

The Language Teacher

<http://jalt-publications.org/tlt>

Feature Article

- 3** Foreign Language Reading Anxiety and Mindfulness
Ronald Schmidt-Fajlik

PCP Selected Paper

- 13** Teacher and Student Perspectives on Written Feedback
Kent Jones & Kevin Tang

TLT Interviews

- 23** An Interview with Mari Nakamura
Torin R. Shimono

My Share

- 27** Classroom ideas from Akiko Tsuda, Anthony Sellick, Paul Tanner, and Eng Hai Tan

JALT Praxis

- 32** *TLT* Wired
35 Younger Learners
39 Book Reviews
41 Teaching Assistance
44 The Writers' Workshop
47 SIG Focus: Reader Reflections: Being Part of a SIG
50 Old Grammarians



The Japan Association for Language Teaching

Volume 44, Number 4 • July / August 2020

ISSN 0289-7938 • ¥1,900 • *TLT* uses recycled paper

Foreign Language Reading Anxiety and Mindfulness

Ronald Schmidt-Fajlik

Ibaraki University

<https://doi.org/10.37546/JALTTLT44.4-1>

Students might approach reading with a sense of anxiety if they are unable to completely comprehend the text that they are reading. The purpose of this article is to determine whether the introduction of a mindful reading technique decreases anxiety about unfamiliar vocabulary and grammatical structures, increases focus, and builds confidence, thereby contributing to a more positive reading experience. Forty-one Japanese university students took part in the study. After the introduction of a mindfulness technique and putting it into practice, a questionnaire was administered to all 41 students taking part in the study three weeks after the introduction of the technique to determine its effectiveness. Results indicate that many students found mindfulness helpful when reading.

学生達は自分が読んでいる外国語の文章を完全に理解することができていないため、読むことについて不安を抱えている可能性がある。本論は、(自分の呼吸に注意を向けながら読書する)マインドフルリーディングのテクニックの導入が、親しみのない単語や文法構造についての不安を減らし、集中力と自信を高め、その結果より積極的なリーディング体験に寄与する手助けとなるかどうか判断することを目的としている。41人の日本の大学生が本研究に参加した。マインドフルリーディングのテクニックを導入した三週間後に、有用性を判断するアンケートを実施した。結果は、読むときにマインドフルネスが有用であると、多くの被験者が認識していることを示した。

Pedagogical practice in language teaching often focuses on language teachers initiating external strategies to develop students' language skills. An example includes finding an effective methodological approach in the way language learning material is presented. While teaching strategies are certainly important, they are controlled, initiated, and decided upon by language teachers. Thus, while these external strategies might encourage effective learner engagement, alternative strategies that help students at a more intrinsic level might also be important to engendering a more encompassing approach to language teaching. Such an approach could take into consideration not only external strategies to create a positive learning environment through the "vast repertoire of techniques that are at a teacher's disposal" (Dörnyei & Muir, 2019, p. 734), but also the internal affective strategies of students for greater autonomy, by engaging the "development of learners' psychological and emotional capacity to

control their own learning through independent action" (O'Leary, 2014, p. 20). The use of mindfulness, defined as "non-reactive awareness of the present moment" (J. A. Grant & Zeidan, 2019, p. 192), may be an effective intrinsic strategy to reduce foreign language anxiety (FLA) and thereby improve reading. An anchored breathing technique was introduced as part of mindful reading as it is considered a "core lesson in mindfulness practice" (Rechtschaffen, 2014, p. 182). The breathing technique could serve as a way for students to take control of their own internal processes when dealing with anxiety based on negative thoughts and feelings.

The literature review provides an overview of how mindfulness has been used in various educational settings and explains the concept of mindfulness in further detail. Foreign language reading anxiety is then described, followed by an outline of the procedure used to introduce a mindful approach to reading. Results regarding the effectiveness of the mindful breathing technique are then described and summarized.

Literature Review

Mindfulness

Mindfulness can be viewed as a mental state in which one's attention is drawn to the present. It is a gentle awareness of the present moment, brought about without criticism or judgment, resulting in quiet acceptance (Gunaratana, 2011). This focus on the non-judgmental present might be helpful to students whose source of FLA is based on self-critical thoughts arising at the point of interaction with a foreign language (FL) text, due to textual as well as cultural challenges. Introducing students to mindfulness might help them deal with this source of anxiety as it "is a way of training our minds through intentional awareness so that they stay in a more peaceful and compassionate state" (Srinivasan, 2014, p. 27). Mindfulness might be particularly helpful for students who experience self-doubt regarding the adequacy of their FL reading skills. As students might feel unable to grasp the meaning of a text due to limits in understanding the vocabulary and grammatical structures used, a mindful

approach may allow students to engage with a text with greater confidence in that “if we are mindful, we don’t assume limits from past experience have to determine present experience” (Langer, 2014, p. xvii). Mindfulness may also assist anxious students by refocusing from worrying about unknown words or structures to bring them back to their reading. Students are gently ‘reminded’ back to the present moment to re-engage with the text.

In dealing with anxiety, an important factor in mindfulness training is non-reactivity to inner experience by remaining in the present moment, even in the face of distracting thoughts or feelings (Siegal, 2007). Through a mindful approach to reading, they may reduce their FLA and therefore be less inclined to be influenced by task-irrelevant thoughts. This may result in greater mental energy to pursue the reading task at hand, ultimately leading to a more pleasurable reading experience. By using mindfulness to return to the present moment, students may be able to reduce the amount of mental energy they spend worrying about not being able to comprehend unfamiliar vocabulary and grammatical structures. Lower FLA may also increase reading comprehension in that “reading anxiety may result in poor comprehension” (Rajab, Zakaria, Rahman, Hosni, & Hassani, 2012, p. 363). Worrying less about unfamiliar vocabulary and grammatical structures may also lead to improved reading fluency, defined as “the ability to read connected text rapidly, smoothly, effortlessly, and automatically with little conscious attention to the mechanics of reading, such as decoding” (Meyer & Felton, 1999, p. 284).

Foreign Language Anxiety and Reading

According to Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986), FLA is “a distinct complex of self-perceptions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors related to classroom language learning arising from the uniqueness of the language learning process” (p. 128). FLA may negatively impact FL learning (Horwitz, 2001). For example, Trang, Baldauf, Jr., & Moni (2013), through a review of multiple research studies, found evidence of FLA, concluding that “students feel more tense and nervous in FL classrooms than in any of their other classes” (pp. 709-710).

Within a FL context, students may feel anxiety toward FL studies to greater or lesser degrees (Kim, 2009). For example, reading anxiety has been found to be a distinct phenomenon in FL learning (Saito, Garza, & Horwitz, 1999; Sellers, 2000). This is because it is a cognitively demanding task compounded by unknown vocabulary and sentence structures (Rajab, et al., 2012). Badara, Hanafi, Kamaluddin,

Nurlaela, and Sari (2019) found reading anxiety to be a debilitating factor in reading comprehension.

Mindfulness in Language Teaching

How the effectiveness of mindfulness in language education has been investigated is reviewed here. Research conducted by Sakata and Fukuda (2012, cited in Takaguchi, 2015, p. 75) found that mindfulness helped students who had negative feelings about studying English by helping them to better cope with such feelings. Mindfulness has also been used to reduce the English language anxiety of Thai college students, improving their performance in oral presentations (Charoensukmongkol, 2016). Findings at a bilingual primary classroom in Spain suggest that engaging in mindfulness promotes a calm environment which benefits language learning and attention skills (Mortimore, 2017, p. 25). Additionally, a case study at a college in China found that mindfulness helped students value their own English language learning process, which increased motivation and engagement (Wang & Liu, 2016). According to Fujita (2014, cited in Takaguchi, 2015, p. 74), although mindfulness has increasingly come to the attention of educators, its usefulness has not garnered much attention in Japan, which the current investigation seeks to partly rectify.

Extensive Reading

One of the rationales for extensive reading (ER) is that it is an effective way to further develop reading and vocabulary skills (Nunan, 2017) as well as foster a positive attitude toward reading in a FL (Day & Bamford, 1998). This is summarized in Richards and Schmidt’s (2002) statement that the purpose of ER is “reading in quantity and in order to gain a general understanding of what is read. It is intended to develop good reading habits, to build up knowledge of vocabulary and structure, and to encourage a liking for reading” (pp. 193-194). However, encountering new vocabulary and unfamiliar grammar could make reading a source of FLA rather than pleasure (Matsuda & Gobel, 2004). FLA might lead students to lose motivation and view language learning negatively (Liu & Huang, 2011; Khodadady & Khajavy, 2013). Instead of reading with the intended purpose of “engagement and enjoyment” (Nunan, 2017, p. 148), students might approach ER with a sense of dread and reluctance. As ER is generally done independently outside of regular classroom hours, students might benefit from strategies to cope with FLA while reading in order to feel more motivated to pursue it. Given this, the current study focuses on assisting students in dealing with FLA

when reading texts in English through introducing a mindfulness technique as part of the course ER component. Students were administered a questionnaire after the technique was introduced to determine its helpfulness in dealing with reading-related FLA.

Methods

Study Group

Students participating in the study consisted of a total of 41 Japanese university students from a first-year integrated English class and a second-year advanced English class. Ethical standards were conformed to through explanation of the purpose of the study, the acquisition of consent, and voluntary participation. The privacy and confidentiality of students was maintained as the questionnaires were completed anonymously. The students comprised 18 (44%) males and 23 (56%) females. In previous research, Schmidt-Fajlik (2020) found that students experienced FLA while reading, hindering enjoyment of the text and hampering confidence, which served as a rationale for the current research into whether introducing a mindfulness technique assists students to allay their FLA. It was hypothesized that positive reading engagement during the ER component could reduce FLA and assist students with reading other non-ER materials.

Introduction of Mindfulness

Students were asked to bring a book they were reading to class as part of the extensive reading requirement in order to practice the mindful reading technique together. A handout explaining how to prepare for and conduct mindful reading was provided in Japanese for ease of understanding (Appendix B). The original in English is provided in Appendix A. In both classes, the procedure was explained and conducted in English with students able to use the Japanese handout as a reference. Students were able to ask for further explanation in English or Japanese.

The first step in introducing students to mindful reading involved a short relaxation breathing exercise before beginning to read. Students were instructed to inhale slowly through their nose and then exhale slowly through their mouth. They were encouraged to do this at least five times, although they could continue to do this as many times as necessary to achieve a state of calm and relaxation before reading. This may have served to allay initial anxiety before beginning to read. Next students were encouraged to use anchored breath-

ing, which is foundational to mindfulness practice (Rechtschaffen, 2014). Anchored breathing helps students to remain in the present moment and refocus away from negative thoughts and feelings. This is breathing at a regular rate through their nose. If any thoughts or emotions, whether negative or positive were experienced while reading, students were asked to casually notice those thoughts or emotions and bring themselves back to the present moment by refocusing attention on their breathing.

Students were given 20 minutes of class time to read mindfully. As the class was held once a week, students were asked to bring their ER book the following week to try the technique together again. Between classes, students were encouraged to practice mindful reading outside of class time as part of the ER course requirement. The mindfulness technique was done in two class sessions and an extra week was given after the second mindfulness session for further at home mindful ER practice before administration of the questionnaire.

Questionnaire Examining the Effectiveness of Mindful Reading to Allay FLA

Questionnaire responses were used to determine whether students found a mindfulness approach to reading effective in dealing with negative thoughts and feelings (Appendix D). A pre-test was conducted using a separate questionnaire related to the degree that students experienced stress and negative thoughts and feelings when reading. Results of the pre-test showed that many students experienced negative thoughts and feelings when reading (Schmidt-Fajlik, 2020). The pre-test served as a guide in formulating the final questionnaire related to the effectiveness of the mindfulness technique. Both the pre-test and final questionnaire were adapted from Saito, et al.'s (1999) Foreign Language Reading Anxiety Scale (FLRAS), which is used to elicit "students' self-reports of anxiety over various aspects of reading, their perceptions of reading difficulties in their target language, and their perceptions of the relative difficulty of reading" (p. 204). However, as the mindfulness training was intended to lower FLA, the statements used in the FLRAS were revised as self-reports of anxiety reduction. For example, whereas the first statement in the FLRAS is "I get upset whenever I encounter unknown grammar when reading (French, Russian, Japanese)" (p. 205), in the adapted version this was changed to "I feel less upset whenever I encounter unknown grammar when reading English". A 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree" was used to gauge how students felt about

each statement. To avoid language proficiency influence, the questionnaire in English (Appendix C) was translated into Japanese and administered in Japanese (Appendix D).

Research Results

Here, questionnaire findings are presented in themes based on associated items from the questionnaire; *negative emotional responses*, *reading fluency*, *perception of usefulness*, and *gender*. Questionnaire items are interpreted in terms of these themes with their results described.

Negative Emotional Responses

Items related to negative emotional responses include the following statements:

- Statement 1: *I feel less stress when I read in English.*
- Statement 5: *I feel less frustration and anxiety when I don't understand.*

Statement 1: *I feel less stress when I read in English.*

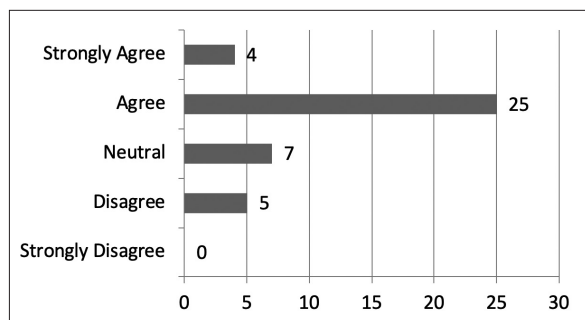


Figure 1. Responses to the statement 'I feel less stress when I read in English'.

Responses to the statement 'I feel less stress when I read in English' in Figure 1 indicate that a large proportion of students were able to experience less stress when reading in English. Those that agreed or strongly agreed represent 71% of the total responses. This suggests that most students felt mindfulness helped reduce their stress while reading.

Statement 5: *I feel less frustration and anxiety when I do not understand.*

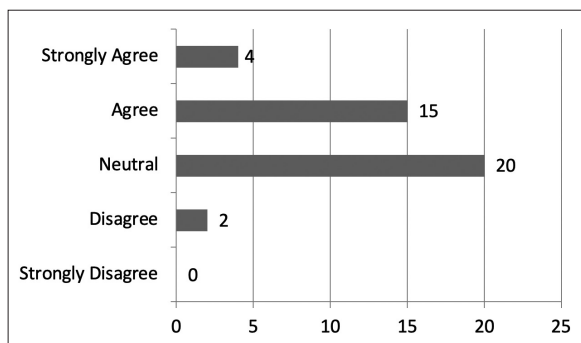


Figure 2. Responses to the statement 'I feel less frustration and anxiety when I do not understand'.

In Figure 2, most students were neutral in their assessment regarding whether the technique reduced frustration and anxiety when not being able to understand. For many students, though, the technique did prove to be helpful, with those agreeing and strongly agreeing representing 46% of the total, with only 5% disagreeing.

Discussion of Negative Emotional Responses

Regarding this theme of negative emotional responses, the mindfulness technique appears to have helped deal with feelings of stress for most students. In terms of feeling less frustration and anxiety, results were divided between those for whom the technique served to allay such feelings and those who felt neutral about it. This suggests that although the technique may be effective in overall stress reduction for a large majority of students, many may still experience frustration and anxiety. However, as nearly an equal number of students responded that the mindfulness technique did allay frustration and anxiety, it may be effective in helping many students handle negative emotional responses. Reduced anxiety may also positively contribute to student motivation (Khodadady & Khajavy, 2013). Mindfulness may therefore be an effective way to address Rajab, et al.'s (2012) concern about the importance of addressing the negative impact of reading anxiety on students.

Reading Fluency

Items concerning whether mindfulness improved reading fluency included the following:

- Statement 2: *Reading became easier to understand.*
- Statement 7: *While using mindfulness I translate word by word less when I read.*

Statement 2: *Reading became easier to understand.*

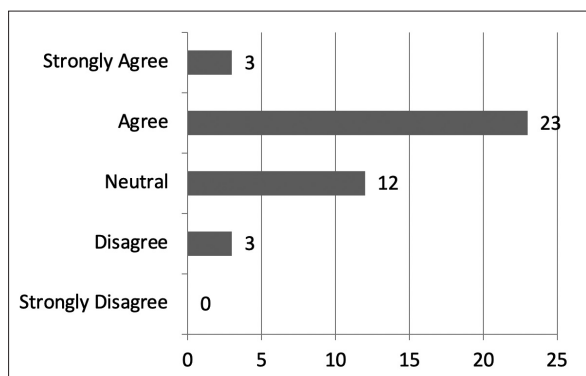


Figure 3. Responses to the statement 'reading became easier to understand'.

The responses in Figure 3 show that for over half of the students, using mindfulness helped improve their understanding while reading. Those that agreed and strongly agreed to the statement represent 63% of the total. This may be due to a decrease in confusion caused by worrying about unknown vocabulary and grammatical structures.

Statement 7: *While using mindfulness I translate word by word less when I read.*

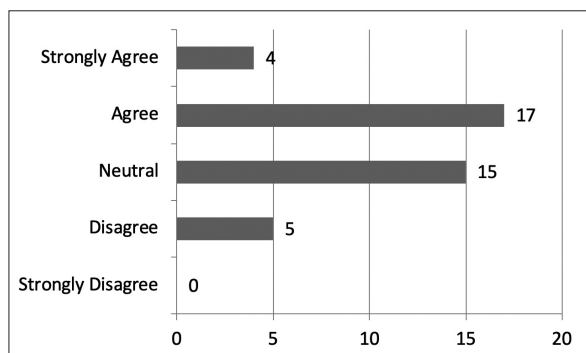


Figure 4. Responses to the statement 'While using mindfulness I translate word by word less when I read'.

In Figure 4, a greater number of students, 51% of the total, reported feeling less need to translate word by word when using mindfulness. This may have the positive influence of allowing students to continue in the flow of reading rather than continually pausing to check on the meaning of each word. Worrying less about individual word meaning may promote reading skills as students become more comfortable in relying upon the meaning of words based on the context in which they appear. To the 37% of students who responded neutrally, however, the technique seemed to have little effect.

Discussion of Reading Fluency

Considering the theme of increased fluency overall, as many students reported that reading became easier to understand, this may have contributed to increased comprehension in that "there is evidence that fluency is both a contributor to and product of comprehension" (Klauda & Guthrie, 2008, p. 312). Increased reading fluency may also be a motivating factor in that "any technique that produces faster [reading] rates may conceivably be helpful in reducing the poor readers' perception of reading as a laborious process" (E. Grant & Standing, 1989, p. 520).

Perception of Usefulness

Items regarding the perceived usefulness of the mindfulness technique included:

- Statement 11. *Mindfulness has helped me in reading English.*
- Statement 12. *I will continue to use mindfulness when reading in English.*

Statement 11: *Mindfulness has helped me in reading English.*

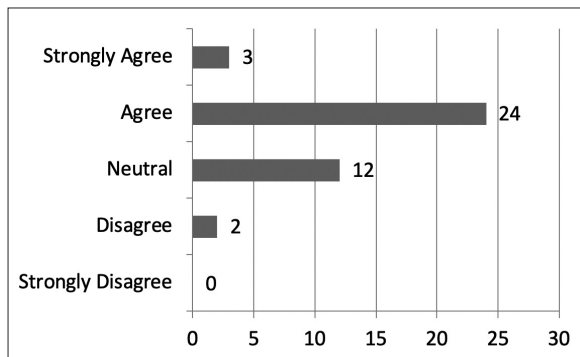


Figure 5. Responses to the statement 'Mindfulness has helped me in reading English'.

In Figure 5, combining the results for those that agreed and strongly agreed, most students, 66%, agreed with the statement that mindfulness was helpful when reading in English. This indicates that students in general found the technique helped them in reading English. This could have been due to a reduction in negative thoughts and feelings, increased fluency and comprehension, an increase in reading pleasure, or a combination of a variety of factors. For the 29% of students whose responses were neutral, the technique may have been perceived as having added no further benefit or they may have been unsure of a particular benefit. For

the small number of students who disagreed, 5%, they appear to have felt that the technique did not help their English reading. These students may require alternative mindfulness development strategies or may feel no intervention is necessary.

Statement 12: *I will continue to use mindfulness when reading in English.*

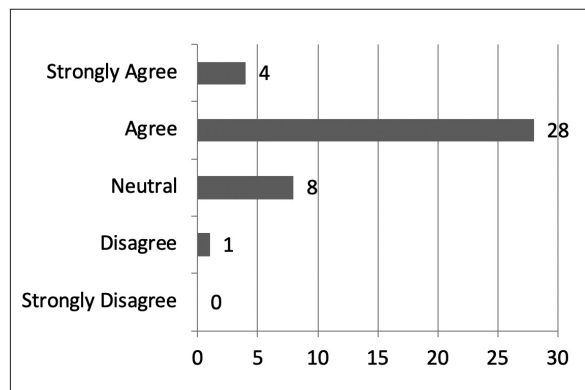


Figure 6. Responses to the statement ‘I will continue to use mindfulness when reading in English.’

In Figure 6, most students, a combined total of 78%, agreed and strongly agreed with the statement that they will continue to use mindfulness when reading, suggesting that most students found the technique to be of assistance.

Discussion of Perception of Usefulness

Regarding the perceived usefulness of mindfulness, most students responded positively, as reflected in their responses related to the helpfulness of the technique and regarding whether they will continue to use it. However, a smaller number of students perceived no added benefit to the introduction of the technique. These students may feel that such an approach is unnecessary or may feel they benefit from other approaches.

Mindfulness and Gender

Here, gender differences are explored. The mean averages of agreement and disagreement for all statement responses are used to explore this theme.

Table 1. Mean average level of agreement and disagreement

	Level of Disagreement (1+2)	Neutral (3)	Level of Agreement (4+5)	Total
Male	1	8	9	18
Female	2	9	12	23
Total	3	17	21	41

Table 1 shows the total responses agreeing and disagreeing to the statements by gender. The mindfulness technique appeared to be equally effective with both males and females, with the level of agreement 52% for females and 50% for males. Neutral responses were 39% for females and 44% for males. Neutral responses may be due to several factors, such as uncertainty whether the technique made a difference or a lack of negative thoughts or feelings related to reading to begin with, meaning the technique served no purpose in terms of reducing anxiety as their anxiety was already low. Disagreement of 5% for males and 8% for females may suggest that for a very small number of students, the technique proved to be of no use in creating a better reading experience.

Concerning gender, both males and females responded similarly. This suggests that the mindfulness technique appears to have been equally effective regardless of gender. This may be due to similar levels of FLA experienced by males and females, as Rastegar, Akbarzadeh, and Heidari (2012) found no significant difference between males and females regarding FLA.

Conclusion

Results from the questionnaire show that many of the Japanese university students in this study reported that mindfulness reduced negative emotional responses and improved reading fluency. Many students also reported that they found the technique to be helpful, and they would continue to use a mindful approach while reading. Although a control group was not used, and the sample size was relatively small, the researcher found the technique to be helpful in his own teaching situation. The introduction of mindfulness could help students in similar teaching situations that require reading. Using these techniques might help students concentrate and make reading less arduous when

experiencing FLA, thus language teachers may want to consider introducing the technique in their classrooms. Effective language learning might not only encompass employing external strategies controlled by a language teacher such as methodology and the creation of a positive classroom atmosphere, but also encouraging students' own internal strategies. Here mindfulness might assist by providing students an autonomous way in which to deal with anxiety, self-doubt, and negative feelings during the language learning process. Although the technique may not be a panacea for all students in all situations, it may be of help to many.

References

- Badara, A., Hanafi, H., Kamaluddin, K., Nurlaela, N., & Sari, I. M. (2019). The Relationship between Anxiety Level and Foreign Language Learners' Reading Comprehension. *Proceedings of the International Symposium on Social Sciences, Education, and Humanities (ISSEH 2018)*. <https://doi.org/10.2991/isseh-18.2019.12>
- Charoensukmongkol, P. (2016). The role of mindfulness in reducing English language anxiety among Thai college students. *International Journal of Bilingual Education and Bilingualism*, 22(4), 414–427. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13670050.2016.1264359>
- Day, R. & Bamford, J. (1998). *Extensive Reading in the Second Language Classroom*. Cambridge, UK and New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Dörnyei, Z., & Muir, C. (2019). Creating a Motivating Classroom Environment. In X. Gao (Ed.), *Second Handbook of English Language Teaching* (pp. 719–736). Springer International Handbooks of Education. Cham: Springer International Publishing. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-02899-2_36
- Grant, E., & Standing, L. (1989). Effects of Rapid Decoding Training on Reading Speed and Comprehension. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 69(2), 515–521. <https://doi.org/10.2466/pms.1989.69.2.515>
- Grant, J. A., & Zeidan, F. (2019). Employing pain and mindfulness to understand consciousness: a symbiotic relationship. *Current Opinion in Psychology*, 28, 192–197. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.copsyc.2018.12.025>
- Gunaratana, H. (2011). *Mindfulness in Plain English*. Boston, MA: Wisdom Publications.
- Horwitz, E. (2001). Language anxiety and achievement. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, 21, 112–126. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S0267190501000071>
- Horwitz, E., Horwitz, M., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 70(2), 125–132. <https://doi.org/10.2307/327317>
- Khodadady, E., & Khajavy, G. H. (2013). Exploring role of anxiety and motivation in foreign language achievement: A structural equation modeling approach. *Porta Linguarum*, 20, 269–286.
- Kim, S. Y. (2009). Questioning the stability of foreign language classroom anxiety and motivation across different classroom contexts. *Foreign Language Annals*, 42 J(1), 138–157. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2009.01012.x>
- Klauda, S. L., & Guthrie, J. T. (2008). Relationships of three components of reading fluency to reading comprehension. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 100(2), 310–321. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0022-0663.100.2.310>
- Langer, E. (2014). *Mindfulness*. Boston, MA: Da Capo Press.
- Liu, M., & Huang, W. (2011). An Exploration of Foreign Language Anxiety and English Learning Motivation. *Education Research International*, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2011/493167>
- Matsuda, S., & Gobel, P. (2004). Anxiety and predictors of performance in the foreign language classroom. *System*, 32, 21–36. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2003.08.002>
- Meyer, M. S., & Felton, R. H. (1999). Repeated reading to enhance fluency: Old approaches and new directions. *Annals of Dyslexia*, 49(1), 283–306. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11881-999-0027-8>
- Mortimore, L. (2017). Mindfulness and Foreign Language Anxiety in the Bilingual Primary Classroom Mindfulness y la ansiedad provocada por la lengua extranjera en el aula bilingüe de Primaria. *Educación y Futuro*, 37, 15–43.
- Nunan, D. (2017). Language learning beyond the classroom. In L. Wong & K. Hyland (Eds.), *Faces of English Education: Students, Teachers, and Pedagogy* (pp. 143–158). London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.
- O'Leary, C. (2014). Developing Autonomous Language Learners in HE: A Social Constructivist Perspective. In G. Murray (Ed.), *Social Dimensions of Autonomy in Language Learning* (pp. 15–36). Basingstoke, UK: Palgrave.
- Rajab, A., Zakaria, W. Z. W., Rahman, H. A., Hosni, A. D., & Hassani, S. (2012). Reading anxiety among second language learners. *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 66, 362–369. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.11.279>
- Rastegar, M., Akbarzadeh, M., & Heidari, N. (2012). The Darker Side of Motivation: Demotivation and its Relation with Two Variables of Anxiety among Iranian EFL Learners. *ISRN Education*, 1–8. <https://doi.org/10.5402/2012/215605>
- Rechtschaffen, D. (2014). *The Way of Mindful Education: Cultivating Well-Being in Teachers and Students*. New York: W. W. Norton & Company.
- Richards, J. C., & Schmidt, R. (2002). *Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics* (3rd ed.). London: Person Education.
- Saito, Y., Garza, T. J., & Horwitz, E. K. (1999). Foreign language reading anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal*, 83(2), 202–218. <https://doi.org/10.1111/0026-7902.00016>

- Schmidt-Fajlik, R. (2020). Extensive Reading Anxiety of Japanese University Students. 茨城大学全学教育機構論集 大学教育研究 第, 3, 57–67.
- Sellers, V. D. (2000). Anxiety and reading comprehension in Spanish as a foreign Language. *Foreign Language Annals*, 33(5), 512–520. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1944-9720.2000.tb01995.x>
- Siegel, D. J. (2007). Mindfulness training and neural integration: differentiation of distinct streams of awareness and the cultivation of well-being. *Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience*, 2(4), 259–263. <https://doi.org/10.1093/scan/nsm034>
- Srinivasan, M. (2014). *Teach, Breathe, Learn: Mindfulness In and Out of the Classroom*. Berkeley, CA: Parallax Press.
- Takaguchi, H. (2015). Mindfulness teaching in education: A comparative study of Japan and the United States. *Suguradai University Studies*, 51, 73–83.
- Trang, T. T. T., Baldauf, R. B., Jr., & Moni, K. (2013). Investigating the development of foreign language anxiety: an autobiographical approach. *Journal of Multilingual and Multicultural Development*, 34(7), 709–726. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01434632.2013.796959>
- Wang, Y., & Liu, C. (2016). Cultivate mindfulness: A case study of mindful learning in an English as a foreign language classroom. *IAFOR Journal of Education*, 4(2), 141–155. <https://doi.org/10.22492/ije.4.2.08>

Ronald Schmidt-Fajlik has a B.F.A. from York University (Canada), a B.Ed. from the University of Toronto, an M.Ed. in English language teaching from the University of Manchester, and a D.Ed. in Didactics from the University of South Africa. He has published a number of papers related to English language pedagogy. His research interests include interpersonal competence, intercultural communication, and applied linguistics. He has been living and teaching in Japan for over twenty years. He is currently an associate professor at Ibaraki University.

Appendix A

Original English Mindfulness Explanation

Mindfulness technique for reading

1. Before reading, prepare your body and mind through a breathing exercise. Deeply inhale through your nose and exhale through your mouth. Do this five times. You may do this more times if you feel the need to further bring about a state of calmness.
2. If reading on your own, it may be helpful to decide how long you will read for in terms of approximate time (minutes) or duration (number of pages). This will allow you to keep an end goal in mind where you can take a break or take

a meditative pause without excessively pushing yourself. The goal is to continue with the flow of reading without interruption until your goal has been reached. If reading in class, your teacher may assist you with the end goal.

3. Begin to read. Breathe regularly through your nose. If any thoughts or emotions, whether negative or positive appear during your reading, casually observe and label them in your mind and continue reading. If you find your thoughts and feelings begin to overwhelm you or the flow of your reading, observe your breathing to bring yourself back to the present moment. Continue with the flow of reading.
4. Once the reading goal has been reached, take a meditative break.
5. If you wish, you may repeat the process by choosing a goal and mindfully reading until the goal has been reached.

Appendix B

Japanese Translation of Mindfulness Explanation in Appendix A

リーディングでのマインドフルネステクニック

1. 始める前に、深呼吸を通して身体と心の準備を整えます。まず深く鼻から息を吸い込んで、口から吐き出しましょう。これを5回繰り返します。もし、あなたがもう少し自分を落ち着かせる必要があるなら、これを何度か落ち着けるまで繰り返します。
2. もし、自身で読み進めるなら、どれくらいの時間(分)、どれくらいの長さ(ページからページまで)読むかを最初に決めておくの良いでしょう。これは、あなたが過度に無理をしないように休憩や瞑想の為の時間を取りやすくして最終目標に導くためです。目標はリーディングの流れを中断すること無く自分の決めたところまで読み続けて行くことです。リーディングクラスでは先生が範囲を指導し、あなたを目標に導きます。
3. リーディングを始めましょう。基本的に息は鼻からしてください。もし、何かポジティブでもネガティブでも考えや言いたいことが読書の最中に浮かんできたとしても、気にせず心に留めて読み進めてください。もしその考えや感情があなたの読書の邪魔になるほど気になり始めたら、自身の呼吸に集中してリーディングをしているという事を意識してみましょう。では続けて読み進んでいきましょう。
4. リーディングの目標を達成したら、一旦、休憩をとりましょう。
5. もしあなたが目標を定め直してこの工程を繰り返したいなら、新しい目標を達成するまで注意深くリーディングを続けましょう。

Appendix C

Original English Questionnaire
Mindful Reading Questionnaire

Circle: M F other

Age: _____

After trying the mindfulness techniques, circle how strongly you feel about each statement. (1 = strongly agree, 5 = strongly disagree)

1. I feel less stress when I read in English.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
2. Reading became easier to understand.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
3. I feel less intimidated when I see a whole page of English front of me.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
4. I feel less upset whenever I encounter unknown grammar when reading English.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
5. I feel less frustration and anxiety when I do not understand.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
6. It bothers me less when I encounter words I cannot pronounce while reading English.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
7. While using mindfulness I translate word by word less when I read.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
8. I feel more confident when I am reading in English.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
9. I am more satisfied with my level of reading ability.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
10. I enjoy reading books in English more.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
11. Mindfulness has helped me in reading English.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
12. I will continue to use mindfulness when reading in English.
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
13. If you have any comments, please write them below:

Appendix D

Translation of English Questionnaire in Appendix C

マインドフルのリーディングアンケート

どちらかに○してください: 男・女・その他

年齢: _____

マインドフルネスのテクニックを試してみて、当てはまるものに○をしてください。(1 = とてもそう思う、5 = 全然思わない)

1. 英語を読んでいるときのストレスは少なくなった。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
2. 読んでいる時、少し理解しやすくなった。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
3. 全て英語で書かれたページをみても怖気付かなくなった。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
4. 英語を読んでいる時文法で意味が分からなくてもイライラしなくなった。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
5. まったく分からない時もイライラや不安が少なくなった。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
6. 英語を読んでいる時に発音出来ない単語が出てきてもリーディングが止まる事はなくなった。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
7. マインドフルを使ってリーディングしている時は単語ごとに訳すことが少なくなった。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
8. 英語のリーディングに自信がついた。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
9. 自分の英語リーディング能力のレベルに満足している。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
10. 英語の本を読むのが楽しくなった。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
11. 英語のリーディングでマインドフルネスは手助けになっている。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
12. 英語のリーディングではマインドフルネスを使っていきたい。
1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
13. コメントが御座いましたら下記にご記入ください:

