Exploring Personality Traits and Loneliness in University EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Learners

Abstract

This study attempts to explore the relationships between personality traits, loneliness, and university students’ EFL (English as a foreign language) achievement. A sample consisting of 137 freshman students from two universities participated in this study. Statistical results showed that conscientiousness was positively related to EFL achievement, while neuroticism was negatively related to EFL achievement. Statistical results also revealed that students who achieved poorer EFL results tended to consider themselves to be lonelier. In addition, loneliness was also found to have significant negative relationships with three personality traits including extraversion, agreeableness, and conscientiousness. Taken together, this study would help to contribute to the understanding of personality, loneliness, and EFL achievement in university students.

Key words: personality, loneliness, EFL achievement, foreign language education.

Introduction

In the research on foreign language education, factors that are associated with learners have been attracting researchers’ attention over the last few decades. Learner factors such as foreign language anxiety, foreign language learning strategies and styles, foreign language learning motivation and attitude, willingness to communicate, gender, cultural background, and learning tasks have all been very well investigated in various cultural groups. However, there are still factors that do