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RELATIONSHIP OF PERSONALITY TYPES AND STRATEGY CHOICES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING²⁷

Summary. Language learning is a comprehensive concept encompassing numerous components and needs. Because of this, it is affected by various subjects, the most significant of which are learner personality and the language learning strategy choices of students. Taking into consideration the importance of these factors in language education, the main aim of this study is to discover the relationship of students' personality types and their language learning strategy choices, also taking into account their language levels, in order to provide information for syllabus designers and language teachers. In order to do so, a survey design method was used, supported by the Myers Briggs Personality Test and the SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning). Sixty-eight randomly selected students participated in the study. After analyzing data with SPSS 23.0, it was found that there is no significant statistical relationship between strategy choices and personality types. On the other hand, the participants showed different characteristics (most of them had ESTJ, or "extravert, sensing, thinking, judging" characteristics); furthermore, they desired to use different learning styles, the most often used of which were compensation, memory, and social strategies. This study is important in that it revealed that students can have different characteristics and learning strategies, and that these differences should be taken into consideration while planning a language course.

Keywords: personality types; SILL; learning strategy; Myers and Briggs.

Introduction

Learning which can be defined as "acquiring or getting of knowledge of a subject or a skill by study, experience, or instruction" (Brown, 2007, p. 7) or "the internalization of rules and formulas which can be used to communicate in the L2" (Tuncay, 2013, p. 119), requires the use of different strategies and is affected by various variables, such as learner, teacher and learning environment. The learner, in particular, should be given importance, because it is nearly impossible to teach something if it is not desired by the learner itself. Thus, learner characteristics are the main factors that should be taken into consideration in this regard. Examining and considering the personalities

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of a group of learners will create positive opportunities for planning educational activities.

Bitlisli, Dinç, Çetinceli, and Kaygısız (2013) describe personality not only as the stable entity of the overall characteristic features of a person, but also an invariable model of the individual characteristics that define the uniqueness of that person. Writers also explain that the root of the word "personality" goes back to the Latin word "person," referring to the mask used to represent the identity of individuals and demonstrate their characteristics. These characteristics not only impact the social lives of individuals, but they also influence their academic lives in terms of their learning capacity and time needed to master a subject. Oxford (2003) asserts that the characteristics of an individual can be examined in four different ways: extraversion vs. introversion, thinking vs. feeling, sensing vs. intuition, and judging vs. perceiving. Extraverted learners get their energy and desire from the outside world; and they learn by doing, discussing or talking. On the other hand, introverted learners choose to have just a few friends, focus on their own interests and prefer to write instead of talking (Oxford, 2003; Report prepared for DORA ESFJ, 2013). It is understood from these studies that having extraverted students carry out writing activities or introverted students engage in speaking exercises in front of the class will affect the learning atmosphere in a negative way and hinder the acquisition process by decreasing motivation and increasing anxiety levels. Therefore, planning a language class according to whether students are extraverted or introverted can be helpful in improving language learning outcomes.

As a second characteristic type, sensing students like thinking about today and about the place in which they are at a given time. However, intuitive students are more fanciful and able to think in an abstract way. It is easy for intuitive students to find new theories or solutions for a problem; task-based language learning activities can be beneficial for these students. Asking such learners to find the answer to a question or discover a grammatical point in L2 by accomplishing various tasks will engage their attention. On the other hand, sensing students are content with what they have. They do not desire to be active in the process of discovering knowledge and are happy with studying information that has been provided to them.

Another characteristic type can be viewed as thinking vs. feeling. As understood from their names, thinking students give importance to the truths, even if these truths can be dangerous for them or other people; they desire to study truths and acquire understanding in this way. Understanding the grammatical or semantic rules of a language and application of those rules can be an effective exercise for them. However, it is important for feeling students to consider emotions in the learning process, as they try to understand their friends' emotions or needs by showing empathy. For this reason, they do not have problems while working in pairs or groups.

Finally, judging students are more serious, and they may feel the need to find a solution as quickly as possible. Moreover, they prefer to take part in the decision-making process of a learning activity; it is not easy for them to sit in a classroom and do what is asked of them. Contrary to judging students, who do not like activities such as games, perceiving students are able to easily obey all rules set forth by the teacher, and they see everything as a game. For these students, playing games or doing activities that will take hours, or even days, are effective for language learning. The characteristics of these personality types were defined by Myers Briggs and used to determine 16 different personality types (for instance; ISTJ, ENFJ, INFP, ENTP etc.), as presented in Table 1.

Table 1.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Personality Types

Extraversion	Introversion		Sensing	Intuition
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Attuned to external environment * Prefer to communicate by talking * Work out ideas by talking them through * Learn best through doing or discussing * Have broad interests * Sociable and expressive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Drawn to their inner world * Prefer to communicate in writing * Work out ideas by reflecting on them * Learn best by reflection and mental practice * Focus in depth on their interests * Private and contained * Take initiative when the situation 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Oriented to present realities * Factual and concrete * Focus on what is real and actual * Observe and remember specifics * Build carefully and thoroughly toward conclusions * Understand ideas and theories 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Oriented to future possibilities * Imaginative and verbally creative * Focus on the patterns and meanings in data * Remember specifics when they relate to a pattern * Move quickly to conclusions, follow hunches * Want to clarify ideas and theories

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* Readily take initiative in work and relationships	or issues is very important to them		through practical applications * Trust experience	before putting them into practice * Trust inspiration
Thinking	Feeling		Judging	Perceiving
* Analytical * Use cause and effect reasoning * Solve problems with logic * Strive for and objective standard of truth * Reasonable * Can be "tough-minded" * Fair.... Want everyone treated equally	* Empathetic * Guided by personal values * Assess impacts of decisions on people * Strive for harmony and positive interactions * Compassionate * May appear "tenderhearted" * Fair.... Want everyone treated as an individual		* Scheduled * Organize their lives * Systematic * Methodical * Make short and long term plans * Like to have things decided * Try to avoid last minute stresses	* Spontaneous * Flexible * Casual * Open minded * Adapt, change course * Like things loose and open to change * Feel energized by last minute pressures

Note. Report prepared for DORA ESFJ, 2013, 4-5.

As an information-transferring activity, learning requires the use of various techniques known as learning strategies. These strategies are another important characteristic in terms of ELT procedures. Hardan (2013) cites the definition of Chamot (1982), explaining that strategies are the processes, techniques, approaches, and actions that are used in learning. On this point, the concept of learning styles also comes into mind. Before trying to explain learning strategies in depth, it will be beneficial to clarify the differences between styles and strategies. As understood from Carson and Longhini (2002), learning styles are individuals' natural and habitual ways of acquiring knowledge. The learner does not make a conscious choice about what to do and shows his/her individual characteristics in the learning process. On the other hand, strategies, which are both conscious and goal driven (Chamot, 2005), are deliberately chosen by the learner.

Learning strategies, which are characterized by Patten and Benati (2010) as learner choice, awareness, purpose, and laboriousness, should be examined in detail, as they are important factors in the language education. These strategies have two main categories: direct and indirect. As cited in Hardan (2013), Oxford asserted that direct strategies include memory (producing mental images, employing audio and visual elements, and starting action), cognition (studying, analyzing and giving reasons, and creating

opportunities for comprehension and production), and compensation (trying to find out the next item and overcoming speaking and writing barriers). On the other hand, indirect strategies include metacognitive (related to planning and evaluating), affective (expressing the importance of emotions in learning), and social (giving importance to studying together and helping each other) factors. The characteristics of all these strategies are explained in detail in Table 2 below;

Table 2.

Characteristics of Learning Strategies

Direct Strategies	Memory Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It needs grouping, imagination, and reviewing. • It is used for storing and retrieving the information. 	Indirect Strategies	Metacognitive Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It includes planning, evaluating, and finding opportunities. • It helps learners to control their learning process.
	Cognitive Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It needs reasoning, notetaking, outlining, analyzing, and explaining in a short way. • Its aim is to help learner while understanding the target language properly. 		Affective Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is used to lower the anxiety and increase the self-esteem and motivation. • While Metacognitive strategies control the learning processes, affective strategies control the learner's emotions.
	Compensive Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It tries to help the learner while passing the learning barriers. • It enables the learners to compensate their lack of vocabulary and linguistic knowledge. 		Social Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is helpful for being able to ask questions and study in pairs or groups. • It helps students to be in an environment where the L2 was used.

Note. Oxford, 2003; Hardan, 2013; Oxford & Burry-Stock, 1995.

It is clear from the existing research that learner characteristics and learning strategies are important factors in language education; and failing to consider these in the educational process is not possible. Thus, the aim of this study is to explain the importance of understanding students' individual characteristics and learning strategies, the relationship between them, and how to arrange learning environments according to these elements. In accordance with the main aim of the study, our research questions were as follows:

1. What are the results of personality tests of students?
2. Which strategy do students use the most often?
3. How do students' strategy choices change according to their personalities?
4. Do students' strategy choices show differences according to their language levels?
5. What is the relationship between MBTI and strategy choices?

Method

Research design

A cross-sectional survey design, which is a quantitative method described by Creswell (2005) as "procedures in quantitative research in which investigators administer a survey to a sample to the entire population of people in order to describe the attitudes, opinions, behaviors, or characteristics of the population" (p. 354), was used in this study. Dörnyei (2007) supports Creswell by explaining the ability of surveys to reveal the characteristics of a population. In this survey design, the aim was to understand students' characteristics and their strategy choices by asking them indirect questions. A Likert scale method was chosen as an appropriate method for collecting opinions (McDonough & McDonough, 1997).

Participants

This study was carried out with 68 students from different departments of a state university in Turkey. The study had 100 participants at the beginning, but some of the participants did not fill out the survey forms completely, and thus, they were not included in the study. Having university students as participants provided the opportunity for reaching individuals who are from different parts of the country and who have diverse characteristics. Moreover, the students did not have the same language proficiency levels, as they ranged from beginner to intermediate.

Data collection and analysis

The data were collected using two different survey forms that were originally designed and used in previous studies. In order to understand students' characteristics, the Myers Briggs Personality Test was used. This test includes 4 different sections and is used by institutions or individual researchers to understand people's characteristics. The various sections of the test help us to identify students' characteristics as extraversion vs. introversion, thinking vs. feeling, sensing vs. intuition, and judging vs. perceiving, resulting in a final personality type. The SILL (Strategy Inventory for Language Learning) was also applied, and students' learning strategy choices were categorized as cognitive, metacognitive, compensating, affective, social, and memory. The SILL was employed because Oxford and Burry-Stock (1995) refer to it as the most often-used scale for collecting data in order to understand learners' strategy choices.

Table 3.

Reliability Score of the Data Collection Tool

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
,957	63

The SPSS 23.0 was used in the analysis of the quantitative data. The reliability score, which can be found in Table 3 above, indicates the adequacy and quality of the data collection tools. Nonparametric data, descriptive statistics, the Kruskal Wallis Test, and Regression analysis were applied to the data in the analysis process.

Results and Discussion

Students' personality test results

As Table 4 shows, most of the students in the study exhibit sensing or thinking characteristics. These students are logical, fair, strict, trustful, and have the ability to remember the whole picture of events, work on facts, and trust

their experiences. As such, the learning atmosphere for these students should be logical, strict and trusting. Students should feel secure, and games or activities that aim to relax the learner should not be part of the learning procedure.

Table 4.

Students' Personality Test Results

-		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Extraversion	1	1,5	1,5	1,5
	Sensing	23	33,8	33,8	35,3
	Thinking	22	32,4	32,4	67,6
	Judging	8	11,8	11,8	79,4
	Sensing and thinking	8	11,8	11,8	91,2
	Sensing and judging	3	4,4	4,4	95,6
	Thinking and judging	2	2,9	2,9	98,5
	Sensing, thinking and judging	1	1,5	1,5	100,0
	Total	68	100,0	100,0	-

Moreover, the participants in this study are active and fact-minded. They may be practical while solving a problem and be able think analytically due to their "ESTJ" (Extraversion, sensing, thinking, judging) characteristics. In this respect, teachers may be more successful in getting their students' attention and increasing classroom success with a course design and syllabus that addresses students' common sense and critical thinking skills.

Additionally, because the students demonstrated extravert characteristics, it can be stated that they need to be with other people and study in groups; working alone or not being allowed to cooperate will be difficult for them. Assignments or homework that can be related to their social lives and that asks students to communicate with others will motivate them and increase their success. Furthermore, due to their sensing characteristics, they may trust facts more than anything else. These students may be able to see the whole picture as a snapshot and remember it. However, studying facts and relying on them too much decreases their chances of seeing new possibilities. Explaining the classroom rules in a logical way and making the aim of the language course clear will motivate such students and decrease their anxiety, as they exhibit the characteristics of "thinking" people. Students who

trust facts, like being with people, and are able to see the complete picture also tend to prefer the opportunity to make decisions. Belonging to a group of “judging” people, teachers may leave them blanks that can be completed according to the students’ decisions. In order to accomplish this, a task-oriented environment may be preferred, along with a student-centered curriculum.

Students’ SILL results

Language teachers of students such as those who participated this study must be aware of that their learners mostly use compensating strategies, taking action when they come across a problem or when they are hindered by a learning barrier. Learning with others and remembering were the other most frequently employed strategies. In this sense, it may be ineffective to ask such students to understand each other or to connect the information using their cognitive ability, because they do not choose affective or cognitive strategies.

Table 5.

Students Strategy Choices

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Remembering	13	19,1	19,1	19,1
	Using mental processes	3	4,4	4,4	23,5
	Compensating	17	25,0	25,0	48,5
	Organizing and evaluating	12	17,6	17,6	66,2
	Managing emotions	2	2,9	2,9	69,1
	Learning with others	13	19,1	19,1	88,2
	Remembering and compensating	1	1,5	1,5	89,7
	Remembering and organizing and evaluating	1	1,5	1,5	91,2
	Using mental processes and organizing and evaluating	1	1,5	1,5	92,6
	Managing emotions and learning with others	2	2,9	2,9	95,6
	Compensating and organizing and evaluating	2	2,9	2,9	98,5
	Using mental processes and compensating	1	1,5	1,5	100,0
	Total	68	100,0	100,0	

In addition to the most frequently used strategy types of the participants, the mean scores of the strategy choices indicate an order of strategy choice, from compensating, remembering (memory), organizing and evaluating (metacognitive), learning with others, mental process (Cognitive), and affective (managing emotions) strategies. It is understood from this study that despite the increasing importance of humanity and methods that take students' psychological aspects into account, affective strategies are the least used by the participants. In other words, the students who took part in this research did not give importance to their anxiety levels or increasing their motivation and self-esteem as a means to successfully fulfil their tasks.

Relationship of strategy choices and personality types

Table 6.

Kruskal Wallis Test Result

-	General Personality Type
Chi-Square	5,957
df	11
Asymp. Sig.	,876

a. Kruskal Wallis Test; b. Grouping Variable: Most used strategy

From the results of the Kruskal Wallis test, it can be seen that there is no statistical relationship between the students' characteristics and their language learning strategy choices, because the Asymp. Sig. Column has a value greater than 0,05. When the crosstab results of the same variables are examined, the reason for this low statistical relationship can be understood. It is clear from this analysis that most of the students have sensing or thinking characteristics, and that both of these groups use compensating strategies most often.

Although the students from all of the characteristic groupings used compensating strategies, they showed differences in their second most-frequently used choices. The extravert students, for instance, primarily employed compensating and remembering, but their second choice was organizing and evaluating. In other words, they like making plans and

organizing their time for effective studying. Remembering and learning with others were the strategies that followed compensating strategies when in the sensing, thinking, and judging students. Students such as these may prefer working with other people on a task and may be able to remember information easily.

Given the preceding information, it can be stated that that despite a lack of statistical difference between students' personality types and their language learning strategy choices, they exhibited differences in the order of the strategy choices from the most desired to the least desired. Because of this, it can be recommended that language teachers take into consideration students' characteristics and strategy choices in planning their courses. For instance, the students in this study desired to have some blanks to fulfill; namely, they need the freedom to make decisions during activities.

Relationship of students' strategy choices and language levels

A Kruskal Wallis and a regression analysis were used to understand the relationship between students' language levels and strategy choices. As can be seen in Table 7, the value in the Asymp. Sig. column of the Kruskal Wallis test is ,117 which is greater than ,05. This value expresses that there is no significant statistical relationship between strategy choices and language levels. Therefore, it can be stated that there were no differences in the strategy choices of the students of differing language levels.

Table 7.

Kruskal Wallis of the Language Level and Strategy Choices

-	L2 Level
Chi-Square	16,693
df	11
Asymp. Sig.	,117

a. Kruskal Wallis Test b. Grouping Variable: Most used strategy

Moreover, the R Square result of the Regression Analysis indicates a ,038 percent relationship between students' language levels and their

language strategy choices. The reason for this low relationship value may be students' strong desire to use compensating strategies, as these were the first choice of most of the participants.

Table 8.

Model Summary of Regression Analysis

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,194 ^a	,038	,023	2,88717

a. Predictors: (Constant), L2 Level

Students' Strategy choices and MBTI

Table 9.

Kruskal Wallis and Regression Analysis Tests

	Students' real personality levels
Chi-Square	12,386
df	11
Asymp. Sig.	,335

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	,022 ^a	,001	-,015	2,94239

a. Predictors: (Constant), Students' real personality levels

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Most used strategy

As can be seen from the results of the Kruskal Wallis Test and Regression Analysis, the relationship between the participants' MBTI and their strategy choices is not meaningful, because 50 of the 68 participants were identified as the "ESTJ" type. The order (from the most chosen to the least) of the learning strategy use of the students who have this type of MBTI is remembering (12 students), compensating (11 students), organizing and evaluating (10 students), and learning with others (9 students). There was not a great difference between the numbers of students who chose each of these strategies; thus, the outcomes of the analysis do not show critical dissimilarities.

Conclusion

Language learning is a challenging process, and both learners and learning strategies are important in this process. This study expresses the value of using the correct teaching methods and learning environment according to students' personalities and learning strategy choices. On the other hand, the findings of this study indicate that there is no direct and statistically significant relationship between students' personality traits and their strategy choices or between their language levels and strategy choices. Nevertheless, this study revealed that students in the same class have different personality types, and the different features of these personality types affect their learning. For example, it may be difficult to conduct group work with students who are introverted, and it is the responsibility of the teacher to determine this before beginning the learning process. If the characteristic features of the students are not taken into consideration, teaching/learning activities will present challenges for both students and teachers; students may not be active in the learning process, and their self-esteem or motivation may be low.

Giving importance to students' learning strategy choices is also important. Contrary to studies such as Carson and Longhini (2002) and Griffiths and Parr (2001), who support the high use of indirect strategies, our study revealed an excessively high use of direct strategies, especially compensation strategies. Students desire to use learning strategies when they come across a learning barrier. The choice of strategies appears to have no relation to students' personality types; but applying the correct strategy in the learning process will have a positive impact on their learning. This study supports the idea that before preparing a learning curriculum or syllabus for a course, educators should take their students' personalities and strategy choices into consideration. It may be impossible to design the learning atmosphere according to the personalities and strategy choices of all students, but it may be possible to design this atmosphere according to the majority.

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RYŠYS TARP ASMENYBĖS TIPO IR UŽSIENIO KALBOS MOKYMO SI STRATEGIJŲ PASIRINKIMO

Santrauka. Kalbų mokymasis – tai sudėtinga sąvoka, apimanti įvairius komponentus ir poreikius. Dėl šios priežasties įvairūs veiksniai turi įtakos kalbų mokymuisi. Kaip vienus iš svarbiausių galima išskirti asmenybės tipą ir kalbų mokymosi strategijų pasirinkimą. Atsižvelgiant į šių veiksnių svarbą mokant(is) kalbos, pagrindinis tyrimo tikslas yra išsiaiškinti studentų asmenybės tipų ir kalbos mokymosi strategijų pasirinkimo santykį. Siekiant suteikti informacijos studijų programų sudarytojams ir kalbų mokytojams, tyrime taip pat atsižvelgiama į studentų kalbos lygius. Tyrime, sudarytame taikant tokius instrumentus kaip Myers-Briggs asmenybės testą ir SILL (Kalbos mokymosi strategijų inventorių), dalyvavo 68 atsitiktinai atrinkti studentai. Išnagrinėjus tyrimo duomenis, naudojant SPSS 23.0 programą, nustatyta, kad nėra žymaus statistiškai reikšmingo skirtumo tarp kalbos mokymosi strategijų pasirinkimo ir asmenybės tipų. Kita vertus, tyrimas atskleidė skirtingas dalyvių savybes (didžioji dalis yra ESTJ tipo asmenybės, kai dominuoja ekstraversija, sensorika, mąstymas, vertinimas) ir jų polinkį naudoti skirtingas mokymosi strategijas, iš kurių dažniausiai pasitaiko kompensacinės, atminties ir socialinės strategijos. Šis tyrimas yra aktualus, nes atskleidžia, kad studentai gali turėti skirtingas asmenybės savybes ir naudoti skirtingas mokymosi strategijas, ir į šiuos skirtumus reikia atsižvelgti planuojant kalbos mokymo programas.

Pagrindinės sąvokos: asmenybės tipai; SILL strategijų inventorių; mokymosi strategijos; Myers ir Briggs.