ATATÜRK ÜNİVERSİTESİ YAYINLARI ATATURK UNIVERSITY PUBLICATIONS

The Relationship Between Secondary School Students' English Speaking Anxiety, English Speaking Self-Efficacy and Personality Traits

Nurullah ÖZCANLI[1] (iD)

İshak KOZİKOĞLU[2] (iD)

[1] Mustafa Cengiz Secondary School, Van, Turkey

[2] Van Yüzüncü Yıl University, Faculty of Education, Educational Sciences Department, Van, Turkey

ABSTRACT

This study aims to investigate the relationship between secondary school students' English-speaking anxiety, English-speaking self-efficacy, and personality traits. Conducted as a correlational study, it involved 920 students from secondary schools in the central districts of Van, selected through the cluster sampling method. Data were collected using the "Five-Factor Personality Scale," "English Speaking Self-Efficacy Scale," and "English Speaking Anxiety Scale." The analysis employed Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficient and stepwise regression techniques. The findings revealed significant interrelations among students' personality traits, English-speaking anxiety, and self-efficacy perceptions. Specifically, students' English-speaking self-efficacy and the personality traits of openness to experience, extraversion, neuroticism, and agreeableness collectively accounted for 27.1% of the variance in English-speaking anxiety. Given the critical role of English-speaking anxiety in language acquisition, it is recommended that teachers consider these variables when guiding students. They should create motivating and supportive learning environments that foster self-expression and establish a positive classroom atmosphere conducive to foreign language learning.

Keywords: English speaking anxiety, personality traits, English speaking self-efficacy perceptions, secondary school students.

Introduction

Learning a foreign language, which is one of the crucial parameters of the modern world, is considered very important for social and economic development as well as the welfare of individuals and society. With the transformations brought about by globalization, learning a foreign language has increasingly gained significance and emerged as a fundamental necessity. English, in particular, has become the most commonly taught language in Turkey and the most widely spoken global language in the world. However, there are some problems in the acquisition of speaking, which is seen as the most important skill in the foreign language education. This situation may be caused by many factors such as individuals' low language proficiency and anxiety about speaking English (El Shazly, 2021).

There are four basic skills in foreign language education: reading, writing, speaking and listening. Today, individuals are more interested in speaking rather than other skills and it is stated that the development of speaking skills shows the success in foreign language learning. For this reason, the development of speaking skills is given more importance in our country and in other countries where English is taught. However, individuals do not reach the desired level of proficiency in productive language skills, especially in speaking skills (Zhang et al., 2020), because there are many cognitive and affective factors that affect language learning such as new linguistic characteristics, a distinct culture, and even thinking styles (Zambak, 2016).

Since speaking skills are emphasized more in foreign language learning, this topic has become increasingly significant, leading to a more detailed investigation of the factors influencing speaking skills (Altın & Saracaloğlu, 2019; Elsharkawy, 2019; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993;

Özkan, 2019). These studies have explored foreign language learning not only from a cognitive perspective, focusing on aspects like learning style and language proficiency, but also from an affective perspective, addressing factors like motivation and anxiety. As Haidara (2016) points out, psychological factors like self-confidence as well as structural features such as vocabulary and grammar influence speaking skills in foreign language learning. As a matter of fact, Krashen (1981) states that as foreign language learning anxiety increases, verbal performance decreases. Most of the researchers (Aydın, 1999; Elsharkawy, 2019; Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Horwitz et al., 1986) emphasize that although individuals have the necessary cognitive competence to speak English, they cannot actively use this competence for speaking and the most important reason for this is anxiety, being one of the affective factors.

Language anxiety represents a specific type of anxiety, characterized by a complex interaction of unique perceptions, emotions, and behaviors related to language learning, arising from the unique characteristics of the language acquisition process (Horwitz et al., 1986). Furthermore, Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) define foreign language anxiety as the feeling of discomfort, nervousness, and anxiety experienced in learning or using a second/foreign language. Foreign language speaking anxiety and language anxiety can be considered together because speaking anxiety is defined as the cause of language anxiety and both affect individuals' foreign language learning (Özkan, 2019). Horwitz (2001) emphasizes that almost half of foreign language learners experience language anxiety and similarly, Campbell and Ortiz (1991) emphasize that students are very negatively affected by language anxiety. Therefore, it is common to have such negative feelings in the context of foreign language learning, particularly concerning speaking skills.

Literature review reveals the presence of studies addressing foreign language speaking anxiety. Çağatay (2015) explains that speaking anxiety is an obstacle in speaking as a productive language skill and causes failure and lack of motivation in this process. Gardner and MacIntyre (1993) state that speaking causes more anxiety than other skills. Young (1990) states that expecting students to demonstrate speaking and writing skills before their reading and listening skills are well developed can lead to anxiety and failure. Similarly, Park (2009) states that speaking anxiety hinders the development of verbal skills in adult learners. In addition, Febrianti (2011) emphasizes that speaking is among the most essential skills in foreign language acquisition; however, it is the area where students tend to achieve the lowest performance and very

few reach proficiency close to that of a native speaker. As can be seen from these studies, English speaking anxiety is recognized as a primary factor contributing to the failure in foreign language learning process, fostering a negative correlation between language learning and anxiety (Horwitz, 2001). In this case, it is seen that there is a need for studies to examine students' English speaking anxiety, which has an important effect on the process of learning English, and the variables that may be related to this anxiety.

English speaking proficiency is seen as an important skill in foreign language learning and much effort is expended by both teachers and students for its development (Zambak, 2016). Developing speaking proficiency in foreign language learning process provides many benefits to the individual both psychologically and academically. However, despite all efforts, speaking in a foreign language often causes anxiety and especially the activities that require verbal communication skills in the classroom are seen as a cause of anxiety for learners (Gardner & MacIntyre, 1993; Horwitz et al., 1986). Many studies in the literature (Aydın, 1999; Bozok, 2018; Elsharkawy, 2019; Horwitz et al. 1986; Özkan, 2019; Young, 1990; Zambak, 2016) indicate that foreign language speaking proficiency is an important factor in success in foreign language learning and these studies indicate a negative relationship between foreign language speaking anxiety and success in verbal communication skills. Therefore, it is thought that English speaking self-efficacy is effective on English speaking anxiety.

Studies in the literature (Asmalı, 2017; Doğan, 2008; Hamzadayı & Büyükikiz, 2015) indicate that personality, defined as the characteristic features that set individuals apart from others (Cüceloğlu, 1996; Horzum et al., 2017), has an important effect on foreign language learning. Because personality is a concept that includes both mental and emotional characteristics of the individual. The effect of the personality traits of the individual shows itself in educational environments and especially in foreign language learning (Ay, 2014). Therefore, it is thought that learners' personality traits have a predictive power on the speaking anxiety they experience while learning a foreign language.

A review of the literature reveals that scholars have conducted studies to investigate the causes of English-speaking anxiety (Aydın, 1999; Bozok, 2018; Duman et al., 2017; Elsharkawy, 2019; Tum & Kunt, 2013; Zambak, 2016) because foreign language learning requires many interactions such as personality traits as well as individuals' proficiency. Most of the studies (Altın & Saracaloğlu, 2019; Balemir, 2009; Hamzadayı et al., 2018; Karagöl & Başbay,

2018; Kozikoğlu & Kanat, 2018; Özkan, 2019; Tuncer & Doğan, 2015) have studied foreign language anxiety in relation to variables such as gender, age or psychological factors. However, there is a lack of research exploring the impact of English speaking self-efficacy and personality traits of secondary school students on English speaking anxiety. Vural (2017) examined the relationship between prospective English language teachers' personality traits, their English speaking anxiety and English speaking self-efficacy. It is thought that English speaking proficiency and personality traits are very important in this context. Because the individual may be affected by unfavorable environmental conditions, negative language learning experiences, may not have other competencies that require speaking skills, or may not be exposed to the language learned, which is a very important factor in language learning (Tanrıöver, 2012; Zambak, 2016). In this case, it is thought that there is a need for studies to determine to what extent English speaking self-efficacy perception and personality traits, which are seen as variables that may be effective on English speaking anxiety, predict English speaking anxiety of secondary school students.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between English speaking anxiety, English speaking self-efficacy, and personality traits among secondary school students in the central districts of Van province. To achieve this objective, the following research questions were addressed:

1. Is there a significant relationship between English speaking anxiety, English speaking self-efficacy and personality traits of secondary school students?
2. Do secondary school students' English speaking self-efficacy and personality traits significantly predict their English speaking anxiety?

English speaking proficiency includes psychological readiness as well as structural features such as vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation (Öztürk & Gürbüz, 2014; Yule, 2016). Someone who has proficiency in speaking English is expected to use the language accurately and fluently, but not having this proficiency at the desired level can cause anxiety and ultimately failure (Horwitz et al., 1986; Krashen, 1981; Şahin et al., 2016). In addition, it is known that personality traits such as self-confidence, sociability, self-confidence, openness to experience play an important role in foreign language learning (Erton, 2010; Hamzadayı & Büyükikiz, 2015). Considering all these, it is seen that English speaking anxiety has very important effects on success in foreign language learning. Therefore, it is

thought that addressing variables such as English speaking self-efficacy and personality traits that may be effective on English speaking anxiety in the context of cause and effect may contribute to the literature.

Methods

Research Design

This study was carried out using the correlational survey design. This model investigates the presence and extent of the relationships among two or more variables. (Büyüköztürk et al., 2017). In this study, since the relationship between English speaking anxiety, English speaking self-efficacy and personality traits of secondary school students was examined, it was deemed appropriate to use the correlational survey model.

Population and sample

The study population for this research includes students attending secondary schools in the central districts of Van province during the 2020-2021 academic year. Considering that the language and expressions used in the scale items may be difficult for students to understand, 5th grade students were excluded from participation in the study. Based on the data provided by the Van Provincial Directorate of National Education, the distribution of the 6th, 7th and 8th grade students in secondary schools according to districts is displayed in Table 1.

Table 1.
Number of secondary school students in the study population

Districts	6th Grade	7th Grade	8th Grade	Total
İpekyolu	6234	6441	6721	19396
Tuşba	3353	3413	3313	10079
Edremit	2895	2896	2939	8730
Total	12482	12750	12973	38205

When Table 1 is examined, a total of 38,205 secondary school (6th, 7th and 8th grade) students (19,396 students in İpekyolu district, 10,079 students in Tuşba district and 8,730 students in Edremit district) study in schools within the three central districts of Van province. In this study, since it was difficult to reach the entire study population in terms of time, labor and facilities, it was decided to take sample. In this study, cluster sampling method was used to determine the sample. Cluster sampling is a sampling technique when all clusters in the population have equal chances of being selected individually (Karasar, 2014). In order to better represent the study population, secondary schools in the central districts of Van province were divided into three groups as high, medium and low according to their socio-economic development levels. A certain number of secondary schools were randomly selected from each group. In these schools, a certain number of classes

from each grade level were randomly selected. The sample of the study consisted of 920 students enrolled in these schools and classes. In determining the sample size; in cases where the population is 40,000, a sample size of 655 at the ".01" significance level is regarded as adequate to represent the population. (Çıngı, 1994; as cited in Büyüköztürk et al., 2017). Therefore, it can be deemed that the sample in this study is sufficiently large to represent the target population. The distribution of the secondary school students according to the grade level, socio-economic development level of the school and gender is displayed in Table 2.

Table 2.
Distribution of students in the sample by gender, grade level and socio-economic development level of the school

Descriptive Variables	Category	Number (N)	Percent (%)
Gender	Female	584	63.5
	Male	336	36.5
Grade level	6th Grade	327	35.5
	7th Grade	262	28.5
	8th Grade	331	36.0
Socio-economic development level of the school	Low	307	33.4
	Medium	262	28.5
	High	351	38.2
	Total	920	100

According to Table 2, 584 (63.5%) of the students were female and 336 (36.5%) were male. 327 (35.5%) of the students were in the 6th grade, 262 (28.5%) in the 7th grade and 331 (36.0%) in the 8th grade. When the schools are analyzed according to socio-economic development level, it is seen that the number of students from each stratum is close to each other. It is seen that 307 (33.4%) students from low socio-economic development level schools, 262 (28.5%) students from medium socio-economic development level schools and 351 (38.2%) students from high socio-economic development level schools were sampled.

Data Collection Tools

Five Factor Personality Scale
The scale developed by the researchers consists of 20 items. The "Big Five" model, which is recognized as an inclusive model of personality traits, was taken as a basis in the development of the scale for determining the personality traits of secondary school students. The Big Five personality traits framework posits that individual differences can be classified into five separate and independent dimensions (Digman, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 2008). A comprehensive assessment model has been developed, which is widely accepted by experts

working on personality, including extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional instability (neuroticism) and openness to experience (Goldberg, 1990; McCrae & Costa, 2008).

The pilot study was conducted with 224 secondary school students studying in the central districts of Van province. Five sub-factors were found in the 5-point Likert scale as a result of exploratory factor analysis and these factors were determined as openness to experience (4 items), conscientiousness (4 items), neuroticism/emotional instability (5 items), extraversion (4 items), and agreeableness (3 items). The total variance explained by these five factors was calculated as 66.720%. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficients were analyzed to determine the reliability of the scale. Cronbach Alpha values were calculated as 0.86 for the first factor, 0.85 for the second factor, 0.80 for the third factor, 0.82 for the fourth factor and 0.79 for the fifth factor. In this study, Cronbach Alpha values were calculated as 0.72 for the first factor, 0.81 for the second factor, 0.87 for the third factor, 0.80 for the fourth factor and 0.85 for the fifth factor. These values indicate that the data collected from the scale exhibit reliability.

English Speaking Self-Efficacy Scale
While creating the trial form of the scale developed by the researchers, items were prepared by taking into account the dimensions (competency areas) of grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation/vocalization, listening comprehension, fluency/expression. The relevant literature was reviewed and as many behavioral statements as possible were written by making use of similar studies, scales and questionnaires in Turkey and abroad. Then, the behavior statements were examined in terms of content, simplicity and clarity and necessary corrections were made. The items that needed to be removed were removed and 20 behavioral statements were determined. To assess the content validity, clarity, and relevance of the items, the pilot version was presented to expert opinion from the fields of Educational Sciences, Turkish Education and English Education. The experts were asked to evaluate the behavioral statements in terms of content validity, comprehensibility, language, content and reflection of the specified features. Feedback was received from seven experts and certain suggestions were made accordingly. Based on the experts' feedback, required revisions were made to certain items, and a pilot form comprising 20 items was developed.

The pilot study was carried with 224 secondary school students studying in the central districts of Van province. The exploratory factor analysis of the 20-item 5-point Likert scale revealed that the scale demonstrated a

unidimensional structure. The total variance explained by the single factor was calculated as 51.666%. The reliability of the scale was assessed by analyzing the Cronbach's alpha internal consistency coefficients. Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient was calculated as 0.95 for the total scale which was found as 0.79 in this study. These values indicate that the data collected from the scale exhibit reliability.

English Speaking Anxiety Scale

In this study, the scale developed by Horwitz et al. (1986) was employed to assess students' foreign language speaking anxiety. The scale was adapted into Turkish by Aydın (1999), and Saltan (2003) selected and utilized 18 items from the original 33-item scale. The adapted scale consists of four sub-dimensions, namely "communication anxiety (6 items)", "fear of negative evaluation (7 items)", "test anxiety (2 items)", "English class anxiety (3 items)" and a total of 18 items. The items in the scale are rated on a 5-point Likert scale. In his thesis study, Altın (2018) conducted a validity and reliability study of the 18-item scale with secondary school students. The results of the confirmatory factor analysis indicated that the model should be reduced to a single dimension because the correlation between the dimensions in the model was found to be greater than .90. The Cronbach Alpha internal consistency coefficient of the scale was .98 which was calculated as .95 in this study. These values indicate that the data collected from the scale exhibit reliability.

The ethical process in the study was as follows:

- Ethics committee approval was obtained from Van Yüzüncü Yıl University Social and Humanities Sciences Ethics Committee (Date: 16.09.2020, Number: E- 61176)
- Informed consent has been obtained from the participants.

Data Analysis

Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients were used to analyze the relationship between students' English speaking anxiety, English speaking self-efficacy, and personality traits. Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient is used to determine the degree and direction of the relationship between variables on normally distributed data. These values; "between .00-.29" was interpreted as a low level relationship, "between .30-.69" as a moderate level relationship, "between .70-1.00" as a high level relationship. Additionally, stepwise regression analysis was used to examine the predictive power of students' English speaking self-efficacy and personality traits on their English speaking anxiety.

Before conducting the differential analyses, normality test

was performed to determine whether the data displayed normal distribution. In the analyzes performed to determine univariate normality, it was found that skewness and kurtosis values were within ± 1. For normality to be accepted, skewness and kurtosis values are expected to be within ± 1 (Büyüköztürk, 2018). In line with these values, it was decided that the data provided a normal distribution.

Box's M test for the distribution of covariance matrices and Levene's Test for the homogeneity of variances were analyzed. The results demonstrated that the test findings were not statistically significant (p > .05), supporting the conclusion that the assumptions of homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices were met (Büyüköztürk, 2018). Mahalanobis distance values were calculated to assess multivariate normality, and outliers were removed from the dataset prior to analysis. The linear relationship between the dependent variables was assessed through scatter plots, and it was determined that the assumption of linearity was satisfied. Furthermore, it was found that there were moderate to strong correlations between the dependent variables, with the highest correlation being .725. Then, it was concluded that both multivariate normality and linearity assumptions were satisfied, and no multicollinearity issues existed among the dependent variables.

Results

Results Concerning the First Sub-Problem

In accordance with the the study's first sub-problem, Pearson Product-Moment Correlation Coefficients were computed to assess the relationships between students' scale scores, and the results are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3.

Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients concerning the study's variables

Scales and sub-dimensions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Speaking anxiety	1.00	-.468**	-.189**	-.142**	-.074*	.189**	-.148**
2. Speaking self-efficacy		1.00	.334**	.193**	.328**	-.365**	.250**
3.Extraversion			1.00	.483**	.501**	-.524**	.508**
4.Agreeableness				1.00	.638*	-.476**	.725**
5.Conscientiousness					1.00	-.541**	.608**
6.Neuroticism						1.00	-.460**
7. Openness to experience							1.00

$p < .05$ *, $p < .01$ **

According to the data in Table 3, there is a moderate, negative and significant relationship between students' speaking anxiety and speaking self-efficacy (r= -.468; *p* < .01); and there is a low, negative and significant relationship between students' speaking anxiety and the sub-dimensions of extraversion (r= -.189; *p* < .01), agreeableness (r= -.142; *p* < .01), conscientiousness (r= -.074; *p* < .05), and openness to experience (r=-.148; *p* < .01), and a low, positive and significant relationship between speaking anxiety and neuroticism (r= .189; *p* < .01).

There is a moderate, positive and significant relationship between students' English speaking self-efficacy and sub-dimensions of extraversion (r=.334; *p* <.01) and conscientiousness (r=.328; *p* < .01) traits; a low, positive and significant relationship between agreeableness (r=.193; *p* < .01) and openness to experience (r=.250; *p* <.01) traits; and a moderate, negative and significant relationship between neuroticism (r=-.365; *p* < .01) trait.

Results Concerning the Second Sub-Problem
In accordance with the the study's second sub-problem, the results of the stepwise regression analysis are displayed in Table 4.

Table 4.
Stepwise regression analysis results on the prediction of students' English speaking anxiety

Steps	Predictor variables	β	Predictive power (R)	Explained variance (R^2)
1.	Speaking self-efficacy	-.468	.468	.219
2.	Opennes to experience	-.176	.498	.248
3.	Extraversion	-.154	.514	.264
4.	Neuroticism	.073	.518	.268
5.	Agreeableness	-.087	.521	.271

According to the data in Table 4, it can be observed that students' English speaking self-efficacy and the five-factor personality traits of openness to experience, extraversion, neuroticism and agreeableness explain 27.1% of the variance in students' English speaking anxiety. The variance analysis results concerning the stepwise regression analysis are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5.
Variance analysis results on the prediction of students' English speaking anxiety

Model	Sum of Squares	Sd	Mean of Squares	F	p
Regression	128.137	5	25.627		
				68.042	.000
(Residual)	344.251	914	.377		

According to the data in Table 5, the predictive power obtained in the stepwise regression analysis given in Table 4 is significant ($F_{(5,914)}$=68.042, *p* < .000). The regression analysis for predicting students' English speaking anxiety was carried out in five stages, and five variables were identified as significant predictors. The analysis results indicated that students' English speaking self-efficacy, which was included in the regression equation as a significant predictor, had the power to explain 21.9% of the variance in English speaking anxiety, openness to experience had the power to explain 2.9% of the variance, extraversion had the power to explain 1.6% of the variance, neuroticism had the power to explain 0.4% of the variance, and agreeableness had the power to explain 0.3% of the variance. However, conscientiousness personality trait did not contribute significantly to the total variance and did not predict students' English speaking anxiety at a significant level.

Discussion

The study found a moderate, negative, and significant correlation between students' English speaking anxiety and speaking self-efficacy. Additionally, a low, negative, and significant correlation was observed between students' English speaking anxiety and the personality traits of extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience. A low, positive, and significant correlation was also found between students' neuroticism personality trait and their English speaking anxiety. A moderate, positive, and significant correlation was identified between students' English speaking self-efficacy and extraversion and conscientiousness personality traits; a low, positive and significant relationship between agreeableness and openness to experience personality traits; and a moderate, negative and significant relationship between neuroticism personality trait. In addition, it concluded that students' English speaking self-efficacy was the most important predictor of students' English speaking anxiety (21.9%), followed by openness to experience (2.9%), extraversion (1.6%), neuroticism (0.4%) and agreeableness (0.3%) personality traits. In this context, it was found that students' English speaking self-efficacy and the five-factor personality traits of openness to experience, extraversion, neuroticism, and agreeableness collectively accounted for 27.1% of the variance in students' English speaking anxiety.

The results of this study are consistent with the results of similar studies in the existing literature. In a study conducted with university students, Vural (2017) discovered a significant, negative relationship between English speaking self-efficacy and English speaking anxiety. Similarly, many studies in the literature (Chen, 2007; Liu,

2006; Marcos-Llinás & Garau, 2009; Özkan, 2019; Woodrow, 2006) have identified a negative relationship between self-efficacy and anxiety in language learning. Unlike those studies' results, Balemir (2009) reported that the proficiency level of students in the foreign language process did not have a significant role in their speaking anxiety. That is to say, proficiency level did not have any facilitating or debilitating impact on students' foreign language speaking anxiety. Conversely, there are also research studies available in the literature (Tahsildar & Kabiri, 2019; Tuncer & Doğan, 2015) indicating that as students' proficiency level increases, their foreign language learning and speaking anxiety increases. Upon reviewing the literature, it is evident that the majority of related studies corroborate the results of this research. According to the this study's results, it can be concluded that there is a negative relationship between English speaking anxiety and English speaking self-efficacy, in other words, as students' English speaking self-efficacy increases, their English speaking anxiety decreases. In addition, it was found that students' English speaking self-efficacy was the most important predictor (21.9%) of students' English speaking anxiety. Similarly, Vural (2017) reported that English speaking self-efficacy was the strongest predictor of English speaking anxiety. Anyadubalu (2010) and Yule (2016) emphasize that foreign language proficiency is an important factor on the performance in lessons. Therefore, it can be argued that eliminating the factors that cause anxiety in students will motivate them to be more successful in English lessons or to increase their speaking self-efficacy. In this case, it can be concluded that students' English speaking self-efficacy has a significant effect on English speaking anxiety, and therefore, improving students' English speaking self-efficacy is an important factor in reducing English speaking anxiety.

Similarly, the results regarding the correlation between English speaking anxiety and personality traits support the results of the studies in the literature. In Vural's (2017) study, negative and significant relationships were found between English speaking anxiety and the personality traits of extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness, respectively; while a low level, positive and significant relationship was found between neuroticism. Öztürk and Gürbüz (2014) stated that personality traits are an important factor on foreign language anxiety and motivation. Similarly, it is stated that individuals with positive personality traits (extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness) demonstrate reduced anxiety, increased energy, and a more positive attitude toward language learning tasks, which enhances their participation in

classroom activities (Kiany, 1998). However, Köksal et al. (2014) examined the relationship between foreign language anxiety and personality traits and found that there is no significant correlation between learners' personality traits and their levels of foreign language learning anxiety. Drawing on the results of this study and existing literature, it can be concluded that the more extroverted, open to new and different developments, responsible and agreeable students are, the less worried they are about speaking English; the more unstable their emotional states are, the more anxious they are about speaking English. It is stated that individuals with extroverted, non-neurotic and agreeable personality traits are more successful in foreign language learning process (Ehrman, 1990). Thus, it can be asserted that personality traits play a significant role in English speaking anxiety and they should be acknowledged as a critical factor in the process of foreign language learning.

In addition, it was determined that openness to experience (2.9%) personality trait was the strongest predictor of English speaking anxiety after English speaking self-efficacy, followed by extraversion (1.6%), neuroticism (0.4%) and agreeableness (0.3%) personality traits. Similarly, Vural (2017) found that extraversion and openness to experience significantly predicted English speaking anxiety negatively, while neuroticism and agreeableness significantly predicted it positively. Piechurska-Kuciel (2018) found that there were significant relationships between openness to experience personality trait and verbal skills in a foreign language and that this personality trait was the strongest predictor of anxiety in communication skills. Similarly, Er et al. (2016) found that extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness, and agreeableness personality traits significantly predicted anxiety in four basic language skills. Therefore, it can be said that extraversion, openness to experience, neuroticism and agreeableness are important variables in predicting English speaking anxiety. In addition, it can be concluded that learners with positive personality traits (extraversion, openness to experience, conscientiousness and agreeableness) are more sociable, harmonious and talkative in the society or in the circle of friends, so they are less anxious about speaking English and volunteer to participate in activities and activities in the classroom.

The study revealed a moderate, positive, and significant correlation between students' English-speaking self-efficacy and the personality traits of extraversion and conscientiousness; a low, positive and significant relationship between agreeableness and openness to experience personality traits; and a moderate, negative and significant relationship between neuroticism

personality trait. Vural (2017) found positive and significant relationships between English speaking self-efficacy and openness to experience, extraversion, conscientiousness, and agreeableness personality traits respectively; a low level, negative and significant relationship was found between neuroticism. Alishah (2015) found positive and significant relationships between communicative skills in English and extraversion, and negative and significant relationships between introversion personality traits. Similarly, Apple (2011) reported that there were positive and significant relationships between English speaking proficiency and openness to experience, extraversion, conscientiousness, and agreeableness personality traits, while a negative and significant relationship was found between neuroticism. Drawing on the results of this study and existing literature, it can be concluded that except neuroticism, the other positive personality traits have positive relationships with English speaking self-efficacy, and therefore these personality traits positively affect English speaking self-efficacy. MacIntyre and Charos (1996) state that extraversion and openness to experience personality traits are related to self-confidence and motivation and that these individuals have higher self-efficacy in speaking in a foreign language. On the other hand, Vural (2017) emphasizes that self-disciplined and well-organized students are more competent in speaking English than negligent and disorganized ones. Niazi (2017) stated that people with agreeableness personality traits are sensitive to sympathize and cooperate with other people. In this case, it can be argued that learners with positive personality traits (openness to experience, extraversion, conscientiousness, and agreeableness) think that they are better at activities that require verbal skills in a foreign language, and they consider themselves more competent in English speaking skills.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concluded that students' personality traits, English-speaking anxiety, and perceptions of speaking self-efficacy were related to each other. This study is expected to contribute to the relevant literature by identifying potential predictor variables influencing English-speaking anxiety, which is seen as an important problem in English language teaching, and examining the variables related to English speaking anxiety. In this context, it may be proposed that students' personality traits should be taken into consideration in the English language teaching process. In this way, teachers can obtain more appropriate learning environment and experiences for teaching English in the classroom, students can participate more in the lesson, and this can lead to a sense of self-confidence in them. In addition, this study focused on the variables that predict English speaking anxiety by looking at the

relationship with various variables (English speaking self-efficacy perception, personality traits). In future studies, different variables that may be related to English speaking anxiety (characteristics of the learning environment, teacher behaviors, teaching strategies, attitudes, etc.) can be included to examine their effect or predictive power on English speaking anxiety.

References

Alishah, A. R. (2015). *A study of factors affecting Turkish EFL learners' willingness to speak in English* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Gazi University.

Altın, M. (2018). *The effect of quantum learning model on foreign language speaking skills, speaking anxiety and self-efficacy of secondary school students* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Adnan Menderes University.

Altın, M., & Saracaloğlu, A. (2019). The effect of quantum learning model on foreign language speaking skills, speaking anxiety and self-efficacy of secondary school students *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies*, *15*(3), 1083-1104.

Anyadubalu, C. C. (2010). Self-efficacy, anxiety, and performance in the English language among middle-school students in English language program in Satri Si Suriyothai School, Bangkok. *International Journal of Human and Social Sciences*, *5*(3), 193-198.

Apple, M. T. (2011). *The Big Five personality traits and foreign language speaking confidence among Japanese EFL students* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Temple University.

Asmalı, M. (2017). Big five personality traits and test anxiety among English as a foreign language learners. *Iğdır University Journal of Social Sciences*, *11*(4), 1-21.

Ay, S. (2014). On individual differences affecting foreign language teaching. *Journal of Language* (*Dil Dergisi*), *163*, 5-18.

Aydın, B. (1999). *A study of sources of foreign language classroom anxiety in speaking and writing classes* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Anadolu University.

Balemir, S. H. (2009). *The sources of foreign language speaking anxiety and the relationship between proficiency level and degree of foreign language speaking anxiety* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Bilkent University.

Bozok, D. (2018). *Investigating speaking anxiety of university EFL students: The case of instructors and students* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Çanakkale Onsekiz Mart University.

Büyüköztürk, Ş., Çakmak, E. K., Akgün, Ö. E., Karadeniz, Ş., & Demirel, F. (2017). *Scientific research methods.* Pegem Publications.

Büyüköztürk, Ş. (2018). *Handbook of data analysis for the social sciences*. Pegem Publications.

Campbell C. M., & Ortiz, J. (1991). Helping students overcome foreign language anxiety: A foreign language anxiety workshop. In E. K. Horwitz and D. J. Young (Eds.), *Language anxiety: From theory to research to classroom implications*, (153-168). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Chen, H. Y. (2007). *Relationship between EFL learners' self-efficacy beliefs and English performance* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Florida State University.

Cüceloğlu, D. (1996). *Basic concepts of human and behavioral psychology*. Remzi Publications.

Digman, J. M. (1990). Personality structure: Emergence of the five-factor model. *Annual Review of Psychology*, *41*(1), 417-440.

Doğan, A. (2008). Foreign language anxiety affecting secondary school students' English learning. *Journal of Language*, *139*, 48-67.

Duman, B., Göral, G. N., & Bilgin, H. (2017). A qualitative study on university students' foreign language speaking anxiety in the classroom environment. *Adnan Menderes University Journal of Educational Sciences*, *8*(2), 13-27.

Ehrman, M. (1990). Owls and doves: Cognition, personality, and learning success. In Alatis, J. (Ed.), *Linguistics, Language Teaching, and Language Acquisition: The Interdependence of Theory, Practice, and Research* (pp. 413-437). Georgetown University Press.

Elsharkawy, N. (2019). An investigation into the factors that lead to speaking anxiety among EFL learners. *International Journal of Media Culture and Literature*, *5*(1), 27-44.

El Shazly, R. (2021). Effects of artificial intelligence on English speaking anxiety and speaking performance: A case study. *Expert Systems*, *38*(3), e12667.

Er, G. S., Dillon, D., & Samantha, G. Y. W. (2016). Predicting foreign language anxiety: Trait emotional intelligence and big-five personality traits. *Asia-Pacific English language Teaching Conference.*

Erton, İ. (2010). Relations between personality traits, language learning styles and success in foreign language achievement. *Hacettepe University Journal of Education*, *38*(38), 115-126.

Febrianti, E. R. (2011). Teaching speaking of English as a foreign language: Problems and solutions. *Journal Bahasa, 1*(2), 133-146.

Gardner, R. C., & MacIntyre, P. D. (1993). On the measurement of affective variables in second language learning. *Language learning*, *43*(2), 157-194.

Goldberg, L. R. (1990). An alternative description of personality: The big five factor structure. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *59*(6), 1216-1229.

Haidara, Y. (2016). Psychological factors affecting English speaking performance for the English learners in Indonesia. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, *4*(7), 1501-1505.

Hamzadayı, E., & Büyükikiz, K. K. (2015). The relationship between personality traits and self-efficacy perceptions of speaking skills of Turkish as a foreign language (TFL) learners. *Turkish Journal of Social Research*, *19*(1), 297-312.

Hamzadayı, E., Bayat, N., & Gölpınar, Ş. (2018). The relationship between the level of speaking anxiety and speaking performance. *Journal of Language Education and Research, 4*(2), 75-85.

Horwitz, E. K., Horwitz, M. B., & Cope, J. (1986). Foreign language classroom anxiety. *The Modern Language Journal, 70*(2), 125-132.

Horwitz, E. (2001). Language anxiety and achievement. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *21*, 112-126.

Horzum, M. B., Ayas, T., & Padır, M. A. (2017). Adaptation of big five personality traits scale to Turkish culture. S*akarya University Journal of Education*, *7*(2), 398-408.

Karagöl, İ., & Başbay, A. (2018). The relationship among attitude, anxiety and English speaking performance. *Journal of Theoretical Educational Science*, *11*(4), 809-821.

Karasar, N. (2014). *Scientific research methods.* Nobel Publications.

Kiany, G. R. (1998). English proficiency and academic achievement in relation to extraversion: A preliminary study. *International journal of applied linguistics*, *8*(1), 113-130.

Kozikoğlu, İ., & Kanat, F. (2018). Prediction of high school students' English course participation based on their attitude towards English course and English speaking anxiety. *Kastamonu Education Journal*, *26*(5), 1643-1652.

Köksal, O., Arslan, C., & Bakla, A. (2014). An investigation into foreign language learning anxiety, stress and personality in higher education. *International Journal on New*, *5*(2), 199-208.

Krashen, S. D. (1981). *Second language acquisition and second language learning*. Oxford Publications.

Liu, M. (2006). Anxiety in Chinese EFL students at different proficiency levels. *System*, *34*(3), 301-316.

Marcos-Llinás, M., & Garau, M. J. (2009). Effects of language anxiety on three proficiency-level courses of Spanish as a foreign language. *Foreign Language Annals*, *42*(1), 94-111.

MacIntyre, P. D., & Charos, C. (1996). Personality, attitudes, and affect as predictors of second language communication. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 15,* 3-26.

McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T. (2008). Empirical and theoretical status of the five-factor model of personality traits. *The SAGE Handbook of Personality Theory and Assessment*, *1*, 273-294.

Niazi, S. (2017). Personality traits as predictor of self-esteem of university students: Moderating role of openness to experience. *Journal of Behavioural Sciences*, *27*(2), 102-119.

Özkan, C. (2019). *The relationship between students' success and their level of foreign language anxiety and the primary sources of foreign language speaking anxiety* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Çağ University.

Öztürk, G., & Gürbüz, N. (2014). Speaking anxiety among Turkish EFL learners: The case at a state university. *Journal of Language and Linguistic Studies, 10*(1), 1-17.

Park, S. M. (2009). *The effects of speaking anxiety on foreign language learning* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. The University of Texas.

Piechurska-Kuciel, E. (2018). Openness to experience as a predictor of L2 WTC. *System*, *72*, 190-200.

Şahin, M., Seçer, Ş. Y., & Erişen, Y. (2016). Perception of English'and motivation in learning English. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, *4*(9), 43-60.

Tahsildar, N., & Kabiri, A. (2019). The relationship between Afghanistan EFL students' academic self-efficacy and English language speaking anxiety. *Academy Journal of Educational Sciences*, *3*(2), 190-202.

Tanrıöver, A. S. (2012). *Turkish EFL university students' self-perceptions of and attitudes toward foreign language speaking* [Unpublished master's thesis] Atatürk University.

Tum, D., & Kunt, N. (2013). Speaking anxiety among EFL student teachers. *Hacettepe University Journal of Education*, *28*(3), 385-399.

Tuncer, M., & Doğan, Y. (2015). Effect of foreign language classroom anxiety on Turkish university students' academic achievement in foreign language learning. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, *3*(6), 14-19.

Vural, H. (2017). *The relationship of personality traits with English speaking anxiety and English speaking self-efficiacy* [Unpublished doctoral dissertation]. Gazi University.

Woodrow, L. (2006). Anxiety and speaking English as a second language. *RELC Journal*, *37*(3), 308-328.

Young, D. J. (1990). An investigation of students' perspectives on anxiety and speaking. *Foreign Language Annals*, *23*(6), 539-553.

Yule, G. (2016). *The study of language*. Cambridge University Press.

Zambak, A. (2016). *Factors affecting foreign language speaking anxiety levels of 8th grade students at public secondary schools* [Unpublished master's thesis]. Çağ University.

Zhang, X., Ardasheva, Y., & Austin, B. W. (2020). Self-efficacy and English public speaking performance: A mixed method approach. *English for Specific Purposes*, *59*, 1-1.