The Effect of Extraversion and Introversion on Fluency Speaking on Iranian EFL Students

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Abstract:
Personal traits and personal differences used to be neglected in language learning but later some connections were found between personality traits, which were called Big Five personality traits, and language learning. The purpose of this study was to determine if there was a relationship between 1) extraversion/introversion and speaking fluency and 2) gender and speaking fluency. 116 students of English participated in this study, then they were divided into homogeneous groups, their learning style was determined and then they were interviewed. According to the results of this study, the extravert students outperformed significantly the introvert ones while there was no significant difference between the performance of extravert male students and extravert female students.

Key words: Fluency, Extraversion, Introversion, Gender, Learning Style

1. Introduction

Before 1990s the relationship between language learning and personality traits was strongly neglected but since that time, researchers started to shed light on this area of learning language. This research tries to talk about one of the most frequently used words in the area of TELF which is the word fluency. Fluency deals with the number of words, syllables, pauses, repetitions, false starts, and reformulation during a specific length of time (Rod Ellis, 2003). The trait of extraversion–introversion is a central dimension of human personality theories. The terms introversion and extraversion were first popularized by Carl Jung (Jung, C.J., 1921). Extraversion is associated with better speed and long-term memory, but worse reasoning and verbal ability (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2006; Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2006; Graham & Lachman, 2012; McCrae, 1987; Moutafi et al., 2005). Gender is the range of physical, biological, mental and behavioral characteristics pertaining to, and differentiating between, masculinity and femininity (Udry, J. Richard, 1994; Haig, David, 2004) but in this study gender refers to biological sex which is the state of being male or female.

This study tries to determine the relationship between speaking fluency and extraversion/introversion and also the relationship between speaking fluency and gender. According to (Erminio Capitani, et al. 1999) gender affects word retrieval of certain categories in semantic fluency tasks. And (Jean-Marc Dewaele & Adrian Furnham, 2000) says that extravert bilinguals significantly outperform introvert ones in fluency and accuracy. Moenikia, M. (2010) found that the mean score of students with different learning styles differed significantly. On the other hand I. Erton (2010) says there isn’t a statistically strong relationship between the learners’ learning style and being successful in language achievement. Aranya Srijongjai (2011) also claims that there were no significant difference between students’ learning styles based on their achievement levels in the writing class.

The aim of this paper is to see if there is any relationship between fluent speaking and extraversion/introversion and examine the relationship of fluent speaking and gender of students regarding their learning styles. For the first hypothesis, the current researcher expects the Iranian EFL extravert students to significantly outperform the Iranian EFL...
introvert students. The current researcher also expects the Iranian female EFL extravert students to perform significantly better than Iranian male EFL introvert students.

2. Methodology

2.1. Participants

The study sample was consisted of 116 students of English. 74 of them were university students but because there weren’t enough male subjects and introvert subjects, the researcher went to an English institute and added 42 other subjects to the sample. Since the subjects were from different classes the age factor was not controlled but all of them were pre-intermediate students of English.

2.2. Instruments

In this study, a proficiency test which is available in the appendix A, was used in order to find pre-intermediate students. The other test that the present researcher used was a personality test, designed by Michael William Eysenck, in order to find out about extraversion/introversion of the subjects, the Persian version of this test is also available in the appendix B. Students were also interviewed for about 4-5 minutes and were asked questions about their daily lives.

2.3. Procedure

First of all the present researcher went to a university class and told the students about the purpose of the study and the steps that are needed to be taken in the research. Then the students were handed a proficiency test to answer. Five students refused to participate in the study. After collecting the proficiency test, those students who took part in the study were given the Persian translation of Eysneck personality test. After collecting all of the papers, the same process was repeated in an English institute. In the English institute none of the students rejected taking part in the study. After checking the proficiency test, thirty two students were deleted from the study in order to make the sample homogenous, then the Eysneck test of those eighty four students were checked. Students with the extraversion percentage of below 40 were considered as introvert students and those with the extraverion percentage of higher than 60 were considered as extravert students. Thirty one students’ extraversion percentage was between 40 and 60, so again the sample was reduced and this time the number of the remained students was fifty three. And these fifty three students were consisted of twenty one male students and thirty two female students. Eighteen introvert students and thirty five extravert ones. Two weeks after the proficiency and personality tests, four group of students were randomly selected to be interviewed. A group of 15 extravert students, a group of 15 introvert ones, a group of 15 male extraverts and a group of 15 female extraverts. It is obvious that two groups of 15 male extravert students and 15 female extravert students had overlapped with the group of 15 extravert students. Students were interviewed one by one and then their performance was scored according to a criteria which is available in the appendix C. The questions of interview were about the daily life of the interviewee, the reason that he/she chose to study English, if he/she is happy with the university/institute he/she is studying at and if she/he wishes to study English in higher levels or not, and in case of a yes or no answer, he/she was asked to explain his/her reason. Although each of the interviewed students was asked not to tell others about the questions, the questions were changed so that if the interviewed students tell others about the questions, they couldn’t be ready for them. The number and characteristics of the interviewed students are shown in the following table, according to their gender, male or female, and their personality or better to be called their learning style, being extravert or being introvert students. The sum of the students with each of the characteristics of being male, female, extravert or introvert is in the table1 too. After the data were collected, the numbers were given to a data analyzer so that he would interpret them and tell us if there was any significant difference between the groups or not.

Table 1, the number of characteristics of the sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Introvert</th>
<th>Extravert</th>
<th>Sum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sum</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

First of all the data analyzer checked to see if the scores were normally distributed or not. The first method to find if the scores are normally distributed or not was Skewness and Kurtosis. If the Skewness and Kurtosis were between (-2 and 2), then the scores would be normally distributed.
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Table 2, Descriptive Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statistic</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Skewness</th>
<th>Kurtosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>0.208</td>
<td>-0.72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N (listwise)</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As you can see, Skewness is 0.20 and Kurtosis is -0.72, so the scores are normally distributed. After making sure that the scores were normally distributed, then it’s time to put the scores on a diagram.

Figure 1, Distribution of the scores

As you can see, it’s a bell-curve diagram which again proves that the scores are normally distributed.

3. Results and Discussion
Since the scores were normally distributed, a T-test should be done and you can see the t-test table in the following.

The first hypothesis was if being extravert or introvert affects speaking fluency or not. $H_1$ says that there is a significant difference between the speaking fluency of introvert and extravert students. On the other hand $H_0$ says that extraversion or introversion does not affect speaking fluency.

![Table 3](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 3, Independent T-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>t-test for Equality of Means</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to the table 3, the t-test shows that there is a significant difference between the two mean scores. ($\text{Sig} < 0.05$) means that extravert students and introvert students are significantly different in fluent speaking. So extravert students’ fluent speaking surpass introvert students.

The second hypothesis was supposed to find out if male extravert students differ significantly from female extravert students in the speaking fluency. $H_1$ says that extravert students of different genders will perform significantly different from each other while $H_0$ says that gender does not have any relationship with fluent speaking. In the following you’ll see the table of results.

![Table 4](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 4, Group Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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This t-test shows that there is no significant difference between the group of male extravert students and female extravert students. (Sig > 0.05) means the H₀ is confirmed and the H₁ is rejected. According to these finding, there is no significant difference between fluent speaking of male and female extravert students.

4. Conclusion and Implication
This paper is about one of the most common terms in the world of TEFL, fluency. The present researcher tried to find out if there is any relationship between fluent speaking and learning style, introversion and extraversion, and also if gender affects fluent speaking fluency. Different characteristics of personality are attributed to extraversion and introversion, for example extraversion is associated with better speed and long-term memory, but worse reasoning and verbal ability (Chamorro-Premuzic & Furnham, 2006; Chamorro-Premuzic et al., 2006; Graham & Lachman, 2012; McCrae, 1987; Moutafi et al., 2005). Fluency is a concept that many people tried to define it and the present researcher followed (Rod Ellis, 2003) and according to Ellis, found a criteria to score the subjects’ performances. This criteria is available in the appendix C.

The number of subjects participating in the study was 116, they were both university students and students of institute. First of all an English proficiency test was given to them to select a homogenous group out of them and then later a personality test was given to them in order to find out if they were introvert or extravert. Lots of students were put aside in this stage and just 53 students remained to be studied. After two weeks four groups of students were randomly selected. A 15-student group of extravert students, a 15-student group of introvert students. Other two groups were selected from the extravert students, a group of 15 extravert male students and a group of 15 extravert female students. These students were interviewed by the present researcher one by one. Each of them was supposed to answer some questions about their life, their university/institute, the lessons they are studying, etc. And the length of this interviews was about 4-5 minutes.

The research questions and hypothesises of this study were:
H₁: Extravert Iranian EFL students speak more fluently.

Table 5, Group Statistics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sex</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.2000</td>
<td>.86189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>2.5333</td>
<td>.91548</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 6, Independent Samples Test

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Levene's Test for Equality of Variances</th>
<th>t-test for Equality of Means</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Sig.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Equal variances assumed</td>
<td>.300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equal variances not assumed</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
RQ 2: Does the gender of EFL learners affect their fluent speaking regarding their learning styles?

H2: Iranian female extravert EFL students speak more fluent than Iranian male extravert EFL students.

According to the collected data and their analysis, the H1 of the first research question was confirmed and Iranian EFL extravert students outperformed Iranian EFL introvert students, while the H2 of second research question was rejected which means there is no meaningful relationship between gender and fluent speaking of Iranian EFL students regarding their learning style.

References


Jung, C. (1921) Psychologischen Typen. Zurich: Rascher Verlag


Appendices

Appendix A, Proficiency Test

Name

Part I: Select the best answer.
1. Alicia, ………………. the window please. It’s too hot in here.
   a) opens b) open c) opened d) will opened
2. The movie was ………………. the book.
   a) as b) as good c) good as d) as good as
3. Eli’s hobbies include jogging, swimming, and ………………. .
   a) To climb mountains b) climb mountains c) to climb d) climbing mountains
4. Who is ………………. Mariana or Sachiko?
   a) tallest b) tall c) taller d) the tallest
5. The concert will begin ………………. fifteen minutes.
   a) in b) on c) with d) about
6. I have only a ………………. Christmas cards left to write.
   a) few b) fewer c) less d) little
7. Each of the Olympic athletes ………………. for months, even years.
   a) have been training b) were training c) has been training d) been training
8. You were ………………. the New York office before 2 pm.
   a) supposed call b) supposed to call c) supposed calling d) supposed call
9. Ms. Guth ………………. rather not invest that money in the stock market.
   a) has to b) could c) would d) must

Part II: Select the one underlined word or a phrase that is incorrect.
10. Takeshi swimmmed one hundred laps in the pool yesterday.
    a) swimmmed b) hundred c) in d) yesterday
11. The majority to the news is about violence or scandal.
    a) the b) to c) news d) violence
12. Mr. Olsen is telephoning a American Red Cross for help.
    a) is b) a c) Red d) for
13. The doctor him visited the patient’s parents.
    a) The b) him c) visited d) patient’s
14. Each day after school, Jerome run five miles.
    a) each b) after c) run d) miles
15. He goes never to the company softball games.
    a) never b) the c) softball d) games
16. Do you know the student who books were stolen?
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Part III: Select the best answer (vocabulary)

17. Jean-Pierre will spend his vacation either in Singapore nor the Bahamas.
   a) will b) his c) nor d) Bahamas

18. Fredrick used work for a multinational corporation when he lived in Malaysia.
   a) used work b) multinational c) when d) lived

Part IV: Select the best answer (reading comprehension)

Leave Interstate 25 at exit 75. Follow that road (Elm Street) for 2 miles. After 1 mile, you will pass a small shopping center on your left. At the next set of traffic lights, turn right onto Maple Drive. Erik’s house is the third house on your left. It’s number 33, and it is white green trim.

24. What is Erik’s address?
   a) Interstate 25 b) 2 Elm Street c) 13 Erika Street d) 33 Maple Drive

25. Which is closest to Erik’s house?
   a) the traffic lights b) the shopping center c) exit 75 d) a greenhouse

Thank You ☺️
Appendix B, Eysneck Personality Test
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Appendix C, Speaking Scoring Criteria

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**WorldView**

VIDEO/DVD SPEAKING RUBRIC

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Sample speaking rubric for fluency activities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating</th>
<th>Demonstrated competence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses a variety of structures with only occasional grammatical errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speaks smoothly, with little hesitation that does not interfere with communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stays on task and communicates effectively; almost always responds appropriately and always tries to develop the interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pronunciation and intonation are almost always clear/accurate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Uses a variety of vocabulary and expressions, but makes some errors in word choice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses a variety of grammar structures, but makes some errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speaks with some hesitation, but it does not usually interfere with communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stays on task most of the time and communicates effectively; generally responds appropriately and keeps trying to develop the interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pronunciation and intonation are usually clear/accurate with a few problem areas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Uses limited vocabulary and expressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses a variety of structures with frequent errors, or uses basic structures with only occasional errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Speaks with some hesitation, which often interferes with communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stays to communicate, but sometimes does not respond appropriately or clearly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pronunciation and intonation errors sometimes make it difficult to understand the student</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Uses only basic vocabulary and expressions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Uses basic structures, makes frequent errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Has trouble keeping to point; speaking, which often interferes with communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purpose isn’t clear; needs a lot of help communicating; usually does not respond appropriately or clearly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequent problems with pronunciation and intonation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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