

Speaking Through Personality: A Qualitative Analysis of Introvert and Extrovert Learners in Efl Classroom

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Abstract : *This study explores how introverted and extroverted learners' speaking performance reflects their learning styles in an EFL classroom and how they interact during speaking activities at SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa. Using a descriptive qualitative design, six eighth-grade students (three introverts and three extroverts) were selected through purposive sampling based on classroom observations and teacher recommendations. Data were collected through non-participant classroom observations, audio/video recordings, and semi-structured interviews, then analyzed using Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña's interactive model of data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing. Findings show that introverted students display a reflective learning style, preferring to prepare in quiet settings, memorise at home, listen more, and take 3–5 second pauses before responding, using silence as internal rehearsal to prioritise accuracy. In contrast, extroverted students demonstrate a social/experiential learning style, characterised by quick and spontaneous responses, frequent hand-raising, initiating discussions, and treating every speaking opportunity as "learning by doing" to build fluency. Classroom interaction patterns indicate that extroverts tend to drive and sustain discussion, while introverts contribute more selectively with well-structured answers once they feel ready. These results suggest that personality differences do not determine speaking success, but shape distinct learning routes toward speaking proficiency. The study recommends that EFL teachers design inclusive speaking activities that provide planning time and quiet preparation for introverts, alongside interactive and spontaneous tasks that support extroverts' social learning preferences.*

Keywords: Introvert, Extrovert, Speaking skills, Learning styles, EFL classroom.

Abstrak : Studi ini meneliti bagaimana kinerja berbicara siswa introvert dan ekstrovert mencerminkan gaya belajar mereka di kelas EFL dan bagaimana mereka berinteraksi selama kegiatan berbicara di SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa. Dengan desain kualitatif deskriptif, enam siswa kelas delapan (tiga introvert dan tiga ekstrovert) dipilih melalui purposive sampling berdasarkan pengamatan kelas dan rekomendasi guru. Data dikumpulkan melalui pengamatan kelas tanpa partisipasi, rekaman audio/video, dan wawancara semi-terstruktur, kemudian dianalisis menggunakan model interaktif Miles, Huberman, dan Saldaña tentang kondensasi data, tampilan data, dan penarikan kesimpulan. Hasil menunjukkan bahwa siswa introvert menunjukkan gaya belajar reflektif, lebih suka mempersiapkan diri di tempat yang tenang, menghafal di rumah, lebih banyak mendengarkan, dan mengambil jeda 3–5 detik sebelum merespons, menggunakan diam sebagai latihan internal untuk memprioritaskan ketepatan. Sebaliknya, siswa yang ekstrovert menunjukkan gaya belajar sosial/experiential, ditandai dengan respons cepat dan spontan, sering mengangkat tangan, memulai diskusi, dan memanfaatkan setiap kesempatan berbicara sebagai "belajar sambil melakukan" untuk meningkatkan kefasihan. Pola interaksi di kelas menunjukkan bahwa ekstrovert cenderung memimpin dan mempertahankan diskusi, sementara introvert berkontribusi lebih selektif dengan jawaban yang terstruktur ketika mereka merasa siap. Hasil ini menunjukkan bahwa perbedaan kepribadian tidak menentukan keberhasilan berbicara, tetapi membentuk jalur belajar yang berbeda menuju kemahiran berbicara. Studi ini menyarankan guru EFL merancang aktivitas berbicara yang inklusif, yang memberikan waktu perencanaan dan persiapan tenang bagi introvert, serta tugas interaktif dan spontan yang mendukung preferensi belajar sosial ekstrovert.

Kata kunci: introvert, ekstrovert, keterampilan berbicara, gaya belajar, kelas EFL.

1. PENDAHULUAN

EFL learners in Indonesia study English in a context where the language isn't used in daily life, so learning success is heavily influenced by the learning environment, learning style, teaching strategies, and students' cognitive abilities, not just the teaching

material (Thach, 2025). Speaking skills are often seen as the main indicator of language proficiency, but they are also the most challenging skill because they involve psychological pressure, anxiety, and spontaneous interaction (Luh et al., 2023). As explained by Febrianti et al. (2025), speaking is not merely about arranging words, but a process of conveying ideas and receiving responses to ensure that the intended interlocutor understands meaning.

In this context, personality is an important internal factor that affects how students learn and participate in speaking activities. As stated by (Sharma, 2024), speaking reflects a person's ability to communicate and interact, but in line with (Erlina et al., 2023), personality plays an important role in determining how someone learns and interacts in a foreign language. This aligns with (Mustafidah, 2023), who notes that personality is a key factor influencing speaking ability. Research shows that personality plays a role in how someone learns and interacts in a foreign language, not just in social traits. The introvert–extrovert differences are reflected in learning preferences: extroverts tend to learn through social interaction and thinking while speaking, while introverts are more comfortable with reflective processing and thinking before speaking.

In class, the quietness of introverted students is often misunderstood as a lack of ability or passivity, while the activeness of extroverts is seen as the ideal standard, so reflective learning strategies are often undervalued. Also, psychological barriers such as anxiety, shyness, and fear of making mistakes hinder students' willingness to speak up in class

Previous studies have often compared speaking ability scores between introverts and extroverts and tend to find no significant difference, so personality is not seen as the sole determinant of success. However, few studies have explored the learning process and cognitive paths taken by these two personality types when practising speaking.

SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa was chosen as the research site because of the need to map the differences in students' learning styles in speaking classes and how challenges for introverts and extroverts are accommodated in learning. Understanding how introverted students use reflective strategies (like 3–5 second pauses, memorising at home, studying in a quiet place) and how extroverted students use social-experiential strategies (quick responses, asking a lot of questions, learning through interaction) is very important so teachers can design inclusive speaking activities.

Based on that background, this study is titled 'Speaking Through Personality: A Qualitative Analysis of Introvert and Extrovert Learners in an EFL Classroom', which

specifically looks at how the learning styles of these two personality types show up in their speaking performance and interaction patterns in a junior high EFL class.

2. METODE PENELITIAN

The research method in this thesis uses a qualitative descriptive design to deeply illustrate how introverted and extroverted students' learning styles manifest in their speaking performance and interactions in the EFL speaking class without focusing on quantitative score calculations. The research subjects are eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa for the 2025/2026 academic year, selected using purposive sampling, consisting of six students: three with introverted personalities and three extroverted, identified through initial class observations and consultations with the English teacher; ambivert students were deliberately excluded to make data contrasts clearer.

Data were collected using structured observation sheets containing indicators of reflective and social/experiential learning styles (such as 3–5 second pause duration, hand-raising activity, use of fillers, participation patterns) as well as audio/video recordings, supplemented by semi-structured interviews to explore internal cognitive processes and psychological conditions not observable. Data collection techniques were carried out through non-participant observation of speaking activities in class (also during the subject identification stage) and in-depth interviews with six selected participants. Data analysis used the interactive model of Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña, which included data condensation (coding in a reflective vs experiential style), presenting data as narratives and comparison tables, and drawing and checking conclusions through method triangulation and member checking to ensure the findings are valid.

3. HASIL DAN PEMBAHASAN

The subjects of this study were eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa for the 2025/2026 academic year. From them, the researcher selected six key respondents (three introverts and three extroverts) through purposive sampling based on classroom behaviour observations and discussions with the English teacher, without using psychometric instruments. The research activities started on 20 April 2026 with a meeting with the principal and the English teacher, then data collection was carried out in three sessions: classroom observation on 23 and 25 April 2026, and in-depth interviews and documentation collection on 30 April 2026.

1. Descriptive Analysis of Observation

The observation sheet attachment was prepared as the main tool to systematically record the speaking behaviours of introverted and extroverted students in the EFL classroom. This table makes it easier for the researcher to directly observe students' learning methods and speaking techniques in a real classroom context, not just based on interviews or assumptions. In the table, the researcher fills in the Student Name, Personality Type, Date/Activity, and then ticks (✓) the behavioural characteristics that consistently appear during speaking activities (pairs, groups, or whole class) following the observation format guidelines. At the initial stage, before classroom observation, the researcher attended the school's Performing Arts activities to observe how introverted and extroverted students interact and socialise outside formal learning settings. This data is used to compare students' communication styles, participation, and social relationships in non-academic situations with their behaviour during classroom learning processes.

a. First Observation

Student Initials	Personality Type	Date	Observed Aspects	Observation Sheet Match
NA	Introvert–Reflective Style	23 April 2026	Social tendency / Internal tendency, Wait-time & participation	Quiet, observant, more comfortable with a few close friends, rarely initiates conversation, responds only when asked, pauses 3–5 seconds before answering, does not often raise hand
CN	Introvert–Reflective Style	23 April 2026	Social tendency / Internal tendency, turn-taking & fillers	Calm, observant, comfortable with two close friends, selective in speaking, responds only when addressed by the teacher, sometimes uses

				fillers when speaking
NM	Introvert– Reflective Style	23 April 2026	Internal tendency, wait- time & response	Prefers to be alone, reflective, comfortable by themselves, speaks only when addressed, has long pauses before responding, responses are structured but infrequent

Thus, the data in the table and the descriptions of NA, CN, and NM behaviours consistently reflect the typical traits of introverted students, especially regarding their use of 3–5 second pauses before answering, their tendency not to raise their hand spontaneously, and their preference for learning by listening attentively before speaking.

b. Second Observation

Student Initials	Personality Type	Date	Observed Aspects	Observation Sheet Match
KP	Ekstrovert	25 April 2026	Wait-time & response style, learning style (Social/Experiential), social tendency (Extraversion)	Quick and spontaneous response, dominant, initiates discussions, very active.
MF	Ekstrovert	25 April 2026	Wait-time & response methods, learning style (Social/Experiential), social tendency (Extraversion), speaking participation pattern	Quick to respond (thinking while speaking), learning through collaboration with friends, often answering without being asked, feeling that learning is more fun

				when talking a lot.
MN	Ekstrovert	25 April 2026	Wait-time & response methods, learning style (Social/Experiential), social tendency (Extraversion), speaking participation pattern	Very quick to respond, keeps the conversation flowing while thinking, enjoys performing, likes being the centre of attention, wants the majority to be active

The second observation of the extroverted students (KP, MF, MN) showed that all three participants consistently displayed very active social behaviour, were eager to cooperate, and proactively started discussions and answered without waiting for teacher instructions. They seemed to enjoy being the centre of attention, responded quickly, and took every opportunity to speak as a way to think on the spot. This pattern reflects a social/experiential learning method, where language acquisition happens through direct interaction, collaboration, taking language risks, and using speaking opportunities as authentic practice in class. Overall, their high verbal participation and tendency to dominate conversations not only reflect readiness to speak but also clearly indicate a 'learning by doing' approach typical of extroverted students in EFL speaking lessons.

2. Descriptive Analysis of Interview

In this study, the researcher carried out classroom observations and semi-structured interviews with eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa to examine how introverted and extroverted learning styles are reflected in their speaking performance and interaction patterns during speaking lessons. The semi-structured interviews were used to validate findings related to learning styles that appeared during classroom speaking activities, as well as to explore the internal cognitive processes and psychological conditions underlying the students' participation in English speaking tasks. To help students express their experiences and views more freely, the interviews were conducted in Indonesian.

a. Interview Findings: Introverted Students

Three introverted students (NA, CN, NM) show a reflective, organised, and calm learning style. They tend not to speak immediately but prefer to think, memorise, or study the material in a quiet setting before feeling ready to perform. When preparing for speaking tasks, they prefer to memorise at home, study on their own, stay away from crowds, and need a quiet environment to understand the material thoroughly. When others speak in English, they mostly act as quiet listeners, paying attention, saving any confusion to ask later privately rather than in front of the class.

When they make mistakes, their main reaction is to take a moment to step back, review, repeat memorisation, and reflect on the error as a way to improve themselves, rather than stopping or giving up immediately. In class interactions, they rarely raise their hand, wait for other friends first, seldom ask questions in English, and feel more comfortable working alone or in small groups with friends who are on the same wavelength.

Emotionally, active friends can be both a source of learning and pressure, depending on the closeness of the relationship and their self-confidence. In group or partner work, they almost always wait for the other person to start because of a lack of self-confidence and the need to feel safe before speaking

b. Interview Findings: Extroverted Students

Interview findings show that extroverted students tend to use a spontaneous, social, and hands-on approach when learning to speak English. They prefer to 'just try it out' in front of friends without much reflection, and only do minimal preparation (quick reading, short memorising, or asking the teacher/friends) to boost their confidence in performing, not to avoid it.

When they make a speaking mistake, their response is active and open: they ask the teacher or friends if what they said was wrong, read and memorise again, and use mistakes as a chance to improve next time rather than a reason to withdraw.

In class situations, they quickly raise their hands, tend to go first in group/pair work, and actively give comments or ask questions during presentations. They say they don't want to "miss an opportunity" and prefer groups where everyone is active and talks a lot. Overall, they feel fairly confident using English, see mistakes as normal, and feel okay/comfortable being around friends who are also very active.

Based on the data analysis from eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa, this section aims to answer the research questions, namely, how introverted and extroverted students' learning styles show up in their speaking performance and how these two personality types interact in the speaking class.

1. How do introverted and extroverted students' learning styles manifest in their speaking performance at SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa?

Based on the data analysis, the differences in learning styles between introverted and extroverted students in speaking at SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa are clearly seen from observation and interview patterns. This agrees with (Citra & Zainil, 2021), who found that introverted learners more often use metacognitive, cognitive, and affective strategies in speaking. Interviews showed introverts prefer learning in a quiet atmosphere, memorising at home, avoiding crowds, and using 'quiet moments' to process mistakes and maintain accuracy.

On the other hand, extroverted students as mentioned by (Yusuf & Gorontalo, 2021) rely more on social strategies and teamwork, like to “just give it a go” in groups, and see every chance to speak as practice. When they mess up, they ask teachers or friends and turn mistakes into “learning by doing.” Introverts’ home memorising, quiet studying, and “silent period” after mistakes show Reflective & Cognitive Processing, while extroverts’ impulsive participation and collaboration back up the Social & Experiential Learning Style theory.

Viewed through this study’s indicators, introverts’ longer pauses, waiting to be called on, and attentive listening match the Reflective Style indicator, where silence and structured responses signal cognitive processing, not passivity. Extroverts’ quick responses, frequent hand-raising, and enjoyment of attention align with the Social/Experiential Style indicator, where speaking is “thinking out loud,” taking risks, and sustaining fluency. Together, these patterns confirm the Reflective Style and Experiential Style rubric categories as valid lenses for understanding how personality shapes EFL learners’ speaking behaviour in this study.

2. How do the introverted and extroverted students interact in the speaking classroom?

The interaction between introverted and extroverted students in the speaking class at SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa differs in turn-taking, discussion roles, and responses to peers and teachers. Extroverted students tend to initiate conversations,

raise their hands quickly, take the first turn, interrupt with comments or questions, and keep the discussion flowing spontaneously and expressively, thus having more control over the discussion. In contrast, introverted students are more often listeners and speak when called on or when they feel ready, contributing less frequently but consistently; this pattern aligns with Reflective Style and Social/Experiential Style as well as classroom interaction theory, supporting the finding that extroverts are “more comfortable and enthusiastic leading in starting conversations” and more engaged in dynamic and spontaneous exchanges (Ainy et al., 2023).

In group work, extroverts tend to take the lead in leadership and task management, while introverts contribute by clarifying, summarising, or adding points when they are confident in their answers. These findings are consistent with Citra & Zainil (2021) that introverts use metacognitive and cognitive strategies more, whereas extroverts more often use social and compensatory strategies in speaking. So, their interaction complements each other: extroverts start the conversation and create speaking opportunities, while introverts add depth to the material through more structured responses according to their own learning styles and strategies.

4. KESIMPULAN DAN SARAN

Research on six eighth-grade students at SMP Negeri 2 Sungguminasa shows that introverts and extroverts have different learning styles and speaking performances but complement each other. Introverts tend to be reflective, calm, observant, speak when asked, need a pause before responding, and prefer learning in quiet environments, so their contributions are fewer but structured and accurate. Extroverts are more social-experiential: they actively start discussions, respond quickly, often answer without being asked, like being the centre of attention, and use every chance to speak as 'learning by doing' to build fluency.

Teachers need to combine structured tasks that give introverts thinking time with discussions, group work, and spontaneous exercises for extroverts, and not equate silence with passivity. In group work, speaking turns should be managed so quiet students still have space, while extroverts liven up the discussion without dominating. Both are encouraged to use learning styles according to their personality and complement each other, and future research should involve more subjects and contexts to make understanding personality-based learning paths in EFL speaking more comprehensive.

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