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外語學習焦慮與人格特質在大學生的英語學習成就的預測力分析

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摘要

本研究主要目的是要探索外語學習焦慮與人格特質在大學生的英語學習成就可能產生的預測力；也就是說，這兩個變因對於英語學習成就能做出怎樣的解釋？參與研究的受測者為249名上大學英文課程的學生，兩份量表包括Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale（FLCAS）（Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986）與Big Five Inventory(John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991）的修訂版（Chiao, 2002）分別被使用來測試這兩個變因，全民英檢中高級初試成績則被用來衡量學生的英語學習成就。統計分析結果顯示這兩個變因對於英語學習成就作出具統計意義的顯著貢獻，其中，外語學習焦慮的Beta值(β)最大，意即：外語學習焦慮對於英語學習成就在這幾個變因裡預測力最強。本項研究對於這兩個變因在大學生的英文學習成就所扮演的角色，提供了有意義的訊息。

關鍵詞：外語學習焦慮、人格特質、英語學習成就、外語教學

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Analyzing the Predictive Power of Foreign Language Learning Anxiety and Personality Traits on the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Achievement in University Students

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the predictive power of foreign language learning anxiety (FLLA) and personality traits on university students' English as a foreign language (EFL) learning achievement. The main focus is to determine how well FLLA and personality traits can explain EFL learning achievement. 249 Taiwanese university students who were enrolled in EFL courses participated. I employed the Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz, Horwitz, & Cope, 1986) and the modified version (Chiao, 2002) of the Big Five Inventory (John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991) to assess the factors under study. The first stage of the High-Intermediate Level (intended for non-English major college or university students) of the General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) was used to evaluate students' EFL learning achievement. The results show that personality traits and FLLA make statistically significant

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contributions to EFL achievement. Of all the factors at play, FLLA made the largest significant unique contribution to the prediction of EFL achievement. The findings provide valuable and useful information for psychological research in pedagogical and linguistic contexts.

Keywords: foreign language learning anxiety, personality traits, EFL achievement, foreign language education

Introduction

Psychological literature has documented that individual differences play an important role in foreign language learning. For example, Ellis (1985) suggested that personality factors are important in the development of linguistic abilities. Dörnyei (2005) also supported this view and indicated that individual differences are the most consistent predictors to determine whether or not learning outcomes are successful. Among different individual factors, personality traits are believed to have heavy implication in the learning process in general, and have been identified as “powerful modifying variables” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 24) which “shape the way people respond to their learning environment” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 30).

Another factor that drew our attention was anxiety that may occur in the process of foreign language acquisition. Anxiety has been found to be an important factor affecting the acquisition of foreign languages (Brown, 2000; Salehi & Marefat, 2014). Despite the increased attention that has been directed recently by researchers toward the experience of learning, few empirical and systematic studies have investigated the role of personality and anxiety simultaneously in foreign language learning. In response, we examined the roles that personality and anxiety play in the learning of English as a Foreign Language (EFL), in particular how well they explain the EFL achievement.

Foreign Language Learning Anxiety (FLLA)

Aida (1994) found that some form of anxiety seems to be a fairly common phenomenon among foreign language learners. In particular,

students who were required to give oral presentations in a foreign language appeared to show some degree of trepidation or panic. Cheng (1998) interviewed 24 college students in Taiwan about their English learning experience and reported that some felt so anxious to the point that they would rather die than go to an EFL class.

Foreign language anxiety was defined by Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) as fear or apprehension experienced by learners who are expected to use a foreign language. The role of anxiety in learning has been examined by psychologists. Wine (1980) proposed the Cognitive-attention Model of Anxiety and argued that individuals caught up in anxiety subconsciously divided their attention and thoughts between self-deprecating worry and the task at hand. Attention and thoughts have instrumental value to foreign language learners. Because attention and thoughts are depleted by anxiety during the process of learning, anxious learners may perform poorly as a result.

This model was further developed by Krashen (1982) to explain FLLA. Krashen (1982) proposed his Affective Filter Theory by suggesting that anxiety entails high affective filters such as dread of public scrutiny or fear of public embarrassment. Affective filters make learners less receptive to language input and less confident in expressing themselves. Through affective filters, anxiety prevents the brain's operating system from focusing on processing the foreign language input, which in turn blocks language acquisition from taking place.

Another researcher, Leary (1983), suggested that anxiety surfaces when individuals are motivated to make impression on others, but at the same time

have doubts in their ability to do so. In a foreign language classroom where evaluation occurs frequently, learners are more motivated than ever to make efforts to impress their teachers and peers. This gives rise to anxiety in the individual with a high level of motivation to impress and a high level of self doubt in ability.

Deriving from this point, Oxford (1999) suggested that anxiety damages language learners' achievement "indirectly through worry and self-doubt and directly by reducing participation and creating overt avoidance of the language" (p.60). Arnold and Brown (1999) shared a similar view about FLLA and contended that it has downward-spiralling effects on learners. What they implied is a vicious circle occurring continuously between learners' negative feelings and undesirable performance. A few recent empirical findings (e.g., Andrade & Williams, 2009; Öner & Gedikoğlu, 2007) seemed to support such notions.

It would appear that anxiety impedes individuals' foreign language learning. Yet, a few researchers seemed to believe a moderate amount of anxiety would facilitate foreign language learning. For example, Chastain (1975) argued that some degree of anxiety could actually provoke desired learning attitudes and push students to complete their work. Bailey (1983) also suggested that a right amount of nervousness could bring forth people's potential to perform better. A recent study using a sample of 948 Korean college students found that even though female college students were more anxious in foreign language learning, they scored better than their male counterparts with less anxiety (Park & French, 2013).

Despite the complex and multidimensional phenomenon of FLLA, Horwitz, Horwitz, and Cope (1986) conceptualized possibly the most comprehensive FLLA framework to date. Their framework is composed of

three elements: communication apprehension, test anxiety, and fear of negative evaluation. *Communication apprehension* involves the discomfort or tension about real or anticipated communication with others. *Test anxiety* stems from learners' "fear of failure" (Horwitz, *et al*., 1986, p.127) because of the unrealistic expectations that learners place on themselves. Since most foreign language classes involve ongoing evaluation of students' performances, even the brightest students can make mistakes, not to mention the other students. Therefore, test anxiety frequently arises in the learners who are concerned about failure and view the foreign language situation as difficult, challenging, or even threatening. The third component *fear of negative evaluation* is similar to test anxiety but broader in scope because it involves any situation in which the learner perceives other people are evaluating his or her ability. It may happen in any social or evaluative situations such as a job interview. Learners dreading negative evaluation tend to exhibit excessive worry about embarrassment or fear of being viewed as incompetent. As a result, they withdraw from learning activities in class or simply sit in the classroom passively in order to avoid the real or imaginative ridicule.

Personality

The investigation of personality has been one of the core themes in behavioral and psychological sciences (Saklofske & Eysneck, 1998) and foreign language development research in college students (Abu-Rabia, Peleg, & Shakkour, 2014). Personality factors have received psychologists' attention

in numerous disciplines of psychology because they indicate emotional, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal, and motivational variations (McCrae & Costa, 2003). As people are different in many ways, it can be inferred that individuals approach learning tasks in their own manner.

Various studies have been carried out to examine the relationships between personality and foreign language learning. For example, Moody (1988) investigated the relationships between personality types and foreign language learning in college students, and discovered that extraverted students preferred social interaction and performed better in oral tests, while introverted students liked individual work and were better in written tests. He also discovered that sensing students favored memory of facts and details, and accordingly, they preferred objective choice tests. On the other hand, intuitive students liked grasping general concept; as a result, they were fond of essay tests. A recent study using a sample of 164 Taiwanese college students also discovered that certain personality traits had a significant impact on English achievement (Kao & Craigie, 2014). They found that extraverted college students were more likely than their neurotic counterparts to perform better in EFL learning.

However, there were also studies which found little or no relationship between personality and language learning. For example, Carrell, Prince, and Astika (1996) studied 75 Indonesian college students and found low correlations between personality types and language learning. Similarly, Karami (2001) investigated 120 pre-college students in Hamadan and found no significant difference between personality traits and grammatical proficiency. Another study (Rastegar, 2002) investigated the Kerman and Shiraz college students and no significant relationship between extraversion personality and EFL proficiency was observed.

These studies seem to yield different results between personality and foreign language learning. One of the reasons could be the use of different frameworks and instruments to measure personality. In order to enhance methodological rigor in research, a stable, robust, and integrative construct of personality is necessary.

There are different theoretical constructs and instruments that psychologists use to measure personality. This study used the Big Five Model because it has been widely used in the psychological, social and educational research. Besides, these five factors (openness, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism) almost completely account for a comprehensive domain summarizing people's emotional, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal and motivational traits and are relatively stable and fairly robust over time (Digman, 1989). Indeed, John, Naumann and Soto (2008) highlighted the benefit of the Big Five by suggesting that it "serves an integrative function because it can represent the various and diverse systems of personality description in a common framework" (p.116).

Personality Traits and Foreign Language Learning Anxiety

Even though personality traits have been found to be rather stable over time (MacIntyre, 2007), several personality traits have drawn the attention of researchers in order to understand their relationships with foreign language learning anxiety. Prior studies have found individuals with certain personality

traits may be susceptible to foreign language learning anxiety.

Conscientiousness is the trait that is associated with being diligent, well-organized, reliable, habitually vigilant before making decisions, and working hard for accuracy and perfection. These qualities have been found to be likely to make individuals more stressed when they make errors in a foreign language (Gargalianou, Muehlfeld, Urbig, & Van Witteloostuijn, 2015). Considering the fact that there are many opportunities to make errors in a foreign language learning environment, it seems plausible to believe that the conscientious learners are more likely to experience anxiety than others.

Another personality trait, extraversion, represents the tendency to be gregarious, assertive, and social. Therefore, instead of feeling reserved, awkward, or indifferent, extraverted individuals tend to feel more comfortable in social interaction and communication (Brown, Robson, & Rosenkjar, 2001). Research investigating the relationships between the extraversion trait and the foreign language learning anxiety has yielded various results. For example, MacIntyre and Charos (1996) found that extraversion and foreign language learning anxiety were negatively related. Another study (Dewaele, 2013) revealed a moderate relationship between extraversion and foreign language learning anxiety only in one sub-group.

“Neuroticism” refers to the qualities of being emotionally unstable, sentimental, sensitive, anxious, vulnerable, and insecure. Studies on the relationships between neuroticism and foreign language learning anxiety appeared to be inconsistent. For instance, no significant relationship between neuroticism and foreign language learning anxiety was found in a study by MacIntyre and Charos (1996). They argued that such a result may have underscored foreign language anxiety as a situation-specific anxiety, in lieu of a general trait anxiety. Another researcher, Dewaele (2013), reported a

significantly negative link between neuroticism and foreign language learning anxiety.

The other two qualities – agreeableness (the qualities of being understanding, warm, and sympathetic) and openness to experience (the qualities of being imaginative, curious, and creative) – did not appear to show significant links with foreign language learning anxiety.

Although there has been a growing interest in how personality correlates with foreign language learning among college students, research in this area was scattered and inconclusive. In particular, personality appeared to have been studied independently. The problem with this is that the relationship between personality and foreign language learning could not be viewed without taking into account an assortment of important factors. Considering personality may not work in isolation to influence foreign language learning, this study investigated personality traits and FLLA simultaneously in relation to college students' EFL achievement. Two research questions were asked.

1. How well do personality traits and FLLA predict EFL achievement?
2. Which of the factors under investigation has the strongest predictive power on EFL achievement?

Methods

Participants

Our sample consisted of 249 Taiwanese college students who were enrolled in EFL courses. These EFL courses, including Basic English and Basic English Writing, are general college requirements for students in their

freshman year. The average age of our participants is 18 years old. They major in medical sciences, engineering, and management. Among them, 70 were male and 179 were female. Classes were coeducational and not divided by students' ability levels. English was a foreign language to them and is not commonly used in the Taiwanese society. As the English used in the questionnaires was considered understandable to our participants, they were not translated into Chinese. Assistance was offered to students who had difficulty understanding the meanings of the questions.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data were collected in the participants' Basic English and Basic English Writing classes in 2014. Students were informed about the purposes and procedures of the study, its benefits, the importance of the respondents to the success of the study, as well as their rights as voluntary participants. In addition, they were informed that their participation would be anonymous and confidential. Next, they were told that their participation entailed completing questionnaires that were designed to elicit information relevant to the variables under study. The questionnaires were then distributed in class for the students to complete. The participants completed the questionnaires, which were then collected for statistical analysis.

Data analysis began with descriptive statistics of major variables of interest for the sample. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21 to address each of the research questions. Simultaneous multiple regression analyses were used to answer the research questions in which the unique beta weights of the individual independent variables were addressed.

Instruments

To answer the research questions, the following self-report were implemented. The questionnaires (see the Appendix) were deemed most pertinent to the study. Directions were provided as to how each questionnaire should be answered.

Measuring foreign language learning anxiety: The Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale (FLCAS) (Horwitz *et al*., 1986) is a 33-item self-report instrument that has been shown effective in identifying people's perception of anxiety in foreign language learning (See Appendix A). Each of the 33 items is accompanied by a five-point Likert scale, ranging from one being strongly disagree to five being strongly agree. This scale includes items like "I tremble because of fear when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class", and "It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in English", and so on. The FLCAS allows for an overall assessment of FLLA, with a total score ranging from 33 to 165. A higher total score indicates a higher degree of foreign language learning anxiety exhibited in the respondent. Horwitz *et al.* (1986) indicated adequate test-retest reliability over a period of 8 weeks, yielding $r = .83$ ($p < .001$), and acceptable internal consistency .93 ($N = 75$). Saito, Horwitz, and Garza (1999) reported that this instrument has a reliability coefficient of .94 (Cronbach's alpha, $N = 383$).

***Measuring personality traits*:** The modified version (Chiao, 2002) of the Big Five Inventory (John, Donahue, & Kentle, 1991) was used to assess the participants' personality traits (See Appendix B). This instrument yields a score for each of the Big Five personality factors: extraversion, agreeableness,

conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience. Each item consists of a short statement, and respondents are required to rate the degree to which they agree with each statement on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Extraversion includes items 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31, and 36, and has possible scores ranging from 8 to 40. Agreeableness includes items 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32, 37, and 42, and has possible scores ranging from 9 to 45. Conscientiousness includes items 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28, 33, 38, and 43, and has possible scores ranging from 9 to 45. Neuroticism includes items 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34, and 39, and has possible scores ranging from 8 to 40. Openness includes items 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 41, and 44, and has possible scores ranging from 10 to 50. To prevent response biases, this study uses reverse score in a number of items. Sample items include “I see myself as someone who perseveres until the task is finished”, and “I see myself as someone who is emotionally stable and not easily upset”. This instrument was chosen because of its suitability to the local Taiwanese context. In addition, it was also carefully developed and has sound reliability and validity. The reliability alpha for Extraversion is .82, for Agreeableness is .75, for Conscientiousness is .83, for Neuroticism is .74, and for Openness is .75.

***Measuring English Achievement*:** The General English Proficiency Test (GEPT) was used to assess the EFL achievement. The first stage of the High-Intermediate Level (intended for non-English major college students) of the GEPT was used. It has possible scores ranging from 0 to 240. The GEPT was developed by the Language Training and Testing Center (LTTC) and supervised by Taiwan’s Ministry of Education. The LTTC (2009) reported that the reliability indices fall between 0.87 and 0.91, which are comparable to the reliability figures reported by other large-scale tests. The GEPT was

conducted during the two semesters of 2014, and the scores were stored in the database of the university's Language Center. In this study, students' GEPT scores were extracted from the database of the university's Language Center.

Results and Discussion

Descriptive statistical analyses were conducted on the data of participants. The description of the characteristics of the study variables was summarized in Table 1.

Table 1
Descriptive Statistical Analyses of the Variables under Study

	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
GEPT	83	236	184.29	36.33
extraversion	11	40	25.53	7.00
agreeable	22	45	33.84	4.32
conscientious	14	44	29.39	4.80
neurotic	10	39	22.49	5.44
openness	21	66	35.00	5.93
FLLA	51	142	97.05	18.50

The main interest of this study was to determine the predictive power of the five personality traits and FLLA on the EFL achievement of the students under investigation, as well as to measure the relative contribution of each variable to the prediction of EFL achievement. For this reason, multiple regression analysis was used. Simultaneous multiple regression analyses

were used to answer the research questions in which the unique beta weights of the individual independent variables were addressed. This technique was performed here because it answered (1) how well a set of variables is able to predict a particular outcome, and (2) how much unique variance in the dependent variable that each of the independent variables explained (Pallant, 2001).

The results of this analysis are presented in Table 2. The results indicated that three variables (extraversion, neuroticism, and FLLA) accounted for a statistically significant variability on the EFL achievement. The beta value (β = .21) of extraversion indicated that this personality trait was related to higher EFL achievement. The beta value (β = -.17) of neuroticism indicated that this personality trait was related to lower EFL achievement. The beta value (β = -.29) of FLLA indicated that it was related to lower EFL achievement. Altogether, approximately 26% (R^2 = .26) of the variance in EFL achievement found in this sample could be predicted by the personality traits and FLLA, F (6, 242) = 13.93, p < .001, R^2 = .26 (see Table 1). The results suggest that personality traits and FLLA make statistically significant contributions to EFL achievement. The results also revealed that FLLA made the largest significant unique contribution to the prediction of EFL achievement; thus it was the strongest predictor of all variables under investigation. It is expected that learners who reported higher levels of extraversion, lower levels of neuroticism, and lower FLLA achieved better EFL results than those who exhibited lower levels of extraversion, higher levels of neuroticism, and higher FLLA.

Table 2

Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis for Personality and Foreign Language Learning Anxiety (FLLA) Variables Predicting EFL achievement (*N* = 249)

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	*t*	*p*
Extraversion	1.08	.32	.21	3.35	.001
Agreeableness	-.12	.51	-.01	.24	.81
Conscientiousness	.29	.47	.04	.63	.53
Neuroticism	-1.13	.43	-.17	-2.64	.01
Openness	-.61	.35	-.10	-1.75	.08
FLLA	-.56	.12	-.29	-4.72	<.001

F (6, 242) = 13.93, $p < .001$, R^2 = .26, Adjusted R^2 = .24.

Since all participants had taken the GEPT test, it would be interesting to see whether the low-proficiency and high-proficiency students differ in their personality traits and FLLA. Therefore, we divided the sample into two groups, which are the low-proficiency group and high-proficiency group, according to their GEPT scores. The GEPT mean score 184.29 was used as a cut-off point. 93 subjects who scored less than 184.29 were accordingly categorized into the low-proficiency group, while the remaining 156 students who scored higher than the mean score were assigned into the high-proficiency group. To explore the predictive power of FLLA and personality traits for the two groups of students, multiple regression analysis was again used. The statistical results were presented in Table 3 for the low-proficiency group, and in Table 4 for the high-proficiency group.

Table 3

Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis for Personality and Foreign Language Learning Anxiety (FLLA) Variables Predicting EFL achievement of the Low-Proficiency Group (*N* = 93)

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	*t*	*p*
Extraversion	1.35	.36	.32	3.71	<.001
Agreeableness	-.92	.57	-.13	-1.60	.11
Conscientiousness	-.28	.59	.04	-.47	.64
Neuroticism	-2.60	.48	-.46	-5.40	<.001
Openness	-.79	.38	-.16	-2.09	.04
FLLA	-.33	.13	-.21	-2.59	.01

F (6, 86) = 15.43, p < .001, R^2 = .52, Adjusted R^2 = .49.

Table 4

Simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis for Personality and Foreign Language Learning Anxiety (FLLA) Variables Predicting EFL achievement of the High-Proficiency Group (*N* = 156)

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	*t*	*p*
Extraversion	.06	.17	.03	.34	.73
Agreeableness	-.11	.27	-.03	-.39	.70
Conscientiousness	.19	.23	.07	.80	.43
Neuroticism	.50	.22	.20	2.24	.03
Openness	-.09	.19	-.04	-.51	.61
FLLA	-.27	-.07	-.34	-4.03	<.001

F (6, 149) = 3.27, p = .005, R^2 = .12, Adjusted R^2 = .08.

The results showed that neuroticism was the strongest predictor of the GEPT results for the low-proficiency group – the neuroticism trait in the low-proficiency group significantly contributed to the poor GEPT scores. On the other hand, FLLA was the strongest predictor of GEPT for the

high-proficiency group. The results suggested that FLLA had a significant impact on the high-achievers' GEPT scores.

The statistical results indicated that foreign language learning anxiety (FLLA) stood out as the most powerful predictor of all the variables entering into the first regression model. Therefore, FLLA appears to deserve future researchers' attention. These findings took a step forward from traditional research which either examined these factors separately, or made no statement about the relative significance of FLLA and personality traits, and presumed that FLLA and personality traits are of equal importance.

From a cognitive psychological perspective, anxiety could cause cognitive interference in the process of foreign language acquisition. Such interference consumes the resources of working memory, leaving less capacity for cognitive activities. As a result, it may impair language learners' information retrieval, memory, and other cognitive operations such as message organization and storage, particularly in the high-proficiency group. Eysenck (1979) stated that cognitive interference may manifest itself in mental activities such as worry over potential failure, concern over the opinions of others, distracting, or excessive self-criticism. We therefore suggest that the energy, attention, and concentration which should be directed towards EFL learning was divided by the cognitive interference, which in turn made EFL learning less efficient.

The statistical results also suggested that personality traits could make a difference in how well individuals learn EFL. The findings revealed that extraverted learners achieved better EFL results. Extraverted learners have been found to be more willing to speak out, interact with peers, and to be

more comfortable when they make errors (Ehrman & Oxford, 1995). Since foreign language learning involves communication with others, the personality qualities of willingness to speak out and to interact with others, and not fearing making mistakes can make a difference. EFL learners who can easily interact with others would be more willing to have social contacts which are required for the foreign language acquisition. It is also possible that extraverts feel more confident in social situations. We suggest that such confidence can be translated into a beneficial effect on EFL learning.

The results also revealed that neuroticism was found to contribute to poor EFL achievement, particularly in the low-proficiency group. As neuroticism has been strongly linked to emotions (Eysenck, 1992), and emotions can have a significant impact on foreign language learning (Apple, 2011), there appears to be some reason to believe that neuroticism have a “ripple effect” on EFL learning. For learners who have a general tendency to be anxious or fearful (high on neuroticism), their anxiety and fear may be intensified in a situation where their language performance is constantly monitored by their teacher and peers, and they may have very little control over the situation. In addition, it seems reasonable to suggest that the effect of neuroticism may be implicitly rippled through the entire learning process, and indirectly contributes to students’ poor EFL learning outcome.

Conclusion: Summary and Suggestions

This study is considered to be one of the very first empirical investigations to look into how well these five personality traits (extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, and openness to experience) and the FLLA could explain tertiary students’ EFL achievement. It provides

some valuable data and insightful information for psychological research in the pedagogical and linguistic context.

First, our results suggested that FLLA and two personality traits (extraversion and neuroticism) should be taken seriously in educational settings involving the EFL learning. Teachers should be more aware that students with different personality traits may perceive and respond differently to EFL learning, and these differences may be habitual and to some extent, fundamentally unchangeable. It is important for EFL educators to remain sensitive to the individual differences among their students. Therefore, they can take advantage of students' uniqueness by designing suitable approaches or using teaching materials that may better fit students.

In addition to being aware of personality differences, EFL instructors should also become aware of the FLLA, considering the results indicated that it was the strongest predictor of EFL achievement. We suggest that a supportive and interactive in lieu of competitive and stressful classroom atmosphere can make students feel more comfortable in learning a foreign language. This in turn may reduce unnecessary anxiety and boost students' EFL learning outcome.

The present study had some limitations. First, it was restricted to the students of one university, which limits the generalizability of the results. Second, all of the measures used in the present study were self-report measures, except for the GEPT. Disadvantages to the self-report method used in this study are that the questionnaires can be impersonal to some respondents, the answers were forced-choice and it can be difficult for a few people to respond in dichotomies about complicated emotions in their learning. Plus, there was no

control over how students answered the questionnaires. Some relatively obscure variables such as time of day, survey taking fatigue, or survey taking environment such as relative humidity could affect survey taking, which accordingly confound results. This speaks to the problem of response bias, and again makes generalizability of results difficult. Therefore, other types of data collection and analysis such as qualitative methods including critical discourse analysis, direct observation, or structured interviews, may provide more clear and detailed information about the meaning and dimensions of these factors and how they affect the EFL learning achievement.

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Appendix

A. Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale

1. I never feel quite sure of myself when I am speaking in my English class.
2. I don't worry about making mistakes in English class.
3. I tremble when I know that I'm going to be called on in English class.
4. It frightens me when I don't understand what the teacher is saying in the English class.
5. It won't bother me at all to take more English classes.
6. During English classes, I find myself thinking about things that have nothing to do with the course.
7. I keep thinking that the other students are better at English than me.
8. I am usually at ease during tests in my class.
9. I start to panic when I have to speak without preparation in English class.
10. I worry about the consequences of failing my English class.
11. I don't understand why some people get so upset over English class.
12. In English class, I can get so nervous that I forget things I know.
13. It embarrasses me to volunteer answers in my English class.
14. I would not be nervous speaking English with native speakers.
15. I get upset when I don't understand what the teacher is correcting.
16. Even if I am well prepared for English class, I feel anxious about it.
17. I often feel like not going to my English class.
18. I feel confident when I speak in English class.
19. I am afraid that my English teacher is ready to correct every mistake I make.
20. I can feel my heart pounding when I'm going to be called on in English class.

21. The more I study for an English test, the more confused I get.
22. I don't feel pressure to prepare very well for English class.
23. I always feel that the other students speak English better than I do.
24. I feel very self-conscious about speaking English in front of other students.
25. English class moves so quickly that I worry about getting left behind.
26. I feel more tense and nervous in my English class than in my other classes.
27. I get nervous and confused when I am speaking in my English class.
28. When I'm on my way to English class, I feel very sure and relaxed.
29. I get nervous when I don't understand every word the English teacher says.
30. I feel overwhelmed by the number of rules I have to learn to speak English.
31. I am afraid that the other students will laugh at me when I speak English.
32. I would probably feel comfortable around native speakers of English.
33. I get nervous when the English teacher asks questions which I haven't prepared in advance.

B. Modified Version of the Big Five Inventory

Instructions: there are a number of characteristics that may or may not apply to you. For example, do you agree that you are someone who likes to spend time with others? Please write a number next to each statement to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with that statement.

1. Disagree strongly
2. Disagree a little
3. Neither agree nor disagree

4. Agree a little

5. Agree strongly

I See Myself as Someone Who...

1. Is talkative

2. Tends to find fault with others

3. Does a thorough job

4. Is depressed, blue

5. Is original, comes up with new ideas

6. Is reserved

7. Is helpful and unselfish with others

8. Can be somewhat careless

9. Is relaxed, handles stress well

l0. Is curious about many different things _

11. Is full of energy

12. Starts quarrels with others

13. Is a reliable worker

14. Can be tense

15. Is ingenious, a deep thinker

16. Generates a lot of enthusiasm

17. Has a forgiving nature

18. Tends to be disorganized

19. Worries a lot

20. Has an active imagination

21. Tends to be quiet

22. Is generally trusting

23. Tends to be lazy

24. Is emotionally stable, not easily upset

25. Is inventive

26. Has an assertive personality
27. Can be cold and aloof
28. Perseveres until the task is finished
29. Can be moody
30. Values artistic, aesthetic experiences
31. Is sometimes shy, inhibited
32. Is considerate and kind to almost everyone
33. Does things efficiently
34. Remains calm in tense situations
35. Prefers work that is routine
36. Is outgoing, sociable
37. Is sometimes rude to others
38. Makes plans and follows through with them
39. Gets nervous easily
40. Likes to reflect, play with ideas
41. Has few artistic interests
42. Likes to cooperate with others
43. Is easily distracted
44. Is sophisticated in art, music, or literature

Note:

Reverse-scored items include 2, 6, 8, 9, 12, 18, 21, 23, 24, 27, 31, 34, 35, 37, 41, and 43.