Corrective Feedback and Personality Type: A Case Study of Iranian L2 Learners

Hassan Banaruee (Corresponding author)

Dept. of Language, Chabahar Maritime University

Hassan.banaruee@gmail.com

Hooshang Khoshsima

Dept. of Language, Chabahar Maritime University

khoshsima2002@yahoo.com

Afsane Askari

Dept. of Language, Islamic Azad University, Bandar Abbas Branch

Afsane.askari2015@gmail.com

Abstract

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of explicit and implicit corrective feedback on extrovert and introvert language learners in a writing course. Participants were classified into two groups of explicit corrective feedback and implicit corrective feedback. Based on Myers-Briggs personality questionnaire, participants of each group were divided into extroverts and introverts. Throughout a writing course, the first group was provided with explicit feedback and the second group with implicit feedback. The results of a pretest and a posttest showed that while explicit corrective feedback is more effective for extroverts, indirect implicit feedback produces better results for introverts in writing courses. However, it is suggested that an optimal mixture of positive and negative feedback would be most beneficial in writing courses, particularly for extrovert learners who need external stimuli to be pushed forward.

Keywords: Corrective feedback, Personality type, Explicit and implicit, Direct and indirect

1. Introduction

Corrective feedback is one of the widely-discussed subjects in the literature of L2 learning and L2 acquisition. Corrective feedback is a type of negative feedback which is in the form of a response to a learner's error (Ellis, 2009a). Although a large body of research has been conducted on corrective feedback, there is not a broad agreement about what errors to correct and how to correct them (Banaruee & Askari, 2016; Hyland & Hyland, 2006; Banaruee, 2016).

Harmer (1983) argued that when L2 learners are engaged in communication, the teacher should not intervene by telling students that they are making mistakes. This view has been supported in other works, such as Basturkmen, Loewen, and Ellis (2004). Disagreement about corrective feedback in writing can clearly be seen in the opposite views of Truscott and Ferris (Truscott, 1996, 1999, 2007; Ferris, 1999). Truscott believes that correcting learners' errors in a composition can eliminate errors in a subsequent draft but cannot improve grammatical accuracy in a new composition. Rejecting this view, Ferris argued that it is not possible to dismiss correction in general as it depends on the manner of correction.

The relationship between personality type and optimal corrective feedback is a subject that has not been properly met in the literature of this field. Several models of personality types have been suggested by researchers, among which Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (Myers, 1962) has been one of the most popular questionnaires. This model which is based on another model suggested by Jung (1923) includes four pairs of personality types: extroversion/introversion, sensing/intuition, thinking/feeling, and judging/perceiving. According to Keirsey and Bates (1984, pp. 25-26), extrovert people are sociable and external, while introverts are interested in internal reactions. They add that sensing people are mainly reliant on experience and actuality, while intuitive people are speculative and imaginative. While being objective and analytic is the main characteristic of thinking people, being subjective is one of the dominant features of feeling people. Finally, while judging people are fixed and decided, perceiving people are flexible and open to various options (pp. 25-26).

This study aimed to investigate the existence of a possible relationship between extroversion/introversion and corrective feedbacks in writing courses for Iranian L2 learners. To achieve this objective, two groups of L2 learners were provided with explicit and implicit corrective feedback in a writing course. Both groups included extroverts and introverts.

2. Review of the Literature

The relationship between Myers-Briggs personality traits and degrees of success in L2 learning and related activities has been investigated by a number of studies (Carrell, Prince, & Astika, 1996; Ehrman & Oxford, 1995; 1989; Ehrman, 1990, 1989; Moody, 1988; Oxford & Ehrman, 1988). The curricular components and language teaching objectives in related activities also play a crucial role in the success of L2 learning, indicated by Zare-Behtash and Banaruee (2017).

According to Ehrman and Oxford (1990), sensing L2 learners tend to rely on memory strategies. Another interesting point in their study was that thinking L2 learners, in contrast to

feeling L2 learners, tend to employ metacognitive and analytic strategies. According to Dewaele and Furnham (2000), extrovert bilinguals are more fluent than introvert bilinguals. Gan (2011) found no significant correlation between extroversion/introversion and L2 learners' oral performance. In a study conducted on a group of Iranian L2 learners (Soleimani, Jafarigohar, & Ramezani, 2013), no significant correlation was found between extroversion / introversion and the performance on multiple-choice and true false tests.

In the area of corrective feedback in L2 classrooms, SLA researchers have identified a variety of ways in which errors can be corrected by teachers. These strategies have been observed in descriptive studies (Khoshsima & Banaruee, 2017; Lyster & Ranta, 1997) in language classrooms. In later works, researchers have developed hierarchical taxonomies of strategies based on a theoretical view of how corrective feedback contributes to language acquisition. In the case of written corrective feedback, the key distinction is between direct, indirect, and metalinguistic forms of correction (Ellis, 2009b). In the case of oral corrective feedback, two distinctions have been made: explicit vs. implicit corrective feedback (e.g., Carrol & Swain, 1993; Aljaafreh & Lantolf, 1994; Zare-Behtash, Khatinzadeh & Banaruee, 2017) and input-providing vs. output-prompting feedback (Lyster, 2004; Ellis, 2006).

The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between personality types and corrective feedback in writing compositions in L2. This study specifically focused on the relationship between the first pair of personality types (extroversion/introversion) and two types of corrective feedback (explicit/implicit). Administering a pretest and a posttest among two groups of learners, researchers of this study tried to answer the following question:

Which type of corrective feedback (explicit/implicit) is more effective for extroverts and introverts in writing courses?

3. Methodology

3.1 Participants

Based on Myers-Briggs personality questionnaire, participants of both groups were divided into extrovert group and introvert group. In the explicit feedback group, 19 participants were included in the extrovert group and 11 participants were included in the introvert group. In the implicit feedback group, 17 participants were included in the extrovert group and 13 participants were included in the introvert group.

3.2 Instrument

A sample of Michigan TOEFL test was used to select those learners who were at intermediate level of general English. Myers-Briggs personality questionnaire was used to classify learners into two groups of extroverts and introverts. In order to determine level of writing proficiency of learners before and after treatment period, a pretest and a posttest were administered. Each test included two topics. Participants were expected to write a composition about each topic. Also, SPSS was used to analyze the data.

3.3 Procedure

At the beginning of the study, a sample of Michigan TOEFL test was used to select only those learners who were at intermediate level of proficiency in general English. Then, participants were divided into the two groups of explicit feedback group and implicit feedback group, each one consisting of 30 participants. Based on Myers-Briggs personality questionnaire, participants were classified as either extroverts or introverts. Throughout a writing course of 15 sessions, participants of the first group received explicit corrective feedback about their writings. On the other hand, participants of the second group attended another 15-session course in which they received implicit feedback about their writings. A pretest and a posttest were administered to examine level of proficiency of learners before and after treatment period. Then, two paired t-tests were run to compare level of improvement in the writing proficiency in both groups of participants.

3.4 Data Analysis

Having scored participants' papers in the pretest and posttest, researchers of the study analyzed the data in two phases. In the first phases, scores of explicit feedback group were analyzed. A paired t-test was run to compare the performance of extroverts in pretest and posttest. Also, another paired t-test was run to compare the performance of introverts in the pretest and posttest. A similar procedure was used for implicit feedback group. Results of these four paired t-tests could indicate which personality group (extrovert/introvert) benefited more from which type of feedback (explicit/implicit).

4. Results

4.1 Results of Explicit Feedback Group

Results of paired t-test for extroverts and introverts in explicit feedback group have been given in Table 1 and Table 2.

Table 1. Results of t-test for extroverts

	Paired Differences		t	df	Two Tailed P- Value
	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
Explicit feedback/Extroverts	-0.73	From -1.09 to -0.38	4.2530	29	0.09874

Table 2. Results of t-test for introverts

	Paired Differences		t	df	Two Tailed P- Value
	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			
Explicit feedback/Introverts	-0.17	From -0.53 to 0.20	4.3345	23	0.2543

The p-value of extroverts is smaller than the p-value of introverts. Therefore, it might indicate that extroverts benefited more from explicit feedback.

4.2 Results of Implicit Feedback Group

Results of the paired t-test for extroverts and introverts in implicit feedback group have been given in Table 3 and Table 4.

Table 3. Results of t-test for extroverts

	Paired Differences		t	df	Two Tailed
	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			P- Value
Implicit feedback/Extroverts	-0.15	From -0.34 to 0.23	4.1365	23	0.2837

Table 4. Results of t-test for introverts

	Paired Differences		t	df	Two Tailed
	Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference			P- Value
Implicit feedback/Introverts	-0.16	From -0.43 to 0.16	4.3256	23	0.1169

The p-value of introverts is smaller than the p-value of extroverts. Therefore, it could indicate that introverts benefit more from implicit feedback.

5. Discussion

As was mentioned in the results, in writing compositions, extroverts benefited more from explicit feedback than from implicit feedback. On the other hand, introverts benefited more from implicit feedback. Extrovert people are sociable and receptive to those feedbacks that are provided in social contexts. They usually welcome explicit feedbacks and react positively to this type of feedback. In fact, they are open to explicit to explicit corrective feedbacks and are ready to discuss the points corrected in the feedbacks. It seems that these personal characteristics prepare the ground for extrovert people to be in an advantage position in a classroom where explicit feedbacks are provided for correcting compositions. On the other hand, introvert people are interested in internal reactions. They are less receptive to explicit feedbacks that are directed at them in social interactions. In fact, introverts are in an advantage position in those contexts where feedbacks are provided indirectly.

The important point is not as to whether we have to provide corrective feedback or not to provide. Rather, the question is how we should provide feedback and who the target of feedback should be. The results obtained in this study suggest that if the learner belongs to that category of people who are extroverts, explicit feedback would produce better results. In other words, it would be better to direct the feedback towards the same person that has committed an error, even if that feedback is provided in a social context such as classroom. If the learner belongs to that category of people who are introverts, implicit feedback would produce better results. In other words, it would be better to direct corrective feedback toward

the whole group of learners rather than to that learner who has committed an error in her/his writing a composition. It seems that introvert people are more receptive to indirect implicit feedback and react positively to this type of corrective feedback in writing compositions.

However, an important point that must not be ignored here is the distinction between positive and negative feedbacks. Providing corrective feedback does not necessarily mean that a solely negative feedback is directed at the learner. Sometimes, the teacher can provide an explicit corrective feedback accompanied by another positive feedback. In fact, a skillful teacher can reduce the possible negative effect of a corrective feedback by providing a simultaneous positive feedback. The most successful teacher is a teacher who builds an optimal mixture of positive and negative feedbacks. In this way, errors can be corrected without having a negative impact on the learner. This is particularly the case with extrovert learners who need an external stimulus to push them forward. For this group of people, positive feedback provided in interactions between teacher and learner in the classroom is beneficial, even if it is preceded by or simultaneous with a corrective feedback.

6. Conclusion

Based on the results obtained in this study, it was concluded that extroverts and introverts do not equally benefit from the same type of corrective feedback. Extrovert people tend to benefit more from explicit corrective feedback, particularly if it is accompanied by positive feedback provided in the social interactions in the classroom. On the other hand, introvert people tend to benefit more from implicit feedback that is directed toward the whole group of learners rather than the learner who has committed an error in his/her writing of compositions. Considering these results, this article suggest that personality types of language learners have to be taken into account in the process of providing feedback in writing courses. It seems that classifying learners into different groups on the basis of their personality and using proper ways of providing feedback for each group will produce better results in writing courses.

References

Aljaafreh, A., & Lantolf, J. (1994). Negative feedback as regulation and second language learning in the Zone of Proximal Development. *The Modern Language Journal, 78*, 465-483. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1994.tb02064.x

Banaruee, H. (2016). *Recast in Writing*. Sana Gostar Publications.

Banaruee, H., & Askari, A. (2016). *Typology of Corrective Feedback and Error Analysis*. Sana Gostar Publications.

Basturkmen, H., Loewen, S., & Ellis, R. (2004). Teachers' stated belief about incidental focus on form and their classroom practices. *Applied Linguistics*, *25*, 243-272. https://doi.org/10.1093/applin/25.2.243

Carrell, P., Prince, M., & Astika. G. (1996). Personality types and language learning in an EFL context. *Language Learning, 46,* 75-99. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1996.tb00641.x

Carroll, S., & Swain, M. (1993). Explicit and implicit negative feedback: An empirical study of the learning of linguistic generalizations. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition, 15*, 357-366. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263100012158

Dewaele, J. M., & Furnham, A. (2000). Personality and speech production: A pilot study of second language learners. *Personality and Individual Differences, 28*, 355 -365. https://doi.org/10.1016/S0191-8869(99)00106-3

Ehrman, M. (1989). *Ants, grasshopper, badgers, and butterflies: Qualitative and quantitative investigation of adult language learning styles and strategies*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Union Institute.

Ehrman, M. (1990). The role of personality type in adult language learning: An ongoing investigation. *Language Aptitude Reconsidered* (pp. 126-178). New York: Prentice Hall Regents.

Ehrman, M., & Oxford, R. (1989). Effects of sex differences, career choice, and psychological type on adult language learning strategies. *Modern Language Journal*, 73, 1-13. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1989.tb05302.x

Ehrman, M., & Oxford, R. (1990). Adult language learning styles and strategies in an intensive training setting. *Modern Language Journal, 74*, 311-327. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1990.tb01069.x

Ehrman, M., & Oxford, R. (1995). Cognition plus: Correlates of language proficiency. *Modern Language Journal, 79*, 67-89. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1995.tb05417.x

Ellis, R. (2006). Researching the effects of form-focused instruction on L2 acquisition. In K. Bardovi-Harlig, & Z. Dornyei (Eds.), *Themes in SLA Research* (AILA, Vol. 19, pp. 18-41). Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Ellis, R. (2009a). Corrective feedback and teacher development. *L2 Journal, 1,* 3-18.

Ellis, R. (2009b). A typology of written corrective feedback types. *English Language Teaching Journal*, *63*, 97-107. https://doi.org/10.1093/elt/ccn023

Ferris, D. (1999). The case for grammar correction in L2 writing classes: A response to Truscott (1996). *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *8*, 1-10. https://doi.org/10.1016/S1060-3743(99)80110-6

Gan, Z. (2011). An investigation of personality and L2 oral performance. *Journal of Language Teaching and Research, 2*, 1256-1267. https://doi.org/10.4304/jltr.2.6.1259-1267

Harmer, J. (1983). *The practice of English language teaching*. London: Longman.

Hyland, K., & Hyland, F. (2006). *Feedback in second language writing: Contexts and issues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9781139524742

Jung, C. (1923). *Psychological types*. New York: Harcourt Brace.

Keirsey, D., & Bates, M. (1984). *Please understand me: Character and temperament types*.

Del Mar, CA: Prometheus Nemesis Book Company.

Khoshsima, H., & Banaruee, H. (2017). L1 Interfering and L2 Developmental Writing Errors among Iranian EFL Learners. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*.

Lyster, R. (2004). Differential effects of prompts and recasts in form-focused instruction. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *26*, 399-432. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263104263021

Lyster, R., & Ranta, L. (1997). Corrective feedback and learner uptake: Negotiation of form in communicative classrooms. *Studies in Second Language Acquisition*, *19*, 37-66. https://doi.org/10.1017/S0272263197001034

Moody, R. (1988). Personality preferences and foreign language learning. *Modern Langue Journal, 72*, 389-401. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4781.1988.tb04198.x

Myers, I. (1962). *The Myers-Briggs type indicator*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press. https://doi.org/10.1037/14404-000

Oxfor, R., & Ehraman, M. (1988). Psychological type and adult language learning strategies: A pilot study. *Journal of Psychological Type, 16*, 22-32.

Soleimani, H., Jafarigohar, M., & Ramezi, A. (2013). Extroversion/Introversion and Test Performance of Iranian EFL Students on Multiple-Choice and True/False Reading Comprehension Test. *International Journal of English and Education, 2*, 211-224.

Truscott, J. (1996). The case against grammar correction in L2 writing classes. *Language Learning*, *46*, 327-369. https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-1770.1996.tb01238.x

Truscott, J. (1999). What's wrong with oral grammar correction. *The Canadian Modern Language Review, 55*, 437-455. https://doi.org/10.3138/cmlr.55.4.437

Truscott, J. (2007). The effect of error correction on learners' ability to write accurately. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, *16*, 255-272. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jslw.2007.06.003

Zare-Behtash, E., & Banaruee, H. (2017). Critical Evaluation of the New Headway Advanced and the ILI Advanced Series: A Comparison of Curricular Components and CLT Objectives Based on ACTFL. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics & English Literature*. https://doi.org/10.7575/aiac.ijalel.v.6n.5p.182

Zare-Behtash, E., Khatinzadeh, O., & Banaruee, H. (2017). A Comparative Study of Teaching Methods in ESP Courses. *European Journal of English Language Teaching*.