Polo del Conocimiento

Personality and gender on efl students' spoken production

Personalidad y género en la producción hablada de los estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera

Personalidade e gênero na produção falada de estudantes efl

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Abstract

This quantitative study aims to identify the correlation between gender (male and female) and personality (extrovert and introvert) in the spoken production of A2 level students of the English major at the Technical University of Cotopaxi in the April-July 2023 academic term. The Raymon's Big Five personality test (Cattell, 1943) was applied to students who got an A2 level on the placement test. Then, 40 students (10 extroverted and 10 introverted females and 10 extroverted and 10 introverted males) completed an oral activity, which was assessed with the criteria of Cambridge (2020) and Farhady et al. (1995) rubrics. The data were analyzed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software. A Pearson Correlation analysis was used to show the correlation of personality and gender with spoken production. The results of this research indicate that there is no correlation of variables under study. The study also showed that introverted students had better speaking skills than extroverted students by the smallest difference of (0,28 tenths). In terms of gender and spoken production, it was found that female students have better speaking skills than male students by the smallest difference of (0,10 tenths). In conclusion, it could be inferred that students of both types of personality and gender (sex) can develop speaking skills in different ways.

Keywords: Personality; Introvert; Extrovert; Genre; Spoken production.

Resumen

Este estudio cuantitativo tiene como objetivo identificar la correlación entre género (masculino y femenino) y personalidad (extrovertida e introvertida) en la producción oral de estudiantes nivel A2 de la carrera de Inglés de la Universidad Técnica de Cotopaxi en el semestre académico abril-julio 2023. El test de personalidad de los Cinco Grandes de Raymon (Cattell, 1943) se aplicó a los estudiantes que obtuvieron un nivel A2 en la prueba de nivel. Luego, 40 estudiantes (10 mujeres extrovertidas y 10 introvertidas y 10 hombres extrovertidos y 10 introvertidos) completaron una actividad oral, que fue evaluada con los criterios de Cambridge (2020) y Farhady et al. (1995) rúbricas. Los datos fueron analizados con el software Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Se utilizó un análisis de correlación de Pearson para mostrar la correlación de la personalidad y el género con la producción hablada. Los resultados de esta investigación indican que no existe correlación de las variables en estudio. El estudio también mostró que los estudiantes introvertidos tenían mejores habilidades para hablar que los estudiantes extrovertidos por la

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diferencia más pequeña de (0,28 décimas). En términos de género y producción hablada, se encontró que las alumnas tienen mejores habilidades orales que los varones por la mínima diferencia de (0,10 décimas). En conclusión, se podría inferir que los estudiantes de ambos tipos de personalidad y género (sexo) pueden desarrollar la habilidad de hablar de diferentes maneras.

Palabras Claves: Personalidad; Introvertido; Extrovertido; Género; Producción hablada.

Resumo

Este estudo quantitativo tem como objetivo identificar a correlação entre gênero (masculino e feminino) e personalidade (extrovertida e introvertida) na produção falada de alunos do nível A2 do curso de Inglês da Universidade Técnica de Cotopaxi no período letivo de abril a julho de 2023. O teste de personalidade Raymon's Big Five (Cattell, 1943) foi aplicado aos alunos que obtiveram nível A2 no teste de nivelamento. Em seguida, 40 alunos (10 mulheres extrovertidas e 10 introvertidas e 10 homens extrovertidos e 10 introvertidos) completaram uma atividade oral, que foi avaliada com os critérios de Cambridge (2020) e Farhady et al. (1995) rubricas. Os dados foram analisados com o software Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Uma análise de Correlação de Pearson foi utilizada para mostrar a correlação de personalidade e gênero com a produção falada. Os resultados desta pesquisa indicam que não há correlação das variáveis em estudo. O estudo também mostrou que os alunos introvertidos tinham melhores habilidades de fala do que os alunos extrovertidos pela menor diferença de (0,28 décimos). Em termos de gênero e produção falada, constatou-se que os alunos do sexo feminino apresentam melhores habilidades de fala do que os alunos do sexo masculino pela menor diferença de (0,10 décimos). Concluindo, pode-se inferir que estudantes de ambos os tipos de personalidade e gênero (sexo) podem desenvolver habilidades de fala de diferentes maneiras.

Palavras-chave: Personalidade; Introvertido; Extrovertido; Gênero; Produção falada.

Introduction

Developing oral communication in a foreign language is a complex process. Brown (2000) mentioned that there are several factors that influence speaking when learning the English language. The first are the internal factors such as personality, age, learning style, attitudes and aptitudes, gender, motivation, and confidence. The second are the external factors such as the teaching method, the environment, and social and economic issues. This research focuses on

personality and gender; the former is about how people think, their opinions of things, and values they have (Arip et al., 2017), and the latter corresponds to the definition of *sex*, which refers to physical and biological traits that distinguish between males and females (APA Dictionary of Psychology, 2023).

Regarding personality, the study focuses on extroversion and introversion. "The extroverts are more open and easy to express opinions, and the introverts are more closed and tend to be quiet" (Rofi'i, 2017, p. 35). Extroverts learn by doing and talking with others. They tend to be sociable and express themselves well. On the other hand, introverts tend to prefer written communication and working through reflection. They tend to be private and take the initiative in things that are relevant to them (Woosley, 2001).

Hassan's study (2001) provided some relevant insights to a better understanding of the extroversion and introversion variables in relation to pronunciation accuracy in learning English as a foreign language. This study found that extroverted students pronounced more accurately in English than introverts. In the same way, Suliman (2014) compares language production in two types of personalities. It was found that extroverted learners tend to interact without inhibition; they are more fluent, active, and good team workers. They communicate in the second language easily. Thus, it is believed that extroverts are more successful in communication; they might not produce accurate output though. On the other hand, introverts talk less and are more reflective; they work autonomously or with one or two people. They are quiet and passive rather than actively social. Many introverted learners are obsessed with grammatical correctness and a native-like accent.

Moreover, Rofi'i (2017) conducted a comparative analysis study examining introverts and extroverts' ability to speak. The oral expression test of 44 high school students showed that extroverted students have better control in three aspects of speech: accent, vocabulary, and fluency, while introverts have good control in two aspects of speech: comprehension and grammar. The researcher explained that it could be because extroverted students are more active in speaking; they find it easier to remember the pronunciation and practice active speaking, but they do not take into account the structure of the sentences. On the contrary, introverted students pay attention to the structure and even try to understand the sentences; however, they are passive in the speaking class due to their personality.

Second language research on personality can provide useful insights to language pedagogy. Eftiama (2022) mentioned that good teachers should be able to recognize and respect students' personalities as well as to motivate them to develop their communication skills. In the same line, Lestari et al. (2013) assert that identifying learners' personality can help teachers to make decisions in their teaching process and students to give them a greater chance to acquire the second language successfully. In fact, Mutlu (2018) analyzed the value of choosing the right teaching methods and creating an atmosphere based on students' personalities and learning strategies for foreign language learning.

With respect to gender, the present study focuses on the biological, physical, and psychological differences: male and female, which have different abilities that can affect different achievements, especially in learning a foreign language. In this regard, Mahmud (2010) said that language and gender studies revealed the differences between men and women in using language. Dealing with female ability in speaking English, some researchers say that females are better than males. (Erdiana et al., 2019). Female learners are significantly more active in performing speaking activities than male ones (Sundari & Dasmo, 2014). There are some studies about genre and spoken production.

Ali et al. (2019) conducted a quantitative study which investigated EFL learners' attitudes towards speaking skills. They found that female students had more positive perceptions on how English could affect their present and future in all aspects, but their perceptions about learning to speak English do not differ from the male students. In addition, Erdiana et al. (2019) developed a quantitative descriptive study about females and males in speaking skills. They found that females got higher scores in all aspects of speaking. Nevertheless, the mean scores of male and female students are very similar (female = 68.5 and male= 63.3). In another comparative study conducted by Ismiati (2013), female students got higher scores on the four components of speaking skill than male students. The scores in pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar, and fluency of female students are higher than the scores of male students (30 over 26, 39 over 34, 41 under 36, and 44 under 38, respectively). Finally, Öztürk and Gürbüz (2013) analyzed the effect of gender on foreign language speaking anxiety and motivation. It was found that female students were more motivated to learn English than male students. The former demonstrated a higher integrative motivation, and no significant difference was found in instrumental motivation of male and female. In addition, it was

revealed that female students got more anxious than male students while speaking English in the classroom.

Even though there is some international research that aims to analyze the relationship between personality and genre in English speaking production, there is little evidence in national and local context. Thus, this paper reports quantitative results of the correlation between personality and gender in speaking production in students of A2 English level at Technical University of Cotopaxi from April-July 2023. This research intends to help teachers to be aware of differences between personality and genre in English language learning and to break the myth of the differences in their language performance. Two research questions guided this study:

1. Is there a correlation between personality and English spoken production?
2. Is there a correlation between genre and English spoken production?

Methodology

A quantitative approach was used to collect and analyze data about the correlation between personality and gender in English spoken production of pre-service English teachers at the Pujilí campus of the Technical University of Cotopaxi in Ecuador during the April-July 2023 academic term. This was a cross-sectional study because data was collected at a single point in time without influencing the learning process. A non-probability purposive sampling (Weber et al., 2020) was used to select participants. It allowed a less-restricted selection of participants without a sampling frame by using personal judgments to meet the objectives and considering accessibility to the participants. Thus, 79 students who got A2 level in a placement test (American Empower, 2022) administered by the director of the English major were selected to complete the personality test called The Big-Five Inventory (Cattell,1943). This information was analyzed following the same author's criteria. The questionnaire consists of 8 questions where the students had to answer yes or no in each statement. Those who responded no were evaluated with (-1) and those who responded yes (+1) in each question, if the learners have a positive result, they were considered as extroverted but if they had a negative result, they were considered introverted. But if the learners had the same amount of negative and positive numbers, they were considered ambivert. At the end, 11 extroverted, 14 introverted, and 5 ambivert men and 22 extroverted, 23 introverted, and 4 ambivert women were obtained.

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Under the criterion of accessibility (convenience sampling), 40 students were selected: 10 introverted men, 10 extroverted men, 10 introverted women, and 10 extroverted women. Ambivert personality was excluded from the study since there were not many students. Then, a speaking activity about a trip they had taken was applied. Each student recorded a three-minute audio description with the EFL instructor's supervision as a classroom activity. To create the rubric for assessing students' speaking, two criteria: grammar-vocabulary and pronunciation from the rubric for the KET exam (Cambridge, 2020) and one criterion: fluency from Farhady et al. (1995) was used. Each rubric criterion was evaluated out of 5 points with a total of 15 points, which were averaged to obtain the speaking result. The activity and the rubric were subjected to expert validation and piloted. The participants agreed to participate in the study through informed consent; their identities were not revealed in any part of the research.

The independent samples t-test was used to assess whether there are statistically significant differences between the means of two separate groups (Samuels & Gilchrist, 2014). The data obtained were analyzed with the Social Sciences Statistical Package Program (SPSS). Pearson correlation was applied to analyze the correlation of *personality* and *gender* with spoken production. The Pearson correlation (r) indicates an outcome value between +1 and -1; when the result obtained is close to +1, it means that there is a positive correlation between both variables. But when the result obtained is close to -1, it means that there is a negative correlation of variables. The correlation can be strong or weak, depending entirely on how close the results obtained are to +1 or -1 because there are very weak, weak, considerable, medium, and very strong items. If the result is zero, there is no correlation between the variables. The results are validated depending on the bilateral significance (p) this shows the degree of compatibility between the proposed population value and the available sample information ranging from 0 to 1, which indicates that if the results are greater than 0.05, that means, it is compatible with the null hypothesis. On the other hand, if the significance is less than 0.05, it indicates incompatibility with the null hypothesis. (Hernández, Fernández, & Baptista, p. 2018).

Results

To answer the first research question about the correlation between personality and spoken production in A2 English level students of the English major at the Technical University of Cotopaxi, data from the personality test and the speaking rubric were correlated in SPSS program.

Figure 1

Personality and spoken production
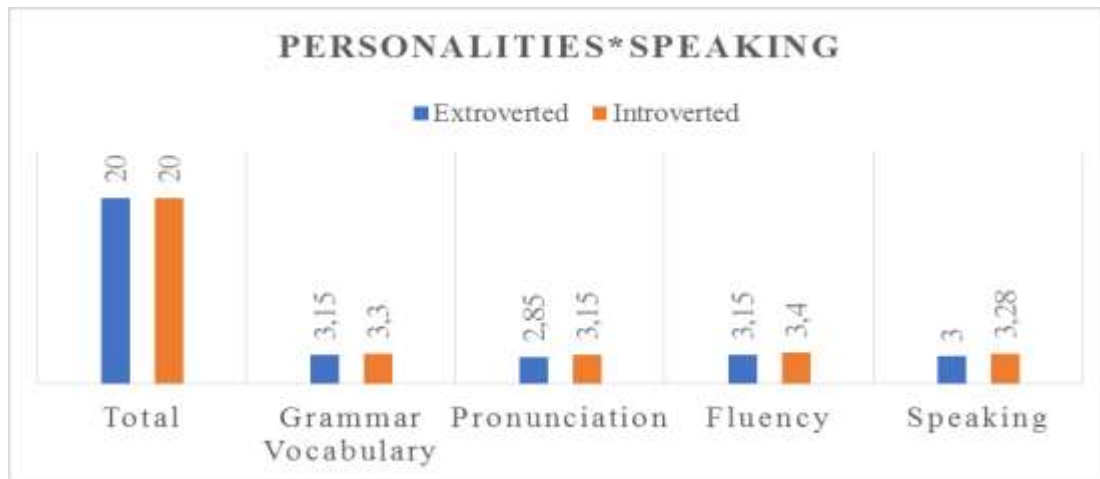
Based on figure 1, introverted students performed better in speaking production skills than extroverted students by a minimal difference of 0,28 tenths. Along with it shows that introverted students are better in all 3 sub-skills of speaking by minimal differences too. In order to find out if these differences are statistically significant, an independent sample t-test was done.

Table 1

Independent Samples Test for Participants' Personalities and their Spoken Production

Independent samples test

	Levene's test for equality of variance s		T test for equality of means						
	F	Sig.	T	Gl	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Differen ce	Std. Error Differen ce	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lowe r	Uppe r

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean	Std.Err	Lower	Upper
Gender	Equal variances assumed	.	.	,000	38	1,000	,000	,162	-,328	,328
	Equal variances not assumed			,000	38,000	1,000	,000	,162	-,328	,328
Grammar and Vocabulary	Equal variances assumed	,861	,359	-,714	38	,479	-,150	,210	-,575	,275
	Equal variances not assumed			-,714	35,599	,480	-,150	,210	-,576	,276
Pronunciation	Equal variances assumed	1,306	,260	-1,338	38	,189	-,300	,224	-,754	,154
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,338	34,587	,190	-,300	,224	-,755	,155

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		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig.	Mean	Std. Error	Lower	Upper
Fluency	Equal variances assumed	,275	,603	-,932	38	,357	-,250	,268	-,793	,293
	Equal variances not assumed			-,932	37,845	,357	-,250	,268	-,793	,293
Speaking	Equal variances assumed	1,848	,182	-1,368	38	,179	-,23250	,16999	-,57663	,11163
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,368	36,150	,180	-,23250	,16999	-,57721	,11221

Regarding the results obtained, it was evidenced that the similarities are not significant since the results are greater than 0,05 in all variables, which according to the theory, the significance value must be less than 0,05. In this way, it concludes that there is no significant difference between the variables (personality and speaking).

Table 2

Correlation between personality and speaking

Correlation

	Speaking	Personality

Speaking	Pearson correlation	1	,217
	Sig. (2-tiled)		,179
	N	40	40
Personality	Pearson correlation	,217	1
	Sig. (2-tiled)	,179	
	N	40	40

The results of table 1 show that the coefficient of Person (r) is 0,217, which means a weak positive correlation level between the variables of speaking and personality. However, the significance value (p) is 0,179 which is greater than the 0,05 required value to validate the correlation between the two variables. In conclusion, there is no correlation between personality and speaking.

To address the second inquiry pertaining to the correlation between gender and oral production among A2-level English students within the English major at the Technical University of Cotopaxi, a correlational analysis was undertaken. This analysis involved evaluating the oral performance of participants, who were subsequently classified into two distinct groups: male and female students. The process was executed using SPSS to generate data graphics, which were subsequently analysed and interpreted. Following the interpretation of the graphs, distinctions and resemblances became apparent. To determine the significance of these differences and similarities, an independent samples test was conducted within the SPSS program. The comprehensive examination of this correlation was facilitated through the utilization of SPSS, a statistical software tool, enhancing the precision and reliability of the findings.

Figure 2

Outcomes of speaking activity related to gender
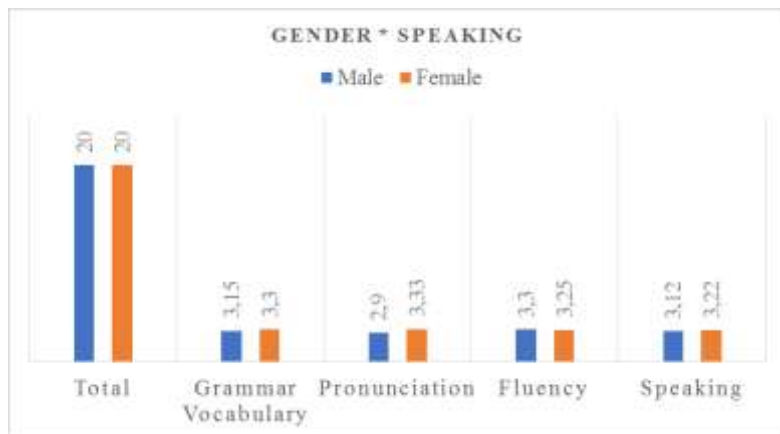
According to the results between gender and speaking, it is evident that women are better than men in speaking skill by a minimal difference of 0,10 tenths. Likewise, women are better in two sub-skills related to speaking, which are grammar-vocabulary and pronunciation, with minimal difference. On the other hand, men are better than women in the fluency sub-skill.

A series of independent sample tests were performed on the gender and speaking-related data to find out whether the observed differences or similarities are statistically significant or not with further inferential analysis shown in table 3.

Table 3

Independent Samples Test for Participants' Gender and their Spoken Production

Independent samples test								
	Levene's test for equality of variance s		T test for equality of means					
	F	Sig.	T	Gl	Sig . (2 - tail ed)	Mean Differenc e	Std. Error Differenc e	95% Confidenc e Interval of the Differen
								Lower

		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	
Personality	Equal variances assumed	.	.	,000	38	1,000	,000	,162	-,328
	Equal variances not assumes			,000	38,000	1,000	,000	,162	-,328
Grammar and Vocabulary	Equal variances assumed	,180	,674	-,714	38	,479	-,150	,210	-,575
	Equal variances not assumed			-,714	37,983	,479	-,150	,210	-,575
Pronunciation	Equal variances assumed	,255	,616	-,881	38	,384	-,200	,227	-,660
	Equal variances not assumed			-,881	38,000	,384	-,200	,227	-,660
Fluency	Equal variances assumed	3,307	,077	,184	38	,855	,050	,271	-,499

		F		t	df	Sig.	Mean Diff	Std. Error	Lower
	Equal variances not assumed			,184	35,416	,855	,050	,271	-,500
Speaking	Equal variances assumed	,744	,394	-,574	38	,569	-,09950	,17338	-,45048
	Equal variances not assumed			-,574	36,358	,570	-,09950	,17338	-,45100

According to the results obtained, it is evident that the similarities are not significant as the results are greater than 0,05 in all variables, which according to the theory, the significance value (p) must be less than 0,05. Hence, it is said that there is no significant difference between the variables.

Table 4

Correlation between gender and spoken production

Correlation

		Gender	Speaking
Gender	Pearson Correlation	1	,093
	Sig. (2-tiled)		,569
	N	40	40
Speaking	Pearson Correlation	,093	1
	Sig. (2-tiled)	,569	
	N	40	40

As per the findings presented in Table 4, it is evident that there is no correlation between speaking ability and gender since the results show the coefficient of Person (r) is 0,093 which means a very

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weak positive correlation level. However, the significance value (p) is 0,569 which is greater than 0,05, the required value to validate the correlation between the two variables.

Discussion

Even though there is no correlation between personality and spoken production, the results showed that introverted students are better than extroverted students in developing speaking skills by a minimum difference of 0,28. This finding is different from Hassan (2001), Rofi'i et al. (2017), and Suliman (2014) because they concluded that extroverted students are better in this ability. They say that extroverted learners have better social skills than introverted ones, so they have better communication skills in expressing their ideas, and they learn a language by talking with others (Rofi'i, 2017). Nevertheless, our data about pronunciation showed that extroverted learners are better than introverts, which is in line with Hassan's study (2001) that found that extroverted students pronounced the English language more accurately than introverts. There was a minimal difference in the scores, so it could be inferred that both types of personalities can develop speaking skills in different ways as Lestari, et al. (2013) mentioned. They asserted that extroverted students will not always have a better communicative skill.

In the same way, there is no correlation between gender and spoken production, but data showed that women are better than men in some aspects of speaking skills by a minimal difference of 0,10 tenths. This result is in line with Trinder (2014) who found that women tend to be more extroverted and this factor marked a tendency of the female gender to develop better communication skills (spoken production) as they were more involved in social interaction than men. Similarly, our results showed that women's oral production was better in terms of grammar-vocabulary and pronunciation while men's fluency stood out. , with women being better in production as mentioned by Ismiati (2013) where it is revealed that women are more proficient in English oral skills than men according to specific factors: pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and fluency. Finally, this investigation found that females perform better in language production and tend to have a better and more positive perception towards English spoken production as Erdiana et al. (2019) Ali et al. (2019) expressed.

Conclusion

It was revealed that there is no correlation among the variables under examination (personality and genre in spoken production). However, introverted students excel in speaking and in its subcategories: grammar-vocabulary, fluency, and pronunciation, showing only marginal differences in performance. This could be because introverted students mostly prefer to read books and spend most of their time learning by themselves. In addition, it was evidenced that women tend to have a better spoken production in English. They have a better command of grammar-vocabulary and pronunciation. Conversely, men are better in fluency than women. These results are subjected to certain limitations: the sample and the subjectivity in assessing speaking tasks. Based on previous research and these findings, it can be concluded that both extroverted and introverted and male and female learners can succeed in second language learning, though in different ways. Both types of personalities and genres are better for certain tasks and learning processes, so further research to determine what the precise patterns are should be conducted because there is no data to resolve this quandary.

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