

Relationship between Personality type and EFL Competence: A Case Study of Secondary School Students in One School in Dar es Salaam

ERASMUS AKILEY MSUYA¹
University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania

Abstract

The current study sought to establish a relationship between tolerance of ambiguity, introversion – extroversion and field independence, on the one hand, and the competence of EFL students in a secondary school in Tanzania, on the other. To attain this, the study involved 48 students, 28 girls and 20 boys who were in the ordinary level of secondary education. They were first served with a questionnaire of personality type identification. Then they were served with a cloze assignment which was graded and each component given 100% scores. All the learners were provided with their respective scores in each component. This happened after the candidates were put into their respective personality type categories. The findings have revealed that, no difference existed between the two groups in tolerance of ambiguity except for the sex differences where female tolerant of ambiguity were slightly better than males contrary to intolerant of ambiguity (vocabulary and grammar). In the category of introversion/extroversion, the extroverts were better in grammar than introverts; female introverts were as good as extroverts (both male and female) but males proved poorer. As for field independence, there were no much differences in performance between field dependents and field independents except for the fact that female field dependents were significantly better in vocabulary than their counterparts who are field independents.

Key words: Personality type, EFL, Competence, tolerance of ambiguity, Introversion-extroversion, field independence.

¹ Department of Foreign Languages and Linguistics, College of Humanities, University of Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. msuyaerasmus@gmail.com, Tel +255756537686

1. Introduction

1.1. The notion of Personality type in Relation to Variability in Second Language Acquisition

Second Language Acquisition (SLA henceforth) is defined as the learning and adopting of a language that is not your native language. For second language learners to make maximum progress with their own learning styles, their individual differences must be recognized and attended to. A number of theories hold that personality factors significantly influence the degree of success that individuals achieve in learning a second language (Gass and Selinker, 1994) based on the assumption that some features of the learner's personality might encourage or inhibit second language learning (Cook, 1996) by enhancing certain facets of language learning while impeding others (Larsen-Freeman and Long, 1991).

Since individual differences (such as personality, language aptitude, learning styles and strategies, motivation, language anxiety), directly or indirectly contribute to second language learning outcomes, they have become one of the most frequently researched areas in applied linguistics. However, current trends in the SLA research also place emphasis on the situational nature of individual factors and suggest a new dynamic conceptualization in which individual factors enter a particular type of interaction with situational parameters (Dörnyei, 2009).

Keefe (1979) states that many language instructors are aware of the fact that individual learner differences more or less contribute to the success of language learning. However, cognitive style remains a controversial issue in ESL/EFL research. One potential area for closer study is test-takers' cognitive styles. The cognitive style concept refers to the link between personality and cognition that influences how one learns things in general and the particular approach one adopts when dealing with problems (Keefe, 1979). Cognitive styles are relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment. In theory, numerous cognitive styles may exist (Keefe, 1979).

Personality is thought to affect language learning directly or indirectly, i.e. by influencing the choice of language learning strategies or classroom participation (Bielska 2006). Ehrman (1996) suggests that there is a clear

relationship between personality and Second Language Acquisition (SLA) as personality determines what people feel comfortable with. As a result, people tend to choose and consequently do what they feel comfortable with and get better at the given skills. This does not preclude the development of skills associated with the opposite pole of a given preference scale. It simply suggests that without conscious focusing, these skills may not be given enough natural practice (Bielska, 2006).

1.2 Empirical Studies

A number of studies have been carried out in the realms of relating personality type and attainment in either overall sense or in more specific areas of language as determined by differing pace and rate of attainment. We briefly present a few of such studies.

Roguli (2016) studied the relationship among personality, learning strategies, perceived teaching strategies of 229 medical students from the University of Split, Croatia and their English language proficiency. The research sample included five major dimensions of personality: extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, and intellect. The research findings revealed a significant negative relationship between conscientiousness and general language competence which could be attributed to the use of the cloze test as an assessment tool. Second, the findings indicated that students who scored higher on intellect were more likely to use cognitive and metacognitive strategies, whereas those with higher extraversion and agreeableness scores tended to use social strategies more frequently.

1.2.1 Studies on Extroversion and Introversion

There have been studies specifically on introversion and extroversion. According to Zhang (2008), extrovert and introvert are two characterizations of how one relates to the outside world. Extrovert means a person more interested in what is happening around him than in his own thoughts and emotions. That is to say, the extrovert experiences the world more through contact with others and shared experience than through self-examination or study. If the problem were to come about for an extrovert, they would more

than just likely find someone to help. On the contrary, introvert is a person who is more interested in his own thoughts and feelings than in things outside himself, and is often shy and unwilling to speak or join in activities with others.

Some studies have shown that extroverts (or unreserved and outgoing people) acquire a second language better than introverts (or shy people). One particular study done by Naiman et al (1978) reflected this point. The subjects were 72 Canadian high school students from grades 8, 10 and 12 who were studying French as a second language. These were served with questionnaires to establish their psychological profiles, which also included a French listening test and imitation test. It was established that approximately 70% of the students with the higher grades ('B' or higher) would consider themselves extraverts.

Also, Wesche (1977) studied 37 Canadian civil servants in an intensive French course and found a correlation between role playing and proficiency in listening comprehension and speaking skills ($r = 0.60$). Role-playing could reflect extroversion, self-confidence, and/or satisfaction with the learning situation, as well as general anxiety level. Furthermore, Kinginger and Farrell (2004) conducted interviews with U.S. students after their study abroad program in France in 2003. They found that many of the students would avoid interaction with the native speakers at all costs, while others jumped at the opportunity to speak the language. Those who avoided interaction were typically quiet, reserved people, (or introverts). Therefore, if teachers correct mistakes and further embarrass shy students, it may isolate students even more. Instead, repeating back the corrected statement allows feedback without a damaging student's ego.

Some studies have established a positive relationship between measures of extroversion and the learning and using of oral English by ESL students. Rossier (1975), for example, hypothesized that the outgoing extroverted students would become proficient speakers of English more rapidly than their introverted classmates. While, no relationship was found between extroversion and overall oral proficiency, the statistical analysis of the data revealed a highly significant positive correlation between extroversion and oral fluency. As for Naiman et al. (1978), they tested the same hypothesis on the superiority of the extrovert learners. The authors checked whether "good language learners", i.e. Canadian high school students learning French as a L2

who scored highest on two written tests, tended to be more extroverts. When a positive correlation failed to emerge between extroversion scores and test results, the authors questioned the construct validity of the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI), which was used to calculate extraversion scores (Naiman et al. 1978: 67), apparently unaware that their focus on test scores might have explained the unexpected result (Dewaele and Furnham. 1999). Had they used not just test scores but also more sophisticated linguistic variables, covering not only written language but also oral language, they might have found that the lack of expected relationships was unrelated to the construct validity of the EPI.

However, Dewaele and Furnham's (2000) study found significant positive correlations between extroversion scores and indicators of fluency (but not accuracy) in advanced French interlanguage. They were of the opinion that extroverts' better stress-resistance and better short-term memory allow them to maintain automaticity of speech production when they are under some sort of arousal/stress while introverts slide back to controlled processing which overloads their working memory. The last study to be cited in this category was Wakamoto (2009) who found that his more extroverted Japanese learners of English as foreign language tended to prefer social strategies like cooperation with others or asking for clarification compared to the more introverted students who were more likely to try to overcome obstacles without outside help.

1.2.2 Studies on Field Dependence and Independence

Research has shown that the construct of field dependence and field independence (FD/FI) can explain some of the differences in second language proficiency (Carter, 1988; Chapelle and Green, 1992; Chapelle and Roberts, 1986). A few studies have been conducted in this regard. Chapelle and Roberts (1986) state that a good language learner is one who is field independent and tolerant of ambiguity. The results of their investigations confirm the hypothesis that FI is the characteristics of a good language learner and predict success in language learning. In another study, Casey et al. (1995) found that field independent students performed better than field dependent subjects only on one of the technical courses.

Similarly, Liu and Reed (1995) found that field independent and field dependent students learned vocabulary equally well through a contextually rich language program. Field-independent subjects consistently achieved higher academic levels than field-dependent subjects, whether specific subjects or global performance are considered (Davis, 1991). Dwyer and Moore (1995) indicated that the field independent learners were superior to field dependent learners on tests measuring different educational objectives.

As for Lu and Suen, their (1995) study revealed a substantial interaction between cognitive style and assessment approach. They concluded that field-independent students scored substantially higher on a performance-based assessment than did field-dependent students.

Shalbafan (1996) investigated whether the findings of earlier researches on the relation between FD/FI and EFL learners' achievement could be extrapolated to Iranian EFL learners' writing ability. His results showed that where the form of a writing task was considered, FI students performed better than their FD counterparts.

Fajen et al. (1997) conducted two experiments on listening and reading, concerning FD/FI cognitive styles. The results of both studies indicated that FI participants seemed to use a tacit structure strategy, whereas FD participants appeared to display structuring skills while note-taking. In another study conducted by Cook, Friedman, and Wagner (1998), grade 5 students completed multiple choice exams and measures of cognitive style. The results indicated that FD/FI did not relate to answer changing frequency, but concluded that exam performance improved with greater field independence.

Salmani (2007) conducted a comprehensive research to find out the relationship between FD/FI and performance on different tests. Data analysis revealed that field independence in particular has been found to correlate positively and significantly with L2 learning in school settings where the target language is taught formally.

Farsi et al. (2014) examined the influence of field dependent-independent (FD/FI) on proficiency test. The cognitive style (FD/FI) was considered as an independent variable and proficiency test as the dependent variable. Eighty six freshman female students of English as a foreign language (EFL) at Kerman University, Iran participated in the study. At first, the Group Embedded Figures Test (GEFT, Witkin et al., 1971) was given to the

participants in order to identify field dependent/independent groups. Then, the participants were given a proficiency test. The results indicate that there was a positive relationship between FI and language proficiency of the participants.

1.2.3 Studies on Tolerance of Ambiguity

Budner (1962) defines the term in its negative sense as intolerance of ambiguity meaning by that the tendency to perceive ambiguous (i.e., novel, complex, or insoluble) situations as sources of threat. Ambiguity tolerance-intolerance as a scientific concept is established by Else Frenkel-Brunswik (1949). She noted that tolerance or intolerance of ambiguity as a personality variable could predict one's behavioral features in ambiguous situations.

It has been argued that in second language learning a great amount of apparently contradictory information is encountered and successful language learning necessitates tolerance of such ambiguities (Brown, 2007). Tolerance of ambiguity (TA) has thus been shown to have a strong positive correlation with successful second language learning in many studies. Unlike some learning styles, intolerance or low tolerance of ambiguity has not been shown to be beneficial to language learning in any way. Instead, the low-TA learner is considered easily overwhelmed, quick to reject language concepts that don't fit a known rule, and generally less likely to be a successful language learner (Rehm, 2012).

Another study was that of Atef-Vahid et al. (2011) who explored levels of ambiguity tolerance among 38 third- year high school students in EFL classrooms and its relationship with cloze test performance. Students' ambiguity tolerance level was surveyed and analyzed using the Second Language Tolerance of Ambiguity Scale (SLTAS) (Ely, 1989), and their performance was measured through a standardized English cloze test administered by the researchers. The results of the Pearson Product correlation coefficient showed that respondents with higher levels of ambiguity tolerance were likely to achieve higher scores on the cloze test, and those with lower levels of ambiguity tolerance tended to obtain lower scores on the cloze test.

As for Shak (2015), he studied relationships between language learning strategies and tolerance of ambiguity. The findings revealed that language learning strategies mean was moderate overall. Students' most preferred

language learning strategies were metacognitive strategies, while the least preferred was Memory strategies. Their overall tolerance towards ambiguities caused by the use of English inside and outside the language classrooms was also moderate. This signified that they did not exhibit high tolerance that would lead them to accept new and ambiguous language elements unquestioningly.

Rastegar and Kerman (2015) investigated the relationship among EFL learners' emotional intelligence, tolerance of ambiguity, and language learning strategies use. The data were collected from 75 EFL senior undergraduate students majoring in English regarding the relationship among their emotional intelligence, tolerance of ambiguity, and language learning strategies use. Three instruments were used: Emotional Intelligence Scale (Schutte et al., 1998), Tolerance of Ambiguity Scale (Ely, 1989), and Strategy Inventory for Language Learning (Oxford, 1990), with the focus on metacognitive, affective and social strategies, were administered. The results demonstrated there was no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and tolerance of ambiguity.

The most recent study was by Ezzati and Farahian (2016) who investigated the tolerance/intolerance of ambiguity of EFL learners, focusing on seeking the relationship between ambiguity tolerance (TA) and grammar acquisition of advanced EFL learners. To do so, a version of the TOEFL test was administered to measure the participants' achievement in grammar, followed by Second Language Tolerance of Ambiguity Scale (SLTAS). The findings showed that advanced EFL learners were TA in some contexts and intolerant in some others. Findings also revealed that there is a significant relationship between overall grammar knowledge of Iranian EFL learners and TA.

In all those studies one notices absence of studies of the same nature in the Tanzanian context. The current study therefore seeks to examine the relationship between three personality types: introversion/extroversion, field independence/dependence and tolerance/intolerance of ambiguity, on the one hand, and competence in EFL focusing on vocabulary, grammar and reading.

2. Materials and Methods

This study took place in Mugabe secondary school. The school is located in Ubungo district in Dar es Salaam region, Tanzania. The study involved 48 students, 28 girls and 20 boys who were by then in form three. These were purposively chosen having given their consent to take part in the study. They were first served with a questionnaire of personality type identical on three aspects, namely; Tolerance of ambiguity, introversion – extroversion and field independence. Then they were given an English language test with sections and reading comprehension, grammar and vocabulary.

The assignments were graded and graded each component being given 100% scores and all the learners were provided with their respective scores in each component. This happened after the candidates were put into their respective personality type categories. It is worth noting here that each of the learners was classified into the learners was classified into the three clusters of personality types. Having been sorted the candidates according to the personality types means were computed and percentages of means established for comparative purposes across gender and test components within each personality type. The data were summarized in figures.

3. Findings

The findings are organized according to the respondent categories, beginning with tolerance of ambiguity, followed by extroversion/introversion and finally tolerance of ambiguity.

3.1 Tolerance of Ambiguity

The term ambiguity tolerance is tightly connected with the name of Else Frenkel-Brunswik (1949) who addressed intolerance of ambiguity in her attempt to explain the nature of authoritarianism. She concluded that tolerance or intolerance of ambiguity as a personality variable could predict one's behavioral features in ambiguous situations. This personality type showed rich and wide variability both across components of language tested and across participants in terms of gender. For richer comparability, tolerant and intolerant of ambiguity were separated.

3.1.1 Intolerants of Ambiguity

This construct is defined by Budner (1962) as the tendency to perceive (i.e. interpret) ambiguous situations as sources of threat. In addition, Bochner (1965) posits that the intolerants of ambiguity, inter alia, tend to favour categorization, have great need for certainty and white-black view of life. They also have inability to allow good and bad traits to exist in the same person and tend to reject whatever is unusual or different, which make them rigid, authoritarian, and dogmatic and closed minded. The performance of this category of learners is as summarized in figure 1 below.

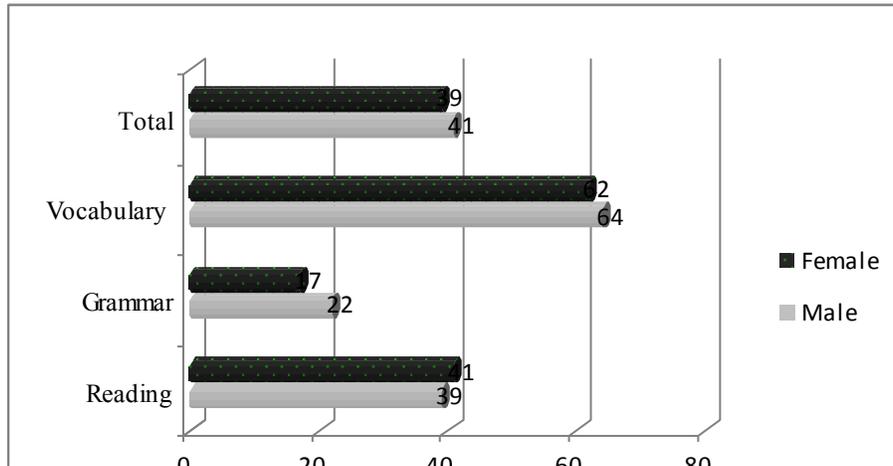


Figure 1: Comparative Performance of Intolerants of Ambiguity

Intolerants of ambiguity performed variously as shown in figure 1 above. In terms of differences in performance in the aspect of gender, males who are not tolerant of ambiguity did slightly better than their female counterparts in total as well as in vocabulary and grammar. It is only in reading that females' performance was slightly higher (2% difference) than males. Generally, the differences were very minimal since the highest was 4% (in Grammar).

As for performance across language components that were tested, vocabulary was the area which was performed the best. The performance was at B aggregate, which is almost equivalent to intermediate high, if we adapt ACTFUL proficiency scale framework. As for reading, the performance (for both sex groups) was at 'C' aggregate, equivalent to intermediate low in ACTFUL framework. Grammar ranked lowest among the intolerants of ambiguity F aggregate, equivalent to novice low – indicating that this category of respondents were poorest in grammar.

3.1.2 Tolerants of Ambiguity

Tolerance of ambiguity, as defined by McLain (1993), deals with a range, from rejection to attraction, of reactions to stimuli perceived as unfamiliar, complex, dynamically uncertain or subject to multiple conflicting interpretations. Ellis (1994) refers to this construct in the language learning context as an ability to deal with ambiguous new stimuli without frustration and without appeals to authority. According to Brown (2000), ambiguity tolerance can be viewed as the degree to which you are cognitively willing to tolerate ideas and propositions that run counter to your own belief system or structure of knowledge. In this study, tolerant of ambiguity also have variation in performance between sexes and across language components that were tested, as illustrated below in figure 2.

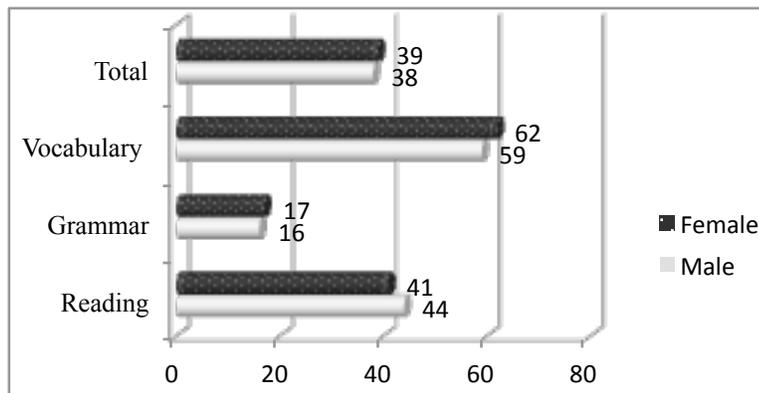


Figure 2: Comparative Performance by Tolerant of Ambiguity

Data in figure 2 show that, just like tolerant of ambiguity, the tolerant of ambiguity performed very well in vocabulary than in all other areas. These just like their counterparts, were at B aggregate, similar to intermediate high. However, unlike their counterparts, women who are tolerant of ambiguity, though having similar score with fellow women, performed comparatively higher than men. This was however, at marginal score of 3%. Similarly, for Reading and Grammar, the overall performance between the two groups of personality type were at (aggregates intermediate low) and (novice (low), respectively. This shows no difference between the two groups of this personality type except for the sex differences where female tolerant of ambiguity were slightly better than males contrary to intolerants of ambiguity, (vocabulary and grammar). The reverse is the case for reading where female intolerants of ambiguity were better than males while in tolerance of ambiguity the opposite is true.

In a study by Atamanova and Bogomaz (2011) it was found out that the ambiguity-tolerant and -intolerant students differed in the range of their English communicative competence scores. In the group of ambiguity-tolerant students this interval varied within 2.5 to 5.0, the ambiguity-intolerant students' scores ranging from 3.0 to 4.0. Moreover, qualitative analysis of the students' responses on the adjectives associated with the English language showed that the ambiguity-tolerant students' associations were emotionally colored and sounded positive.

In another study, Atamanovaa and Bogomazb (2014) explored possible relationships between engineering students' ambiguity tolerance and their communicative competence in English as a foreign language. They found out that this parameter of personal potential determines rather the qualitative nature of students' communicative competence development. In addition, it was found out that some other variables of the students' personal potential could contribute to the process under study, namely commitment, challenge, persistence, orientation to present and self-worth.

3.2 Extroversion vs. Introversion

According to *Next age Encyclopedia*, the terms introvert and extrovert reveal how a person processes information and that they should be treated as a continuum where each one of us has both only that one is more dominant. In

this category, comparative analyses of extroverts and introverts performance are presented beginning with extroverts.

3.2.1 Extroverts

According to Myers (1992), these learners tend to be energetic, enthusiastic, action-oriented, talkative, and assertive. He adds that an extroverted person is likely to enjoy time spent with people and find less reward in time spent alone and that extroverts are energized by being with people and become tired and bored when they have to spend long periods of time alone. In the current study, the EFL Tanzanian learners' performance is presented in figure 3 below.

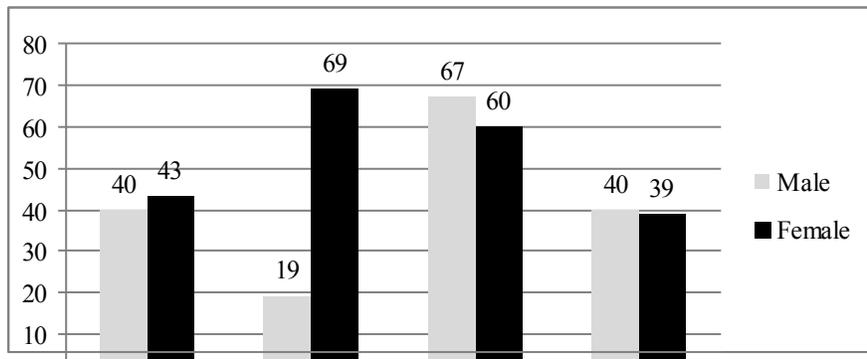


Figure 3: Comparative Performance of Extroverts

Figure 3 above shows that female extroverts outperformed their male counterparts significantly (by 50% difference) in Grammar but marginally (3%) in reading. Conversely, male extroverts did better than female extroverts in vocabulary though marginally (at 7% difference). As for the overall findings, the differences between sexes were almost negligible.

With regard to components of language that were tested, Grammar was performed better than all others but my female respondents as opposed to males former were at 'B' (intermediate flight) while the latter were well

below that level, as their average performance was at F (novice low). As for vocabulary which ranked second, the opposite is the case only that both sex group scored B aggregate (similar to intermediate high). Similarly, in reading, which was comparably the lowest in performance, both sexes were at (aggregate) (intermediate low) though as already explained, female extroverts performed better than male extroverts, though with a marginal difference of 3%.

3.2.2 Introverts

An introvert, according to Van Mourik (2006), is introspective and finds meaning within, preferring their internal world of thoughts, feelings, fantasies, and dreams and that they have the advantage over extroverts when it comes to long-term memory and problem solving. They tend to be quiet, low-key, deliberate, and disengaged from the social world. Thus, one who is introverted is more likely to spend time alone or in contemplation, as these activities are rewarding. Rauch (2003) adds that introverts tend to avoid social situations entirely, not because they are shy or misanthropic, but because they choose to and they often enjoy long, one-on-one conversations about feelings or ideas, and may give excellent public presentations to large audiences. The performance of this group is as presented below in Figure 4.

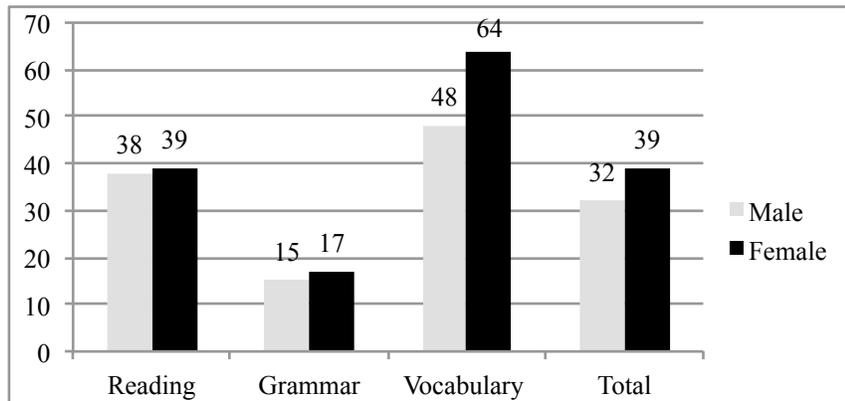


Figure 4: Comparative Performance of Introverts

Figure 4 above tells a different story when compared with figure 3. Here it is vocabulary that is best performed by the introverts, unlike the extroverts who dominated in grammar performance. It is also the female not males, who sex celled and in bigger disparity (difference of 185), whereby the female were at B aggregate (intermediate low). The introverts were, however, very poor in grammar since both groups were at F aggregate.

As for the reading, the introverts were at D, with negligible difference between males and females, unlike their extrovert counterparts who were at C aggregate. In short we can conclude that the extroverts were better in grammar than the introverts female introverts were as good as the extroverts (both males and female) but the males proved poorer. In Reading the personality type showed minimal difference since extroverts were at 'C' extroverts at the same can also be said in the total.

3.3 Field Dependency

This third and last personality type was also variously performed across participants and across language is easy as presented below.

3.3.1 Field Dependents

Field dependents, in the context of cognitive style, refer to learners who are most affected by their environment. These learners are inclined to overall field learning and tend to get the whole idea unlike the field independent learners who conduct an analytical procedure and are more likely to break a model into different sections and details. The performance of the field dependents in the current study is as illustrated in figure 5 below.

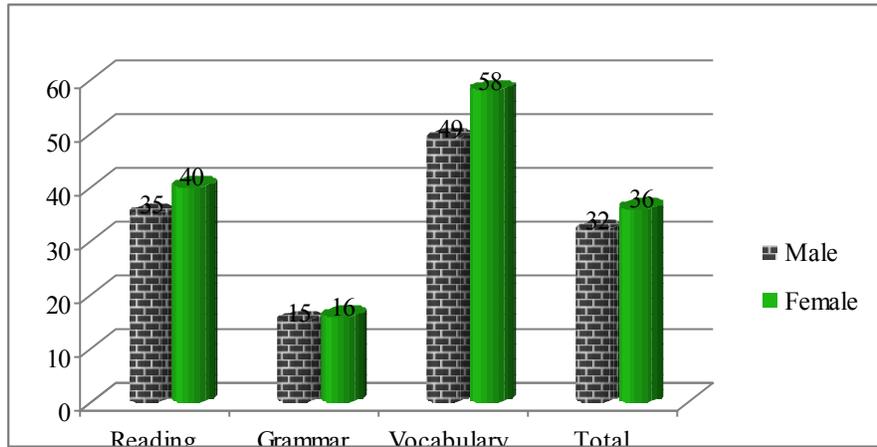


Figure 5: Comparative Performance of Field Dependents

Figure 5 above show that female field dependents outperformed the male ones in all language components tested at varying levels of disparities ranging between 1% (in grammar) and 5% (reading). Both groups did comparatively better in vocabulary (at C aggregate) than all others. As for reading the field dependents – irrespective of their sex groups – were at D aggregate (equal to novice high) with female outperforming male by 5%. Grammar was least performed, with both sex groups scoring 15 and 16 for males and females, respectively, which translates to their being at F aggregates (similarly to novice low). Generally the field dependents were better in vocabulary and poor in grammar, with boys doing relatively better than girls.

3.3.2 Field Independents

Field independents, according to Wyss (2002), are learners who, inter alia, have no problem concentrating amidst noise and confusion. These have been referred to as “analytical, competitive, individualistic, task oriented, internally referent, intrinsically motivated, hypothesis testing, self-structuring, linear, detail oriented, and visually perceptive” (Hall, 2000, p.

5). In this study, field independents' performance was also various both across the content areas and sexes, as figure 6 illustrates.

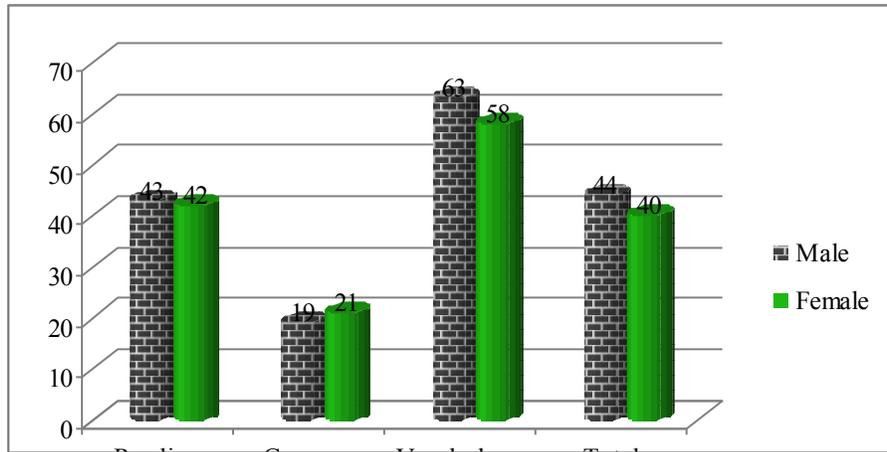


Figure 6: Comparative Performance of Field Independents

Findings in figure 6, unlike field dependents, the males who are field independent performed better than the females. The field independents, just like field dependents, did well in vocabulary in reading and were poorest in Grammar. In short, there were no much differences in performance between field dependents and field independents except for the fact that female field dependents were significantly better in vocabulary than their counterparts who are field independents. This might be attributed to comprehensiveness of the test which should have included oral skills. Studies elsewhere show that field independent students have better academic achievement than field-dependent students (Luk, 1998). One specific study by Al-Saai and Dwyer (1993) also showed that if the educational subjects and materials conform to students' cognitive styles, it will lead to a better achievement and, in terms of overall performance, studies have shown that field independent learners performed better than field dependent in learning English language (Abraham, 1985). In a more recent study by Nozan and Siamian (2015) which sought to find

the relationship between field dependence –independence cognitive style and English text reading comprehension, learning English as a foreign language, academic achievement and the choice of academic courses involved 305 students studying at the junior level at high school in Sari. The data analysis was conducted by using regression analysis which showed that FDI cognitive styles determined the changes in dependent variables of reading comprehension score, learning English and the total average with the respective values of 8.8%, 9.2% and 11.6% ($p < 0.05$).

4. Conclusion

This study has explored relationship between tolerance of ambiguity, introversion – extroversion and field independence as personality type, on the one hand, and the EFL competence, on the other, involving 48 studying in form three in Mugabe secondary school. The findings have shown no difference existed between the two groups of this tolerance of ambiguity category serve for the sex differences, with females performing slightly better than males in the areas vocabulary and grammar. As for introversion/extroversion, the extroverts were better in grammar than the introverts. As for field independence, there were no much differences in performance between field dependents and field independents except for the fact that female field dependents were significantly better in vocabulary than their counterparts who are field independents.

In the light of the above findings, we draw the following conclusions:

- a) Not significant relationships can be established between personality type and competence in the context of instructed SLA, within which competence in the current study was measured, given the restricted linguistic stimuli, especially unstructured or informal language use, characterizing foreign language context.
- b) There is not thick wall separating ‘citizenship’ of personality types. This study noted that the learners belonged to multiple personality groups; i.e. some who were introverts were also intolerants of ambiguity and field dependents, and vice versa. This could explain

why it was difficult to establish any significant relationship between personality type and language competence.

- c) Gender as a factor is a significant cross-cutting variable in accounting for variability in SLA, irrespective of personality type. In this study, it is gender that showed marked intra- and inter-group difference in personality types.
- d) Just as learners are not a homogeneous conglomerate in their acquisition of a second language, so does the language they acquire. This was evident in the current study where learners' performance across personality type and across sex performed differently in the tested language content areas.

References

- Abraham R.G. (1985). Field Independence-Dependence and the Teaching of Grammar. *TESOL Quarterly*. 19(4), 689–702.
- Al-Saai, A.J. and Dwyer, F.M. (1993). The Effect of Visualization on Field-Dependent and Field-Independent Learners. *International Journal of Instructional Media*. 20(3), 243–249.
- Atamanova, I. & Bogomaz, S. (2011a). "Language learning through content: What can help university students develop their communicative competence in a professional field?" In B. Swaffield & I. Guske (Eds.), *Global Encounters: Pedagogical Paradigms and Educational Practices* (pp. 93-105). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.
- Atamanovaa, I. and Bogomazb, S. (2014). Ambiguity Tolerance as a Psychological Factor of Foreign Language Communicative Competence Development. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences* 154 (2014), 345 – 352.
- Atef-Vahid, S. Kashani, A.F. and Haddadi, M. (2011). The Relationship between Level of Ambiguity Tolerance and Cloze Test Performance of Iranian EFL Learners, *LiBRI. Linguistic and Literary Broad Research and Innovation*, 2 (2), 149-169.
- Bielska, J. (2006). *Between Psychology and Foreign Language Learning*. Katowice: Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Śląskiego.

- Bochner, S. (1965). Defining Intolerance of Ambiguity. *Psychological Record*, 15(3), 393–400.
- Brown, H. D. (2000). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching* (4th ed.). New York: Pearson Education Company.
- Brown, H. D. (2007). *Principles of Language Learning and Teaching*. White Plains, New York: Pearson Education Company.
- Budner, S. (1962). Intolerance of Ambiguity as a Personality Variable. *Journal of Personality*, 30(1), 29–50.
- Carter, E. F. (1988). The Relationship of Field dependent/Field independent Cognitive Style to Spanish Language Achievement and Proficiency: A Preliminary Report. *Modern Language Journal*, 72 (1), 21-30.
- Casey, B., Day, D. A., Murphy, H. J., and Young, J. D. (1997). Scores on the Group Embedded Figures Test by Undergraduates in Information Management. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 84, 1135-1138.
- Chapelle, C., and Green, P. (1992) Field Independence/Dependence in Second Language Acquisition research. *Language Learning*, 49 (1), 47-83.
- Chapelle, C. and Roberts, C. (1986). Ambiguity Tolerance and Field Independence as Predictors of Proficiency in English as a second language. *Language Learning*, 36 (1), 27-45.
- Cook, V. 1996. *Second Language Learning and Teaching* (2nded.). New York: Arnold.
- Cook, G., Friedman, S. and Wagner, D. (1998). Staying with their first Impulse? The Relationship between Impulsivity/Reflectivity, Field Dependence/Field Independence and Answer Changes on a Multiple-choice Exam in a fifth-grade sample. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 31(3), 166-175.
- Davis, J.K. (1991). “Educational Implications of Field Dependence/Independence”. In S. Wapner and J. Demick (Eds.), *Field Dependence-Independence: Cognitive style Across the Life span*.
- Dewaele, J. and Furnham, A. (1999). Extraversion: The Unloved Variable in Applied Linguistic Research. *Language Learning: A Journal of Research in Language Studies*. Vol. 49, Issue 3: 509-544.
- Dörnyei, Z. (2009). *The Psychology of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Dwyer, F. M. and Moore, D. M. (1995). Effect of Color Coding and Test Type (visual/ Verbal) on Students Identified as Possessing Different

- Field Dependence Level, *ERIC Document No. Ed380 078. Educational Measurement*, 32 (1), 1-17.
- Ehrman, M., 1996: *Second Language Learning Difficulties: Looking Beneath the Surface*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Ellis, R. (1994). *The Study of Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ely, C. M. (1989). Tolerance of Ambiguity and Use of Second Language Strategies. *Foreign Language Annals*, 22(5), 437-45.
- Ezzati, M. and Farahian, M. (2016). Exploring Tolerance of Ambiguity and Grammar Achievement of Advanced EFL Learners, *Journal for the Study of English Linguistics*, 4(2), 1-12
- Fajen, B.R., Gillespie, G., Rickards, J.P. and Sullivan, J.F. (1997). Signalling, Note taking, and Field Independence-dependence in Text Comprehension and Recall. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 89, 508-517.
- Farsi, M, Bangheri, M.S., and Sharif, M. (2014). Relationship Between Field Dependence/ Independence And Language Proficiency of Female EFL Students. *International Journal of Language Learning and Applied Linguistics World (IJLLALW)*, Vol. 6 (3): 2289-2737.
- Frenkel-Brunswik, E. (1949). Intolerance of Ambiguity as an Emotional and Perceptual Personality variable. *Journal of Personality*, 18, 108-143.
- Gass, S. M., & Selinker, L. (1994). *Topics in Applied Psycholinguistics. Second language Acquisition: An Introductory course*. Hillsdale, NJ, US: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Hall, J. K. (2000). Field Dependence-Independence and Computer-based Instruction in Geography. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, VA.
- Keefe, J. W. (1979). "Learning Style: An Overview". In *NASSP's Student learning styles: Diagnosing and Prescribing Programs* (pp. 1-17). Reston, VA: National Association of Secondary School Principals.
- Kinginger, C, & Farrell, K. (2004). Assessing Development of Metapragmatic Awareness in Study Abroad. *Frontiers: The Interdisciplinary Journal of Study Abroad*, Vol. 10:19-42.
- Larsen-Freeman, D. and Long, M. H. 1991: *An Introduction to Second Language Research*. London: Longman.

- Liu, M., and Reed, W.M. (1995). The Relationship between the Learning Strategies and Learning Styles in a Hypermedia Environment. *Computers in Human Behavior*, 10, 419-434.
- Lu, C. and Suen, H.K. (1995). Assessment Approaches and Cognitive Styles. *Journal of Educational Measurement*, Volume 32, Issue 1 March 1995 Pag. 1-17
- Luk, S.C. (1998). The Relationship between Cognitive Style and Academic Achievement. *British Journal of Educational Technology*. 29(2), 137–147.
- McLain, D. L. (1993). The MSTAT-1: A New Measure of an Individual's Tolerance for Ambiguity. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 53, 183-189.
- Naiman, N., Froanlich, M., Stern, H.H., and Toedesco, A. (1978). *The Good Language Learner*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE).
- Nozan, A.Y. and Siamian, H. (2015). The Relationship between Field Dependent-Independent Cognitive Style and Understanding of English Text Reading and Academic Success. *Materia Sociomedia: Journal of the Academy of Medical Sciences of Bosnia Herzegovina*. 27(1), 39–41.
- Oxford, R. L. (1990). *Language learning strategies: What every teacher should know*. Rowley, MA: Newbury House.
- Rastegar, M. and Kerman, E. (2015). Emotional Intelligence, Tolerance of Ambiguity, and Language Learning Strategies Use of EFL Learners: A Study of Relations. *Cumhuriyet Science Journal*, 36(3), 446-663.
- Rauch, J. (2003). "Caring for Your Introvert: The Habits and Needs of a Little-understood Group" in *Atlantic Monthly* March, 2003.
- Rehm, H. A. (2012). Tolerance of Ambiguity in English Learners. Ohio TESOL Conference in 2012: Leading Language Learning.
- Rogulj, Jasmina. (2016). Relationship between Personality, Learning Strategies, Teaching Strategies and English Language Proficiency. PhD Thesis. Filozofski fakultet u Zagrebu, Department of English Language and Literature.
- Rossier, R. E. (1975). Extraversion-introversion as a Significant Variable in the Learning of English as a Second Language: University of Southern California.

- Salmani-Nodoushan, M.A. (2007). Text Familiarity, Reading Tasks, and ESP Test Performance: A Study on Iranian LEP and non-LEP University Students. *Reading Matrix*, 3(1), 1-14.
- Schutte, N.S., Malouff, J.M., Hall, L.E., Haggerty, D.J., Cooper, J.T., Golden, C.J., et al. (1998). Development and validation of a measure of emotional intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences*, 25, 167-177.
- Shak, M.A. B. (2015). Tolerance of Ambiguity and the Use of Language Learning Strategies Among ESL Learners at the Tertiary Level Proceedings of Academics World 9th International Conference, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 28th November, 2015.
- Shalbfafan, K. (1996). On the Role Field Dependence/Field Independence in Iranian EFL Learners' Writing Ability. Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Tehran.
- Van Mourik, Or. (2006). The Introvert Advantage, *NYU Journalism* February Vol.26.
- Wakamoto, N. (2009). *Extroversion/Introversion in Foreign Language Learning – Interactions with Learner Strategy Use*. Ed. Peter Lang, vol. 67, pp. 17-25.
- Wesche, M. (1977). Learning Behaviors of Successful Adult Students on Intensive Language Training. Paper presented at Los Angeles Second Language Acquisition Forum, UCLA, 1977.
- Witkin, H.A. and Goodenough, D.R. (1977). Field Dependence and Interpersonal Behavior. *Psychological Bulletin* 84(4), 661-689.
- Wyss, R (2002). Field Independent/Dependent Learning Styles and L2 Acquisition. *Journal of ELT*, (49), 125-128.
- Zhang, Y. (2008). The Role of Personality in Second Language Acquisition. *Asian Social Science*, Vol 5, No, 5:58-59.