



Extravert Iranian EFL Learners and Critical Thinking

Mojgan Yarahmadi

¹Assistant Professor, Ph.D in ELT, Department of English, Islamic Azad University, Arak Branch, Arak 38135-567, Iran

ABSTRACT

This study aims at investigating the relationship between extraversion personality dimension of Iranian EFL learners and their critical thinking. To achieve this goal, 102 sophomore male and female Islamic Azad University students majoring in English translation aged 20-24, were given the restandardized Persian EPQ (Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, 1975) .57 male and female extravert students were selected and assigned to answer the questionnaire of critical thinking. Performing data analysis through Pearson product-moment correlation showed that there is a significant correlation between students' personality dimension (extraversion) and their critical thinking.

KEY WORDS: Critical Thinking; Extravert; Introvert; EFL; Personality Dimension.

INTRODUCTION

From the late 1970s through the early 1980s on, there was a shift from teaching – based approaches to learner based ones. This led researchers to focus on learners and learning processes rather than teaching processes. Thus, a concern arose with regard to how learners engage in their learning tasks in a second or a foreign language.

By this shift, there was also a shift in second language acquisition research. One research emphasis has been directed towards exploring the similarities among learners, especially towards finding what processes of learning are common. In the late 1970s, however, a further concern for the differences among learners came to the attention of EFL researchers, which proved influential on individual differences.

The examination of variation in human behavior is referred to as the study of individual differences. Kiany [6]1998 defines personality as ‘one of the individual differences which is widely accepted as having an effect on learning in general and second language acquisition in particular’.

Extraversion and introversion are considered as two subcategories of personality factors. It was first used and developed by Carl Gustav Jung .According to Cook [2] personality factors such as introversion and extroversion may affect language learning. But how does their influence operate?

Busch [1] examined the relationship between extraversion and English proficiency. Strong [7] investigated the influence of extraversion and other traits such as talkativeness and popularity on English Learning. Ely [4] tried to examine the impact of extraversion on university students learning Spanish as a second language.

In Feriere's words [5], language is a thinking process that allows students to learn and grow. Critical thinking, a rapidly growing concept in education has stimulated a flood of recent research and publications. Nowadays, critical thinking is one of the major concepts under consideration in education. Cotton [3] describes creative thinking as a novel way of seen or doing things. It has been mostly used for first language education in the United States, but today, its role in second and foreign language learning and teaching is of great importance. critical thinking and its relationship to the educational process has become a central issue and it is time to explore the term .She adds since critical thinking is a process which is involved in any research activity; it can be considered as a principal concept to education, especially at higher levels. In fact, it is a fundamental goal of learning.

This study attempts to answer the following research question:

Is there any significant relationship between Iranian EFL learners' critical thinking and their personality dimension (extravert)?

METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The number of 102 Iranian EFL male and female sophomore students majoring in English Translation at Islamic Azad University in Arak participated in the study. They were given the restandardized Persian EPQ (Eysenck Personality Questionnaire, 1975) .57 male and female extravert students were selected and assigned to answer the questionnaire of critical thinking including 30 multiple choice items to evaluate the skills of analysis,

*Corresponding Author: Mojgan Yarahmadi, Assistant Professor, Ph.D in ELT, Department of English, Islamic Azad University, Arak Branch, Arak 38135-567, Iran. Email: m_yarahmadi@iau-arak.ac.ir Tel: +98-9189579097

inference, evaluation, inductive reasoning and deductive reasoning. Having collected the two completed questionnaires, the researcher analyzed the data and extracted the results through Spearman product-moment correlation.

RESULTS

TABLE 1. Descriptive Statistics of Critical Thinking and Personality Dimension (Extraversion)

| | N | Mean | SD |
|-------------------------------------|----|--------|--------|
| Critical Thinking | 57 | 319.21 | 37.97 |
| Personality Dimension(Extraversion) | 57 | 95.077 | 29.597 |

TABLE 2 Pearson Correlations between Critical Thinking and Personality Dimension (Extraversion)

| Correlations | | | |
|---------------------|-------------------------------------|------------------|-------|
| | | Speaking Fluency | EQ |
| Pearson Correlation | Personality Dimension(Extraversion) | 1.000 | .325 |
| | Critical Thinking | .325 | 1.000 |
| Sig. (1-tailed) | Personality Dimension(Extraversion) | . | .007 |
| | Critical Thinking | .007 | . |
| No of Participants | Personality Dimension(Extraversion) | 57 | 57 |
| | Critical Thinking | 57 | 57 |

TABLE 3. Results of Regression Analysis for Critical Thinking and Personality Dimension(Extraversion)

| Coefficients ^a | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 14.245 | 31.951 | | .446 | .657 |
| | Critical Thinking | .253 | .099 | .325 | 2.547 | .014 |

DISCUSSION

Table 1 illustrates the descriptive statistics for students' scores in two tests. To investigate the correlation between the students' Critical Thinking and Personality Dimension (Extraversion), the Pearson product-moment correlation was applied. Data analysis by Pearson correlation indicated that there is a significant positive ($r = .325$, $p < 0.05$). Table 2 shows the results of correlation students' Critical Thinking and Personality Dimension (Extraversion). Table 3 also displays the regression analysis for Critical Thinking and Personality Dimension (Extraversion).

Table displays the model summary statistics. As it was stated, the value of correlation coefficient ($r = 0.325$) and p-value ($p = 0.007$) indicated that there was significant relationship between Critical Thinking and Personality Dimension (Extraversion).

Conclusion

The results of the study confirmed the hypothesis. In order to function effectively in society, encounter different problems, and promote independent learning, individuals must be able to think critically and reason effectively. Teachers should be aware that extravert students are able to think critically. The process of thinking, learning and growing in the target language demands the learners' involvement, resulting in their developing learner autonomy. To investigate the effect of gender and age, more studies on this subject involving age and gender differences could be carried out. Similar researches could be done using introvert students.

REFERENCES

- [1]Busch, D.1982.Extroversion-introversion and the EFL Japanese Students. *Language Learning*, 32,109-132.
- [2]Cook, V. 2001. *Second Language Learning and Language Teaching*. London: Arnold.
- [3]Cotton, K.1988.*Classroom Questioning Close Up No. 5*. Portland: Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.
- [4]Ely, c.M.1986. An Analysis of Discomfort, Risktaking, Sociability, and Motivation in the L2 Classroom. *Language Learning*, 36(1),1-25.
- [5]Freire, P. 1973. *Pedagogy for Critical Consciousness*. New York: Seabury.
- [6]Kiany, G.R.1998. English Proficiency and Academic Achievement in Relation to Extraversion: A Preliminary Study. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, 8(1), 113-130.
- [7]Strong, M. 1983. Social Styles and the Second Language Acquisition of Spanish Speaking Kindergartners. *TESOL QUARTERLY*, 17(2), 241-258.