Personality and Emotional Intelligence in Second Language Learning

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

PREFACE

The main purpose of the book entitled *Personality and Emotional Intelligence in Second Language Learning* is twofold. Firstly, it is to provide a comprehensive, up-to-date overview of the studies in the field of second/foreign language learning and L2 use that focused mostly on personality traits and emotional intelligence. Secondly, it is to present the results of a mixed method study researching the possible influence of mentioned variables on the process of learning a second language. It is believed that focusing on both higher-order "Big Five" personality traits of Extraversion, Openness to experience, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Neuroticism (Costa & McCrae, 1992a), as well as on the lower-order personality trait of Emotional intelligence (Petrides & Furnham, 2001) while examining various aspects of second language acquisition (SLA) will help to elucidate the very process of second language learning. Consequently, presenting results from the standardized national secondary school-leaving examination concerning both written and oral L2 proficiency as well as informants' preferences related to the acquisition of L2 skills of listening, writing, reading, speaking, but also such language subsystems as grammar, pronunciation, vocabulary and spelling is expected to shed some more light on the complex relationship between personality and language learning. At the same time, this is the first empirical study, to the best of our knowledge, that also takes into account Emotional intelligence as a potential variable that might influence the process of second/ foreign language learning while relating it to various L2 skills as well as written and oral L2 proficiency.

This book is composed of six chapters. Chapter One focuses on defining the constructs of personality and emotional intelligence. It also introduces a brief overview of different personality structures according to various theories and models like Eysenck's (1947, 1990) "Big Three", the "Big Five" (Costa & McCrae, 1985, 1989, 1992a, 1992b), as well as Trait Emotional intelligence (TEI) by Petrides and Furnham (2001). After the overview of the constructs, it concentrates on the detailed description of the NEO-FFI personality inventory by Costa and McCrae (1992a) and Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) by Petrides and Furnham (2001) which were used in the present study.

Chapter Two concentrates on the personality traits with regard to various aspects of language learning, starting from the classroom context and gradually moving to semi-structured and naturalistic settings. It presents studies that have researched both higher and lower-order personality traits among L2 learners, study abroad students and immigrants living in the L2 country. At the same time, it addresses various issues concerning SLA but also L2 use, L2 speaking anxiety, and acculturation. It is hoped that the overview of the up to date literature concerning both higher-order and lower-order personality traits and second/foreign language learning and L2 use in different educational and cultural settings will provide an interesting background for the present study.

Chapter Three focuses on the methodology of the study, research questions and hypotheses, as well as the participants and research instruments. The present contribution examines the complex interaction of such factors as personality traits and Emotional intelligence and the processes connected to L2 learning as well as L2 use from the qualitative and quantitative point of view. The use of both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods was justified by dominant trends in applied linguistics research, which show that the combination of both perspectives overcomes the limitations of narrowing frameworks and enriches the analysis by allowing for greater diversity in the type of data gathered (Dewaele, 2008). To be able to shed some more light on the quantitative data analysis results, it was decided to incorporate an open question that invited the informants of the study to share their thoughts and opinions concerning the most difficult aspects of foreign language learning. When it comes to the quantitative part of the questionnaire, it is important to mention that written and oral skills in English (L2) were measured using the national secondary school-leaving examination results making sure that they are both standardised, objective and identical for all informants taking part in our study. Other presented results are based on participants' grades from practical use of English classes focusing on grammar, writing and integrated skills as well as self-reported preferences concerning the acquisition of L2 skills of reading, writing, listening, speaking but also grammar, vocabulary, spelling and pronunciation. It is believed that different types of measures introduced in the present research will help to show what are the possible influences of the personality traits and emotional intelligence on SLA when both objective measures of L2 proficiency, as well as subjective perceptions concerning preferences related to the acquisition of L2 skills, are taken into account.

Chapter Four presents the results of quantitative data analyses. It focuses mostly on the correlation, multiple stepwise regression and t-test analyses' results concerning higher and lower-order personality traits and measured aspects of SLA. Among these, we could enumerate L2 written and oral proficiency test results, grades from grammar, writing and integrated skills classes as well as informants' preferences concerning the acquisition of L2 skills, self-perceived L2 proficiency and L2 use as well as self-reported L2 anxiety.

Chapter Five focuses on the results of qualitative and quantitative data analysis concerning participants' views on the most challenging aspect of the language learning. All of the answers are analysed qualitatively with the use of inductive category development (Mayring, 2001). The criterion is derived from theoretical background as well as research question. Following this criterion, the material is worked through, and categories are deduced. Later on, they are revised and reduced to main categories and analysed quantitatively regarding frequencies as well as personality traits.

Chapter Six presents discussion of the findings linking it to the presented literature overview as well as some implications and limitations of the study.

I would like to conclude the preface by thanking Professor Jean-Marc Dewaele and Professor Mirosław Pawlak, who read an earlier version of the present book and made valuable critical comments and suggestions for improvement.

I would also like to thank my husband Daniel and my children, Julia and Bruno, for their love, patience, understanding and unstinting support.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CONCEPT OF PERSONALITY

1.1 Introduction

The aim of the present chapter is to provide a brief overview of various definitions of personality as well as different personality questionnaires. We are to present the most dominant approaches to the measurement of personality and Emotional Intelligence as well as other popular personality constructs used in SLA. However, before focusing on specific traits it is important to explain the very concept of personality.

1.2 What is personality?

To answer "What is personality?" question several meanings and implications of the word "personality" need to be addressed. The concept of personality is relatively recent and has undergone some significant changes (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 4). At the very beginning, personality referred to our shared humanity, the capacities that were believed to distinguish us from animals (Williams, 1979). Over time, however, it came to refer more to the characteristics of the individual human being: the "person". The word "person" came from the Latin word "persona", which referred to the mask worn by an actor. This individuality of a person was understood as roles and characters that a given individual assumes in life (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 4). Currently, the personality psychology perspective on personality refers to those individual differences that are psychological, fall outside the intellectual domain, are enduring dispositions rather than transient states, and form some relatively broad patterns (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 6). Even though psychologists agree that personality is fundamentally a matter of individual human differences in personal characteristics other than intelligence (Crozier, 1997), we can still come across many definitions of the concept. Child (1986, p. 239) has defined personality as: "the more or less stable and enduring organisation of a person's character, temperament, intellect and physique which determines his unique adjustment to the

environment". The American Psychological Association described it as "individual differences in characteristic patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving" (Kazdin, 2000). However, probably the most often cited definition of personality is the one proposed by Allport (1961, p. 28) describing it as "the dynamic organisation within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his characteristic behaviour and thought". This definition was built on the meticulous research of many previous definitions of personality and reflected Allport's emphasis on incorporating various characteristics of personality into one definition (Feist & Feist, 2009). Personality was presented by Allport as both stable and growing, physical and mental, conscious and unconscious, product and process (Feist & Feist, 2009, p. 378). Carducci (2009, p. 260) explained that although personality is an organised system of components, this system is in a constant state of change. Within such a state, each experience modifies various aspects of the individual's personality (Caspi & Roberts, 1999, cited in Carducci, 2009, p. 260). Additionally, its psychophysical nature suggests that it integrates aspects of the mind such as feelings, ideas and beliefs as well as the aspects of the body like a nervous system. The fact that personality was defined as a determinant of behaviour emphasises that it might serve both an activating and directive function in the individual's adaptive and expressive thought and behaviour (Wiggins, 1997, cited in Carducci, 2009, p. 260). Allport's definition also clarified the nature and purpose of the concept of personality as an expression of uniqueness. The phrase "characteristic behaviour and thought" refers to people's thoughts and reflections while adjusting to the environment (Elms, 1993, cited in Carducci, 2009, p. 260).

As it can be seen from the above, personality is a broad concept that refers to various aspects of an individual's unique characteristics that are:

> "(…) relatively enduring behavioural and cognitive characteristics, traits, or predispositions that people take with them to different situations, contexts, and interactions with others and that contribute to differences among individuals. They are the qualities or collection of qualities that make a person a distinctive individual, or the collective aggregate of behavioural and mental characteristics that are distinctive of an individual" (Matsumoto & Juang, 2008, p. 255)

The definitions presented above describe the notion of personality but fail to characterise it in a more detailed manner. Therefore, the next section focuses on the description of the structure of personality and

different approaches that aim to illustrate the individual differences that make up people's personalities.

1.3 Personality traits and Emotional Intelligence

In psychology, the principal unit for describing personality is the *trait*, and personality is said to be the organisation of traits. The concept of *trait* is a characteristic form of thinking, feeling and behaving and was defined as habitual patterns of behaviour, thought, and emotion (Kassin, 2003). According to this perspective, traits are relatively stable over time, differ among individuals, and influence our behaviour. It is important to mention that traits are dispositions. That is, they should be best thought of as a "probabilistic tendency that a person has to act in a certain way when placed in a certain kind of situation" (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 19). Allport and Odbert (1936) were early pioneers in the study of *traits*, which they also referred to as *dispositions*. In their approach, *central traits* are basic to an individual's personality, whereas *secondary traits* are more peripheral. Traits also vary in their generality, as some traits represent only narrow domains of life, and others are relevant to a substantial proportion of it. Therefore, they can be organised in a certain hierarchy, with relatively specific traits that relate to a small number of behaviours falling under broader traits (Allport & Odbert, 1936). Even though there is a large number of traits that could be used to describe personality, the statistical technique of factor analysis, has demonstrated that particular clusters of traits reliably correlate together forming "The Big Five Factor Model".

1.3.1 The "Big Five" personality traits

The search for the fundamental trait dimensions started decades ago with Fiske (1949). Over time, researchers began recognising regularity in factor analyses suggesting that personality ratings often converged on five broad factors. As a result of various approaches to psychological traits analysis, a dominant "The Big Five Factor Model" has evolved. It has developed from Allport and Odbert's (1936) attempts to compile trait-related terms that have mainly focused on situational-based approaches offering greater flexibility in explaining a person-specific environment and using the lexical analysis of trait adjectives in natural languages as the classification of all the major sources of individual differences in personality (e.g., Costa & McCrae, 1988, 1992a, 1992b; Digman, 1989, 1990; Fiske, 1949; Goldberg, 1981, 1990, 1992; John, Angleitner, & Ostendorf, 1988 cited in Ożańska-Ponikwia, 2013). However, it was

Goldberg (1981) who proposed five main personality factors naming his findings "The Big Five". He started with the lexical hypothesis that: "the most important individual differences in human transactions will come to be encoded as single terms in some or all of the world's languages" (Goldberg, 1990, p. 1216). Within Goldberg's taxonomy, terms were grouped and organised according to their culturally-shared meaning, as determined by the meaning-similarity ratings of native speakers, dictionary definitions, the co-occurrence of adjectives and self-rating (Peabody & Goldberg, 1989, cited in Ożańska-Ponikwia, 2013). Although he started the research on the "Big Five", the founders of the theoretical background were Costa and McCrae. Mentioned researchers decided to reduce Cattell's (1957) theory of 16 traits to conform with Eysenck's 'PEN' theory (Eysenck, 1990). According to Eysenck, personality consists of temperament and intelligence represented by three major personality traits of Psychoticism, Extraversion and Neuroticism (PEN) (Strelau, 2000, p. 535). Costa and McCrae added the Openness to experience to Extraversion and Neuroticism from the Eysenck "PEN" model and in this way created the Three Factor Model of Personality. The NEO Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) originally measured only Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness to experience. It was not until 1989 that the NEO model (Neuroticism, Extraversion, Openness to experience) was enlarged by adding two more factors: Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. These five factors represent the five fundamental ways along which people's personalities vary. What is important to highlight is the fact that the "Big Five Factor Inventory" measures ten personality factors instead of five as each of the "Big Five" personality traits has its counterpart presented on the linear scale. The reason for pairing these factors is that a high score for one of the pair, e.g. Extraversion, entails a low score for its counterpart, in this case Introversion. Scores on the various dimensions follow a normal (Gaussian) distribution, meaning that a majority of people are situated between the opposite poles, and are called "ambiverts" on the Extraversion-Introversion dimension (Ożańska-Ponikwia & Dewaele, 2012). Consequently, the "Big Five" personality traits are Extraversion vs Introversion; Agreeableness vs Antagonism; Conscientiousness vs Undirectedness; Neuroticism vs Emotional Stability; Openness to experience vs. Not Open to Experience. All the five dimensions that form the construct are rather broad, comprising several essential facets, which are usually referred to as primary traits (Dornyei, 2005, p. 15). Below we are to present some major characteristics that could be associated with the high and low scorers on each trait.

Extraversion is best exemplified by traits involving sociability, encompassing traits that involve energy and activity levels, sensation-seeking, interpersonal dominance, and tendency to experience positive emotional states (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 26). In Costa and McCrae's NEO-PI-R (1992a), the six facets of activity level which define Extraversion are Assertiveness, Activity, Excitement Seeking, Positive Emotions, Gregariousness, and Warmth. In other words, extraverts are people who are sociable, outgoing and good in interpersonal contacts. They are also characterised by the quantity and intensity of interpersonal interaction, their activity level, their need for stimulation and capacity for joy. Extraversion also implies an energetic approach to the social and material world and includes traits such as Assertiveness and Positive emotionality. On the other hand, introverts, who represent the opposing pole of this factor, can be defined as serious, shy, avoiding meeting people, self-sufficient, passive, quiet, reserved, withdrawn, sober, aloof, and restrained. Their domain is more of thought than of action. Introversion is understood as "the tendency to be quiet and reserved with other people, to shun crowds and excitement, and to act on thoughtful consideration rather than impulse" (Plotnik & Mollenauer, 1986, p. 647).

Agreeableness, just like Extraversion, is primarily linked to interpersonal qualities but involves cooperativeness, altruism, as well as a warm and compliant stance towards others (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 26). The six facets of activity level which define Agreeableness are Trust, Straightforwardness, Altruism, Compliance, Modesty and Tender-mindedness (Costa & McCrae, 1992a). Therefore, high scorers could be described as friendly, good-natured, likeable, kind, forgiving, trusting, cooperative, modest, and generous. Low scorers are characterised as cold, cynical, rude, unpleasant, critical, antagonistic, suspicious, vengeful, irritable, and uncooperative.

Conscientiousness is linked to self-control, planfulness, as well as being organised, efficient and deliberate in one's approach to tasks. The six facets of activity level which define Conscientiousness are Competence, Order, Dutifulness, Achievement striving, Self-discipline and Deliberation (Costa & McCrae, 1992a). Unconscientious people tend to be impulsive, disorganised, and careless towards their responsibilities. Therefore, Conscientiousness seems to reflect one's approach to long-term goals and interests, resisting impulses that threaten to sabotage them, as well as harnessing one's efforts to accomplish these goals and interests competently (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 26).

Neuroticism has to do mostly with people's emotional stability referring to a wide range of negative emotions including anger, sadness,

shame, and embarrassment. Neurotic people are more prone to experience negative emotions, to be psychologically maladjusted and vulnerable as well as reporting low self-esteem. On the other hand, people who are low scorers on the trait Neuroticism are emotionally stable, calm, and able to cope well with stress (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 27). The six facets of activity level which define Neuroticism are Anxiety, Angry Hostility, Depression, Self-consciousness, Impulsiveness and Vulnerability (Costa and McCrae, 1992a).

Openness to experience could be characterised by such facets of activity level as Fantasy, Aesthetics, Feelings, Actions, Ideas and Values (Costa and McCrae, 1992a). High scorers could be described as imaginative, curious, flexible, creative, moved by art, novelty seeking, original, and untraditional. In contrast, low scorers are conservative, conventional, down-to-earth, unartistic, and practical (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 15). Openness to experience is, therefore, a matter of willingness to adopt novel and unconventional ways of thinking and behaving. High scorers on the trait are heavily invested in cultivating new experiences, whereas its low scorers are conventional and narrow in their interests as well as conservative and sometimes rigid in their approach to life's challenges and opportunities (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 27).

Research suggests that there are four major levels of the trait hierarchy such as meta-traits, domains, aspects and facets (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 51). Major trait domains that represent the dimensions of personality could be located somewhere within the multidimensional "Big Five" domains. As a matter of fact, for some time the "Big Five" was thought to lie at the highest level of the personality hierarchy. However, from the late 1990's evidence began to accumulate for two even broader meta-traits of Stability and Plasticity (DeYoung, 2006 cited in Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 51). These have been suggested to reflect broad processes common to Agreeableness, Conscientiousness and Emotional stability on the one hand and Extraversion and Openness to experience on the other. DeYoung, Quilty and Peterson (2007) suggest that in trait hierarchy each trait domain can be divided into two aspects and further on into facets which could be understood regarding specific behaviour (such as talkativeness in the case of Extraversion) and whose exact number and identity was not specifically determined. Consequently, according to DeYoung (2015), two meta-traits of Stability and Plasticity were divided into "Big Five" domains of Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, Neuroticism, Extraversion and Openness to experience (Costa & McCrae, 1992a). These domains were further divided into ten aspects which are: Orderliness and Industriousness (Conscientiousness); Compassion and

Politeness (Agreeableness); Volatility and Withdrawal (Neuroticism); Assertiveness and Enthusiasm (Extraversion); Openness and Intellect (Openness) (DeYoung, 2015). This hierarchical nature of traits shows that each "Big Five" domain "is a complex composite that can be unpacked in terms of increasingly more finely grained constructs" that describe "coherent patterns of basic psychological processes" (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, pp. 51-52). According to Hampshire (1953), all these basic psychological processes could be classified regarding affect, behaviour, and cognition. Consequently, Haslam, Smilie & Song (2017, p. 52) conclude that:

> "While psychology as a whole can be defined as the study of affect, behaviour, and cognition, personality psychology can be defined as the study of regularities in, or stable differential patterns of these processes, usefully organized in terms of the Big Five."

The set of the "Big Five" personality factors is the most dominant model of personality structure in contemporary personality psychology that measures the higher-order personality traits by means of the NEO-PI-R personality questionnaire (Costa & McCrae, 1992a). Below we are to focus on a trait Emotional Intelligence (EI) that is closely related to the "Big Five" personality traits. De Raad (2005) located trait EI within the abridged "Big Five" circumplex and found that it comprises scattered aspects of the "Big Five" domain and correlates with at least four of the five basic traits. Petrides, Pita & Kokkinaki (2007) performed two joint factor analyses to determine the location of trait EI in Eysenckian and "Big Five" factor space. The results showed that trait EI is a compound personality construct located at the lower levels of the two taxonomies and therefore was termed a lower-order personality trait (Petrides, Furnham & Mavroveli, 2007).

1.3.2 Emotional Intelligence as a lower-order personality trait

Emotional Intelligence (EI) as a non-cognitive aspect of intelligence has its roots in Thorndike's (1920) idea of *social intelligence* as the ability to understand and handle interpersonal situations and Gardner's (1983) theory of multiple intelligences focusing on *intrapersonal* and *interpersonal* intelligence. However, it was Mayer and Salovey (1997) who proposed that EI encompasses social intelligence but is distinct from a more traditional understanding of intelligence (Newsome et al., 2000) as it focuses on the ability to reason about emotions and to use that knowledge in order to help with thinking through problems (Mayer, Roberts &

Barsade, 2008 cited in Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 310). Petrides and Furnham (2001) proposed to distinguish between EI constructs, depending on whether the operationalisation process was based on self-report (as in personality questionnaires) or maximum performance (as in IQ tests). As a result, they came up with "trait EI" (or trait emotional self-efficacy) and "ability EI" (or cognitive-emotional ability). The ability view, also known as "information-processing EI" (Petrides & Furnham, 2001) considered emotional intelligence as a cognitive ability that involves emotional information processing. In contrast, the trait view described it as a dispositional tendency to behave in particular ways (Haslam, Smilie & Song, 2017, p. 310). Consequently, Trait EI was investigated with reference to personality hierarchies, while ability EI was investigated with reference to cognitive ability hierarchies (Mavroveli, Petrides, Rieffe & Bakker, 2007). It should also be emphasized that trait EI and ability EI are two different constructs conceptually, methodologically and empirically (Mavroveli, Petrides, Rieffe & Bakker, 2007), and that trait EI is explicitly hypothesized to lie outside the realm of human cognitive ability (Carroll, 1993), which was confirmed in many independent studies reporting near-zero, or even negative, correlations between trait EI questionnaires and IQ tests (Derksen, Kramer, & Katzko, 2002; Newsome, Day, & Catano, 2000; Petrides, Frederickson, & Furnham, 2004; Saklofske, Austin, & Minski, 2003; van der Zee, Thijs, & Schakel, 2002; Warwick & Nettelbeck, 2004 cited in Petrides, Furnham & Mavroveli, 2007, p. 154). At the same time, some other studies (De Raad, 2005; Petrides & Furnham, 2001; Petrides, Pita, & Kokkinaki, 2007; Saklofske, Austin & Minski, 2003) researching the hierarchical trait structures located trait EI within the "Big Five" domain and reported correlations with at least four of the five basic personality dimensions. Petrides, Pita & Kokkinaki (2007, p. 283) concluded that:

> "the factor location analyzes demonstrates that trait EI is a distinct (because it can be isolated in personality space), compound (because it is partially determined by several personality dimensions) construct that lies at the lower levels of personality hierarchies (because the trait EI factor is oblique, rather than orthogonal to The Giant Three and The Big Five). This conclusion enables us to connect our trait emotional self-efficacy conceptualization of EI to the established differential psychology literature. This is a major conceptual advantage of trait EI theory because it integrates the construct with the mainstream models of personality. Moreover, this conceptualization appears to be consistent, not only with hierarchical but also with circumplex models of personality."

As presented above, the trait EI framework aims to provide a comprehensive coverage of personality facets relating to affect. Trait EI (or emotional self-efficacy) itself concerns a constellation of emotion-related self-perceptions and dispositions (Davey, 2005: 306) measured by the Trait Emotional Intelligence Questionnaire (TEIQue) developed by Petrides and Furnham (2003). The TEIQue is a self-report inventory that covers the sampling domain of trait EI comprehensively measuring 15 distinct facets, four factors of Emotionality, Self-control, Sociability and Well-being as well as global trait EI. According to the hierarchical structure of the TEIQue, the facets are narrower than the factors, which, in turn, are narrower than the global trait EI (Petrides, 2009, p. 5). Below short descriptions of high and low scorers on all factors and facets are provided.

Individuals with high scores on Emotionality are in touch with their feelings and can understand well other people's feelings. They can also perceive and express emotions and use these qualities to develop and sustain close relationships with others. Individuals with low scores on this factor find it difficult to recognise their internal emotional states and to express their feelings to others, which may lead to less rewarding personal relationships (Petrides, 2009, p. 10).

High scorers on Self-control have a healthy degree of control over their urges and desires. In addition to controlling impulses, they are good at regulating external pressures and stress. They are neither repressed nor overly expressive. In contrast, low scorers are prone to impulsive behaviour and may find it difficult to manage stress (Petrides, 2009, p. 10).

The Sociability factor differs from the Emotionality factor above in that it emphasises social relationships and social influence. The focus is on the individual as an agent in social contexts, rather than on personal relationships with family and close friends. Individuals with high scores on the Sociability factor are better at social interaction. They are good listeners and can communicate clearly and confidently with people from diverse backgrounds. Those with low scores believe they are unable to affect others' emotions and are less likely to be good negotiators and networkers. They are unsure what to do or say in social situations and, as a result, they often appear shy and reserved (Petrides, 2009, p. 10).

High scores on Well-being reflect a generalised sense of well-being (a good or satisfactory condition of existence; a state characterized by health, happiness, and prosperity), extending from past achievements to future expectations. Overall, individuals with high scores feel positive, happy, and fulfilled. In contrast, individuals with low scores tend to have low self-regard and to be disappointed about their life as it is at present (Petrides, 2009, p. 10).

Apart from the four factors of broad relevance presented above, TEIQue also measures fifteen facets of Adaptability, Assertiveness, Emotion perception, Emotion expression, Emotion management, Emotion regulation, Impulsiveness, Relationships, Self-esteem, Self-motivation, Social awareness, Stress management, Trait empathy, Trait happiness, and Trait optimism. A brief description of all the facets is given in Table 1 below.

Table 1 The adult sampling domain of trait emotional intelligence (Petrides, 2009)

Facets	High scorers perceive themselves as…
Adaptability	flexible and willing to adapt to new conditions
Assertiveness	forthright, frank and willing to stand up for their rights
Emotion perception	clear about their own and other people's feelings
Emotion expression	capable of communicating their feelings to others
Emotion management (others)	capable of influencing other people's feelings
Emotion regulation	capable of controlling their emotions
Impulsiveness (low)	reflective and less likely to give in to their urges
Relationships	capable of having fulfilling personal relationships
Self-esteem	successful and self-confident
Self-motivation	driven and unlikely to give up in the face of adversity
Social awareness	accomplished networkers with excellent social skills
Stress management	capable of withstanding pressure and regulating stress
Trait empathy	capable of taking someone else's perspective
Trait happiness	cheerful and satisfied with their lives
Trait optimism	confident and likely to "look on the bright side" of life

What is important to highlight is the fact that all of the fifteen specific facets are linked to their corresponding factor of broad relevance. More specifically, Emotionality comprises the following facets: trait Empathy, Emotion perception, Emotion expression and Relationships. The Sociability factor of broad relevance consists of Emotion management, Assertiveness and Social awareness. Well-being includes such facets as trait Happiness, trait Optimism and Self-esteem. The last of the four factors, Self-control, encompasses Stress management, Impulsiveness (low) and Emotion regulation. It is important to note that the facets of Adaptability and Self-motivation were not keyed to any factor, but feed directly into the global trait EI score (Petrides, 2009).

1.4 Other personality constructs used in SLA research

Although the set of the "Big Five" personality factors is the most dominant model of personality structure in contemporary personality psychology, there are some other personality constructs that are also very popular in SLA research. Among these we could enumerate the Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (EPQ), which is a self-report instrument that is based on Eysenck's theory of personality (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975). It is based on Eysenck's three-component construct (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975), which identifies three principal personality dimensions, contrasting (1) Extraversion with Introversion, (2) Neuroticism and Emotionality with Emotional stability, and (3) Psychoticism and Tough-mindedness with Tender-mindedness (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 13). There is some overlapping between the Eysenckian personality model and the "Big Five" as the "Big Five" construct retains Eysenck's first two dimensions, but replaces Psychoticism with three additional dimensions of Conscientiousness, Agreeableness, and Openness to experience. A wide variety of empirical studies have tested these models and found that they provide a good representation of the central features of personality (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 13).

Another very popular construct in SLA is the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) based on Jung's theory of three bipolar types: Extraversion–Introversion, Sensing–Intuiting, and Thinking–Feeling (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 18). However, the MBTI constructed by Myers and Briggs (1976) consists of four dichotomies as the Judging-Perceiving one was added by the authors to Jung's taxonomy. The four dichotomies targeted by the MBTI are as follows: *Extraversion–Introversion,* referring to where people prefer to focus their attention and get their energy from: the *outer world* of people and activity or their *inner world* of ideas and experiences; *Sensing–Intuition,* referring to how people perceive the world

and gather information; *Thinking–Feeling,* referring to how people prefer
to arrive at conclusions and make decisions; *Judging–Perceiving,* referring
to how people prefer to deal with the outer world and take action (Ehrman,
1996). The MBTI requires people to make forced choices and decide on
one pole of each of the four preferences. The permutation of the
preferences yields sixteen possible combinations called *types*, usually
marked by the four initial letters of the preferences (because two
components start with an 'I,' 'intuition' is marked with the letter 'N')
Dörnyei (2005, p. 20). As a result, each informant might be assigned to
one of the sixteen groups (ISTJ, ISFJ, INFJ, INTJ, ISTP, ISFP, INFP,
INTP, ESTP, ESFP, ENFP, ENTP, ESTJ, ESFJ, ENFJ, ENTJ); for
example, Myers' own type preference was Introversion–Intuition–
Feeling–Perceiving (INFP). The 16 MBTI types have been found to be
remarkably valid because, as Ehrman (1996) explained, the combinations
are more than the sum of the parts. They outline real, recognizable
character types and thus the inventory has proved to be useful in a wide
variety of contexts (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 20). What is important to note is that
the use of the term *indicator* in the title of the MBTI, is related to the fact
that the dimensions of the MBTI do not refer to traditional scales ranging
from positive to negative. Rather, they indicate various aspects of one's
psychological set-up and, depending on their combinations, every type can
have positive or negative effects in a specific life domain (Dörnyei, 2005,
p. 20). Ehrman (1996) noted that the MBTI personality dimensions have
cognitive style correlates and called the MBTI factors *personality styles*
and not *personality traits.* Consequently*,* it was highlighted that within the
domain of psychology the MBTI is considered a personality type
inventory and not a personality test (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 20).

1.5 Conclusions

The aim of the present chapter was to provide some definitions of
personality as well as a brief overview of the most popular personality
constructs used in SLA research. We have focused mostly on the "Big
Five" personality model as it is currently the most dominant model of
personality structure (John, Naumann, & Soto, 2008). Trait EI was another
personality construct that was discussed in a great detail since it has been
conceptualised as a lower-order personality trait, which correlated well
with several higher-order personality traits from the "Big Five" domain
(Petrides, Pita & Kokkinaki, 2007). When it comes to other very popular
personality constructs used in SLA, both the Eysenck Personality
Questionnaire and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator were presented.

The next chapter is aimed to present the overview of the literature concerning the possible relationship between higher and lower-order personality traits and various aspects of second language (L2) learning taking into account different measures and social contexts of L2 use.