

**THE RELATIONSHIP AMONG TRAIT
EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, BIG FIVE
PERSONALITY TRAITS AND THE ACADEMIC
SUCCESS OF EFL LEARNERS**

Sinem HERGÜNER¹ & İsmail Hakkı MİRİCİ²

Abstract

This study aims to determine the associations among Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI), Big Five Personality Traits (BFPT) and the academic success of the students in four language skills namely reading, writing, listening and speaking in English and overall academic success in EFL university students from different majors and having one-year intensive English education. The participants of the study are randomly selected 211 university students attending the School of Foreign Languages in 2013-2014 academic year. In this study, a descriptive and quantitative method was applied. One of the instruments of the study is Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale (1998) revised by Austin, Saklofske, Huang, and McKenney (2004). Tok, Morali, and Tatar (2005) adapted the scale for Turkish population. The other instrument is the Short Form Five Factor Personality Inventory developed by Tatar (2005). For the data analysis, the Pearson correlation coefficient and ANOVA analyses were applied. The findings of the study show that there is a significant negative relationship between BFPT and TEI of the language learners. Also, BFPT and TEI have certain levels of correlation with academic success in language skills and with their grade point averages (GPA). However, the variable of major is insignificant in the success of language learners. In the light of the findings of this study, it can be indicated that TEI and BFPT, as individual differences, are worth taking into account in language classrooms so as to improve the academic success, and thus the quality of the language learning and teaching.

Keywords: *Big five personality traits, trait emotional intelligence, academic success, language skills, English as a foreign language.*

Article History:

Received
08.09.2016

**Received in revised
form**

17.09.2016

Accepted

07.09.2016

Available online

15.10.2016

¹ Dr., Instructor, Gazi University, e-mail: herguner0634@gmail.com

² Prof. Dr., Hacettepe University, e-mail: hakkimirici@gmail.com

Introduction

There are numerous studies focusing on academic success in terms of various factors, aspects and components in learning process. There is also a huge number of studies concerning the individual differences, such as learning styles (Dunn, Dunn & Price, 1984; Kolb, 1985), learning strategies (O'Neill, 1978), language learning strategies (O'Malley & Chamot, 1990; Oxford, 1990) and multiple intelligences (Gardner, 1983) specific to each learner. However, it is quite evident that there are still other individual differences like personality to scrutinize to understand the human being in depth.

Efforts to explain personality traits can be traced as far back as ancient Greek. All philosophers searched for an answer to the same question "what makes us 'us'?" There have been many scholars such as Costa and McCrae (1992), Eysenck (1952; 1967) and Zuckerman (1991) searching for the answers to the questions which are concealing just behind our personalities. Costa and McCrae (1992) developed the five-factor model of personality. The five-factor model of personality is a classification of personality features in five basic dimensions which are Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Neuroticism, and Openness to Experience. Various studies determined a significant relationship between personality and performance (Furnham, Jackson & Miller, 1999; Rothmann and Coetzer, 2003).

The conscientiousness feature of a person shows the capacity to take responsibilities, to have a personal achievement, to be dependable, to be efficient, planned, hardworking and persistent. Agreeableness shows the inclination to be sympathetic, helpful, friendly, tolerant, trustworthy, easy-going, considerate and unified. An extraverted person is regarded as sociable, confident, ambitious, affable, reward-seeking and enterprising. Emotional stability indicates the ability to remain calm, flexible, easy-going, tolerant, reasonable and self-confident. Lastly, openness to experience shows the capacity of someone to be free-thinking, creative, sensitive, intelligent, inquisitive and cultured (Echchakoui, 2013, p.18).

People who are dominant in any traits of personality are claimed to carry certain features as in the following table by Costa and McCrea.

Table 1. Big Five Personality Traits developed and revised by Costa and McCrea in 1992

Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness	Agreeableness	Conscientiousness
Anxiety	Warmth	Fantasy	Trust	Competence
Anger-Hostility	Gregariousness	Aesthetic	Straightforwardness	Order
Depression	Assertiveness	Feelings	Altruism	Dutifulness
Shyness	Active	Moving	Obedience	Strive to achieve

Costa P. T. & McCrae, R. R. (1995). Domains and facets: Hierarchical personality assessment using the Revised NEO Personality Inventory. *Journal of personality assessment*, 64(1), 21-50.

Emotional Intelligence (EI) is also considered to be a predictor of academic achievement (Petrides, Frederickson, & Furnham, 2004). Goleman (1995) described EI as the capacity to understand your own feelings and others' to manage the processes you are involved in thanks to this capacity. The roots of the work go back to Gardner's (1983) study of Multiple Intelligences and where it is possible to see the relationship between emotional intelligence and the notion of interpersonal and intrapersonal intelligence (Mayer, Salovey, & Caruso, 2008; Petrides, et al., 2004). Despite the contradictory approaches in their study, Cherniss, Extein, Goleman, and Weissberg (2006) pointed out the obvious congruence among EI models. All of the EI models obviously are based on two prominent components which are awareness and management of one's own emotions and awareness and management of others' emotions. In the literature, there are two kinds of EI, trait EI and ability EI. The conceptual distinction between trait EI and ability EI which helps a clearer understanding of EI was made by Petrides, et al., (2004, p. 278).

On one hand, Trait EI (or emotional self-efficacy) refers to a cluster of behavioral tendencies and self-perceptions concerning one's ability to recognize, process, and utilize emotion-laden information. On the other hand, Ability EI (or cognitive-emotional ability) refers to one's actual ability to recognize, process, and utilize emotion-laden information.

In certain studies (Downey, Mountstephen, Lloyd, Hansen, & Stough, 2008; Schutte, Malouff, Hall, Haggerty, Cooper & Golden, 1998), it was suggested that the predictive ability of trait EI is obscure in an academic setting while some other studies (Barchard, 2003; Parker, Petrides, Frederickson & Furnham, 2004; Summerfeldt, Hogan, & Majeski, 2004) have found no – or a low– relationship between them.

The present study is an attempt to open a new door to the understanding of TEI and BFPT as certain psychological factors in academic success of EFL learners in language skills. TEI and BFPT being individual differences in learning process can be treated as ability selection tools in language learning and teaching processes. It is possible to categorize learners in any skills, thus why not doing that for language skills of EFL university students in Turkey so as to contribute to the enhancement of the language learning and teaching, which is an open sore for years in Turkey. Thus, today there is a more crucial need to determine psychological factors such as TEI and BFPT in foreign language learning than ever, taking into account the high level of early withdrawals from university due to the inefficacy and low level of academic success of university students in foreign language.

1.1 Aim of the Study

In this study, the terms BFPT and TEI have some specific meanings in EFL contexts. To illustrate, BFPT in an English language classroom refers to Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Extraversion, Neuroticism and Openness in terms of linguistic, communicative and intercultural abilities of language learners and users for their personal communication purposes.

In the same sense, TEI refers to the Optimism/Mood Regulation, Appraisal of Emotion and Utilization of Emotion of the language learners with regard to such language abilities stated above.

The aim of the present study is to research the associations among TEI, BFPT and the academic success of the EFL university students from different majors and having one-year intensive English education in four language skills namely reading, writing, listening and speaking in English and their overall academic success.

1.2 Problem statement

The main research question of the study is 'Is there a relationship among Trait Emotional Intelligence, Big Five Personality Traits and the academic success of EFL learners in four language skills (listening, reading, writing, and speaking) in English?'

The related sub-questions of the study are as in the following;

1. Are Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) and Big Five Personality Traits (BFPT) correlated?
2. Is there a significant difference in GPA and the academic success in four language skills, TEI and BFPT of the EFL learners in terms of their gender?
3. Is there a statistically significant difference among EFL learners in the faculty of engineering and the other faculties in terms of their GPA and their academic success in language skills?
4. Is there a significant difference in the TEI and BFPT of the EFL learners in terms of their majors?
5. Are TEI and its sub-dimensions positively correlated with the academic success in four language skills and GPA?
6. Are BFPT- except for Neuroticism- positively correlated with the academic success in four language skills and GPA?
7. Is there a correlation between BFPT-except for Neuroticism- and the academic success in four language skills and GPA in terms of the majors of the EFL learner?

Therefore, the methodology of the study focuses on clearing up the above mentioned research questions.

Method

The study has the features of descriptive and quantitative research design since the aim of the study is to see a clear picture of a group of language learners with a big population of 1220. The participants, the data collection tools and the procedure are as in the following.

Participants

The participants of the study are comprised of randomly selected 211 willing students (107 females, 104 males) out of 1220 students from the School of Foreign Languages of Gazi University in 2013- 2014 academic year. The majors and the faculties of the participants were different. They were basically from Faculty of Economics and Administrative Sciences, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Architecture and Faculty of Sciences. At the beginning of the academic year, an exemption test, with the aim of determining the students' level of English to identify the ones who would take one-year English education at the preparatory school, was administered to the students at Gazi University who entered various departments of faculties requiring their students to be proficient in English to be able to follow the courses carried out in English. Students who got 60 and over from that exemption test had the chance to go directly to their

departments to start taking courses related to their own majors. The participants of the study were chosen out of the rest of the students who got under 60 from the exemption test and went to preparatory school to take this one-year English education.

2.2 Data Collection Tools

2.2.1 Schutte emotional intelligence scale

Since the participants are not proficient enough to understand the items in English, the adapted Turkish version (Tok, Morali, and Tatar, 2005) of the Emotional Intelligence Scale developed by Schutte et al. (1998) was used in order to measure TEI. The scale comprises of 41 items and gives an overall EI score together with the separate scores for the subscales of Optimism/Mood Regulation, Appraisal of Emotion and Utilization of Emotion. Optimism/Mood Regulation part determines how much competent people report themselves in regulating both their own emotions and others'; Utilization of Emotions defines their competence in utilizing emotions while solving problems; and Appraisal of Emotions shows their ability in identifying not only their emotions but also others'. The scale's internal consistency coefficient for our sample was .92.

2.2.2 Short form five factor personality inventory

The Short Form Five Factor Personality Inventory developed by Tatar (2005) is the second data collection tool used in this study. It is composed of 85-item with a 5-point scale ranging from totally accurate (1) to totally inaccurate (5). The inventory measures the five main personality traits which are Neuroticism, Extroversion, Openness to Experience, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness. Internal consistency coefficients for personality factors were 0.82, .0.72, .75, .80, and .75 respectively. Participants were asked to rate how accurately each statement described their behaviors. Participants also responded to general demographic questions about gender, age, major, student numbers, and school year.

2.3 The Procedure

During the academic year, the participants took 6 midterm exams with the same main parts namely, listening, reading, writing and speaking. This study accounted for the midterm exams, which provided the necessarily sufficient data to observe academic success of the learners in four language skills in English throughout that academic year.

At the beginning of the 2013-2014 academic years, participants filled out the Short Form Five Factor Personality Inventory and Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale. Self-administered questionnaires were distributed in general English classes. The questionnaire contained three sections: Big Five Personality Traits, Trait Emotional Intelligence, and demographics. Participants completed the questionnaire and were ensured about the confidentiality of their responses.

At the end of the academic year, their grade point averages (GPA) for each midterm exam covering the four language skills were obtained and were matched to their trait EI and personality scores. The relationship between the personality factors and EI was also investigated separately for each language skills.

In order to analyze the obtained data set descriptive statistics, ANOVA, Pearson correlation coefficient analyses were administered through SPSS 20.0 statistical analysis software.

Results

3.1 Findings Based on the Research Question 1

'Are Trait Emotional Intelligence (TEI) and Big Five Personality Traits (BFPT) correlated?'

Table 2. Correlation between Personality Traits and Trait Emotional Intelligence

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Extraversion								
2. Agreeableness	-.091							
3. Conscientiousness	-.004	.248**						
4. Neuroticism	-.147*	.070	-.202**					
5. Openness	.181**	.319**	.319**	-.118				
6. Total TEI	.027	-.033	.058	-.125	.067			
7. Regulation of Emotions	.032	-.036	.051	-.107	.109	.827**		
8. Utilization of Emotions	-.009	-.055	.025	-.096	-.002	.444**	.208**	
9. Appraisal of Emotions	-.013	-.026	.033	-.074	.013	.799**	.514**	.170*

*p<.05; **p<.01

Table 2 shows that there is no significant correlation between BFPT and TEI. In terms of sub-dimensions of BFPT, Neuroticism and Agreeableness were found to be negatively correlated with TEI and its all sub-dimensions without any statistical significance. Extraversion and Conscientiousness were also found to be negatively correlated with two of the sub-dimensions of TEI, namely Utilization of Emotions and Appraisal of Emotions. In addition, Openness was found to be negatively correlated only with Utilization of Emotions.

3.2 Findings Based on the Research Question 2

'Is there a significant difference in GPA and the academic success in four language skills, TEI and BFPT of the EFL learners in terms of their gender?'

Table 3. Differences in GPA, Language Skills, TEI and Personality Traits by Gender in Entire Sample

Scores	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	p
GPA/Midterms	Female	107	67.77	12.17	1.656	.099
	Male	104	64.78	14.02		
Listening	Female	107	61.20	12.17	.346	.729
	Male	104	60.57	14.46		
Reading	Female	107	68.02	12.85	1.387	.167
	Male	104	65.48	13.72		
Writing	Female	107	70.19	15.26	2.644	.009
	Male	104	64.10	18.10		
Speaking	Female	107	72.24	13.22	1.635	.104
	Male	104	69.08	14.88		

Total Trait EI	Female	107	153.29	14.60	1.201	.231
	Male	104	150.64	17.32		
Regulation of Emotions	Female	107	46.49	5.76	.782	.435
	Male	104	45.80	6.97		
Utilization of Emotions	Female	107	21.30	3.12	1.769	.078
	Male	104	20.52	3.28		
Appraisal of Emotions	Female	107	37.76	5.29	-.214	.830
	Male	104	37.92	5.95		
Extraversion	Female	107	3.48	.70	-.121	.904
	Male	104	3.49	.64		
Agreeableness	Female	107	3.68	.67	-.308	.759
	Male	104	3.71	.59		
Conscientiousness	Female	107	3.30	.59	.722	.471
	Male	104	3.24	.59		
Neuroticism	Female	107	2.66	.64	.741	.460
	Male	104	2.59	.67		
Openness	Female	107	4.09	.43	.897	.371
	Male	104	4.04	.44		

*p<.05; **p<.01

Independent samples T-test results in Table 3 show that there is no significant difference between females and males in terms of their success in GPA and language skills as well as their TEI and BFPT mean scores for any of the dimensions or sub-dimensions of TEI and BFPT.

3.3 Findings Based on the Research Question 3

'Is there a statistically significant difference among EFL learners in the faculty of engineering and the other faculties in terms of their GPA and their academic success in language skills?'

Table 4. Differences among EFL learners in different faculties in terms of their GPA (One Way ANOVA)

Faculties	N	Mean	SD	F	P
Architecture	12	64.88	15.05		
Engineering	93	68.75	14.60		
Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	64.65	10.74	2.034	.110
Science	27	63.29	12.82		

*p<.05; **p<.01

As is seen in Table 4 the result of One way ANOVA test illustrates that there is no significant difference among EFL learners in different faculties in terms of their GPA.

Table 5. Differences among EFL learners in different faculties in terms of their Listening Skills

Faculties	N	Mean	SD	F	P
Architecture	12	57.46	13.43		
Engineering	93	63.19	14.56		
Economy and	79	59.43	11.08	1.757	.157

Administrative Sciences	27	58.75	14.25
-------------------------	----	-------	-------

*p<.05; **p<.01

As is seen in Table 5, the result of One way ANOVA test illustrates that there is no statistical significant difference among EFL learners in different faculties in terms of their listening skills.

Table 6. Differences among EFL learners in different faculties in terms of their Reading Skills

Faculties	N	Mean	SD	F	P
Architecture	12	66.49	16.24		
Engineering	93	69.56	14.13		
Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	64.59	11.90	2.633	.051*
Science	27	63.63	11.68		

*p<.05; **p<.01

As is seen in Table 6, the result of One-way ANOVA test illustrates that there is a statistical significant difference on behalf of the students in the faculty of Engineering in terms of their reading skills.

Table 7. Differences among EFL learners in different faculties in terms of their Writing Skills

Faculties	N	Mean	SD	F	P
Architecture	12	69.00	16.97		
Engineering	93	69.70	18.34		
Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	65.35	14.83	1.579	.196
Science	27	63.09	17.26		

*p<.05; **p<.01

As is seen in Table 7, the result of One way ANOVA test illustrates that there is no statistical significant difference among EFL learners in different faculties in terms of their writing skills.

Table 8. Differences among EFL learners in different faculties in terms of their Speaking Skills

Faculties	N	Mean	SD	F	P
Architecture	12	66.18	17.66		
Engineering	93	72.72	15.76		
Economy and Administrative	79	69.98	11.13	1.526	.209

Sciences			
Science	27	67.72	13.91

*p<.05; **p<.01

As is seen in Table 8, the result of One way ANOVA test illustrates that there is no statistical significant difference among EFL learners in different faculties in terms of their listening skills.

All in all, as is seen in the Tables above regarding the differences among the EFL students in different faculties in terms of GPA and language skills, there was no statistically significant difference in terms of the faculty of Architecture and three of the language skills namely listening, writing and speaking.

3.4 Findings Based on the Research Question 4.

‘Is there a significant difference in the TEI and BFPT of the EFL learners in terms of their majors?’

Table 9. Difference among EFL learners in different Faculties in terms of Trait Emotional Intelligence

TEI	Faculties	N	Mean	SD	F	p
Total EI	Architecture	12	153.33	10.82	.413	.744
	Engineering	93	150.73	17.52		
	Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	152.51	15.81		
	Science	27	154.19	13.14		
Regulation of Emotions	Architecture	12	46.25	6.03	.840	.473
	Engineering	93	45.68	6.53		
	Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	46.09	6.65		
	Science	27	47.89	5.09		
Utilization of Emotions	Architecture	12	19.50	3.12	1.233	.299
	Engineering	93	20.84	3.24		
	Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	21.30	3.32		
	Science	27	20.67	2.79		
Appraisal of Emotions	Architecture	12	39.58	5.00	1.046	.373
	Engineering	93	37.19	6.30		
	Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	38.38	4.96		
	Science	27	37.70	5.07		

*p<.05; **p<.01

As is seen in Table 9, One way ANOVA results illustrate that there is no significant difference among EFL learners in different faculties for their TEI.

Table 10. Difference among EFL learners in different Faculties in terms of BFPT

	Faculties	N	Mean	SD	F	P
Extraversion	Architecture	12	3.46	.82	1.198	.311
	Engineering	93	3.58	.68		
	Economy and	79	3.45	.64		

Agreeableness	Administrative Sciences					
	Science	27	3.32	.64		
	Architecture	12	3.91	.48		
	Engineering	93	3.67	.70		
Conscientiousness	Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	3.69	.58	.530	.311
	Science	27	3.67	.60		
	Architecture	12	2.87	.51		
	Engineering	93	3.32	.58		
Neuroticism	Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	3.30	.60	2.468	.063
	Science	27	3.16	.59		
	Architecture	12	2.74	.53		
	Engineering	93	2.63	.70		
Openness	Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	2.57	.65	.708	.548
	Science	27	2.76	.53		
	Architecture	12	4.04	.43		
	Engineering	93	4.10	.44		
	Economy and Administrative Sciences	79	4.03	.40	.452	.716
	Science	27	4.034	.51		
			392			

*p<.05; **p<.01

As is seen in Table 10, One way ANOVA results illustrate that majors of EFL learners in different faculties do not have any influence on their TEI or BFPT.

3.5 Findings Based on the Research Question 5.

'Are TEI and its sub-dimensions positively correlated with the academic success in four language skills and GPA?'

Table 11. Correlation among Trait Emotional Intelligence and Four Language Skills and GPA in entire sample

	1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.	8.
1. Total TEI								
2. Regulation of Emotions	.827**							
3. Utilization of	.444**	.208**						

Emotions								
4. Appraisal of Emotions	.799**	.514**	.170*					
5. GPA	.034	.068	.008	.006				
6. Listening	-.029	-.049	-.040	.037	-.713**			
7. Reading	.011	.016	-.026	.046	-.713**	.874**		
8. Writing	.002	-.005	.040	-.005	-.759**	.787**	.805**	
9. Speaking	-.066	-.090	-.012	-.046	-.663**	.748**	.686**	.731**

*p<.05; **p<.01

Table 11 shows that there is no correlation among Trait Emotional Intelligence, GPA and four listening skills.

3.6 Findings Based on the Research Question 6

‘Are BFPT- except for Neuroticism- positively correlated with the academic success in four language skills and GPA?’

Table 12. Correlation among the Personality Traits, Language Skills and GPA in entire sample

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Extraversion									
2.Agreeableness	-.091								
3.Conscientiousness	-.004	.248**							
4.Neuroticism	-.147*	.070	-.202**						
5.Openness	.181**	.319**	.319**	-.118					
6.GPA	.098	.138*	.115	-.017	.124				
7.Listening	.076	.157*	-.026	.063	-.019	-.713**			
8.Reading	.031	-.125	-.049	.044	-.104	-.713**	.874**		
9.Writing	.035	-.119	.039	.032	-.046	-.759**	.787**	.805**	
10.Speaking	-.002	-.070	.080	.011	.001	-.663**	.748**	.686**	.731**

*p<.05; **p<.01

As it is seen in Table 12, Pearson correlation analysis illustrates Agreeableness is positively correlated only with GPA and listening. Despite being statistically insignificant,

Agreeableness was found to be negatively correlated with reading, writing and speaking but listening. However, the rest of the BFPT were not found to be positively correlated with GPA or any language skills. Interestingly, despite being statistically insignificant, Neuroticism was found to be positively correlated with all language skills.

3.7 Findings Based on the Research Question 7.

'Is there a correlation between BFPT-except for Neuroticism- and the academic success in four language skills and GPA in terms of the majors of the EFL learner?'

Table 13. Correlation among Personality Traits, GPA and Language Skills for the EFL learners in the faculty of Architecture

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Extraversion									
2.Agreeableness	-.206								
3.Conscientiousness	-.392	-.099							
4.Neuroticism	.215	.100	-.433						
5.Openness	.237	-.016	.451	-.440					
6.GPA	-.649*	.732**	.176	.021	-.235				
7.Listening	-.477	.760**	.028	.112	-.371	.909**			
8.Reading	-.582*	.701*	.144	.081	-.291	.951**	.916**		
9.Writing	-.575	.806**	.299	-.151	-.011	.930**	.853**	.930**	
10.Speaking	-.505	.722**	.056	.162	-.333	.916**	.832**	.790**	.769**

*p<.05; **p<.01

Table 13 shows that there is a negative correlation among extraversion, all language skills and GPA. On the other hand, Agreeableness is positively correlated with GPA and all language skills for the Faculty of Architecture.

Table 14. Correlation among Personality Traits, GPA and Language Skills for the EFL learners in the faculty of Engineering

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Extraversion									
2. Agreeableness	-.092								

3. Conscientiousness	-.040	.231*							
4. Neuroticism	-.186	.161	-.001						
5. Openness	.123	.296**	.330**	-.085					
6. GPA	-.166	-.039	-.089	.180	-.203				
7. Listening	-.169	-.059	-.116	.175	-.195	.940**			
8. Reading	-.173	-.024	-.123	.233*	-.153	.938**	.872**		
9. Writing	-.026	-.022	-.075	.061	-.207*	.902**	.811**	.802**	
10. Speaking	-.213*	-.086	-.090	.113	-.219*	.893**	.802**	.781**	.748**

*p<.05; **p<.01

Table 14 shows that Extraversion is negatively correlated only with Speaking. In addition, Neuroticism is also positively correlated only with Reading. Openness is also negatively correlated with writing and speaking

Table 15. Correlation among Personality Traits, GPA and Language Skills for the EFL learners in the faculty of Economy and Administrative Sciences

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Extraversion									
2.Agreeableness	-.089								
3.Conscientiousness	.044	.270*							
4.Neuroticism	-.085	-.129	-.381**						
5.Openness	.187	.321**	.277*	-.072					
6.GPA	.221	-.087	-.125	.033	.223*				
7.Listening	.109	-.121	-.253*	.169	.126	.873**			
8.Reading	.188	-.083	-.161	-.010	.184	.874**	.846**		
9.Writing	.139	-.029	-.061	-.003	.215	.863**	.671**	.722**	
10. Speaking	.244*	-.092	-.082	-.004	.175	.757**	.648**	.548**	.620**

*p<.05; **p<.01

Table 15 shows that Extraversion is positively correlated only with Speaking in the faculty of Economy and Administrative Sciences. However, Conscientiousness is negatively correlated with listening. Moreover, Openness is positively correlated with GPA. Thus, the 7th hypothesis indicating that there should be a positive correlation among BFPT, GPA

and Language skills in EFL learners in terms of their majors has partially been confirmed for the faculty of Economy and Administrative Sciences.

Table 16. Correlation among Personality Traits, GPA and Language Skills for the EFL learners in the faculty of Science

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1.Extraversion									
2.Agreeableness	-.242								
3.Conscientiousness	-.122	.626**							
4.Neuroticism	-.064	-.105	-.301						
5.Openness	.190	.519**	.358	-.418*					
6.GPA	.037	.175	.073	-.025	-.055				
7.Listening	-.002	.257	.100	-.196	.039	.916**			
8.Reading	-.034	-.061	.038	-.026	-.303	.841**	.731**		
9.Writing	.021	.096	.056	-.012	-.073	.946**	.787**	.802**	
10. Speaking	.166	.247	.086	-.018	.156	.851**	.758**	.604**	.743**

*p<.05; **p<.01

Table 16 shows that there is no significant correlation among any personality traits, GPA or language skills in the faculty of Science. In the light of the data obtained through the Table 15, it can be inferred that there is still a correlation among Personality Traits, GPA and Language Skills for the EFL learners in different faculties.

Discussion

Based on the theoretical background and the research findings mentioned earlier, we anticipated that to some extent there were certain correlations and differences in terms of the variables of gender and major in GPA (McCrea & Costa, 1992a; Parker, et al, 2004; Chamorro-Premuzic, 2007; Tok & Morali, 2009; Naderi, Abdullah, Aizan & Sharir, 2010; Siegling, Furnham & Petrides, 2014). The findings of this study, thus, are partially compatible with the previous researches in terms of the variables of gender and major of the participants of the research.

In this study, it has been found out that there is no significant correlation between BFPT and TEI in contrary to many other studies (Austin, Saklofske & Egan, 2005; Avsec & Kavcic, 2011; Petrides, 2010; Tok & Morali, 2009). It has also been determined that Neuroticism and Agreeableness are negatively correlated with TEI. Likewise, extraversion and conscientiousness have showed negative correlation with two of the sub-dimensions of TEI namely, utilization of emotions and appraisal of emotions. When it comes to openness it has also been found to be negatively correlated with the utilization of emotions.

One of the two variables in the study was gender. Many of the previous researches illustrate that gender plays a significant role in academic success (Naderi, et al, 2010). Sarıcaoğlu and Arıkan (2009) also suggested a positive correlation between gender and linguistic intelligence. However, some others indicate that gender is not significantly related to TEI (Mitrofanu & Cioricaru, 2014; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 2014). The findings of this study also demonstrated no significant differences between female and male EFL learners. Thus, we cannot associate gender with EFL learners' scores in GPA, language skills and TEI and BFPT.

The second variable of the study was major of the EFL learners. Results showed that there was no significant difference among the students from different faculties although the students of the Faculty of Engineering have higher scores for GPA than the Faculty of Economy and Administrative Sciences. Unlike the findings of the study, there are few studies which have found a positive correlation between the majors of the students and their academic success (Lakhal, Sevigny, Eric, 2013; Vedel, 2014).

The variable of major has showed a significant difference only in the reading skill out of four language skills. The students of the faculty of Engineering have higher scores than the ones in the faculty of Economy and Administrative Sciences and the faculty of Science.

Also, the participants from a certain faculty have not outweighed the ones from the other faculties neither in TEI nor BFPT. Thus, we cannot associate the variable of faculty neither with TEI nor with BFPT.

The results are insignificant in terms of the correlation among TEI, language skills and GPA. However, speaking was found to be negatively correlated with TEI similar to those stated by Freudenthaler (2008). Unlike these studies, Petrides et al. (2004) and Restegar and Karami (2013) have shown the importance of emotional intelligence in academic achievement. Also, Oz, (2015) indicated the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and language learning. Additionally, Parker, et al (2004) indicated the predictive ability of emotional intelligence of academic success.

On the other hand, there are significant correlations among the BFPT, Language Skills and GPA also stated in many researches (Oz, 2014; Petrides, et al, 2004; Tok and Morali, 2009). Agreeableness has been found to be negatively correlated with GPA, writing and speaking.

Overall, the results of this study confirmed the knowledge of the associations among personality traits, trait emotional intelligence, and academic success. The findings also extend the body of knowledge of personality traits and trait emotional intelligence in Turkish context.

Conclusions and Suggestions

The BFPT based data have demonstrated that neuroticism and agreeableness are negatively related to TEI, which can be explained with the emotional instability of neurotic individuals, who are more likely to experience feelings such as stress, anxiety, envy, anger, guilt and depression. However, individuals having high scores from TEI can be treated as people who are controlled and emotionally stable, and who are capable of recognize and manage their own and others' feelings. When it comes to the negative correlation between Agreeableness and TEI, it can arise from the nature of agreeable individuals that can be easily persuaded to do and involve in anything since people scoring high in Agreeableness tend to believe that most people are honest, decent, and trustworthy. Thus, agreeable people are inclined to lose control over their lives and let others to affect them easily.

The fact that there is not a negative correlation among language skills and TEI can be explained with the stressful nature of communicating in a foreign language. On the other hand, it is surprising that there is a negative correlation between speaking, which can be treated as the most stressful language skill among the others, and TEI. All in all, people who have low scores from TEI can be unsuccessful in language skills due to the lack of control over feelings on time and properly while communicating in the target language.

Summing up the results about BFPT and academic success, it can be concluded that agreeableness has been found to be negatively correlated with GPA, academic success in writing and speaking. In fact, agreeable people are easy going. However, as it's probably their first experience in a new environment far away from their families and hometowns, they may not have adapted this new situation, yet. In addition, they are quite friendly, mindful and helpful individuals. That's they are inclined to be too altruist towards other people. As it is their first year, just like them, their friends had various problems and they may have spend so much time in solving others' problems that they forgot themselves and their academic responsibilities. Therefore, it is possible that they could not focus on their studies sufficiently, which caused them to get lower marks. Due to the fact that writing and speaking are productive skills unlike reading and listening that are receptive skills, they develop later and they are demanding skills which can cause more stress on the language learner. These agreeable learners who were experiencing a new life were also learning a new language, which can also be treated another stress resource for them. The adaptation period might have taken a long time for them leading low scores in these language skills and in their GPAs. Interestingly, participants who had high scores in neuroticism are successful in language skills without statistically any significant value. Contrary to the prevailing literature, emotionally unstable learners and users of English can be academically successful in language skills and in their daily lives while using the language. This may have resulted in the low levels of neuroticism of these learners. That's, maybe, the stress and anxiety they felt was even useful during the tests they took throughout a year. Here comes the term 'positive stress' from the field of learning and educational psychology, which helps the learners focus on the material they are studying on so that they can understand it better.

In conclusion, it is evident that this study has shown BFPT and TEI have certain levels of correlations with academic success in language skills and in GPA. Besides, language learners and users who have high scores in TEI can be treated as successful language learners.

As for the practical applications of this study, the assessment and evaluation criteria of language learners and users can be revised accordingly. The findings of the study has made it clear that certain personality traits predict the success in language skills, which means learners are advantageous or disadvantageous in some language skills. They cannot change these personality traits; however, the courses and tests they take can be adapted or materials can be developed accordingly. The same concern can be kept in the material development and adaptation stages of education for language learners. With such materials, it is suggested that language learners will be more motivated and focused while learning a new language, which would definitely contribute to their academic success in language learning.

Teachers of languages are suggested to apply personality and emotional intelligence scales that they are easily accessible and free to see the personality profiles of their students as well as their capacities of using emotions. In that way, they can arrange the materials, lessons, activities and the tests they will apply for their students. Hopefully,

they can help their learners make use of the resources in them, motivate and guide them while learning a new language according to their individual differences.

More research into the relationship between Neuroticism and academic success is still necessary before obtaining a definitive explanation to the positive correlation between them, which is a contradictory result to the prevailing literature about this topic. Thus, further research of the issue would be of interest for the researchers who deal with BFPT and TEI.

References

- Austin, E. J., Saklofske, D. H., & Egan, V. (2005). Personality, well-being and health correlates of trait emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 38(3), 547-558.
- Avsec, A. & Kavcic, T. (2011). Importance of the Alternative Five and Trait Emotional Intelligence for Agentive and Communal Domains of Satisfaction. *Psihologijske teme*, 20(3), 461-475.
- Austin, E. J., Saklofske, D.H., Huang, S. H. S., & McKenney, D. (2004). Measurement of trait emotional intelligence: Testing and cross-validating a modified version of Schutte et al.'s (1998) measure. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36, 555-562.
- Barchard, K. A. (2003). Does emotional intelligence assist in the prediction of the academic success? *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 63(5), 840-858.
- Cherniss, C., Extein, M., Goleman, D. & Weissberg, R. P. (2006). Emotional intelligence: What does the research really indicate? *Educational Psychologist*, 41, 239-245.
- Chamorro-Premuzic, T. (2007). *Personality and individual differences*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Costa, P. T., Jr., & McCrae, R. R. (1992). Four ways five factors are basic. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 13, 653-665.
- Downey, L. A., Mountstephen, J., Lloyd, J., Hansen, K. & Stough, C. (2008). Emotional intelligence and scholastic achievement in Australian adolescents. *Australian Journal of Psychology*, 60(1), 10-17.
- Dunn, R., Dunn, K. & Price, G. E. (1984). *Learning style inventory*. Lawrence, KS, USA: Price Systems.
- Echchakoui, S. (2013). Personality Traits and Performance: The Mediating Role of Adaptive Behavior in Call Centers. *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management*, 3, 17-27.
- Eysenck, H. J. (1952). *The scientific study of personality*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Eysenck, H. J. (1967). *The biological basis of personality*. Springfield, IL: Thomas Publishing.
- Furnham, A., Jackson, C. J. & Miller, T. (1999). Personality, learning style and work performance. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 27(6), 1113-1122.
- Gardner, H. (1983). *Frames of mind: The theory of multiple intelligences*. New York, NY: Basic Books.

- Goleman, D. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ*. New York: Bantam Books.
- Kolb, D. (1985). *Learning Style Inventory: Self Scoring Inventory and Interpretation Booklet*. Boston, MA: McBer & Company.
- Lakhal, S., Sevigny, S. & Eric, F. (2013) Personality and student performance on evaluation methods used in business administration courses, *Educational Assessment, Evaluation and Accountability*, 27(2), 171-199.
- Mayer, J.D., Salovey, P. & Caruso, D.R. (2008). Emotional Intelligence: New Ability or Eclectic Traits?, *American Psychologist*, 63(6), 503-517.
- McCrae, R. R. & John, O. P. (1992). An introduction to the five-factor model and its applications. *Journal of personality*, 60(2), 175, 215.
- Mitrofan, N., Cioricaru, M-F. (2014) Emotional Intelligence and School Performance correlational Study, *Procedia Social and Behavioral*, 127, 769-775.
- Naderi, H., Abdullah, R., Aizan, H. T. & Sharir, J. (2010). Intelligence and Academic Achievement: An Investigation of Gender Differences. *Life Science Journal*, 7(1), 83-87.
- O'Malley, J. & Chamot, A. (1990). *Learning strategies in second language acquisition*. Cambridge University Press.
- O'Neill, H. F. Jr. (Ed.). (1978). *Learning strategies*. NY: Academic Press.
- Oxford, R. (1990). *Language Learning Strategies: What Every Teacher Should Know*. NY: Newbury House Publisher.
- Oz, H. (2014). Big five personality traits and willingness to communicate among foreign language learners in Turkey. *Social Behavior and Personality*. 42(9), 1473-1482.
- Oz, H., Demirezen, M. & Pourfeiz, J. (2015). Willingness to communicate of EFL learners in Turkish context. *Learning and Individual Differences*. Available online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.lindif.2014.12.009>.
- Parker, J.D.A., Summerfeldt, L.J., Hogan, M.J. & Majeski, S.A. (2004). Emotional intelligence and academia success: examining the transition from high school to university. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36(1), 163-172.
- Petrides, K.V. (2010) Trait Emotional Intelligence Theory, *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 3, 136-139.
- Petrides, K.V., Frederickson, N. & Furnham, A. (2004). The role of trait emotional intelligence in academic performance and deviant behaviour at school. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 36, 277-293.
- Rothmann, S. & Coetzer, E. P. (2003). The big five personality dimensions and job performance. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 29(1), 68-74.
- Sarıcaoğlu A., & Arıkan, A. (2009). A study of multiple intelligence, foreign languages success and some selected variables. *Eğitimde Kuram ve Uygulama*, 5(2), 110-122.
- Schutte, N. S., Malouff, J. M., Hall, L. E., Haggerty, D. J., Cooper, J. T., Golden, C. J., (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25, 167-177.

- Siegling, A. B., Furnham, A. & Petrides, K. V. (2014). Trait Emotional Intelligence and Personality Gender-Invariant Linkages Across Different Measures of the Big Five. *Journal of Psychoeducational Assessment*. 33(1), 57-67.
- Tatar, A. (2005). *Çok Boyutlu Kişilik Envanteri'nin Madde-Cevap Kuramına Göre Kısa Formunun Geliştirilmesi ve Psikometrik Özelliklerinin İncelenmesi*. Doktora Tezi, Ege Üniversitesi, Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü, İzmir. [Development of the short form multidimensional personality inventory and examination of its psychometric properties according to item response theory. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Ege University, Institute of Social Sciences.]
- Tok, S. and Moralı, S.L., 2009. Trait Emotional Intelligence, the Big Five Personality Dimensions and Academic Success in Physical Education Teacher Candidates. *Social Behavior and Personality*. 37(7), 921-932.
- Tok, S., Moralı, S. L. & Tatar, A. (2005). Adaptation of the Schutte Emotional Intelligence Scale into Turkish and examination of its psychometric properties. *International Emotional Intelligence and Communication Symposium*, May 7-9, 2007.
- Vedel, A. (2014). *The Big Five and tertiary academic performance: A systematic review and meta-analysis*. *Personality and Individual Differences*. 71, 66-76.
- Zimmerman, B. J., & Kitsantas, A. (2014). Comparing students' self-discipline and self-regulation measures and their prediction of academic achievement. *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, 9(2), 45-155. Retrieved from <http://www.sciencedirect.com>
- Zuckerman, M. (1991). *Psychobiology of Personality*, CUP: NY.