

The Implications of Mindfulness Training on EFL Students' Second Language Speaking Anxiety and Willingness to Communicate

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Many studies have been conducted with the aim of shedding light upon to lower the speaking anxiety and increase the willingness to communicate in a second language (L2). Even though it dates back to early meditation, mindfulness is not old in many different scientific disciplines such as psychology, medicine and education. In terms of language and mindfulness, most of the research have conducted studies based on public speaking in mother language (L1) and it was discovered that mindfulness reduces public speaking anxiety in L1. However, to our knowledge, there haven't been any research studies conducted on the relationship between mindfulness and L2 and there is very limited theoretical data related to these two correlated concepts.

Therefore, the current study was carried out in attempt to understand the difference between upper-intermediate (B2) level EFL students who had 6-weeks of mindfulness meditation-based intervention (MMCI) training and those who did not, in terms of their L2 speaking anxiety and willingness to communicate in L2. The study was conducted at a preparatory program of a foundation (non-profit, private) university in Istanbul, Turkey, involving 29 participants (N=12 control, N=17 experimental). Quantitative data was collected through two different questionnaires given as pre and post-test. Additionally, qualitative data was gathered by semi-structured interviews to receive verbal record. Non-parametric data was compared by employing a Mann Whitney U Test which revealed a significant decrease in participants' L2 speaking anxiety in English ($p < 0.011$), more willingness to communicate in English ($p < 0.001$) comparing to control group who received no MMCI treatment at all. The findings of the current study have significant implications not only for the EFL instructors, but also the administrators of preparatory schools in particular as well as teacher educators in the area of ELT, and have some recommendations for the future study.