

Role of Extroversion and Introversion in Developing Speaking Skill of Bangladeshi EFL Learner: Teachers' Perspective

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Abstract

Influence of extroversion-introversion in learning speaking skill has been an issue of discussion. Researchers have been studying on this issue. The present study reports 40 Bangladeshi university EFL teachers' perception regarding extroversion-introversion personality of the learner and its impact on learning speaking English. An analysis of their response indicates that the participants in the study view learners' being extrovert or introvert is quite influential on speaking English class and it can boost up or injure the progress of speaking skill of English language of a learner. They think that to develop speaking skill in EFL classroom practice is a must and extroverts are more eager to take risk and practice a lot. As a result, they achieve success in developing speaking skill earlier than the introverts.

Keywords: EFL, motivation, anxiety, risk-taking, speaking skill, target language, input, output, SLA, error-correction.

Introduction

Personality has been taken into consideration as an important factor in second language acquisition. Extroversion and introversion are two kinds of personality traits which have become very influential in second language acquisition. To make sure the progress of the development of the speaking English of an EFL learner, it is quite necessary to identify whether he is an extrovert or introvert. The present study conducted on 40 Bangladeshi University EFL teachers reveal their opinions and views regarding the influence of learners' being extrovert or introvert into their development of speaking English in EFL classroom. They expressed that extrovert learners tend to talk more and they always come up with more courage in case of taking part of speaking activities and they are also not afraid of being focused in EFL classroom in Bangladesh. On the other hand, introverts are afraid of focus of attention and also tend to talk less. As a result, their amount of practice in speaking English becomes less. As practice is a must in developing speaking English, it helps the extroverts to boost up their speaking performance.

Research Questions:

1. Does learners' being extrovert/introvert exert any influence on Bangladeshi EFL learners' speaking performance?
2. If yes, which one of them is beneficial to boost up the progress?

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Literature Review

“Second Language acquisition refers to the subconscious or unconscious process by which a language other than the mother tongue is learnt in a natural or tutored setting” (Ellis, 1985: 6). According to Ellis (1985) some personal and general factors determine the level of differences in performances from learner to learner. The general factors are 1) Group dynamics 2) Attitudes to teacher and course material c) Individual learning techniques and the personal factors are 1) age 2) aptitude 3) cognitive style 4) motivation and 5) personality (Ellis, 1985). Of these, personality is one of the most debated topic (Brown, 2007 cited in Nezhad, jahandarand Khodabandehlou in 2014) . A number of theories hold that the degree of success that an individual achieves in acquiring a second language is influenced by personality factors (Gass & Selinker, 1994 cited in Suliman, 2014). Extroversion and introversion are two types of the personality traits. In L2 learning, extroversion and introversion have received the greatest attention (Ahmadian and Yadgari, 2011). “Extrovert persons tend to be sociable, need people to talk to, crave excitement, take chances, an easy-going and optimistic” (Eysenck and Eysenck 1985, cited in Ahmadian and Yadgari, 2011:3). On the other hand, “an introvert is quiet, retiring, reserved, plans ahead, and dislikes excitement” (Eysenck and Eysenck 1985, cited in Ahmadian and Yadgari, 2011:3). According to Taylor (1998, p.10 cited in Ahmadian and Yadgari, 2011)

Extroverts prefer quicker and less accurate approach. They also talk more .They are also good at interpreting body language and facial expressions and also good at task involving short-term memory. On the contrary, introverts talk less .They reflect more before acting. Introverts like to work independently or with one or two other people. They seem to be better at reflective problem solving tasks and tasks involving long-term memory.

Extroverts like parties and have many friends and they also like to look outside themselves for relief but introverts are quiet, shy, aloof and distant. They like to engage into that type of activities that only involve themselves (Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012).

Introverts talk less and have lower self-confidence (Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012). According to Krashen’s Monitor Model Hypothesis (cited in Ellis 1985), self-confidence is one of the very important factor in Second language Acquisition because it helps the learner to receive great amount of input. Self-confidence is considered a kind of motivation in second language acquisition (Gardner and Clement, 1990, cited in Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012). Furnham finds that (1990 cited in Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012) extroverts can take more risks than introverts .This risk-taking helps them to communicate in the target language in EFL classroom. Zhang finds out that extroverts possess the willingness to communicate even if they are not sure whether they are going to achieve success or not (2008). Two scientists - Kinginger and Farrell (cited in Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012) found from a study abroad program in France in 2003 that many introvert students used to avoid interaction with the native speakers because they were afraid of feeling embarrassed at being identified and being corrected at making mistakes by the teacher during speaking English. “If teachers correct mistakes and further embarrass shy students, it may isolate students even more” (Zhang, 2008:58).

To become proficient in SLA, it is quite important to practice the target language. Extroverts take full advantage of language use opportunities as they tend to be sociable and like to join groups and risk-takers (Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012). As introverts tend to talk less this becomes a kind of blockage on the way of their development because they receive less input. On the other hand, as extroverts tend to talk more it helps in the way of their progress because they receive a large amount of input. Extrovert learners are believed to be more successful in communication because of their habit of communicating easily in second language (Suliman, 2014). This habit of communicating in target language helps to receive more input and produce more output. Swain (1993 cited in Dewaele and Furnham, 1999) finds that extroverts receive more comprehensible input and can produce more comprehensible output than the introverts due to being less anxious to communicate in the target language. Even Krashen (cited in Ellis 1985) mentioned that learners with high motivation and self-confidence and with low anxiety receive plenty of input and this input influences the rate of development. This little amount of input impacts the amount of fluency of the introvert learners. Extrovert learners achieve greater fluency than introverts in oral performance (Zafar and Meenakshi, 2012)

Methodology

Participants

The primary data for this research were collected through a survey carried out among 40 EFL teachers of university based in Bangladesh. The teachers have different educational backgrounds and they have different lengths of teaching experience. 23 teachers have MA in Applied Linguistics & ELT and 17 teachers have MA in English Literature. They are taking English fundamental courses of BA (Hon.) in English, BBA, LLB, and Applied Sociology. 50% percent teachers have more than 4 years teaching experience. Their students' L1 is Bangla and they are studying English in EFL context. They have both extrovert and introvert type of learners in their classrooms and they also take speaking English classes. The students were categorized as extroverts and introverts according to their class performance and observation by their teachers.

Data Collection

The data were collected through a questionnaire that included close-ended questions except one open-ended question. The questionnaire was constructed on a five point Likert type attitude scale which was completed by the teachers. Questions of different aspects to analyze the influence of the learners' being extrovert or introvert in developing speaking English in EFL class were included in the questionnaire and teachers were asked to indicate their agreement or disagreement with the statements. The open-ended question in the questionnaire provided some qualitative data which shed light into the influence of learners' being extrovert or introvert on increasing the speed of development in speaking English in EFL classroom. The questionnaire along with the results is given in the appendix.

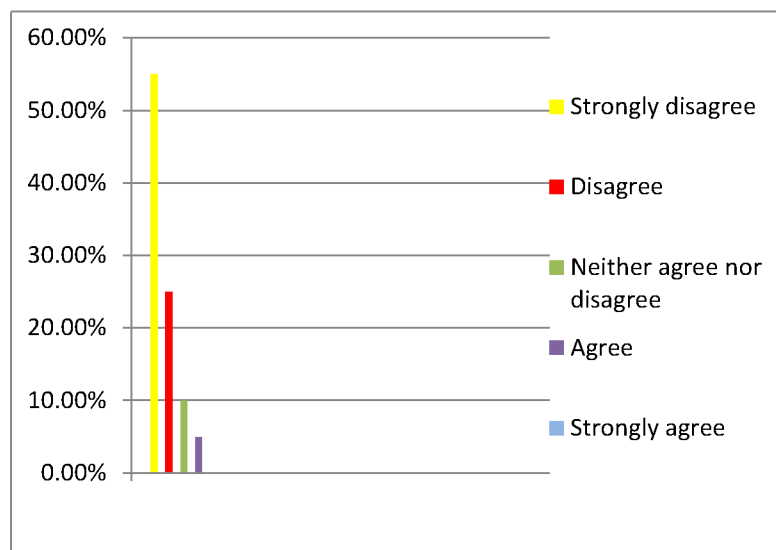
Findings

Major findings of the study are discussed in relation to the following areas:

- a) Focus of attention
- b) Risk-taking
- c) Correction of Error
- d) Self-confidence and motivation
- e) Amount of practice and input
- f) Fluency

a) Focus of attention:

Normally, in a classroom a student gets focused when he randomly takes part in different activities. 25% teachers strongly agreed and 50% teachers agreed with the view that *Extrovert students are always eager to take part in speaking activities in the classroom*. On the other hand, most of the teachers disagreed with the view that *Introvert students are always eager to take part in speaking activities in the classroom* (50% teachers strongly disagreed and 25% teachers disagreed). This participation makes the extroverts focused in the classroom. In response to the statement *Extroverts want to be focused in the classroom* almost all the teachers agreed (20% teachers strongly agreed and 50% teachers agreed and most of the teachers disagreed with the view that *Introverts want to be focused in the classroom* (55% teachers strongly disagreed and 25% teachers disagreed) (figure 1).



Introverts want to be focused in the classroom.	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
	55%	25%	10%	5%	5%

Figure 1: Focus of attention.

b) Risk-taking:

Most of the teachers in the study expressed their view that introvert students are afraid of taking part in the classroom speaking activities. Introverts do not want to take risk by uttering English into the classroom because they are afraid of losing the face by making mistake. Even though they know English due to lack of courage they do not take part in speaking activities much often. This is evident when the teachers rejected the statement that *Introverts are risk-takers* (75% teachers strongly disagreed and 20 % teachers disagreed). On the other hand, 80% teachers strongly agreed and 15% teachers agreed with the statement that *Extroverts are risk-takers* (figure 2).

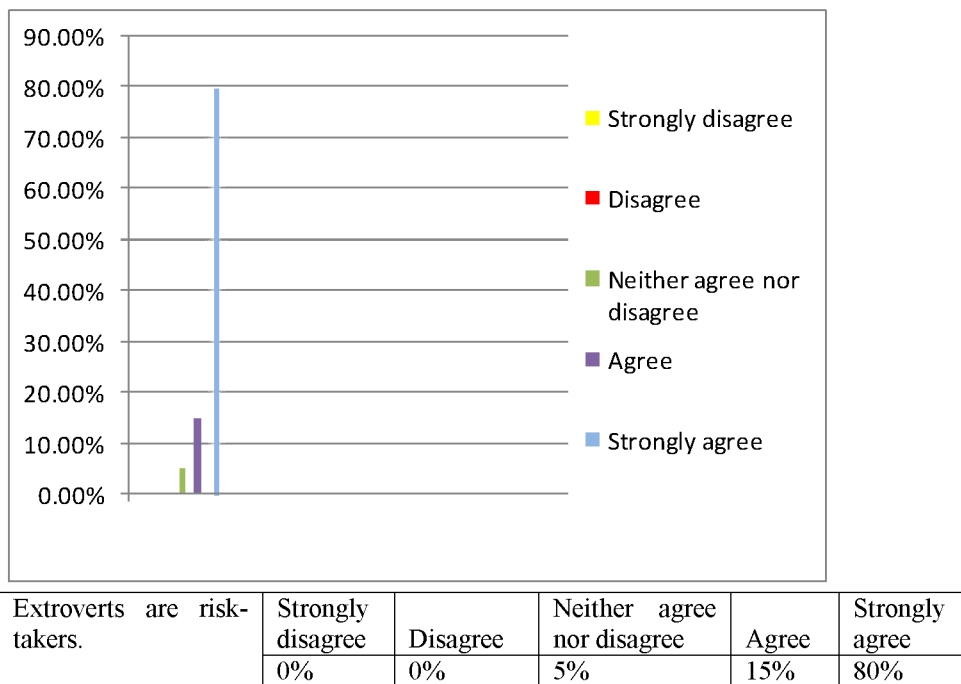


Figure 2: Risk-taking

c) Correction of Error:

Not everyone comes to learn a language with an absolute knowledge. Some are supposed to make mistakes and it is required that the errors or mistakes will be identified and corrected by the teachers so that the learners would not repeat the mistakes. This process is really helpful in language learning. But *Introverts learners are always afraid of making error* (45% teachers strongly agreed and 30% teachers agreed) and *Introverts become less motivated when their error is identified* (50% teachers strongly agreed and 25% teachers agreed) (figure 3) . The teachers also think that *Introverts are shy during speaking* (25% teachers strongly agreed and 50% teachers agreed). The teachers find out that extrovert learners do not get afraid in making error which is evident when they rejected the idea that *Extroverts are always afraid of making error* (45% teachers strongly disagreed and 30% teachers disagreed)

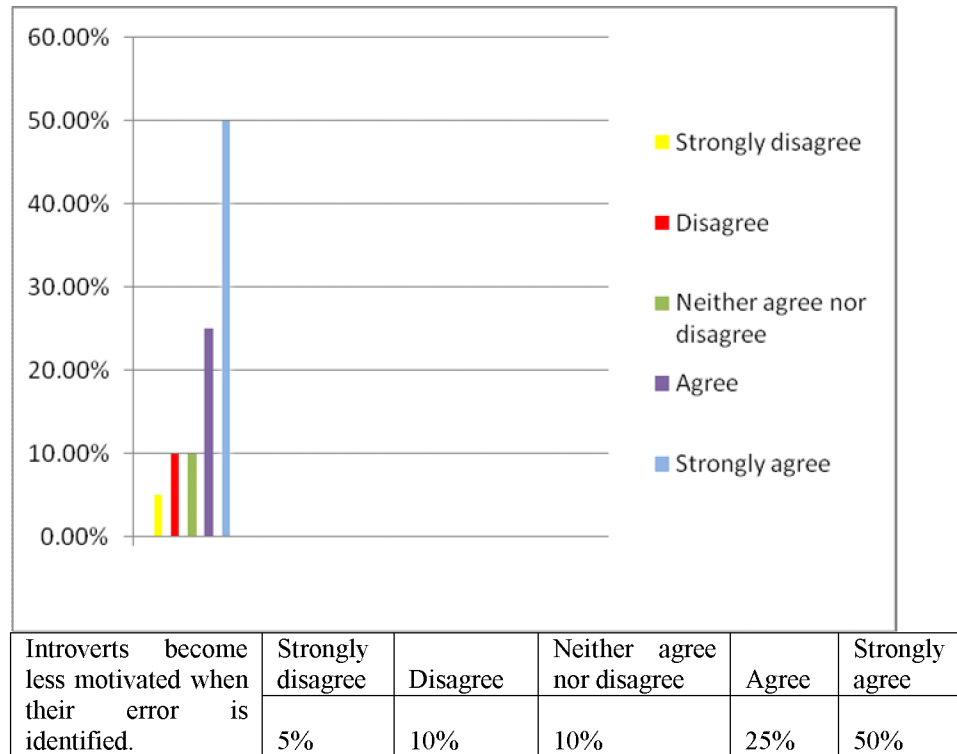


Figure 3: Correction of Error

d) Amount of practice and input

Some statements were included in the questionnaire to find out teachers' perception regarding the effectiveness of practicing speaking English of the learner and its impact on language learning. Almost all the teachers agreed that *Practicing English is necessary to develop speaking performance* (50% teachers strongly agreed and 45% teachers agreed). The teachers also think that *Extroverts do not miss the chance to use target language* (70% teachers strongly agreed and 15% teachers agreed) (figure 4) and as a result *Extroverts practice speaking English more than introverts*. (60% teachers strongly agreed and 15% teachers agreed). The learner who practices more receives more amount of input of target language which helps him to produce comprehensible output. Again, 65% teachers rejected the idea that *Introverts receive more input than extroverts* (65% strongly disagreed and 25% teachers disagreed).

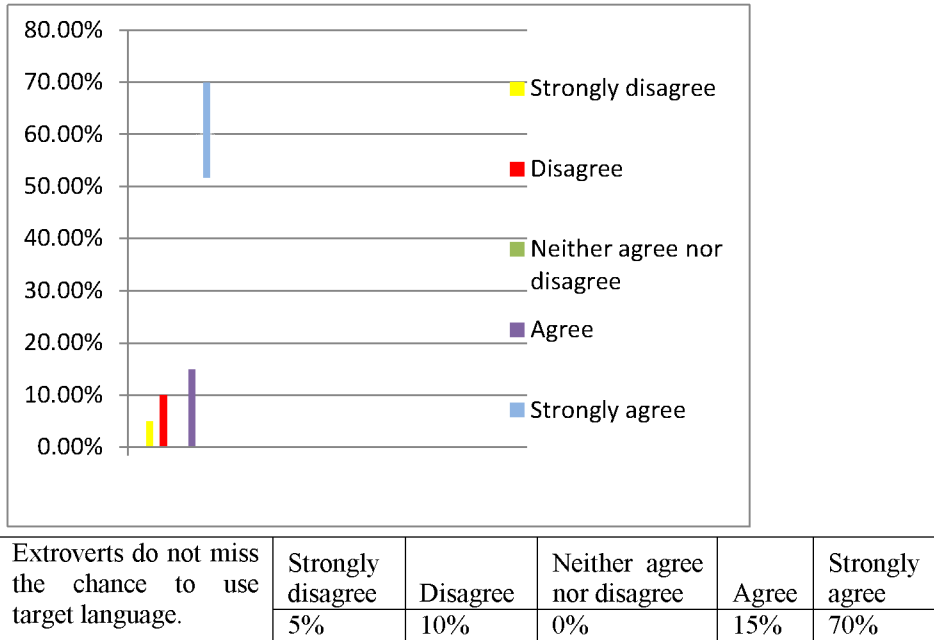


Figure 4: Amount of practice and input

e) Self-confidence and motivation:

Self-confidence and motivation are two very influential factors and they play crucial role in language learning. It is known that the learner who possesses a large amount of self-confidence and motivation receives a large amount of input which facilitates his language learning. Some statements were provided to find out teachers’ perception of whether extroversion/introversion is related to self-confidence and motivation or not and if it is related, its effect on language learning. Most of the teachers believe that *It is easy to motivate the extrovert students than the introvert students* (45% teachers strongly agreed and 35% teachers agreed). They also showed their agreement to the point that *Extroverts have more self-confidence than introverts* (65% teachers strongly agreed and 20% teachers agreed) (figure 5).

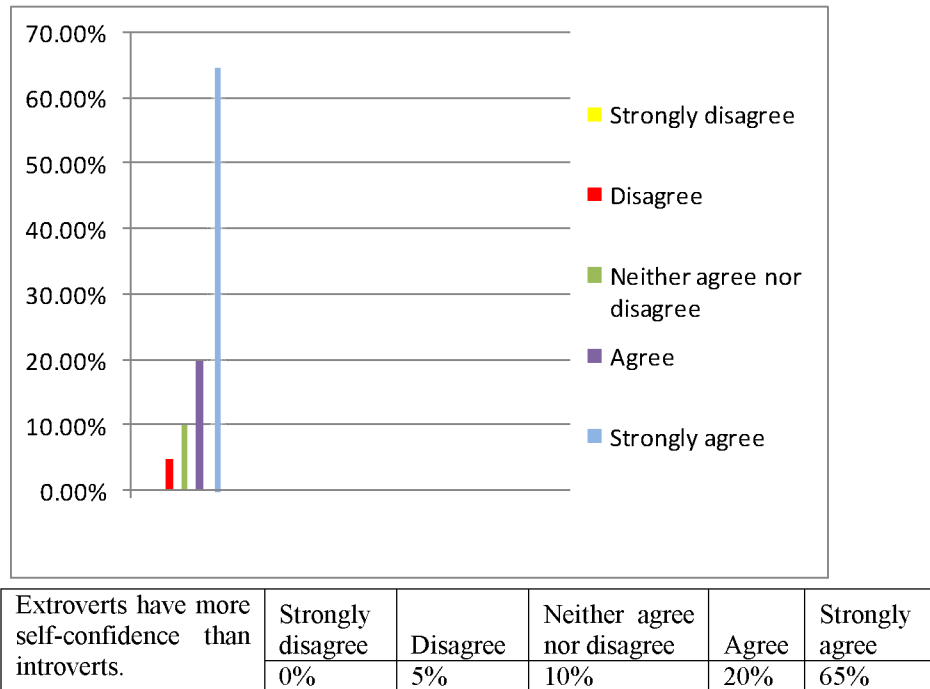


Figure 5: Self-confidence and motivation

f) Fluency: As earlier stated that extroverts are not shy in the classroom during speaking English, this helps them to initiate native like pronunciation which helps them develop their speaking performance. 45% teachers strongly disagreed and 25% teachers disagreed that *Extroverts hesitate to imitate native like pronunciation*. Moreover, they find that *Introverts hesitate to imitate native like pronunciation* (45% teachers strongly agreed and 30% teachers agreed). The teachers also believe that *Extroverts are more fluent than introverts* (60% teachers strongly agreed and 25% teachers agreed).

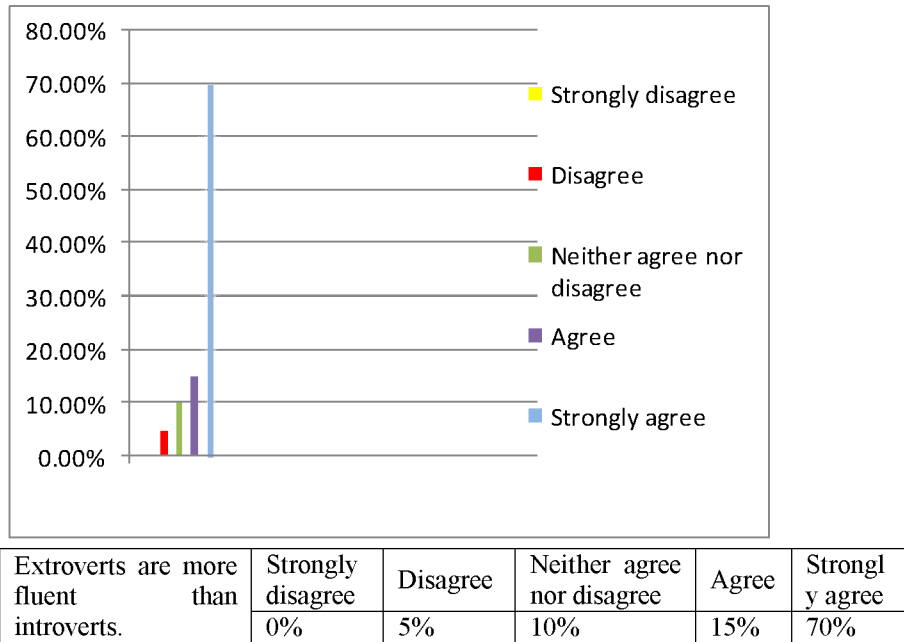


Figure 6: Fluency

Further Qualitative data: The open-ended question included at the end of the questionnaire provides some qualitative data reflecting teachers’ perception regarding the role of extroversion/introversion on the speaking performance of Bangladeshi EFL learners. A number of issues like introvert students most of the time feel nervous when they are called to take part in speaking activities and also start trembling when they are supposed to talk were expressed by the teachers. The teachers also even shared that introverts do not dare to talk about anything spontaneously rather than think several times whether he or she is producing the right speech or not. Extrovert students are always eager to take part in role play activities, group work and pair work which facilitates their development came up in their comments. They commented that extrovert learners always feel a kind of zeal to practice English as a result they are always encircled by input and this input ultimately boosts up their progress. On the other hand, due to shyness, introverts most of the time suffer from tension of being focused or being ridiculed by classmate or teacher at making mistake which stops them from being encountered with large amount of input. One teacher suggested, “I think teachers can try to create an environment in the classroom which will let the introverts to feel like as if no one is going to ridicule him or her at his mistake” (T16). Another teacher said, “some highly motivated introvert learners sometimes also become successful but they have to go through a traumatic time as they always have to remain engage in an inner fight”(T32). They said that ultimately both introvert and extrovert may achieve success at one point of time but extrovert can achieve it easily without going through any psychological pressure and extroverts can achieve it in shorter time than introverts as extroversion acts as a kind of escalator toward good performance of speaking English for an EFL learner.

Discussion

The teachers expressed that extroversion/introversion play an important role on learning speaking skill of Bangladeshi EFL learners. Extroversion/introversion either increases or decrease the speed of learning of speaking English. Teachers who participated in the study find out that extrovert students always acquire more self-confidence than introverts and also extroverts are ready to take risk most of the time. They also expressed that extrovert students become more motivated than introverts. Even, extroverts crave for focus of attention and introverts are afraid of being focused in the classroom. All of these lead the extrovert learners to take part in large amount of speaking activities including role play or pair work or other activities. This participation helps them to receive a lot of input. And they also do not take error-correction process as a matter of shame. As a result, they spontaneously take part in speaking activities. They sometimes make error during speaking activities which is also corrected by teacher. This error correction helps them to correct themselves and produce comprehensible output. All of these ultimately help an extrovert to be a good performer of speaking skill. On the other hand, introvert learners normally avoid taking part in speaking English activities because of having lack of self-confidence, motivation, risk-taking capacity. They are also afraid of being focused in the classroom. They also avoid speaking English because of being ashamed at making mistakes in the classroom. All of these do not let them encounter with a large amount of input and they can not produce much comprehensible output.

Conclusion

The study covered only 40 Bangladeshi university EFL teachers' perception regarding the role of extroversion/introversion on the speaking performance of Bangladeshi EFL learners. Therefore, the views of the teachers may not be generalized. However, the study sheds some light on the EFL teachers' perception regarding whether extroversion/introversion personality type has any impact on the development of speaking performance of a Bangladeshi EFL learner or not. The result of the survey shows that extroversion and introversion can influence the speaking performance of a learner. In this regard, the teachers consider extroversion as a facilitating factor in a Bangladeshi EFL speaking classroom. On the contrary, they think that introversion is a kind of blockage on the way of the development of speaking skill of a learner as it does not let the learner to meet a large amount of input and most of the teachers believe that without receiving a large amount of input it is not possible to produce comprehensible output of a second language specifically English Language.

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Appendix

Questionnaire for Teachers

Personal Information

Name of institution :

Last Academic degree (please tick one)

- BA (Hon.) in English
- MA in English Literature
- MA in Applied Linguistics and ELT
- MA in TESOL
- M.Phil.
- Ph.D.

Years of teaching experience (please tick one)

- Less than one year
- 1-2 years
- 2-5 years
- More than 5 years

Sl. No.	Statement	Level of agreement									
		1		2		3		4		5	
		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
		# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%
1.	Extrovert students are always eager to take part in speaking activities in the classroom.	2	5%	4	10%	4	10%	20	50%	10	25%
2.	Introvert students are always eager to take part in speaking in the classroom.	20	50%	10	25%	6	15%	2	5%	2	5%
3.	Extroverts are shy during speaking.	22	55%	10	25%	4	10%	2	5%	2	5%
4.	Introverts are shy during speaking.	4	10%	4	10%	2	5%	20	50%	10	25%
5.	Extroverts want to be focused in the classroom.	4	10%	4	10%	4	10%	20	50%	8	20%
6.	Introverts want to be focused in the classroom.	22	55%	10	25%	4	10%	2	5%	2	5%
7.	It is easy to motivate the extrovert students than the introvert students.	0	0%	4	10%	4	10%	14	35%	18	45%
8.	It is easy to motivate the introvert students than the extrovert students.	20	50%	10	25%	0	0%	4	10%	6	15%
9.	Extrovert loses the motivation when their error is identified.	18	45%	10	25%	4	10%	4	10%	4	10%
10.	Introverts become less motivated when their error is identified.	2	5%	4	10%	4	10%	10	25%	20	50%
11.	Extroverts are risk-takers.	0	0%	0	0%	2	5%	6	15%	32	80%

Sl. No.	Statement	Level of agreement									
		1		2		3		4		5	
		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
		# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%
12.	Introverts are risk-takers.	30	75%	8	20%	2	5%	0	0%	0	0%
13.	Extroverts do not miss the chance to use target language.	2	5%	4	10%	0	0%	6	15%	28	70%
14.	Introverts do not miss the chance to use target language.	24	60%	8	20%	2	5%	4	10%	2	5%
15.	Introverts are always afraid of making error.	4	10%	4	10%	2	5%	12	30%	18	45%
16.	Extroverts are always afraid of making error	18	45%	12	30%	2	5%	4	10%	4	10%
17.	Extroverts feel embarrassed when he is identified at making mistake.	20	50%	8	20%	2	5%	6	15%	4	10%
18.	Introverts feel embarrassed when he is identified at making mistake.	4	10%	6	15%	2	5%	8	20%	20	50%
19.	Practicing in English is necessary to develop speaking performance.	0	0%	0	0%	2	5%	18	45%	20	50%
20.	Extroverts practices speaking English more than introverts.	4	10%	2	5%	4	10%	6	15%	24	60%
21.	Introverts practices speaking English more than extroverts.	16	40%	12	30%	4	10%	4	10%	4	10%
22.	Extroverts hesitate to imitate native like Pronunciation.	18	45%	10	25%	0	0%	4	10%	6	15%

Sl. No.	Statement	Level of agreement									
		1		2		3		4		5	
		Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree		Strongly agree	
		# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%	# of respondent	%
23.	Introverts hesitate to imitate native like pronunciation.	4	10%	6	15%	0	0%	12	30%	18	45%
24.	Extroverts are eager to take part in role play activities.	2	5%	2	5%	0	0%	8	20%	28	70%
25.	Introverts are eager to take part in role play activities.	24	60%	6	15%	6	15%	2	5%	2	5%
26.	Extroverts have more self-confidence than introverts.	0	0%	2	5%	4	10%	8	20%	26	65%
27.	Introverts have more self-confidence than extroverts.	26	65%	10	25%	4	10%	0	0%	0	0%
28.	Extroverts are more fluent than introverts.	0	0%	2	5%	4	10%	10	25%	24	60%
29.	Introverts are more fluent than extroverts.	26	65%	8	20%	4	10%	2	5%	0	0%
30.	Extroverts receive more input than introverts.	0	0%	4	10%	2	5%	8	20%	26	65%
31.	Introverts receive more input than extroverts.	26	65%	10	25%	2	5%	2	5%	0	0%

32. Do you find anything more in the attitude of your extrovert and introvert students which influences their speaking performance?