Aspects of Teaching Foreign Languages at a Technical University

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Abstrakt: The term extraversion, derived from the theories of personality developed in psychology, acts as one of the central roles in the domain of SLA. Having studied about extraversion, it has been discovered two controversial views towards its effect on language learning: Rossier (1975) asserts that people owning extraverted personality are prone to be fluent in terms of communicative skills while Eysenck's (1964) studies demonstrate that extraverts are less successful language learners owing to several neuro-chemical phenomena in the human brain. The presented case study is going prove the former theory by observing, describing and reporting the learning process of an extrovert learner using valid methodology during the experiment.

Key words: extraversion, L2 speech production, fluency, English.

Introduction

There are a considerable number of factors that affect the process of second language acquisition. However, it is worth noting that individual variability in the process of obtaining a second language is considered to be one of the key points in the field of SLA (Gass, 1988). It could be easily contended from a range of observations that the achievement of L2 learners vary despite the fact that the procedure of learning is exactly the same. According to Johnson (2001) the variables having contribution to different levels of attainment in language proficiency is divided into 3 categories: cognitive, affective and personality variables. Ellis (1990) noted that different forms of mental processing accounts for cognitive category, affective factors include motivation and anxiety (Ehrman et al., 2003) and a set of personality traits make up personality variables (Skehan, 1989).

The subject I decided to work with is 6th grade at one the secondary schools in Tashkent. A is now 13 years old. The learner is Uzbek who is being brought up in a traditional family with quite strong cultural and spiritual values and customs practiced in his home. However, the subject is bilingual speaking fluent Russian in educational and social domain additionally to his mother tongue. Uzbek is spoken both inside and outside home. Also, A speaks English well owing to being exposed to learning it as a compulsory subject from grade-1 (6 years) and since he studies in a class which is specialized into English, he has an opportunity to have English classes times in a week. Moreover, he has been taking extra courses for the last 4 years. A went to Russian-Medium Instruction group in kindergarten and, currently, he is attending the same type of class at public school too. Therefore he has an opportunity to meet with people from different mentalities, beliefs, languages and religions. The participant is a kinesthetic a visual learner at the same time. As an L2 learner, I would describe

this learner as an active, energetic, impulsive, extravert and eager to learn new things in class. The participant's average level is "B".

Because I have known A for a long period of time, I was able to observe and assess his attitude, goal and interest as a second language learner in classes. Based on my knowledge about the subject, I decided to study his dominant personality, extraversion, and how it is contributing to his oral language proficiency.

The main reason why I have chosen this student is that I have known this learner for 4 years since started to take extra English courses. During 2015/2016-academic year, I was an General English teacher at the "Get Innovative Club" learning center in Tashkent where I worked part-time in addition to my university studies. And was the participant was one of the learners in my ever first group. Their group comprised my kids' group in which everything was taught from the beginning. However, the following year when I quitted my job, there was a year gap that I did not teach him, instead, he attended to another teacher. Nevertheless, it has been nearly 2 years since I started my teaching process with him again. Because we became neighbors, I have been doing home-teaching and achieving desirable results.

RESEARCH DESIGN

So as to find out whether my hypothesis that extraverts are tend to be confident language holders, I designed a four-step research: *an oral interview and personality test, two-week observations of the subject at English lessons, and a final questionnaire.*

STAGE 1

a) An interview was conducted to collect data more about the subject such as interests, cultural background, educational life, family and, most importantly, about background knowledge about English. The entire conversation was recorded with the consent of the subject.

b) The subject was asked to fill the personality test which was particularly devoted to identify the learner to be an extravert, introvert or average. The test was conducted under computer based form and Personality Test Center web was the tool of the test. The results appeared right after finishing it and the participant were found to be an extravert.

STAGE 2

I observed the participant for a two-week period of time and I conducted 4 lessons altogether. During the observation elementary level of the course book *"Enterprise"* by Virginia Evans and Jenny Dooley was central instrument for two of my lessons. The other two were the techniques of communicative language teaching. Generally, all the lessons were conducted under Communicative Language Teaching approach.

Lesson 1: an activity namely "Description of a picture" was implemented to revise and show the background knowledge of the participant. Moreover, grammar themes such as Infinitive and Gerund were explained , and a story, which included quite number of Infinitive and Gerund was given to retell as a homework.

Lesson 2: an activity namely "Retelling" was employed to check the ability of the subject to use own words and a proper paraphrase.

Lesson 3: grammar theme "Conditional Type 2" was conducted during the lesson in which the topic related to the *environment* was under emphasis.

Lesson 4: an interactive activity "discussion" was held based on the topic "Our Precious Planet" to identify capability of the subject how much extent he is using the acquired vocabulary on environment. Here are some examples of discussion questions:

- What would you do if you were a leader of your country?
- What do you think how our planet's water can be saved?
- Which environmental problems should be solved firstly? Why?

STAGE 3

Final questionnaire which reflects the participant's attitude towards the procedure of the research and gained improvements through the study.

DATA COLLECTION

The interview taken from the subject was the initial data collection process. This process was divided into 2 stages the former one of which included questions about the subject's personal information, more about family, background knowledge about English, and the latter step comprised computer based Personality Test.

a) After interviewing it has been discovered that the learner has longitudinal relationship with English and bilingualism in the family.

The script is given in the Appendix 1 to prove the learner's profile.

b) The test included 20 questions which aimed to identify extraversion and introversion level of the participant. After having the test it was found that the subject scored 17, considerably high score from the average score, 9.34 which meant the participant has extraverted personality. Here it can be seen grade statistics:

General statistics
Total participants
21901
Average Score
9.34

Grade Statistics

Grade	Range	Frequency	Percent
Mostly extraverted	18-20	257	1,2
Extraverted	***12-17***	***6421***	***29,3***
Average	9-11	5913	27.0
Introverted	3-8	8659	39.5

Mostly introverted	0-2	651	3.0
	-	9	0.0
	-	9	0.0
	-	9	0.0

The data in italics and in bold in the table represents the subject's grade statistics.

Question	Extraversion	Introversion
1	✓	
2	✓	
3	✓	
4	✓	
5	✓	
6	✓	
7	✓	
8	✓	
9		✓
10		✓
11		✓
12	✓	
13	✓	
14	✓	
15	✓	
16	✓	
17	✓	
18	✓	
19	✓	
20	✓	

Above it can be seen the responses of the participant. Surprisingly, only 3 questions were ticked for introvert. Here you may see those questions:

- Do you prefer your husband or wife to be self-contained or very sociable

The participant answered, self-contained (Introversion)

- In your opinion are most people worthy of real trust?

The participant answered was, no (Introversion)

- If you had to organize entertainment would you find it quite enjoyable, or would you prefer if other people did it?

The participant answered, you would find it enjoyable (Introversion)

The details of other questions are attached in Appendix 2.

The first main observation involved "Description of a picture" activity which described a family having a holiday in nature. This activity helped me identify the problems in terms of grammar, pronunciation and lexical resource in L2 as well as it was helpful in determining the level of creativeness of the participant.

The findings show that the subject suffers from misusing singular and plural forms of auxiliaries in natural speech. For example,

- *Father and mother **is** telling funny stories.*

Moreover, the subject showed his lackage of vocabulary when he was describing where the grandmother and grandmother were sitting in the picture:

*Grandmother and grandmother **is** sitting on the **branch**.*

Here he used the word "branch" instead of "bench".

It was found that there were some mistakes in pronunciation the following words: *castle* and *great.*

On the other hand, the subject could describe the picture in an accessible way. He put names to the subjects in the picture while description such as ***Tom*** for a child who was sitting and eating a sweet. And ***Jack*** for the dog which was playing with the other two boys. Surprisingly, the participant made a worthy guess that Tom liked the sweets when he stated: *"He is eating a sweet, because he likes them very much".* He was also able to demonstrate self-correction during his speech which means he has knowledge about that.

The results of the following observation in which "retelling" was the central activity could be an example of prepared speech since it was given beforehand. The student could manage to use paraphrase and own words especially at times when he felt difficulty in finding appropriate word. He also used balanced body language during the speech. However, there was a lack of eye contact.

Data collected from the observation three and four demonstrated the subject's ability to create sentences and link them appropriately with recently covered vocabularies and grammar theme.

For example, the words such as *acid rain, car fumes, endangered species, logging down trees*, *acid rain, air pollution* were main vocabulary source in the 11th unit of the book Enterprise. The grammar focus of this unit was "Conditional Type 2".

In the following lesson when "discussion" was held on the topic "Our Precious Planet", the student was able to use sentence structure with Conditional type 2 when he was talking about saving the nature:

If I were a leader of my country, I would ban factories giving off chemicals into the space, because they could bring a lot of illnesses and air pollution.

Moreover, he was able to use topic based vocabulary ***"air pollution"*** in the same sentence that heralds he manages to handle more complex tasks. This might be an example to Dewaele and Furnham's (1999) theories that "more complex tasks were easier for extravert learners" (p.152)

The final questionnaire included 10 questions from which could be obtained the participant's attitude towards the discussed topic in the case study. It could be identified that the participant himself also is for extraversion, having answered "agree" sides 7 out of 10 questions.

CONCLUSION

This study sought to investigate the effect of extraversion on the oral fluency of Uzbek-Russian bilingual speaking student of English. Oral production data in L2 was collected in two weeks having conducted 4 lessons by means of picture description, story-telling, discussion and communication with a foreigner. Personality Test Center (2006) was the tool in identifying the learner's degree of extraversion.

A number of key issues with respect to the extraversion construct have been addressed in this study. First we sought to examine the level of the participant. Secondly, we analyzed if the participant can handle with the breakdowns in oral speech as well as sow appropriate behavior and body language during the prepared speech. Thirdly, it has been studied if the student can express his thoughts and views in l2. Finally, it was checked that if the student can handle with breakdowns in oral speech with a native speaker.

The hypothesis tested in this study was that extraverted L2 learners would outperform introverts in fluency. Lexical and grammatical accuracy were hypothesised to be lower for extraverts. At the end of the research it has been partially proven Rossier's theory that "people owning extraverted personality are tend to be fluent in communication aspect of L2" since it was identified some mistakes in terms of grammar during the whole observation and study also led to the agreement with the view of Ellis (1994) that "extroverted learners will do better in acquiring basic interpersonal communication skills" while "introverted learners will do better at developing cognitive academic language ability"(p. 520).

From my own perspective, it could be inclined that it should be taken into consideration the age of the participant. Since the participant is young enough to be fluent, possibly, the same study might show different results. During the process of research design different ideas ran through my mind to conduct the case study. However, I chose the way that could do. Through deep investigation, I have found out that one of the final observation types of activities are Direct Communication with a native speaker or Online Communication since they might have a greater contribution to evaluate the student's process and progress after series of lessons. Till the end of the process of my case study, I kept this idea to implement in my study. However, I could not find an opportunity to find neither native speaker nor online friend to ask a favor. So I would suggest to examine this procedure for those who had in mind to investigate this topic in the future.

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