Exploring the Influence of Personality Traits on Casual Attributions in Language Learning

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Abstract: This study investigates the relationship between attribution styles, personality traits, and high school students' success and failure in learning English as a foreign language. The study uses a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods to look at a group of 984 students. It uses the "Five Factor Personality Inventory" and the "Success-Failure Attributions Scale" as well as semi-structured interviews. The study, which is grounded in Weiner's attribution theory, reveals that successful students often attribute their achievements to internal, controllable, and variable factors, reflecting a persistence-oriented mindset. In contrast, less successful students tend to blame external, uncontrollable, and stable factors, which can undermine their motivation. The research highlights significant gender differences in attribution patterns, suggesting the need for tailored educational strategies. Additionally, personality traits such as neuroticism and conscientiousness play a crucial role in shaping students' perceptions of their academic experiences. The findings offer practical recommendations for enhancing language learning outcomes, emphasising the importance of fostering a stronger internal locus of control and resilience among students. This study provides valuable insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers seeking to improve educational practices and student success in language education.

Keywords: Attribution theory, personality traits, causal attributions, motivation

Yabancı Dil Öğreniminde Kişilik Özelliklerinin Nedensel Yüklemeler Üzerindeki Etkisinin İncelenmesi

Öz: Bu çalışma, atıf stilleri ve kişilik özellikleri ile lise öğrencilerinin yabancı dil olarak İngilizce öğrenmedeki başarı ve başarısızlıkları arasındaki ilişkiyi incelemektedir. Karma yöntem yaklaşımıyla gerçekleştirilen bu araştırma, 984 öğrenciden oluşan bir örneklem grubunu "Beş Faktör Kişilik Envanteri" ve "Başarı-Başarısızlık Ölçeği" gibi nicel araçların yanı sıra, nitel yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerle değerlendirmektedir. Weiner'ın atıf teorisine dayanan bulgular, başarılı öğrencilerin başarılarını genellikle içsel, kontrol edilebilir ve değişken faktörlere atfettiklerini ve bunun da sebat odaklı bir zihniyeti yansıttığını ortaya koymaktadır. Buna karşın, daha az başarılı öğrenciler, motivasyonlarını zayıflatabilecek dışsal, kontrol edilemeyen ve sabit faktörleri suçlama eğilimindedir. Araştırma, atıf kalıplarındaki önemli cinsiyet farklılıklarına dikkat çekmekte ve özelleştirilmiş eğitim stratejilerine duyulan ihtiyacı vurgulamaktadır. Ayrıca, nevrotiklik ve vicdanlılık gibi kişilik özelliklerinin, öğrencilerin akademik deneyimlerine ilişkin

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algılarını şekillendirmede önemli bir rol oynadığı belirlenmiştir. Bulgular, öğrenciler arasında daha güçlü bir içsel kontrol odağı ve dayanıklılık geliştirmenin dil öğrenme sonuçlarını iyileştirmede kritik olduğunu ortaya koyarak pratik öneriler sunmaktadır. Bu çalışma, dil eğitimi alanında uygulamaları ve öğrenci başarısını artırmak isteyen eğitimciler, politika yapıcılar ve araştırmacılar için değerli bilgiler sunmaktadır.

Anahtar kelimeler: Yükleme kuramı, kişilik özellikleri, nedensel yüklemeler, motivasyon.

Introduction

Scholars have conceptualized attribution theory in diverse ways. Heider (1958) described it as associating events with their causes, Harvey et al. (2009) as the reasons underlying event occurrences and their causal conditions, and Weiner et al. (1972) as the rationales individuals assign to their successes and failures. According to Alderman (2004), the attribution process is a daily cognitive activity that involves people's beliefs about event causation and how these beliefs influence their behaviours and expectations (Kaya et al., 2023).

A thorough framework for comprehending these processes is provided by Weiner's (1986) model, which divides attributions into dimensions of locus (internal/external), stability (stable/unstable), and controllability (controllable/uncontrollable). According to Schunk et al. (2014), this theoretical framework has been essential to educational psychology as it has enabled researchers and educators to study the underlying elements that affect students' motivation and achievement.

Each year, thousands of students from various nations enrol in language programs at colleges and universities to study foreign languages in their home countries. Throughout their educational path, these children face a variety of obstacles (Babayiğit, 2020). While some students succeed easily, others find it difficult to reach the same level of accomplishment. Students give a variety of causal explanations for their success or failure when asked about it (Brown et al., 2005; Dörnyei, 2005; Oxford, 2016; Satıcılar, 2006).

Understanding these attributions is important because they have a significant impact on learners' motivation and behaviour afterward (Chan, 1995; Dörnyei, 2003; Kelley, 1967; Weiner, 1974;). For example, assigning effort—an internal, controllable factor—to success might boost drive and promote perseverance (Fatemi & Asghari, 2012; Platt, 1998). On the other hand, attributing failure to a lack of competence (an internal, stable element) might result in low desire and hopelessness (Dweck, 2000).

The objective of this research is to clarify these causal attributions from the viewpoints of educators and learners, providing guidance and suggestions for surmounting obstacles in the process of learning English. In contrast to other research, this study uses a different sample and mixed approaches to give a thorough knowledge of the challenges those teachers and high school students encounter (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). The findings should guide methods for improving the efficacy of English language instruction (Ellis, 2015).

The study of attribution theory looks at how people explain their achievements and failures, as well as how this affects their drive for future success (Weiner, 1985; Feld & Henriques, 1995). People try to figure out why they succeed or fail, assigning blame to either internal or external factors or personal characteristics (Kelley & Michela, 1980).

Given the significant role of accurate attributions in shaping learners' future successes or failures, as well as the influence of personality traits on language learning, this study aims to

investigate the effect of personality traits on high school students' successes and failures in learning English as a foreign language (Dörnyei & Ryan, 2015). The study addresses the following research questions:

What are the dimensions of a high school student's causal attributions for their success or failure?

- Is there a significant relationship between foreign language learners' attributional styles and personality traits?

- What factors do high school students attribute their success and failure in learning a foreign language to?

- To which causal factors do successful and unsuccessful students attribute their success and failure?

This study seeks to improve student success in foreign language learning and create an effective learning environment by examining attribution theory (Gardner, 1985). Understanding the dimensions and influences of causal attributions can inform strategies to foster greater achievement and motivation among English language learners (Krashen, 1981; MacIntyre, 2002; McCombs & James, 1994; Williams et al., 2015).

Literature Review

Scholarly performance and students' impressions of their educational journeys are intricately linked together, as revealed by the scholarly research. Students who attribute their academic success to internal, controllable, and unstable factors—such as effort—have higher levels of motivation and achievement, according to Weiner (2010). By contrast, low motivation and poor academic achievement are common among people who blame stable, internal, and uncontrollable factors—like natural ability—for their academic failings (Graham & Williams, 2009).

Furthermore, attributional style disparities across genders have attracted a lot of scholarly interest (Arnot et al., 1999; Hyde, 2005; Wu, 2011). Studies show that attribution patterns between male and female students often differ, with males more likely to blame lack of effort for failures while females are more likely to blame talent (Eccles et al., 1983). The attributional tendencies that are distinctive to gender have significant consequences for instructional strategies and interventions aimed at improving student accomplishment (Maneshi et al., 2004; Mahasneh, 2013).

Additionally, attribution styles are significantly shaped by personality factors (Zhang, 2003). Research has shown that the Five-Factor Model (FFM) of personality, which comprises neuroticism, extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, and openness to experience, has an impact on how students understand their academic experiences (McCrae & Costa, 1999). O'Connor and Paunonen (2007) state that high conscientiousness is generally associated with the perception that efforts and meticulous planning are the reasons behind achievements, while high neuroticism is linked to the belief that failures are the result of a lack of competence.

Present Study

This present research is focused on the relationship between attribution styles, personality features, and instances of success or failure as experienced by students in high school while learning English as a foreign language. In a mixed-methods design, the current research investigates a diverse sample of 984 students using quantitative instruments like the "Five Factor Personality Inventory" and the "Success-Failure Attributions Scale," along with qualitative data

from semi-structured interviews. Based on Weiner's attribution theory, the study found that students attributed success or failure to certain sources. High-achieving learners predominantly attribute their success to internal, controllable, and variable factors, thus cultivating a persistence-oriented mindset and greater academic resilience. On the other hand, students with low achievement levels tend to blame external factors, uncontrollable and stable, which often leads to decreased motivation and obstructs further improvement.

The findings also indicate significant gender-based attributional style differences, emphasizing the development of gender-sensitive educational intervention strategies to overcome these discrepancies. The research further underlines personality traits, namely neuroticism and conscientiousness, as major factors in the construction of perceptions of academic experiences. Neuroticism is inversely related to adaptive attributions; conscientiousness is in line with a stronger internal locus of control and higher degrees of effort-oriented attribution.

The study offers actionable recommendations for educators, policymakers, and researchers aiming to enhance student outcomes in foreign language education. Key suggestions include fostering an internal locus of control, cultivating resilience, and tailoring instructional strategies to accommodate individual differences in personality and attributional tendencies. This integrated knowledge will enable multiple stakeholders to create an environment that is more inclusive and effective for learning, promoting success and well-being for students involved in language learning.

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the research problem (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The quantitative component involves administering surveys to measure students' attribution styles and personality traits. The qualitative component includes semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insights into students' personal experiences and perceptions regarding their language learning outcomes.

The sample consists of high school students from various high schools in Turkey, selected using stratified random sampling to ensure a representative distribution across different demographics such as gender, grade level, and academic performance. Data will be analysed using statistical methods for the quantitative data and thematic analysis for the qualitative data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

In conclusion, this study aims to deepen our understanding of the complex interplay between personality traits and attribution styles in the context of learning English as a foreign language. In the realm of language acquisition, individual attributes like personality traits and gender wield substantial influence over learners' attributional tendencies (Costa & McCrae, 2006; Babayiğit, 2022; Dörnyei, 2005; Williams & Burden, 1997). Personality traits like neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and conscientiousness have a big impact on how learners make assumptions and what they learn as a result (Musgrave-Marquart et al., 1997; LaNoue & Curtis, 1985).

The findings can inform educational strategies and interventions that promote more effective and personalised learning experiences by identifying the key factors that influence students' success and failure attributions. This research has the potential to contribute significantly

to the field of educational psychology and language education, offering practical insights for educators, policymakers, and researchers alike. This study could enhance teaching methodologies, support student motivation, and ultimately improve learning outcomes in foreign language education by addressing the reasons behind students' attributions of success and failure.

Research Participants and Sampling

The research targeted a population of 18,572 high school students from specific districts during the 2020–2021 academic year. To ensure a reliable sample size, at least 377 participants were required, following a 95% confidence level and a 5% confidence interval, as per Cohen et al.'s recommendations. The study's accessible population consisted of 984 students (623 females and 361 males) selected through convenience sampling.

Additionally, 25 students were chosen for interviews using maximum diversity sampling, considering factors like gender, grade level, and district of study. These students represented diverse backgrounds and were categorised by their foreign language proficiency levels, attending representative high schools.

Table 1

Accessible Population for the Study

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Female	623	63.3
Male	361	36.7
Total	**984**	**100**

Procedures for Data Collection

Before commencing the study, necessary permissions were obtained from the developers of the "Five Factor Personality Inventory" and "Success and Failure Attributions Scale." Ethical approval was secured from the Ethics Committee at the Rectorate of Van Yüzüncü Yıl University, and survey permissions were granted by the Van Provincial Directorate of National Education. Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, 984 high school students in Van Province used Google Forms to collect data. A semi-structured interview form was also employed with 25 students, conducted online via Zoom. This online method offered advantages such as cost-effectiveness, flexibility, and the absence of geographical constraints. Participants were briefed about the study, assured of confidentiality, and encouraged to answer honestly. The entire process took approximately 20–25 minutes, emphasising voluntary participation and data privacy.

Measures

Five Factor Personality Inventory: The investigation employed as its primary data-gathering tool to evaluate the personality traits of high school students. Derived from the work of Rammstedt and John (2007), this assessment, focussing on five core features, was culturally adapted to Turkish settings by Horzum et al. (2017), specifically designed for high school students. We assessed respondents on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "never" to "always," using five criteria and 10 questions.

Success and Failure Attributions Scale: To evaluate students' attributions of success and failure in foreign language learning activities (Satıcılar, 2006). This measure comprises two components: attributions for success and attributions for failure. It covers 11 statements discussing success attributions and 12 statements referring to failure attributions, each assessed on a 5-point Likert scale.

Semi-structured interview: The form was applied to gather more insights into the research queries. The form, which consisted of eight questions tailored for high school students, probed their self-perceived success in foreign language learning, attributions for success and failure, and the nature of these attributions—whether they leaned towards internal or external factors. The design of the semi-structured interview form was meticulously crafted, drawing upon attribution theory and its implications in the realm of foreign language education. Subsequently, adjustments were made to enhance the clarity of the statements. Ten additional students, not part of the research group, were consulted to ensure the comprehensibility and quality of the questionnaire items. This collaborative effort culminated in the final version of the questionnaire, ready for implementation.

Data Analysis

In the current study, an intricate analysis of data was performed utilising both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to uncover the multifaceted dynamics between high school students' personality traits and their attributions for success and failure in learning English as a foreign language. The quantitative data analysis was conducted using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 (IBM Corp., 2016)., where descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, are generally used for quantitative data analysis (Babayiğit et al., 2021; Cizrelioğulları et al., 2019; Cizrelioğulları & Babayiğit, 2020), and these items were employed based on the data's nature.

Advanced inferential statistical techniques, including t-tests and correlation analyses, were employed to examine the interrelationships among variables. For instance, the results presented in Table 3 reveal significant correlations between specific personality traits and attribution dimensions, demonstrating that traits like conscientiousness and agreeableness were positively correlated with internal and controllable attributions, thereby corroborating existing personality theories (McCrae & Costa, 1999).

Parallel to the quantitative analysis, qualitative data were meticulously scrutinised through thematic analysis, adhering to the rigorous procedures outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). This process involved transcribing semi-structured interviews, systematically coding the data, and identifying emergent themes pertinent to students' personal experiences and perceptions of their language learning outcomes (Yavuz & Höl, 2017). The thematic analysis yielded rich, textured insights into how students internalise their academic successes and failures, often attributing their performance to a complex interplay of effort, ability, and external factors such as instructional quality and learning environments.

The confluence of quantitative and qualitative findings facilitates a holistic understanding of the nuanced nature of attributions in foreign language learning. The data accentuate the profound influence of personality traits in shaping students' attributional styles, which in turn modulate their motivational and emotional responses to educational challenges (Dörnyei, 2005; Williams et al., 2004). This mixed-methods approach not only validates theoretical constructs but also offers pragmatic insights for educators striving to cultivate more resilient and adaptive learning strategies among students.

Findings

In this section, an intricate array of frequency and percentage distributions, coupled with descriptive statistics, pertaining to the outcomes derived from the analysis. Furthermore, to address the inherent diversity within the dataset, the frequency and percentage distributions pertaining to select socio-demographic attributes of the participating students are elucidated, providing a comprehensive snapshot of the study's cohort.

Table 2
Internal and External Attributions for Success and Failure

Attributions	$\bar{x}$	Hig.	Low.	Sd
External	3.48	4.29	2.58	0. 33
Internal	2.84	4.38	1.85	0. 52

The analysis of Table 2 reveals significant insights into eleventh-grade students' attributions regarding their success and failure in foreign language learning. The mean score for external attributions is 3.48, indicating that students moderately attribute their outcomes to external factors such as luck, task difficulty, or teacher behavior. In contrast, the mean score for internal attributions is 2.84, suggesting a lesser frequency in attributing outcomes to internal factors like effort, ability, or personal motivation. The range of scores for external attributions, with a high of 4.29 and a low of 2.58, shows moderate variance in students' perceptions, while internal attributions, ranging from 4.38 to 1.85, exhibit broader variability. This broader range for internal attributions, coupled with a higher standard deviation of 0.52 compared to 0.33 for external attributions, indicates greater variability in students' beliefs about the influence of personal factors on their success or failure.

The findings suggest that students predominantly attribute their academic outcomes to external factors, reflecting a belief that situational and environmental elements play a more significant role than their actions and abilities. This variability in internal attributions may highlight differing levels of self-awareness, self-efficacy, or confidence among students regarding their capacity to influence their learning outcomes. These insights can inform educational strategies to foster a stronger internal locus of control, encouraging students to take more responsibility for their learning and potentially enhancing their motivation and academic achievement.

Table 3
Differences in Students' Attribution Styles

Variables	$\bar{x}$	Max.	Min.	Sd
Ability	3. 64	4. 86	2. 71	0. 4
Effort	3. 36	3. 4	1. 9	0. 42
Task difficulty	2. 67	4. 6	1. 4	0. 63
Luck	2. 29	4. 63	1. 75	0. 62

Table 3 provides a comprehensive examination of students' attribution styles across various factors such as ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. Notably, students tend to moderately attribute academic success or failure to ability, as indicated by a mean score of 3.64, whereas attributions to effort are slightly lower, suggesting less emphasis on personal diligence.

Additionally, students perceive task difficulty as a contributing factor to outcomes, as evidenced by a mean score of 2.67.

Conversely, attributions to luck receive the lowest mean score, indicating a lesser inclination to attribute outcomes to chance. The range and standard deviation of scores across these variables highlight considerable variability in students' perceptions, offering valuable insights into their beliefs about academic success and failure. These findings hold implications for educational interventions aimed at enhancing student motivation and achievement.

Table 4

T-test Results of Students' Success and Failure

	Sex	N	$\bar{x}$	Sd	t	df.	f	p
Attributions to success	Male	361	36,5	5,58	2,75	73,31	0,67	0,00
	Female	623	43,1	5,10				
Attributions to failure	Male	361	35,2	7,84	0,718	71,16	3,78	0,52
	Female	623	33,9	10,17				

Table 4 presents the results of t-tests analysing differences in students' attributions to success and failure based on gender. Male students have a mean score ($\bar{x}$) of 36.5 for attributions to success, while female students have a higher mean score of 43.1. The t-value of 73.31 with 982 degrees of freedom (df) indicates a significant difference between male and female students in attributions to success (t = 0.67, p < 0.001). On the other hand, for attributions to failure, male students have a mean score of 35.2, and female students have a slightly lower mean score of 34.8. The t-value of 71.16 with 982 degrees of freedom (df) indicates no significant difference between male and female students in attributions to failure (t = 3.78, p > 0.05). These results suggest that gender differences exist in how students attribute their success, but not their failure, in the context of language learning.

Table 5
Correlation Analysis of Personality Traits and Casual Attributions

	Neuroticism	Extraversion	Openness to experience	Agreeableness	Responsibility
Ability	-.182**	.122	-.028	.165*	.166**
Effort	-.417**	.214**	.112	.327**	.311**
Task difficulty	-.102	.209**	.027	.221**	.372**
Luck	-.069	.158*	.063	.126	.143*

A correlation analysis was done on personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness, and responsibility) and casual attributions (ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck). The results are shown in Table 5. The correlation coefficients (r) indicate the strength and direction of the relationship between each pair of variables.

Neuroticism shows a significant negative correlation with ability (r = -.182, p < 0.01) and effort (r = -.417, p < 0.01), suggesting that individuals with higher levels of neuroticism tend to attribute their success and failure less to their abilities and efforts. Extraversion exhibits a significant positive correlation with effort (r =.214, p < 0.01), indicating that individuals who are more extraverted are more likely to attribute their success to effort. Openness to experience shows

a weak positive correlation with effort (r =.112, p > 0.05) and task difficulty (r =.027, p > 0.05), while agreeableness demonstrates a moderate positive correlation with ability (r =.165, p < 0.05) and effort (r =.327, p < 0.01), implying that individuals who are more agreeable tend to attribute their success to both ability and effort.

Responsibility has significant positive correlations with ability (r =.166, p < 0.01), effort (r =.311, p < 0.01), and task difficulty (r =.372, p < 0.01), suggesting that people who are more responsible tend to attribute their success and failure to their abilities, efforts, and task difficulty. However, luck shows weak correlations with all personality traits, indicating that individuals do not heavily rely on luck as a factor in their attributions. Overall, these findings provide insights into the relationship between personality traits and casual attributions in the context of language learning.

Qualitative Analyses

What are the causative elements that foreign language learners ascribe to their success or failure in foreign language classes? When posed with the question "What is the definition of success in the context of English?" All of the pupils who saw themselves as effective in learning foreign languages were completely in support of

"I feel successful when I score "85" (85-100 points) in a foreign Language."

For example, the fourth participant (P-4) who considered herself successful in the interview stated the following:

"I feel successful if I get an average of '85' in foreign language."

A score of 45–54 is sufficient for a student to be considered successful in a foreign language." In addition, eight (32%) of them perceived foreign language success as getting "65" (55–69 points) in a foreign language exam. Also, five (20%) of them believe that getting "75" (70–84 points) creates a sense of success in English. When the eleventh-grade students' answers to the question of what it means to be successful in a foreign language are analysed, it is seen that all eleventh-grade students explained that success in a foreign language depends on exam results. Their ideas reveal that they do not even think of explaining success in terms of the skills they can develop in language learning. For example, they stated that being proficient at speaking English fluently means being successful in English. When the same question was asked to twelfth grade students, it was possible to see some differences between the two groups. For example, five of the twelfth-grade students who were successful in English (40%) reported that success in English depended on getting a "90" in the foreign language exam.

On the other side, 20% of successful English learners' express contentment with scores of "85" or "95" in their foreign language exams. Conversely, 47% of those who struggled with English feel that achieving a "45" in the foreign language exam would signify success in mastering the language. For instance, one twelfth-grade participant who didn't fare well in the interview articulated:

"To pass the class, I believe my foreign language score should hit at least '45'. Achieving this makes me feel successful." (Participant 6)

Furthermore, 30% of respondents define success in a foreign language as scoring at least "65" in the exam. The findings indicate that, akin to their eleventh-grade counterparts, success for twelfth-grade students in a foreign language is largely contingent on exam outcomes. It's evident

that both eleventh and twelfth graders approach foreign language learning primarily to attain favourable exam results.

In essence, the drive for students lies in obtaining commendable scores rather than mastering the language skills of speaking, writing, and reading (Er & Küçükali, 2024; Peacock, 2009). This sentiment is reinforced by students' responses to the question, "Do you consider yourself successful in learning English?" All successful students from both grade levels unanimously affirmed their perceived success. Their responses to inquiries about the factors contributing to success or failure align with the questionnaire findings, as shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Students Casual Attributions of Foreign Language Learning Achievement

Participant	Sex	Causes of Success	Casual Attribution Dimensions
P1	Female	The fact that foreign languages will be useful for our profession.	Internal/stable/*Controllable*
P2	Male	I succeeded because I love and understand foreign languages I work hard.	Internal/stable/*Controllable*
P3	Male	I have a talent for learning languages.	Internal/stable/Unc*ontrollable*
P4	Female	I have been successful in foreign languages because I have been interested in foreign languages since middle school.	Internal/Unstable/*Controllable*
P5	Female	Studying hard in foreign language classes, listening carefully, repeating the foreign language regularly	*Internal/Unstable/Controllable*
P6	Female	I love the foreign language teacher	*Internal/stable/Uncontrollable*
P7	Female	I have a special interest in foreign languages.	*Internal/stable/Uncontrollable*
P8	Female	I prepare before coming to foreign language classes.	*Internal/Unstable/Controllable*
P9	Male	I do my homework on a regular basis	*Internal/Unstable/Controllable*
P10	Male	I study hard in foreign language classes.	*Internal/Unstable/Controllable*
P11	Female	I like foreign language lessons because it is a universal language	*Internal/Unstable/Controllable*
P12	Female	My success stems from the application of learning strategies that are tailored specifically to my needs and preferences.	*Internal/Unstable/Controllable*

Table 6 presents students' casual attributions of foreign language learning achievement, categorised by participant, sex, causes of success, and casual attribution dimensions. The participants offer diverse reasons for their success in learning a foreign language, reflecting various internal and external factors influencing their achievements. The attributions predominantly align

with Weiner's (1986) three-dimensional classification of achievement attributions, encompassing internal/external, stable/unstable, and controllable/uncontrollable dimensions.

Participants P1, P2, P4, P5, P6, P7, P8, P9, P10, P11, and P12 attribute their success to internal factors such as personal interest, hard work, talent, and effective learning strategies. These attributions are characterized by stability, indicating that participants perceive these factors as long-term contributors to their success. Additionally, most of these attributions are controllable, suggesting that participants believe they have agency over these factors and can actively influence their outcomes. Participant P3 attributes success to an internal, stable, and uncontrollable factor, suggesting that they perceive their talent for learning languages as an inherent trait that contributes consistently to their success but is beyond their control. To sum up, the table underscores the multifaceted nature of students' attributions of success in foreign language learning, reflecting a combination of personal characteristics, efforts, and external influences. These attributions provide insights into students' perceptions of the factors driving their achievements and can inform educational interventions aimed at promoting more effective language learning strategies and fostering a growth mindset among learners.

Table 7

Students Casual Attributions of Foreign Language Learning Failures

Participant	Sex	Causes of Success	Casual Attribution Dimensions
P1	Female	I am not capable of learning a foreign language	*Internal/stable/Uncontrollable*
P2	Male	I don't make enough effort to study	*Internal/Unstable/Controllable*
P3	Male	I don't think I have the ability to learn in a foreign language.	*Internal/stable/Uncontrollable*
P4	Female	Learning a foreign language is very difficult for me	*Internal/unstable/Controllable*
P5	Female	The reason why I fail in a foreign language is that I don't like English.	*Internal/unstable/Controllable*
P6	Female	The reason I failed in foreign languages is that I have no aptitude for foreign language.	*Internal/unstable/Controllable*
P7	Female	I have very little interest in foreign languages and foreign language is an ordeal.	*External/stable/Uncontrollable*
P8	Female	My foreign language study environment is very bad.	*External/stable/Uncontrollable*
P9	Male	Foreign language teachers' teaching methods are inadequate and incomplete.	*External/stable/Uncontrollable*
P10	Male	The classroom environment is not suitable for foreign language learning.	*External/stable/Uncontrollable*
P11	Female	My family did not support me enough in learning a foreign language.	*External/stable/Uncontrollable*
P12	Female	I do not listen carefully to my teacher in foreign language classes.	*Internal/stable/Controllable*

Table 7 indicates students' casual attributions for foreign language learning failures, categorized by participant, sex, causes of failure, and casual attribution dimensions. The

attributions vary widely, reflecting a variety of internal and external factors that students perceive as influencing their failures in learning a foreign language.

Participants attribute their failures to a combination of internal and external factors. Internal attributions predominantly involve personal characteristics and efforts, characterised by stability and controllability. For example, participants P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6, and P12 attribute their failures to internal factors such as lack of capability, effort, ability, difficulty, dislike, and inattentiveness, with varying degrees of stability and controllability.

External attributions, on the other hand, involve factors beyond students' control, such as the learning environment, teaching methods, classroom environment, lack of family support, and inadequate teaching. These attributions are stable and uncontrollable, indicating that participants perceive these factors as enduring barriers to their success.

Finally, the table highlights the complex interplay of internal and external factors in students' attributions of failure in foreign language learning. These attributions provide insights into students' perceptions of the obstacles they face and can inform interventions aimed at addressing both individual and environmental factors to promote more effective language learning strategies and foster a supportive learning environment.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study offers an in-depth examination of the complex interplay between students' attribution styles, personality traits, and their foreign language learning outcomes (Gümüş, 2014; Musgrave-Marquart et al., 1997). By employing a mixed-methods approach that integrates quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, the research provides a comprehensive perspective on the factors influencing students' attributions in learning English as a foreign language.

The quantitative analysis reveals significant differences in students' attributions based on variables such as ability, effort, task difficulty, and luck. Consistent with Weiner et al.'s (1972) framework, students predominantly attribute their successes to internal factors such as ability and effort, while their failures are often attributed to both internal and external factors, including task difficulty and luck. This finding aligns with contemporary research highlighting the dual nature of attributions in academic settings (Schunk, 2020; Schunk & Pajares, 2022).

The qualitative data further enrich these insights by unveiling a range of personal experiences and perceptions. Interviews suggest that students often link their successes to factors like interest, passion, and perseverance (Georgiou, 1999), while failures are attributed to perceived lack of ability, task difficulty, and external circumstances. These nuanced attributions underscore the importance of individual differences in understanding student motivation and learning strategies, reflecting Dörnyei's (2005) emphasis on the role of personal factors in language learning and Williams and Burden's (1997) discussion of motivation. Correlation analysis reveals significant associations between personality traits and attribution styles. Traits such as neuroticism and extraversion are notably correlated with attributions to effort and task difficulty, respectively. These findings support the view that personality traits significantly influence individuals' attributions and learning outcomes (Musgrave-Marquart et al., 1997; Costa & McCrae, 2017).

The implications of these findings for educational practice, policy, and future research are substantial. A deeper understanding of the interaction between attribution styles, personality traits, and language learning outcomes can help educators develop more personalised and effective instructional strategies. Policymakers can leverage these insights to implement interventions that

create supportive learning environments, enhancing students' motivation, self-efficacy, and academic achievement (Bandura, 1997; Zimmerman, 2002; O'Connor & Paunonen, 2007).

In conclusion, this study makes a significant contribution to the literature on attribution theory and its application to foreign language learning. By utilising a mixed-methods approach and integrating various theoretical frameworks, the research provides a thorough understanding of the factors affecting students' attributions in language learning contexts. Future research should continue to investigate the intricate relationships between attribution styles, personality traits, and learning outcomes to inform evidence-based practices in language education.

Recommendations

Based on this study's findings, several recommendations emerge for educators, policymakers, and researchers to improve language learning outcomes and support student success:

Educators should tailor their instructional strategies to accommodate students' diverse attribution styles and personality traits. By recognising the role of internal and external attributions in shaping students' perceptions of success and failure, educators can design interventions that promote self-efficacy, motivation, and resilience in language learning.

Efforts should be made to foster a growth mindset among language learners, emphasising the belief that intelligence and language proficiency can be developed through effort and perseverance. Educators can implement growth mindset interventions, such as providing constructive feedback and promoting a culture of continuous improvement, to empower students to adopt adaptive attributional patterns.

Students should be encouraged to develop metacognitive awareness and employ effective learning strategies to monitor and regulate their language learning processes (Er & Farhady, 2023). Educators can incorporate metacognitive instruction into language curricula, equipping students with the skills to set goals, plan their learning, and evaluate their progress.

Language teachers should receive training in attribution theory and its implications for language instruction. By understanding the role of attributions in student motivation and achievement, teachers can create a supportive learning environment that nurtures positive attributions and fosters academic success (Rothman et al., 1993).

Parents play a crucial role in shaping students' attributions and attitudes towards language learning (Müller et al., 2006). Schools and educational institutions should actively involve parents in their children's language education by providing resources, workshops, and opportunities for collaboration. By fostering a partnership between parents and educators, students can receive consistent support and encouragement both at home and in the classroom.

Future research should continue to explore the complex interplay between attribution styles, personality traits, and language learning outcomes. Longitudinal studies examining the developmental trajectories of attributions and their impact on language proficiency over time would provide valuable insights into the mechanisms underlying successful language learning.

It might be easier to understand how sociocultural factors affect attributions and academic success if we do cross-cultural studies that look at attributional patterns and language learning outcomes in different cultural settings. By considering cultural variations in attributional styles, educators can implement culturally responsive pedagogical practices that cater to the diverse needs of language learners.

In conclusion, the recommendations outlined above offer actionable steps for stakeholders in language education to support students' academic success and foster a positive learning environment. By implementing evidence-based practices informed by attribution theory, educators can empower students to overcome challenges, develop a growth mindset, and achieve proficiency in their target language.

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Geniş Özet

Giriş

Yükleme teorisi, bireylerin olayları nedenleriyle nasıl ilişkilendirdiğini anlamaya yönelik önemli kavramlardan biridir. Heider (1958), Harvey ve diğerleri (2009) ile Weiner ve diğerlerinin (1972) çalışmalarında bu teori, çeşitli bilimsel perspektiflerden ele alınmış ve her biri, bireylerin yüklemelerde bulunma süreçlerine dair özgün içgörüler sunmuştur. Alderman (2004), yüklemeyi, bireylerin davranışlarını ve beklentilerini şekillendiren nedensellik inançlarını etkileyen bilişsel bir süreç olarak vurgulamaktadır (Kaya vd., 2023). Weiner'ın (1986) yüklemeleri konum, istikrar ve kontrol edilebilirlik boyutlarına göre kategorize eden modeli, eğitim psikolojisi alanında önemli bir yer edinmiş ve öğrencilerin motivasyonunu ve akademik başarısını etkileyen faktörlerin analizinde kritik bir araç olmuştur (Schhuk vd., 2014).

Amaç

Dünya genelinde öğrenciler, yabancı dil öğrenirken çeşitli zorluklarla karşılaşmakta ve bu süreçte farklı başarı düzeyleri sergilemektedir (Babayiğit, 2020). Öğrencilerin nedensel yüklemelerini (başarı ya da başarısızlıklarını neye dayandırdıklarını) anlamak, onların motivasyonları ve gelecekteki davranışları üzerinde derin etkiler yaratabilir (Dörnyei, 2003; Kelley, 1967). Bu araştırma, lise öğrencilerinin İngilizce öğrenimindeki başarı ve başarısızlıklarına ilişkin yaptıkları atıfları incelemekte ve bu atıfların kişilik özellikleri ile cinsiyet farklılıklarıyla nasıl ilişkili olduğunu araştırmaktadır.

1. Lise öğrencilerinin yabancı dil öğrenimindeki başarı ve başarısızlıklarına ilişkin nedensel yüklemelerini hangi ayırt edici boyutlarını ortaya koymaktadır?

2. Yabancı dil öğrenenlerin atıf stilleri ile kişilik özellikleri arasında anlamlı bir ilişki var mıdır?

3. Öğrenciler yabancı dil öğrenmedeki başarı ve başarısızlıklarına hangi faktörleri atfetmektedir?

4. Başarılı ve başarısız öğrencilerin atıfları nasıl farklılaşmaktadır?

Yöntem

Araştırma, nicel anketler ve nitel görüşmeleri birleştiren karma bir yöntem yaklaşımı kullanmıştır. Nicel bileşen, atıf stillerini ve kişilik özelliklerini değerlendiren anketleri içerirken; nitel bileşen, öğrencilerin kişisel deneyimlerini ve algılarını derinlemesine keşfetmek amacıyla yarı yapılandırılmış görüşmelerden oluşmuştur. Örneklem, cinsiyet, sınıf düzeyi ve akademik performans açısından temsil edilebilirliği sağlamak amacıyla tabakalı rastgele örnekleme yöntemi ile Türkiye'deki lise öğrencileri arasından seçilmiştir. Veriler, nicel veriler için istatistiksel analiz yöntemleri ve nitel veriler için tematik analiz kullanılarak değerlendirilmiştir (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Miles & Huberman, 1994).

Bulgular

Öğrenciler, dil öğrenme sonuçlarını genellikle şans, görev zorluğu ve öğretmen davranışı gibi dışsal faktörlere (ortalama puan = 3.48) bağlamaktadır. İçsel atıflar (ortalama puan = 2,84) daha az yaygındır ve bu durum, öğrencilerin öğrenme çıktıları üzerindeki öz-yeterlik algılarının

sınırlı olduğunu göstermektedir. Ayrıca, atıf tarzlarında cinsiyet farklılıkları gözlenmiştir. Erkek öğrenciler, başarılarını içsel faktörlere daha sık atfeden kız öğrencilere kıyasla, başarıyı daha az sıklıkla içsel faktörlere bağlamaktadır (t = 0.67, p < 0.001). Ancak, başarısızlık yüklemelerinde cinsiyetler arasında anlamlı bir fark bulunmamıştır. Korelasyon analizi, kişilik özellikleri ile atıf tarzları arasında önemli ilişkiler olduğunu ortaya koymuştur. Örneğin, nevrotiklik, yetenek ve çabaya yapılan atıflarla negatif korelasyon gösterirken, dışadönüklük çaba ile pozitif korelasyon göstermiştir.

Öğrenciler, başarıyı öncelikle sınav puanları ile tanımlamaktadır ve dil becerilerinden ziyade performans sonuçlarına odaklanmaktadır. On birinci sınıf öğrencileri başarıyı 65 ila 85 puan arasında değerlendirirken, on ikinci sınıf öğrencileri benzer örüntüler sergilemektedir. Başarı ve başarısızlık atıfları, Weiner'ın sınıflandırmasıyla uyumludur. Başarılı öğrenciler, başarılarını ilgi ve çaba gibi içsel, istikrarlı ve kontrol edilebilir faktörlere bağlarken; başarısızlıklarını ise genellikle yetersiz öğretim gibi dışsal, istikrarlı ve kontrol edilemeyen faktörlere dayandırmaktadır.

Sonuç ve Tartışma

Nicel ve nitel bulguların bir araya getirilmesi, öğrencilerin yabancı dil öğrenimindeki başarı ve başarısızlıklarına yönelik atıflarının büyük ölçüde dış faktörlere dayandığını ve bu durumun dil öğrenme süreçlerini olumsuz etkileyebileceğini göstermektedir. Başarılarını içsel faktörlere bağlayan öğrenciler, daha yüksek bir motivasyon seviyesine sahip olma eğilimindedir. Bu tür atıflar, öğrencilerin öğrenme süreçleri üzerinde daha fazla kontrol hissetmelerine olanak tanır ve başarıya ulaşma olasılıklarını artırır. Ancak, dışsal faktörlere atıfta bulunan öğrencilerin, özellikle başarısızlıklarını bu tür faktörlere dayandıranların, motivasyonları ve akademik dirençleri daha düşük olabilir.

Cinsiyet farklılıkları ve kişilik özellikleri de bu süreçte belirleyici bir rol oynamaktadır. Erkek öğrencilerin başarılarını daha az sıklıkla içsel faktörlere atfetmesi, dil öğreniminde daha düşük bir iç kontrol odağına sahip olabileceklerine işaret etmektedir. Bu durum, onların başarısızlık karşısında daha az dirençli olmalarına yol açabilir. Aynı şekilde, nitel bulgular, öğrencilerin başarıyı daha çok ölçülebilir ve dışsal göstergelerle ilişkilendirdiklerini ortaya koymaktadır. Bu, öğrencilerin dil becerilerini geliştirmek yerine sadece sınav başarısına odaklandığını göstermektedir.

Bu çalışma, yabancı dil öğrenimi bağlamında öğrencilerin atıf stillerini ve kişilik özelliklerini anlamanın önemine dikkat çekmektedir. Bulgular, eğitim stratejilerinin daha güçlü bir iç kontrol odağını teşvik etmesi ve öğrencilerin öğrenme çıktıları için daha fazla sorumluluk almalarını desteklemesi gerektiğini göstermektedir. Öğrenci özelliklerini merkeze almak ve üst bilişsel stratejiler geliştirmek, öğrencilerin motivasyonlarını ve başarılarını artırabilir. Bu bulgular, eğitimciler, politika yapıcılar ve araştırmacılar için değerli çıkarımlar sunmakta ve öğrenci başarısını destekleyen daha etkili ve kişiselleştirilmiş dil öğrenme programlarının geliştirilmesine rehberlik etmeği amaçlamıştır. Sonuç olarak, öğrencilerin başarı ve başarısızlık algılarını etkileyen faktörleri ele alan bu araştırma, eğitim psikolojisi ve dil eğitimi alanlarına önemli katkılarda bulunmakta olup, öğretim metodolojilerinin geliştirilmesi ve yabancı dil öğreniminde öğrenci motivasyonunun desteklenmesi için uygulanabilir öneriler sunmaktadır.