflection and self-trust. It helped to nurture trust with others. Stress reduction through simple daily activities like mindful breathing and walking enabled students to calm their "whole-self". Students also wrote that they wanted to share this awareness to help family and friends feel calmer and less stressed (pg. 904 - 910).

Proven helpful to students, mindful practices should result in an aid for teachers as well in order to claim the best out of these practices. Rickert, Nicolette Paige, in her study "Teacher Mindfulness in the Middle School Classroom: Reliability and Validity of a New Scale" (2016), states that for teachers as well mindful experiences are important because they need to be

careful in their interaction with the students. Perspective talking and showing empathy is crucial. Thus, as a definition of teacher mindfulness in the classroom Paige used the notions of calm, clear and kind behaviours are central (pg. 12).

As a teacher, all you need to do is, firstly to care enough for your pupils, and yourself, afterwards, a quick study and research on the usage of the approach and its implementation inside the classroom, and there you go, results will start to show up transparently.

2.4.1 Benefits of mindfulness inside the classroom

As it has been previously stated, mindfulness focuses on awareness in the present moment. But, how will awareness of the present moment aid those children or students inside the classroom? There are a dozen researches done on this particular matter, explaining the benefits of mindfulness inside the classroom.

Moreover, mindfulness activities require no cost, meaning, they are inexpensive, they are also easy to implement and can be done anywhere and anytime. These activities also make the learning process fun and at the same time, it makes them learn the skill faster.

Tracy H. Daniel, in her book “Mindfulness for children” (2018), stated several facts and reasons how mindfulness benefits children inside the classroom. Some of them have an “**executive function**, meaning it encompasses a range of skills, like: **working memory, perspective-taking, decision-making, emotional regulation, problem-solving, planning and impulse control**”. Daniel also stated that mindfulness strategies improve a child's mental health, like: **reduces anxiety and stress; improves attention and focus; decreases negative self-belief; enhances happiness**, and many other benefits provided from these strategies. Apart from executive functioning, mental health and well-being, one of the most important aids is the way mindfulness benefits the learning process. Mindfulness **expands metacognition, improves academic performance, eases test anxiety, enhances creativity, enriches reasoning skills and clarity, promotes better work habits and cooperation** etc. (pg. 19).

In the study conducted by Grant Rix and Ross Bernay, "A study of the Mindfulness in Five Primary schools in New Zealand" (2014), a thematic analysis was completed on a journal during an intervention in five primary schools in New Zealand. In this paper they presented 4 key findings on the benefits of their mindfulness activities in these schools. First key finding was: **Amount of student engagement and students' sense of calm** (Rix G., Bernay R., 2014, pg. 210). Teachers in these schools reported benefits which came to be noticeable after a few sessions, meaning, the more sessions, the better the results came from those sessions. It was noted that students enjoyed these practices and the feelings they reported were relaxation, peacefulness, refreshed mentally, etc. (pg. 210). Second key finding from Rix and Bernay was: **Students' ability to focus and pay attention**. Improvement was noted in this area as well in most of the schools. Teachers claimed more attentiveness and increased focus during the lessons. The third key finding was: **Improved relational skills** which means that they were able to solve conflicts easier because they developed positive relationships and were able to understand others' points of view (pg. 211). Last but not least finding was: **Increased calm and stress reduction for teachers**. This finding shows us that mindfulness activities were proven to be helpful not only to children but teachers as well. One of them noted that it was a lot more helpful that it made him dig deeper into himself and find priorities (212).

Another thematic analysis was made on the survey conducted by Ager, K, Albrecht, N and Cohen, M 2015, (Psychology, vol. 6, no. 7, pp. 896-914). Apart from the first one, this one acquired students' perspective on these activities. 20 children in the Montreal area in Canada from Grade One, practiced yoga and mindfulness/relaxation for 12 minute-sessions over a six week period; When expressing their response about the activities, they used these words: "**fun**", "**enjoy**", "**great**", "**good**", "**happy**", "**relaxed**", and many others, expressing a sense of calmness and better embodied feelings (Ager, K, Albrecht, N and Cohen, M 2015, 'Mindfulness in schools research project: Exploring students' perspectives of mindfulness - What are students' perspectives of learning mindfulness practices at school?', Psychology, vol. 6, no. 7, pp. 896-914. pg. 902).

In an "Evidence Based Guidelines for Mindfulness in Schools" (Bailey, Neil et al. 2018), it was also stated that mindfulness practices can affect the whole school environment, not just teachers and

students. The condition is for the overall school community to be engaged because mindfulness practices will not drive whole school performance. motivation for participation is crucial in order to succeed as an approach (pg. 6). Being able to correctly implement the approach, it will have a positive effect on collective beliefs, values and practices across the whole school community” (Bailey N., Chambers R., Hassed C., Jones A. Owen J., Wootten A., *Evidence Based Guidelines for Mindfulness in Schools - a Guide for Teachers and School Leaders*, 2018. pg. 8).

Kathryn Marie Wagner in her paper "The Mindfully Embedded Classroom" (2016), wrote about many studies that were conducted in the effectiveness of mindfulness inside the classroom. One of the studies worth mentioning was directed on child’s executive functioning, done by Flook et al. (2010). He studied the Mindfulness Awareness Practices among 64 young pupils. “Flook et al. (2010) concluded that these mindfulness practices were effectively improving executive functioning (EF) scores of children who appeared to have poor baseline EF skills . This was one of the many studies that proved the effectiveness of this approach promotes a state of heightened attention on particular moments. As it is already known, our attention tends to fluctuate over high-stress intervals, therefore it is of vital importance to follow some activities that help children stay more focused during their lessons.

2.4.2 Pros and cons of its usage

When it comes to pros of using mindfulness activities inside the classroom we have a lot to talk about. It is mostly about the facilitation of the learning and teaching processes and in the grasp of knowledge which comes as a result of brain training and well-being during hard-time life periods. Except that it has been proven helpful to children, it was also helpful to teachers and the overall school environment.

Nevertheless, one must be cautious when it comes to correct implementation of these practices inside the classroom because it may have its side effects in case not much attention is being paid to the process. One of the most important considerations when it comes to mindfulness in school intervention presented in an Edutopia article by Maurice J. Elias (2018) about the topic was that mindfulness practices in schools will not magically change the results for. Educators might unconsciously and indirectly foster complacency or focusing on conditions that provide negative effects for the students and the teachers (Pros and Cons of Mindfulness in SEL; Retrieved on February 11, 2021). This means that not all students might respond in the same way towards the practices. Some might unintentionally focus only on themselves and draw their attention from the class and be comfortable about it.

Except the focus on negative, other negative effects were noted on the Evidence Based guidelines Neil W. Bailey et al., which were about the usage of terms and rituals and materials that might have spiritual connotations. It is important to avoid using them (pg. 17). Also, there might be cases when the students are not as much interested to engage with the practices, which results in them not being associated with any of the benefits of the practices (pg. 18).

It is suggested not to make the practices compulsory or imposed, those who do not want to participate can just observe in quietness till the others finish.

2.4.3 Benefits of mindfulness in language learning

In the above chapter “Benefits of mindfulness inside the classroom” you will find studies that somehow have proven the benefits of these practices inside the classroom. Those benefits were not particularly made in the language field but this does not mean that they are not valid when it comes to language learning. The same processes are considered to be helpful, regarding the topic or the subject being taught inside the classroom. Nevertheless, when it comes to language learning, it is essential to be fully aware while learning in order to grasp the new words correctly, including the sentence structure, vocabulary, pronunciation, etc.

When it comes to the benefits of mindfulness in language learning, I have chosen some studies for analysis. First one is a case study of Mindful Learning in an English as a Foreign Language Classroom by Yang Wang and Chao Liu (2016). They came to a conclusion that while using mindfulness practices, EFL students built and became aware of a comfortable learning environment, while they took ownership of the learning. Mindful writing provided students with the generation of new thoughts and they became aware of their thinking. It helped them facilitate their learning process; a cultivation of intelligence and creativity; cooperative learning ensured students with an opportunity to learn from the others, reflect, think critically while discovering their awareness (pg. 141). This was the most important part acquired from the study. Further on, we shall review the mindful strategies Wang and Liu used in their EFL classes, but first of all, one of the reasons why they decided to use these strategies was because their students were not interested in learning a foreign language (pg. 142).

Wang and Liu's study's purpose was to investigate the effect of mindfulness on adult EFL students and the strategies that supported their learning. The study took place in a Northwest University in China with seventeen female participants, and seven males around their twenties (pg. 143). Their structure of the sessions went like this: they practiced mindful strategies for three months in the spring semester. They incorporated graphic organizers, word definition diagrams, improving questioning skills, cooperative learning, word definition diagrams and mindful writing. All these strategies are integrated with guided meditation. Mr. Liu led a one-minute meditation in the beginning of the study at least once a week and then slightly extended the time length of meditation until the students became familiar and comfortable with meditation (pg. 145).

Meditation- this was the first strategy used by Liu and Wang in their EFL classroom. They led a one minute meditation after reading a text in English. They wrote about their feelings for five minutes after the meditation practice. After writing they could share it with the class. While explaining the process, Liu and Wang said that it was reported in their post-surveys that meditation activities helped the students to focus on their own writing. (pg. 146).

KWL Chart- in this instructional strategy, students listed: What do I know? What do I want to know? What have I learned? Students did a two-minute guided meditation after reading another text, then their task was to complete the chart. After the chart was completed they had to discuss

their charts. During the discussion part Mr. Liu observed that the discussion they had after reading the given text accurately expressed their thoughts and reflections (pg. 147).. According to them, students were more aware of their learning and comfortable environment, they also loved this strategy.

Free writing- This was presented through a free writing strategy, in which students had to freely write their individual responses after reading a story and after meditating for two minutes. Students achieved individually as well. As explained by Mr. Liu students reported that while practicing mindfulness they concentrated more on writing, they thought independently and learned more. They also reported to have understood the text better and deeper after meditation practices and besides learning better they were able to form their own opinions while respecting each other's words (pg. 148).

Found Poem- creating a found poem was another strategy used. Students took phrases and words from original sources and organized them into a poem. After reading the text and marking the words they wanted to use, students performed a two-minute meditation after which they started working in groups of four to create the poem. This was their favorite strategy and it helped them embrace writing in English and gained more confidence in it. About this strategy, Mr. Liu wrote that the awareness rose during group work, their cooperation was also in the right level while selecting carefully their words and sentences; they were all active during the conversations and expressing their thoughts. Besides, they reported being happy working in groups and discussing. The benefit was that they were aware of what they did and how they did it (pg. 149).

Technology Project- in order to make the learning process more fun and entertaining, Mr. Liu incorporated technology in his strategies as well. Student's task was to create two different projects, one individual and one collaborative. After a three minute meditation, students brainstormed about their projects and presentation plans. They practiced a great source of English by taking their target words and listing their meanings while making new sentences as examples, also differentiating them from other words with similar meaning etc. The students reported that they were aware of what they were doing and loved learning through interesting

and concentrating activities. Additionally, Mr. Liu commented that “this couldn’t be accomplished without mindfulness” (pg. 150).

These activities, according to Mr. Liu was proven helpful inside the classroom, he clearly explains that these activities would be very beneficial for learning English mindfully; to improve students’ skills via helpful strategies. It develops awareness, increases confidence and efficiency; arouses student interest. Additionally, if teachers used these activities in college, it would facilitate and enhance student awareness of learning, create a comfortable environment, enhance concentration, learning efficiency and most importantly an increased achievement (pg. 153).

Scientifically, it makes more sense when we consider the effect that mindfulness strategies have on the brain and its relation to language learning. This means that learning a new language helps the brain develop for the better and improve its functioning. It also “originates from the neurobiological processes of the brain, is mediated by the language necessary to metacognate, and plays a role in approach to social interactions, the conceptual framework presented supports a proposed embedded framework of mindfulness, which may also have significant importance in the development or implementation of mindfulness strategies, programs or philosophy in education”. (Wagner, Kathryn Marie, "The Mindfully Embedded Classroom: An Investigation of the Mindfulness Traits, Philosophies, and Practices of High School Teachers (2016)). Mindfulness practices, except that facilitate the language learning process, it also aids in preserving the language permanently into the brain.

2.5 Defining Suggestopedia and other language teaching methods

*“My personal belief is that human hidden reserves are endless. However, science has reached an understanding that they are far larger than currently realized?”
(Dr. G. Lozanov’s speech at the meeting of the twenty UNESCO experts, 1978)*

As a definition, the first time I heard about Suggestopedia was during one of the English Language Teaching lectures. Mindfulness alike, Suggestopedia remains an unknown practice among teachers in my country. To explain and define it, I looked over a collection of books on

Suggestopedia (the original book remains in Bulgarian language), which was originally written by the Bulgarian psychotherapist Georgi Lozanov, who was at the same time the founder of Suggestopedia (Suggestology) teaching method developed first in the 1970s.

Lozanov explained the suggestion being a phase when the body is being led by his psychic only. The person takes command from his psychic, which behaves according to the previous background experiences the person has had. In such a way, the so called, hidden reserves of the mind will be reached easily. Using suggestopedia in language learning enhances the learning process by making it easier to imbibe the new words naturally.

Lozanov explained that art and aesthetics are particularly important in learning, thus in life because they also make the learning process much more enjoyable. Furthermore, in order for a person to reach the hidden reserves of the mind, suggestopedia suggests much more how is being taught, rather than what. (Lozanov G. *Suggestopedia- Desuggestive teaching communicative method on the level of the hidden reserves of the human mind*, 2005, pg. 10).

When talking about art and aesthetics, they conducted an experiment where they replaced the classical teaching method; a simple explanation of the lesson followed by memorization and repetition, with another method which followed the lesson by an artistic introduction in a playful manner, using role plays accompanied by classical music (Lozanov G. *Suggestopedia- Desuggestive teaching communicative method on the level of the hidden reserves of the human mind*, 2005). The most important part was the one next day when students were able to explain and have conversations in the foreign language all by themselves.

Jane Bankroft in her book "Suggestopedia and Language Acquisition" (1999), explains language acquisition as an implicit manner similar to the way in which someone absorbs information by watching television. It is not in an explicit manner through presentation and rules (pg. 1). Meaning, one should not force the process, one should feel it coming by itself, naturally and unconsciously.

When it comes to Suggestopedia, according to Bankroft, teachers must possess some features, for example, a good voice quality is necessary, some acting abilities and use of body language. Music knowledge and relaxation techniques would also be beneficial in a languages class

(Bankroft J., *Suggestopedia and Language Acquisition*, 1999, pg. 14). According to some statistics in her book, According to Bankroft this is the methodology that speeds up learning 5 to 50 times (Bankroft J., *Suggestopedia and Language Acquisition*, 1999). She also claimed that in the United States many instructors and teachers are using these approaches that employ right-brain strategies for effective language acquisition within a traditional language class (pg. 14). The name is a combination of the terms "method" and "pedagogy" and "lessons take place against a background of soothing music in an emotionally comforting environment, with the teacher planting and unplugging thoughts in and from the learners' minds" (*Suggestopedia methods-<https://www.tefl.net>* –retrieved on February 22nd).

As for Suggestopedia, Lozanov wrote about not only using it as a methodology of foreign language teaching. In Bulgarian schools it was used as a methodology for Mathematics and operas too. Children learned the Bulgarian alphabet and reading without having to put any effort and they showed remarkably high grades (Lozanov G. *Suggestopedia- Desuggestive teaching communicative method on the level of the hidden reserves of the human mind*, 2005, pg. 12).

Bankroft (1999) explained to us the path how Lozanov came to the method. She claimed that Lozanov noticed hypermnesia (which is the opposite of amnesia, loss of memory) in many yoga practitioners. After this he gave serious thought to using yoga practices inside the classroom in order to help students build and have stronger memory. While Lozanov himself claimed that suggestopedya is built up on the basis of yoga techniques (p. 267). Bancroft explained that in the official English translation of the Lozanov thesis, she read that mental concentration together with self-relaxation creates conditions that activate the auto-suggestive mechanisms, and there comes to the capacities of the unconscious, or how Lozanov calls, the reserves of the mind (p. 108). It means that in a relaxation state, students tend to grasp the new information more readily, as a form of "suggestion" and be open to it.

Some of the methods being used by the time suggestology was introduced were merely yoga practices, like: Hatha yoga, Raja yoga, Savasana posture and meditation. Their emphasis was on mental concentration, self-discipline, breathing exercises etc.

Among successful methods of language learning currently are: **Total Physical Response, the Natural Approach, Counseling-Learning and Suggestopedia.**

According to its founder, James Asher, “Total Physical Response is the method through which students learn the second language in the same way children learn their mother tongue”. It has to be synchronized with actual body movement. Bankroft (1999) wrote about a study in the United States which confirmed that physically responding to commands improves short-term memory; long-term memory; as well the ability to transpose linguistic elements to comprehend novel utterances (pg. 6).

The Natural Approach which is formed upon five hypotheses, one of them is called the Affective Filter Hypothesis and says about low anxiety levels and high motivation as well as self-confidence are the best situations for language acquisition; encouraging a low filter means that the performer is more “open” to the input and that the input strikes “deeper.” “Student performers with optimal attitudes have a lower affective filter” (pg. 7).

Whereas in Community Language Learning, learners learn through interaction with other community members which in this case are other fellow learners and teachers. The word itself explains that learning is viewed as a collaborative achievement with other learners and knowers; not as an individual accomplishment, as something that occurs through competition with others (Bankroft J., *Suggestopedia and Language Acquisition*, 1999, pg. 10).

CHAPTER 3

3.1 Methodology

After I was taught the importance of mindfulness and meditation inside the classroom, I wanted it to be seen and presented in a broader environment. To begin with, I explained and asked for permission from the head principal of Primary School “Drita” in Gramacel, a rural area of Decan, my birthplace. I was selected as a substitute teacher for 6 months in this school where I was about to teach English as a foreign language. Unfortunately, I was not quite familiar with the English language abilities that my students had, that is why firstly I needed to know my pupils for some time. I observed for two months the way they were coping with language learning and how

much they were willing to learn it. I would not say that they appeared to be that much excited about English language class during the time we were using classic learning and teaching methods. It was a simple regular class where I tried to cover the aim of the lessons, because, due to the pandemic with Covid-19, classes were 10 minutes shorter than regular.

It was not until after two months that I presented and prepared my pupils for the application of the approach; mindfulness.

I was assigned to teach ten different classes, aged from 5 to 15 years old. There were usually two to three classes a week, 30 minutes each.

Before I began with the application, I completed an online course, “Yoga for children: Music and Activities” with Bari Koral as a course tutor on 6th of September 2020 (‘Of Course’ is part of Be-a Education Ltd, a UK Registered Learning Provider (UKPRN: 10064410) Company No 08761384). In this course, Miss Koral taught many ways how music can be combined with yoga activities in order to bring relaxation and enhance awareness inside the classroom. But these activities were merely used for younger children because songs and music make classes more fun. I also searched for mindfulness activities that can be used for older students, from 6th class and above. I found a lot of good activities in Tracy H. Daniel’s book, “Mindfulness For Children, 150+ activities for Happier, Healthier, Stress-Free Kids”, and honestly speaking, two classes a week are never enough to apply all those great activities which can be used in different age group students.

There are some specific aspects that I was focused more while applying the approach, for example: *behavioral changes, emotional consolidation, learning skills before and after the approach, mental flexibility and focus, anxiety levels, level of understanding new language, etc.*, eventually will add everything that is worth to be noted in the results part. A special focus was considered before, during and after the exam periods. During this time usually stress levels increase, making students feel a lot more anxious.

I initiated the application at the beginning of November 2020, till January 2021, together with the winter break. Before starting, I used some free time to explain the importance of paying attention in class and the activities we were about to do. Students admitted that they have never dealt with breathing activities, inside or outside school and it was their first time they encountered such activities, thus, they seemed really excited. In lower level classes I used a mini

breathing sphere to explain the breathing activities and their importance. As a result they seemed to be really curious and were paying attention to everything I was explaining.

During the 8-week application, I used a printable course plan (taken from the “of course” course I was part of; find the journal sample in the Appendixes) for each class and each week in which I would write the Aim of the activity, the Activity process and the Outcomes of the activity. Below you will find the tables explaining the activities for week one to eight. You will find the outcomes in the Results chapter.

Aims and Activities presented on tables for each week and each class, starting from week one to eight.

CLASS	ACTIVITY	AIMS
Kindergarten & I	Red Light & Green Light: one person is chosen to be the traffic cop while they stand on a line. When the traffic cop says “green light” children try to run to the finish line. When the cop says “red light” he/she turns around and they have to stop in their tracks. First person who crosses becomes the new traffic cop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>self-regulation activity;</i> - <i>helps children take control over their actions.</i>
II & III	Wacky Relay: two children carry an object of choice (ball, pencil, etc.) down a path using some body parts (elbow to elbow, knee, finger etc.).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>self-regulation;</i> - <i>self-control;</i> - <i>feeling comfortable during teamwork.</i>
IV & V	Box Breath: trace the edges of a box (e.g. a book); take a deep breath on one edge and count to four, hold it for the other edge, count to four during the trace and then breathe out to the other edge of the box.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Calming;</i> - <i>Helps children self regulate;</i> - <i>Provides a visual support to keep</i>

		<i>children focused and engaged</i>
VI	4-7-8 BREATHING: breathe in deep for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, exhale for 8 seconds. Finish with an inner and outer smile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Controlled breathing;</i> - <i>Introduction to the activity;</i> - <i>Relaxation;</i> - <i>Alleviates anxiety.</i>
VIII & IX	Repeating the clapping exercise: feet shoulder width apart on the floor and sitting nice and tall. I clap three times counting 3, 2, 1 and then in the same rhythm you clap as hard as you can 1,2,3. Then, hold your hands as if you are holding a football. Place your attention into your hands, noticing sensation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Directing attention;</i> - <i>Exploring;</i> - <i>Investigating;</i> - <i>Relaxation.</i>

Table 1. Aims and Activities for week one

CLASS	ACTIVITY	AIMS
Kindergarten & I & II & III	THE FREEZE GAME: play a song during which pupils dance when the music plays and freeze when it stops. Reverse the cues, fast music- slow dancing. After the activity, relax by taking a deep breath in and out.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Introduction to controlled breathing;</i> - <i>Self-regulation;</i> - <i>Self-control.</i>
	Blow the candle: children join their two index fingers together, imagining it's a birthday candle, take a deep	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Deep, slow breathing;</i>

IV & V	breath in through their nose, and exhale blowing the candle.	- <i>Relaxation.</i>
VI	Repeating the clapping exercise: feet shoulder width apart on the floor and sitting nice and tall. I clap three times counting 3, 2, 1 and then in the same rhythm you clap as hard as you can 1,2,3. Then, hold your hands as if you are holding a football. Place your attention into your hands, noticing sensation.	- <i>Directing attention;</i> - <i>Exploring;</i> - <i>Investigating;</i> - <i>Relaxation.</i>
VII & VIII & IX	Box Breath: trace the edges of a box (e.g. a book); take a deep breath on one edge and count to four, hold it for the other edge, count to four during the trace and then breathe out to the other edge of the box.	- <i>Calming;</i> - <i>Helps children self regulate;</i> - <i>Provides a visual support to keep children focused and engaged</i>

Table 2. Aims and Activities for week two

CLASS	ACTIVITY	AIMS
Kindergarten & I & II & III	Blow the candle: children join their two index fingers together, imagining it's a birthday candle, take a deep breath in through their nose, and exhale blowing the candle.	- <i>Deep, slow breathing;</i> - <i>Relaxation.</i>
IV & V & IX	Repeating the clapping exercise: feet shoulder width apart on the floor and sitting nice and tall. I clap three times counting 3, 2, 1 and then in the same rhythm you clap as hard as you can 1,2,3. Then, hold your hands as if you are holding a football. Place your	- <i>Directing attention;</i> - <i>Exploring;</i> - <i>Investigating;</i> - <i>Relaxation.</i>

	attention into your hands, noticing sensation.	
VI	Box Breath: trace the edges of a box (e.g. a book); take a deep breath on one edge and count to four, hold it for the other edge, count to four during the trace and then breathe out to the other edge of the box.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Calming;</i> - <i>Helps children self regulate;</i> - <i>Provides a visual support to keep children focused and engaged</i>
VII & VIII	4-7-8 BREATHING: breathe in deep for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, exhale for 8 seconds. Finish with an inner and outer smile.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Controlled breathing;</i> - <i>Introduction to the activity;</i> - <i>Relaxation;</i> - <i>Alleviates anxiety.</i>

Table 3. Aims and Activities for week three

CLASS	ACTIVITY	AIMS
Kindergarten & I	<i>Clap it song:</i> clap it is a song by Bari Koral in which the pupils will do some movements to the left, right, up and down following the song.	
II	Blow the candle: children join their two index fingers together, imagining it's a birthday candle, take a deep breath in through their nose, and exhale blowing the candle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Deep, slow breathing;</i> - <i>Relaxation.</i>
III & IV & VI & IX	Box Breath & Easy seated Pose: Sit up straight, place your hands on your knees. Breathe in. Roll your shoulders up by your ears. Breathe out and let your	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Enhances flexibility;</i> - <i>Feel strong, grounded;</i>

	shoulders roll down by your back. Take a few breaths.	- <i>Improve focus.</i>
V & VIII	1,2,3 clap & Mountain pose: stand up tall with your hands at your side, palms facing forward. Wiggle your fingers to relax. Wiggle your toes as well. Roll your shoulders by your ears, let them fall down your back. You are a tall magnificent mountain.	- <i>Improves focus & attention;</i> - <i>Slow and deep breathing;</i> - <i>Promotes flexibility and strength;</i> - <i>Connects children to the earth;</i> - <i>improves physical balance.</i>
VII	Tree pose: begin in mountain pose. Plant your entire right foot into the ground. Shift your weight to your right foot. Make a triangle with your legs. Bring your hands together at your heart center. Find something not moving to gaze at. When steady, grow your branches to the sky.	- <i>Improve focus and teach resilience;</i> - <i>Strengthens brain-body awareness;</i> - <i>Develops self-regulation skills.</i>

Table 4. Aims and Activities for week four.

CLASS	ACTIVITY	AIMS
Kindergarten & I & II & III	Blow the candle: children join their two index fingers together, imagining it's a birthday candle, take a deep breath in through their nose, and exhale blowing the candle.	- <i>Deep, slow breathing;</i> - <i>Relaxation.</i>
	Repeating the clapping exercise: feet shoulder width apart on the floor and sitting nice and tall. I clap three times counting 3, 2, 1 and then in the	- <i>Directing attention;</i> - <i>Exploring;</i>

IV & V & VI	same rhythm you clap as hard as you can 1,2,3. Then, hold your hands as if you are holding a football. Place your attention into your hands, noticing sensation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Investigating;</i> - <i>Relaxation.</i>
VII & VIII & IX	Body Scan: close your eyes, take a deep breath in through your nose. Instruct them to do a “body scan”. Starting from their toes, up till the crown of their head. Notice the sensations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Paying attention to the body;</i> - <i>Focus in breathing;</i> - <i>Relaxation.</i>

Table 5. Aims and Activities for week five.

CLASS	ACTIVITY	AIMS
Kindergarten & I & II & III & IV & V	Volcano Breath: stand up in mountain pose and bring your hands to your heart center with palms together. Then while breathing in slowly, bring your hands above your head, just like a volcano exploding forcefully, move your arms from up to down each side. Repeat three times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Release anger, stress or tension;</i> - <i>Moves the emotion of anger and makes kids feel calmer.</i>
VI & VII & VIII & IX	Tai Chi: stand up in mountain pose, take a slow deep breath in. let it go. Now make a ball of energy by rubbing your palms together very quickly, always trying to feel the sensations it gives. Slowly move them apart, keep your fingers relaxed. Feel the energy in your hands.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Self-paced movements</i> - <i>Helps relax, focus and find inner peace;</i> - <i>Allows them to let go of anger and stress.</i>

Table 6. Aims and Activities for week six.

CLASS	ACTIVITY	AIMS
Kindergarten & I & II & III & IV & V	Counting Breaths: put your hands on your belly, deep breath through your nose. Breathe out, feel your hands fall, slowly count one. Repeat to ten. Find your heartbeat or pulse before and after counting the breaths. Did it change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Improves focus;</i> - <i>Leads to relaxation, clarity and calm.</i> - <i>Keeps the attention to the present moment.</i>
VI & VII & VIII & IX	Balloon Breath: sit or stand up tall. Roll your shoulders back and down. Bring in through your nose and sweep your hands wide making a big balloon. Fill your belly, join your palms above your head. While breathing out, pop your hands down to your heart center. Wiggle your hands back and forth on the out breath. Repeat ten times.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Introduces deep, diaphragmatic breathing;</i> - <i>Produces a state of calm;</i> - <i>Relieves frustration and decreases excessive energy;</i> - <i>Reduces heart rate and blood pressure.</i>

Table 7. Aims and Activities for week seven.

CLASS	ACTIVITY	AIMS
Kindergarten & I & II & III & IV & V	Starfish Hands: Hold up one hand and spread your fingers out. Let's trace up and down each finger with the pointer finger of the other hand while focusing on breathing in and out through your nose. Now squeeze your hands for 10 seconds and focus on how your hands feel. Breathe in and out and stay focused till it's gone. Start one more time.	

<p>VI & VII & VIII & IX</p>	<p>The appreciation seat: each student sits on the appreciation seat for a few minutes and everyone in the classroom expresses appreciation (thankfulness) for the individual in the seat.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - <i>Recognition;</i> - <i>Appreciation</i>
-----------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Table 8. Aims and Activities for week eight.

We started the first week with some easy and fun activities for lower level classes in order to make it more attractive. I combined the activities depending on the level of difficulty and the school environment because there were a lot of activities which needed wider space and an outside environment. Red light, Green light and Wacky relay are two of the activities which teaches self- regulation to children and it is important because it helps children take control over their actions. These two activities I retrieved from a YouTube video by Kreative Leadership (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_O1brYwdSY). The Freeze Game as well.

Blow out the Candle and Clap It song were taught from Miss Koral in her course and were used with lower level classes also.

The Appreciation Seat was the last activity and it was borrowed from Shapiro Sh. et al. (Masters of Mindfulness Transforming Your Mind and Body) 2018.

The other activities described above were all taken from Tracy H. Daniel’s book “Mindfulness For Children, 150+ Activities for Happier, Healthier, Stress-Free Kids”.

CHAPTER 4

4.1 Aims and Results

The first and the most important aim shall be monitoring the effects on English language learning process that this approach will have, for I have not encountered any of its usage in Kosovo schools in its previous times. Also, one of the aims is raising the awareness of the importance of this approach among students but why not in a broader sense as well, like teachers, school staff and eventually the overall educational system. In case of positive results, I shall present the research to higher educational institutions and possibly make it part of the

curriculum. Of course, this would be possible only if the institutions take the effort of bringing some qualified professionals in the field (if there is none in Kosovo), at the same time, interested people (teachers in particular) would have the chance to take training and qualifications which shall provide a quality increased performance.

To conclude, the aim of this research is providing people, especially children, with a quality life, less frustrated, improved behavior, without anxiety, and a more effective learning process all simply by offering them the appropriate way to think and react to particular stressful moments. In a broader sense, these reasons mostly facilitate the learning process, specifically in our case, the English language one. Not to mention that conduction of this research, which was one of my long-term goals, will increase my academic skills and performance.

Whereas, a personal, general definition about mindfulness would be a set of activities which generate attention and focus firstly in ourselves and then in our surroundings, resulting in a better understanding and facilitation of some issues that mostly derive from our inner selves.

Results chapter will conclude the journal outcomes for each session and activity, the way they reacted, and noted changes in behavior during the sessions.

After the collection of the journals, a questionnaire was handed to students (6 to 9th class). Please find the journal sample and questionnaire in the appendices part (page 61). The journals contained the details about the activities; the name and the aims of the activities; the procedure of the specific activity used; notes about the outcomes, and of course, the class number and week. The journal was a sample borrowed from the online course from Bari Koral: Yoga for Children: Music & Activities.

After I was done with the journals for all the weeks, I conducted a questionnaire for classes VI & VII & VIII & IX. The questionnaire's purpose was to demonstrate whether the results from the journals match their opinions about the activities and mindfulness in general. The questionnaire was handed in Albanian, for the reason that the children might express their feelings better in their mother tongue. There were 43 participants, among them 29 girls and 14 boys aged from 13 to 15. The questionnaire had in total seven questions, the first four questions were closed,

whereas the last three questions were open-ended questions in which they had to express their feelings about their experience with mindfulness.

Below you may find the results of each week:

Table 9: Results for each week.

Week 1

Classes: Kindergarten & I.

Activity: **Red Light & Green Light.**

Outcomes:

Doing this activity with first graders was easier than with preschoolers because they had a little bit more difficulty understanding the main idea. Nevertheless, they found it very **entertaining** and **enjoyed it a** lot during the activity. The activity was performed several times and each time they were being more successful at **understanding** and **controlling themselves**. Pupils used to keep asking again and again to play it. In the meantime, we exercised the usage of different English words, like: red, green, cop, traffic, etc.

Classes: II & III

Activity: **Wacky Relay.**

Outcomes:

The exercise was fun and turned out to be successful even in the first time of practice. It was also a **self-regulation** activity and the most important thing is that they understood the power of teamwork and were patient while waiting for their turns. Class was mainly focused on the activity and the pupils were waiting for more practice. There was enough time for all to play because the

activities were usually performed two days a week. The activity was teaching them **self-control** and **feeling comfortable** during teamwork.

Classes: IV & V.

Activity: **Box Breath**.

Outcomes:

The activity was very clear and easy to understand. Pupils claimed **better**, more **positive** feelings while they were **focusing their breath** and **paying attention**, they were **more relaxed** after the activity. They suggested and required to perform the activity more often even in their first week of mindfulness. Second day was also successful. I loved how they were getting used to mindfulness and it has somehow started to be a part of their life. Pupils also claimed that they were practicing it at home. So, generally, it was a successful initiation.

Classes: VI & VII

Activity: **4-7-8 Breathing**

Outcomes:

November 5th, 2020 was the first day this activity was performed by these two classes. It was noted that not all of the students performed perfectly on their first time, but most of them did. Second day was more successful, proving the saying “practice makes it perfect”. The activity was focused on controlled breathing and to **alleviate anxiety**. The most important thing is that pupils **loved** the activity and were **feeling better** while performing it.

Classes: VIII & IX

Activity: **Repeating the Clapping exercise**.

Outcomes:

As an introductory class, students seemed to be feeling a bit weird and awkward at the beginning, nevertheless, it should be normal as it was the first time they performed such an activity. Second day turned out to be more successful with both levels. They started **liking** it and showing **more**

interest. The activity was about exploring and investigating while **directing** their attention and **focus.**

Week 2

Classes: Kindergarten & I

Activity: **The freeze Game.**

Outcomes:

This activity also dealt with **self-control** and **self-regulatory** exercises. Children loved the activity and enjoyed it very much. They were unconsciously learning how to **control** their movements; they were ready to start whenever the music started and to stop when it stopped. They also had the chance to practice new English words while having fun. It was one of their favorite activities. Moreover, in order to **relax**, we did some deep breathing activities at the end of the activity.

Classes: II & III

Activity: **The freeze Game.**

Outcomes:

3rd class pupils grabbed the attention easier and likewise they **loved** the first breathing exercise after the freeze game. Second day of the freeze game, they **enjoyed** a lot and were more **aware** of their movements. More breathing exercises will be used in the upcoming weeks.

Second graders also were good at it. It was something new to them and we are hoping that while practicing more often they will be better at it. Of course, immediate outcomes won't be expected because for most of them it was the first time experiencing mindfulness.

Classes: IV & V

Activity: **Blow out the Candle.**

Outcomes:

This activity was **fun**, **entertaining** and **relaxing** to the kids. I tried to use a low voice to make it as relaxing as possible. Something worth being noted here was that this was the testing week. Most of the children were anxious about these exams. In English class, before the testing we

performed 'blow out the candle'. After the activity most of the students claimed to be more **relaxed** and **less anxious**. It was somehow strange to them in the beginning until I explained the reason behind deep breathing and the way it helps us relax.

Class: VI

Activity: **Repeating the Clapping exercise.**

Outcomes:

This activity was good, although not the best. It is needed to strengthen it a little bit as this was their first time applying. Second class we had a test. We did the relaxation method before the test, and also suggested doing it after the test. Children appeared to be **calm** after the activity. It is for them to grasp the main idea of mindfulness and help them **relax** during anxiety and **stress** periods.

Classes: VII & VIII & IX

Activity: **Box Breath**

Outcomes:

Activity was performed well by 7th graders, successfully **calmed** them and made them feel more **relaxed**. Each day the activities are being improved and it seems like it is becoming a part of their life. With 8th graders, this activity was done for the first day of the second week and it went good. During the lesson there was a moment when they were being too energetic and noisy. I instructed them to stop and breathe deep, started counting to four and that is when they understood that it is mindfulness time. They started breathing deep and the class went **calm** again. 9th graders were also feeling more **relaxed** after the box breath activity.

Week 3

Classes: Preschoolers & I & II & III

Activity: **Blow out the Candle.**

Outcomes:

Activity went well. Preschoolers started doing the activity for the first time and I tried explaining the reason behind it. The activity should be explained again next class so that it becomes part of their schedule. This activity was easier and helped pupils **calm down**. It is lovely to see them happy during the class. Second day was also performed the same way and again they claimed they were **feeling better**.

Classes: IV & V

Activity: **1-2-3 Clap**

Outcomes:

This was also one of their favorite activities as well. Children **enjoyed** it very much and they were so **calm** during and after the activity. I could notice their **relaxed** faces at the beginning of the class. Performance was perfect for most of the students; nevertheless it had **positive** effects on their **mood** and behavior.

Class: VI

Activity: **Box Breath**

Outcomes:

Today's activity was also good; pupils tried doing the exercises more often during their free time inside the classroom. The aim was to **focus** their attention by performing deep breaths which would lead to **relaxation**. The only issue I had with this class was when some of the children did not take it too seriously, sometimes they burst in laughter and disturbed other children, but the issue got fixed the moment I tried to explain the importance of mindfulness.

Classes: VII & VIII

Activity: **4-7-8 breathing**

Outcomes:

7th class today had an English language exam today and before that we quickly performed this activity. During the exam I could notice many **smiley** faces, I noticed little or **no anxiety** at all among them. At the top of the exam paper I wrote in brackets that it is not the grade that determines their intelligence, therefore they should be feeling calm and breathing deep.

8th graders also performed the activity before the exam started. It helped them become more **relaxed** and **focused** on their testing.

Class: IX

Activity: **1-2-3 clap Breathing**

Outcomes:

Today's activity was done at the end of the lesson in order to let them continue their day while being **relaxed**. Second day also performed well. I noticed some students being upset but after performing the activity I could notice some **change in their behavior**, some smiles on their faces.

Week 4

Classes: Preschoolers & I

Activity: **Clap it Song**

Outcomes:

Clap it song was very much **fun** for kindergarten and first graders. They did some movements to the left and right, up and down, following the instructions from the song. They were focusing on their movements instructed by the song and followed by me. After they got tired a bit we practiced deep breathing to **relax**. Another benefit from this activity was the one practicing new **English words** and accompanying them with movements, like: clap it high, clap it low, clap behind, etc.

Class: II

Activity: **Blow out the Candle**

Outcomes:

This is one of the easiest activities to perform as it does not require much effort but yet it positively affects the child's **mental state**. As for the second graders, they loved the activity and they were giving their best at it. The activity made them react **calmly** and they were in a **better mood**. During one of the classes, one of the students was crying because he found the activities in the book too difficult to solve. I approached him slowly and instructed him to take a deep breath in through his nose and let it go through his mouth, after a few minutes he was feeling way better and was ready to continue with the activities. I really loved the way he was smiling joyfully after deep breathings.

Classes: III & IV & VI & IX

Activity: **Easy seated pose & Box breath.**

Outcomes:

Box breath was successfully performed by some of the students, whereas some need to practice it more in order to perfect it. Easy seated pose was firstly introduced to all of the classes and was well performed by the majority of the students. Easy seated pose is also easy to learn and the children claimed to be **calmer** after the activity took place.

Class: V & VIII

Activity: **1-2-3 clap exercise & Mountain Pose**

Outcomes:

The 1,2,3 clap exercise was pretty good this time too. Some students were in a **good mood** while others were trying to **focus** and feel every sensation. Whereas mountain pose was **fun** but also something **different**. They gave enough effort to do it but obviously they needed more practice in order to reach to the essence of the activity, because, to them, it was more interesting what they were doing rather than what they were feeling. It would be better if this activity would be

performed in nature, outside school, because it **connects** children to the earth and **strengthens** their physical balance, but due to the bad weather we could not go outside.

Class: VII

Activity: **Tree pose**

Outcomes:

About this activity, I got enough confidence to say that it was one of their favorites; they continuously required me to practice it again and again. But, just as the other yoga poses, it would be better if the activity was performed in open nature, their feelings would flow more naturally. Some of the students practiced it perfectly, though not all of them. It could be noticed that the ones which were more **confident** in themselves, had less trouble practicing it. While others who were not that serious failed at their most important part. They were very **pleased** after the activity and quite ready to continue with the lesson.

Week 5

Classes: Preschoolers & I & II & III

Activity: **Blow out the candle**

Outcomes:

This activity is generally the easiest one to perform and they love it. They focus their attention while **having fun** and **relaxing** at the same time. I am pretty sure they will remember it long after some time because it is the simplest one. This time the activity was successful as well.

Classes: IV & V & VI

Activity: **1-2-3 Clap**

Outcomes:

It is one of students' favorite activities because it makes them feel **comfortable** while doing it. Classes 4, 5 and 6 enjoyed this activity and they claimed they were **feeling better** after I asked them how they think the activity helped them.

Classes: VII & VII & IX

Activity: **Body Scan**

Outcomes:

Body scan was introduced for the first time in this group and apparently resulted successful because after it was performed, the students claimed to **feel better** and kind of **different** than before the activity. They claimed to be more **relaxed** while they were paying attention to different parts of the body and their sensations.

Week 6

Classes: Kindergarten & I & II & III & IV & V

Activity: **Volcano Breath**

Outcomes:

Volcano breath was one of the activities that we all enjoyed a lot during the performance. It is one of our favorites. The way this activity makes them **connect** the awareness with the body while moving their hands up and down, is very **powerful** and **relaxing**. This activity successfully made pupils more **relaxed** and **conscious** about their feelings. It also made them more **energetic** by releasing anger, stress or tension; simultaneously making children **feel better**.

Classes: VI & VII & VIII & IX

Activity: **Tai Chi**

Outcomes:

This is also one of the activities which would be better performed in an open area in order to feel the nature and their surroundings. Nevertheless, this activity was a bit **more difficult**, not as of performance but as of understanding. They are still young, they rather not believe in a few things without seeing or experiencing them; anyway, some of them could really notice the effect it had on their hands and **sensations**. I noticed them being **very curious** about everything that was going on around them.

Week 7

Classes: Kindergarten & I & II & III & IV & V

Activity: **Counting Breaths**

Outcomes:

During the performance of this activity, children were counting each exhalation during which they were keeping their **attention** in the present moment. All I could hear during the activity was children counting in a low voice which led them to be even more **relaxed**. Counting breaths was a little bit challenging for them because they had to **focus** on two things at the same time: counting and breathing. After some practice of the activity, it helped them manage to reach the goal.

Classes: VI & VII & VII & IX

Activity: **Balloon Breath**

Outcomes:

With this activity they were introduced to diaphragmatic breathing which produced a state of **calm, reduced heart rate** and their **blood pressure**. This is also a **fun-engaging** activity because it

makes children **connect** their movements with sensations while having **fun** at the same time and letting go of the **negative** feelings.

Week 8

Classes: Kindergarten & I & II & III & IV & V

Activity: **Starfish hands**

Outcomes:

This was also one of the activities that brought **calmness** inside the classroom while they were following and focusing on their sensations. Their **curiosity** made some of the pupils follow their fingers at a faster pace and finishing it earlier, for this reason they were instructed to perform it once again but this time slower and focusing only in the **present moment**. Most of the pupils were noticed to be more **calm**, especially the kindergarten ones.

Classes: VI & VII & VIII & IX

Activity: **The Appreciation Seat**

Outcomes:

I would rate this activity among the top ones. Because it was the last mindfulness class and it was the beginning of the second semester at school, I chose this activity for a fresh start for students to feel appreciated. At first they were hesitating to take the appreciation seat but with some encouragement, they agreed. This activity led them to **recognition** and **appreciation** expressing it to each-other. It raised their **confidence** and made them feel more **valued** by their peers which leads to a **better relationship** between them.

4.2 Questionnaire results

Question number 1: Have you ever practiced mindfulness in the classroom (except the English Language class)? 10 of the boys and 27 of the girl participants responded with NO, whereas 4 boys and 2 girls chose YES as an answer. This tells us that the majority of the pupils of this specific school did never practice mindfulness activities before, they were new to this.

Question number 2: Do you think that mindfulness activities in the classroom are attractive and help the learning process? All of the participants responded with YES to this question. Important thing is for them to have a positive view about these activities, in this way the excitement grows.

Question number 3: Would you recommend mindfulness usage in other classes as well? Two of the girl participants disagreed whereas the other 27 agreed to use mindfulness in other lessons. Also, two of the boy participants disagreed, leaving 12 others with agreement. The result of this question shows that the majority of these pupils agree to the practice of the mindfulness activities if it is to be ever implemented as an extra-curricular activity.

Question number 4: Would you like to continue with mindfulness application in the classroom? Out of 14 male students, 2 responded with NO, 12 others responded with YES. Whereas, out of 27 females, all 27 responded YES to this question.

Question number 5: Do you think that mindfulness in the classroom helped you learn English better, if yes, why? This is an open-ended question in which children could express their opinion about mindfulness in English class. Among 14 boys, 3 of them wrote that mindfulness activities did not help them; 1 gave no response; 10 claimed that the activities were helpful to them. They wrote that the activities generally made them *feel better; calmer; more focused and concentrated;* and most of them felt *more relaxed*.

All 27 girls gave positive answers. They described mindfulness as the activity which made them: *learn more words; made them feel more relaxed and prepared; calmer; stress free; focused; better understanding; express their thoughts easier; fearless; it clarified their thoughts*. One of the respondents wrote:

5. A mendoni që praktikimi i meditimit në klasë ju ka ndihmuar që të mësoni më mirë gjuhën Angleze, nëse po, pse?

Po mua me ka ndihmuar shume, sepse ma ka larguar teje stresin dhe jamë ndjeh shumë me mir dhe më lirshem, për të treguar atë që e mendoj, për gjuhën Angleze.

It is written: “Yes it helped me a lot, because all the stress went away and I felt way better, more relaxed to talk about what I thought about English Language”.

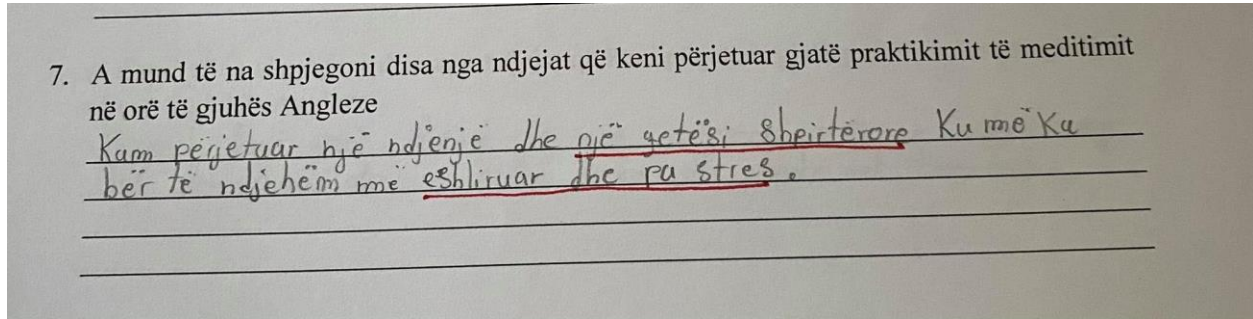
Question number 6: During 8-week mindfulness practices in English class, which of the methods did you like the most and helped you feel better? Here, most of the students claimed to have liked breath-work activities, the ones which focused more on breathing. Other mentioned activities were: *Tai Chi*, *Box Breath*, *4-7-8 breathing*, *1-2-3 clap breathing*. Also, some students wrote all of the activities. Important to be noted is that except one student who did not write anything, the others all claimed to have liked the activities. Here is one of the answers:

6. Gjatë periudhës 8-javore të praktikimit të meditimit në orë të gjuhës Angleze, cila nga metodat ju ka pëlqyer më së shumti dhe ju ka bërë të ndiheni më mirë?

Meditimi me frymëmarrje, më ka bërë të ndihem shumë mirë dhe ti përjetoj ndjenjat që i kamë nga brenda. Por edhe praktikimet e meditimit tjera me kanë bërë të ndihem mirë.

Translation: “Breathing mindfulness made me feel much better and experience inner feelings. Other activities as well made me feel good”.

Question number 7: Can you explain some of the feelings you experienced during mindfulness in English class? The answers of this question matter the most, for the simple reason that they could think about what they felt through the practices. Content analysis is used in order to classify the data of this specific question. Find below one of the answered part:



“I’ve experienced a feeling and a spiritual calmness which made me feel relaxed and no stress”.

Table 10: Content analysis of the students’ questionnaire conducted at the Primary School “Drita” Gramacel.

Students’ explained feelings	Frequency	Percentage
Feeling better	17	26.9%
Relaxed	17	26.9%
Calmer	10	15.8%
Less stressed	4	6.3%
Positive	2	3.17%
Special	2	3.17%
Fearless	2	3.17%
Helpful	1	1.5%
Prepared	1	1.5%
Focused	1	1.5%

Energetic	1	1.5%
Less anxious	1	1.5%

Apart from these positive feelings and responses described by the students, 2 respondents wrote that they could not explain their feelings properly; one participant claimed that he had no feelings and one more claimed to have forgotten her feelings, which makes it a total of 6.3%. The percentages were extracted according to the number of responses, not the number of the students, because there were cases when one student wrote more than one answer.

The students' responses were rated under specific categories in which I was focusing more during the activities:

- **Emotional consolidation** - *Feeling better, more relaxed, calmer, less stressed, and positive.*
- **Mental flexibility** – *focused during the lesson.*
- **Learning skills** – *prepared for the lesson.*
- **Anxiety levels** – *less anxiety level.*

Whereas, under **Behavioral changes**, you might consider the same words as in emotional consolidation because when students are feeling better, relaxed, less stressed and positive, they will automatically change their behavior to a better one. Same applies to the **Level of learning a new language** because when students are prepared and more focused during the lesson, their learning process will be automatically enhanced.

CHAPTER 5

5.1 Discussion and Conclusion

In this particular paper I sought to investigate the importance of Mindfulness activities and its effects on English language teaching among a particular group of young pupils. Based on the research method findings of this paper, we were able to resolve this issue to a certain aspect. In short and simple words, significant changes were identified among the behavior of the pupils that were part of the research investigation; their emotional reinforcement; their stress level. Pupils were noted to be more comfortable expressing their thoughts and one of the most important things worth to be mentioned was their willingness to be part of the English Language class. Nevertheless, considering the circumstances, it should be taken into account that the lack of time for the activities; the school environment and confronting the pandemic with Covid-19, challenged the approach application to a massive extent.

Previous findings have shown that mindfulness activities resulted in a positive impact in many life spheres, reinforcing self-acceptance and focusing more on the positive, leaving less space for the negative thoughts to affect our lives.

Somehow, it makes even more sense when we check the scientific data about the progress and development of our brains with the help of mindfulness and meditation activities.

Focusing on our wellbeing, physical and emotional, mindfulness activities aim to contribute to our overall well being, particularly when these activities are used with a certain purpose or to a certain aged group, i.e. pupils inside the classroom.

It excites me a lot to think about giving the opportunity to every child to develop self-awareness and courage at a very young age. Equipping them with compassion, intellectual and emotional tools they will become their own hero anytime they need it. It should live among each teacher's vision and every educator's goal. Such responsibility should be taken very seriously by the hierarchy, as important as lecturing a specific subject, not to say more than that because the way they grow up tells a lot about who they are going to be in their future, and what their role will be in our society. To quote Ellen Langer in "The power of mindful learning" (1997): "Most of us are not taught our skills, whether academic, athletic or artistic, by the real experts. The rules we are given to practice are based on generally accepted truths about how to perform the task and not on our individual abilities. If we mindlessly practice these skills, we are not likely to surpass our teachers. Even if we are fortunate enough to be shown how to do something by a true expert, mindless practice keeps the activity from becoming our own" (pg. 21). It stands as a reason to take another route, as there are many more avenues for people to follow.

Identifying this issue, I believe future researchers would be able to take this in the direction which would be very useful for the overall society as there are still many loose ends to study and develop in order to get a better sense on this issue, especially when it is presented as an innovation.

While working relentlessly, I hope that I will be supported by other teachers as well and all members in the education framework of our country. Obviously, that would provide even higher rates of success in this approach. Moreover, the specific aspects I will be focusing more on during

the investigation, are what actually decide what kind of humans will those students become for the whole society; their thoughts become actions, and actions impact their surroundings, be it for good or for worse. We shall certainly aim for the best in each individual; individuals with increased rate of compassion and empathy; self-acceptance and others; increased sense of courage to change; morality and intuition so that it should become an outstanding change for society.

It is essential to give the space for a new way of growing up, an opportunity to create something that will nurture the upcoming generations. Giving students more space for the activities to let them decide when they really feel like they need to be part of mindfulness, or better say, let mindfulness be part of them. All of it applies when it comes to English language teaching and learning. We want our pupils to be concentrated in our classes, but how much do we work into helping them remain concentrated? In fact, it is very simple. Making them target their attention for the fact that concentration occurs naturally when we focus our attention where we want. And, mindful breathing results to be one of the easiest ways to help us vary our attention. Of course, it should be a choice, not an obligation, and not rush into it because just like exercises, they require endurance, commitment and a lot of self-confidence.

Each process requires some time to be implemented in the society. Taking into consideration that there will always be obstacles and failures that will cross our path, and people who simply are afraid to embrace changes into their life, they will always remain the same in the course of their life. But these obstacles should never interrupt our way towards success, instead they should make us learn and move forward at a faster pace.

I am considering this research to be a very important step in my life and I truly believe that it will result in success as people need to be part of new experiences, experiences that can actually bring change into their life and into their student's life, especially considering the rapid change that the world is going through. We are all having role models in our life, but if we want to become someone's role model, we need to do something that would make an impact into their life, in such a way there are more chances to be followed by those people.

REFERENCES

Ager, K, Albrecht, N and Cohen, 'Mindfulness in schools research project: Exploring students' perspectives of mindfulness - What are students' perspectives of learning mindfulness practices at school? 2015.

Bailey N., Chambers R., Hassed C., Jones A. Owen J., Wootten A., *Evidence Based Guidelines for Mindfulness in Schools - a Guide for Teachers and School Leaders*, 2018.

Bankroft J., *Suggestopedia and Language Acquisition*, 1999.

Broderick P., *Learning to Breathe-A Mindfulness Curriculum for Adolescents to Cultivate Emotion Regulation, Attention, and Performance*, 2013.

Daniel T., *Mindfulness For Children, 150+ activities for Happier, Healthier, Stress-Free Kids*, 2018.

Kabat-Zinn J., *Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) Authorized Curriculum Guide*, 2017.

Langer E., *The power of mindful learning*, 1997.

Lozanov G. *Suggestopedia- Desuggestive teaching communicative method on the level of the hidden reserves of the human mind*, 2005.

Rix G., Bernay R., *A Study of the Effects of Mindfulness in Five Primary Schools in New Zealand* *New Zealand Journal of Teachers' Work*, Volume 11, Issue 2, 201-220, 2014.

Rickert N., *Teacher Mindfulness in the Middle School Classroom: Reliability and Validity of a New Scale*, 2016.

Siegel D., *The Mindful Brain*, 2007.

Shapiro Sh., Hanson R., Carlson K., Mustad J., Robbins M., Jha A., Epel E., Graham J., Keltner D., Nichols W., Siegel D. *Masters of Mindfulness Transforming Your Mind and Body*, (2018).

Schoeberlein D., Seth S., *Mindful Teaching and Teaching Mindfulness: A guide for anyone who teaches anything*, 2009.

Wagner K., *The Mindfully Embedded Classroom: An Investigation of the Mindfulness Traits, Philosophies, and Practices of High School Teachers*, 2016.

Wang Y., Liu Ch., *Cultivate Mindfulness: A Case Study of Mindful Learning in an English as a Foreign Language Classroom*, 2016.

Elias M., for www.edutopia.org *Pros and Cons of Mindfulness in SEL*, 2018.

Kreative Leadership: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H_O1brYwdSY *5 Incredibly Fun GAMES to Teach Self-Regulation (Self-Control)*

Leonard A., for the Blinkist Magazine, *Root to Rise: Following the History of Mindfulness Back to its Source*, 2020. (<https://www.blinkist.com/magazine/posts/history-of-mindfulness>)

(No author) www.welldoing.org *The Basics of Mindfulness: Where Did It Come From?*

Joshi M., for www.bupa.co.uk *Have you felt depressed? Here's how mindfulness might help you*, 2017.

Medical News Today: www.medicalnewstoday.com *What is the best type of meditation?* 2017.

Teflnet: www.tefl.net Suggestopedia methods.

APPENDIXES

Meditimi në klasë- Pyetësor për nxënësit

Ju lutëm plotësoni këtë pyetësor me përgjigjet që u përshtaten preferencave tuaja. Të dhënat do të mbeten anonime dhe do të përdoren vetëm për qëllime akademike.

Gjinia: M F - Moshë:_____

1. A keni praktikuar ndonjëherë metoda të meditimit në klasë në ndonjë orë mësimore (përpos asaj të gjuhës Angleze)?
 - a. Po
 - b. Jo
2. A mendoni që metodat e meditimit në klasë janë atraktive dhe e ndihmojnë procesin mësimor?
 - a. Po
 - b. Jo
3. A do rekomandonit përdorimin e metodave të meditimit edhe në orë tjera mësimore?
 - a. Po
 - b. Jo
4. A do të kishit dëshirë të vazhdonit me aplikimin e metodave të meditimit në klasë?
 - a. Po
 - b. Jo

5. A mendoni që praktikimi i meditimit në klasë ju ka ndihmuar që të mësoni më mirë gjuhën Angleze, nëse po, pse?

6. Gjatë periudhës 8-javore të praktikimit të meditimit në orë të gjuhës Angleze, cila nga metodat ju ka pëlqyer më së shumti dhe ju ka bërë të ndiheni më mirë?

7. A mund të na shpjegoni disa nga ndjejat që keni përjetuar gjatë praktikimit të meditimit në orë të gjuhës Angleze

Mindfulness in the classroom- Student's questionnaire

Please complete this questionnaire based on your preferences. Data gathered will be anonymous and used only for academic purposes.

Gender: M F - Age:_____

1. Have you ever practiced mindfulness methods in any other class (except the English Language one)?

a. yes

b. no

2. Do you think mindfulness activities are attractive and help the learning process?

a. yes

b. no

3. Would you recommend mindfulness activities in other classes as well?

a. yes

b. no

4. Would you like to continue with mindfulness activities inside the classroom?

a. yes

b. no

5. Do you think mindfulness activities helped you learn English language better, if yes, why?

6. During the 8 week mindfulness activities in English class, which of the methods you liked the most and made you feel better?

7. Can you explain some of the feelings you experienced during mindfulness in English class?

November 5 2020

Week I
Class: VI

Aims
Controlled breathing;
Introduction to the activity;
Relaxation;
Alleviate anxiety.

Activities
4-7-8 breathing
Breathe in deep for 4 seconds, hold your breath for 7 seconds, exhale for 8 seconds.
Finish with an inner and outer smile.

Day one: First time applying this method. Some students performed it better, some not so good but as it's the first time, we're waiting for better results next time.

Outcomes
Day two:
Second day was more successful, proving the saying "practice makes it perfect."
Pupils

Notes
Important thing is that they are really loving it.

