



PERSONALITY TRAITS AND THEIR IMPACT ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNING: A CLASSROOM-BASED STUDY

Ruxshona Ismoilova

Student at SamSIFL

Scientific supervisor: Timur Suleymanov

Lecturer at SamSIFL

suleymanov@samdhti.uz

Abstract

This paper presents my observations and findings from a three-month teaching practice conducted in a second-grade English classroom. The main aim of the study was to explore how individual personality traits, particularly extraversion and introversion, influence young learners' participation and overall progress in English lessons. Over a period of twelve weeks, I observed twenty-four students during various classroom activities such as language games, reading aloud, vocabulary exercises, and basic speaking tasks. The findings show noticeable differences between outgoing and introverted learners. More sociable students participated actively and completed tasks more quickly, while quieter students often required continuous encouragement and additional teacher support. The study suggests that recognizing individual personality differences is essential for creating a more effective, balanced, and inclusive language learning environment.

Keywords: personality traits, English language learning, classroom participation, teaching practice, individual differences, young learners, pedagogy.

Introduction

Every young learner enters the foreign language classroom with a unique set of personal characteristics and learning preferences. Some students are naturally confident, active, and willing to participate in oral tasks, while others prefer to



remain quiet, observe, and process information internally. These individual differences significantly influence how children learn and use English.

According to Brown (2007), learner-internal factors such as personality, motivation, and anxiety play an important role in shaping language learning outcomes and classroom behavior. Similarly, Ellis (2008) emphasizes that second language acquisition varies among learners due to psychological and social differences. As a result, a single teaching method cannot be equally effective for all students.

During my teaching practice, I observed that students in the same classroom responded very differently to identical tasks. Some immediately volunteered answers, while others avoided speaking even when they knew the correct response. This variation motivated me to examine how personality traits influence English language learning in a real classroom context.

Methodology and Classroom Context

This qualitative observation study was conducted in a second-grade class consisting of twenty-four students. The observation lasted for three months (twelve weeks), during which I regularly participated in English lessons as a teacher-observer.

The lessons were based on communicative language teaching (CLT) principles, as described by Harmer (2007). Activities included flashcards, educational games, short reading passages, vocabulary practice, and speaking tasks.

To ensure systematic observation, I focused on the following five aspects:

- participation in classroom activities
- speed of task completion
- willingness to speak English
- interaction with classmates
- response to teacher questions



These criteria helped me analyze behavioral differences between extroverted and introverted learners in a natural classroom environment.

Observations and Findings

During the observation period, I identified clear differences in student behavior and learning styles.

One student in particular was very quiet and introverted. He rarely volunteered to answer questions and often avoided speaking in front of classmates. Although he demonstrated understanding of the material through written work, he lacked confidence in oral activities. This behavior appeared to be more related to personality and communication anxiety than ability. Skehan (1998) notes that anxiety and personality factors can significantly limit learner participation.

To support this student, I gradually adjusted my teaching approach by using simpler questions, providing individual encouragement, and offering private feedback. Over time, I observed small but noticeable improvements in his confidence, and by the end of the study, he began participating more actively.

In contrast, several students were highly sociable and energetic. They actively participated in tasks, responded quickly to questions, and often took a leading role in group activities. These learners completed tasks more rapidly and demonstrated stronger confidence in speaking activities, even when minor language errors occurred.

As Skehan (1998) explains, extroverted learners are generally more willing to take risks in communication, which increases their opportunities for language practice. I also observed that these students were especially engaged in competitive vocabulary games involving interaction and teamwork.

The findings suggest that personality traits significantly influence students' participation in English language learning. Extroverted learners tend to engage more actively in classroom activities, while introverted learners often participate less frequently.



However, this does not imply that quiet learners are less capable. As Lightbown and Spada (2013) emphasize, effective language learning depends on creating a supportive and safe classroom environment where all students feel comfortable participating.

Based on my experience, teaching strategies also play a crucial role in how personality traits manifest in the classroom. Highly interactive and fast-paced activities often benefit extroverted learners, while introverted students respond better to structured, low-pressure tasks that allow gradual participation.

Therefore, a balanced combination of interactive and supportive teaching methods is essential for meeting the needs of different learner types.

Conclusion

This three-month teaching practice provided valuable insights into the importance of personality traits in English language learning. Clear differences were observed in confidence, participation, and task completion among the students.

Overall, the findings confirm that personality is an important factor in second language learning. As a future teacher, I realized that understanding individual differences is essential for effective lesson planning. Teachers should design flexible and inclusive learning environments where every student, whether outgoing or quiet, can participate and succeed.

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