

CHAPTER 7: DELVING INTO THE MINDFULNESS: A WINDOW OF OPPORTUNITY FOR EFL PRESERVICE-INSERVICE TEACHERS IN TÜRKİYE

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“There are no hopeless situations,
there are hopeless people.
I have never lost hope.”

Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

“Be happy in the moment, that's enough.
Each moment is all we need, not more.”

Mother Teresa

1. Introduction

Educational setting requires whole-hearted, mindful, and capable educators to entice learners' not only academic skills but as humans also their emotive, social and life skills. Recent trends in positive psychology have led to a proliferation of mindfulness studies in education to cultivate social and life skills. During and beyond Covid19 pandemic, educational settings globally witnessed challenges in that educators and learners need to alleviate stressors, anxiety, and sense of burden, depression, low wellbeing, and problem behaviors. With the lens of Foreign Language Education (FLE), foreign language educators should also cope with linguistic, cross cultural, psychological, and pedagogical adversities additional to demanding teaching profession. Mindfulness as a novel activity in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) has attracted a renewed attention to boost positive emotions of EFL educators and learners towards language, life, and social skills and to cogitate challenges of Covid 19.

The centrality of this paper is on mindfulness and the significance of mindfulness in ELT in Türkiye. Therefore, it is better to begin with umbrella term Positive Psychology first before highlighting Mindfulness as one of the Positive Psychology variables. Positive Psychology (PP) is a discipline of human psychology that places a higher priority on empirical research concerning how individuals prosper and live well; it is the investigation of what is good in life leveraging fundamental human strengths and attributes to make life happier (Csikszentmihalyi & Nakamura, 2011; MacIntyre, 2021; MacIntyre et al., 2019; Peterson, 2006; Seligman, 2006; Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000).

Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi's influential works (2000) were the very first to introduce PP, which sought at promoting a change in the emphasis of psychology from solely fixing the adverse and troubling issues that life brings to nurturing positive attributes.

Psychology is not just a branch of medicine concerned with the illness or health; it is much larger. It is about work, education, insight, love, growth, and play. And in this quest for what is best, positive psychology does not rely on wishful thinking, faith, self-deception, fads, or hand-waving; it tries to adapt what is best in the scientific method to the unique problems that human behavior presents to those who wish to understand it in all its complexity. (Seligman & Csikszentmihalyi, 2000, p. 7)

A few years later, Peterson (2006) put emphasis on scientific techniques and good things in life, consequently defined PP as “The scientific study of what goes right in life, from birth to death and at all stops in between” (p. 4). According to Seligman, PP attempts to establish instruments for cultivating positive emotions, greater involvement, and an awareness of purpose in life rather than employing a lenitive method to alleviating pain or struggling with traumatic experiences. Therefore, life is not just viewed through the lens of oddities and challenges but also from its pleasing features (2006). Seligman (2011) highlights that PP takes interest in a person's not merely happiness but as well resilience, growth, flourishing, and pleasure in all spheres of their lives (MacIntyre, 2021), including their educational pursuits. Seligman (2006) launched the PP research in education and psychology as a response against the supremacy of cognitivist positions in second-language acquisition (SLA) research with a focus on anxiety (Çapan & Pektaş 2013), demotivation or burnout (Ghanizadeh & Royaei, 2015) which had obscured the significance of emotions in L2 learning. It is an undeniable fact that an overtly positive rebirth occurred in the field of language instruction with the introduction and swift spread of PP in general education (Deweale & MacIntyre, 2014).



Figure 1. Potential positive psychology factors contributing to SLE/FLE (Wang et al., 2021)

Figure 1 above visualizes the positive student and/or teacher factors that may have impact in SLA/FLE research domains. Now that the main foci of PP and its relation to SLA and FLE research field highlighted, it is time to focus on the centrality of this paper Mindfulness as a PP construct and its relation to ESL/EFL studies.

From a scientific standpoint, mindfulness is a relatively recent development in numerous disciplines, including medicine (Arıcı Özcan & Şahin, 2021), psychology, education (Öz, 2017), positive psychology and intercultural communication tracing to the period of early Buddhist meditation taking its name from language Pali, an old Buddhist language (Germer, et al., 2013). As a pioneer scientist in *Mindfulness*, Kabat-Zinn (2003) defined mindfulness as “the awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and non-judgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment” (p. 145). It is noteworthy to comment on Jon Kabat Zinn’s definition. There are a few key factors in Kabat’s definition on what is of crucial stances for mindfulness. It is a procedure that is ongoing, to start. The period we are in is the only thing that is important; revisiting the past or worrying on the future are not. Last but not least, it is important to accept and refrain from imposing judgment thus embracing acceptance and non-judgmentality. However, the mindful attitudes are not limited to nonjudgement, acceptance and here and now-the present. Kuru Gönen (2022) provides a detailed information in Table 1 below about mindful attitudes, its features with implications.

Table 1. Nine attitudes of mindfulness (Kuru Gönen, 2022).

Attitudes	Features	Implications for EFL Classroom
Non-Judgement	Not labeling or categorizing the events, situations as good, bad, nice, awful, etc. Cultivating an ability to understand.	Approaching English language learning by leaving the judgments about learning FL and adopting an objective perspective.
Acceptance	Accepting fear, anxiety, and sorrow as they are and not running away from them.	Accepting negative arousals related to FL learning and going through all with an open perspective. Being able to see solutions to language learning problems.
Beginner's Mind	Experiencing things like a child as if they are happening for the first time.	Going through everything as they are related to FL learning with curiosity regardless of the concerns of the past and future.
Patience	Trying to control the plans of expectations of the future. Making negative consequences out of the things and situations that have not happened yet.	Being stuck in negative past experiences of learning English and jumping into conclusions. Language learning takes time, and it can only happen in the present moment.
Non-Striving	Observing the feelings and sensations as they rise and fall and being in full awareness of the experience.	Avoiding difficult situations and topics related to English and expecting to learn everything at the end of a single lesson bring disappointment.
Letting Go	Having an awareness of 'everything shall pass' by conscious observation of the internal states.	Letting go of negative FL learning experiences, choosing to focus on the present moment instead of living in the same worrisome story repeatedly.
Compassion	Having a friendly attitude towards feelings, thoughts, and all internal states.	Building emotional resilience for learning FL by acknowledging the reasons for failure and downfalls.
Gratitude	Not taking everything for granted. Appreciating even the simplest things.	Being able to say 'I am here, I am healthy, and I am in the class. I am here for language learning, and I am putting my effort into this.'

In Kuru Gönen's study, she indicated patience, non-striving, trust, letting go, compassion and gratitude additional to attitudes of nonjudgement, acceptance and here and now. She provides the readers a comprehensive and to the point features and attitudes besides providing implications for EFL learner and instructors. Having defined what mindfulness is and its features, what follows is the Mindfulness-Based studies in disciplines to unravel their results and implications in brief.

There are many different mindfulness-based interventions as well each has its own characteristics. Table 2 demonstrates the most utilized Mindfulness-Based interventions by the scientists and the researchers.

Table 2. Common mindfulness-based interventions (Felver, et al. 2013, p.533)

Intervention	Format	Description
Mindfulness- Based Stress Reduction	8 weeks, daily homework, weekly group meetings to teach mindfulness techniques and discussion application	Teaches mindful breathing, body awareness and stretching focuses on integrating mindfulness into everyday life
Mindfulness- Based Cognitive Therapy Soles of the Feet	8 weeks, daily homework, weekly psychoeducational group meetings to discuss precursors to psychopathology. 5 structured 45-minute sessions to teach awareness of emotional precursors to aggressive behavior and technique to shift attention to a neutral stimulus	Blends CBT and MBSR to address precursors to psychopathology Teaches simple self-regulation strategy to interrupt escalating emotional problems that lead to aggression
Acceptance and Commitment Therapy	Individual or group sessions of varying lengths, uses experiential thought exercises, relies heavily on metaphors	Works to increase psychological flexibility relevant to internal and external experience, concurrently uses behavioral strategies to promote change

Mindfulness based interventions are practiced in many disciplines from medicine to education their participants ranging from children to adults. To begin with, there are some recent studies on mindfulness for students with learning disabilities including Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD). The available research seems to verify the positive effects of parent-child mindfulness training with high school pupils suffering from ADHD or ASD by indicating a further need of research (Keenan-Mount, et al., 2016). On bullying and cyberbullying, Foody and Samara (2018) in their paper, accentuated the connection between mental health and experiences of bullying with numerous studies. To target and counteract adverse impacts of bullying and cyberbullying, they presented beneficial mindfulness practices. Özcan and Şahin (2021) conducted experimental research to investigate the impact of Mindfulness-Based Thriving Program (MTP) on undergraduates. The undergraduates from Faculty of Health enrolled in different majors participated in the study. MTP intervention was found to be effective on the experimental group's mindfulness and

thriving levels. So far, the author presented the effects of mindfulness-based practices from disciplines of medicine and academy with a focus on ASD, ADHD high school students, bullying and cyberbullying and university students' thriving and mindfulness level and all indicated that mindfulness-based practices may be quite effective to eliminate problem behaviors and boost thriving. The following paragraph will focus on mindfulness and foreign language education.

The practice of mindfulness, which has its roots in Buddhism, is used in Western psychology for problem behaviors, disorders or mental issues. EFL as a field with a pedagogy is distinct from merely psychology however as MacIntyre (2016) asserts that the growth of positive psychology in SLA can offer creative solutions in that field.

In addition, the notion that deliberate and effective interventions can be made to increase wellbeing for both individuals and communities is a central tenet in PosPsy and is a defining feature of education itself, with language at the very center of the process. For this reason, and many others, there are connections between PosPsy and SLA that are well worth exploring (p.5).

In EFL on Foreign Language Anxiety studies, Charoensukmongkol (2019) examined the role of mindfulness to diminish ESL public speaking anxiety of university students. The results yielded that the more participants' mindfulness level the less anxiety level they demonstrated with higher grades on their speaking class presentations. In the study, there was no difference on the mindfulness levels based on gender variable. Fallah (2017) found the more mindfulness levels were associated with the lower anxiety levels and the more coping self-efficacy levels. Önem (2015) conducted a study with Freshman ELT preservice teachers. The researcher aimed to determine whether the effects of meditation and the smell of aroma lavender will affect their anxiety states and new vocabulary learning levels. The results indicated that the experimental group scored lower on posttest anxiety. Öz (2017) also with an experimental design in her study, found that mindfulness meditation-based intervention program lowered preparatory EFL learners' speaking anxiety while increasing willingness to communicate levels.

In their paper, Koçali and Aşık (2022) presented a systematic review on mindfulness in EFL and ESL context on national and international studies. They found that both experimental and non-experimental studies yielded positive results in favor of mindfulness. Despite the numerous studies on anxiety and FLE, in Türkiye, there is dearth of studies on mindfulness. Hence, there seems a need for a systematic understanding of how mindfulness contributes to FLE in Türkiye. The purpose of this paper is to review recent research into the notion and interactional effect of Mindfulness on EFL educators and learners and pave a way for further research with practical

and pedagogical implications. A systematic understanding of how mindfulness contributes to FLE in Türkiye is still lacking. With this aim in mind, this systematic review attempts to unravel the most recent research about the concept of mindfulness in ELT studies conducted in Türkiye. By locating the works conducted over the preceding ten years, this systematic review seeks to analyze the subject of mindfulness research in ELT in Türkiye. Although there are studies on mindfulness and ELT abroad, we need to adapt the studies in Türkiye because of many internal and external factors such as context, culture, ELT programs and stakeholders, ELT policy, physical and psychological climates of the schools. This objective's primary driving force is to demonstrate the value of mindfulness in English Language Teaching and Learning in Türkiye, since this will serve as the foundation for future studies on mindfulness and intervention studies.

The following research questions (RQ) are addressed to draw a conclusion of the study.

RQ 1: What are the main aims of mindfulness studies in ELT regarding preceding ten years?

RQ 2: What are the tendencies of research design, participants, data collection and analysis instruments of mindfulness studies published in ELT in Turkish context regarding preceding ten years?

RQ 3: What are the major findings of the studies on mindfulness in ELT?

2. Procedure

This part of the paper informs the readers about research design, data collection and analysis, identification, eligibility and exclusion stages.

Systematic review is used for research design of the current study. The systematic review's main objective is to provide an in-depth summary of all primary research that is currently accessible in answer to a specific research issue. The term "secondary research" (research on research) is occasionally used to describe a systematic review, which makes use of all the current research. A thorough search of all available sources of evidence for pertinent studies is the first stage in a systematic review. In the methodology part of the review, a list of the databases and citation indexes that were examined is presented. Next, titles and abstracts are scrutinized for eligibility and relevance using prearranged, consistent criteria. The scientific merit of each study is then evaluated. The evidence is then synthesized (Clarke, 2011).

In data collection and analysis, the author had a clear objective, used relevant research, relevant criteria for studies, transparent techniques for eligible studies, evaluated the validity of the findings of the included studies, and presented and synthesized the included studies in a systematic manner. The author employed The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses group (PRISMA) standards as the foundation for the four-phase flow diagram (identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion of the studies) that served as the basis for the current systematic review (Moher et al., 2009). By using qualitative techniques, the data from the studies of choice were analyzed and their findings were interpreted through content analysis.

For *Identification Stage*, since the study's initial eligibility criterion was to analyze recent research on mindfulness in ELT that was restricted to Turkey, it was decided to focus on searching studies from the preceding ten years. Ten studies on mindfulness in ELT published between 2014 and 2023 that fall under the purview of this systematic review were chosen and evaluated in accordance with the research questions formulated. The fundamental criterion employed for selecting the studies was that they were primarily concerned with the mindfulness in ELT in Türkiye. The second criterion relates to study quality. The study sought to identify research papers that were listed in open access databases and the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) Thesis Center. 'Mindfulness in ELT ' in Türkiye was selected as the keyword used for structuring the search query throughout the literature. The review excluded any of the following documents: books, book chapters, book reviews, conference papers, and review studies. The review solely addressed works pertaining to mindfulness in ELT because research in the field of ELT in Türkiye was prioritized. The author used PRISMA standards to mitigate the potential of bias and enhance eligibility. Studies that met the following criteria were included in this systematic review:

- confined to Türkiye and focusing on mindfulness in ELT,
- were carried out with Turkish EFL learners or teachers,
- had been published in open access journals and the Council of Higher Education (CoHE) Thesis Center,
- were printed between the years of 2014 and 2023.

Eligibility Stage included a pathway. The relevant recent studies were first identified and then evaluated for eligibility using the inclusion and exclusion criteria, which are essential in determining in the selection of studies deemed relevant to the study's aim and research questions.

Following Exclusion Stage; books, book chapters, book reviews, conference papers, and review studies were not included in the final phase of searching for related articles on mindfulness in ELT. In addition, research studies that were not published between 2014 and 2023 were eliminated. For example, out of 336 (CoHE Thesis Center, 2023). The author searched for the Web of Science (WOS) (360 articles but out of criteria), Scopus (1250 articles and 45 Türkiye based article none belonging to ELT) and ScienceDirect (91 articles none of them is suitable for review) databases thus decided to utilize from Google Scholar database and open access journals and CoHE Thesis Center. See Appendix for the summary of studies included in systematic review.

3. Findings

The author sought answer for the Research Questions of ‘what the main aims of mindfulness studies in ELT regarding preceding ten years are’, ‘what the tendencies of research design, participants, data collection instruments and data analysis of mindfulness studies published in ELT in Turkish context regarding preceding ten years are’ and ‘what the findings of the studies on mindfulness in ELT are’. The emerging themes of finding are elaborated below.

3.1. Focus of Mindfulness in ELT Studies in Türkiye

The review comprised research papers and theses on mindfulness in ELT in Türkiye that used five quantitative, four mixed-methods, and one qualitative research design. Based on the examination of the studies under evaluation, many different subjects were investigated:

Due to the nature of their research, quantitative studies sought to find out if senior English Language and Education students were aware of their being always present during various activities or, instead, acted automatically without paying enough attention to them (Altan, 2021) and to ascertain whether using lavender essential oil to promote meditation will have an impact on anxiety and learning in the context of learning a foreign language (Önem, 2015), to determine whether the guided mindfulness meditation technique will affect the level of motivation among English language teachers for the preparation of lessons (Pamuk, 2019). In another quantitative study, the objective was to examine how mindfulness affects EFL teachers

who are demotivated and claim to have burnout syndrome (Şimşir, 2019). The last quantitative based research aimed to investigate the amount of mindfulness among learners in preparatory schools and how it might fluctuate depending on psychosocial factors (Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021).

On the other hand, mixed methods studies aimed to; investigate the connection between learner autonomy and mindfulness throughout the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) at Fırat University (Demirci, 2022), reveal how instruction on mindfulness influences EFL students' levels of speaking anxiety, willingness to speak in the target language, and mindfulness awareness (Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022), at a state university in Central Anatolia, Türkiye to investigate the association between mindfulness and anxiety levels related to learning a foreign language among university students (Koçali, 2020). The final mixed-method study, as the first thesis in Türkiye on mindfulness in ELT, also aimed to distinguish between EFL students who received Mindfulness meditation-based clinical intervention (MMCI) training and those who did not in terms of L2 speaking anxiety, their degree of mindfulness and WTC in second language as a shared concern (Öz, 2017). Finally, there is only one qualitative study that sought to investigate the effects of mindfulness training on teachers' interactions with students, wellbeing, and resilience in their classrooms (Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023).

3.2. Context and Sample

The context is a predetermined criterion thus all the reviewed studies needed to be and were in Türkiye on mindfulness in ELT. Most the studies' target populations were EFL preparatory class students but some also included EFL teachers, ELT preservice teachers, and undergraduates of different majors such as Aviation Management and International Relations. To begin with, the studies chose the participants from preparatory school (Demirci, 2022; Öz, 2017; Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021), EFL instructors (Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023; Şimşir, 2019), EFL teachers (Pamuk, 2019), ELT preservice teachers (Altan, 2021; Önem, 2015), undergraduates in Aviation Management (Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022) and International Relations (Koçali, 2020). In general, the studies, except from the one in Ministry of National Education (Pamuk, 2019), were carried out at universities.

3.3. Data Collection and Analysis Instruments

The quantitative studies primarily used survey-based tools to collect data, Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) was used (Altan, 2021; Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021), furthermore State and Trait Anxiety Inventory & Vocabulary Test (Önem, 2015), Comprehensive Relative Autonomy Index (Pamuk, 2022), Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire (FFMQ) and Job-related Affective Well-being Scale (Şimşir, 2019) were the instruments utilized in the quantitative studies.

In similar veins, for the mixed methods studies, two studies echoed employing the same instruments; namely MAAS, The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS), Willingness to Communicate Scale (WTC) and semi-structured interview (Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022; Öz, 2017). Similarly, Autonomy Perception Scale (APS), MAAS and semi-structured interview (Demirci, 2022) and FLCAS, MAAS and semi-structured interview (Koçali, 2022) were the common tools as an integral component of their data collection process. Finally, the last study uniquely qualitative in nature of research, included a teacher journal and three semi structured interviews (Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023).

3.4. Major Findings

The selected research generated an array of noteworthy findings illustrating the various impacts of mindfulness in ELT on student anxiety, speaking anxiety, willingness to communicate, higher degree of mindfulness on both student and teachers, positive student-teacher interactions teacher professional and personal development, resilience, well-being, teacher burnout, job-related affective well-being and learner autonomy. Mindfulness in ELT enabled students to decrease their speaking anxiety (Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022; Önem, 2015, Öz, 2017) and another study yielded moderate level of foreign language anxiety on students (Koçali, 2022). For correlational studies, one of the studies demonstrated a significant negative relationship between mindfulness and foreign language anxiety on undergraduate students (Koçali, 2022) and in similar veins, another study reported statistically significant and meaningful relationship between mindfulness and L2 speaking anxiety (Öz, 2017).

Aside from the positive effects of mindfulness on foreign language anxiety, the studies agreed on the higher level of willingness to communicate (Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022; Öz, 2017) and high degree in mindfulness (Altan, 2021; Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022; Öz, 2017; Şimşir, 2019) along with mindfulness level being above moderate (Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021) and yielding moderate level of mindfulness (Demirci, 2022; Koçali, 2022). To elaborate on mindfulness, among the

related studies, many different positive effects and findings emerged like revealing small correlation between mindfulness and learner autonomy (Demirci, 2022), better level of vocabulary knowledge (Önem, 2015), an increase in the level of well-being and mindfulness besides indicating statistical and meaningful relationship between mindfulness and ‘Mindfulness for Well-being and Peak Performance’ (MWPP) also well-being and MWPP, furthermore; high, positive and significant relationship between well-being and mindfulness emerged (Şimşir, 2019). In parallel, mindfulness training had a positive effect on selected student-teacher interactions, teacher resilience and wellbeing (Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023).

A closer look at the data indicates some negative impacts and findings. To begin with, two studies indicated low level of expected mindfulness behaviors like being here and now (Altan, 2021) and students being not capable in performing mindful behaviors (Demirci, 2022). Akin to the findings, the studies displayed no noteworthy connection between mindfulness and gender among university students correlating with the findings (Demirci, 2022; Koçali, 2022). In their study, in respect of variables like the place the students lived most of their gender and academic achievement findings revealed no relationship between mindfulness and these variables (Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021). In one study, the participant teachers’ autonomous motivation levels did not change after mindfulness intervention and both control and experimental group displayed decrease in autonomous and controlled motivations (Pamuk, 2019).

4. Discussion

This systematic review's main objective was to provide recent studies that focused on mindfulness in ELT to draw conclusions for subsequent investigations. The review addresses several essential features of mindfulness in ELT specifically in Türkiye. In that manner, the current study creates a descriptive portrait of mindfulness in ELT while simultaneously illuminating the methodology and focus trends evident in the studies that were conducted over the preceding ten years. In considering this, it analyzed ten research studies on predetermined criteria that were carried out in Türkiye for a decade. The study reached to some crucial findings that serve as springing off points for further studies. The research results demonstrate that the following issues are specifically among the reviewed research topics/trends of the mindfulness in ELT studies: Foreign Language Anxiety, L2 speaking anxiety, willingness to communicate, mindfulness on both student and teachers, teacher professional and personal development, resilience, well-being, teacher burnout, job-related affective well-being and learner autonomy.

Four themes arose within the parameters of the findings and the synthesis and analysis of intended research questions. The first theme is on the focus on mindfulness in ELT studies in Türkiye, the second theme entails context and sample, the third theme covers data collection and analysis instruments, and final theme is about the major findings on the synthesized review studies. The evaluation of research papers revealed that there were some overlaps and discrepancies among studies on the effects and the degree of mindfulness in ELT.

To begin with, the first emerging theme is the focus on mindfulness in ELT studies in Türkiye, which yielded versatile research objectives on quantitative and mixed methods studies. The studies have tended to focus on revealing the mindfulness levels of ELT undergraduates as participants (Altan 2021) and the degree of preparatory school learners' mindfulness and its fluctuation depending on psychosocial factors (Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021). In the other studies, the researchers treated mindfulness through interventions to ascertain whether benefitting lavender aroma will affect anxiety and vocabulary learning (Önem, 2015), to unravel how mindfulness instruction impacts EFL students' speaking anxiety, willingness to communicate and mindfulness awareness (Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022; Öz, 2017), to display the effect of guided mindfulness meditation technique on English language teachers' motivation for lesson preparation (Pamuk, 2019) and how the influence of mindfulness on demotivated EFL teachers having burnout syndrome (Şimşir, 2019). In the correlational studies aside from interventional, the emphasis was on the association between mindfulness and EFL learners' learner autonomy (Demirci, 2022) and mindfulness and EFL learners' FLA levels (Koçali, 2020). Under first theme, the focus of studies on anxiety are parallel with another study in EFL as well (Schoeberlein & Sheth, 2009). Two studies attempted to unearth teachers' burnout, well-being and mindfulness levels after mindfulness intervention (Şimşir, 2019) and the impact of mindfulness training on a teacher's teacher- students interaction, teacher wellbeing, and resilience in class (Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023). Likewise, Charoensukmongkol (2013) shared the same research focus on the benefits of mindfulness training on teacher burn out and job satisfaction.

The second theme based on the context and participants indicated a rich context and samples. Since the setting is a predetermined criterion, all the studies on mindfulness in ELT reviewed ought to be and were conducted in Türkiye in general context. To specify more, the recent synthesized review studies, except from the study in Ministry of National Education (Pamuk, 2019), were carried out at many public and private universities. The evaluation revealed that, for the participant selection, students in EFL preparatory classes were the majority as the target

groups of the studies (Demirci, 2022; Öz, 2017; Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021), but in their studies, some also preferred EFL instructors (Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023; Şimşir, 2019), EFL teachers (Pamuk, 2019), ELT preservice teachers (Altan, 2021; Önem, 2015), and included undergraduates with a variety of fields of study, namely from Aviation management (Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022) and International Relations (Koçali, 2020) similar to the participants as undergraduates with different majors Charoensukmongkol (2013) , Özcan and Şahin (2021).

The third theme puts emphasis on data collection and analysis instruments thus similar and quite different tools were employed in the recent studies. Based on the findings, the most frequently used instrument was Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) by many researchers (Altan, 2021; Demirci, 2022; Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022; Koçali, 2022; Öz, 2017; Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021) it may be because of the focus of the main studies put mindfulness at its hearth., followed by the second mostly employed tool as semi structured interviews (Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023; Demirci, 2022; Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022; Koçali, 2022; Öz, 2017) to support triangulation and validity. The third tool is a very famous and most frequently employed scale in ELT named The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS). This may stem from that it was developed by Horwitz et al. (1986), it has been commonly used to determine anxiety level of participants it was developed by Horwitz et al. in 1986, it has been commonly used to determine anxiety level of participants Ersanlı and Ünal (2002); Koçali, (2022) and Öz, (2017) used FLCAS for their mixed methods studies as shared concern to understanding on the impact of mindfulness on anxiety types (Charoensukmongkol, 2013; Fallah, 2017). The reviewed studies as well covered many different sources of tools as scales, questionnaires, index and journals to add breadth and depth of analysis.

The final theme put emphasis on major findings based on the synthesis of the reviewed studies. The studies yielded positive and to a less degree negative impact of mindfulness in FL. Almost every reviewed research that was carried out on anxiety and the impact of mindfulness yielded positive results on decreasing the EFL anxiety or speaking anxiety (Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022; Koçali, 2022; Önem, 2015; Öz, 2017). The result of the findings also correlates with Semple et al. (2005) regarding the impact of mindfulness on anxiety. This result may be because of the mindfulness traits of *beginner's mind* and *letting go* (Kuru Gönen, 2022) as both indicates a clear focus to the present moment opportunities that life brings rather than living in the past with regret/ indignation and the future with anxiety.

Much of the available recently reviewed research deals with the significance, positive impact and level of mindfulness on participants indicating better vocabulary knowledge, higher level

of mindfulness, increased willingness to communicate, (job related) well-being, resilience and better teacher-students interaction (Altan, 2021; Çiçek & Gürbüz, 2023; Demirci, 2022; Ersanlı & Ünal, 2022; Koçali, 2022; Önem, 2015; Öz, 2017; Şimşir, 2019; Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021). The review results are in the same position as by Koçali and Aşık's (2022) systematic review on mindfulness in EFL and ESL context on with a focus on both national and international studies yielding positive results in favor of mindfulness.

To specify more, even if the numbers were considerably lower, some studies' findings point to gender variable did not differ on mindfulness level. According to the research results, the studies (Demirci, 2022; Koçali, 2022; Tural & Küçükkaragöz, 2021) did not uncover any notable associations between gender and mindfulness among university students. This view is supported by the other scholars by Brown and Ryan (2003), Charoensukmongkol (2019) and YAZICI (2020) that highlighted no gender difference on mindfulness studies. The justification for demonstrating the same mindfulness level despite gender disparities may be because mindfulness is a lately popular technique and practice in Türkiye, and attending such courses may be out of the realm of possibility financially. Additionally, the majority of undergraduates may also come from akin social and economic backgrounds, which might place them all in the same context (Koçali, 2020).

There is also, however, a further point to be considered. Even though the numbers are somewhat lower, some research findings seem to contradict those that demonstrate the positive effects of mindfulness and high degrees of mindfulness. For instance, in her study, Pamuk (2019) found that guided meditation had no effect on the autonomous motivation level of teachers in the experimental group. Besides all of the teachers in the control and experiment groups showed a decline in both autonomous and controlled motivation after the intervention. She asserts that this result may stem from the length of the meditation limited to 8 minutes and many individuals participation in the guided mindfulness meditation without understanding how to do it effectively. Two research revealed low levels of the expected mindfulness behaviors, such as being present in the moment (Altan, 2021), and students' inability to engage in these activities (Demirci, 2022).

5. Conclusion

This systematic review attempts to examine the topic of mindfulness research on ELT limited to studies conducted in Türkiye by synthesizing the studies completed over the recent 10 years. By analyzing the relevant studies carried out across the nation with regards to bolstering the

awareness and understanding of mindfulness practices, this systematic review aimed to portray the mindfulness in ELT in the pertinent literature. The ultimate aim is to contribute to Turkish academia on mindfulness in ELT otherwise we need to adapt the studies in Türkiye because of many internal and external factors such as context, culture, ELT programs, physical and psychological conditions of the schools. The four-phase flow diagram served as the basis for the current systematic review, and it was constructed by employing PRISMA standards. Data from the studies of choice were analyzed using qualitative methods, and their results were then interpreted using content analysis. The synthesis of the studies indicated four themes. This systematic review study came to the conclusion that the concept of mindfulness is worthwhile researching because recent studies indicate it has a high potential to influence both students' and teachers' interactions with language and personal- professional development, resilience, well-being and decreased anxiety in spite of fewer studies revealing contradictory results. Also, the studies indicated a gap in qualitative studies to unveil the deeper understanding of and trustworthiness of in-depth analysis of findings and further research to unearth the rationale behind no gender difference on mindfulness levels.

This review study has some limitations as it only includes the studies conducted in Türkiye only, the research studies published from 2014 to date, the studies focused merely on mindfulness in ELT only. The review did not cover books, book chapters, book reviews, systematic reviews, conference proceedings, poster presentations in Türkiye. The overall conclusion of this systematic review might be affected due to these limitations. These restrictions may have an impact on the systematic review's ultimate conclusion.

Further studies on gender difference and mindfulness in ELT may be the focus for filling the above-mentioned gap. The researchers may compare and contrast the recent mindfulness studies in Türkiye and abroad to see the whole picture in detail. Although cognitivist approaches have been criticized, it is evident that the researchers are still primarily interested on anxiety in the experimental mindfulness studies. Further research in this field might dwell more on PP elements than on the prevalence of anxiety or demotivation more with a qualitative focus. There is still scarce of mindfulness-based theses and even having no dissertation of mindfulness in ELT indicates a need for new theses and dissertations in Türkiye.

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Appendix A. Summary of Studies Included in Systematic Review

Author	Research Design	Context and Sample	Data Collection Instruments	Key Findings
Altan, M. Z. (2021)	Quantitative Descriptive	42 senior English Language and Education department students	MAAS (The Mindful Attention Awareness Scale)	Higher mindfulness level in general but low in the score of being here and now.
Çiçek, M. & Gürbüz, N. (2023)	Qualitative Narrative Inquiry	An EFL instructor with mindfulness training certificates who worked at a preparatory school in a northeast state university in Türkiye	A teacher journal and three semi-structured interviews.	Positive impact of mindfulness training on selected trained teacher's student-teacher interactions, and on her resilience and wellbeing.
Demirci, E. (2022).	A mixed research design Correlational	155 preparatory class students at State university in Elazığ, Türkiye.	Mindful Attention and Awareness Scale (MAAS) Autonomy Perception Scale Semi-structured interview	Small correlation between mindfulness and learner autonomy moderate level of mindfulness no gender-based difference in mindfulness level participants were not adequate enough on performing mindful behaviors
Ersanlı , C. Y & Ünal, T. (2022).	A mixed research design Interventional Quasi Experimental	41 sophomore students taking General English in the Department of Aviation Management at a State University in	Mindfulness Attention and Awareness Scale (MAAS) The Foreign Language Classroom	Experimental group had a higher willingness to communicate in a foreign language, a higher degree of mindfulness, and a lower level of second language speaking anxiety

		the Black Sea Region	Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) Willingness to Communicate Scale (WTC) Semi-structured interview	compared to their previous condition. Qualitative data also reveal that students who got mindfulness training could cope with their anxiety of making errors while speaking both in or outside of the class
Koçali, Z. (2020).	A mixed research design Correlational	157 students from preparatory to senior students International Relations at a State university in Central Anatolia in Türkiye	Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS) Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) Semi-structured interview	Moderate level of foreign language anxiety moderate level of mindfulness no meaningful relationship between mindfulness and gender among university students no meaningful relationship between mindfulness and grade a significant negative relationship between mindfulness and FLA.
Önem, E. E. (2015)	Quantitative Experimental	61 freshmen of English Language Teaching department of a state university in Türkiye	Turkish version of State and Trait Anxiety Inventory Vocabulary Test	Experimental group a lower level of anxiety at the end of the research Better level of vocabulary knowledge

Öz, S. (2017)	Mixed Method Experimental	29 preparatory program students at a private university in Türkiye	Mindful Attention & Awareness Scale (MAAS), Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) and Willingness to Communicate Scale (WTC) and semi- structured interviews.	there is a statistically significant and meaningful relationship between mindfulness and L2 speaking anxiety of EFL preparatory school students. the practice of mindfulness reduces fear of making mistake in English classes. a higher degree of mindfulness a significant decrease in L2 speaking anxiety
Pamuk, Z. O. (2022).	Quantitative Experimental	50 EFL teachers working at primary, secondary, high school and university	Comprehensive Relative Autonomy Index	The measured motivational variables decreased statistically in both groups
Şimşir, D. (2019).	Quantitative Quasi Experimental	60 Instructors of English who work at different universities in İstanbul	Five Facet Mindfulness Questionnaire, FFMQ Job-related Affective Well-being Scale, JAWS	significant increase in mindfulness after the Mindfulness for Well- being and Peak Performance (MWPP) statistical and meaningful relationship between mindfulness and MWPP in experimental group no difference found in control group for JAWS significant increase in well being after the MWPP significant relationship between wellbeing and JAWS. control group remained stable

				high, positive and significant relationship between well-being and mindfulness
Tural, P., & Küçükkaragöz, H. (2021).	Quantitative Descriptive	214 preparatory school students at a university from different departments	Mindful Attention Awareness Scale (MAAS)	the study group's mindfulness level was above moderate. no relationship was found between academic achievement, gender, and where they have spent most of their life

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