

The Correlation between Personality Traits: *Extraversion/Introversion* and Students'  
Attitudes in Learning English as a Foreign Language

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**Abstract**

This research is aimed at finding out the percentage of extrovert and introvert students among the fourth semester students of English Education Study Program in Jambi University in the Academic Year 2016/2017, finding out students' attitudes in learning EFL, and finding out the correlation between personality traits and students' attitudes in learning EFL. In constructing this research, the data were collected from 50 Regular students of the fourth semester. The correlation study was chosen as the research design. EPI (Eysenck Personality Inventory) was employed to measure students' personality traits and AMTB (Attitude/Motivation Test Battery) was employed to measure students' attitudes.

The research found that 82% students are extrovert, and 18% students are introvert. The result found that 96% students have positive attitudes in learning EFL. The calculation of Pearson Product Moment showed that there is a positive moderate correlation between extraversion trait and students' attitudes which value 0.574. There is also a positive strong correlation between introversion trait and students' attitudes which value 0.631. Based on the findings, the level of introversion more affected students' attitudes than extraversion. Therefore, there is positive correlation between personality traits: extraversion/introversion and students' attitudes in learning English as a foreign language.

**Key Words:** *Personality Traits, Extraversion, Introversion, Language Attitudes.*

## **1. Introduction**

### *1.1. Background*

Every English learner has their own characteristics that will affect to the success of acquiring a language. The factors such as motivation, attitudes, personality, learning achievement, aptitude, intelligence, and age are the dimensions that influence learning process (Gardner, 1985). As one of the influences, personality is the dynamic organization of the psychological and physical which patterns the actions, thoughts, and feelings of someone (Allport, 1961 as cited in Celikel, 2011).

Extraversion and introversion are the most notable traits and considered to be essential in studying second language learning (Dornyei, 2005). According to Eysenck (1964), extrovert students are talkative, energetic, and outgoing in their communication and introvert students are reserved, quiet, and calm. Socan and Bucik (1998, as cited from Hamed et al., 2015) added that in classroom activity, extrovert students would likely to have high participation in speech task than introvert students. In addition, introvert students seem to avoid the speech task that sometimes can be a sign of speaking anxiety.

Another factor that influences language acquisition is language attitude. Allport (1935, as cited in Abidin et al., 2012) explained that attitude in learning a language is related to the students' mental and neural state of readiness toward a language and organized through experience and the response to objects and situation when the language is learnt. Good experience when learning English would likely shape positive attitude toward the language. If the learners have positive attitude toward a language, it can facilitate language learning and relate to the success in second language acquisition (Gardner, 1985).

## *1.2 Research Questions*

This research is conducted to answer these following questions:

1. What are the percentages of extraversion/introversion traits among the fourth semester students of English Education Study Program in Jambi University in the Academic Year 2016/2017?
2. What are the attitudes of extrovert/introvert students among the fourth semester of English Education Study Program toward learning English as a foreign language?
3. Is there any significant correlation between the personality traits: extraversion/introversion among the fourth semester students of English Education Study Program and their attitudes in learning English as a foreign language?

## **Review of Related Literature**

Gardner (1985), Ellis (1999), Dornyei (2005), and Troike (2006) have distinguished the individual differences (ID) in learning second language from psychological perspective. Attitude as one of the factors that influence the success of learning is a psychological tendency that is expressed by positive or negative reaction to the object of interest based on beliefs and opinions about the object (Gardner, 1985). Bartram (2010) has explained the influences that may affect language attitudes into two aspects: educational and sociocultural. Educational factors are said to be the significant influence on the language attitudes (Bartram, 2010). The factors include teacher-related influences, school-related influences, and the curriculum policy. Chambers (1994, as cited in Bartram, 2010) stated that teacher plays the important part in the motivational process that will affect their attitudes. Bartram (2010) added that the school-related influences or pedagogy factor only give small influence to the learners' attitudes, especially when the learners already have negative attitude toward EFL and the efforts

to improve teaching practices are not enough to cover the negative attitude. Bartram (2010) categorized three sociocultural influences into the learner's close social environment, the learner's experiences and perceptions of the target-language speakers and communities, and the perceived social status of the languages learned. The learner's close social environment included parents, family, friends, and peers. Parental influences are divided into active and passive.

According to Dornyei (2005) the role of personality is less important than other variables such as aptitude and motivation. Personality itself refers to individual psychological and behaviour. The extraversion dimension which became the main concern of this research is divided into two traits: extraversion and introversion. Harbaugh (2010) defined that extrovert desires excitement takes risks and acts impulsively at times, while the introvert is a quiet, reflective person who prefers time alone, and does not crave excitement. Saputri (2012) found that extrovert students tend to achieve better achievement in speaking test than introvert students. Suliman (2014) also investigated the role of extraversion and introversion in second language acquisition. The result found that extrovert students will communicate fluently with high speech rates and legible pronunciation than introvert students. Similar result also found in Hamedi, et al. (2015). The result showed that extrovert student have less public speaking anxiety than moderate introvert students.

## **Research Method**

To conduct the research, the researcher used correlation research design. The variables of this research are personality traits which consist of extraversion and introversion and students' attitudes toward English as a foreign language. The participants of this research was the fourth semester students of English Education

Study Program in Jambi University in the Academic Year 2016/2017 from Regular Class. There are total of 50 students registered in Regular Class. 18 students are from A class, and 32 students from B class. The employed instruments in the research included EPI (Eysenck Personality Inventory) and AMTB (Attitude/Motivation Test Battery). The EPI questionnaire was adapted from Aziz (2010). The adapted questionnaire consists of 22 items and measure students' personality traits, extraversion and introversion. The AMTB questionnaire was adapted from Gardner (1985). The adapted questionnaire consists of 25 items that measure six domains: desire to learn English, parental encouragement, English class anxiety, English lecturer evaluation, attitudes toward learning English, and English course evaluation.

To find the reliability and validity of the questionnaires, the researcher conducted a pilot study to the students who do not belong to the sample. The result of pilot study showed that EPI and AMTB questionnaires have very high reliability. However, the items no 8 and 19 in EPI questionnaire and the items no 7, 8, 10, 16, and 22 in AMTB questionnaire are invalid and did not use for the research. After the pilot study conducted, the questionnaires distributed to Regular students and the data were analyzed using SPSS program.

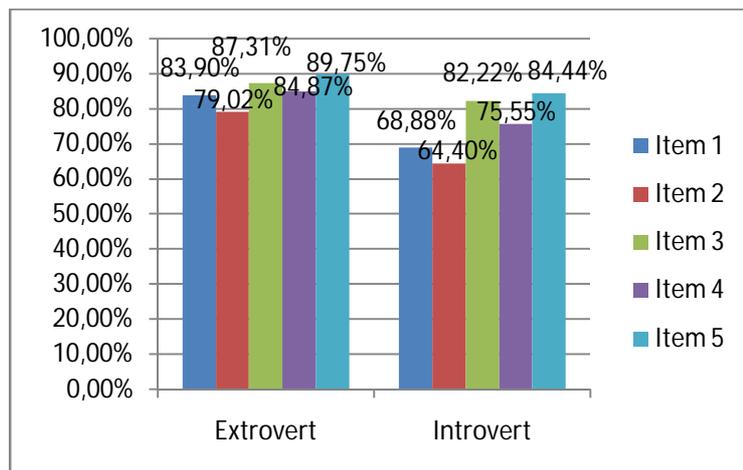
### **Findings and Discussions**

From the calculation of EPI, 82% students have extraversion personality, and 18% students have introversion personality. According to Eysenck (1964), the students who has extrovert personality are sociable, crave excitement, takes chances, acts on the spur of the moment, and is generally an impulsive individual. In the other hand, the introvert students are more reserved, do not crave excitement, tends to plan ahead, and distrusts the impulse of the moment. The students who have strong extroversion degree

are 20% of all extrovert students. The students who have moderate extroversion degree are 80% of all extrovert students. The student who has strong introversion degree is only 1 students and the students who have moderate introversion degree are 89% of all introvert students.

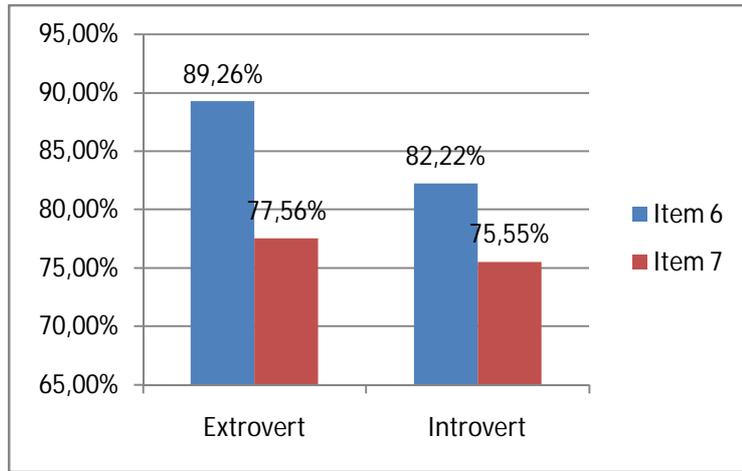
From the calculation of AMTB, there are 96% students who have positive attitudes in learning English as a foreign language, and there are 4% students who have negative attitude in learning English as a foreign language. The students who have negative attitudes are the students who have the tendency of introversion. The mean score yielded for extrovert students is 3.75, while introvert students' attitudes is 3.29. Based on the analysis of AMTB questionnaire, the extrovert students have higher score than introvert students in five domains: desire to learn English, parental encouragement, English lecturer evaluation, attitudes toward learning English, and English course evaluation. The introvert students have higher in the domain of English class anxiety.

*Desire to Learn English*



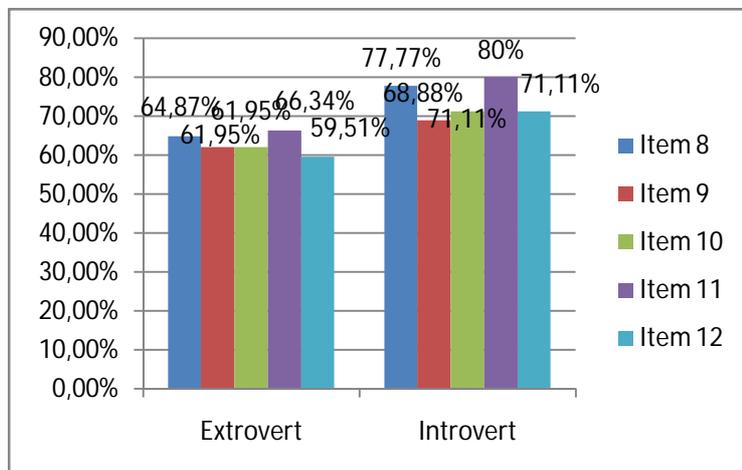
From the chart above, the extrovert students show stronger desire to learn English. According to Dornyei (2005), it happens due their characteristics which desire excitement and passionate than introvert students.

*Parental Encouragement*



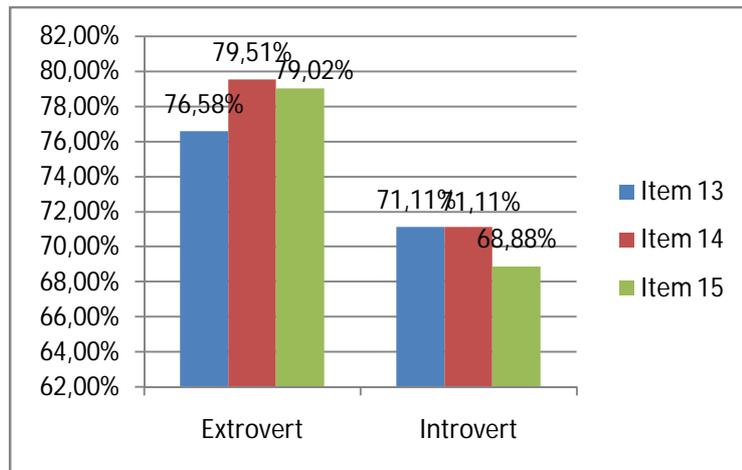
From the chart above, the fourth semester students of English Education Study Program in Jambi University in the Academic Year 2016/2017 both extrovert and introvert think that parents' supportive encouragement for their status as English students is very important.

*English Class Anxiety*



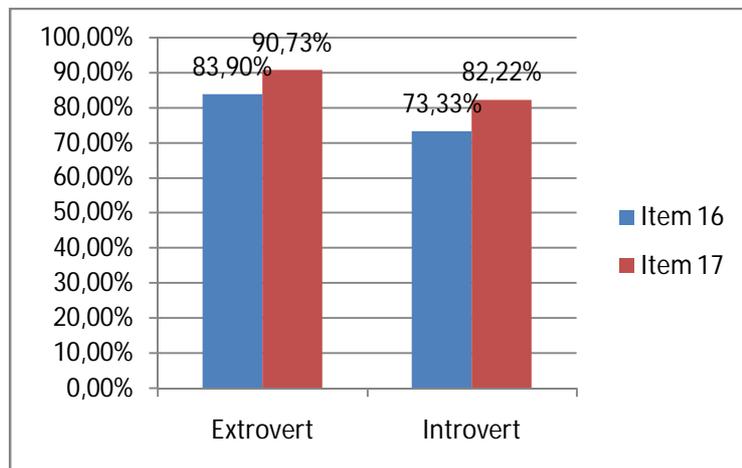
From the chart above, the students have anxiety in English classroom especially when it comes to oral performance or speaking. However, the introvert students show more significant anxiety. Extrovert students are more confident in speaking because they are more talkative and active, while introvert students are more passive and reserved (Eysenck, 1964, Horwitz et al., 1986 & Dornyei, 2005).

### *English Lecturer Evaluation*



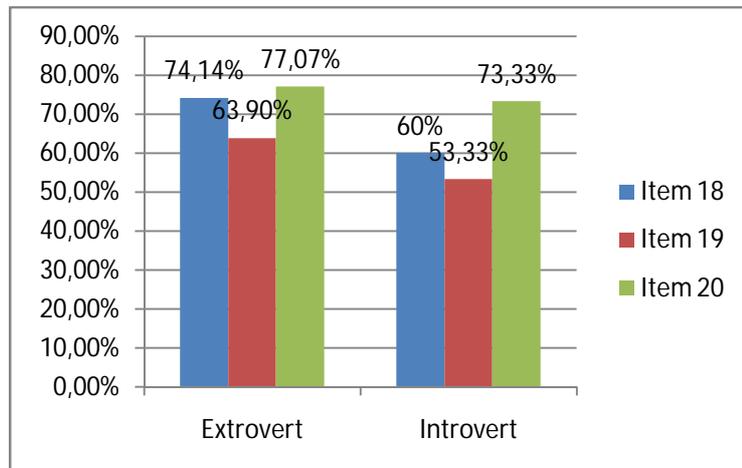
From the chart above, the students showed positive evaluation toward their lecturers in English Education Study Program. Teaching media such as PowerPoint and Digital Media Learning and various teaching style that are used by the lecturers will inspire and give the students motivation in learning, and this motivation will be incorporated to their positive attitudes toward learning English.

### *Attitudes toward Learning English*



From the chart above, extrovert and introvert students have positive attitudes toward learning English, but extrovert students have higher score than introvert students.

## English Course Evaluation



From the chart above, the students have positive evaluation toward their English courses. Bartram (2010) said that the activities that focus on vocabulary, verbs, and oral works which used communicative approach and emphasizing on rehearsal and repetition would likely to shape negative attitudes, and the percentage of the item which related to this statement is lower compared other items in this domain.

The findings from the calculation of Pearson Product Moment Formula showed that there is a correlation between personality traits: extraversion and students attitudes in learning English as a foreign language with coefficient correlation is 0.574, and the  $t_{\text{count}} \geq t_{\text{table}}$  or  $4.860 \geq 1.677$ . The result in Pearson Product Moment Formula also showed that there is a positive correlation between introversion and students' attitudes with coefficient correlation is 0.631, and the  $t_{\text{count}} \geq t_{\text{table}}$  or  $5.64 \geq 1.677$ . All in all, the result proves that personality traits: extraversion/introversion and students' attitudes as the variables that influence individual differences in learning second language positively correlated.

## **Conclusions and Suggestions**

Based on the findings and discussions, it can be concluded that most of the students of English Education Study Program of Jambi University at the fourth semester in the academic year 2016/2017 have extraversion personality trait and also have positive attitudes toward learning English as a foreign language. The extrovert students have more positive attitudes in learning English as a foreign language than introvert students. Positive correlation was found between personality traits: extraversion/introversion and students' attitudes in learning English as a foreign language. Introversion personality trait show stronger correlation with students' attitudes than extraversion personality trait. It means that the effect of introversion personality trait toward students' attitudes in learning language is better than extroversion.

It is hoped that the students can understand and manage their personality trait which affect their attitudes toward English. It is important for the lecturer to learn about students' personality because it can help the lecturers to minimize negative attitudes in learning English as a foreign language. The lecturers can adapt their teaching methodology to students' individual differences and emphasize communicative approach where the lecturers help the students to contextualize content in terms of their own experience and knowledge. The lecturers can integrate their textbooks with up-to-date materials and other supplementary resources through multiple exemplification, and the use of different types of illustration and mode of presentation.

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