

# THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE BIG FIVE PERSONALITY TRAITS AND LANGUAGE LEARNING STRATEGIES

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## ABSTRACT

**Problem Statement:** The studies based on the relationships between personality and language learning strategies have produced inconsistent results. There have been very few number of studies conducted to find the relationships between personality and language learning strategies. In addition to this, there have been few second language studies based on the Big Five model which is expected to renew interest in the study of the role of personality factors in language learning.

**Purpose of the Study:** The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the personality and language learning strategies of Turkish university students studying at a two-year vocational high school in a Turkish state university.

**Methodology:** This study investigated the personality trait levels, language learning strategy levels and the possible relationships among them by employing a quantitative approach. Two different surveys which were translated into Turkish by the author were used as the data gathering tools.

**Findings and Conclusions:** The findings revealed that while the most popularly used strategy group was compensation strategies, the most preferred personality trait was agreeableness. Significant relationships were found between cognitive strategies and extraversion; agreeableness and intellect; compensation strategies and agreeableness; affective strategies and agreeableness; social strategies and agreeableness.

**Keywords:** Personality, Language Learning Strategy, Foreign Language Learning.

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## Büyük Beş Kişilik Özellikleri ve Dil Öğrenme Stratejileri Arasındaki İlişki

### ÖZ

**Problem Durumu:** Kişilik ve dil öğrenme stratejilerinin ilişkisi üzerine temellendirilmiş çalışmalar tutarsız sonuçlar ortaya koymuşlardır. Bu ikilinin ilişkisini bulmaya yönelik olan çalışma sayısı oldukça azdır. Buna ek olarak, kişiliğin dil öğrenmede oynadığı rolü araştırmaya yönelik çalışmalarda ilgi çekmesi beklenen “Büyük Beş Kişilik Modeli” üzerine yapılan ikinci dil edinimi çalışmaları sayısı da oldukça azdır.

**Araştırmanın Amacı:** Bu çalışmanın esas amacı iki yıllık bir devlet üniversitesinin meslek yüksekokulunda okumakta olan Türk öğrencilerin kişilik ve dil öğrenme strateji kullanımları arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektir.

**Yöntem:** Bu çalışma, kişilik boyutları, dil öğrenme stratejileri ve bunlar arasındaki muhtemel ilişkileri nicel bir yaklaşımla incelemiştir. Araştırmacı tarafından Türkçeye çevrilen iki anket, veri toplama aracı olarak kullanılmıştır.

**Bulgular ve Sonuçlar:** Çalışmanın sonuçları, en popüler strateji grubunun telafi stratejileri; en popüler kişilik boyutunun da uyumluluk olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Bilişsel stratejiler ve dışa dönüklük; uyumluluk ve zihin; telafi stratejileri ve uyumluluk; duyuşsal stratejiler ve uyumluluk; sosyal stratejiler ve uyumluluk arasında anlamlı ilişkiler bulunmuştur.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kişilik, Dil Öğrenme Stratejisi, Yabancı Dil Öğrenimi

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Language learning is believed to vary depending on individual characteristics (Skehan, 1989). Learners' individual differences which may include personality, intelligence, aptitude, motivation have become important features for successful second or foreign language acquisition. Studies in individual differences, however, have failed to produce consistent research results (Lalonde & Gardner, 1984; Skehan, 1989) because they interact with each other in a complicated way (Oxford, 1992).

It is an undeniable fact that all learners have very diverse personalities. In conjunction with this fact, in the context of language, a number of personality characteristics have been proposed as likely to affect second language learning (Lightbrown & Spada, 2006). Personality is defined as those characteristics of a

person that “account for consistent patterns of feeling, thinking and behaving” (Pervin & John, 2001, p. 4). It is generally conceived of as composed of a series of traits such as extraversion/introversion and neuroticism/stability (Ellis, 2008).

Personality makes a difference in how people learn and what they learn (McCaulley & Natter, 1980). Thus, it becomes an important construct in language learning together with linguistic, affective, motivational, and demographic factors (Carrell et al., 1996). As with many constructs, there is a two-way relationship between personality and language learning which means that personality can influence second language learning and second language learning can also influence personality development (Ellis, 1985).

Although traditionally known as a part of taxonomy of individual differences, learning strategies are not accepted as individual difference factors. They constitute an aspect of the learning process rather than being learner attributes proper (Dörnyei, 2005). This fact is mentioned by Cohen (1998) who defined learning strategies as “learning processes which are consciously selected by the learner”.

Language learners use a variety of strategies to communicate more effectively (Scarcella & Oxford, 1992). Keeping in mind that learners use these strategies to improve their language learning and to communicate more effectively, an important figure in the field of language learning strategies, Oxford (1999b) defined the construct as “specific actions, behaviors, steps or techniques that students use to improve their own progress in developing skills in a second or foreign language”. The primary functions of language learning strategies are believed to help the language learners “make learning easier, faster, more enjoyable, more self-directed, more effective, and more transferable to new situations” (Oxford, 1990, p. 8).

### 1.1. Problem Statement

The studies based on the relationships between personality and language learning strategies have produced inconsistent results using the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator and the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire. Some studies found a significant relationship (Harris & Grenfell 2004; Li & Quin 2006; Skehan, 1989) and some of the studies did not find a correlation between personality and language learning strategies (Carrell & Anderson, 1994; Carrell et al., 1996). There have been very few number of studies conducted to find the relationships between personality and language learning strategies (Kang, 2012). In addition to this, there have been few second language studies based

on the Big Five model (Ellis, 2008, p. 676) which is expected to renew interest in the study of the role of personality factors in language learning (MacIntyre & Charos, 1996).

## 1.2. Aims and Focus

The main objective of this study is to examine the relationship between the personality and language learning strategies of Turkish university students studying at a two-year vocational high school in a Turkish state university. Under this main objective, all the objectives of this study are provided below:

- 1) To examine and identify the personality traits of Turkish university students by using Big-Five factor markers developed by International Personality Item Pool (IPIP).
- 2) To examine and identify the language learning strategy choices of Turkish university students by using Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL version 7.0).
- 3) To examine the relationships between the five personality traits and language learning strategies of Turkish university students.

Taking these objectives into consideration, this study addressed the following research questions:

- 1) What are the levels of personality traits of Turkish university students studying English as a foreign language?
- 2) What are the levels of language learning strategies of Turkish university students studying English as a foreign language?
- 3) Are there any correlations between personality traits and language learning strategies of Turkish university students studying English as a foreign language?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

### 1.3. Personality and Second Language Learning

The broad and complex construct, personality has been defined by different researchers in different ways. Allport (1937) called personality one of the most abstract words in language and listed distinct meanings that were derived from fields as diverse as theology, philosophy, sociology, law and psychology. Funder (2001) defines it as "an individual's characteristic patterns of thought, emotion, and behavior together with the psychological mechanism-hidden or not-behind those patterns". One of the most widely used definitions was provided by Pervin and John (2001) as personality "accounts for consistent

patterns of feeling, thinking and behaving". Either this or that way, the emphasis in these approaches has been on 'consistent patterns' which means that there is a certain constancy about the way in which an individual behaves, regardless of the actual situation (Dörnyei, 2005).

The scientific exploration of personality and how it could be measured began in the late nineteenth century (Moody, 2007). What is proposed as the Big Five Model goes back to research conducted in 1930s and 1940s by Allport, Odbert, and Cattell. The main idea behind it was that if there was a certain consistency about how people behaved, then this must be reflected in adjectives in the language people used to characterize each other. Collecting all the possible adjectives in a given language would therefore provide a comprehensive list of personality factors, and by submitting these adjectives to factor analysis we might distill a smaller number of underlying personality dimensions or traits. However it took several decades before the Big Five as a solid framework appeared and the main researchers who were responsible for the final breakthrough were Goldberg (1992, 1993), McCrae and Paul Costa (2003) (Dörnyei, 2005).

The Big Five personality model is currently dominant in psychology and it distinguishes five dimensions of personality: 1. Openness to experience, 2. Conscientiousness, 3. Extraversion-introversion, 4. Agreeableness, 5. Neuroticism-Emotional stability (Ellis, 2008). The domains of personality according to Big Five model are described by Dörnyei (2005) as it follows:

- *Openness to experience*: High scorers are imaginative, curious, flexible, creative, moved by art, novelty seeking, original, and untraditional; low scorers are conservative, conventional, down-to-earth, unartistic, and practical.
- *Conscientiousness*: High scorers are systematic, meticulous, efficient, organized, reliable, responsible, hard-working, persevering, and self-disciplined; low scorers are unreliable, aimless, careless, disorganized, late, lazy, negligent, and weak-willed.
- *Extraversion-introversion*: High scorers are sociable, gregarious, active, assertive, passionate, and talkative; low scorers are passive, quiet, reserved, withdrawn, sober, aloof, and restrained.
- *Agreeableness*: High scorers are friendly, good-natured, likeable, kind, forgiving, trusting, cooperative, modest, and generous; low scorers are cold, cynical, rude, unpleasant, critical, antagonistic, suspicious, vengeful, irritable, and uncooperative.

- *Neuroticism–Emotional stability*: High scorers are worrying, anxious, insecure, depressed, self-conscious, moody, emotional, and unstable; low scorers are calm, relaxed, unemotional, hardy, comfortable, content, even tempered, and self-satisfied.

Although the traits have been carefully constructed and it is the leading trend in terms of personality in the psychology context, Funder (2001) still thinks that we cannot derive every personality construct from the combinations of Big Five.

One of the studies among the limited number of studies based on Big Five personality model is the study conducted by Verhoeven and Vermeer (2002). They created a thirty statement instrument including five personality domains and asked a teacher to evaluate 241 native and second language learners in the Netherlands. Their aim was to see the effect on communicative competence. The results showed that L2 speakers' openness to experience was related to all aspects of communicative competence; extraversion was related to strategic competence; conscientiousness was related to organizational competence. They suggested that extraverted learners are more likely to employ strategies to compensate for their limited language skills.

## 2.2. Language Learning Strategies

Over the last twenty years, there has been a growing amount of research in language learning strategies (Williams & Burden, 1997). The function of language learning strategies is to define the approach learners adopt in learning a second language (Ellis, 2008). The actions taken in order to learn a language are generally called as learning strategies and defined as behaviors or actions which learners use to make language learning more successful, self-directed and enjoyable (Oxford, 1989).

A question arises due to the difficulty in finding the difference between engaging in an ordinary learning activity and a strategic learning activity. A more specific definition of language learning strategies is put forward by Cohen (1998) as "language learning strategies include strategies for identifying the material that needs to be learned, distinguishing it from other material if need be, grouping it for easier learning, having repeated contact with the material and formally committing the material to memory when it does not seem to be acquired naturally".

After taking attention of the researchers, language learning strategy research focused mostly on who is good language learner and the characteristics of him (Rubin, 1975; Stern, 1975). The results showed that together with language

aptitude and motivation, students' individualized learning techniques led them to be successful.

The initial efforts on language learning strategies created two popular taxonomies of language learning strategies by O'Malley and Chamot (1990) and Oxford (1990). They are quite similar (Dörnyei, 2005). O'Malley and Chamot (1990) in their classification had 3 groups of strategies named as 'cognitive', 'social/affective' and 'metacognitive' strategies. The more popular categorization deserving appreciation for consistently questioning the classification is Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) (1990). Oxford (1990, cited in Adams, 2006) divides LLSs into direct strategies (*memory strategies, cognitive strategies, and compensation strategies*) and indirect strategies (*metacognitive strategies, affective strategies, and social strategies*). The present study will be dealing with language learning strategies by using the taxonomy of Oxford (1990).

Williams and Burden (1997, p. 152) explain the basic functions of strategy categories of language learning strategy taxonomy of Oxford (1990). Metacognitive strategies are concerned with helping learners to regulate their learning, whereas affective strategies are concerned with learners' emotional requirements such as confidence. While social strategies lead to increased interaction with the target language, cognitive strategies are the mental strategies learners use to make sense of their learning, memory strategies are those used for storage of information. Finally, compensation strategies help learners to overcome knowledge gaps to continue the communication.

### 2.3. Personality and Language Learning Strategies

Studies conducted on the relationship between the personality and language learning strategies have shown diverse results. An example of these studies is the study of Ehrman and Oxford (1990). They found out the relationships between personality and language learning strategies by examining twenty Turkish learners by using MBTI, the SILL and the interviews. The results showed that while extravert learners preferred using social strategies; introvert learners preferred metacognitive strategies by avoiding social contact. While sensing learners preferred memory strategies; intuitive learners preferred compensation strategies. Further results of this study showed that thinker learners preferred cognitive; feeler learners preferred metacognitive; judger learners preferred metacognitive and social strategies.

Wakamoto (2000) investigated the relationship between personality and language learning strategies of 254 Japanese learners of English by focusing on



extroversion and introversion. According to the results, extraversion was found significantly and positively correlated with functional practice strategies and social/affective strategies. Contrary to the study of Ehrman and Oxford (1990), introvert learners were not found to have any preferred language learning strategies.

In another study, Sharp (2008) investigated the relationships among personality types, language learning strategies and proficiency of 100 students learning English in Hong Kong. The results showed that introversion was negatively related to social strategy use and positively related to metacognitive strategy use.

Kang (2012) in his PhD thesis examined the personality traits and language learning strategies of 250 Korean university students learning English as a foreign language through five-factor model of personality and SILL. He found significant relationships among five personality domains and strategy categories. Openness, conscientiousness and extraversion showed positive relationships with most of the strategies, but neuroticism showed a negative relationship only with metacognitive strategies. Also, openness and conscientiousness were found to be most significant predictors of using language learning strategies.

Chen and Hung (2012) investigated the personality types, perceptual style preferences and language learning strategies of 364 Taiwanese senior high school learners. The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers & McCaulley, 1985), the Perceptual Learning Preferences Survey (adapted from Kinsella's 1995 survey), and the Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Oxford, 1990) were the instruments to collect data. According to the results, significant relationships were found between introvert/extrovert personality and language learning strategies. Significant relationships were also found between the sensing/intuitive personality type and memory, compensation, social, and metacognitive strategies.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

This study investigated the personality trait levels, language learning strategy levels and the possible relationships among them by employing a quantitative approach. Two different surveys translated into Turkish by the author were used as the data gathering tools.

#### 3.1. Setting and Participants:

The present study which aims to find out the relationships between the personality traits and the language learning strategies of Turkish university



students was conducted at a state university in Turkey during the Spring term of 2012-2013 academic year. A total number of 149 students from various classes, both from first and second grades participated in the study. The participants were young adults whose ages varied from 18 to 27 with an average at 20.4. The distribution of the participants according to gender is shown Table 1 below:

**Table 1.** Gender Distribution

Gender	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Male	88	59.1
Female	61	40.9

The participants' English proficiency level is elementary. Thus, both the personality and the language learning strategy questionnaires were translated into Turkish by the researcher to gather more accurate results.

### 3.2. Data Collection Tools:

This study consisted of two different measurements: Oxford's (1990) Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (SILL) and Goldberg's (1992) International Personality Item Pool. There are originally two versions of the SILL, both for English speakers learning a new language (version 5.1) and for the speakers of other languages learning English (version 7.0). For the current study, the SILL 7.0 version was employed. It was translated into Turkish to gather more accurate results. The SILL is a self-reported questionnaire that measures the frequency of use of language learning strategies of adult second language learners (Oxford, 1990). Oxford's (SILL) (1990) has six strategy groups and fifty items. Basically, language learning strategies are grouped into two categories (direct and indirect). The six strategy groups and the actions these strategy groups require and the item numbers are shown Table 2 below (Oxford, 1990):

**Table 2.** Language Learning Strategy Categories and the required Actions

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<b>I. Direct Strategies</b>	
<b>1) Memory Strategies (9 items)</b>	a) Creating mental linkages b) Applying images and sounds c) Reviewing well d) Employing action
<b>2) Cognitive Strategies (14 items)</b>	a) Practicing b) Receiving and sending messages c) Analyzing and reasoning d) Creating structure for input and output
<b>3) Compensation Strategies (6 items)</b>	a) Guessing intelligently b) Overcoming limitations in speaking and writing
<b>II. Indirect Strategies</b>	
<b>4) Metacognitive Strategies (9 items)</b>	a) Centering your learning b) Arranging and planning your learning c) Evaluating your learning
<b>5) Affective Strategies (6 items)</b>	a) Lowering your anxiety b) Encouraging yourself c) Taking your emotional temperature
<b>6) Social Strategies (6 items)</b>	a) Asking questions b) Cooperating with others c) Empathizing with others

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Turkish version of the SILL is rated on a five-point Likert-scale which is frequency based ranging from 1: *never* to 5: *always*. The participants were evaluated according to the scores they had between 1 to 5 showing how often they used strategies while learning English. Their scores were divided into three levels:

**Table 3.** Frequency of Language Learning Strategy Use

<b>High</b>	Always or almost always used	4.5 to 5.0
	Usually used	3.5 to 4.4
<b>Medium</b>	Sometimes used	2.5 to 3.4
<b>Low</b>	Generally not used	1.5 to 2.4
	Never or almost never used	1.0 to 1.4

In terms of reliability issue of the SILL, a number of studies proved that the SILL is highly reliable showing a high reliability score of above .90 (Kang, 2012). Some examples of the translated versions of the SILL also showed high reliability such as Watanabe' study (1990) reported .92 with Japanese learners and Yang's study (1992) reported .94 with Taiwanese students. In this study, the high reliability of the SILL did not change and it was found .92. In terms of validity, the back-translation was done by another researcher and necessary amendments were taken into consideration while preparing the Turkish version of the SILL.

The second data collection tool in this study comprising the Big Five personality traits known as Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness to Experience, and Neuroticism/Emotional Stability is the International Personality Item Pool. The scale was developed to measure the Big-Five factor markers reported in Goldberg (1992) by a scientific collaborator for the development of advanced measures of personality traits and other individual differences (<http://ipip.ori.org/>).

### 3.3. Analysis:

For the analysis of the first two research questions, quantitative data analysis was conducted with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 20.0) by calculating the descriptive statistics which included means, standard deviations, frequencies for each personality trait and each language learning strategy category. Also, for these two research questions, Pearson's *r* correlation was calculated to investigate the possible correlations among the personality traits themselves and language learning strategies respectively. For the third research question, Pearson's *r* correlation was found to examine the relationships between personality traits and language learning strategies.

## 4. FINDINGS

As it was previously mentioned, the main objective of this study is to find the relationships between the Big Five personality traits and language learning

strategies. Following this main objective, three research questions were tried to be answered in this section. The findings will be revealed under each research question.

1) *What are the levels of personality traits of Turkish university students studying English as a foreign language?*

The scale which was designed to measure the Big-Five factor markers reported in Goldberg (1992) was used to examine the participants' personality domains. The five domains comprising the Big Five model include Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Extraversion, Openness to Experience and Neuroticism/Emotional Stability.

The table below shows overall mean scores and the standard deviations of the five personality traits. Among the five domains, Agreeableness showed the highest mean which was followed by Extraversion, Intellect/imagination, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism/Emotional Stability.

**Table 4.** Five Personality Domain Mean Scores and Standard Deviations

	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Emotional	Intellect
Mean	3.19	3.57	3.12	3.01	3.19
Std. Deviation	.350	.380	.329	.559	.352

As it is shown in Table 4 below, intercorrelations were found among the five domains. According to the results, many statistically significant relationships were found among personality traits ( $p < .001$ ). Extraversion and Conscientiousness were found correlated with all personality domains ( $p < .001$ ). Positive relationships were found between Agreeableness and Extraversion, Conscientiousness and Intellect ( $p < .001$ ). Positive relationships were found between Emotional and Extraversion and Conscientiousness. Except for Emotional, Intellect was found to be correlated with all personality domains ( $p < .001$ ).

**Table 5.** Five Personality Domains, Intercorrelations

	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Emotional	Intellect
Extraversion	-	.49**	.36**	.33**	.49**
Agreeableness	.49**	-	.28**	.14	.48**
Conscientiousness	.36**	.28**	--	.36**	.47**
Emotional	.33**	.14	.36**	-	.21*
Intellect	.49**	.48**	.47**	.21*	-

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

2) *What are the levels of language learning strategies of Turkish university students studying English as a foreign language?*

The overall language learning strategy use of the participants was interpreted by conducting descriptive statistics. The scale used for language learning strategies is the Turkish version of SILL (Oxford, 1990) which included 50 items related to measuring six groups of language learning strategies: memory, cognitive, compensation, metacognitive, affective, and social strategies. According to the results, compensation strategies were found to be the most preferred strategies which were followed by memory, metacognitive, social, affective, and cognitive strategies respectively. However, all strategies were used at a medium level. Additionally, the least preferred strategy is cognitive strategy. The results are shown in the Table 6 below:

**Table 6.** Language Learning Strategy Use Means and Standard Deviations

	Memory	Cognitive	Compensation	Metacognitive	Affective	Social
<b>Mean</b>	2.80	2.53	2.97	2.77	2.69	2.73
<b>Std. Deviation</b>	.657	.752	.861	.854	.826	.970

In addition to the mean scores and standard deviations, intercorrelations were also found among the language learning strategies. According to the results, six strategy groups were found to be correlated with one another. The statistically strongest relationship was found between metacognitive and cognitive strategies ( $p < .001$ ). The details in terms of intercorrelations are provided in Table 7 below:

**Table 7.** Language Learning Strategy Use Intercorrelations

	Memory	Cognitive	Compensation	Metacognitive	Affective	Social
<b>Memory</b>	-	.60**	.37**	.62**	.37**	.44**
<b>Cognitive</b>	.60**	-	.50**	.70**	.51**	.61**
<b>Compensation</b>	.37**	.50**	-	.46**	.42**	.47**
<b>Metacognitive</b>	.62**	.70**	.46**	-	.60**	.60**
<b>Affective</b>	.37**	.51**	.42**	.60**	-	.56**
<b>Social</b>	.44**	.61**	.47**	.60**	.56**	-

\* $p < .05$ . \*\* $p < .01$ .

3) *Are there any correlations between personality traits and language learning strategies of Turkish university students studying English as a foreign language?*

With the aim of investigating the relationships between personality traits and language learning strategy categories, Pearson's  $r$  correlations were found. Significant relationships were found between memory strategies and agreeableness ( $r=.24$ ); cognitive strategies and extraversion ( $r=.25$ ), agreeableness ( $r=.23$ ) and intellect ( $r=.25$ ); compensation strategies and agreeableness ( $r=.21$ ) and conscientiousness ( $r=.24$ ); metacognitive strategies and agreeableness ( $r=.23$ ); affective strategies and agreeableness ( $r=.26$ ); social strategies and agreeableness ( $r=.30$ ) ( $p < .001$ ). The details are shown in the Table 8 below:

**Table 8.** Language Learning Strategy and Personality Domains Correlations

Strategy/personality	Extraversion	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness	Emotional	Intellect
Memory	.18*	.24**	.17	.12	.19*
Cognitive	.25**	.23**	.180*	.18*	.25**
Compensation	.19*	.21**	.24**	.18*	.15
Metacognitive	.15	.23**	.01	.09	.06
Affective	.18*	.26**	.05	.17*	.12
Social	.16	.30**	.13	.12	.21*

## 5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

The present study had the objective of examining the language learning strategy use and five personality traits of Turkish state university students who study for 2 years at a vocational high school. The possible relationships among the language learning strategy categories and personality traits were among the objectives of this study as well.

The findings revealed that Agreeableness is the most popular personality trait among the participants followed by Extraversion, Intellect/imagination, Conscientiousness, and Neuroticism/Emotional Stability. As it is previously mentioned by Dörnyei (2005, p. 15) high scorers of Agreeableness are friendly, good-natured, likeable, kind, forgiving, trusting, cooperative, modest, and generous; low scorers are cold, cynical, rude, unpleasant, critical, antagonistic, suspicious, vengeful, irritable, and uncooperative. Although the mean scores of five personality traits are quite similar to one another, it can be concluded that the participants of this study have the above mentioned personality characteristics.

Intercorrelations among the personality traits revealed that the learners who had a high degree of Extraversion and Conscientiousness showed a higher degree of all personality traits. Moreover, the learners who had a high degree of Agreeableness showed a higher degree of Extraversion, Conscientiousness

and Intellect. Similarly, the learners who had a high degree of Emotional showed a higher degree of Extraversion and Conscientiousness. Finally, the learners who had a high degree of Intellect showed a higher degree of all personality traits except for Emotional.

The findings in terms of language learning strategy use showed that compensation strategy which is accepted as a direct strategy and which requires guessing intelligently and overcoming limitations in speaking and writing is the most popular strategy used by the participants. It was followed by memory, metacognitive, social, affective and cognitive strategies respectively in terms of popularity. In addition, intercorrelations among language learning strategy categories demonstrated that all strategies have significant relationships with one another.

According to Pearson's  $r$  correlations results some significant relationships were found among the language learning strategy categories and five personality traits. The learners who had a high level of agreeableness showed a higher tendency to use memory strategies. The learners who had a high level of extraversion, agreeableness and intellect showed a higher tendency to use cognitive strategies. The learners who had a high level of agreeableness and conscientiousness showed a higher tendency to use compensation strategies. The learners who had a high level of agreeableness showed a higher tendency to use metacognitive, affective social strategies.

According to the findings of this study, agreeableness was chosen as the most preferred personality domain by the participants. The agreeableness domain stands for a tendency to build harmony in social situations (Costa & McCrae, 1992). It consists of six facets: trust, straightforwardness, altruism, compliance, modesty, and tender-mindedness (Kang, 2012). Agreeableness was found significantly correlated with all strategy groups in this study. The findings of this study are not in accordance with the findings of Kang's (2012) study regarding agreeableness. Although, agreeableness was found significantly correlated with all strategy groups in this study, it was not correlated with any of the six strategy groups in Kang's study (2012).

The second most preferred personality domain was the extraversion which references a tendency to prefer stimulation, company of others, and engagement with the external world (Costa & McCrae, 1992). It consists of six facets: warmth, gregariousness, assertiveness, activity, excitement-seeking, and positive emotions. In this study, extraversion was found to significantly correlate with cognitive strategy group. However, this finding is not compatible with the study of Ehrman and Oxford (1990). According to the results of their



study which was based on Turkish learners, extravert learners preferred using social strategies. Also, the study of Wakamoto (2000) investigating the relationship between personality and language learning strategies of Japanese learners of English found extraversion significantly positively correlated to functional practice strategies and social/affective strategies which is also incompatible with the findings of this study.

In terms of language learning strategy use, the findings of this study show similarities and differences to the findings of some studies. Compensation strategies were found to be the most preferred strategies in this study. This finding is compatible with the findings of Razi (2012) who found out in his study that Turkish participants mostly preferred compensation and metacognitive strategies. Another study the results of which show similarity to the present study is the one conducted by Alptekin (2007) who investigated the tutored learning of English in a formal setting and the non-tutored acquisition of Turkish in a non-formal setting by international university students at a Turkish University. According to the results, although the learners used all strategies, the compensation strategy was the most frequently used strategy in both tutored and naturalistic learning.

In terms of strategy use, the study of Arslan et al. (2012) revealed that Turkish college students use memory strategies the most which was followed by metacognitive strategies, social strategies, compensation strategies, affective strategies and cognitive strategies. Although the findings of this study do not match on the frequently used strategy groups with this study, they show similarity on the least preferred strategy groups.

Results show that personality is an important factor affecting the language learning strategy use. However, strategy use is a complex construct influenced by a variety of factors. Therefore, similar studies should be conducted to provide results about possible relationships between language learning strategies and its potential affecting constructs. Additionally, results found in one specific context may not be applicable to other. Hence, studies should be conducted to investigate language learning strategies in different contexts as well.

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