Diverse approaches to ‘mindfulness’
Introduction

While exploring diverse ways of teaching Religious Education in Europe, one of the most striking discoveries was that in different European countries there is, arising independently from each other a strong movement of enhancing ‘mindfulness’ in state funded schools, not only in Religious Education.

Our READY partner, the University of Aberdeen, even offers a quite well accepted Master Programme in mindfulness. Dr Graeme Nixon gives information on this below, pages 3-10.

Katharina Sigler, teacher trainee of the Staatliches Seminar für Didaktik und Lehrerbildung (Gymnasium) in Tübingen / Germany, used and reflected elements of the mindfulness approach in the context of a Spanish course. She wrote an award-winning research paper including teaching suggestions whose abstract can be read on pages 11-20. Katharina will be happy to give more information or to mail the complete paper on demand.

On June 1\textsuperscript{st}, 2017, during a READY learning event in Tübingen Katharina and Graeme had the opportunity to exchanges views on mindfulness which are documented in pages 20-XX. This conversation was joined by Uta Martina Hauf, teacher educator for catholic Religious education who has experience with meditation exercises in RE and Dr Christof Schilling, teacher educator for ethics and philosophy, who has a broad and daily experience in practicing yoga for himself.
Studying mindfulness at Aberdeen University

https://prezi.com/mk7casd1dwbs/mindfulness-for-empowerment/

https://prezi.com/mrrhdoppdt3g/mindfulness-medical-humanities/

Folie 1

Mindfulness in Context(s)

1. The philosophical and social context
1. The pedagogical and professional context
The Sea of Faith
Was once, too, at the full, and round earth’s shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle furled.
But now I only hear
Its melancholy, long, withdrawing roar,
Retreating, to the breath
Of the night-wind, down the vast edges drear
And naked shingles of the world.

Ah, love, let us be true
To one another! for the world, which seems
To lie before us like a land of dreams,
So various, so beautiful, so new,
Hath really neither joy, nor love, nor light,
Nor certitude, nor peace, nor help for pain;
And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle and flight,
Where ignorant armies clash by night.        (Matthew Arnold, 
Dover Beach 1867)

Secularisation and the move to privatised spirituality in Kincardine O’Neil

Secularisation (Bruce)
Decline in:
1. power of religious institutions;
2. popularity involvement in religious institutions and activities;
3. plausibility of religious beliefs.
Folie 5

Power of Religious Institutions;
• Impotence of churches re blasphemy, social mores (gambling, sexuality), political agendas, sabbatarianism;
• Absence of clerical representation in Scots Parliament and Welsh Assembly;
• House of Lords reform.

Other examples?

Folie 6

Micro-narratives come to the fore.
This leads to greater individualism (and greater uncertainty)

"The challenge that faces us is to separate the basic principles that might help to guide us through what has been called the moral maze from the kind of absolute systems that claim to know the right answer to every moral dilemma that faces us. Our era is characterised by discordant voices and competing claims, all asserting their right to teach the rest of us how to live and what values to hold" (Holloway 1999).

Folie 7

From belief cornershop... ...to belief hypermarket
"The madman jumped into their midst and pierced them with his eyes. Where is God?' he cried; 'I will tell you. We have killed him -- you and I. All of us are his murderers. But how did we do this? How could we drink up the sea? Who gave us this sponge to wipe away entire horizons? What were we doing when we unchained the earth from its sun? Where is it moving now? Where are we moving? Away from all sure? Are we not plunging continually? Backward, sideward, forward, in all directions? Is there still any up or down? Are we not straying, as through an infinite nothing? Do we not feel the breath of empty space? Has it not become colder?"

Nietzsche
The drive to connectivity (but with what?)

Where is the Life we have lost in living?
Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge?
Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?
(T.S Eliot, The Rock)

Living in the modern panopticon?

And we are here as on a darkling plain
Swept with confused alarms of struggle
and flight
Matthew Lipman’s paradigm shift in education:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Standard Paradigm</th>
<th>Reflective Paradigm (education as inquiry)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Education = transmission of knowledge to those who don't know from those who do</td>
<td>1. Education = outcome of participation in a teacher guided community of inquiry where the goal is good judgement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Our knowledge of the world is unambiguous, unmysterious and unequivocal</td>
<td>2. Students are stirred to think about the world when it is revealed that our knowledge of it is ambiguous and mysterious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Knowledge is spread over non-overlapping subjects</td>
<td>3. Subjects/disciplines overlap and are not exhaustive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The teacher has an authoritative role</td>
<td>4. The teacher is fallible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. An educated mind is a well-stocked mind</td>
<td>5. The goal is not acquisition of information but to grasp the relationships between subjects</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Mindful Learning (Ellen Langer)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mindful</th>
<th>Mindless</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Actively engaged in present</td>
<td>Automatons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aware of context and multiple perspectives</td>
<td>Stuck in a rigid perspective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drawing new distinctions</td>
<td>Rely on distinctions made in the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guided by rules and routines</td>
<td>Governed by rules and routines</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

16th Century

- REFORMATION
- LOSS OF EPistemological HIERARCHIES
- DEVELOPMENT OF Democratic, SCIENTIFIC CONSCIOUSNESS
- Protestant NEED to EXEMPLIFY grace
- CAPITALISM AND MATERIALISM
- SECULARISATION AND LOSS OF TRADITIONAL MEANINGS, TECHNOPOLY AND INDIVIDUALISM

21st Century

- INCREASING KNOWLEDGE OF ALTERNATIVE TRADITIONS
- SECULAR MINDFULNESS
- THE POSTMODERN DILEMMA
The daily use of digital media seems to be much more a matter of course than for example in Germany. So it is not amazing that even the mindfulness programme is conceptualised as a course alternating between E-learning and practicing mindfulness in real life situations and group settings. This kind of blended learning enables persons from very different professional backgrounds to participate in the programme.

Graeme Nixon also recently published an academic article about the Aberdeen mindfulness programme with colleagues:
Finally, many British schools try to make mindfulness part of their school life:

https://mindfulnessinschools.org/

https://www.facebook.com/rtенews/videos/1564738796888450/
My subjects: Spanish, French and Latin

About Me: I started my first job at the Evangelische Firstwald-Gymnasium in Kusterdingen near Tübingen last September 2016 (www.gymnasium-kusterdingen.de). There I teach pupils at the ages from 11 to 18 years.

During my teacher training at the Staatliche Seminar für Didaktik und Lehrerbildung (Gymnasien) Tübingen, I discovered Mindfulness thanks to a friend who offered Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) for us trainees with the aim to find out if it helps to reduce the level of stress while we are teaching. This training changed my attitude towards life. I feel more relaxed, positive and healthy and I know better what is important for me in life. That’s the reason why I want to practice it with pupils.

During my “Referendariat” I also wrote a research paper on “Writing as a means to ready oneself. Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction and Identity/Self-Discovery in Spanish Class, Based on Autobiographical Writing /Grade 10, 15-16 years old)”

Not only since then have I been really interested in a dialogue about Mindfulness with other people.

If you are interested or would like to have full access to my research paper on teaching mindfulness in Spanish classes please contact me: katharina.sigler@gmail.com
Abstract

1. Introduction

In the context of the German "Referendariat" (18 month teacher training), the candidates have to plan, realize, and reflect on a teaching module of about 12 lessons. It should consider innovative, pedagogical, and didactic elements. According to this, the following teaching proposal about the combination of mindfulness, identity, and self-discovery autobiographical writing in a foreign language, was realized in a Spanish class.

The starting point was the autobiographical writing in a foreign language, here Spanish, combined with the education to self-regulation. Two goals were central in this unit: firstly the development of linguistic competence itself, especially writing competence, and secondly social competence. This means self-reflection, self-discovery, and personality development. The first aim was accompanied by mindfulness exercises for the specific purpose of training writing competence. In the second aim, however, the mindfulness exercises did not pursue a specific purpose but focused on reliving experiences without any evaluation.

2. What is Mindfulness?

Mindfulness is an innate capacity of the mind to be aware of the present moment in a non-judgmental way. (Here practiced in a neutral ideological way.) This means observing while not interacting, accepting not judging, being open-minded, loving yourself and being oriented in experiences. You can consider mindfulness as a lifestyle or an attitude towards your own life.

3. Why Mindfulness at School?

3.1 Opportunities

Why should pupils learn mindfulness at school? Leisure comes from the Greek 'skholē' and means free time. In the antiquity, school was really a place of free time because learning was a luxury. Nowadays however, pupils are confronted with constant stress and pressure to perform. The density of stimuli have increased a lot
as well. It is mostly reflected in constant interruptions in daily life because of social networks, videogames, and advertisements. Unfortunately, concentration decreases constantly at school, too. Training in mindfulness can help pupils to focus on one thing. But not only a better attention span and focus are positive effects of Mindfulness Training, there is also other neuroscientific evidence for benefits such as enhanced awareness, emotional regulation, an expanded sense of identity, and greater sense of connections to others (emotional intelligence, empathy). Other factors affected by Mindfulness Training are a global well-being, positivity, engagement, resilience, creativity and innovation, rational decision making, cognitive flexibility, and to put it in a nutshell: social competence. So Mindfulness Training can help pupils to discover themselves and develop their personalities. In autobiographical writing, they get to know a good medium for extending their reflections by writing them down. Just in the combination of cognitive and social learning lies the key of an increased teachability of and motivation for learning.

3.2 Risks

Besides the positive effects of Mindfulness Training, we can't forget the risks of a functionalization of Mindfulness at school. The objective would go completely off the theme if we misuse meditation and Mindfulness to optimize the system and the efficiency of stressed pupils at school or, on another level, employees in big companies. That's why we have to create a space without evaluation and we have to focus on the well-being of the pupils, the interpersonal relationship between the pupils, and the class itself.

Another risk can be that intimacy is not protected enough. Sometimes you have to handle difficult situations and biographies of suffering pupils. The most important thing is to know what to do in that case. There are a lot of things which are out of the teacher's area of responsibility. As a teacher you have to know who you can ask for help.

4. Why Mindfulness Training in a Foreign Language?

Which advantages could result from the combination of learning a foreign language and Mindfulness Training? We restructure the world while we learn a new language. So, why not use the foreign language for a new concept? There are several advantages. First of all, we usually don't have an affective attitude to a new language. But if we begin to talk about our own identity, our feelings and our inner thoughts, the foreign language can become a more personal thing. We develop a subjective relation to it. Besides, our pupils will feel like persons who are held in high regard. They will learn more easily because they can talk in class about themselves. What is more, in foreign countries we are often confronted with situations where we get to know each other and have to present ourselves in the respective foreign language. That's why there are a lot of possibilities for creating authentic talk- and writing opportunities. The self creates a new identity as a multilingual subject.
Another interesting observation is the fact that the foreign language is often not yet accepted as an own, personal, and affective language. Thus, it is easier to talk about feelings, emotions, and reflections. Pupils will learn the vocabulary which helps them to talk about these new discourses.

If you are interested in knowing more about the concrete realization of these topics you are kindly invited to contact me or read the following overview of this teaching module.
### Einheit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tag</th>
<th>Stunde</th>
<th>Datum</th>
<th>Stundenthema</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Do 3./4.</td>
<td>15.10.15</td>
<td>Planungsphase: Narración autobiográfica: Mi vida – etapas o personas importantes en mi vida: Methoden der Ideenfindung und Strukturierung.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sprachliche Mittel 1: Wortschatzarbeit, Wiederholung/Vertiefung der tiempos pasados.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr 2.</td>
<td>16.10.15</td>
<td>Texterstellungsphase: Una autobiografía</td>
<td>Förderung der Kompetenz, inhaltlich wie sprachlich kohärente Texte zu verfassen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Textproduktion: Narración – Mi autobiografía.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Di 1.</td>
<td>20.10.15</td>
<td>Überarbeitungs-/Korrekturphase: Auto corrección</td>
<td>Schulung der Überarbeitungskompetenz und Autokorrektur.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sprachliche Mittel 2: Verbesserung des Stils, gerundio/ construcciones con infinitivo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do 3./4.</td>
<td>22.10.15</td>
<td>Planungsphase: ¿Quién soy yo? ¿Quién eres tú?</td>
<td>Schulung der Fremd- und Selbstwahrnehmung.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sprachliche Mittel 3: subjuntivo.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fr 2.</td>
<td>23.10.15</td>
<td>Texterstellungsphase: Contar la vida con fotos</td>
<td>Generisches Lernen: Modelltexte als Orientierung für eigene Schreibprodukte.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Textproduktion: Análisis – ¿Quién soy yo?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Di 1.</td>
<td>27.10.15</td>
<td>Überarbeitungs-/Korrekturphase: Evitar errores</td>
<td>Schulung von Strategien zur Fehlervermeidung.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do 3./4.</td>
<td>29.10.15</td>
<td>Planungsphase: Imaginar el futuro</td>
<td>Schulung der Reflexionskompetenz.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Sprachliche Mittel 4: Futur im Spanischen</td>
<td>Textproduktion: Imaginación – Mi futuro.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### 3.2.1 Die erste Doppelstunde: Mi vida

**Ziele:**


1. **Ritual:** Ankommen in der Fremdsprache: Achtsamkeitskalender (M1)

**AA:** Volved a leer vuestros apuntes y la hoja con el vocabulario útil (M2). Elegid de cada categoría las cinco expresiones que más os gusten y copiadlas en las tarjetas que os dará vuestra profesora (redactar chuletas).  

SuS üben das monologische Sprechen im geschützten Raum, indem sie drei Minuten ohne Unterbrechung über schöne Erlebnisse der letzten Woche in der Vergangenheit berichten und mindestens fünf der aufgeführten Redemittel benutzen, die der Partner bei Verwendung abhaken soll. Dann Rollenwechsel und Sicherung im Plenum durch Schülerpräsentation.

**Einstieg:** SuS verteilen sich so auf die Tische im Raum, dass jeder alleine sitzt. Den Einstieg

---

bildet eine mittlerweile ritualisierte dreiminütige Entspannungs- und Atemübung.

Überleitung: Tf 1: generar ideas: Durch die Konzentration auf sich selbst und das Einnehmen einer bequemen Position wird die Methode “Escritura automática” (M4) im Sinne Bretons zum Thema: “Mi vida” vorbereitet.
Reflektionsphase: SuS melden ihre Reaktionen und Einschätzungen zurück.

Tf 2: estructurar ideas: SuS sichten das Niedergeschriebene auf Schätze hin, indem sie Unbrauchbares streichen und gute Ideen oder Formulierungen anhand eines Zeitstrahls (M5) hierarchisieren und strukturieren. Bildimpulse dienen als Binnendifferenzierung bei Ideenarmut.

Tf 3: vocabulario individual: Parallel dazu legen sie einen individuellen Wortschatz (M6) an. (Wörterbücher liegen bereit)
Sicherung im Plenum (mdl): ¿Cuáles podrían ser etapas importantes en vuestras vidas hasta hoy en día?

ÜL: Vamos a ver cuáles son las etapas o personas importantes en la vida de Jorge Luis Borges.
Kurzer Lehrervortrag zu Borges und Hinführung zur Autobiographie.

Fokus liegt auf der Wiederholung, Anwendung und Festigung des Gebrauchs der Tempora. Umgang mit dem Text erfolgt in der darauffolgenden Stunde.

Bezug zum Anfangsritual: SuS üben nun das dialogische Sprechen (M2), indem sie einem Partner mündlich erzählen, was für sie wichtige Etappen oder Personen ihres Lebens sind. Dabei sollen sie verstärkt auf die richtige Verwendung der Zeiten achten. Partner soll unterbrechen und mindestens drei Fragen stellen.
Sicherung im Plenum
HA: Aufgabe 3: deberes (M7)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Español</th>
<th>Aleman</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>la respiración</td>
<td>die Atmung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ respirar</td>
<td>→ atmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la aspiración</td>
<td>das Einatmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ aspirar</td>
<td>→ einatmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la espiración</td>
<td>das Ausatmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ exhalar</td>
<td>→ ausatmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quedarse quieto, a</td>
<td>still bleiben</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>estar sentado, a</td>
<td>sitzen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentarse</td>
<td>sich setzen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentarse en el borde de una silla</td>
<td>auf der Stuhlkante sitzen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sentirse</td>
<td>sich fühlen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la sensación (cuerpo)</td>
<td>das Gefühl (körperliche Wahrnehmung)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el sentimiento (alma)</td>
<td>das Gefühl (seelisches Empfinden)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inmóvil</td>
<td>still</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la relajación</td>
<td>Entspannung</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ relajarse</td>
<td>→ sich entspannen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ estar relajado</td>
<td>→ entspannt sein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ descansar</td>
<td>→ sich ausruhen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>profundo, a</td>
<td>tief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>respirar profundamente</td>
<td>tief atmen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palmear</td>
<td>abklopfen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la mano</td>
<td>die Hand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la reflexion</td>
<td>Nachdenken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ reflexionar sobre algo</td>
<td>→ über etwas nachdenken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el pensamiento</td>
<td>der Gedanke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ pensar en</td>
<td>→ (nach) denken, an etwas denken</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la concentración</td>
<td>die Konzentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la atención</td>
<td>die Aufmerksamkeit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la consciencia</td>
<td>das Bewusstsein</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>→ la consciencia plena</td>
<td>→ die Achtsamkeit</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instálate en un lugar y en una posición muy agradable. Respira y expira profundamente y concéntrate en ti mismo.

Toma el bolígrafo y escribe rápidamente tus pensamientos. No levantes el bolígrafo del papel. Si no sabes qué escribir, traza una línea (zeichne eine Linie).

Escribe sobre etapas o personas importantes de tu vida.

Mi madre, mi padre, mi hermano, mis amigas, volleyball, mi nuevo equipo, Bundesliga, Meisterschaften, mi abuela y su comida ricísima, mis abuelos, mi otra abuela, mi hermano grande, el estrés del instituto es muy unoñig, halloween está por aquí, voy a mis amigas falsas, mein Ehrgeiz, mein Talent, mein Kern, mis deseos, mis viajes, Aurélie, Harthao, Doris, ich werde erwachsen, muy aburrida, dormir, el futuro va a ser mejor, divertida, Schmerzen, ich mach was drauβ, Little Mix, ich brauch immer neue Kopfhörer, Bogg va a ser anstrengend, Herausforderungen, Training, viajes, el amor, desafío
Mi vida:
Mira las fotos y añade las situaciones que te parezcan importantes para tu vida en la línea del tiempo.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Español</strong></th>
<th><strong>Alemán</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>amistad con alg.</td>
<td>mit jemandem Freundschaft schließen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>los años escolares</td>
<td>die Schulzeit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la infancia</td>
<td>die Kindheit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la juventud</td>
<td>die Jugend</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mono/a</td>
<td>süß (kind)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>desear atrás</td>
<td>zurück wünschen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comprensivo/a</td>
<td>verständnisvoll</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mudarse (de casa)</td>
<td>umziehen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deportivo/a</td>
<td>sportlich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la ambición</td>
<td>der Ehrgeiz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>acordarse de alc.</td>
<td>sich an etwas erinnern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cocer alc.</td>
<td>etwas backen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hoy en día</td>
<td>heutzeit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el príncipe azul</td>
<td>der Märchenprinz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>la comunión</td>
<td>die Kommunion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coleccionar momentos</td>
<td>Momente sammeln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dedicarse al bricolaje/hacer (a mano)</td>
<td>basteln</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dicho sea de paso</td>
<td>nebenbei bemerkt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maternas</td>
<td>mutterübereits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>el/la educador/a</td>
<td>der/die Erzieherin</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion about MINDFULNESS between
Dr Graeme Nixon, Katharina Sigler, Uta Hauf,
Dr Christof Schilling and Dr Peter Kliemann

June 1st, 2017 at the Staatliche Seminar für Didaktik
und Lehrerbildung (Gymnasien) Tübingen

There is an audio recording of the discussion. Selected statements will
be transcribed soon ...