

A Study on the Interplay of Personality Traits and Language Learning Strategies among University Students

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ABSTRACT

The concept of personality qualities can be linked to success in learning a second or foreign language and final proficiency in the target language. The learner's personality might have an impact on their overall success in learning a foreign language. Language learning strategies have a significant impact on foreign language acquisition performance. Although they are not closely related, these two patterns, when considered in a foreign language classroom, can greatly aid students in their endeavor while learning a foreign language. The study involved 170 students from 5 five universities in Indonesia. The Five Factor model questionnaire, which measures personality traits such as openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Costa & McCrae, 1992), was given to students, and the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning was used to measure language learning strategies used by Indonesian students. The result showed that there was a connection between personality traits in form of openness to experience and the metacognitive strategy used by the EFL students.

Keywords: The Five Factors, SILL, Personality Traits, Language Acquisition

INTRODUCTION

The focus of the classroom has shifted from being teacher-centered to being student-centered over the past 20 years in the field of language learning and teaching. This pattern gave students the chance to develop their learning independence while also becoming more self-reliant. The learner-centered approach to language teaching received increasing attention (Reiss, 1987; Wenden, 1991; Tamada, 2017). Language learning strategies and styles, as well as how much they affect the successful acquisition of a foreign language, were also considered when it comes to successful language learning. Oxford (1990) is the most well-known and frequently quoted researcher in writing about language learning strategies. She proposed that scholars should focus on the learning process rather than the result when looking at the processes the students go through as they learn the language. Along with instructional methods, learning styles, and strategies, personality characteristics of language learners are also significant factors in SLA.

It has received considerable attention from experts in language learning when it comes to personality traits. Numerous studies have revealed that there is a significant amount of personality factor variability among students. Researchers have concentrated on this problem as a result of this variety to aid students in achieving their objectives for second language acquisition. Individual differences in personality qualities can typically be attributed to an unchanging pattern of traits. Anxiety, locus of control, achievement orientation, intrinsic motivation, self-esteem, social competence, etc. have all received research attention. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers, McCaulley, Quenk, & Hammer, 1988) is one of the most well-known and often used tools for assessing personality traits. Costa and McCrae (1992). The Five Factor Model of Personality is very well-known and frequently applied in the field of language acquisition. The five personality traits included in the model are neuroticism, extraversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and congruence. The relationship between personality characteristics and language acquisition techniques has not received much attention from researchers. Because of its significance and possible

contribution to language studies, several researchers have asked for more extensive research in this area (Bongear, Planken, & Schils, 1995; Dorney, 2009, 2010; Moyer, A. 1999, Moyer, M. 2007).

The primary goal of the current study is to identify personality features and preferred language learning strategies among university students in Indonesia. Additionally, the researchers wanted to see how closely personality traits and language learning strategies correlated with one another. The problem statement and the rationale for the research's initiating is presented in the first section of the study. Descriptive statistics, the Pearson product-moment correlation, and the t-test is used to show how personality traits and language learning strategies relate each other, as well as which personality traits are most prevalent among the participants.

METHODS

The study involved 170 students who were enrolled in the English major in five universities in Indonesia. Big Five and SILL questionnaires were used by the researchers. In this investigation, both quantitative and descriptive approach were used.

Oxford's The Strategy Inventory for Language Learning, 1990 (SILL version 7.0 for ESL/EFL learners, 50 items), was employed by the researchers. Students responded to a self-report questionnaire by marking their responses according to how they see themselves as language learners. This allowed us to ascertain how frequently students employ language learning strategies. The SILL questionnaire has frequently been a crucial tool in numerous investigations. According to those investigations, the SILL's dependability coefficients ranged from .85 to .98. Accordingly, Bremner and Narayan (1988), Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995), Park (1997), Sheorey (1999), and Wharton (2000) concluded that the questionnaire is a reliable indicator of students' reported use of language learning strategies. For assessment purposes, language learning strategies are divided into six groups in the SILL.

The second questionnaire employed in this study was the five-factor model. Openness to Experience, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Agreeableness, and Neuroticism make up the Five Factor Model (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Extroversion is associated with those who are socially outgoing and enjoy interacting with others. According to this personality feature, people look for fulfillment in the community or from sources other than themselves. High scorers are frequently characterized as gregarious, whilst low scorers prefer to work on their assignments by themselves. Modesty, compassion, tender-heartedness, and honesty are all part of the agreeableness personality trait. It depicts a person who modifies their behavior in order to please others.

Being trustworthy and diligent is the personality quality of conscientiousness. People with this personality attribute are frequently dependable and on time at work. Instead of being spontaneous and creative, they choose planned and organized activity. High achievers are more likely to adhere to rules and favor tidy homes. Low scorers could act uncleanly and deceive others. Being emotional is a psychological trait known as neuroticism. People with neuroses display instability and are often impulsive. They struggle under pressure and frequently experience fear. The psychological attribute of seeking out new experiences and intellectual endeavors is known as openness to experience. High scorers might daydream frequently. Low scorers can be extremely realistic.

Openness to Experience is the trait that reflects an individual's willingness and interest in exploring new ideas, experiences, and perspectives. People high in openness tend to be imaginative, curious, and open-minded. They often enjoy trying new things and are receptive to unconventional or creative concepts. Congruence seems there might be a confusion here, as "congruence" is not typically included as one of the Big Five personality traits. Congruence is more commonly associated with Carl Rogers' theory of personality and therapy. In this context, congruence refers to the alignment between a person's self-concept and their actual experiences, feelings, and behaviors. Incongruence would occur when there is a disconnect between these aspects.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

What were the respondents' dominant personality traits? The following were taken into consideration while determining the students' personality traits: extroversion, agreeability, conscientiousness,

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neuroticism, and openness. The mean value (M=23,69) and table 1 below show that students preferred the personality attribute of openness to experience. The following two personality traits that students ranked highest were agreeableness (M=21, 53) and conscientiousness (M=21, 34). The lowest means were for extroversion (M=18, 50) and neuroticism (M=18, 87).

TABLE 1. One Sample Statistic of Personality Traits

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Extroversion	70	18,50	2,477	,296
Agreeableness	70	21,53	3,124	,373
Conscientiousness	70	21,34	2,675	,320
Neuroticism	70	18,87	2,983	,356
Openness to experience	70	23,69	3,295	,394

In addition to examining personality traits, researchers frequently investigate the preferred language-learning strategies used by respondents. The most popular learning strategies among students, as shown in the table below, was metacognitive (M=3.82). The second-ranked learning strategies among students was social (M=3.63), which was followed by affective (M=3.53) learning strategies. Cognitive (M=3.51) was the least chosen learning approach, which was followed by memory (M=3.32).

TABLE 2. One Sample Statistic of Strategy Used

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Memory strategies	170	3.32	3,757	,449
Cognitive strategies	170	3.51	4,800	,574
Compensation strategies	170	3.44	2,512	,300
Metacognitive strategies	170	3.82	4,076	,487
Affective strategies	170	3.53	3,116	,372
Social strategies	170	3.63	3,018	,361

TABLE 6. Correlation between Pesonality traits and LLSs

		Memory	Cognitive	Compensation	Metacognitive	Effective
Extroversion	Pearson					
	Correlation	,269*	,437**	,241*	,438**	,282*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,024	,000	,044	,000	,018
	N	70	70	70	70	70
Agreeableness	Pearson					
	Correlation	,203	,074	,075	,079	,370**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,093	,540	,539	,514	,002
	N	70	70	70	70	70
Conscientiousness	Pearson					
	Correlation	,354**	,253*	,444**	,212	,385**

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Neuroticisms	Sig. (2-tailed)	,003	,035	,000	,078	,001
	N	70	70	70	70	70
	Pearson					
	Correlation	,076	,116	,161	,018	,293*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,532	,338	,184	,882	,014
	N	70	70	70	70	70
Openness to experience	Pearson					
	Correlation	,214	,163	,272*	,186	,245*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,076	,178	,023	,122	,041
	N	70	70	70	70	70
	N	70	70	70	70	70
	N	70	70	70	70	70

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

It may be deduced from the most recent research from the date above that student preferred the personality trait of openness to experiences. The second highest scored personality attribute was Consciousness, followed by Agreeability. This is consistent with earlier study on the subject (Kang, 2012). The lowest means for extroversion ($M=18.50$) and neuroticism ($M=18.87$) indicate that students were neither neurotic nor extrovert while learning the language. According to SILL data, metacognitive ($M=3.82$) learning strategy was the most popular among students. The second-ranked learning method among students was social ($M=3.63$), which was followed by affective ($M=3.53$) learning strategies. Cognitive ($M=3.51$) was the least chosen learning strategies, which was followed by compensation ($M=3.44$). The results of earlier research on a related topic do not match those of the current study. According to Su's (2005) findings, students preferred social strategy. She investigated Applied Foreign Language majors in Taiwanese vocational colleges. University students in Singapore were the subject of a study by Wharton (2000), who discovered that they favoured the social learning approach. Politzer (1983), however, discovered the students preferred the memorization learning approach in her study. This is more consistent with the findings of the most recent research. This indicates that students' learning processes have altered, most likely as a result of recent developments in technology and educational practices.

CONCLUSION

This study's major goals were to assess the Five Factors proficiency among university students in Indonesia and investigate the connections between personality traits and language learning strategies. The results supported a significant relationship between personality traits and language learning strategies. According to this study, Openness to Experience is the personality trait that has the most potent moderating effect on personality. This is most likely as a result of its connection to metacognitive function and heavy reliance on genetic variables. Understanding a student's personal learning strategies might be crucial to their success in learning a foreign language. Additionally, it can boost students' motivation and self-confidence. When designing foreign language lessons, personality characteristics of the students should be taken into mind.

With the aid of this knowledge, expert course designers will be able to bring crucial language learning challenges closer to the students, enabling them to get the greatest learning outcomes. Students' enthusiasm and interest may also rise if they are made aware of their personality traits and language learning strategies. Students will be able to express their personality features after they are aware of these many challenges, giving them the confidence to learn in a range of learning scenarios.

Students should have been given the chance to approach their learning tasks from this perspective as the cognitive strategy was the one that received the highest ranking in the current research context. Language teachers should evaluate the findings of the research and try

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(a References example)

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