

THE EXTROVERT-INTROVERT PERSONALITY AND THEIR SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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Acquisition**Abstract**

Studying language requires more than a purely linguistic approach; it also necessitates examining the mental processes involved, which falls under the psychology domain. By addressing the question why some individual succeed in learning a second language while others fail, this study aimed at investigating how the extrovert-introvert personality acquired English as a second language. This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach through observations of the daily activities of six respondents at the Green Lion Bali Foundation and utilized a questionnaire to determine the respondents' personality types. Interviews with colleagues were also used as a method of data triangulation for the research. The result of this study revealed that the influence of personality traits on English language acquisition, revealing different acquisition patterns. Extroverts, with their tendency toward openness, exhibit a more spontaneous language acquisition style. In contrast, introverts, who tended to be more reserved, display a more disciplined and structured language acquisition pattern, although they tended to communicate more slowly. Therefore individual's tendency toward a dominant extroverted or introverted personality can significantly contribute to the creative learning process in English language acquisition

INTRODUCTION

Language plays a vital role in human life, functioning not only as a communication tool but also as a key indicator of intellectual ability. This process engages the human brain, requiring cognitive and emotional input to generate words and sentences (Triadi, 2017). Language activity is not merely mechanistic but also mentalistic, as it inherently involves cognitive processes. Therefore, studying language requires more than a purely linguistic approach; it also necessitates examining the mental processes involved, which falls under the psychology domain. This interdisciplinary perspective gave rise to psycholinguistics, a field that combines linguistics and psychology to provide a more accurate and comprehensive understanding of human language behavior (Ismail, 2013).

Langacker, as cited in Nuraeni (2015), defines psycholinguistics as the study of language acquisition and linguistic behavior, focusing primarily on the psychological mechanisms underlying these processes. Kusuma (2016) highlights that psycholinguistics is closely interconnected with language acquisition, language learning, and the practical use of language by humans. Fromkin and Rodman, as cited in Syahid (2014), offer two views on language acquisition: the first suggests that language acquisition begins abruptly, while the second describes it as a gradual process emerging from prelinguistic motor, social, and cognitive developments. In the second language acquisition context, learners acquire a language through deliberate and conscious learning efforts. The psychological aspect, which examines individual characteristics and mental processes of language learners, adds depth and intrigue to the study of language acquisition.

In this vein, Jung (1956); Eysenck & Wilson (1975) highlighted that the essential individual characteristics are extrovert and introvert. According to Eysenck, extroverted people are more oriented toward their surroundings. They are sociable, enjoy socializing, attending parties, and have many friends. They prefer conversation, humor, responsiveness, adaptation, and a relaxed atmosphere over solitary activities like reading or studying. They are typically active, preferring

movement to idleness, and may display aggressiveness, irritability, and occasional unreliability. Eysenck further explained that introverted individuals tend to focus inward, directing their attention toward their inner thoughts and experiences. Internal factors largely shape their behavior. They are typically reserved, preferring solitary activities like reading over socializing or interacting with others. Consequently, they often have a small social circle and prefer to avoid crowded environments.

Differences in personality types, as described, are also observed among employees at the Green Lion Bali Foundation. The foundation is a social organization committed to supporting Balinese culture, education, conservation, and community welfare. It employs 60 staff members, including 29 coordinators who assist international volunteers and oversee programs such as Teaching English, Health-Care Education, Environmental Education, Turtle Conservation, Kindergarten, School Renovation, and Construction. To ensure smooth program implementation, the foundation provides volunteers with accommodation, transportation, and meals. Coordinators play a critical role as interpreters and guides, facilitating activities primarily conducted in English. While strong English communication skills are essential, newly recruited coordinators continue to face challenges with English language proficiency.

Regarding the influence of psychological aspect towards individual ability in mastering a second language, a related previous study had conducted by A study conducted by Alagić (2021) aimed at investigate the difference between extroverted and introverted students in English proficiency. By using a statistical analysis, the study revealed that there is no significant difference between introverted and extroverted students in English proficiency. Hassan and Abbas (2022) investigate examples of personality marking in language elements and skills, giving significance to extroversion and its counterpart, introversion, which are said to have an impact on the language learning process and learners' language proficiency. By utilizing a descriptive-correlational study, they found that there is a significant correlation between students' personality type and language proficiency. Another related previous study conducted by Mustoip et al (2024) also aimed at understanding how the students' personality impact the interaction of learning English at the elementary school in Indonesia. By collecting data through questionnaire and observation, this study concluded that there is an influence of introverted and extroverted personalities on the interaction of learning English in Indonesian elementary schools.

Although previous studies have been conducted on second language acquisition, previous studies have not qualitatively explained why some individuals face challenges in mastering a new language compared to others. While the relationship between personality types, such as extroverts and introverts, and second language acquisition has been widely studied, little attention has been given to the qualitative aspects of how individuals acquire English as a second language, even in identical environments. This study offers a novel perspective by exploring how individuals with extroverted and introverted personality types acquire a second language under the same conditions, specifically with equal opportunities for interaction as a stimulus. This study aimed to investigate the process of English acquisition as a second language among employees in the Green Lion Bali Foundation, focusing on the role of personality differences.

METHOD

This study employed a descriptive qualitative approach, focusing on extroverted and introverted personality types in the English as a second language acquisition context, analyzed through a psycholinguistic lens. The study centered on six newly recruited employees at the Green Lion Bali Foundation, all serving as coordinators. The respondents graduated from high school in 2022 and were recruited by the foundation in early 2023.

Data collection was through participatory observation, where the researcher was present at the site, observing activities firsthand while actively engaging in them. The observations specifically targeted respondents' behavior during working hours, requiring them to use English in all interactions. To ensure authenticity, the observation process was conducted naturally, without the respondents being aware of it, thus capturing genuine patterns of language acquisition. The respondents'

personality types identification was based on questionnaire responses, guided by the theoretical framework developed by Eysenck & Wilson (1975), which includes the dimensions of Activity, Sociability, Risk-Taking, Impulsiveness, Expressiveness, Reflectiveness, and Responsibility.

The data collected through observations were processed using descriptive analysis, categorizing findings according to their characteristics and meanings. These findings were then used to describe language acquisition patterns, with a particular focus on interactions between the respondents and guests, both during program activities and outside program hours within the Green Lion Bali Foundation environment. The analysis was conducted both implicitly and explicitly, employing systematic methodological approaches. Initially, the material was described thoroughly to provide a clear and accurate understanding of the observed phenomenon. This process involved collecting, organizing, and refining the data to ensure its accuracy and alignment with the research objectives. A comparative analysis was then carried out, examining how the respondents' two personality types as second language learners influenced their language acquisition patterns. Based on these analyses, conclusions were then drawn regarding the role of personality factors in second language acquisition at the Green Lion Bali Foundation.

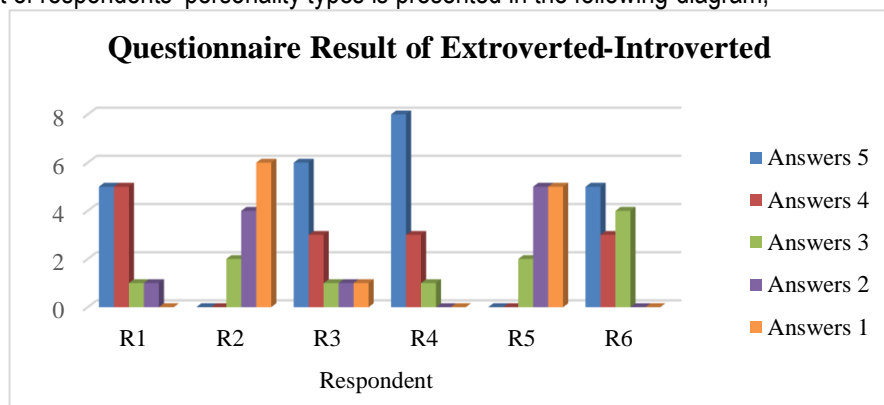
RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Respondent's Language Background

Second language acquisition is widely believed to be influenced by an individual's first language, as evidenced by the accents shaped by their native tongue. Questionnaire results revealed that 4 out of 6 respondents are from Manggarai and Bajawa in East Nusa Tenggara, while 2 other respondents are from Gianyar, Bali. They primarily use their first language with family and friends and Indonesian with coworkers outside work hours. This linguistic background has impacted their English as the second language acquisition.

Language acquisition is inherently a subconscious process, where learners may use the language for communication without being fully aware of it. In this study, as the target language, English is acquired through interaction, allowing respondents to incorporate it into their daily work routines. Given the program implemented at the research site, where guests come from diverse countries, including Europe and America, the English use facilitates global-topic interactions between guests and employees, particularly the respondents. Naturally, individual personality differences influence the dynamics of these interactions.

However, differences in language use between interlocutors do not significantly affect second language acquisition or pose a barrier. This is because, within the Green Lion Bali Foundation environment, respondents spend 75% of their time interacting with guests, making them accustomed to interacting with the target language, English. The selected respondents in this study were categorized as either extroverts or introverts based on a Google Form questionnaire, which followed Eysenck & Wilson's (1975) theory on personality type determinants. These determinants include activity, sociability, risk-taking, impulsiveness, expressiveness, reflectiveness, and responsibility. The result of respondents' personality types is presented in the following diagram;



The diagram revealed the respondents' self-assessment of their personality types based on a questionnaire aligned with Eysenck and Wilson's (1975) theory, which outlines the criteria for determining extrovert and introvert personality types. Respondents' personality types in the diagram were determined by their answers to a Likert-scale questionnaire (5-1). A higher score suggests a greater likelihood of an extroverted personality, while a lower score indicates an introverted personality. Thus, the diagram revealed that 4 out of 6 respondents (80%) display extroverted traits, while the remaining 20% are categorized as introverts.

2. Extrovert-Introvert Personality in Second Language Acquisition

Personality is one of the individual differences that significantly shapes the outcomes of learning processes generally, and second language acquisition in particular. At the Green Lion Bali Foundation, notable differences emerge between extroverted and introverted personalities in the process of acquiring English.

a. Extroverted Respondents

Observations of respondents at the Green Lion Bali Foundation, representing both personality types, revealed that extroverted respondents tended to be very enthusiastic about participating in the programs offered by the workplace. These respondents frequently engage in informal communication outside of work hours, using these interactions as opportunities to practice and learn directly by conversing with guests.

The extroverted respondent demonstrated a greater willingness to take risks, frequently spending time with guests beyond work hours, including weekends and holidays. These respondents frequently developed special relationships, such as romantic involvement, with guests and participated in various activities with them beyond work-related interactions. Despite these tendencies, such personal relationships between staff and guests are explicitly prohibited by the Green Lion Bali Foundation's policies.

The extroverted respondent displayed a high level of enthusiasm in using English, despite initially producing frequent grammatical and structural errors. Eventually, however, their proficiency had enhanced markedly, and they had become fluent in English. This advancement can be attributed to their consistent practice and active engagement in communicative situations, which has enabled them to overcome early challenges. Their ability to use English in formal and informal environments has played a pivotal role in their language production. This progression was further validated by an interview with a senior coworker, as follows:

"Baru setahun di sini mereka, lebih lancar sekarang ngomongnya dibanding pas awal-awal sini tuh, soalnya setiap hari mereka ajak ngomong sama tamunya, main pimpong sampai malam, jadi lancar mereka."

Respondents with this personality type tend to provide extensive explanations to questions that typically require only a "yes" or "no" response, reflecting their inclination toward detailed communication. This tendency often arises from their desire to engage more deeply and share information comprehensively. Furthermore, these extroverted respondents consistently receive positive evaluations from colleagues, particularly from guests, who highlight their approachability and interpersonal warmth, describing them as friendly and engaging. Their ability to create a welcoming and supportive environment fosters effective communication, which is essential for building strong professional relationships. These characteristics enhance their daily interactions and contribute to a conducive environment for language acquisition, where frequent engagement and openness are crucial for language proficiency development.

b. Introverted Respondents

Based on observations of respondents with an introverted personality, a clear distinction emerged, as they tended to remain quiet and spent less time interacting with guests outside of working hours, which significantly affected their rapport with guests. As a result, these introverted

respondents were often perceived as less friendly by guests, as reflected in performance evaluations. During leisure time, when interactions between guests and staff were more common, these respondents tended to remain silent and only engaged in conversation when prompted by guests or when they felt the necessity to explain something.

Respondents with introverted personalities were often positively evaluated by their supervisors for their discipline in adhering to company policies. These individuals tend to be proactive in activities, such as preparing materials for the next day's program and assisting in office tasks. They typically spend their weekends in privacy, either in their rooms or cleaning their break areas. Additionally, they were less willing to take risks, as they rarely spent their leisure time interacting with guests after the daily programs, preferring quiet and structured environments over spontaneous social interactions.

However, based on a thorough observation of the introverted respondents, it was clear that while they might appear reserved, they were not passive. These respondents tended to invest significant effort in organizing their thoughts, which enabled them to produce more structured and coherent speech when they were engaged in conversation. Their careful approach to communication often results in precise and deliberate language use, even though they may speak less frequently. This behavior reflected a preference for thoughtful reflection before responding, rather than a lack of interest in interaction. This observation was further corroborated by an interview with a senior employee, as follows:

"Ia, sering diam tapi kalau ajak ngobrol mau mereka, emmm kalau dari segi bahasanya mereka bisa juga kalau ngomong sama tamunya, program tiap hari jalan kan artinya mereka bisa ngomong lah sama tamu, kalau nggak bisa pasti dapat komplek dari tamu biasanya."

Based on the observations, the respondents with different personality types demonstrated the ability to communicate effectively in English. The primary comparison lies in the respondents with different types of personalities acquiring their second language, specifically English, and its impact on communication fluency and vocabulary mastery. Respondents with extroverted personalities were found to perform better in acquiring English as a second language. This can be attributed to their propensity for engaging in frequent conversations, which provided them with plenty of opportunities for practice and reinforcement. Their active participation in interactions enhances their ability to adapt and apply English in a variety of contexts, thereby accelerating language outcomes.

In contrast, introverted respondents tend to experience more significant challenges in language acquisition due to their tendency to hesitate and fear making grammatical or structural errors. This cautious approach to communication, while often ensuring accuracy, limits their opportunities to practice and refine their language skills. As a result, introverts typically exhibit lower fluency in conversation and face more difficulties with vocabulary acquisition compared to their extroverted peers. This contrast underscored the significant influence of personality traits on second language learning and the development of linguistic proficiency.

This aligns with Bialystok's theory, which aims to explain why some individuals succeed in learning a second language (L2) while others fail, and why some are more proficient in certain aspects of L2, while others excel in different aspects. There are three stages in second language learning: input, knowledge, and output. Input refers to the learner's exposure to the language, while knowledge encompasses all the learners' information and experiences. Once all the cells in the knowledge stage are filled, the learner moves to the output stage, where responses reflect an understanding of the expression of thoughts (Budiyono, 2012). Consequently, the success of language acquisition depends heavily on how the brain processes incoming information. The more extensive the input from interactions using the target language, the better the output of second language acquisition.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study revealed that the second language acquisition process among the respondents is generally natural (inherent) and driven by the innate characteristics of each individual.

This inherent capacity, referred to as the Language Acquisition Device (LAD), enables humans to develop language skills and acquire a second language. However, respondents with introverted personalities tend to require more external stimuli to engage in interactions. Consequently, the LAD, serving as the input factor, is processed into the knowledge of language acquisition, which in turn produces responses from the speakers. This was evident in the Green Lion Bali Foundation, where the data revealed that creative language use in daily interactions formed an essential part of their second language acquisition process.

This study also demonstrated the influence of personality traits on English language acquisition, revealing different acquisition patterns. Extroverts, with their tendency toward openness, exhibit a more spontaneous language acquisition style. In contrast, introverts, who tend to be more reserved, display a more disciplined and structured language acquisition pattern, although they tend to communicate more slowly. Therefore, individual's tendency toward a dominant extroverted or introverted personality can significantly contribute to the creative learning process in English language acquisition. Moreover, it can aid in the optimal development of their potential.

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