The articulation of Mindfulness and English as a Foreign Language Teaching in a fifth grade: Exploring contemplative practices in language teaching

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Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con Énfasis en Inglés

Pereira

2022
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Trabajo de grado como requisito para optar por el título de Licenciado en
Bilingüismo con Énfasis en Inglés

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Pereira
2022
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Abstract

This classroom project aimed to implement controlled oral practices along with mindfulness practices with fifth graders at the Institución Educativa Bilingüe Alfonso Jaramillo Gutiérrez at the La Villa campus. The importance of this project relies on the globalized use of the English language, which is recognized as a lingua franca. In this sense, there is a need to develop speaking skills to communicate authentic experiences, feelings, and ideas. This consideration encouraged the development of English-speaking skills through diverse mindfulness practices to elicit authentic experiences using specific language structures and vocabulary. To collect the information of this implementation, this project used observations, teacher journals, and students’ artefacts methods. The results of this project showed that mindfulness practices could create a warm and comfortable space where students could participate in speaking activities. Despite the expectation of linguistic results were not achieved, the speaking skill was practised and developed at a lower level.

Keywords: Mindfulness, language teaching, speaking skill, classroom project
Resumen

Este proyecto de aula se enfocó en la implementación de prácticas orales controladas junto con prácticas de mindfulness en la institución educativa Alfonso Jaramillo Gutiérrez sede La Villa, con el grado 5C. La importancia de este proyecto de aula se basa en el uso globalizado del inglés, el cual se reconoce en estos momentos como una lengua franca. En este sentido, hay una necesidad de desarrollar las habilidades orales para expresar auténticamente experiencias, sentimientos e ideas. Esta consideración incentivó el desarrollo de las habilidades comunicativas de inglés a través de diferentes prácticas de mindfulness para promover el uso de experiencias auténticas con vocabulario y estructuras específicas. Para recoger la información de esta implementación, se utilizó los métodos de observaciones, diarios del profesor y artefactos de los estudiantes. Los resultados de este proyecto mostraron que las prácticas de mindfulness crearon un ambiente cálido y seguro donde los estudiantes pudieron participar en actividades orales. Aunque los resultados lingüísticos esperados no se cumplieron, la habilidad oral fue practicada y desarrollada en un bajo nivel.

**Palabras Claves:** Mindfulness, enseñanza de idiomas, habilidad para hablar, proyecto de aula
Acknowledgements

Por todas las luciérnagas que han alumbrado mi camino, agradezco por su compañía en esta travesía. A vórtice raíz que me brindó la semilla de la presencia y a toda la tribu que ayudó a que la semilla germinara, mil gracias. Al sol que habita en la sonrisa de Lina y la presencia que acompaña al profesor Murcia, mil gracias. Al ideal de la compasión que se esconde en los ojos de la profesora Angélica y, por supuesto, a mi madre divina que me ha regado con tanto amor incondicional; A toda mi familia, institución educativa y todo aquel que puso su grano, mil gracias....
**Justification**

In Colombia, the integration of the English language in primary, secondary, and university institutions is structured based on national bilingual plans. The Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo de Colombia, which is one of them, aims to develop English competencies in primary, secondary, and university education to prepare students for a globalized world. This plan, which was named COLOMBIA Very Well!!, provides people with the opportunities to professionally grow and academically develop themselves while interacting with foreign cultures and people. The Ministry of Education (MEN) recognizes the previous ideas and supports the integration of English into the curriculum to help students to develop communicative competencies to encounter social and interactive contexts in the English Language. To support this idea, the MEN issued the ley 1651 of 2013 which states that formal, informal, public, and private institutions must develop the reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills for students to express themselves correctly in the English Language. However, there are few supporting actions by the MEN to develop these skills in primary and secondary education (Correa & Gónzales, 2016). Teachers as facilitators and supporters of the knowledge and learning process should look for innovative practices to help students to reflect upon their linguistic, social, and intellectual development (Arshana & Usha, 2016).

Education ought to prepare students to exchange information, tolerate different ideas, and learn how to live with familiar and divergent people. The UNESCO (2016) aims to support education to ensure that by 2030, all people have access to good quality and integral education. These characteristics encompass aspects such as social and interpersonal skills to educate people for being global citizens. The MEN, which stands for the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of policies to provide high-quality education in public institutions of Colombia, also recognizes the importance of education and set a strategic framework for 2015-2025. This framework integrates goals such as Colombia as a bilingual country and increasing teaching
excellence. In 2004, the MEN proposed a bilingual plan for 2004-2019 called Programa Nacional de Bilingüismo (PNB). This plan aimed to integrate English as a foreign language in education for students of primary, secondary, and university institutions to achieve specific English levels based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). In 2015, the MEN created another bilingual plan called COLOMBIA Very Well! to respond to the necessities identified in the previous bilingual plan. This plan integrates strategies such as social mobility and alliance management to encourage the use of English among Colombian institutions.

The bilingual plans applied in Colombia education, although they have had specific purposes to support the learning and teaching process of English, have been criticized for their results. Díaz and Santana (2020) analyzed the results from 2014 to 2018 of the national tests Pruebas Saber 11, which are presented by students in the last year of high school, and Pruebas Saber Pro for students who are finishing university careers. The researchers concluded that, although the PNB increased the English level in some regions of Colombia, there is no fulfilment of the PNB’s bilingual goals, and the English level expected from students. One of the problems that Bastidas (2021) points to is that the PNB prioritizes the outcomes expected of the Pruebas Saber 11 and Pruebas Saber Pro national tests. This causes PNB bases the English language and teaching on standardized and decontextualized educational scenarios which affect the teaching and learning process of English. Despite the results previously mentioned, there are still tries to integrate and develop English as a second language in some cities of Colombia, which is the case of Pereira.

Vega (nd) presents the goal of Pereira Bilingüe with the support of entities such as the Acaldía de Pereira, Universidad Cooperativa de Pereira, Universidad Eafit, and Invest in Pereira to integrate and develop English competencies in primary and secondary institutions. The main intention of the development of English competencies is for students to have better job
opportunities with better payments (Vega, nd). The support of these entities provides institutions with ideas, strategies, and realization of bilingual activities such as immersion bilingual spaces. Currently, the Liceo Pino Verde School is the main campus for other institutions such as the public and bilingual school Alfonso Jaramillo Gutiérrez, to attend what they named immersion fields. This activity provides students with the opportunity to attend a whole day of bilingual activities with an emphasis on the English Language. Therefore, students are encouraged to use their communicative competencies to interact with their partners and participate in the activities.

The integration of these activities supports the national bilingual goals and the development of the four skills, however, there is still work to do. The national plans for becoming Colombia a bilingual country (PNB and COLOMBIA Very well!), go in hand with UNESCO’s (2016) social and interpersonal goals by emphasizing communicative competencies and the development of social and interpersonal skills. Knowing this, one of the ways to contribute to these goals is the development of the speaking skill since human nature leads people to communicate and interact with others using language as a means (Puentes, 2007). Nevertheless, only a few studies have demonstrated the innovation of language teaching practices (Castaño, 2020) to support and promote speaking skills. One way of facing this problem could be to integrate mindfulness practices in English classes to support and promote students’ oral production. This integration of mindfulness practices into English classes would help to promote the speaking skill which, according to Nieto and Salazar (2019) and Madero (2018), there is a need to develop it to achieve one of the goals of the COLOMBIA Very Well!! National bilingual plan.

This classroom project aims to integrate mindfulness practices for students to use a language structure to controlled oral activities. This intention supports the exploration of new practices in the English teaching and learning process to develop the speaking skill expected
The reason why to include mindfulness practices is that they provide practitioners with awareness of the present moment and the actions they execute. This awareness may increase the awareness and regulation of language forms and vocabulary when using the language (Zeilhofer, 2020). On the other hand, controlled oral practice, which aims to promote the use of a specific language form and vocabulary based on an objective from the curriculum (Gavilán, 2008), can elicit students' oral production with a specific vocabulary and language form. These activities along with mindfulness practices will promote a mindful response in oral controlled practices to develop the speaking skill. Indeed, these mindfulness practices were adapted and translated into basic English for fifth graders.

This classroom project will contribute to the bilingual goal of the institute Alfonso Jaramillo Gutiérrez, which is to achieve a C1 English level based on the CEFR, and the national bilingual plans by integrating contemplative practices to support and promote students’ oral production. In this regard, the students from this bilingual institute would explore mindfulness practices to express and describe body sensations, likes and dislikes. As shown by Charoensukmongkol (2019), mindfulness practices allow students to provide mindful responses in oral performances, which may help the production of controlled oral practices. This project will also contribute to the mindfulness and L2 literature since Ghanizadhe et al. (2019) highlight a lack of research in this field. Meanwhile, Rojas (2020) mentions that the integration of mindfulness-based programs in Colombia’s curricula might shed light on how these practices are aligned to school policies and requirements. Finally, the researcher also highlights the lack of research on mindfulness with young learners which will also be studied in this project.
Objectives

General Teaching objective:

To implement mindfulness practices in English to promote communicative encounters at the Institución Educativa Bilingüe Alfonso Jaramillo Gutiérrez with 5th graders.

Specific Teaching Objectives:

- To implement the TPR method to introduce contemplative practices and new vocabulary.
- To implement contemplative practices to promote students’ controlled oral production.

General Learning Objective:

To orally describe their experiences after mindfulness practices at the Institución Educativa Bilingüe Alfonso Jaramillo Gutiérrez with 5th graders.

Specific Learning Objectives:

- To follow English instructions when doing mindfulness practices.
- To describe in English the sensations of their bodies.
- To express in English likes, dislikes, and feelings after mindfulness interventions.
Conceptual Framework

This chapter of the study will present the most important concepts for the development and understanding of the classroom project. On the one hand, the definition and history of mindfulness provide us with a comprehension of its essence. Kabat-Zinn (1990/2005) defines mindfulness as the awareness of the present moment where people stop doing to be. Also, Kabat-Zinn (2003) is used for being an occidental iconic mindfulness practitioner that brought mindfulness into the clinical practice, which caused a revolution in the psychological field. As this classroom project integrated mindfulness and language teaching in a school setting, the next concept to define is language teaching. Ellis (2012) says the differences between language teaching and learning and provides a balanced definition for a better understanding. The other concept to introduce is the speaking skill based on the Suminib’s (2017) words, which are strongly connected to the concept of Controlled practice defined by Gavilán (2008). However, the development of speaking skills are related to listening and writing skills, which are defined by Richard et al. (1992) (cited in Hwaider, 2017) and Marpaung and Sinulingga (2012). Finally, the last concepts are audio-visual materials defined by Canning-Wilson (2000) and the Total Physical Response method (TPR) defined by Rambe (2019) illustrating different alternatives to engage students in the learning process by presenting vocabulary and structures.

What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness’ popularity has increased in the last few years; however, few people have explored its roots and applications. To understand the nature of mindfulness practices, this section will expose the birth thereof in very early Buddhism with Buddha and it will explore its different definitions. This implies studying its etymological words and meanings and its conception in the current context. Therefore, Kuan (2007) and Shonin et al. (2014, 2015) manage to define these etymological words and show the general and agreed mindfulness conception. Also, Kabat-Zinn (1990/2005) shows us how the nature of mindfulness is still alive in science. However, the concept also has an operational definition given by Bishop et al.
(2004), which helps to expand the vision of mindfulness. Moreover, it will show the clinical interventions and benefits of mindfulness practices in the psychological field by Baer et al. (2003), Kabat-Zinn (2003), and Argungu et al., (2020); the exploration of mindfulness in the educational context by Davenport and Pagini (2016), Schonert-Reichl and Roeser (2016), and Schwind et al. (2016), and mindfulness in foreign language education by Wang and Liu (2016), Mozzon McPherson (2019), and Zeilhofer (2020). This exploration of mindfulness in the psychological and educational field shows how these interventions support and may foster the learning process and the management of emotions and thoughts in classes. In this regard, the first subconstruct to explore is the definition of mindfulness and its history.

**Definition of Mindfulness**

In the early history of India, a man called Shakyamuni Buddha, known as The Buddha, lived around 2500 years ago (Gombrich, 2009 in Shonin et al., 2015). According to Shonin et al. (2015), The Buddha was a normal person who experienced human emotions and needs such as eating, sleeping, talking, walking, defecating, laughing, bathing, and crying. In his adult life, he felt an inner call to incorporate a spiritual discipline in order to achieve what is called spiritual enlightenment. This being state deals with the end of suffering on the physical, mental, and emotional dimensions. This inner call also encompassed people from other socioeconomic classes and academic levels for them to easily follow the spiritual journey. The Buddha knew that the mind was often distracted, which led him to search for techniques to be fully aware of the present moment and share them with people. In this search, the Pali word *Sati*, which comes from the Sanskrit word *Smrti*, emerged and was subsequently translated as Mindfulness (Shonin et al., 2015).

Although these words are related to each other, there are different definitions for them (Kuan, 2007; Shonin et al., 2014). According to Shonin et al. (2014), the definition of the root *Sat* is truth or to exist in the Sanskrit lexicon; on the other hand, the Prakrit lexicon coined the
word as “the awareness of existence of experienced phenomena in a given moment” (p. 129). Later on, the word acquired the meaning of remembrance, to remember, or memory which was not exactly correct in most contexts (Brown et al., 2007; Kuan, 2007; Shonin et al., 2014). Although these definitions of the etymologic words of mindfulness were given, the Buddhist monks agree that being aware of the present moment is an important aspect thereof (Shonin et al., 2014). This fact leads mindfulness to be recognized as a spiritual practice that fosters spiritual growth (Kuan, 2007; Shonin et al., 2015) and as a technique that can educate the mind with psychological benefits (Kabat-Zinn, 1990/2005; Baer, 2003; Bishop, et al., 2004; Brown et al., 2007). In mindfulness research, there is a need to show how these practices affect psychological and emotional processes in our minds to banish religious and spiritual conceptions.

In the exploration of mindfulness in different fields, there are some conceptions that are aligned to scientific research and others that are not. Kabat-Zinn (1990/2005) defines mindfulness as the practice of stopping doing to be. This author also states that mindfulness leads to a meditative state where people do not try to feel or be something different from what they are. Instead, they stand to become present moment observers involving mind and body sensations. These sensations are a reference to start allowing them to emerge and be embraced by practitioners without any judgement or reaction. On the other hand, Bishop et al. (2004) propose an operational definition for mindfulness and divide it into two main components. These components are self-regulation of attention and orientation to experience. From this perspective, mindfulness starts to take place in the psychological field rather than a spiritual and abstract field. For Bishop et al. (2004), mindfulness is related to a metacognitive process that involves a “control of cognitive processes (i.e., attention self-regulation) and monitoring the stream of consciousness” (pg.233). This perception leads mindfulness to be conceived as a psychological skill that every person can train and develop by personal or clinical mindfulness intervention.
Mindfulness-based Interventions

Mindfulness is currently considered an intervention for patients who suffer from anxiety, chronic pain, stress, and psychological disorders because of its benefits in the emotional, physical, and psychological dimensions (Kabat-Zinn, 1990/2005; Baer et al., 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 2003; Shonin et al., 2014). Mindfulness-based stress reduction program (MBSR) is a clinical intervention created in 1979 by Kabat-Zinn (2003) for the stress reduction clinic in Massachusetts. The main intention is to provide people with the end of suffering that anxiety, stress, and illness cause through the integration of mindfulness. Kabat-Zinn (1990/2005) exposes that mindfulness intervention was successfully embodied for patients of the clinic. These patients experienced the benefits of non-judgmental, acceptance, and patient practices. Based on the MBSR program, mindfulness-based cognitive therapy (MBCT) is introduced as an intervention for depressive patients with the intention to keep exploring the effects of mindfulness on the mind (Baer et al., 2003; Argungu et al., 2020).

In the exploration of mindfulness practices in the psychological field, the MBCT emerges for depressive and clinical patients. This clinical intervention was proposed by Teasdale, Segal, and William (1995, 2002) in Baer et al. (2003) and Argungu et al. (2020) to integrate the mental, body, and feelings awareness of mindfulness practices. This integration allows participants to be aware of repetitive thoughts and feelings that take them to depressive relapses. The MBCT also incorporates aspects such as non-identification with thoughts through statements from cognitive therapy (Baer et al., 2003) and the acceptance and non-judgmental reactions from mindfulness (Argungu et al., 2020). In the exploration of mindfulness as a clinical intervention analysed by Baer et al. (2003), it shows the dialectal behaviour therapy (DBT) for patients with personality disorders made by Linehan, (1993a, 1993b) and the relapse prevention intervention (RP) by Marlatt and Gordon (1985) for patients of substance abuse. Both interventions incorporate the practices of observation of mental, feelings, and body sensations, non-judgmental reactions, and acceptance to change. After exploring the effects of
mindfulness interventions on the psychological field, it increased and encouraged the exploration of mindfulness in education.

**Mindfulness in Education**

After knowing the benefits of mindfulness in the psychological field, the educational context has decided to explore these interventions. Schonert-Reichl and Roeser (2016) bring the concept and practice of mindfulness into education to highlight the importance of contemplative curricula. The integration provides benefits for both teachers and students because of mindfulness qualities. These qualities deal with problem-solving, resilience, non-judgments, non-negative reactions, patience, awareness of feelings, thoughts and body sensations, regulation of attention, and management of feelings such as anxiety and stress (Schonert-Reichl & Roeser, 2016; Schwind, et al., 2016). Schonert-Reichl and Roeser (2016) show how the increase of a humanistic, contemplative, and holistic education is every time more explored and studied by showing the Google search on mindfulness in education. This search had 24,000,000 searchers in 2016. This exploration has shown researchers such as Schwind et al. (2016) who demonstrate in their pilot study how mindfulness benefits improve the relationship between students and education through more acceptance and understanding of the emotional, physical, and mental processes. These mental processes are objects of interest in the educational field.

If Mindfulness provides the skill to focus our attention, this last element may play an important role in educational processes. Schonert-Reichl and Roeser (2016) use the study of Lazar et al. (2005) to expose the changes in the grey matter in the brain of students who practised mindfulness. These changes influenced concentration, self-regulation, emotional regulation, and learning and memory processes. In addition, the langerian mindfulness study conducted by Davenport and Pagini (2016), utilizes the view of mindfulness in schools by Langer (1989, 1992) due to her statements of novelty seeking and meaningful learning. In this novelty interaction, according to Pagini (2016), students can be in a state of openness and a
mindful attitude that allows them to connect and engage with the class. These beneficial aspects allow students to have a different relationship with education through a more willingness and interest in the classes. Bearing this in mind, mindfulness may foster the learning process because of its regulation of attention in the classroom’s distractions and self-regulation when reacting emotionally in specific situations.

**Mindfulness in Foreign Language Education**

After the exploration of mindfulness in education, the interest in exploring this intervention in foreign language classrooms emerged in the researcher field. In the theoretical research of mindfulness in advising L2 learning, Mozzon McPherson (2019) highlighted the plasticity of the brain in mindfulness practitioners. This fact leads to developing executive functions that integrate the aspects of attention, memory, problem-solving, verbal reasoning, and multitasking. As an example, Wang and Liu (2016) realized in their study that when their students felt motivated in class activities, their concentration and achievement of their learning goals increased. This contributes to students’ self-regulation in the classroom and learning process which has a direct effect on the SLA (Zeilhofer, 2020). Zeilhofer (2020) makes an interesting observation and relation of mindfulness practices and awareness to SLA awareness. The researcher states that the self-awareness of mindfulness practices may increase metacognitive awareness in SLA, which may contribute to students’ self-regulation in the forms, vocabulary, and gaps in the language. This research opens a door to exploring mindfulness in L2 teaching since it exposes the changes in the brain and how these aspects benefit the learning process. However, there is little research in this area, which shows a gap and encourages future research in this field.

In this exploration of the concept and interventions of mindfulness, it is important to highlight that there is scientific evidence that mindfulness affects mental and psychological processes. The clinical interventions of mindfulness supported that, despite that mindfulness’
foundations are based on Buddhism with a spiritual conception, people who practice it can have beneficial effects on their brain’s processes. These processes are strongly related to self-regulation of attention, concentration, and memory process (Lazar, et al., 2005 in Schonert-Reichl & Roeser, 2016). Mozzon McPherson (2019) also shows how mindfulness benefits the neuroplasticity in the brain which contributes to the learning process by increasing memory, attention, problem-solving, and verbal reasoning. These researchers and theories expand the vision to an unknown field and invite us to keep exploring mindfulness in educational processes and overall, in L2 teaching and learning processes.

**Language Teaching Definition**

Language institutes, especially English ones, are every time more desired, however, few people wonder what is behind the teaching and learning process of a foreign language. This section will define language teaching to understand the difference between language teaching and learning. The definition and differentiation given in this section take the words of Ellis (2012) and Selinker (1972). It will also show how English is considered a foreign language and lingua franca around the world through Mansfield and Poppi (2012) considerations. Finally, it will think of Teaching English as a Foreign Language as a means of spreading awareness of different cultures and differences in society and the methodologies and approaches to achieve this. These ideas were mainly supported by Dakowska (2018) and Torres (2018).

**What is language teaching?**

The process of learning an L2 is strongly connected to the teaching process, which should be an object of interest to expand the vision of L2 education. Ellis (2012) states that language teaching can be defined in diverse operational definitions since there is not a clear differentiation between teaching and learning in research. Despite this statement, Ellis (2012) stands for the definition of a teaching process that encompasses procedures and instruments to investigate the connection of what is taught to what is learnt. On the other hand, Selinker (1972)
makes a slight distinction between the teaching and learning process. The teaching process deals with the prescriptive objectives and procedures that would help students to acquire the knowledge taught. This statement shows that the teaching process has to do with the input students receive for future expected outcomes. The learning process, in contrast, it deals with the process of learning a language by the integration of external instruments and tools to acquire it. However, it is difficult to segregate the teaching and learning processes because as Piasecka (2016) states, learners, teachers, and subject matters are the pillars of education. The process that happens among the pillars is strongly connected. In language teaching, the English language has been known and explored all over the world to contribute to its globalization.

**English as a foreign language**

The need for communication forces the use of a lingua franca to connect with different countries, cultures, and languages. Mansfield and Poppi (2012) relate the English language as a Lingua Franca (ELF) since people all over the world are taught English to globally communicate. This idea leads the English language to be conceived as a tool to interact, communicate, and approach different cultures. Seidlhofer (2011) in Baker (2012) also points out that ELF exists in foreign countries with an idealized standard of English. This standardization of English leads teachers to teach mainly a variable and culture of English, mainly American English. The previous idea is supported by Mansfield and Poppi (2012) who also highlight the segregation of other English variables that exist in different countries. This segregation pushes non-native teachers and language policy to follow English standards and tests. Le Gal (2019) shows how the Colombian context and English language teaching are strongly influenced by foreign tests, standards, and strategies to improve and certificate teachers’ English proficiency. Although these foreign standards keep alive, Teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) is still considered an opportunity to connect with the world.
Teaching English as a Foreign Language

English language teaching facilitates a global construction and interaction that may increase people’s well-being and intercultural awareness. Michońska-Stadnik (2016) shows in her study that English learners did not only notice an increase in learning skills such as memory, guessing from context, logical thinking, and learning how to learn but also increased their collaborative work, speaking skills, and happiness. These aspects are essential nowadays taking into consideration that countries are interconnected, and people are interacting with diverse cultures, especially in English. Torres (2018) recognizes the importance of ELF and sheds light on how education and overall, teaching can provide and promote English for being a global citizen. One of the characteristics of a global citizen is to be aware of her and others’ identities and global issues (Oxfam, 2015). This awareness also integrates values such as tolerance and empathy which are mainly spread in the education and teaching process (Oxfam, 2015; Torres, 2018). Teaching English in foreign contexts is an opportunity to spread intercultural awareness and human values to coexist in society if they are based on appropriate methods and approaches.

TEFL relies on methodologies and approaches implemented in the class, which have a direct impact on children’s learning process. Dakowska (2018) highlights that learning a language should not rely on a descriptive linguistic procedure. Instead, it should be based on the naturality of learning and using the language in a social context. Bearing this in mind, Dakowska (2018) classifies language as a natural and cultural phenomenon that people use differently depending on the context. This means that trying to teach a language based on memorizing structures and rules inhibit the possibility of using the language naturally in real contexts. In Bryan et al. (2002) in Torres (2018) shows that the CEFR considers the Communicative Approach and Communicative Language Teaching as a means to integrate the intercultural dimension. This emphasis in intercultural communication can create the awareness needed to be a global citizen. Torres (2018) supports this idea and states that “it is to expect that language
learners become intercultural speakers not only in communicating information but in developing a human relationship with other languages and cultures” (p. 15). Therefore, TEFL should consider and integrate real-life contexts where students can socially and culturally interact as social agents.

This section presented how language teaching is an integral part of education along with the learning process and the subject matter. This process integrates the language teaching process, which encompasses the objectives and procedures for helping students to acquire language knowledge (Selinker 1972). Considering the global increase of the English language, TEFL plays an important role in helping students to be global citizens and interact with new cultures and languages through empathy and tolerance (Oxfam, 2015; Torres, 2018). Based on this idea, it is important to properly teach students how to use language knowledge in real-life situations. Therefore, TEFL should develop oral skills to perform language knowledge in real contexts.

**What is the Speaking Skill in Language?**

In this section, the speaking skill will be presented to know the important characteristics that this skill integrates. To define this language skill, the words of Suminih (2017) were taken while Fattha (2006) presents some characteristics of the speaking skill.

Learning a foreign language is strongly connected to the development of specific and basic skills to correctly interact with others. According to Suminih (2017), there are four language skills which are listening, reading, writing, and speaking, which allow people to express their emotions, ideas, thoughts, and experiences. Pronunciation is a segment that the speaking skill integrates, and individuals use it to correctly pronounce words to express phrases or sentences. Some other characteristics of the speaking skill presented by Fattha (2006) are that speaking is an interactive process that happens in real-time. As speaking is an interactive
process, Cornbleet & Carter (2001) states that the people involved in this interaction have the roles of speaker and listener. These authors also present a definition of bottom-up focus where they state that, in writing texts, this focus pays attention to the grammatical, linguistic, and sentence construction aspects. This focus can also be applied in speaking performances of L2 learning through controlled practices.

The speaking skill construct sheds light on one of the skills to be developed in the language. This definition provides us with the characteristics of the speaking skill which are strongly connected to the real and interactive process that involves more than one individual for the speaking to happen. Moreover, as it happens orally, it involves the pronunciation and articulation of words to create sentences at the moment of the interaction. Last but not least, the speaking process can be narrow to specific linguistic aspects of the language through controlled oral practices. Focusing on these grammatical aspects may improve speaking skills; therefore, the controlled oral practice concept will be introduced in the next section to explore how it works.

**What is Controlled Oral Practice?**

Interacting with others requires a demanding knowledge of the language structures and rules to correctly deliver the message we want to convey. Communication requires the practice of the language through different strategies or techniques. In this section, controlled oral practice is presented under Gavilán (2008) research to understand what it is and how this teaching technique works in the classroom.

When facing a social context in a foreign language, speakers should master language structures and know the appropriate vocabulary to orally communicate with others. In this regard, controlled practice is defined by Brown (2001) in Gavilán (2008) as a technique that can support these needs. This means that teachers set a goal and include controlled practices in an activity or task that integrates pedagogical and institutional units. Some of can be activities
filling the gaps, dictation, reading aloud, or modelling instructions that are performed by teachers or students (Gavilán, 2008; Nunan 2010). Gavilán (2008) states that, in controlled practice, there is a plan where students can use a specific structure of the language that is aligned to an objective from the curriculum. This technique is teacher-centred since teachers control the practice and predict students’ answers. On the other hand, Nunan (2010) exemplifies controlled practice by showing that, in this stage, students must practice the language structures, vocabulary, and functions. Here, students must intensively repeat the language structure to internalize and master the rules to use them in non-controlled communication (Yu, 2013). However, Gavilán (2008) states that this technique lacks of creativity and spontaneous response from students since teachers know the answers. Despite this fact, the author shows that controlled practice is used in classrooms to practice grammar and linguistic forms.

In the exploration of controlled oral practice, it shows how this technique supports the internalization and mastering of specific language structures (Yu, 2003). This fact sheds light on how to elicit participants’ oral production taking into consideration their basic English level and age. That is, this teaching technique is appropriate to present language structures for students to express and describe their authentic body sensations and learn vocabulary in a given moment. Despite the participants do not freely use the language, the controlled oral practice focuses on accuracy, syntax, correctness, and grammar rules for them to have the fundamental basis of language oral structure. As students in this project would participate in specific mindfulness practices in every session, they will be able to intensively practice the structure presented. Despite controlled oral production relates to the speaking skill, none of these can be developed without the development of the listening skill.

**What is the Listening Skill?**

Children learn their given language not by being taught but by listening. This section will introduce the listening skill to expand the vision of this skill based on Richard et al. (1992)
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(cited in Hwaider, 2017). Also, it will present the connection that listening skills have with speaking skills taken the words of Renukadevi (2014),

Listening is one of the most essential and used skills in language learning because it allows people to interact effectively with others in a given situation. According to Richard et al. (1992) cited in Hwaider (2017), listening is a comprehension process that involves a linguistic part constructed by phonemes, words and grammatical structures, and a pragmatic part that is composed of the context, situation, and peoples' background knowledge. In the words of Hwaider (2017), listening includes an interaction purpose where the background information people may have plays an important role, especially to interact in real contexts with a second or foreign language. These definitions shed light on the crucial role of the listening skill in this project for the experience that the students had already had with contemplative practices and for the introduction of new vocabulary and grammatical structures in the L2. Bearing this in mind, providing instructions and input in the L2 may help to create an appropriate learning environment which, according to Renukadevi (2014), supports the development of other language skills such as speaking. Therefore, listening allows learners to interact with the authentic use of the L2 in different contexts while they learn the vocabulary and language structure required, and acquire the correct pronunciation of words.

As shown in this section, listening is not an isolated skill but an interconnected skill that helps to develop speaking skills. Taking into consideration that this project has a speaking skill focus, listening cannot be left behind. In addition to listening, there is another important skill that helps in the development of the speaking skill which is writing.

What is the Writing Skill?

Is writing another interconnected skill in language learning? If so, how can writing be a supportive skill for this project? This section will introduce the definition of writing skills in the
words of Marpaung and Sinulingga (2013). Moreover, it will show the connection that writing has with the speaking skill in language learning based on Namaziandostet al. (2018).

Writing in L2 is conceived as a complex skill for children to acquire; however, is writing a supporter for other skills while it improves? According to Tiwari (2005) cited in Marpaung and Sinulingga (2013), writing is a mental process that facilitates people to turn thoughts into ideas making them visible through writing. During this process, people do not only turn thoughts into ideas, but also think about the appropriate words to express and organize them into sentences or paragraphs (Nunan, 2003 in Hotimah, 2015). These definitions of writing skills helped to understand the role of the writing process in speaking skills. As Namaziandostet al. (2018) show in their study, students can improve their speaking skills by writing since it allows them to practice grammatical structures and correctly integrate vocabulary. Considering that the purpose of the project involved the usage of grammatical structures and specific vocabulary, writing is implemented in this project to avoid the incorrect use of them and encourage oral participation.

Despite writing may be a complex process, it supports the integration of grammatical structures and vocabulary that benefits the speaking skill. This project takes into consideration the writing skill to achieve the linguistic goals of the project and the controlled oral objectives. However, writing is not the only element that supports this achievement but is one of them. In the next section, it will be introduced how the audio-visual materials are also one of the supporters for the development of this project.

**What are Audio-Visual Materials?**

Technology is nowadays an important resource in life because people can access different information. In academic environments, the use of technology has been integrated with academic purposes. These purposes relate to the presentation of topics, activities, videos, and audios. This section will talk about the audio-visual materials which are defined by
Canning-Wilson (2000) and will show the importance of this material in the learning and teaching process.

The implementation of technology in contexts such as education is unstoppable however, is it an ally or foe? The use of technology in educational environments is now integrated into the curriculums due to the different academic content it facilitates (Raja & Nagasubramani, 2018). When this virtual content is connected to language classes, it is called audio-visual materials which aim to present a different and authentic experience with the target language (Canning-Wilson, 2000). The importance of this material is that students can have a wider comprehension of topics since they can listen to and watch grammatical structures and vocabulary presented in the video. Moreover, students can rely on the body language of the video’s character to get a complete idea of the message conveyed. Audio-visual materials can also help to practice and review structures seen in the last classes while they explore new contents or situations. This connection between new and old knowledge facilitates activation of previous topics and speculation of new knowledge. This speculation, along with class activities, encourages students to pay attention to grasp specific information and practice the linguistic objectives (Cakir, 2006).

Audio-visual materials play an important role in academic environments since, in these times, technology is part of our daily life. This material can foster and engage students since the design, audio, and video can be related to something they like. Moreover, they can activate the previous knowledge of the class, if the material is intended to do it, and infer the events of, for example, stories through visual elements. Despite this material is also a great support to present, engage, and review structures and vocabulary, in public schools is not easy to access a video projector or visual classroom. This situation leads teachers to use old methods such as the total physical response method.
**What is the Total Physical Response Method?**

This section of the paper introduces the Total Physical Response (TPR) method as a means to teach vocabulary to young learners. The definition and a very brief history of TPR are taken from the words of Rambe (2019) who also sheds light on how it is executed in classes.

Young learners are often moving and playing in their daily life and in classrooms which, by using a methodology that involves physical movements, can foster and support their learning process. The TPR method was created by Asher in the early 1970s to provide language teachers with an alternative methodology that integrates physical movements and language teaching (Rambe, 2019). This methodology employs the use of body language and physical movements for students to meaningfully acquire language, especially vocabulary, through real-life actions and scenarios. In this methodology, the teacher must model the vocabulary for students to learn and ask them to repeat it. According to Arlette (2020), TPR is a teaching technique that can help beginners in language learning to acquire vocabulary with long-time retention. Because TPR integrates physical movements, the researcher states that it engages students in active learning. In this sense, TPR works to teach the English language to primary students since it encourages them to move and model actions instead of listening to words on their chairs (Saehu et al., 2017). This engagement in the class may increase their motivation and interest in learning the language.

In primary grades, students are actively moving which can despair their attention from the class. The presentation of this construct provides us with clarity on how to teach the vocabulary needed in the project while they are engaged and participating in the learning process (Saehu et al., 2017). Moreover, as demonstrated previously by Saehu et al. (2017), TPR can help primary graders to acquire the vocabulary presented by acting and modelling the actions modelled by teachers (Rambe, 2019).
After the exploration of mindfulness and L2 language teaching techniques, theories, and researchers given in this chapter, the motivation keeps moving us towards the exploration of mindfulness in educational contexts and its effects. The presentation of mindfulness in scientific research enables us to demolish the mysticism and misconceptions that people commonly point to. The demonstrations of the changes in the brain supported by Lazar, et al. (2005) in Schonert-Reichl & Roeser (2016) and Mozzon McPherson (2019) are great pillars to wonder and explore what affections mindfulness would have in L2 classrooms. As this classroom project integrated mindfulness practices and L2 teaching, mindfulness practices are thought to promote oral controlled production through listening and writing skills. In this form, the articulation between language and mindfulness practices can be done. Moreover, TPR, along with audio-visual materials, can help and support the presentation of the vocabulary and activities to be done. This implementation would allow the participants to practice and master a specific language structure and vocabulary. This structure would support the integration of language knowledge, which would help them to develop speaking skills to encounter natural interactions in English. This chapter invites teachers to go further in the exploration of new strategies and techniques to enrich the teaching and learning process regardless of whether the results provide just one brick in students’ castles.
This section of the study presents some insights into mindfulness practices applied in educational contexts and their relationship with this classroom project. For this reason, the studies Relating EFL university students’ mindfulness and resilience to self-fulfillment and motivation in learning by Ghanizadeh et al. (2019), The role of mindfulness in reducing English language anxiety among Thai college students by Charoensukmongkol (2019), and Mindfulness-based Social Emotional Interventions for Recognition and Modification of Aggressive Behaviours in Preschoolers by Rojas (2020) are presented to analyze how these studies can contribute to this classroom project.

To find success in L2 learning, it needs to find appropriate resources and attitudes to overcome challenges in the learning process. In the correlational study Relating EFL university students’ mindfulness and resilience to self-fulfilment and motivation in learning, Ghanizadeh et al. (2019) explore mindfulness and L2 resilience as strategies for increasing self-fulfilment and motivation in university students. The participants were 221 (174 women and 47 men) English learners from different universities and academic levels (PhD, MA degrees, and BA degrees in English) in Mashhad, Iran. The average age was from 18 to 46. The instruments used to gather data were four questionnaires implemented in one session for around 20 minutes. The questionnaires were: The Langer Mindfulness Scale (LMS), L2 Resilience Scale, Measurement of Actualization of Potential (MAP), and L2 Motivation Scale. After gathering the data, they were correlated and structured via SEM model implemented the statistical package LISREL 8.50. The results showed that mindfulness fosters self-fulfilment and resilience, which had a positive impact on language learners by increasing motivation when learning. It is also evidenced a direct influence on self-fulfilment by the increase of resilience. The correlation of these last elements enables learners to acquire an L2 because of resilience attitudes and motivation. This resilience attitude can help students to overcome emotional challenges like anxiety.
When speaking in a foreign language, it is necessary to use strategies to manage the levels of anxiety in performances. Charoensukmongkol (2019) conducted the study The role of mindfulness in reducing English language anxiety among Thai college students to investigate how mindfulness can affect the English-speaking scenarios among Thailand college students. The number of participants was 333 selected from four marketing courses taught in English by foreign professors. To collect data, Charoensukmongkol (2019) employed the questionnaires The Mindfulness Attention and Awareness Scale (MAAS), a modified version of the Public Speaking Class Anxiety Scale (PSCAS), and a variation from Tsafou et al. (2015) questionnaire to measure the State mindfulness in Speaking English. The whole data was analyzed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS). The questionnaires were implemented a week before the final presentation of the courses and after its ending. The grades of the presentations were also used as a contribution to the results. The results showed that mindfulness decreased the students’ level of anxiety and, consequently, they achieved higher grades in oral presentations than those who had a higher level of anxiety. To improve performances and L2 learning, it is necessary to cultivate emotional awareness and self-regulation.

In educational contexts, emotions and self-regulation strategies are often avoided to concentrate the classes on the content and the development of the subject matter. Rojas (2020) presents her study Mindfulness-based Social Emotional Interventions for Recognition and Modification of Aggressive Behaviours in Preschoolers, to highlight the importance of strategies and techniques to overcome aggressive behaviours of children in classrooms. This research was carried out at the Semillas de Luz preschool in Bogotá. The participants were 20 preschoolers with an average age of 4 to 5. To collect the qualitative data, Rojas (2020) used observations, focus group, and interviews. For 13 weeks, Rojas (2020) integrated the Mindfulness-based Kindness based Curriculum by Richard Davidson with an adaptation of 4 new lessons and a translation to Spanish. The results concluded that the students could decrease the levels of
aggressiveness by 69%. Children could also increase their social and emotional skills in the classroom by being aware of their feelings and their reactions that affected others.

After presenting the studies in this chapter, it is important to show their contributions to this classroom project. The correlational study made by Ghanizadeh et al. (2019) contributes to this classroom project by highlighting that motivation and self-efficacy benefit to be goal-oriented toward English learning using mindfulness and resilience. Ghanizadeh et al. (2019) also highlight the benefits for both, teachers and students, of being mindful in terms of motivation, resilience, and self-efficacy in the L2 classroom and learning process. The researchers mention that mindfulness and resilience can contribute to students’ self-fulfillment and their concentration on their learning goals. These skills relate to the purpose of this project because of students’ capacity and motivation to overcome the challenges in the English learning process, in the case of this project, the speaking skill which requires mindful responses. The pedagogical implications encourage future qualitative and quantitative research in EFL learning to have precise results on the factors that motivate students’ language learning and how these factors conduct learners to language achievement. Also, Ghanizadeh et al. (2019) suggest creating a curriculum that integrates content materials related to mindfulness to gain more experience and knowledge on how mindfulness can change the dynamic of the class.

Finally, Charoensukmongkol (2019) stated in his research that mindfulness may benefit students’ English speaking through the awareness and management of negative emotions. This benefit may lead students to manage their speaking performance and therefore, meaningful and successful learning can happen. Bearing in mind that this study was quantitatively conducted, Charoensukmongkol (2019) suggests future qualitative and experimental research to gain more evidence of mindfulness and its benefits to reduce foreign language anxiety. The contribution of this study opens a door for mindfulness and L2 teaching in empirical research and the implementation of these techniques in speaking performances. On the other hand, the research of Rojas (2020) also shed light on self-regulation skills and management of hard feelings of
children in educational contexts through mindfulness intervention. That is, children could regulate their emotions in the classroom, which is an important insight for this project. This author also encourages integrating mindfulness and SEL curricula and future research on mindfulness-based programs in Colombia’s context. The studies made by Charoensukmongkol (2019) and Ghanizadeh et al. (2019) used college students, which shows a gap in mindfulness exploration with children. This is also highlighted by Rojas (2020) who suggests future research on mindfulness and young students. Moreover, Ghanizadeh et al. (2019) pointed out another gap in the integration of EFL learning and mindfulness that also encouraged this project.
Methodology

This chapter will introduce the context of the institution and will also present the setting where the project will be carried out. Before implementing the project, it is important to have clear the procedures of the interventions, the institution’s implementation of English, and the specific population of this classroom project. This last section will shed light on how the English language is conceived and taught in the institution, the English proficiency of the teachers, the presentation of the participants, the presentation of the student leading this project, and his mentor. On the other hand, it will present the framework that will be used in this project, how this will be developed and planned, and the resources required. Finally, it will present the assessment procedures and the instruments to collect and analyze the integration of mindfulness and English teaching and learning processes.

Context

The bilingual institute Alfonso Jaramillo Gutiérrez, which name is in honour of its founder, is a public and co-educational school located in Pereira, Risaralda. This school has three campuses around Pereira. The campuses provide preschool, primary, basic, and secondary education for students of a social class among the one to four strata. The places of campuses are in the neighbourhoods La Villa, Guayacanes, and Corales having approximately a total number of 930 students and 68 teachers. In 2016, the institution was chosen for the Acaldía de Pereira, the Cámara de Comercio de Pereira (Colombia Invest), and the Minister of National Education to develop the project “Colegio Piloto Bilingüe”. This project aims to articulate English in every subject, cultural and academic activity to become this institute a bilingual school. This fact has led the school to be recognized as a pioneer of bilingual education in Risaralda. The curriculum integrates different institutional projects such as the AJMUN, where students participate in simulated conferences of the United Nations to develop critical thinking and argumentative skills in Spanish and English. The school has 12 English teachers in the institution who teach from primary to secondary grades. The hours taught in the English subject depend on the grade.
However, as mentioned previously, this institution has a bilingual focus therefore, English is interconnected to other subjects.

**Setting**

The institution has 12 English teachers (11 for the campuses La Villa and Corales and 1 for the primary school of Guayacanes). The teachers’ English level of proficiency is from B1 to C1 based on the CEFR. The English hours taught are based on the grade; for primary grades, the total number of hours per week is 4, from sixth to ninth grade the hours per week taught are 7, and from tenth to eleventh grade, they are 6 hours. Because of the pandemic, the modality of the institution was alternation. In this modality, students must attend the institution two or three sessions per week and on the other days, they took the class online. In face-to-face classes, there was a limitation in the number of students in the classrooms. For the pandemic situation, the number of hours of English per week was reduced from 7 hours per week for 6th and 9th graders, 6 hours for 10th and 11th graders, and 4 hours for primary graders to 3 hours for every grade. On the other hand, the English curriculum and syllabus are based on the suggested curriculum of the Minister of National Education. Therefore, the curriculum integrates the modules of sustainability, education, health, and environment into the English classes. The focus of the English subject is a real-life application of the language, which means that grammar is taught implicitly.

This classroom project will be carried out at the La Villa campus where it teaches from primary to secondary grades. Currently, the students attend school from 7 am in the morning to 12 pm in the afternoon. The hours of English taught in the institution are 2 for primary and secondary grades with an extra hour given in an asynchronous session. It is important to clarify that the sessions were thought to be implemented in 2021, one year after the pandemic; however, the project was implemented in 2022, when every school in Colombia returned to in-person classes. Therefore, asynchronous sessions were no longer given. The participants were from a fifth-grade classroom with around 18 students who will be introduced in the next section.
Participants

This section of the chapter introduces the participants, the practitioner, and the mentor who are important agents for this project. On the one hand, the students of the fifth-grade classroom are presented to know their average age, socioeconomic strata, and their cognitive stage according to Piaget and Vygotsky’s theories introduced in Rafael’s (2007) study. On the other hand, it presents the practitioner who leads the project is presented to know his academic background, age, and level of English proficiency. Lastly, the mentor of this project will be presented to know who she is and how she supported this project.

Students

The participants of the project are 18 fifth graders with an average age of 9 to 11. They belong to a low and middle socioeconomic class from strata of 1 to 3. According to Piaget, at these ages, the students can logically think and find solutions to problems, which means that students integrate different aspects of the environment (Rafael, 2007). This fact demonstrates that the students decrease their egocentric thinking, which allows them to recognize that people have different thoughts. Piaget states that, in this stage, the students still have problems with abstract concepts. This fact leads students to experiment with their senses the objects that people mention to understand what is told. These previous ideas provide us with the insights that students can find solutions on language chunks or exercises that are related to the environment or that were previously and meaningfully presented in the class. As students still have problems with abstract concepts, the insight we gained is that the vocabulary of the practices and language must be modelled or exemplified by visual aids to correlate the meaning with the word. Finally, students are also able to comprehend others’ ideas and experiences, which help them to connect and respect classmates’ oral performances.

Practitioner

The practitioner who developed this project is a male student from the program of Licenciatura en Bilingüismo con Énfasis en Inglés from the Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira.
His English language proficiency was between a B2 and C1 level based on the CEFR. He has practiced mindfulness since 2019 under the guidance of Vórtice Raíz, in Pereira and has participated in the elective subject *Mindfulness para una Educación Consciente* from the Universidad Tecnológica de Pereira. He has also included mindfulness practices in his daily life. He was in charge of planning the sessions articulating mindfulness in the classes, designing the material, observing the class, and writing in a diary the information obtained from the observations.

*Mentor*

The mentor of this project was Lina Vanessa Palacio Marin who has been teaching in primary grades in the institution for a long time. She has also practised and explored contemplative practices and has taken them to academic settings, especially with her classes. In this project, she opened the doors of her classroom in charge to develop the project. She also built and encourage the appropriate space for the sessions of this process asking for and bringing bedsheets, pillows, and musical instruments. Moreover, she was also facilitating different contemplative practices with the group out of these interventions, which encouraged the embracement and welcome of this project. Lastly, she also provided feedback and supportive actions or instructions within the practices to fulfil the contemplative practices carried out.

*Instructional Design*

The purpose of this classroom project was the articulation of mindfulness practices along with English to promote and support the development of the English-speaking skill using controlled oral activities. At the end of the course, students were expected to express their feelings, body sensations, and likes and dislikes. Bearing this in mind, to plan the sessions, it was important that the practitioner kept a continuous process of mindfulness practices to integrate them into the lesson plan. Also, the students’ frequency of mindfulness practice was an important factor to start planning since it helped to recall the vocabulary already used in Spanish mindfulness practices with their in-service teacher. The first lesson plans were thoughts
to develop the listening skill and introduce and use the vocabulary of the practices. Despite every lesson plan had a set of activities to be covered, the practitioner was open to unexpected situations in the classroom such as contemplative and shamanic songs that the in-service teacher and the students wanted to sing to the practitioner, and heartfulness practices that the students wanted to guide. Therefore, the practitioner elaborated the lesson plans based on the importance of understanding the practice, topics, and connection with the students rather than covering fully the points of the lesson plan.

Most lesson plans integrated a musical instrument such as a drum, ukulele, rattle, and bell to introduce the practices, and recall students’ attention during and at the end of them. In the classroom, there were always roles that students chose and one of them was to ring the bell when the classroom was noisy and distracted. However, the ukulele and drums were mostly used for the mindful listening practices, which helped the students to be aware of their present feelings and invite their attention to come back.

**Figure 1.**

*Mindful listening practice using the ukulele.*

*Note. Guapacha, D. (2022).*
During the interventions, there was used an authentic video taken from Headspace that introduces two mindfulness practices. Also, the video was used for students to respond to some comprehension questions and for them to guide the two practices presented. This audio-visual material helped to recall previous vocabulary and language structure, which helped to infer the events of the video. Despite it did not have subtitles, watching the characters and the context they were in, helped them to comprehend the events of the story. According to Canning-Wilson (2000), this happens because audio-visual materials facilitate students to infer the situation based on the characters’ body language since people convey their oral message along with their bodies. Moreover, audio-visual material allows students to have an authentic experience with the language. To use this material, the practitioner used a video projector which, according to Harmer (2001), projectors facilitate the display of content and activities to be used. This facility incorporates images, videos, and texts that teachers can project instead of writing or drawing.
To introduce the vocabulary and present these practices, the practitioner used the Total Physical Response (TPR) method created by James Asher to model the actions to be followed. Some of these actions are breathing in and out, holding the breathing and relaxing. To present these essential commands, the practitioner used a breathing ball to present them and for students to guide the mindful breathing practice. For example, in the first practice, when one of the students used the breathing ball, the rest of the class simulated the breathing ball with their hands to connect with the practice and integrate the commands.

**Figure 4.**

_Sitting practice of breathing using the breathing ball._

Figure 5.

Sitting practice of breathing using the breathing ball.


Development and Implementation

The development of this project integrated aspects such as experience in mindfulness practices, the translation and adjustment of these practices to A2 English level for the fifth graders, physical resources, and language methodologies and techniques. This classroom project was carried out in 12 interventions. In the first encounter, the practicant observed the class to know the students and in the last intervention, he shared his experience and the insights
gathered and listened to the student’s experience during the interventions. These sessions were given twice per week lasting one hour. During the six weeks of implementation, the project aimed to develop speaking skills through oral controlled activities articulating mindfulness practices related to describing their experiences and expressing likes and dislikes. On the other hand, controlled oral activities were connected to TPR which helped the practicant to introduce the vocabulary needed for the controlled oral activities and for the mindfulness practices. Some of the vocabulary to be used are hot, cold, relaxed, tense, walking, observing, and feeling. This vocabulary was presented on the board or video beam and was modelled by the teacher after the presentation. Then, he asked students to follow the action. This presentation facilitated the comprehension of the vocabulary to present the language form to be used.

After the demonstration, the practicant presented the language chunk on the board or the video beam with the specific vocabulary and language form to be used. The practicant guided the mindfulness practice and, when it ended, he asked each student how they felt during the practice. The students responded based on the language form and vocabulary presented previously.

The implementation of this classroom project contributed to the English proficiency level expected of the institution and the self-development and growth of these fifth graders. With the bilingual focus of the institution, it expects to develop a C1 of English proficiency when graduating students. In this sense, this project contributed to this goal and also to the institutional vision of the school which states that, for them, it is fundamental to develop students with a humanism sensibility. This humanism is characterized by respect and tolerance for others which were also considered in controlled oral practices. In this sense, these fifth graders cultivated self-respect and respect for others while developing and supporting English language learning, specifically speaking skills. To achieve these objectives, the project required diverse resources that will be introduced in the next section.
Resources

To implement mindfulness practices in English classes, the project needed resources and specific spaces for its development. To practice mindfulness, it was necessary to have chairs to have a comfortable posture and experience from the practicant. Moreover, during the mindfulness practices, it was important to have bedsheets to create a circle where everyone sat or laid down on the circle. Another important resource for practising was acoustic instruments. In this case, the instruments were a ukulele, drum, rattle, and bell that worked as a signal or reminder for students to get ready to practice, know when the practice had finished, and retake the practice if they got distracted. To present the language form used, the resources were a board, a computer, a video beam, and markers. These resources helped the practicant to exemplify and project the language form, vocabulary, and examples. Also, the video beam and computer helped to project authentic audio-visual materials in two interventions. To count the time for every mindfulness practice and to record specific parts of the class, the practicant used a cellphone. Finally, for the pandemic, it was important to have alcohol, antibacterial gel, and masks in the classrooms to avoid the propagation thereof.

Instruments to Collect the Information of the Project

In this section of the project, it is introduced the instruments that were used for the collection of the information that allowed the practicant to observe and report the development and articulation of the mindfulness practices and control oral practices. Therefore, it will present the observation, teacher journal, and students’ artifacts to report and evidence the activities and their responses during the implementation.

Observation

Observation is an instrument that allows collecting data for the development of research projects. This classroom project employed the qualitative observation method for the development thereof. The implementation of observation, in this project, allowed the practicant to collect data at the moment of the implementation and report the results of the mindfulness
practices and linguistic outcomes expected from students (The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018). However, the practicant could not observe and report the information while teaching the class therefore, the practicant will record specific parts of the interventions such as the implementation of mindfulness practices and the performance of students in oral control practices. To report the information, the practicant used field notes, which are less standardized and deal with narrative data (The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018). The practitioner wrote the information observed in every video recording after every session.

**Teacher Journal**

To expand the vision during the session implementations addressing aspects avoided in the observation method, the teacher journal worked as a complementary instrument for the project to reflect on different aspects experienced in the sessions. A teacher journal is the interpretation of a teacher’s personal experience within an educational setting (Wiegerová, 2013). This journal allows teachers to realize unexpected or new situations in a specific domain, task, and process at school that they consider important. As a teacher journal is a personal document, it works as a means to express feelings and opinions about specific events or experiences. By writing them in the journal, teachers can reflect on the procedures, reactions, and possible solutions in academic situations. The teacher journal method also works as a reflective instrument in which teachers can auto-regulate their teaching practices and look for new strategies if necessary. Having this in mind, this instrument allowed the practicant to reflect upon the implementation and integration of mindfulness practices and the development of oral controlled practices. These reflections will help the practicant to observe his perception during the interventions and regulate some aspects if necessary. The practitioner wrote in the teacher journal at the end of every intervention.

**Students’ Artifacts**

In classroom activities, it is important to report the reactions and classroom setting as a matter of study. Gupta (2016) cited in Álvarez et al. (2021) refers to students’ artifacts as
responses to activities that are reported in videos and audios. This classroom project integrated students’ artifacts focused on videos and photos to evidence the reactions and responses of students towards mindfulness practices. Also, they provide a visual perception of how this project was carried out using the materials presented previously. These students’ artifacts were collected with special permission and agreement between the school and the parents to use students’ photos and videos for academic purposes.
Results

This section presents the results obtained after the ten sessions implemented in the project. To present the results, this section is divided into professional growth, students’ responses, and linguistic outcomes. Each section presents the positive and challenging experiences faced in specific sessions accompanied by reflection and some authors that support the experiences encountered. These sections were reflected based on the objectives of the project and the results obtained.

Professional Growth

This enrichment process, accompanied by reflection and feeling, will be presented in different sections. The first section is lesson planning and execution which will address the experience of articulating English and mindfulness, problems when executing the lesson plans, and unexpected situations. The next section, which is instruments used in the classroom, will present the experience of the musical instruments used in the interventions along with the practicant’s confidence and feeling with them. The use of these musical instruments introduces the next section, which is collaborative work, which presents the importance that the participants and the mentor had during the mindfulness practices. Finally, it will talk about a challenging process experienced during the project which is distracted behaviour during the interventions.

Lesson Planning and Execution

Organizing, articulating, measuring, and guiding are some of the characteristics that lesson plans have which make them a challenging process. During the interventions, planning and executing lessons were one of the most difficult parts because of the articulation of English and mindfulness. At the beginning of the project, this articulation was recognized in the Teacher Journal (T.J) 03/03/22 when expressing that “reconozco que el reto en este caso no será encontrar un estado mindfulness facilitado por las prácticas sino la articulación del inglés en
This challenging process was also recognized in Rojas (2020) when she states that mindfulness should be integrated into Colombia’s curricula, despite creating the methodology and thinking of activities would not be easy. Indeed, thinking about how to connect the mindfulness practices to the linguistic outcomes expected was the primary concern. This concern was always connected to the experiences and beliefs of the practitioner since they, in some interventions, could blind his sight and criteria. This blindness took the practitioner to underestimate the students’ English skills in some interventions which affected the linguistic outcomes expected. This part is evidenced in the T.J 28/03/22 when the practitioner expressed that, during the session, there was great students’ participation in English which was a guide to reflect on how he was articulating English:

1. En esta introducción, les pedí a los chicos compartir como se sentían en ese momento.
   Tuve muchísima participación lo cual me dejó pensativo del modo en que estoy integrando el inglés. Sentí que he estado subestimando a los chicos y por ello no me he atrevido a hablar o articular más inglés durante la práctica.

This underestimation opened a deep door that showed a lack of confidence by the practitioner when integrating English. This unconfident made the first interventions to be hard to plan as the practitioner expressed in the T.J. 14/03/2022 “por el lado lingüístico, me siento un poco perdido por el cómo integrar el inglés durante las sesiones”3. After reflecting in these aspects, the conclusion was “Los chicos están preparados, pero tú no te sientes preparado”4 (T.J, 28/03/22). Obtaining this reflection helped the practitioner realize the limitations he was creating when planning and executing the sessions, which helped him to improve his

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1 I recognize that the challenge, in this case, will not be to find a mindfulness state facilitated by the practices but to articulate English to this process.
2 In this introduction, I asked the students to share how they felt in that moment. I had a lot of participation which made me think the way I am articulating English. I felt that I have been underestimating them and, for that reason, I have not dared to talk or articulate more English during the practice.
3 In the linguistic aspect, I feel a little bit lost on how to integrate English during the sessions.
4 The kids are ready, but you don’t feel ready.
articulation and confidence in future sessions. This readjustment in the process is mentioned by Kimble (2020) to highlight the importance of changing how the interventions were given and what facilitator’s roles are required to improve students’ comprehension of the intervention. This adjustment is evidenced in this project in the sixth session when the practitioner decided to retake the north of the project and adjust some points in the implementations. Here the practitioner expresses that “funcionó el uso del inglés porque reconocieron y asociaron el nuevo vocabulario con palabras conocidas mientras veían y escuchaban estructuras simples” (T.J, 18/04/22). Despite planning and executing were different realities, reflection was an ally to create coherence among them and the objectives.

During the planning and execution of lesson plans, reflection also showed an important and critical element of the interventions. The lack of distinguishing the roles of mindfulness facilitator and practitioner hindered the linguistic process. Because the practitioner got involved in the practice like a participant, he often forgot the linguistic part to be developed and worked. This situation reflected an important element of the teacher journal because it directly showed how forgetting affected the practitioner. In the T.J 06/05/22, the practitioner reflected on this part when he states that “recordé la importancia de que ellos utilizaran la estructura y les empecé a pedir que utilizaran la estructura para expresar sus gustos y disgustos mientras ellos utilizaban los pulgares arriba o abajo”⁶. As this was not the only time that happened, the practitioner wrote again about it feeling frustrated for not advancing in the linguistic objectives. The T.J 09/05/22 showed this part when expressing that “durante la primera parte de los sentidos había olvidado incentivar el uso de I like it, I don’t like it para expresar su experiencia por lo que me hizo sentir un poco frustrado”⁷. Reflecting on these important points helped to

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5 The use of English worked [in the intervention] since they recognized and associated the new vocabulary with known words while they saw and listened to simple structures.  
6 I remembered the importance that the students used the structures, so I asked them to use the structure to express their likes and dislikes while they used their thumbs up and down.  
7 During the first part of the sense practice, I had forgotten to elicit the use of I like it, I don’t like it to express their experience, which made me feel kind of frustrated.
retake the north of the project but also gain a great implication for future implementations which is that linguistic objectives must be as important as mindfulness practices.

As reflection worked as a light that lighted up what was hidden in the dark, there was a huge element found that also affected the interventions. In the practitioner’s experiences in mindfulness practices, he had a passive role that focused on following facilitators’ leads. The experience of changing from a passive to an active role directly affected the development of mindfulness practices. This concern was covered in the T.J 21/04/22 when the practitioner expressed that

\[\text{Al no tener tanta experiencia como facilitador de mindfulness, me he identificado con el rol de practicante en las mayorías de las prácticas por lo que hay momentos de demasiado silencio. Estos espacios donde los chicos necesitan quien los guíe de nuevo a la práctica han sido abarcados por la profesora Lina, quien se da cuenta de que la práctica necesita más instrucción y ella, con mucho amor, me complementa la práctica}^8.\]

The moments where the teacher Lina intervened to provide more instructions or clarify mindfulness practices, were ideal to recognize the urgency of changing the passive role. These silent moments and lack of clarity in instructions were part of the unexpected situations that accompanied the project. Although these situations were challenging, recognizing the importance of roles was also an important insight for professional growth since it was not even considered at the beginning of the project. Setting clear the roles in each practice is essential to guide the students to the practice instead of expecting another person to guide it. After finishing the interventions, the practitioner could identify two main and interconnected roles which were a mindfulness facilitator and an English teacher. In most of the interventions, the practitioner

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^8 Since I do not have vast experience as a mindfulness facilitator, I have identified with the practicant role in most practices, which causes many silent moments. In these spaces, where the students need to be guided again to the practice, the teacher Lina addresses them. She knows when the practice needs more instruction, so she, with thousands of loves, complements the practice.
separated these roles without realizing that they were deeply connected to achieving the project’s objectives. As a matter of example, during the mindfulness practices, there were some linguistic activities to elicit the use of speaking skills, as shown in the T.J. 28/03/2022, but the linguistic part was not practised for focusing merely on the mindfulness practices. The lack of planning and having clear the roles directly affected the linguistic outcomes of the project.

Indeed, this experience was related to the lesson planning since the practitioner did not think of these aspects as relevant.

Planning and executing lessons are strongly influenced by unexpected situations in life and classroom roles. Being open to unexpected situations was an important attitude and decision that the practitioner took during the sessions. Despite they affected the development of the session objectives, as exemplified in the T.J 15/03/22 “la profesora Lina en esta práctica... nos guió hacia un ejercicio vocal para ayudarme con mi voz que se encontraba un poco afónica y para sincronizarnos durante la intervención”\(^9\), it helped to create a strong connection and confidence in the classroom. The appreciation of this confidence is expressed in the T.J 04/04/22 when the practitioner expressed that “El recibimiento y la apertura que se ha logrado durante las sesiones es realmente valioso y significativo tanto para los chicos como para mí”\(^10\). Having this confidence when sharing experiences, supported the expression of students' emotions whether in positive or negative terms, with no repercussions. In the process of planning and executing, there were also important resources that played a key role during the project.

**Musical Instruments used in the classroom**

Musical instruments during the interventions were undeniable influential in the participants’ experience. Depending on the practitioner’s experience with the musical

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\(^9\) In this practice, teacher Lina guided a vocal exercise to help me with my voice, which was a little bit aphonie, and to synchronize us during the intervention.

\(^10\) The welcome and openness that we have achieved during the sessions are highly worthy and meaningful for the students and me.
instruments, the interventions flew correctly with the lesson plan. Having this in mind, the usage of the musical instruments projected positive and negative affections. As a matter of example, the T.J 15/03/22 shows a negative effect with the rattle instrument, which was not explored in-depth in the past by the practitioner. Therefore, he expresses that

\[ \text{por olvido lo dejé [el ukelele] en casa. Esto conllevó a utilizar solo el sonajero el cual no he tenido un gran acercamiento y, por ende, poca conexión. Cuando se realizó el ejercicio de escucha, me sentí incómodo sólo utilizando el sonajero y sentí una gran desconexión con su sonido y la práctica en sí. Esto fue algo que se notó con los y las participantes ya que también estuvieron, la mayoría, desconectados de la práctica lo que los llevó a hacer bromas o a actuar con euforia.}^{11} \]

As evidenced above, the confidence that the practitioner had with the musical instruments was crucial for the guidance and development of the practice. However, the experience was not always negative since, after the rattle experience, the practitioner decided to use the ukulele during the sessions. This musical instrument had accompanied the practitioner for around 2 years, therefore, the connection and confidence with the ukulele were strong. The experience of using the ukulele was reported in the T.J 28/03/22 when the practitioner expresses that “\text{noté que el uso del Ukelele nos ayudó a conectar muchísimo más, principalmente a mí porque me sentí en confianza con el instrumento y con los chicos}^{12}”. On the other hand, before these interventions, the teacher Lina had used three other resources, which were a breathing ball, a bell, and a drum, that helped the students to become familiar with them. When the practitioner used them during the interventions, the students knew what they

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11 For my oversight, I left it [the ukulele] at home. This implied using only the rattle, which I have not had vast experience with and so, I lacked connection with it. When the listening practice was developed, I felt uncomfortable only using the rattle and I felt a great disconnection with its sound and the practice itself. The participants also experienced it since most of them were disconnected from the practice. So. they were constantly joking or acting with euphoria.

12 I noticed that the use of the ukulele helped us to connect much more, mainly to me, because I felt confident with the musical instrument and the students.
were for. As an example, In the T.J 06/05/22, the practitioner noticed the importance that the bell had in crazy moments when he wrote that “he visto la importancia que le han dado los chicos a la campana y a la respiración consciente cada que nos distraemos”\(^\text{13}\). Ringing the bell was always the signal to stop, breathe, and focus on the present moment, which helped a lot in hyperactive moments.

**Collaborative Work**

Although planning, executing, and implementing the musical instruments were of high importance for the development of this project, the presence of teacher Lina, as a mentor, was crucial for this implementation. The support and openness that teacher Lina provided to this project played a key role from the very beginning. As teacher Lina had already practised and introduced contemplative practices in their grades and institution, the directors and students were completely open to experiencing this classroom project. These words can be evidenced in the T.J 03/03/22 when the practitioner says that

\[
\text{La integración y articulación de Mindfulness que ha hecho la profesora Lina en la institución y, en especial, en sus grados asignados han abierto la mente y el corazón de los maestros, directivos y estudiantes. Ha sido una gran ventaja que la institución reconozca el mindfulness como un aspecto fundamental del SER humano y de la formación como seres individuales y colectivos. Gracias al trabajo de la profesora Lina, la institución me abrió las puertas fácilmente para desarrollar el proyecto.}^{14}
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This previous exploration allowed the school to evidence the importance of contemplative practices while the teacher Lina increased her experience as a contemplative

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\(^{13}\) I have noticed the importance that the students have given to the bell and the mindful breathing every time we get distracted.

\(^{14}\) The integration and articulation of mindfulness that teacher Lina has done in the institution, especially, in her classes assigned, have unclosed the teachers, directors, and students’ minds and hearts. It has been a great advantage that the school recognizes mindfulness as an important aspect of human BEING and the growth as individuals and collective beings. Thanks to the teacher Lina’s job, the school was warmly open to the development of this project.
facilitator. The experience that teacher Lina has had as a facilitator of contemplative practices helped to clarify procedures and complement the practices given in this project. The practitioner highlights this key role in the T.J 03/03/22 when expressing that “Lina ha seguido siendo un papel fundamental ya que me ha ayudado a aclarar algunas instrucciones y procedimientos no muy claros en la sesión, como la organización de las mantas y almohadas en círculo15”. However, it was not only her presence during the sessions that helped this project but also the contemplative practices that she implemented out of these interventions. The practitioner also mentions this in the T.J 14/03/22 when he says, “Como la teacher Lina ya había implementado mindfulness y heartfulness con los participantes, ellos tenían un gran avance de la práctica y por eso, también mostraron mucha apertura y recibimiento de la práctica de respiración consciente en inglés16”. This implementation of contemplative practices out of the project spaces enriched the implementation of this project since students were excited and open to the practices.

The integration of English instructions for the mindful breathing practise in other subjects and spaces were also of high importance as mentioned in the T.J 28/03/22 when the practitioner says “también destaco que la profesora Lina ha seguido utilizando el vocabulario “Breath in/out, hold, and relax” fuera de las intervenciones dadas lo que ha causado una mejor integración del vocabulario y una práctica más segura17”. This kind-hearted collaborative work with teacher Lina propelled the integration of mindfulness practices in English and helped the articulation of English instructions throughout this implementation. However, the students also played a key role in these practices since they volunteered to guide them with joy and happiness.

15 Lina has kept being a crucial role since she has helped me to clarify some unclear instructions and procedures like the bedsheet and pillow organization.
16 Because teacher Lina had already implemented mindfulness and heartfulness practices with the students, they had vast experience in the practice. For that reason, they also showed openness and embracement of the mindful breathing practice in English.
17 I also highlight that teacher Lina has kept using the vocabulary “Breath in/out, hold, and relax” out of the given interventions, which has caused a better integration of the vocabulary and confident practice.
This attitude was also reported by Wang and Liu (2016) when expressing that mindfulness practices helped to create a safe and comfortable space. This space helped and encouraged students to take risks in English activities. This students’ attitude is evidenced in the T.J 09/04/22 when the practitioner mentioned that “pedí que esta vez fuesen voluntarios los que las guiaran [las practicas] y ellos, muy animados, alzaron la mano y guiaron las prácticas”. Letting the students take roles in the classroom encouraged the importance of their behaviour while they practised with the vocabulary and structures presented. Therefore, they recognized when they or their partners were loud during the activities and used the bell to come back to the present moment.

Encouraging the practice of mindfulness within a group of people is conceived as a Shanga, which is strongly connected to the mindfulness origins. Shanga is described by Nhat Hanh (2002) as a community of practice where values such as understanding, kindness, and respect are present. One of the purposes of this community is to practice mindfulness together and stay as present as possible facing the emotions, thoughts, and events that may emerge. Unexpectedly, this process created a Shanga where mindfulness practices were crucial and a common like for everyone since the participants cared about prolonging mindful actions in specific parts of the interventions. As expressed in the last paragraph, one of these specific parts was activities, especially linguistic ones, where they needed to listen to their partners, share their experiences after a practice, respond to some questions, or even help their partners’ answers. Despite a Shanga was not part of the plan, the students noticed the importance of their behaviour and helped to maintain mindful actions with respect, which changed the dynamic from teacher to student-centred with equal importance and respect.

_Distracted behaviour during the interventions_

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18 I asked them that, this time, they were volunteers to guide them [the mindfulness practices] and they happily raised their hands and did so.
A challenging aspect during the implementation was distracted behaviour in the practices. Because mindfulness practices allow a certain degree of freedom in academic environments, sometimes they were taken as distracting sessions. This distracted behaviour was also reported by Gorsuch (2019) when he mentions that, during the mindfulness practices, there were some disruptive behaviours such as talking and using the phone because of the quiet moments. These attitudes were also evidenced in these interventions however, the practitioner noticed a difference between the interventions given on Tuesdays and Mondays in terms of behaviour. Despite both days there was distracted behaviour, on Tuesdays, the students were more hyperactive and unfocused than ever. This behaviour on Tuesdays was analyzed by the practitioner in the T.J 29/03/22 when expressing that

Como segunda intervención brindada el martes en la última hora, después de la hora del descanso, estaba intrigado del comportamiento de los participantes en este horario específico. Pude observar que hay más dispersión entre ellos lo que causa que deba repetir constantemente la importancia de estar en silencio a pesar de que no se esté realizando la práctica¹⁹.

This was an aspect of reflection during this implementation that shed light on controlling attitudes by the practitioner. Despite sometimes it was necessary that the practitioner or teacher Lina intervened in the practice to ask for silence, the practitioner evidenced an idealized behaviour during the practices. Indeed, control was a rigid attitude that limited mindfulness practices and the students’ experience. When reflecting on this, the practitioner could take a flexible posture to look for different practices to implement on Tuesdays. This reflection integrated resilience and flexible attitudes to overcome this challenge. This process was also influenced by a practitioner’s mindful state, which Ghanizadeh (2019) refers to beneficial when

¹⁹ As the second intervention given on Tuesday in the last hour, after the break time, I was curious about the behaviour of the participants in this specific schedule. I could observe that there is more distraction among them, which made me repeat constantly the importance of being quiet although they were not doing the activity.
saying that mindfulness not only benefits students’ behaviours and reactions but also teachers’ reactions towards different situations. These attitudes allowed the practitioner to explore and diversify the practices to connect with the students' active energy after break time. This reflection is found in the T.J 21/04/22 when the practitioner expresses that

...reconocer la importancia de soltar el control de las experiencias que no se relacionan con calma y tranquilidad para darle paso al movimiento de emociones que está presente. Para atender a estas emociones que a veces impiden una conexión con la práctica es necesario integrar la situación que pasa durante las prácticas y reconocer el sentimiento que surge para poder abordarlo con consciencia y claridad. Así será más fácil encontrar otras alternativas con mindfulness para los participantes que no logran conectar con las prácticas sentadas o acostadas.

Diversifying the practices was key for engaging the students in them while it was explored the importance of posture and the conception of mindfulness practice. When referring to contemplative practices, most people, including the practitioner at the beginning of the project, considered them as quiet practices with sitting or lying positions. However, this conception was broken in the first intervention since, it the lying down practice, the practitioner noticed a constant movement of many students. The O1 is taken as a reference to express the moment when the practitioner says that “in the second practice, which was a lying down practice, I noticed that some students were constantly moving because of their position on the floor and the break they had had”. Despite it was the first signal that mindfulness practices sometimes were uncomfortable for the students, the practitioner kept prioritizing lying or sitting positions.

20 To recognize the importance of releasing the control of the experience not related to calmness and tranquility to open a space for the current emotions. To take care of these emotions that sometimes hinder our connection with the practice, it is necessary to integrate the current situations during the practices and recognize the feelings that emerge to embrace them with consciousness and clarity. Doing so will be easier to find other alternatives with mindfulness practices for those who cannot connect with the sitting or lying practices.
down practices until different reflections and conclusions that showed a change in the T.J. 18/04/22.

Considering mindful movements as mindfulness practices were important to diversify the quiet, sitting or lying practices. After some reflections made on the interventions in the practices, the practitioner decided to construct a paper boat to develop a breathing practice. During the construction of the boat, the practitioner did not say that it was a mindfulness practice. However, the students needed to be mindful of the moment because some instructions to construct the boat were in English. As it was the first different practice from the rest, the practitioner noticed that the students were engaged when he expressed in the O6 that “most of the students were excited about decorating their boats before the breathing practice which demonstrated that the students were really engaged on the constructing activity. It is important to clarify that decoration was not planned in the session”. At the end of the boat construction, there was a formal mindfulness practice that involved watching their breathing in their bellies through the boats. As it was not a long lying down practice, the practitioner found out that “some students took a different position from the asked, but it did not hinder the activity” (taken from O6). This entire session helped them to be mindful of their activities using from informal mindfulness practices to formal ones.

Reflection was, indeed, a key element during the implementation that allowed the practitioner to recognize the practice weaknesses and look for strategies to improve them. When reflecting on different aspects of daily actions, especially classes, it enriched the personal and professional aspects that directly affected every action in daily life. This reflection was an insight to recognize that mindfulness must not always be a quiet practice. Therefore, mindfulness practices were explored by constructing a paper boat and watching a video, which was an insight into the mindfulness research. This insight suggests exploring a bit more how informal practices are an option for further exploration in academic settings.

**Students’ Response**
One crucial aspect to report the students’ responses was the observations written after the interventions. Indeed, it helped to watch how the practices were guided and how students reacted to them. Despite the students had already practised contemplative practices, the connection between the practitioner and the students was not given yet. This connection was a limitation at the beginning since, in socializing exercises, most students did not want to participate. However, the teacher Lina and the practitioner, when socializing, shared their experiences which built a confident, comfortable, and safe space. This aspect was reported in the O1 when the practitioner expresses that

When the time for sharing the experiences arrived, none wanted to talk about it. The teacher Lina started to share her own experience and then I did, which created a safe and comfortable environment to share their experiences. Then, the students who did the practice shared their experiences with openness and gratitude for the practice ending with thrilling hearts.

The creation of a mutual relationship based on confidence and respect also contributed positively to the results of Wand and Liu (2016) since students could share and exchange their thoughts and ideas without judgements. Mindfulness practices were indeed an important part of the students’ response throughout the process since many of them, in different practices, expressed feelings of calmness and relaxation. This reflection was also given by Schwind et al. (2016) when they mentioned that brief, but constant mindfulness practices helped the students to decrease their anxiety and stress in school. This process was also connected to calm and relaxing feelings. In the T.J. 28/03/22, the practitioner wrote how these feelings were evidenced in the mindful listening practice using the ukulele when mentioning that

*A pesar de que me he tomado más de lo pensado para enseñar este tema, se ha sentido muy gratificante el poder experimentar las prácticas y la participación de los estudiantes y de la profesora Lina. Su participación ha dado cuenta de que las*
prácticas han permitido entrar en estados de relajación lo que permite una mejor conexión.\textsuperscript{21} 

The students’ responses were also strongly influenced by the musical instruments and expertise that the practitioner had with them. The previous quotation was an example of a positive response to a musical instrument that the practitioner had experienced. However, during the interventions, it also happened that the practitioner used an instrument that he lacked experience with as shown before in the professional growth. This experience is evidenced in the O3 where the practitioner mentions the negative sensation that he was experimenting with and how this feeling was projected to the students.

During the practice, there were a lot of interruptions that hindered the fluency and development of the practice... I used an instrument to explore our listening, but I did not have vast experience with it. I also felt uncomfortable and disconnected from the practice at the very beginning and this feeling was transmitted to the students.

Certainly, the experience that the practitioner had during the intervention, whether positive or negative, influenced the students’ experience. As the mindfulness practices were open to adjustments and changes depending on the experience, it helped to explore different musical instruments, resources, and practices through mindfulness. The students were strongly curious about every intervention, which increased their enrolment in the project. As pointed out by Moafian et al. (2019), when learners are open to the experience, they are likely to embrace changes and engage with the process, which may increase memory. The O3 is an example of this phenomenon when the practitioner says that

I took the ukulele to the intervention, and I noticed that the students were highly excited and curious about the practice. When the teacher Lina saw the ukulele, she took her

\textsuperscript{21} Although this topic has taken more time than expected, it has felt gratifying to experiment the practices and the students and teacher Lina’s participation. Their participation has showed that the practices has allowed to experiment relaxing states, which facilitates a better connection.
drum out and told me that she wanted to use it during the practice for a better listening experience, especially when listening to our hearts. When the practice started, I noticed that most of the students were connected to the exercise, despite the noise that other grades were doing.

During the intervention of the O3, the keywords to work with were the verbs listen, feel, listen to the ukulele, and listen to the heart. The engagement that the students had, made that the vocabulary could be easily integrated by the novel experience and the constant repetition. Mixing these last elements provided a base practice that the students constantly asked for to practice the vocabulary of mindful breathing while using the breathing ball. The unexpected integration of the breathing ball practice to unplanned breathing ball interventions is evidenced in the O8 when the practitioner expresses that “Despite the breathing ball was not part of the practice, one student brought it to the circle and asked if they would use it during the practice. I allowed her to guide a mindful breathing practice where everyone participated”. As the breathing ball was colourful and interactively novel, the students liked to use it frequently.

Another important aspect of this implementation was the students’ reactions and attitudes towards linguistic activities. It is important to mention that students had different English levels because some of them came from other schools. During the interventions, there were some students that got the idea of the English activities while others struggle to understand. This situation was evidenced in the O7 during the audio-visual material related to mindfulness practices. In this observation, the practitioner directly mentions that

Some of the students became disinterested during the video, especially those who did not participate in the English questions... I confirmed that one of those students did not understand anything because of his English level... However, there were also students who responded to the questions when they read them at first.

Despite in some moments of the interventions some students participated more than others, the socializing part was an opportunity for improvement for everyone. Thanks to the
relationship and connection that emerged between the practitioner and the students, some of the students who had a low English level participated in the sharing moments. This trust reminded them that there were no judgements in their answers. An example of this event is evidenced in the O8 when the practitioner says that

> When we got to the socializing part, I noticed that most of them liked to share their answers regardless of whether their answers were right or wrong. When some of the answers were wrong, I noticed they experienced a surprising feeling when they realized of the mistake in their answers, which helped to increase their motivation.

The confidence and trust increased students' participation, which helped them practice the structures and vocabulary presented. This process also enriched the students' interventions since the advanced students in the English language helped their classmates in the meaning or pronunciation of words. Despite these interventions lack of linguistic practice, the students' reactions were positive because they felt comfortable when participating and did not feel excluded if their participation had linguistic mistakes. Also, some of them encouraged and supported their classmates when trying to give an answer or socialize their practice experience, which made these activities much warmer and safe. However, there were two students who expressed their dislike of English activities, one example is shown above in the O7. Considering the new students and challenges faced, the linguistic activities were well welcome by most students, which was a positive and encouraging reaction to the development of this project.

**Linguistic Outcomes**

This section will present the linguistic outcomes obtained during this project considering the expected results set at the beginning of this process. To expose the linguistic results of the process, this section is divided into strengths and weaknesses that were experienced in the interventions.

*Strengths*
Modelling actions for introducing vocabulary makes it easier for students to get the idea. Indeed, Rambe (2019) states that TPR is an appropriate way to teach new vocabulary since it is modelled in a real scenario. The repetition and modulation of the vocabulary elicit the constant use and comprehension thereof. Using TPR to present the vocabulary of the sessions helped the students to understand what it meant by associating the context, the experience, and the action. This statement is evidenced in the O1 when the practitioner expresses that

> The breathing ball helped to process and internalize the actions of “Breath in, Breath out, hold, and relax” ... There was a student who proposed to use our hands to simulate the breathing ball for those who did not have it, which helped us to connect and follow the instructions of the guide.

**Figure 6.**

_Sitting practice of breathing using the breathing ball._
The breathing ball was of great help because it modelled the vocabulary of the session and helped the students to associate the vocabulary with future activities. When the students could guide the breathing practice, they felt excited about using the vocabulary and the ball. As the O1 shows it, “...the students demonstrated great interest when using the ball and guiding the practice”. This first experience with the students using TPR was positive in terms of how to present the vocabulary in each session since the students related to the movement and the linguistic outcome. According to Saehu et al. (2017), TPR is ideal to work with primary students because they can use the vocabulary instead of listening and repeating. This statement is also evidenced at the end of the O1 when the practitioner states that “some of them were shy when guiding the practice because it was in English, however, everyone did it with good pronunciation...”
and disposition”. This whole exercise helped them to freely practice the words and actions with no judgements or consequences. An example of this experience is evidenced in the first session when a student guided the mindful practice with the breathing ball and the rest of the class had to repeat the actions with her:

**First session (video 5):**

- **Student A:** “Breath in”  
- **Rest of the class:** “Breath in”  
- **Student A:** “Hold”  
- **Rest of the class:** “Hold”  
- **Student A:** “Breath out”  
- **Rest of the class:** “Breath out”  
- **Student A:** “And relax”  
- **Rest of the class:** “And relax”

Another important element for the linguistic outcome was repetition which was also useful for the practice of the linguistic structures and vocabulary during the sessions. When using the linguistic elements from previous sessions, it was evidenced that the students got used to it and became natural to use it. The O8 is an example that when, after many implementations of mindful breathing, the students wanted to guide the breathing ball practice although this practice was not planned for that intervention. In this observation, the practitioner expresses that “despite the breathing ball was not part of the practice, one student brought it to the circle and asked if they will use it during the practice. I allowed her to guide a mindful breathing practice where everyone participated”. Repetition was, indeed, a key point for them to integrate the structures and vocabulary while they guided the mindfulness practices.

The repetition of structures in different activities was key to not only focusing on the same action to integrate the structure and vocabulary but also in different activities that support
the speaking skill. The use of the same vocabulary and structures in writing activities supported the integration thereof in speaking activities. This experience allowed the students to remember the correct words rather than the complete structure to express their feelings. An example of this exercise is given in the O4 when working on the structures and vocabulary to express the feelings in past.

**Figure 7.**

*Controlled writing activity to express emotions.*

This practice encouraged the students to use the vocabulary presented while they used the verb in past. This writing exercise helped the students to practice the appropriate structure to express their feelings for future speaking activities. This idea was based on Namaziandostet al. (2018) who state that writing skills support speaking skills through the practice of language structure and vocabulary. Therefore, this grammatical aspect enriches the speaking skill since students can correctly express the order of the sentences having in mind the writing process. An example of the previously mentioned is shown in the seventh session where a student responds to the question How do you feel? asked by the practitioner:

**Seventh session (video 1):**

**Question:** How do you feel?

**Student A:** “I feeaal.... Happy”.

*Note. Guapacha, D. (2022).*
Challenges

One of the biggest challenges in this process was the correct articulation of English with the mindfulness practices. As mentioned before in the professional growth section, this articulation was hindered by the unconfident feeling in the articulation of English and lack of experience as a mindfulness facilitator. This last aspect was also a matter of reflection since the practitioner got involved as a participant in mindfulness practices, which affected the role of mindfulness facilitator with linguistic objectives. This experience is evidenced in the O9 when it mentions that

During the practice, I asked them if they liked or not what they smelled, and the students’ responses were to use their thumbs up or down. Teacher Lina always used the structure to express likes and dislikes, which helped me remember the linguistic objective with the students... The students’ linguistic production was limited for my forgetting in the linguistic practice.

Figure 8.

*Sense mindfulness practice focuses on the smelling sense.*
This forgetting in the linguistic practice encouraged some of the students to use their body language or incomplete sentences to produce what was expected. Moreover, the lack of demanding linguistic outcomes limited the student’s production. This point was also a matter of reflection since the practitioner evidenced good participation and use of linguistic structures from some students. The T.J 28/03/22 shows this lack of linguistic demand when expressing that “*tuve muchísima participación lo cual me dejó pensativo del modo en que estoy integrando el inglés. Sentí que he estado subestimando a los chicos y por ello no me he atrevido a hablar o articular más inglés durante la práctica*”. This experience was crucial because it helped to look in-depth at the English level of the students to determine adjustments for future implementations.

The different English level of the students was also a limitation in the linguistic outcomes. Despite the institution is a bilingual school, some students were new in the project implementation year. Therefore, there was a gap between the new students and the old ones. In the O7, the practitioner reveals this gap between the students when they were watching an English video from Headspace. As this video was not with subtitles and was in English, some students reacted negatively to it. The practitioner expresses this when he says that “when we moved on to the video, some students expressed their dislike and fear of watching the video in English and, unfortunately, without subtitles due to an unexpected issue”. This event happened at the beginning of the video which was a preparation for the writing task. When the class got to this point, the practitioner noticed a huge gap between the students as is expressed in the O7.

Some of the students became disinterested during the video, especially those who did not participate in English questions... I confirmed that one of those students did not

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22 See footnote 2
understand anything because of his English level.... However, there were also students who responded to the questions when they read them at first.

This gap was a considerable challenge when planning and articulating English into the interventions since it was, sometimes, demanding for some students and easy for others. This situation increased the practitioner’s unconfident feeling which, along with the facilitator’s forgetting role, hindered the project’s expected results in terms of linguistic outcomes.

This section presented three different and crucial aspects for this project. Among them, it is evident that there were always both positive and negative experiences in terms of professional growth, students’ responses, and linguistic outcomes. Despite mindfulness practices helped to create a friendly and comfortable environment, the linguistic outcomes were limited by aspects such as confidence, students’ English level, and practitioner’s attitudes and actions. These challenging aspects enriched the professional growth of the practitioner through reflection, which helped to identify these aspects and take actions to improve them. The invitation of this whole section is that, although challenges are always present in projects, reflection can clear the sight to take a better path depending on the goal.

This project integrated different aspects of the human realm to study the implication of contemplative states in academic settings. These human aspects have been studied in academic settings to explore how emotions and thoughts may affect the learning and teaching process. One example of these studies was made by Cheng and Zhang (2020) when exploring how traits of emotional intelligence (EQ) have an effect on L2 language performance. One of their findings reveals that self-control was key in high emotional moments to regulate students’ states in speaking performances. As emotions and EQ is still under study, authors like Charoensukmonkol (2014) have explored how mindfulness meditation can contribute to EQ development. This author concludes that mindfulness practitioners can achieve mindful states, which helped them to recognize emerging emotions and manage them. This conclusion showed a relation between mindfulness and EQ since the participants could address stressful emotions...
with mindful responses. Considering that mindfulness practices influence emotional intelligence, this classroom project integrated human aspects such as (self) regulation of behaviour, thoughts, emotions, and feelings. This integration facilitated an open sight to observe how mindfulness practices influenced the achievement of the project’s objectives, planning and implementation of sessions, and practitioner and students’ responses during the sessions.
Conclusions

This classroom project intended to implement contemplative practices to promote the use of speaking skills through controlled oral practices. This project was carried out at the Alfonso Jaramillo Gutiérrez school, La villa campus. The participants were 22 students in fifth grade with experience in contemplative practices. The implementation of this project lasted tenth sessions given twice per week. During these sessions, the results of the project were collected through teacher’s journals, observations, and students’ artifacts. The results show that mindfulness practices, despite it was not meant to analyse their effects in the classroom, created a calmer and more comfortable environment where the students could participate in the speaking activities. Although these were great benefits for the development of the project, the linguistic outcomes were hindered by different factors that emerged in the process.

Throughout the sessions, the relationship between the students and the practitioner strengthened which was of benefit for the speaking activities. Mindfulness played a key role in the relationship and class environment since the students had had comfortable experiences with contemplative practices. Despite the practitioner and the students did not know each other at the beginning of the implementation, the like of being and experiencing mindfulness was almost always present in the students. This attitude allowed us to increase the confidence to share our experiences with others and participate in English without the fear of being judged. This class environment was of great help for the controlled linguistic activities and, indeed, for the different mindfulness practices. However, the mindfulness practices had to be adjusted based on the schedule of the students. As presented in the results, on Tuesdays the students were more active because they just entered from the break. Promoting and implementing quiet mindfulness practices was a challenge because they did not get concentrated. Reflecting on this situation helped to identify the root causes of their distracted behaviour and look for active mindfulness practices that fit in the moment.
To implement mindfulness practices, it is crucial to have experience with them. Before implementing this project, a mindfulness practitioner told me that we cannot give what we do not have. Indeed, every mindfulness practice had to be experienced by the practitioner to know how to guide the students. Moreover, the use of resources during mindfulness practices is also crucial for the correct implementation. As shown in the results, the use of a different musical instrument, with which the practitioner had no experience, can negatively affect the experience of the practice for both the practitioner and participants. Having experience in mindfulness with specific practices changes the process and result of the experience. This conclusion not only integrated resources but also the role of the practitioner since it was evidenced that there is a huge difference between a mindfulness practitioner and a facilitator. During mindfulness practices, it is important that the facilitator has clear his role to not engage in the practice as a participant.

Even though mindfulness practices were important for this project, the linguistic outcomes were equally essential. This project had in mind that the participants were in a bilingual school where the English language was as essential as any other subject. However, the English level of the participants was different showing a gap between the students who studied in the school before and the new students. TPR was a methodology that allowed the participants to comprehend the English instructions and new vocabulary for both. This method was key to presenting and remembering actions and structures that were presented class by class. Because TPR integrates physical movement, the students could easily understand the meaning and use the vocabulary to, for example, guide mindfulness practices. TPR along with writing exercises encouraged the students to use what was taught in speaking activities during the sessions. Nevertheless, the structures to express, for example, likes and dislikes or feelings were not completely used since the students were more likely to use isolated words like sad, like, or even body language. This limited linguistic production was affected by factors such as the carelessness of the practitioner, the mindfulness teaching inexperience, the articulation of
English in the session, unexpected situations, and some distracted behaviour on specific days during the interventions.

The challenges faced in this project made this process enriching despite the linguistic results. The results of this project showed that the objectives were not fully achieved by the aspects presented in the results. It does not imply that the speaking skill was not trained and developed but that it was improved a little bit. Despite the structures presented were not used in the speaking activities, the students were able to understand the questions and express their likes, dislikes, and emotions with specific words, especially those who had a low English level. Referring to the mindfulness practices, it was noticed that they were of great interest and motivation for the students, especially those who integrated blankets, pillows, the use of senses and musical instruments. Moreover, the dynamism of the practices kept them engaged in every intervention since they wanted to know what they were going to do. Being open to change was key to connecting and constructing a safe and comfortable environment where the students felt safe to commit mistakes or guide practices.

Although this project focused on the students’ experiences of mindfulness and English, it also had effects on the practitioner’s experience. During this process, the practitioner, who was deeply involved in the practices, could recognize different beliefs, attitudes, and emotions that hindered the main objectives of the project. The recognition of these aspects, which is strongly connected to mindfulness in terms of being aware of the moment integrating emotions, feelings, and thoughts, facilitated reflective moments where the practitioner could find solutions to the obstacles faced. One of these obstacles was the unconfident feeling when planning and implementing the articulation of mindfulness and English. This feeling led the practitioner to experience anxiety when thinking about mindfulness practices and linguistic activities to achieve the project objectives. Even though it was considered difficult and uncertain at the beginning, recognizing, and reflecting on how the sessions were given, what types of activities were used in the session, how the students responded to them, and how this response
contributed to the objective achievements, increased the confidence of the practitioner and enriched the articulation process.

Confidence and experiences are the foundations for an appropriate project process. It is essential to mention that the inexperience as a mindfulness facilitator and the lack of research in mindfulness articulated with English to develop specific skills, were two main reasons for the practitioner to feel lost in the first sessions. Moreover, the unexpected situations and the students’ distracted behaviour also played a key role in breaking down the conception of quiet mindfulness practices and attitudes. Despite these situations were challenging, the persistence of the mindfulness practices made a difference when, for example, noisy and loudly moments arrived during the activities. As it was presented in the results, the constant use of the bell became a sweet reminder of coming back to the present moment. Because ringing the bell was not in charge of the practitioner but of students, they were able to recognise the specific moments where the bell was needed. Releasing the control of the whole class for the students to guide practices and take roles in different activities, built a shanga. As it was presented above, this concept describes a community of practice that encourages mindful actions with equal respect and tolerance. In academic words, these moments were student-centred since the students were key to their mindfulness and linguistic learning process.
Implications and Recommendations

This classroom project explored mindfulness in an academic setting to promote the speaking skills of the English Language. It is important to mention that the school where the project was carried out, is open to research and different projects that can improve and promote human values and wellbeing. Thanks to this openness, the teacher in charge of the group, where the project was executed, had implemented contemplative practices in her classes. Therefore, the students felt excited about this project for their previous experiences in the contemplative practices of the teacher Lina. These events and people made this project to be easily executed in terms of acceptance and embracement despite being a public school. The acceptance of similar projects in public schools may vary depending on the openness that directors, coordinators, students, and teachers may have. Also, the experience of students may be different since, probably, they have not had contemplative experiences in their personal lives or in academic settings.

For future research and exploration of mindfulness in academic settings, it is highly recommended that researchers have experience with mindfulness to know what it is about and how it works. This experience can be accompanied by mindfulness books that can help them to explore different practices in their own experience to share them in implementations. For not mindfulness facilitators, which was my case, it is important to have the guidance of mindfulness facilitators or psychologists focused on contemplative therapies or implementations to know what to do in specific situations that may be challenging such as a child crying after a mindfulness practice. These practices, sometimes, may guide students to remember hard situations that they go or went through and, with no resources or tools to manage them, can be an awful experience. Again, this project had the great support of Teacher Lina who has been practising mindfulness since a long time ago and has had experience as a mindfulness facilitator. This support, indeed, change the route of some practices that missed instructions, words, guidance, and/or individual intervention with some students. Moreover, the advisor and
a psychologist friend were also present to provide important instructions on working with children and mindfulness.

Integrating different mindfulness practices can increase motivation and engagement during the interventions. To be open to change or adjust a practice is essential for participants to explore deeply the experience of mindfulness while breaking down barriers and misconceptions about it. This flexible attitude is important for participants who are often distracted or trying to call the attention of the class. However, it is important to reflect and integrate the idea that some students will not feel comfortable in the practices, or they perceive them as boring, and it is okay. Respecting the decisions of participants is a way to create a comfortable and safe environment. Bearing in mind that mindfulness can be applied to any action increases the creativity of the practices. It means that, if consciousness is within the action, it can be a mindfulness practice. However, it is important to consider that, if the practice integrates a musical instrument or object, make sure to have experience with it or you may feel lost or disconnected from the practice.

On the other hand, to articulate English and mindfulness practices, it is key to have in mind the linguistic objectives of the class. Exploring contemplative practices in an academic setting is exciting, although it can blind the sight. During the implementations, it is important to have clear the linguistic outcomes that are expected in the session and project, to let space and encourage the participation of participants in linguistic activities. To develop linguistic activities, it is important to recognize the general English level of the students to know whom you need to pay attention to. Moreover, it is important to ingrate a methodology to present vocabulary and actions for participants to get an idea of the practice. TPR was used in this project considering the age of the participants and the results of this method were excellent. However, you may find another method depending on the age, interest, and attitude of participants. Depending on the English level of participants, it is important to consider if repetition needs to be used constantly or partially for the correct use of the vocabulary and language structures. This repetition may be
supported by other skills such as listening, using the vocabulary in every or most interventions, or writing by practising the structure and words presented.

Finally, mindfulness may benefit English classes since it helps to share and construct a space of inner exploration and support. In speaking activities, it may be easier for students to participate and commit mistakes without feeling judged or unsafe. Therefore, mindfulness could be articulated in English considering the skill to be developed, activities to support this development, and the objectives set. For future research, it is recommended to keep exploring how mindfulness may benefit speaking performances to expand the literature on this concern.

Moreover, it would be interesting to know if mindfulness may support the development of other skills such as writing and reading. Last but not least, this process also showed an impact on my teaching expertise since I could be aware of the limitations that I was setting on the articulation of English and mindfulness. Moreover, the use of the bell was conceived for the whole class as a sign to stop and return to the present moment, which improved the class environment. It is also suggested to explore how mindfulness contributes to the teaching process both in the classroom and out of it. This exploration will contribute to the literature on mindfulness and L2 learning and teaching while enriching the state of the art of contemplative practices in Colombian education.
References


https://doi.org/10.1080/10478400701598298


https://doi.org/10.1080/23311908.2019.1609242


Appendices

Appendix A: Teacher Journal

In this appendix, you will find the journals written in every session given during this project and the different spaces where the practitioner could reflect upon this implementation. These spaces are related to advising sessions, lectures, and classes.

Link: https://1drv.ms/w/s!Ai4JzIIXj5OhgR9m7aJzFkGTLBYU?e=XAqM9f

Appendix B: Observations

In this appendix, you will find the observations taken from session 1 to session 10. In these observation formats, you will find the students’ responses and reactions towards the mindfulness practices or linguistic outcomes given during the sessions. Most observations have photos and pictures from the interventions.

Link: https://1drv.ms/u/s!Ai4JzIIXj5OhgRyS-4aVweeIL_U?e=VphTQX

Appendix C: Photos and videos compilation

In this appendix, you will find every photo and video taken from the sessions. Some interventions may have only videos while others only photos. These photos and videos cannot be used and/or shared without the authorization of the student’ parents.

Link: https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1vvHfhdQWwNdp11yrE3grgZoL0jojZ4Y?usp=sharing