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Haiku and Mindfulness for Teacher Education: A Discourse Analysis

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Abstract

Many teachers turn to mindfulness practice to deal with their stress, to develop reflexivity, and to improve their teaching efficacy. In addition, research indicates that teachers who practice mindfulness also may support their students' personal growth while helping them to learn. Writing haiku, a Japanese form of poetry, has been used in language, poetry, and nursing education to address the same issues, with the same goal and with similar results. This study was designed to investigate the discourses that teachers may encounter if they were to search for online resources regarding mindfulness practice or the writing of haiku. Employing discourse analysis, our analyses reveal that the texts pertaining to the two fields of endeavour share topics (catharsis) and discursive repertoires (experience, qualities practice), which are subdivided in more fine-grained repertoires (autobiography, affect, form, and minimalism). We present salient commonalities of the discursive resources of these two practices; and we conclude that the teaching of haiku and mindfulness should be integrated in teacher education.

Keywords: mindfulness, haiku, discourses, discourse analysis, interpretative repertoires, teacher education

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Introduction

Educators' Rising Interest in Mindfulness

Over the past decade, increasing numbers of educators have become familiar with the concept and practice of *mindfulness*, a process of simultaneously attending to internal and external experiences of the moment. Studies provide evidence for multiple positive effects that teachers receive from participation in mindfulness programs. For example, through the practice of mindfulness teachers and pre-service teachers can cope with stress better and develop their well-being (Frank, Reibel, Broderick, Cantrell, & Metz, S, 2015; Hue & Lau, 2015; Roeser et al., 2013); they can enhance their teaching capacity and efficacy (Flook et al., 2013); and they can help students cultivate their awareness and resilience in the classroom, thereby improving their attentiveness and learning (Jennings et al., 2011; Singh et al., 2013). However, confusion remains in education regarding the practice of mindfulness and the ways in which it can best be integrated into school settings (Felver & Jennings, 2016; Monteiro, Musten, & Compson, 2015). Whereas some critics raise questions about the overall efficacy of mindfulness training programs and regarding objective measurements of well-being and improved academic performance of students, others suggest that mindfulness with its spiritual roots might not be beneficial and suitable for all teachers and students (Davis, 2015; Foster, 2016). Teachers also continue to be concerned that the teaching of mindfulness falls outside content-focussed curricula, thus creating additional responsibilities and tasks for teachers (Forbes, 2016; Thompson, 2007).

The past decades also have shown increasing interest in haiku, a poetic form that captures the 'moment of mindfulness.' Educators have included the practice of writing haiku in the curriculum because of its therapeutic, creative, and artistic benefits (Rudnick, 2003; Stephenson & Rosen, 2015; Tsuchie, 2009). Because of its orientation to mindfulness, the writing of haiku may be a form of engaging in that practice while allaying the concerns of those who fear that teaching mindfulness might constitute an additional burden for teachers.

Mindfulness does not yet have a place in most teacher education programs. Many teachers thus will not have had opportunity to learn about mindfulness or mindfulness practices in their training. Those whose interest in either mindfulness or haiku is piqued may seek to find out more through online searches. What would they find there? What are the topics that might be found in online materials? What forms do the discourses in the online resources take? The purpose of this study is to investigate the discourse of mindfulness and that of haiku through the discourse analysis of extensive online resources.

Background

Mindfulness and the writing of haiku have their origins in Asian culture generally and arise from or are related to Buddhism specifically. Taken up by individuals in Western cultures with an interest in Asian cultures and Buddhism during the 1960s, they have gained special importance over the past two decades. In the following, we review some of the pertinent literature in both areas.

Mindfulness programs for teachers and some current concerns

In English, the word 'mindful' commonly means 'being careful or heedful in doing something, intending to do something, and being conscious or aware, attentive, and thoughtful' (Stanley, 2014, p. 1187). Since the 19th century, the term has been widely used to refer to a central concept of Buddhism, the awareness that emerges through careful observation of an object without judgement or interference (William & Kabat-Zinn, 2011). In the late 1970s, as a result of research regarding mindfulness based on the social psychology of thinking and decision making, the concept was expanded to include the qualities of a mind that is open to new information, welcomes more than one perspective, and creates new categories (Langer, 1989). From a psychological perspective, mindfulness is defined as a state of mind in which the

person's whole attention is placed in the present-moment experience (Bishop et al., 2004; Brown Ryan, & Creswell, 2007; Williams, 2010). Although the senses of mindfulness differ when seen within the contexts of Buddhism and Western psychology, they have been conflated among researchers from different fields (Hyland, 2009; Stanley, 2014).

Recent research shows that several mindfulness-based programs bring positive effects to participants in different settings (Felver & Jennings, 2016; Monteiro, Musten, & Compson, 2015). For example, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) was started in the early 1990s based on seven points: non-judgmental observation, patience, beginner's mind, trust, non-striving, acceptance, and letting go (Stanley, 2014). This program has been successful for individuals suffering from stress, distress, or chronic pain (Kabat-Zinn, 1990). It has presently been adapted for a variety of populations in prisons, law offices, businesses, and educational institutions (Baer, 2003; Brown & Ryan, 2003). Research in teacher education and development shows that some mindfulness-based programs, including MBSR and Cultivating Awareness and Resilience in Education (CARE) for Teachers, help teachers and pre-service teachers reduce stress and develop well-being (Hue & Lau, 2015; Flook et al., 2013; Frank et al., 2015; Jennings et al., 2011). The program Transformative Inquiry has been shown to support teachers and pre-service teachers in navigating their teaching and learning better and in improving teaching efficacy (Tanaka et al., 2014).

Despite the positive effects of mindfulness-based programs, concerns remain regarding how to collect data and measure mindfulness effects; and, more importantly, questions remain about how to bring mindfulness into the curriculum effectively, even though some educators have already developed explicit approaches for doing so (e.g., Figure 1). Most research into mindfulness programs tends to measure the effectiveness of mindfulness practices in randomized, controlled experimental designs (Stanley, 2014). One of the limitations of such studies is the issue of whether mindfulness is a 'state of being,' a 'meditation practice,' or 'the outcome of meditation practice' (p. 1190). In addition, the conceptualization of the factors that make up mindfulness is not uniform in different studies, thus no generality is available across current research. The concern also arises whether measurement tools assess mindfulness appropriately (Christopher et al., 2011).



Figure 1. Class-based mindfulness practice (MindUP)

Concern also arises regarding the implementation of mindfulness programs in education. Some suggest that introducing mindfulness-based programs into a school system might involve

religious activities that are not aligned with educational aims and that do not meet the needs of the whole school community (Jennings, 2016). Teaching mindfulness separately from the rest of the curriculum may indeed add additional burdens to teachers and students. It is also a concern that teachers who are supposed to teach mindfulness have insufficient training and knowledge of this practice, leading to inappropriate practices (Foster, 2016; Thompson, 2007). Figure 1 shows a mindfulness-based program at a school.

Haiku as a cultural practice to promote mindfulness

The haiku is a short poetic form developed in Japan in the 17th century. Apart from being known as a seventeen syllable poem in a 5-7-5 pattern, each haiku is also known as the Zen poem, a poem that captures a moment of mindfulness, a moment of the here and now (Wakan, 2003; Yasuda, 1957). Haiku results from a cultural practice in which the poet lives and writes as a way of being—a way of practicing, evoking, and celebrating a moment of mindfulness. The haiku is a small monument to (product of) this practice. The writing of haiku currently is taught in English-speaking countries and in other languages around the world as an aid in learning the language. More interestingly, haiku have been employed in education to develop student self-expression and creativity (Blasko & Merski, 1998; Marshall, 2015). Writing haiku has also been used as an intervention in improving attention and awareness (Rudnick, 2003; Tsuchie, 2009); or in supporting physical and mental health (Berman et al., 2008; Stephenson & Rosen, 2013; Walsh, 2011; Wells, 2000).

Four points summarize the influence of Zen Buddhism on the practice of haiku: (a) timelessness and infinity, (b) simplicity and implication, (c) synchronization, and (d) unity of subject and object (Zizovic & Toyota, 2012). First, a sense of timelessness and infinity arises from the idea that haiku poets can write about any direct and immediate experience of daily life. Second, simplicity is implied in the brevity of a haiku poem. Instead of explaining everything clearly, a haiku only suggests and implies (Janerio, 1970), leaving an experience of emptiness. The emptiness is intended to evoke readers' imagination and to make them active participants, completing the poem together with the writer. Third, synchronization implies that only the present moment exists: yet the present beauty described in a haiku is limitless and undying. Last, the unity of subject and object brings the reader to the idea that no *self* exists in the haiku poet. Thus, poets are unified with the object and the moment of their poem while leaving behind all the thoughts with which they normally occupy themselves: 'Go to the pine if you want to learn about the pine, or to the bamboo if you want to learn about the bamboo' (Basho, as cited by Zizovic & Toyota, 2012, p. 36). Similarly, the poet should forget or abandon the self to enter the realm of nature and achieve unlimited creative force (Peipei, 2005). In other words, haiku is a practice in which poets learn to free themselves from formal rules or conceptual principles to find oneness with nature.

Purpose

This study was designed to investigate the discourses of both mindfulness and haiku writing. Because we are interested in what and how teachers might learn about both topics, we conducted an analysis of a set of online oral and written texts using discourse analysis as method. The analysis sought to provide answers to the question: What are the topics and resources in the discourses of mindfulness and writing haiku?

Method

This study was designed to investigate the discourses on mindfulness and haiku writing as they appear in online texts. The chosen method is discourse analysis.

Text sources

Two sets of data were prepared containing texts concerning mindfulness and the writing of haiku, respectively. All materials had been posted online within the past ten years. Using key

words ‘mindfulness at school’ or ‘mindfulness and education,’ we found more than 500,000 videos. We selected the fifteen most recently posted videos with the most views and related to teachers. In addition, using a Google search, we chose the first twenty articles for teachers concerning the effects of mindfulness. In the case of haiku, we found more than 12,000 videos by use of the key words ‘writing haiku’ or ‘how to write haiku.’ From these, we selected the ten videos with the most views most recently posted in the last ten years. In regard to writing haiku, we selected twenty recent texts available either online or from books introducing how to write haiku and the benefits of writing haiku. All texts in our database regarding mindfulness link to education generally, and most texts concerning haiku are either by or for teachers, teacher educators, or beginning teachers. We analyzed all videos and transcribed relevant episodes.

A summary of the total length of the videos and the number of words of the texts is provided in Table 1. A detailed list of the texts and videos analysed may be obtained from the authors.

Table 1. A summary of text sources

	Mindfulness set	Haiku set
Oral texts	15 videos on mindfulness and teachers (156.65 minutes)	10 videos on haiku writing (54.08 minutes)
Written texts	20 articles (80,678 words)	20 texts (13 articles + 7 book chapters from 3 books) (158,500 words)

In our investigation of the discourses of mindfulness and haiku writing from these online texts, the analytic object is discourse, a cultural, rather than an individual phenomenon. Discourse, as explained below, is shared within communities of practice and is understood even when an individual might not have said a particular phrase. Thus, all texts from one dataset have been entered into a single file, from which excerpts have been chosen as representatives; the topics and repertoires that we analyse in this paper are typical of that dataset.

Discourse analysis

This study investigates the discourses of haiku and mindfulness. A discourse constitutes the universal, shared, and recognizable ways in which members of a community talk and talk about topics specific to and characteristic of the community (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). The concern in this form of analysis is not the truth of written and verbal texts, but how the structural and semantic properties of language are employed for the particular purposes of any situation at hand. The approach has led to an alternative take on social psychology: discursive psychology (Edwards & Potter, 1992). Discursive psychology does not assume that a speaker or author acts to maintain or preserve a ‘self’ or self-image or any internal aspect of a person (Willig, 2014); instead, the language of the discourse itself is taken to be the only ‘reality-constituting resource’ of interaction (Roth & Hsu, 2010, p. 302). ‘It is a central feature of discursive psychology that it treats both external reality and mental states . . . as phenomena that are themselves open to constructive description . . . by participants’ (Edwards & Potter, 1992, p. 10).

Of particular interest in discursive psychology are *interpretative repertoires*, which are defined as ‘the building blocks speakers use for constructing versions of actions or cognitive processes’ and are ‘constituted out of a restricted range of terms used in specific stylistic and grammatical fashion’ (Wetherell & Potter, 1988, p. 172). They may be understood as non-contentious cultural resources speakers or writers can employ in support of claims (Hsu & Roth, 2010). Thus, for example, a high school student who claims that evolutionary theory is wrong and that the earth was created in one act— and supports the claim by saying, ‘I am right because God has taught me so many things how . . . I was made, and God brought me up this way’ (Roth &

Lucas, 1997, p. 158)—employs a religious repertoire; and a student who says that ‘from experiment we can prove that energy and entropy really do exist’ (p. 159) draws on an empiricist repertoire. Importantly, the same repertoires may be used in supporting claims and counter-claims.

In this study, we employ discourse analysis because it allows us to examine texts carefully and to identify ways in which the discourses on mindfulness and haiku are constructed and mediated as a social phenomenon. The discourse analytic approach helps us remain on the textual level to explore the discourses of haiku rigorously, rather than to concern ourselves with the speakers or writers who talk or write about the phenomena. Identifying and analysing interpretative repertoires enables researchers to understand the resources people draw on when they talk about mindfulness and writing haiku.

Mindfulness and haiku: catharsis and its discursive resource

The purpose of this paper is to identify the topics and resources employed in the discourse of mindfulness and haiku writing. In focusing on discourse, the study is concerned with the patterns of language-in-use rather than with the specific claims one or another individual might make. In both contexts, the same patterns were identified. First, we find an overarching concern with the *cathartic* effect achieved in and through the practice (section 4.1). Two main interpretive repertoires can be identified: *personal experience* (section 4.2) and *qualities of practice* (section 4.3). Each of these repertoires has two parts: (a) *autobiographical narrative* (section 4.2.1) and *affect* (section 4.2.2); and (b) *form* (section 4.3.1) and *minimalism* (section 4.3.2). We present a model grounded in and fully describing the data.

The cathartic effect as discursive topic

In both sets of data, we found the discursive topic that both mindfulness (data set 1) and haiku writing (data set 2) are cathartic or have a cathartic effect. In data set 1, we identify the catharsis topic through the way in which the text employs words, grammatical constructions, and rhetorical features that claim a positive change in emotion or a sense of release of emotional tension in mindfulness practices. The claim that mindfulness can help a practitioner achieve a cathartic effect is direct and apparent across all texts. For example, the following text fragment makes a claim about the effects of the practice of mindfulness³:

Fragment 1

[i] I think mindfulness made my personal life a lot better. [ii] I felt more connected to myself and when I got back to the classroom [2:00] it made my professional life better too. [iii] Because I was connected with myself I was also more connected with my students. [iv] We were able to create relationships and that’s where I think a lot of deep learning occurs. [v] Don’t get me wrong, you know, it didn’t happen all of a sudden, but I did notice one day—it was like wait a minute—I haven’t cried between classes for a little while, what’s going on here? (Mindfulness set, lines 9355–9361)

The text employs the causative verb ‘made’ to make a strong and direct claim about the way that mindfulness can help in teaching and personal life. The comparative forms with adjectives and verbs evoke emotions to describe a transformative change or a release of feelings. Thus, for example, ‘mindfulness made my personal life a lot better’ [i] or ‘I felt more connected to myself’ [ii, iii] or ‘but I did notice one day—it was like wait a minute—I haven’t cried between classes for a little while’ [v]. In addition, the verbal phrases ‘I felt,’ ‘I did notice,’ tend to be used together with phrases that create the expectation that something different is coming or

³ Roman numerals are used to identify and reference specific sentences or statements (e.g., Roth & Lucas, 1997).

² *Mindfulness set, lines xxxx-yyyy* refers to an extract from lines xxxx to yyyy in the data set concerning mindfulness.

changing or that a kind of tension release is happening. For example, pertinent descriptions include ‘it was like wait a minute’ or ‘what’s going here?’ [v]. In short, the choice of emotional words, comparative structures, and rhetorical questions make available the claim that this practice can be cathartic.

In the haiku data set, we find claims about catharsis and cathartic effects employing the same kind of language, that is, similar word choices and grammatical features. Consider the following text fragment:

Fragment 2

[i] Funnily enough, writing daily haiku allows me to practice these three themes like almost daily. [ii] So everyday I get to be grateful that I get ten to fifteen minutes to write something fun and creative then I get to deal with the kind of funny feelings of fear and vulnerability . . . [iii] So, this is how writing daily haiku has helped me be a more grateful be more courageous be more humble and live a happier and more productive life. (Haiku set, lines 7094–7102)

The text fragment makes a claim about the results of writing haiku through the use of the causative verb ‘allows’ [i], ‘helped’ [iii] and the repetition of the phrase ‘I get to’ [ii, iii]. This direct claim about the usefulness of the practice is emphasized with adjectives characterizing emotion such as ‘grateful,’ ‘fun’ [i], and ‘the kind of funny feelings of fear and vulnerability’ [ii], which show how the claim relates to catharsis. The verb ‘get to’ also illustrates a change relating to feelings caused or created by the process of writing haiku. Moreover, we notice how the text makes use of comparative forms and adjectives that evoke emotions to make a claim regarding the transforming experience of writing haiku: ‘this is how writing haiku has helped me be a more courageous be more humble and live a happier and more productive life’ [iii]. Further examples of how other authors make the claim that mindfulness or haiku writing helps them achieve a cathartic effect appear in text fragments below.

The personal experience repertoire

Forms of language that are uncontested and, therefore, may be used both in support and questioning of a claim constitute *discursive repertoires* (Roth & Alexander, 1997). One such repertoire appearing in both mindfulness and haiku writing discourses to support the claim that these practices are cathartic is the *personal experience* repertoire. In this repertoire, forms of personal experience are related as supportive evidence (i.e., resource) for claims about the cathartic and helpful effects of mindfulness or haiku writing. The personal experience repertoire appears in the form of two constitutive repertoires: the *autobiographical narrative* and *affect-related narrative*. In the following extracts, we examine how these repertoires are employed and intertwined in both data sets.

The autobiographical narrative repertoire

The autobiographical narrative repertoire is mobilized by the narration of stories from the personal life of the speaker/writer. Although it appears in both speaking and writing, the narrative line may be more frequently employed in the former. Consider the following text fragment concerning mindfulness, in which the text starts with a personal story about how negative the speaker felt when she was young, and ends with a claim that mindfulness has been helpful. That is, an autobiographical narrative precedes the claim about the cathartic effect of mindfulness training [viii].

Fragment 3

[i] At the age of 11, my father was out drinking and didn’t return all night, leaving me alone in the house overnight. [ii] I recall lying awake in bed, terrified, as I listened to the floorboards of the old house creak in the wind. [iii] I held my breath all night long, so I could better hear if someone was breaking into the house. [iv] From that day forward, holding my breath became my coping pattern in times of stress and uncertainly. [v] As I grew older, this pattern created

throat and digestive ailments, which required treatment. [vi] Thankfully, my voice therapist drew my attention to this unskillful way of managing the fear of a potentially traumatic situation. . . . [vii] Today, I can mindfully turn my self-awareness to the deepening of my breathing and recite the mantra ‘just breathe’ while affirming to myself that I am safe. (Mindfulness set, lines 1798–1809)

The fragment features copious use of the personal pronouns ‘I’ and ‘me’ and the repetition of ‘myself.’ This use marks the statements as pertaining to personal experience. Such statements—for example, ‘I recall lying awake in bed terrified’ [ii] and ‘I held my breath all night long, so I could better hear if someone was breaking into the house’ [iii]—are difficult to impossible to question. Indeed, questioning such discourse would itself require considerable substantiation, because it would be undermining something self-evident (Garfinkel, 1967). Here, the autobiographical narrative flows with the use of simple past tense of all verbs. We can see clearly that the paragraph presents a story of the speaker as the main character (‘I’), with the setting (school [i, ii]) at a specific time (at the age of 11 [i]), her feelings or issues, what happens next, and how it turns out in the end (mindfulness helps). That is, the text employs autobiographical narrative to articulate stories that substantiate the claim that the practice is transformative, or cathartic, and thus brings about real change. In the present situation, it helps in the context of the additional claim that ‘Today, I can mindfully turn my self-awareness to the deepening of my breathing and recite the mantra ‘just breathe’ while affirming to myself that I am safe’ [vii]. Here, even though the speaker does not directly use the word ‘mindfulness,’ she refers to the self-awareness of breathing as a practice of mindfulness, which helps her to feel ‘safe’ and release her from her childhood issue.

In the context of writing haiku, the same deployment of autobiographical narrative is found; haiku writers use available stories showing how the practice of writing haiku provided aid. In the following fragment, where the cathartic effect is described in terms of the enjoyment it brings to the author, writing haiku is contextualized in an autobiographical narrative of a first time engagement, out of which regular practice evolved.

Fragment 4

[i] What a haiku does it forces the writer to really distil what they’re trying to say into like only the barest essence and that’s why I’m still writing. [ii] Now it’s started off . . . it’s started off as a joke. [iii] My housemate, Andrew, has written a haiku to his girlfriend for her birthday and so on his birthday I wrote him one back. [iv] I wrote this haiku in a kind of series of 150.

happy birthday man
hipster house-mates forever,
you have a large head.

And he has a large head. [v] I think he once told me that his head is like five standard deviations larger than the normal. . . . [vi] So it’s started off as a joke. [vii] But actually I really enjoyed writing it so I started writing it everyday. [viii] And every day I take about ten to fifteen minutes to write a kind of short haiku and I publish it onto my Facebook. (Haiku set, lines 6949–6958)

The text fragment includes a reason for which the speaker started writing haiku and still practices. As in the case of mindfulness, we notice how with a personal story the text mobilizes the autobiographical repertoire. Through the application of simple past forms of all verbs, the text creates a specific setting (on the occasion of a friend’s birthday), with characters (the speaker, I, and his friend, Andrew). The story is about how the speaker came to write haiku as a joke for his friend’s girlfriend [iv] and then how he enjoyed it later and continued the practice or habit in his everyday life [ix, x]. The autobiographical narrative repertoire highlights details, such as the name of the characters, the roles (friend, girlfriend), the example of the joke, the explanation of why it was a joke, and that the joke was a haiku poem [v].

In both data sets, the speakers/writers draw on the autobiographical narrative repertoire to support the claim that the practice is cathartic. We notice the function of the I-witness in the story telling. Here, speakers/writers put themselves on the stand, which evokes the personal aspect of the theme, catharsis. In addition, the story line in the narrative repertoire first helps create tension and then the change that the topic of catharsis needs. In fragments from the haiku or mindfulness set, we always see stories of how negative feelings arise or issues happen and then how mindfulness or writing haiku intervenes and helps release those feelings or solve those problems.

The affect repertoire

The *affect* repertoire is the second form of discursive resource in the data sets that mobilizes personal experience. In talking about experiences with either mindfulness or haiku writing, texts draw on the affect repertoire when narrating personal stories. The following text fragments show how affect talk is mobilized when the texts (a) present a story of how speakers or writers (come to) know the practice of mindfulness or writing haiku or (b) explain what the practice does to them.

Fragment 5

[i] I started teaching 14 years ago and I totally hated it. [ii] It was awful, I cried all the time, I cried on the way to school, I cried at school, I cried a lot. Um. [iii] I hated it so much that in my third year teaching I went part time just so I could get my bearings and I was completely stressed out. [iv] And I wasn't alone; apparently thousands of teachers leave the profession in the first five years of teaching. [v] For me, I don't think it's much of a surprise, uh, the cat's totally out of the bag, much of mainstream education simply does not work for teachers or for students. [vi] For me what didn't work was that I couldn't connect with my students, I didn't really know them as human beings. Something was missing. That my professional life was falling apart, so was my personal life. [vii] And I was depressed for quite a while, and so the traditional formula of time, the love from friends and family and of course therapy got me back on my feet. [viii] But something else helped me during this time and that was mindfulness. (Mindfulness set, lines 9342–9352)

Here, the text describes how coming to know mindfulness evokes emotions. Apart from relying on an autobiographical narrative repertoire (already described in the previous section), we note a repetition of words that denote strong emotions, including 'cried,' 'hated' [i], 'stressed out,' 'bearings' [iii], 'alone' [iv], 'a surprise' [v], 'falling apart,' 'depressed' [vii]. Not only are emotional words used, but many adverbs of level are explicitly attached and repeated to represent and emphasize the level of emotions; these adverbs include 'totally,' 'all the time,' 'a lot,' 'so much,' 'apparently,' and 'much' [i-v]. All of these linguistic structures mobilize the affect repertoire on which the text draws in relating an experience with mindfulness.

In the writing-haiku-related fragment 6, the text draws from the affect repertoire when narrating the results of how haiku writing helps. Even though the content of the talk is not emotion in writing haiku, the affect repertoire can be identified through rhetorical features employed in introducing the topic of writing haiku. Here, we notice the speaker switches from the use of subject pronouns 'we' [i] and 'some people' [ii] to 'I' [iii, iv]. Along with the change in the use of pronouns, we find frequent use of words that evoke different feelings. For example 'cry' [i], 'tension' [iii], 'sad or depressed,' and 'pent up joy' [iv].

Fragment 6

[i] Today, we'll talk about the four common characteristics of the haiku and also a little bit about why you may enjoy writing haiku. [ii] Some people meditate, some cry and still others make it rain on their local train. [iii] There's nothing wrong with any of these things, but when I need to release tension, I write. [iv] It's not even about being sad or depressed, it's often pent up joy that will make my head explode if I don't get it out on paper. (Haiku set, lines 6890-6895)

Here, we do not explicitly see how the affect repertoire intertwines with the autobiographical narrative, as it does in fragment 5 of the mindfulness set. However, the affect repertoire mobilized in both fragments 5 and 6 illustrates how the speaker supports the claim of catharsis; that is, the affect repertoire strongly supports catharsis as the topic. The affect repertoire illustrates the tension and the change in feelings and emotions of the speakers/writers while sharing their experience with mindfulness practice or haiku writing. In fact, the affect repertoire acts as the strongest argument that can be made for the catharsis claim—it evokes the most personal aspect of catharsis. The fact that a person experiences some internal transformation from a practice makes it clear that he or she has to rely on the affect repertoire to illustrate and support the catharsis claim.

The ‘qualities of practice’ repertoire

In addition to the repertoire regarding narrative forms of experience to support the claim that mindfulness and haiku practice are cathartic, we also found in the database the use of another repertoire, the ‘qualities of practice’ repertoire. This repertoire evokes the topic that mindfulness and haiku writing require certain forms of practice. If the narrative forms of experience repertoire acts as a resource for the claim that mindfulness and writing haiku are helpful, the qualities of practice repertoire illustrates the structure of the practice, that is, how it is done.

We found that the *qualities of practice* repertoire appears independently in some texts or connected with the autobiographical narrative and affect repertoire in other texts. Nonetheless, as we wish to understand the way in which the repertoires are connected with each other (so that we can assess the degree of overlap in the discourse of haiku and mindfulness), we attend to the case in which the qualities of practice repertoire is employed to support the catharsis topic. To this end, we present extracts from both bodies of text to show how the repertoire relates to others. This repertoire splits into two dominant sub-repertoires: (c) *the form repertoire* and (d) *the minimalism repertoire*. An analysis of these two repertoires follows.

The form repertoire

In this discussion, ‘form’ refers to the answer to the question, ‘What is mindfulness?’ or ‘What is haiku?’ or ‘How does it appear?’ In most texts in the mindfulness data set, mindfulness is introduced as a type of awareness practice or meditation. The definition of mindfulness is always attached to the idea of attention to the present moment, without judgement, with the name of the researcher Kabat-Zinn, and with a Buddhist origin. Moreover, mindfulness is described as an everyday activity, which might take the form of yoga, or walking, breathing, visual and auditory meditation, or a body scan, or as a specific program at schools, for example, a ‘Mind-up Program.’

We may consider an excerpt from a discussion of how texts normally draw on the form repertoire to describe an understanding of mindfulness.

Fragment 7

[i] In my new book, *Mindfulness for Teachers*, I outline several mindfulness practices—including focused breathing, open awareness, loving-kindness, and others—that teachers can use in the classroom, whether they want to invoke a sense of mindfulness in the classroom or to become a more mindful person, in general. . . . [ii] When I teach, I sometimes notice that my mind is so focused on thinking about what I need to do and how to do it that I’m not paying attention to the present moment. [iii] I have expectations about how things ought to be and I become attached to them, rather than noticing and accepting how things actually are. [iv] This causes distress, making me emotionally volatile, which in turn affects my perceptions and makes me more sensitive to threat. . . . [v] Practicing mindfulness can also help us to savor the positive moments in our job—when we feel the joy of true connection with our students or resonate with the joy and excitement our students feel when learning clicks for them. (Mindfulness set, lines 1631–1657)

As we see here, mindfulness appears in the form of an exercise that requires attention to or awareness of everything around without judgement [i, ii]. The form repertoire is mobilized by the repetition of words that evoke attention, such as ‘focused’ [i, ii], ‘notice’ [i], ‘paying attention’ [ii], ‘noticing and accepting’ [iii], ‘present moment’ [ii]. Moreover, we notice the use of a clear, direct structure, including ‘I outlined several mindfulness practices—including . . .’ [i] to illustrate what some forms of mindfulness practice are and ‘. . . that I’m not paying attention to the present moment’ [ii], to define what is considered not mindfulness practice. In short, the text relies on the form repertoire when describing or explaining certain qualities of mindfulness practice.

In this extract, the form repertoire appears intertwined with the autobiographical narrative and affect repertoires. The text first employs the form repertoire to introduce mindfulness; then, it makes a claim about how mindfulness works and what it does from personal experience. The text supports the claim through use of the autobiographical narrative repertoire and affect repertoire. After that, the text returns to the form repertoire to clarify/confirm certain qualities of the practice. In some sentences (e.g., [vi]), we do not see a clear distinction between the autobiographical narrative repertoire or affect repertoire or the form repertoire, which again shows how the text combines these repertoires to mobilize a particular discourse when talking about mindfulness.

Likewise, in the haiku data set we found a repertoire describing the formality of haiku. All texts describe haiku as a poetic form with three lines, or with seventeen syllables, or arranged in a 5-7-5 order and with no rhymes. In addition to the limited number of verses or syllables in a haiku, the form repertoire includes discourse regarding simplicity of language, exactness of expression, objective observation, and direct description. Moreover, the form repertoire includes elements of nature, a seasonal word, or a subject shift through juxtaposed ideas or images. Some texts associate the haiku form with Matsuo Basho, a Japanese poet, or introduce haiku as a form connected to Zen Buddhism or another ancient Japanese literary form.

All texts in the haiku data set present at least one of the above elements regarding the form of haiku. For example, in fragment 8, in addition to the idea of 5-7-5 order in three lines [i], the text states that the haiku form includes ‘a reference to a season of the year’ [iii], ‘simple words’ or ‘keen observations’ [i]. All requirements in writing haiku, such as the specific number of syllables, lines, the seasonal word, and careful observation, constitute the resource for the form repertoire that is mobilized in the introduction of haiku in the text.

Fragment 8

[i] Haiku use simple words and keen observations to describe scenes in nature. 2 Each haiku consists of 17 syllables divided into three lines. [ii] In the English adaptation, the first line contains five syllables; the second line, seven syllables; and the third line, five syllables. [iii] Haiku also contain a *kigo*—a reference to a season of the year. (Haiku set, lines 4539–4542)

Likewise, the author of fragment 4 makes use of the form repertoire in many parts of the text. Here, the text emphasises the shortness of the poem and the requirement that, ‘So it’s very short and what a haiku does it forces the writer to really distil what they are trying to say into like only the barest essence and that’s why I’m still writing’ [i]. The speaker in fragment 4 also mobilizes the form repertoire with an example of a haiku in English that follows the basic rule, a short, 5-7-5 syllable structure: ‘hap/py/ birth/day/ man, hip/ster house/mates for/ev/er, you/have/ a/large/head’ [iv].

As in the case of mindfulness, the form repertoire intertwines with the other two narrative forms of the experience repertoire. The text of fragment 4 utilizes the personal story that the haiku was written for a friend. The affect repertoire connects with the autobiography repertoire and these two appear in the mobilization of the form repertoire.

In general, as the data sets demonstrate, the form repertoire specifies what haiku or mindfulness

generally are and specifies the features or requirements associated with them. We can see that texts draw on the form repertoire to formulate the description of mindfulness and haiku as a practice, their qualities, and what or how they are performed. This repertoire is integrated with other discursive resources: autobiographical narrative and affect.

The minimalism repertoire

Closely connected to the form repertoire is the minimalism repertoire, which emphasizes minimal movements or tendencies in acting or performing mindfulness and in writing haiku. Although we could label this repertoire ‘simplicity,’ we intentionally use the word ‘minimalism’ because this term also refers to a form of practice in art, music, or other media. Excerpts from both the mindfulness data set and the haiku data set demonstrate how the minimalism repertoire is mobilized in the course of substantiation for the topic regarding qualities of the practice. In other words, the minimalism repertoire appears in the articulation of part of the practice.

In the following extract from the mindfulness data set, we identify the minimalism repertoire through the repetition of words or phrases that literally mean ‘simple’ or ‘minimal’ when describing mindfulness. In addition, by providing a list of simple daily activities as forms of mindfulness practice or by presenting a meditative or hypnotizing technique, which calls for direct attention to essential and basic things in life such as breathing or eating, the texts mobilize a minimalism repertoire in describing the qualities of mindfulness or articulating how to enact or perform mindfulness.

Fragment 9

[i] So what if training for excellence in education sometimes looks like this? . . . go ahead . . . try it . . . [ii] take a breath . . . and maybe where you are right now . . . however you’re just sitting . . . just notice yourself . . . in the chair . . . [iii] I invite you to be comfortable, close your eyes or put them down at half half mast [a little bit?] . . . and notice your breath in your own body . . . where is it? [8:00] maybe it’s in your stomach . . . [iv] maybe you notice your breath in your chest . . . maybe in your nostrils . . . just notice it . . . without judgment . . . and I invite you to take one deep intentional breath with me . . . so. [v] Training for excellence in education is breathing?— [vi] yeah I know, it’s not very glamorous or scintillating, you know, it’s not even that complicated, but it’s extremely effective. . . . [vii] Mindfulness brings us back [9:00] to the most basic function of our body and that’s our breath. (Mindfulness set, lines 9399–9410)

In this fragment, the minimalism repertoire is mobilized through the use of a wide range of words and phrases, such as ‘basic’ [vii], and phrases ‘not very glamorous or scintillating,’ ‘not even that complicated’ [vi], which convey simplicity or minimalism when referring to mindfulness practice. In addition, at the midpoint, the text calls for the audience’s direct and immediate attention to breathing, one of the most minimal of human activities, by using a series of imperative patterns, such as ‘take a breath,’ ‘just notice yourself,’ ‘be comfortable, close your eyes,’ ‘notice your breath in your body,’ ‘just notice it without judgement,’ ‘I invite you to take one deep intentional breath with me. . . .’ [iii-v]. The statement, ‘Mindfulness brings us back to the most basic function of our body and that’s our breath’ [vii], is a claim about the qualities of the mindfulness practice and in supporting this claim the text relies on the minimalism repertoire.

In a similar way, the minimalism repertoire is found in the haiku data set, regarding the qualities of the practice of haiku writing. All texts illustrate haiku as a form with a special limitation on the number of words or as a display of juxtaposed images or by the use of seasonal words and careful observation. All those features show that haiku display a minimal style. In all texts, we can also notice the minimalism repertoire through examples of haiku.

In fragment 10, the speaker describes a basic feature of haiku called ‘the feeling of lightness’ [ii]. The name itself illustrates the simplicity or minimalism of the form. We notice the appearance of words that indicate an almost ascetic attention in the practice, or a practice that

focuses on simplicity; for example, we note ‘light’ [i], ‘lightness’ [ii], ‘bare minimum,’ ‘five-seven-five’ [iii].

Fragment 10

[i] The first characteristic of the haiku I’d like to go over is that it’s always light mainly . . . [ii] The feeling of lightness is called *karuni*. [iii] It’s the art of putting the use of words to a bare minimum while retaining the poem itself’s meaning. The initial form is the three line, like so: five syllables in the first line, seven syllables in the second line, and five syllables in the third line. five-seven-five. (Haiku set, lines 6902–6906)

Similarly, reconsider fragment 4, which also features the minimalism repertoire. Here, we can see how the minimalism repertoire is mobilized through literal devices, such as the repetition of ‘short’ and the appearance of the phrase, ‘only the barest essence.’ The speaker also draws on the minimalism repertoire to illustrate his understanding and performance of haiku by presenting a five-seven-five syllable haiku for his friend, ‘happy birthday man / hipster housemates forever / you have a large head.’ The appearance of the poem as a sample of how haiku can be a joke, together with the use of words ‘normal,’ ‘joke,’ ‘ten to fifteen minutes,’ ‘a kind of short poem,’ ‘Facebook,’ and ‘everyday’ mobilize the minimalism repertoire. In addition, we notice how in the same text the minimalism repertoire blends with the autobiographical narrative repertoire, the affect repertoire, and the form repertoire.

In general, the form and minimalism repertoire orient us toward the practice, the doing of it, which takes practice. Also, an austerity oriented towards asceticism in turn supports the catharsis theme. In the haiku set, we can see that the form and minimalism repertoires direct us into a practice of writing that requires attention to shortness and lightness, that is, towards intensity. In the mindfulness set, the form and minimalism repertoires indicate the removal of complicated issues in life and focus on the most basic activities that everyone does and knows how to do, such as breathing or walking. We will discuss further how the use of these two repertoires support the catharsis theme; yet, here, we observe a change in writing form, or in lifestyle, underlining a return to the most basic and simple things, and the employment of a form repertoire and a minimalism repertoire that implicitly act as resources for the claim that the practice has a cathartic effect.

A model of interpretative repertoires in texts concerning haiku and mindfulness

Upon analysis of the database, we found different shared discursive topics and resources. To answer the research questions posed in this paper, we present and discuss only common topics and interpretative repertoires found in the database. Both data sets illustrate the same structure, namely the purpose of the practice (mindfulness or writing haiku), how it is, and how something helps. In particular, both haiku and mindfulness texts share a discursive topic that the practices are cathartic; when people talk about mindfulness in education or about writing haiku, they make claims about the cathartic use of those practices. Claims, because they always are tenuous, are supported by forms of discourse that are not problematic and which, therefore, serve as resources or repertoires (Edwards & Potter, 1992). In the present study, the discourse on the cathartic nature of haiku and mindfulness is supported by the *autobiographical* and *affect* repertoires. The claim also is supported by repertoires regarding certain qualities of the practice, which we call *form* and *minimalism*. In short, our analyses revealed that in mobilizing the catharsis topic, texts rely on two core repertoires, the *personal experience* repertoire and the *qualities of practice* repertoire and four second-order repertoires, the *autobiographical narrative* repertoire, the *affect* repertoire, the *form* repertoire, and the *minimalism* repertoire.

In addition to those repertoires, we found other second-order repertoires in both bodies of text; for example, the stress repertoire is employed as a resource for the catharsis claim. However, this repertoire does not appear in all texts, in particular it is often lacking in texts regarding haiku. Thus, in this paper, we chose to present the two core and the four, second-order, shared

interpretative repertoires. Figure 2 provides a summary of the shared repertoires with a wavy line to show how they connect with each other in supporting the shared topic of catharsis.

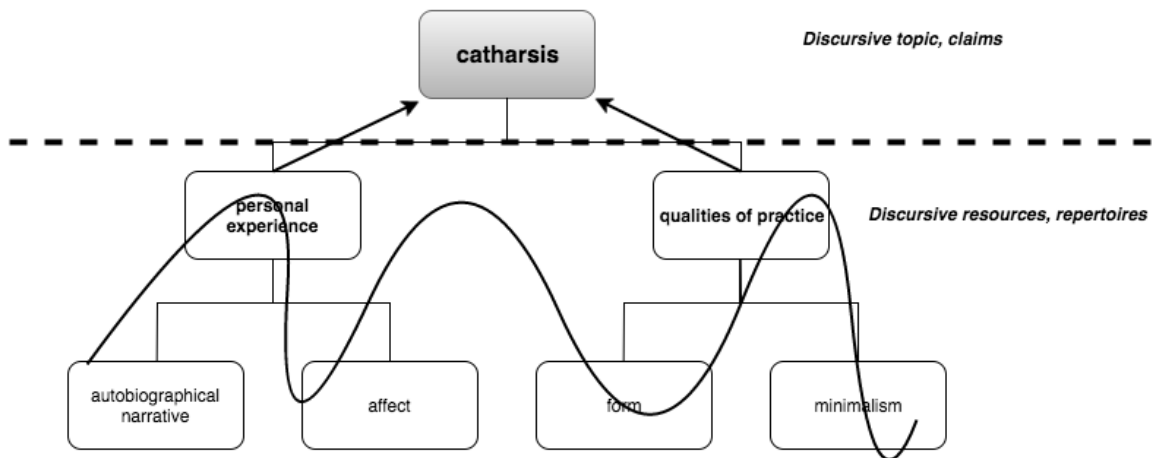


Figure 2. The analytical framework of the discursive topics (or claims) and discursive resources (repertoires). The dividing line demonstrates the topic ‘catharsis’ and the others, the interpretative repertoires (*narrative forms of experience*, and *qualities of practices*), are different ontological entities. At the same time, the arrows show how the two/four repertoires support the claim of catharsis. The wavy line is to show how all the repertoires are interrelated with each other.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study investigates discourses regarding mindfulness and the writing of haiku in online resources. Drawing on the discourse analysis of a database of 25 oral and 40 written texts online, commonalities are found in the discourses of writing haiku and the practice of mindfulness. We summarize our analysis by providing a model of interpretative repertoires in texts concerning mindfulness and haiku writing (Figure 2) that features how the two/four repertoires (*personal experience* and *qualities of practice* repertoire/*autobiographical narrative*, *affect*, *form*, and *minimalism* repertoire) function as the main resources for the discursive topic—cathartic effect of the practice.

Mindfulness and haiku writing have been adopted or imported into Western educational environments. Our study shows that these two practices are discussed using similar claims, supported by similar repertoires. In talking about either haiku writing or mindfulness practice, texts constitute similar patterns for the two practices; namely, that these practices are helpful (the discursive topic concerning the *cathartic effect*) and that they indicate their utility through personal experience (*autobiographical narrative* and *affect* repertoire). They also claim that success in these practices requires certain forms of practice (*form* and *minimalism* repertoire).

The discursive topic concerning the cathartic effect of mindfulness is relevant to research reporting positive effects of mindfulness practice. In its turn, although the purpose and effectiveness of haiku writing are not as clearly reported in the literature, we believe, with Vygotsky (1971), that it is impossible to separate the form of art from its meaning and use. Moreover, ‘catharsis of the aesthetic response is the transformation of affects, the explosive response which culminates in the discharge of emotions’ (p. 215). Our findings reveal how the catharsis topic and its discursive resources weave together in the discourses regarding haiku writing and mindfulness. How people accept and live the discourses of mindfulness and haiku

writing might be novel to those interested in the practices, but the way shared and connected interpretative repertoires (biographical narrative, affect, form and minimalism) act as the resources for catharsis may be akin to Vygotsky's concept of art as catharsis.

This study provides evidence of the parallels in the discourses concerning mindfulness and haiku writing. This is important to know, for many mindfulness programs and programs using poetic inquiry have been implemented in schools as if they were distinct practices, duplicating effort and expenditure. As our analysis presents a thorough account of the overlap of these resources, it offers an alternative to and a means to supplement the practice of mindfulness in school programs. Teachers thus may widen their knowledge by turning to either set of resources. Indeed, the commonalities may suggest a possible integration of haiku writing with mindfulness programs. Our study illustrates a potential to integrate these two practices in teacher education. We do not suggest that writing haiku should replace the practice of mindfulness; rather, since those who write haiku describe the same 'moments of mindfulness' experiences as those who practice mindfulness, the practices seem to share many of the same qualities, results, and benefits—and so the practice of writing haiku might give pre-service teachers viable options in maintaining their own well-being as students and as professional teachers. As well, it gives teachers feasible alternatives in the teaching of mindfulness.

Another reason to introduce the practice of writing haiku in education is that it can address those issues within current mindfulness-based curriculum. First, writing haiku as an alternative form of practice in mindfulness may alleviate the concerns of many teachers and administrators that mindfulness-based programs involve religious activities that are mis-aligned with educational aims and that fail to meet the needs of the whole school community (Forbes, 2016; Thompson, 2007). Likewise, the writing of haiku can address those critiques that claim that teaching mindfulness may add additional burdens to teachers and students, since it can be incorporated into current language, literature, and arts-based classrooms. Finally, the techniques of writing haiku are simple and can hardly lead to inappropriate practices.

Our analysis shows that writers and speakers rely on both the form repertoire and the minimalism repertoire when describing the qualities of practice. Minimalism is a familiar concept in Western culture, especially in arts (Vaquer, 2016). In teaching haiku writing, teachers need not consider meta-linguistic knowledge of the form, or knowledge of the Japanese language; they can bring their backgrounds and experience with other poetic, artistic, or linguistic practices to the classroom. For these reasons, we believe that writing haiku could provide both a viable supplement and alternative to current mindfulness programs.

Our study is relevant to the methodology of current research in mindfulness. If future research on mindfulness seeks to go 'beyond the constructs of cognitive ability and style in order to understand how real innovation is possible' (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000, p. 136), our study shows discourse analysis captures how mindfulness or haiku writing are constituted in and through texts, how they are accepted by participants, and transmitted to others. Instead of engaging in cognitive mapping and inquiry, we have analysed 'discourse that is publicly available' (Roth & Hsu, 2010, p. 301).

In the literature, the quantity of the data sources (what is your N ?) is often an issue determining the strength of a study. In this study, we selected 65 texts for analysis. The unit of analysis, however, is not the individual text. Instead, the unit of analysis is discourse; each text is only a manifestation of the universe of the discourse. Like Vygotsky (1987), who viewed each word as reflecting the whole of social consciousness, we may view each text as reflecting the whole of discourse. Moreover, each text has many readers so that the discourse is actually used and understood by the ensemble of its users (e.g., Hsu & Roth, 2009). Previous studies provide evidence of the generality of the patterns that discourse analysis isolates. Thus, one study, which identified the discursive resources in texts and talk produced by eleventh-grade physics students, showed that with one minor addition, the same pattern appeared in the writing of

scientists in a journal devoted to the topic (Roth & Alexander, 1997). Another study demonstrated that the talk of 14-year-old Swiss students about the environment and environmental protection was a microcosm of Swiss society both in the range of topics and in the discursive repertoires employed (Zeyer & Roth, 2009, 2013). Thus, we expect the discursive patterns reported here to hold if the range of data considered were expanded.

Ethical approval:

“This article does not contain any studies with human participants or animals performed by any of the authors.”

Informed consent: “Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.”

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