EXTROVERTS AND INTROVERTS: COMMUNICATION COMPETENCE IN THE FOREIGN LANGUAGE IN BUSINESS CONTEXTS

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Abstract: Introversion and extroversion are complex, multi-faceted personality constructs. Individuals can fall at the extremes of each dimension or, more commonly, lie somewhere in between and exhibit traits of both. These personality characteristics impact all communication strategies people implement, irrespective of the language or the context in which the dialogue takes place. Such predispositions influence the ability of acquiring a foreign language and the level of proficiency in conveying messages. Extroverted individuals attribute higher weight to objective facts in determining actions, while the introverted types are biased and rely on subjective interpretations. Introverts are considered reflective, private, thoughtful, while extroverts are thought to be gregarious, assertive, adaptive, happy individuals with a tendency to take risks. In business, both attitudes can lead to success, as the extremes of intuition and risk-taking can combine to generate original spin-offs, real turning points in the way we do and imagine successful business.

Keywords: extraverts, introverts, business communication, foreign language acquisition

The concepts of extroversion and introversion have been apparent in modern psychological theory for decades with popularization of the terms and acceptance by the psychology community largely attributed to the work of Swiss psychoanalyst Carl Jung. According to this early work in the area, Jung stated that individuals hold one of two mutually exclusive attitudes: being extroverted or introverted. An individual's extroversion-introversion preference could be determined by the way in which people direct their general interest: extroverts focus on the external world and introverts focus internally. These are distinctly separate attitudes with specific behavioural characteristics in striking contrast. Introverts are reserved, inscrutable, rather shy, while extroverts are open, sociable, jovial, friendly and approachable, on good terms with everybody, or quarrelling with everybody, always relating to people and being affected by them in visible ways. The tendency towards one or the other is universally determinable not only among the educated individuals, but in all walks of life. It is not a product of a conscious or deliberate choice of attitude. The extroverted individual is oriented by objective data to external items and objective facts. On the other hand, the

introverted type is driven by subjective factors, functions of sensation and intuition, and judges the value of things based on likes and dislikes. In essence, Jung's early work on the dichotomous nature of man suggested that extroverted individuals attributed higher weight to objective facts in determining actions, while the introverted attitude type was biased and relied on subjective interpretations. Introverts are considered to be reflective, private, thoughtful, while extroverts are thought to be gregarious, assertive, adaptive, happy individuals with a tendency to take risks.

In point of communication, the cause of the extroverts' strong social presence is their tendency to talk more often and in louder voices, to take up more physical space with broader gestures and to initiate more conversations than introverts.

A study on students showed that during conversations with an unknown person, extroverts made more eye contact and spoke more frequently than introverts. Additionally, extroverts proved to be significantly more confident and accurate when interpreting the meaning of nonverbal communication than introverts: this nonverbal decoding was attributed to extroverts' experience in social settings and their greater desire for social stimulation.

In time-pressured situations, introverts are more likely to use early information to form judgments and make decisions than extroverts in the same context. Research into the impact of extroversion/introversion on decision-making suggested extroverts make more snap decisions based on what feels most natural at the moment. While extroverts were found to exhibit quality checking behaviour before making decisions, there was also a need for someone to steer them in the right direction when they faced important decisions. Conversely, introverts avoid impulsive decisions through thoughtful consideration, intuition and primarily count on themselves.

At the workplace, extroverts generally make more positive evaluations of life in general and their careers are no exception. Research has shown positive associations between extroversion and career satisfaction. Additionally, extroverts are more likely to take action in order to remedy unsatisfactory workplace situations than their introvert counterparts.

Noise distractions in the workplace are more of a problem for introverts than for extroverts, causing pronounced concentration problems for introverts, while extroverts actively select higher noise intensities. Such observations support the idea that introverts have a pronounced reaction to noise, leading to heightened discomfort which interferes with performance on complex tasks.

Introverts are more likely to locate their real self, the essence of who they really are, on the Internet, easily forming social contacts this way, while extroverts locate their real self through more traditional social interactions. Such predilections remain valid for doing business as well.

Introverts and extroverts respond differently to the types of workplace training: extroverts prefer specifically ideation skills training (focusing on idea generation) while introverts enjoy relaxation training (focusing on opening the mind and removing mental barriers).

Extroverts are prefer immediate rewards and are particularly sensitive to

impulsive, incentive-reward-driven behaviours; they are more likely to be involved in extreme sports and other risk-taking activities.

Introverts and extroverts prefer different leisure activities: extroverts participate in social leisure activities; conversely, introverts are more likely to participate in solitary leisure activities.

Extroverts and introverts have very different verbal styles: extroverts tend to talk in more abstract terms whereas introverts are more likely to focus on concrete facts.

Extroverts are achievement oriented and have learning styles that promote group activities. Extroverts prefer talking out loud, and learning through interactions. Introverts on the other hand prefer to reflect first and act later, work privately and present their work in a way that lets them keep their privacy, preferring intermittent communication rather than a constant flow.

Ambiverts tend to perform better on IQ tests. Research into the relationship between intelligence test performance and personality dimensions suggest that the moderate levels of extroversion displayed by ambivert personalities perform significantly better on both verbal and performance measures.

Introverted learners use a greater range of meta-cognitive and cognitive strategies than extroverted learners. Introverts consciously employ goal-oriented specific behaviours to ease the acquisition, retrieval, storage, and use of information for both comprehension and production and extroverted learners used more interpersonal communication strategies.

Extroverts show superior performance in learning tasks when rewarded. Dopamine responsivity encourages sensitivity to rewards in extroverts, while introverts exhibit greater sensitivity to punishment.

Adults learn faster than children, but children are more easily able to acquire better levels of correct pronunciation in foreign language study. This is evident in acquisition-learning situations, both in the second language and the foreign language. The personality enhances certain dimensions of the behaviour that the student adopts when cultivating foreign language skills. The classroom becomes a meeting context of several aspects of students' personality that the teacher must manage.

Several studies on these personality traits related to language learning say that extroverted students achieve better results in oral tests, since they can improvise more easily than introverts. On the other hand, the results of introverted trainees in written foreign language tests (reading and writing), which require more conscious processes, outperform those obtained by extroverted students. Professors must avoid certain attitudes and actions that may cause harm to their students or prevent them from expressing themselves in the foreign language.

Specific objectives for improving business communication skills in the foreign language for introvert vs. extrovert students:

1. To identify the individual's personality impact on learning foreign language for business aims.
2. To analyze the psychological impact of the student in the process of teaching & learning English.

3. To find out the essential factors influencing language learning and relationships between them.
4. To analyze the social context that exerts a great influence on the learning of languages.
5. To determine the main linguistic factors impeding the learning of a language.
6. To investigate the social and cultural factors in which students live.
7. To identify the social contexts exerting a great influence on the learning of a language
8. To define social and cultural factors which intervene in the environment where students live

Motivation in foreign language acquisition is defined differently according to different perspectives. According to behaviourists, in order to acquire positive reinforcement, motivation is needed as an anticipation of reward. However, according to constructivists, motivation is a construct in which ultimate attainment of goals is possible only by passing through a hierarchy of needs, which are solidly grounded in community belonging and social aspects. Theoretically, motivation is associated with intention and becomes a factor that promotes people's outcomes and their engagement in effective behaviour as to attain those outcomes. However, the internal drive is not the only component of motivation. The need for achievement and success, curiosity, desire for stimulation and new experience are also some other components of motivation. Extrinsically motivated people work on tasks with little or no interest and find no satisfaction in learning.

Acculturation comprehends the phenomena which result when groups of individuals having different cultures come into continuous direct contact, with subsequent changes in the original culture patterns of either or both groups. Acculturation occurs through the identification and the internalization of the significant symbols of the host society. Obviously, acculturation is not a new area of study and it has been the focus of foreign language pedagogy in the last few decades. The study of a new language requires a learner to engage in discourse with the native speakers of the target idiom and adapt to the accepted socio-cultural behaviour from the standpoint of the native speakers.

Both cultural and linguistic competencies are required in the process of learning a foreign language, as all languages live within a cultural context. The learner who will be able to gain a greater socio-linguistic proficiency is the one with the highest desire to integrate themselves into the new language speech norms and cultural pattern.

Irrespective of the actual learning ability, students with an outgoing personality may enjoy certain advantages in fast linguistic acquisition. For instance, they become more involved in social interaction, attract more attention from their teachers and are less inhibited when asked to display their proficiency. Moreover, they may perform more confidently in new communication situations. A person with these kinds of attitudes is known as the extroverted learner. Extroverts are better language learners since they tend to be sociable, more likely to join groups rather than to be alone and more inclined to have social contacts. Introverted learners, on the other hand, do not talk much, are more reserved, prefer learning alone, avoid social contact and face difficulties when getting involved in communicative activities.

In language classrooms, quiet and reserved personalities are often treated as problems. However, despite all those weaknesses, an introvert personality still has a lot of strong points: better writing reading and listening proficiency levels, in comparison to those with the extrovert personality as they are more focused on the inner reflection, thinking through ideas and written communication. For these reasons, an extroverted learner will actually acquire the new language first through speaking before reading and writing.

Therefore, the extroverted learners will excel by making contact with the other users of the target idiom and eventually they will obtain more input. In fact, the teachers will definitely feel pleased to have extroverted learners in class since they will actively participate in seminar discussion, like cooperation with others and will easily produce verbal and spontaneous feedback, will always ask for clarification and seek practice opportunities outside the classroom.

Carroll described foreign language aptitude as consisting of four relatively independent subcomponents: phonetic coding ability, grammatical sensitivity, inductive language learning ability, and associative memory. Carroll's theory and his famous Modern Language Aptitude Test are now the most often referred to paradigm in all subsequent studies on foreign language aptitude. The only foreign language aptitude theory that takes into account personality and motivational characteristics is Snow's. In this model, aptitude is not limited to abilities but includes aspects of personality such as achievement motivation, freedom from anxiety, positive self-concept and control of impulses, temperament and moods.

Two personality factors have the strongest effect on foreign language aptitude: openness to experience and extroversion. Openness has a positive effect on foreign language aptitude, whereas extroversion affects foreign language aptitude negatively. Several investigations linked the success of students in the language class with features of their personality and way of being: maturity, meticulousness, responsibility, independence, and self-confidence. The low performers show lack of self-confidence, shyness, nervousness and little eagerness to participate. A relationship was found between the student's performance, his degree of emotional stability, the cognitive styles, and his predisposition to risk in his class interventions.

Recent research has found a high correlation between the students' sociability and their results in oral expression. Nevertheless, high performance students tend to be introverted and lack spontaneity in socialization activities. Several works have demonstrated that anxiety levels hinder foreign language learning, but there two types of anxiety: facilitating anxiety and debilitating anxiety. The first motivates the students and moves them to fight to solve the difficulty of the tasks. The second contributes to the abandonment of the tasks.

Other authors have studied the effect of empathy (sensitivity of subjects for intervening at the right time in interpersonal communication situations; predisposition or ability to identify with others). They have come to the conclusion that the more empathy there is the better chance of success with the foreign language. The more sensitive an individual is to the feelings and attitudes of another person, the more likely

s/he is to perceive and recognize the subtleties and unique aspects of the second language, and incorporate them in speaking.

Some research has focused on the effect of authoritarianism, ethnocentrism, dogmatism and Machiavellianism about academic performance. All these personality traits negatively influence the acquisition of the foreign language.

For individuals with anomie (mood state characterized by the absence of social norms and values and by a feeling of displacement, social marginalization and alienation), foreign language acquisition is easier because of their critical attitude towards society, which triggers a positive attitude towards learning the foreign language and its culture, hence this personality trait can be considered as a positive predictor of student performance.

The subjects confronted with the foreign culture may experience cultural shock and anxiety. There is also a phenomenon of tolerance to ambiguity understood as the overcoming ambiguous, novel, complex and difficult to solve situations; the capacity of accept and tolerate with patience the frustrations that may arise from those situations. Tolerance for ambiguity is a good predictor for success in learning a foreign language.

There is a coherent and significant correlation between motivation and academic performance, but there seem to be no relationships between personality and motivation. Personality and motivation influence performance, each with a different specific weight. The personality traits that showed the highest correlation with learning were: the sense of authority, perseverance in work and low state of anxiety.

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