

THE INFLUENCE OF EXTROVERSION INTROVERSION ON LEARNING ENGLISH AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE

Nilufar Shoirqizi Giyazova*

*Teacher,

Tashkent State University of Economics,

UZBEKISTAN

Email id: nilufar1638146@gmail.com

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ABSTRACT

This paper is aimed to identify the key characteristics of extroversion and introversion and their impact to second language acquisition. During the research, participants would be tested by Eysenck personality questionnaire to examine their personality type. Moreover, they would be provided speaking and writing tasks in order to explore their language proficiency. The conducted research revealed that, extroverted people have more opportunity to learn a language better than introverted people. In data collection part it can be seen that, extroverted participant represented better language proficiency in terms of oral and written tasks rather than introverted participant. Even though, the introverted people might show good results in terms of listening and grammar since their attentive and concentrative abilities. However, this is unclear and contradictive issue that many linguists and psychologists argue up to the present time.

KEYWORDS: *Personality, Extroversion, Introversion And Success In Learning A Language.*

INTRODUCTION

The main individual differences that impact in acquiring a foreign language are: motivation, aptitude, intelligence, age, learning styles and strategies also other factors of personality. In this case study key characteristics of extroversion/introversion and their influence to second language learning will be illustrated. A number of researches have been conducted on this issue and principally it has been hypothesized that extroverts are better than introverts in learning a language as they attend more in classroom activities and comprise better communication skills. Even though, that supposition has not always been confirmed. The results have been different and ambiguous. The studies have shown that there is no disadvantaged type of personality. Every personality type has its own advantages in second language acquisition (SLA). In this case study a research has conducted with candidates who are preparing to take an IELTS examination. The aim of the research is to define the correlation between extroversion/ introversion and its impact in learning English as a foreign language. Initially, participants would be tested by Eysenck personality questionnaire to examine their personality type. Secondly, they would be provided speaking and writing tasks in order to explore their language proficiency. Regarding to results, it might be discovered either extroverts or introverts have success in learning English as a foreign language.

Literature review

One of the most important factors that influence success in learning foreign language is personality. Personality concerned to “stable internal factors or traits which underlie consistent individual differences in behavior. These internal factors are called traits and individuals differ in terms of the extent that they possess any given trait” (Fadi, 2003) [1]. The most frequently examined personality traits that influence in learning a second language is extroversion and introversion. These terms were obtained initially from Jung’s theories. “An extrovert is said to receive energy from outside sources, whereas an introvert is more concerned with the inner world of ideas and is more likely to be involved with solitary activities. This trait does not just describe whether the person is outgoing or shy, but considers if a person prefers working alone or feels energized working in a team” (Sharp, 2004) [2]. Many researchers have been conducted to analyze the link between extroversion/ introversion and language learning. According to Kezwer (1987) [3] some researchers have presented a clear relationship between extroversion and success in second language learning, whereas, some studies have failed to confirm any correlation among extroversion and language learning. Although some studies showed the contradict conclusion: that “there is a negative correlation between the two” (Kezwer, 1987:45) [3]. Zhang (2008) [4] informed that extroverts are eager to communicate and do not fear making mistakes, whereas introversion has negative effects in SLA. According to Erton (2010) [5], there is no important connection among personality traits and success in foreign language learning.

Extroversion

Erton (2010) [5], refers that an extroverted individual has a willing to focus on the external world of people and occasions. Extroverts dislike reading for a long time, spending their time alone, yet they are eager to communicate, going to parties and socialize. They are gregarious and outgoing. Usually extroverts have many acquaintances and friends. As being talkative, they say something without thinking before but rather they opine while communicating. Extroverts are energetic, active and frequently full of aspiration. They desire for excitements, react instantly, and are occasionally very impulsive. Although they are optimistic, sometimes they might be incursive and shift their temper very quickly. Extroverted individuals feel energized by reciprocity with a group of people. “In other words, extroverts are motivated from without and their attention is directed outward” (Zafar, 2011) [6]. McRorie et al. (2009) [7], claim that: “During conversation, extroverts tend to position themselves closer to others, and direct facial posture and eye contact is more likely to be maintained”. Extroverted people are usually very explicit, lively, they find new friends very easily and mostly take leadership positions. They are eager interacting with others, participating in activities and notably generated interpersonal relationship. They are more willing to experience things in order to comprehend them. Extroversion might also be essential point when selecting a career, as they prospect in profession which requires lots of social interaction with other people. Extroverts have a frail ability to concentrate for a long time, as much as their outgoingness and might be distracted from studies without difficulty (Zafar, 2011) [6].

Introversion

Zhang (2009) reported that, an introverted person is someone who inquisitive about his/her own thoughts and emotions than the matters outside himself. Introverts are quiet and contemplative. They dislike being in the focus of attention. Introverts have developed intrapersonal abilities.

Contrasting to extroverts, introverts prefer being energized by their interior world, rather by being with group of people. To be more precise, introverts feel very tired after visiting a party or being with a lot of people for a long time. Afterwards, they have to spend a few hours alone to retrieve their energy. They are enclosed towards every people, except their nearest friends. They prefer planning things beforehand and search for excitements. Introverted people are very responsible, serious and trustworthy. They are capable to control their emotions and willing not to show them to others. They might be pessimistic sometimes, yet they believe ethical standards. Among society, introverts feel themselves nervous and passive. However, with regard to Ostojic (1983), the IQ of introverts is high. Despite this, they are not very talkative and they often have wide word stock. They try hard to achieve their ambitions and have a great aspiration. The main characteristics of introverts are: willing to keep feelings private, outgoing only with close friends, learn better through observation, tend to increase self-knowledge and self-comprehending. It is very difficult for them to meet unknown people and make friends. Ergo, they lose much energy if they communicate with many people. They prefer to have one to one conversation rather than talking in group of people about superficial aspects, which they consider uninteresting.

Introverted people perform better in professions which do not require much social interaction, and more independent jobs. Unlike extroverts, introverts dislike being involved in different activities rather they focus one activity. They also prefer routine rather impulsive situations. According to Zafar (2011), each person is introverted or extroverted in some degree, yet not in the same degree. Furthermore, some people might be extroverted in one situation although, introverted in another.

Learner's profile

The participants of my research were two males that have been preparing to get IELTS examination. The first participant is 18 years old boy, who is the graduate of lyceum under State National University in Tashkent. His name is Ravshan and he is from traditional Kazakh family. His native language is Kazakh and he is multilingual as he speaks Russian, Uzbek and English. He has been learning English about five years. He started learning language at public school and continued at the lyceum. His level of English is Intermediate. He is interested in fishing, in as much as, he feels relaxed being in a quiet place. He is not sociable person and he has few friends as he occasionally prefers spending his time alone and works to improve his learning skills at home. Ravshan likes watching English movies and listen to songs to learn the language better. His purpose from learning English is to enter the University and travel English speaking countries. Having interviewed him I realized that he is the introverted person since, he was reserved, passive and not very talkative. The personality test which will be described further approved my reservations.

The second participant of my research is Alisher. He is 20 years old and studies at Nizomiy University. He brought up in Uzbek family and his native language is Uzbek. He also can speak Russian fluently and his level of English is intermediate. He has been learning English for nearly six years. He prefers group learning rather than individual as much as, he wants to integrate with peers. Additionally, he watches movies and read books in English to ameliorate his language skills. His favorite genre of film is detective. He is outgoing and wants to spend his time with friends. He desires to travel abroad go to sightseeing with his family or close friends. His

ambitions are to achieve a good score in IELTS examination in order to enter the University to study Master's Degree. Alisher is interested in Logistics and wants to run his own company in the future. Communicating with Alisher, it seemed that he is extroverted person, in view of the fact that he was active, lively and talkative during interview. Also he cited that he was very sociable and has many friends.

Research design

In this section the research conducted to define whether personality traits (extroversion and introversion) have impact on success in foreign language learning will be illustrated. The aim of research is to explore which personality type (extroversion/introversion) would have a statistically related with success in learning English as a foreign language. The study consisted of two stages, the first stage concludes: "The Eysenck Personality Test" was used to determine participant's personality type (extroversion/introversion). The personality questionnaire involved 22 items, which consisted of 11 items for extroversion and 11 items for introversion. Each question includes 5-point scale that, first circle means never, second circle rarely, third circle usually, fourth often and fifth always. Participants of research had to select one of the circles of each question regarding to their choice.

The second stage of research consisted of writing and speaking tests in order to observe language proficiency of participants. In writing test participants were asked to write an essay on the topic "What is the role of English in your country". Participants had to give their own opinion based on the given topic. The writing test aimed to explore grammar usage and command of language. The speaking test included the interview and the main part. Interview part involved 11 items related to background information of candidates and the main part was devoted to observe language proficiency, accuracy, fluency and as well as to know word-stock of candidates.

Data collection

The data collection started from providing to five students personality checking questionnaire by Eysenck in order to explore introverted and extroverted students. The questionnaire concluded from 22 items: 11 items for introversion, and 11 items for extroversion. It took approximately ten minutes to complete the questionnaire. The script is given in the Appendix 1 to prove the participants' results.

The results of the data analysis represented that, among five students, the three of them were introverted while two students showed the level of extroversion. The level of extroversion and introversion was examined by providing Eysenck personality test. The two participants: one extroverted and one introverted were selected for further analyzing to check their success in learning English as a foreign language. The results of the first participant from the given questionnaire were as following:

Extroversion level 32%

Introversion level 64%

The descriptive analysis indicated that the extroversion results of the first participant were low, which suggested that he was very quiet, reclusive, unassertive and private.

Introversion results were significantly high, which described that, he was insecure, anxious, emotional and worrying. Regarding to questionnaire the first participant was overly kind natured at times, and helpful at the expense of his own individual development.

The results of the second participant are the following:

Extroversion level 71%

Introversion level 29%

The results of the second participant illustrated that, the extroversion level were dramatically high, which described that he was overly talkative, sociable, outgoing and interacting at the expense too often of developing his own internally based identity and individual interests.

Introversion results were quiet low, which offered that, he was very calm, secure, relaxed and optimistic. In addition, according to test, he was trusting and helpful at the scope of his individual development.

The second observation included speaking test in order to determine the candidate's language proficiency, such as fluency and accuracy in structure. The speaking test questions are provided in the Appendix 2. The oral interview was provided in the first part of the speaking test. There is the fraction from the interview; NilufarGiyazova the interviewer and RavshanNorpoyev is the candidate:

NG: So, can you introduce yourself?

RN: My name is Ravshan and I am 18 years old.

NG: What is your level of English?

RN: I think my level is Intermediate.

NG: How long have you been learning English?

RN: More than four years but I don't know the exact time.

NG: What is your native language?

RN: It is Kazakh.

NG: What other languages do you know?

RN: I can speak Uzbek, Russian and English.

NG: What is your hobby?

RN: My hobby is fishing, I think. Because I can go somewhere quiet and feel relaxed.

NG: Do you prefer learning English with group or individually?

RN: I think learning individually is better.

NG: Are you sociable person?

RN: I think not. I have a few friends and I am not very outgoing.

NG: Do you like gathering with friends or spend your time alone?

RN: Nowadays, I am not gathering with friends because I should prepare hard to IELTS examination. Mostly I spend my time at home.

NG: What helps you to learn English better?

RN: I think watching movies and listening to songs helps me to learn better.

Main part:

NG: What is your purpose from learning English?

RN: I want to travel around the world and I think English help me to do that.

NG: What are your future plans?

RN: My future plan is to enter to the University

As the oral interview indicates, this candidate is not very outgoing and sociable. He has very few friends and he prefer to stay at home rather than gathering and interacting with friends. Additionally, he stated that he prefers individual learning rather than group. It can be seen that, he is an introverted person and personality questionnaire approved it. From the language proficiency point, he could not speak at length and his speech is not clear or fluent because of repetition, self-correction or hesitation to search for relevant words. He used simple grammar structures and his pronunciation is easy to understand but with some problems.

In the following, the oral interview with the second candidate who showed the extroverted personality type, according to Eysenck personality questionnaire:

NG: Can you introduce yourself?

AT: My name is Alisher, surname is Tursunov and I am 20 years old.

NG: What is your level of English?

AT: In my opinion my level of English is Intermediate.

NG: How long have you been learning English?

AT: I suppose, I have been learning English more than five years.

NG: What is your native language and what other languages do you know?

AT: My native language is Uzbek and I am able to speak English and Russian fluently.

NG: What is your hobby?

AT: My hobby is traveling. I like to travel to other countries and visit to sightseeing places with my friends and family members.

NG: Do you prefer learning a language with group or individually?

AT: I prefer learning language with group as I like communicating and interacting with other people.

NG: Are you a sociable person?

AT: Yes, I am very sociable person and I have very many friends.

NG: Do you like going out with friends or spend your time alone?

AT: Occasionally, as I am a sociable person I like going out and spend my time with my friends.

NG: What helps you to learn English better?

AT: I watch movies and read books in English, especially I like detective films. I suppose they help me to improve my language skills.

Main part:

NG: Can you tell me, what is your purpose from learning English and what are your future plans?

AT: My purpose from learning English is to travel abroad and to get a high paid job. My future plans are first of all, to get a high score from IELTS and enter to the University for Master's Degree. Secondly, after graduating the University I want to run my own company in the field of logistics.

According to data collection, the second participant who has the extroverted personality type presented a clear and fluent speech during oral interview. His speaking is generally well organized and the ideas were well linked. He has some grammar errors but his language is easy to understand. The participant has enough vocabulary to describe his speech and pronunciation is clear.

The third observation involved writing test in order to determine participant's language proficiency regarding to grammar and word usage and sentence structure. In writing task candidates gave their own opinion about the given topic. The written essay is given in Appendix 3. The results of written test revealed that, the participant with extroverted personality could give an overview and key features are covered. The main ideas are relevant although not very well organized. He used some less common words either he made a few grammatical mistakes.

The second participant with introverted personality could give some relevant ideas related to topic, though the conclusion is not clear. The structure of the essay is not well organized. He has enough vocabulary, although he used simple and common words to illustrate his ideas. There are a few grammatical mistakes but he his view is understandable.

CONCLUSION

The present research paper aimed to define the influence of extroversion and introversion on learning English as a foreign language among Uzbek people. The conducted research revealed that, extroverted people have more opportunity to learn a language better than introverted people. In data collection part it can be seen that, extroverted participant represented better language proficiency in terms of oral and written tasks rather than introverted participant. Even though, the introverted people might show good results in terms of listening and grammar since their attentive and concentrative abilities. However, this is unclear and contradictive issue that many linguists and psychologists argue up to the present time. Several psychologists claim that introverts are more concentrated and they have better memory, while linguists argue that extroverted people's outgoing and sociable attitudes, as well as, their risk-taking abilities helps them to learn a foreign language better. Personally, I believe that, introverts also have their own upside potentials as learners and success in language learning might not be defined by one

personality type. As Zafar (2011), informed that, every person is introverted and extroverted in some degree, since not in the same degree. In my opinion, the teachers ought to learn their students' personality trait and adjust their teaching methods depending on various types of personality. Further researches should be conducted in this area involving bigger groups and find out why introverts perform better than their group mates in some cases.

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