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THE EFFECT OF LEARNERS' PERSONALITY ON LEARNING EFL: A STUDY ON HIGHER
SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS IN KISHOREGONJ, BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

Individual students are different in personality that is considered as one of the most influential affective factors which are equally important in any discussion regarding the success among EFL learners. Various personality traits have been thought to facilitate or inhibit second language learning: Self-esteem, Inhibition, Risk-taking, Anxiety, Empathy, Tolerance or Ambiguity, Extroversion-Introversion etc. The level of presence of these factors determines a person's personality. Significant presence (i.e. Self-esteem, Risk-taking, Empathy, Tolerance or Ambiguity, Extroversion) or absence (Inhibition, Anxiety, Empathy, Tolerance or Ambiguity, Extroversion-Introversion) of these factors in a person has been considered as positive or negative personality. In developing countries like Bangladesh, where almost all the parties involved in learning personality factors do not receive enough attention- neither from the teachers nor from the parents. So the study aimed at investigating the relation between the selected learners' personality and their success in terms of learning different aspects and skills of English Language. For this purpose, a quantitative research has been conducted to collect, analyze and integrate quantitative data. The results of the study show that personality significantly affects EFL learning.

1. Introduction

Language is considered a complex and specialized skill of mankind. It develops in child spontaneously, without conscious effort or formal instruction (Pinker, The Language Instinct, P.18) and without awareness of its underlying logic. A child can acquire its mother language spontaneously as they are biologically programmed for language (carrying LAD that makes a child able to learn any language) (Chomsky, 1959) and language develops in child in just the same way that other biological functions develop. But learning a second or foreign language is much more complex and challenging task, in some cases impossible, as it is influenced by different factors like age. Lennberg (1967) and Bickerton (1981), in favor of 'Critical Period Hypothesis (CPH)', claimed that before and after critical period certain abilities do not develop. Later, Second Language researchers have outlined the possibilities of extrapolating the CPH to L2 contents (Bialystok 1997; Singleton and Lengyel 1995; Scovel 1988, 1999 are useful summaries). The classic argument is that a critical period for L2 learning occurs around puberty, beyond which people seem to face difficulties in learning an L2. Besides this,

there are other factors which also influence foreign language learning: environment, attitude, motivation and aptitude cognitive style, socio-cultural background, learners' personality-all these are influential in language learning.

Among the factors, learners' personality most often remains unnoticed and less cared in English language teaching in developing countries like Bangladesh, where the parties involved in English language teaching and learning are more concerned, either subconsciously or unconsciously, about the other factors like syllabus, contents, environment, infrastructure etc. As the learners personality traits are ignored, learning is affected to an alarming extent. Though English is dominant in Bangladesh, still it is considered a foreign language as, here, the students have very few opportunities to use English and they are not bound to use it for practical need, except in some of the offices where communication in English is compulsory. Thus, they have a very limited exposure to English-speaking environment. This study has also considered that learners (samples) are learning English as a Foreign Language. This study limits its focus on learners' personality traits and their impacts on EFL learning.

2. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study has been set as broad and specific objectives

- a. **Broad Objective:** To measure the effects of learners personality on learning EFL and thus to find out which are more influential factors that have either positive or negative impacts on learning
- b. **Specific Objective:**
 - i. To determine the effects of learners personality on learning EFL
 - ii. To find out which personality factor(s) is/are more affective than others in learning EFL
 - iii. To determine which personality factors are positive and which are negative for learning EFL

3. Hypothesis

From the means of the two groups' EFL learning score, two hypotheses have been drawn.

Null hypothesis H_0 : There is no difference between the means of the two groups. That is, Personality does not affect EFL learning.

$$H_0 = \mu_1 = \mu_2$$

Alternative Hypotheses H_A : There is difference between the means of the two groups. That is, Personality does affect EFL learning.

$$H_A = \mu_1 \neq \mu_2$$

4. Significance of the Study

Personality is a number of personal traits, which in aggregate are said to constitute the personality of an individual. The present study intends to find out the role of personality in EFL learning among the selected learners and thus it aims to provide an insight of the current scenario of EFL learning in Bangladesh by representing the impacts of personality traits on the samples. Using statistical method and instruments, this study has discovered the relationship between personality as a whole and EFL learning, where most studies conducted before focused on only one or two of the factors of personality. Moreover, the results of the study will activate a sense of urgency among the concerned people regarding the need of sophisticated and effectual treatment of learners in relation to their personality traits and EFL learning.

5. Limitations of the Study

The study has tried to investigate the effects of learner's personality on learning EFL. As sample, 66 higher secondary level students have been taken. The research has also tried to find out which personality factors are more effective and which are less effective. But the study has selected the samples randomly only

from higher secondary level students. Other kinds of samples, that could yield more validity of the study, have not been included.

Moreover, the samples are studying EFL for twelve years, but still most of them are not proficient in English. There are several factors that can be responsible for the lacking. The students living in rural areas do not get the proper input, proper guidance and proper opportunity to learn compared to the students living in towns and cities. The socio-economic condition can be responsible for the lacking. Besides, these learners can be unmotivated, the learning situation or the learning environment may not be favorable, and also the learners can have specific personal traits that might have caused the lacking. So there can be so many factors that can make the learners less proficient. But the focus point or the only consideration of the study is the personality factors of learners. The effect of personality on learning can be different in male and female, rural and urban students. The study would find out the effects in general and would not investigate any specific kind of learners.

6. Definition of Terms

LAD: Language Acquisition Device-a special ability that the children are born with and that helps them discover the underlying rules of a language system (Chomsky, 1965).

CPH: Critical Period Hypothesis is a notion that tells that children can learn a language successfully at the right time or critical period. This period does not continue for long. Learners are less capable of learning after this period. This notion was first proposed by neurologist Wilder Penfield and co-author Lamar Roberts in a book named Speech and Brain Mechanisms that was published in 1959, and later, it was popularized by Eric Lenneberg (1967).

Personality: Personality consists of various personality traits that make an individual different from others.

Self-esteem: One's belief about his or her capability, significance, strengths and worth. It makes a person able to make effective and worthy judgment about himself, the people around and the incidents take place in his or her life.

Inhibition: A feeling that makes an individual self conscious and refrains from doing any act naturally. So, a person with weaker self esteem is weak or fragile and thus lacks confidence in a situation; on the other hand, a person with stronger self esteem can withstand threats to their existence and can face any challenging situation.

Risk-taking: It is the willingness to take risk to be wrong without feeling embarrassed. It is also associated with self-esteem.

Anxiety: Simply speaking, anxiety is a kind of trouble feeling in the mind. It is a subjective feeling on tension, apprehension, nervousness and worry associated with an arousal of the automatic nervous system (Horwitz, 1986).

Empathy: In common terminology, empathy is the process of putting oneself to someone else's position, of reaching beyond the self to understand what another person is feeling. Guiora (1972,p.142) defined empathy as "a process of comprehending in which a temporary fusion of self-object boundaries permits an immediate emotional apprehension of the affective experience of another"

Tolerance of Ambiguity: Tolerance of ambiguity is relatively open-mindedness in accepting ideologies and events and facts that contradict their own views. It is the internalization of contradictory propositions.

Extroversion/Introversion: Extroversion is the extent to which a person had a deep-seated need to receive ego enhancement, self-esteem and a sense of wholeness from other people as opposed to receiving that affirmation within oneself. Introversion is the extent to which a person derives a sense of wholeness and fulfillment apart from a reflection of the self from other people.

7. Literature Review

A good number of researches have been conducted on personality and its impacts on learning EFL. Different researchers conducted study with different approaches and focusing on different areas of personality traits. Rod Ellis (1994&1997) has provided an elaborate discussion on the related researches on Personality traits and influence in learning. The discussion of Ellis is most often followed and quoted in the Second language Acquisition Classes in Bangladesh. The authors, in this paper, have also discussed some of those to review the related literature. The available researches have focused either on identification or on measurement of personality characteristics.

Cattell (1970) attempted to measure personality using a series of dichotomies such as cool/warm, shy/venturesome, not assertive/dominant. Eysenck (1964) identified two general traits- extroversion/introversion and neurotic/stable. Some of the researchers (e.g. Dulay, Burt and Krashen, 1982) even considered cognitive style as a personality trait. A number of personality traits have been identified by different researchers: Self esteem (Heyde, 1979), inhibition (Guiora et al, 1972), risk-taking (Ely, 1986), anxiety (Bailey, 1983; MacIntyre and Gardner, 1989), Empathy (Guiora, Brannon & Dull, 1972) tolerance of ambiguity (Chappelle and Roberts, 1986), extroversion (Busch, 1982), and sensibility to rejection (Naiman Froehlich, Stern & Todesco, 1978). Costa and McCrae (1992) introduced Five Factor Model on personality types. This model talks about 5 personality types: agreeableness, conscientiousness, extraversion, neuroticism and openness to experience. Adelaide Heyde (1979) found that a high level of self esteem is associated with L2 proficiency. Guiora et al (1972) found that inhibition had a negative effect on L2 Learning. Alpert and Haber (1960) has classified anxiety as facilitating and debilitating. According to Scovel (1978), facilitating anxiety helps the learners to face and solve the new learning task and debilitating anxiety makes them unable to perform.

Alexander Guiora et al (1975) found that learners with high capacity for empathy may perform better in L2/FL pronunciation. According to Naiman et al., learners with greater tolerance for ambiguity score higher in tests of listening comprehension. Regarding extroversion and introversion traits, it has been found that extrovert learners learn more rapidly and they are more successful than the introvert learners. Richard Tucker et al. (1976) found that learners' success in L2 seemed to correlate with learners' scores on some traits often associated with extroversion, such as assertiveness and adventurousness. Regarding risk-taking, it is evident that the learners who have this positive personality trait can learn and perform better. Naiman et al. (1978) hypothesized that the learners who do not have risk-taking tendency might avoid active participation in language class out the fear that they might be ridiculed by class mates or teachers. This tendency of not participating in the language class actively would then translate into less successful SLA/Foreign Language Learning.

From the available literature, it can be said that learner's personality is manifested through certain traits or characteristics. Some of these traits are positive having positive as they facilitate learning while some other traits are negative as they pose challenges and difficulties for the learners. This paper is an attempt to measure the impacts of these traits on Learning.

8. Research Methodology

Research methodology refers to the approach by which the researcher conducts a study. It talks about how data is extracted to be clearly understood. In this section the authors have discussed the following: research design, target population, sampling strategy, data collection instruments and process, and analysis of the data. This study has been conducted in the selected higher secondary institutions of Kishoregonj District in Bangladesh. The selected six colleges are: 1. Govt. Mohila College, Kishoregonj 2. Bajitpur Degree College 3. Hazi Asmat College 4. Rafiqul Islam Mohila College 5. Zillur Rahman Mohila College 6. Gurudayal Govt. College

a. Research Design: To get a better understanding of the subject matter through the use of multiple ways to explore the research problem, quantitative method has been adopted and quantitative data have been collected, analyzed and interpreted in this study.

b. Sample: For the study, the sampling has been done in two stages. First, 66 individuals from the selected colleges, 11 from each, have been randomly selected irrespective of their sex and socioeconomic background. The average age of them is 18. They all have 11-12 years of experience of English Learning. Then these 66 students have been provided with the Personality Questionnaire. The questionnaire has been developed from some accepted scales and questionnaires used for measuring personality factors (Horwitz Foreign Language Classroom Anxiety Scale for anxiety (1986), Bunder Tolerance of Ambiguity Scale (1962). The scores obtained by the students reflected 3 types of personality: 1. Clearly Positive (scores ranging from 2 to 10, which means that the number of 'Yes' ranges from 25 to 30), 2. Neutral (scores ranging from 15 to 20), and 3. Clearly negative (scores ranging from 2 to 10). Types 1 and 3 were accepted as valid groups for study which have labeled Group A (G-A) and Group B (G-B). Four students have not shown enough responses to make meaningful inferences about their personality; thus the number of total sample is 62 and divided into two groups, each having 31 samples.

b. Instruments: Three instruments have been used in this study. They are two questionnaires for data collection, and two software (SPSS 13.0 and Online P-Value Calculator) for data analysis. The first questionnaire has been used for measuring Personality which consists of 35 questions (Appendix 1).

The second questionnaire has been used for measuring EFL learning (Four skills: listening, speaking, reading and writing) and it consists of 4 parts. Each part consists of 4 questions. For listening test one recorded passage has been played and the samples have answered 4 questions. For reading test, one written passage has been provided and the samples have answered 4 questions. In each case, 1 mark has been allotted for every right answer. The speaking test consists of 4 questions for measuring communicative ability, pronunciation, vocabulary use and syntax. Each of the questions on speaking carries 3 marks. For measuring writing skill, the samples have been asked 4 questions each of which requires writing sentences of different lengths. Each question in writing test carries 1 mark.

c. Data Collection: The EFL learning questionnaire has been administered to 62 samples and collected back. In the first stage, a questionnaire has been distributed among the samples to find out which type of personality they possess. And then, the samples have been asked to response to skill based questions. The answers of skilled based questions have also been collected back from the samples for further analysis.

d. Data Analysis: Firstly, descriptive analysis has been performed to compute the Means and Standard Deviations for the two groups to see the general situation– if Higher Secondary students' personality influences EFL learning. Secondly, a test has been employed to see if there are any differences in EFL learning between G-A and G-B. Correlation coefficient has also been calculated to find out the effects of personality on EFL learning.

09. Research Findings: Research findings are the results of survey conducted by the authors on 66 higher secondary level students. The survey result will be presented and interpreted in this part of the research paper.

a. Presentation: The survey result of personality assessment test on 66 individuals shows that among the samples 31 individuals possess positive personality and another 31 possess negative personality. The rest 4 fell in the middle of the two groups. So, they have been excluded in the final stage of sampling. Table 1 shows scores mean of two groups of students.

Table 1: Sample and Grouping Based on Score

| | G-A | | G-B |
|----------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| S ₁ | 25 | S ₃₂ | 7 |
| S ₂ | 30 | S ₃₃ | 10 |
| S ₃ | 32 | S ₃₄ | 2 |

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| S ₄ | 26 | S ₃₅ | 9 |
| S ₅ | 33 | S ₃₆ | 10 |
| S ₆ | 29 | S ₃₇ | 6 |
| S ₇ | 27 | S ₃₈ | 7 |
| S ₈ | 30 | S ₃₉ | 2 |
| S ₉ | 26 | S ₄₀ | 9 |
| S ₁₀ | 28 | S ₄₁ | 3 |
| S ₁₁ | 32 | S ₄₂ | 3 |
| S ₁₂ | 33 | S ₄₃ | 3 |
| S ₁₃ | 34 | S ₄₄ | 8 |
| S ₁₄ | 33 | S ₄₅ | 10 |
| S ₁₅ | 29 | S ₄₆ | 8 |
| S ₁₆ | 25 | S ₄₇ | 9 |
| S ₁₇ | 26 | S ₄₈ | 7 |
| S ₁₈ | 28 | S ₄₉ | 7 |
| S ₁₉ | 26 | S ₅₀ | 7 |
| S ₂₀ | 35 | S ₅₁ | 6 |
| S ₂₁ | 33 | S ₅₂ | 6 |
| S ₂₂ | 32 | S ₅₃ | 10 |
| S ₂₃ | 25 | S ₅₄ | 2 |
| S ₂₄ | 28 | S ₅₅ | 3 |
| S ₂₅ | 34 | S ₅₆ | 8 |
| S ₂₆ | 27 | S ₅₇ | 7 |
| S ₂₇ | 34 | S ₅₈ | 8 |
| S ₂₈ | 26 | S ₅₉ | 8 |
| S ₂₉ | 28 | S ₆₀ | 9 |
| S ₃₀ | 29 | S ₆₁ | 6 |
| S ₃₁ | 26 | S ₆₂ | 9 |
| | Mean: 29.3225 | | Mean: 6.4719 |

The first 31 students, mentioned above, who possess positive personality constitute G-A in this study and the other 31 students who possess negative personality constitute G-B. These two groups have then been provided with the EFL learning test questionnaire. The following table shows the overall score of both the groups in learning different skills. The first 31 students have positive personality and the rest of the students (from 32-62) possess negative personality.

Table 2: Scores of All Learners in Different Skills

| Student | Listening | Speaking | Reading | Writing | Student | Listening | Speaking | Reading | Writing |
|-----------------|-----------|----------|---------|---------|-----------------|-----------|----------|---------|---------|
| S ₁ | 4 | 12 | 4 | 4 | S ₃₂ | 2 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₂ | 3 | 12 | 3 | 3 | S ₃₃ | 2 | 8 | 3 | 2 |
| S ₃ | 2 | 11 | 4 | 3 | S ₃₄ | 2 | 9 | 2 | 1 |
| S ₄ | 2 | 10 | 4 | 2 | S ₃₅ | 1 | 7 | 1 | 3 |
| S ₅ | 4 | 11 | 2 | 3 | S ₃₆ | 1 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₆ | 2 | 11 | 3 | 4 | S ₃₇ | 2 | 7 | 1 | 3 |
| S ₇ | 3 | 12 | 4 | 2 | S ₃₈ | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₈ | 2 | 10 | 3 | 3 | S ₃₉ | 2 | 6 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₉ | 3 | 11 | 2 | 4 | S ₄₀ | 2 | 9 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₁₀ | 2 | 11 | 3 | 2 | S ₄₁ | 2 | 7 | 1 | 2 |
| S ₁₁ | 3 | 11 | 4 | 3 | S ₄₂ | 3 | 5 | 3 | 3 |
| S ₁₂ | 3 | 10 | 3 | 3 | S ₄₃ | 1 | 8 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₁₃ | 3 | 12 | 2 | 3 | S ₄₄ | 1 | 4 | 3 | 2 |

| | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------------|---|----|---|---|-----------------|---|----|---|---|
| S ₁₄ | 3 | 10 | 3 | 2 | S ₄₅ | 2 | 7 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₁₅ | 3 | 11 | 4 | 3 | S ₄₆ | 2 | 9 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₁₆ | 2 | 10 | 3 | 2 | S ₄₇ | 2 | 9 | 1 | 1 |
| S ₁₇ | 3 | 11 | 4 | 3 | S ₄₈ | 1 | 8 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₁₈ | 2 | 12 | 2 | 2 | S ₄₉ | 2 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| S ₁₉ | 3 | 10 | 3 | 3 | S ₅₀ | 1 | 4 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₂₀ | 3 | 11 | 3 | 3 | S ₅₁ | 3 | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| S ₂₁ | 2 | 9 | 4 | 3 | S ₅₂ | 3 | 8 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₂₂ | 3 | 12 | 3 | 4 | S ₅₃ | 1 | 10 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₂₃ | 3 | 9 | 4 | 3 | S ₅₄ | 1 | 6 | 2 | 2 |
| S ₂₄ | 3 | 11 | 3 | 3 | S ₅₅ | 2 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| S ₂₅ | 3 | 12 | 3 | 3 | S ₅₆ | 2 | 8 | 2 | 1 |
| S ₂₆ | 2 | 11 | 4 | 2 | S ₅₇ | 1 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| S ₂₇ | 2 | 11 | 3 | 3 | S ₅₈ | 3 | 11 | 1 | 2 |
| S ₂₈ | 3 | 12 | 4 | 3 | S ₅₉ | 2 | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| S ₂₉ | 2 | 11 | 3 | 2 | S ₆₀ | 1 | 8 | 2 | 1 |
| S ₃₀ | 3 | 12 | 4 | 3 | S ₆₁ | 1 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| S ₃₁ | 4 | 12 | 4 | 3 | S ₆₂ | 2 | 6 | 2 | 1 |

Table 3: EFL learning Overall Score

| G-A | | G-B | |
|-----------------|-------|-----------------|-------|
| Student number | Score | Student number | Score |
| S ₁ | 24 | S ₃₂ | 15 |
| S ₂ | 21 | S ₃₃ | 14 |
| S ₃ | 20 | S ₃₄ | 13 |
| S ₄ | 18 | S ₃₅ | 14 |
| S ₅ | 20 | S ₃₆ | 12 |
| S ₆ | 20 | S ₃₇ | 13 |
| S ₇ | 21 | S ₃₈ | 11 |
| S ₈ | 17 | S ₃₉ | 12 |
| S ₉ | 20 | S ₄₀ | 15 |
| S ₁₀ | 18 | S ₄₁ | 12 |
| S ₁₁ | 21 | S ₄₂ | 14 |
| S ₁₂ | 19 | S ₄₃ | 13 |
| S ₁₃ | 20 | S ₄₄ | 10 |
| S ₁₄ | 18 | S ₄₅ | 11 |
| S ₁₅ | 21 | S ₄₆ | 15 |
| S ₁₆ | 17 | S ₄₇ | 13 |
| S ₁₇ | 21 | S ₄₈ | 13 |
| S ₁₈ | 18 | S ₄₉ | 11 |
| S ₁₉ | 19 | S ₅₀ | 9 |
| S ₂₀ | 21 | S ₅₁ | 13 |
| S ₂₁ | 18 | S ₅₂ | 15 |
| S ₂₂ | 22 | S ₅₃ | 15 |
| S ₂₃ | 19 | S ₅₄ | 11 |
| S ₂₄ | 20 | S ₅₅ | 11 |
| S ₂₅ | 21 | S ₅₆ | 13 |
| S ₂₆ | 19 | S ₅₇ | 10 |
| S ₂₇ | 19 | S ₅₈ | 15 |

| | | | |
|-----------------|---------|-----------------|---------|
| S ₂₈ | 22 | S ₅₉ | 12 |
| S ₂₉ | 18 | S ₆₀ | 12 |
| S ₃₀ | 22 | S ₆₁ | 10 |
| S ₃₁ | 23 | S ₆₂ | 11 |
| Mean | 19.9032 | Mean | 12.5161 |

b. Interpretation**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics**

| | Mean | Standard Deviation | N |
|-------------------------|---------|--------------------|----|
| G-A EFL Learning Scores | 19.9032 | 1.7388 | 31 |
| G-A Personality | 29.3225 | | |
| G-B EFL Learning Scores | 12.5161 | 1.7487 | 31 |
| G-B Personality | 6.7419 | | |

$$r = \frac{n(\sum xy) - (\sum x)(\sum y)}{\sqrt{[n\sum x^2 - (\sum x)^2][n\sum y^2 - (\sum y)^2]}}$$

G-A: Personality and EFL Learning: $r_1 = .9802$

G-B: Personality and EFL learning: $r_2 = .8499$

As is seen in table 4, there is a difference between the mean scores of G-A and G-B EFL learning. In order to find out whether it is significant, the t-test was run. In this table, standard deviation shows the dispersion of G-A and G-B EFL learning scores around the mean. It also indicates almost the same standard deviation of EFL learning scores of the two groups, which justifies that the deviation of EFL learning scores in G-A is the same as G-B. In other words, students with positive personality and those with negative personality both are homogenous considering their EFL learning scores, although the former ones are significantly stronger than the later.

Both the correlations are above 0.8, which indicate that there is a strong positive correlation between personality and EFL learning. That is, positive personality facilitates EFL learning when negative personality debilitates the process.

t-test

$$t = \frac{\bar{X}_1 - \bar{X}_2}{\sqrt{\left(\frac{(N_1-1)S_1^2 + (N_2-1)S_2^2}{N_1 + N_2 - 2} \right) \left(\frac{1}{N_1} + \frac{1}{N_2} \right)}}$$

$$= 16.6789 \quad (\alpha = .05, df = 60)$$

When $\bar{X}_1 = 19.9032$

$\bar{X}_2 = 12.5161$

$N_1 = 31$

$N_2 = 31$

$S_1 = 1.7388$

$S_2 = 1.7487$

Result: Critical value of $t = 2.0000$ ($\alpha = .05, df = 60$)

Calculated value of $t = 16.6789$ ($\alpha = .05, df = 60$)

Table 5: The Result of t-test for Independent Groups of Samples

| EFL Learning | N | Mean | Standard Deviation | Degree of Freedom | T |
|--------------|----|---------|--------------------|-------------------|---------|
| G-A | 31 | 19.9032 | 1.7388 | 60 | 16.6789 |
| G-B | 31 | 12.5161 | 1.7487 | | |
| | | P=0 | | | |

Calculated value of t is greater than Critical value of t . So, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted. That is, personality has a significant and positive effect on EFL learning and positive personality has a better effect on EFL learning than negative personality.

c. Discussion:

In Bangladesh, English language is compulsory to be taught from class-1. So, our students should have been very proficient in English. But the picture is that they are not satisfactorily proficient in the language. There are many causes behind it: the teaching method, the teachers' skill, the teaching environment, the socio-economic background are some of them. Besides these, the individual learner differences are also important. They can be less motivated, possess negative attitude to learning, or they may possess specific personality traits that may create difficulty for their learning EFL. In the previous sections, we have seen that learners' personality can affect learning.

The researchers who have worked on learners' personality make certain claims. Adelaide Heyde (1979) studied the effect of self-esteem on performance of an oral production task by American college students learning French as a foreign language. She found that self-esteem correlated positively with the performance on the oral production measure. Gouiora (1972) and colleagues concluded that direct relationship existed between inhibition (a component of language ego) and pronunciation ability in a second language. The inhibitions, the defenses that learners place between them and other are important of L2/EFL success. On a continuum ranging from high to low risk taking, ELY (1986) noticed that high risk taking will yield positive result in L2 learning. Risk taking is closely related to self-esteem. Anxiety is always considered as negative aspect for L2/EFL learning. But Alpert and Haber (1960) and Scovel (1978) said anxiety can be of two types: facilitative and debilitating; facilitative anxiety is positive for learning a L2/EFL. For communication, we need to make certain assumptions correctly and we need to transcend our own ego boundaries, or in Guiora's term to permeate our ego boundaries, so that we can send and receive message clearly. So the emphatic learners learn better. Naiman et al. found that learners with greater tolerance for ambiguity scored higher in listening comprehension tests. Dewaele & Furnham (1998) said that extroversion is an important factor in the development of general oral communication competence.

Keeping in mind all these, the authors of the current paper have divided learners personality into positive personality (G-A) and negative personality (G-B). Under G-A the researchers keep high self-esteem, low inhibition, high risk taking, facilitative anxiety, high empathy, tolerance of ambiguity and extroversion. Low self-esteem, high inhibition, low risk taking, debilitating anxiety, low empathy, intolerance of ambiguity and introversion are put under G-B. So, in general, it can be said that the learners who possess positive personality are better learners and the traits under it are more effective and positive for learning EFL. The learners who possess negative personality face difficulties in learning and the traits under it are less affective and negative for EFL learning.

The collected data establish that in all the EFL learning tests conducted on 62 higher secondary level students, G-A did better than G-B. In the tests for listening, speaking, reading and writing, the students of G-A scored higher. So we can come to the decision that learners' personality has its effects on learning EFL. Among the personality traits self-esteem, risk taking, empathy, tolerance of ambiguity, extroversion etc. are positive and more effective than the others.

10. Conclusion

It can be intuitively presumed that personality has an effect on second Language acquisition. In this methodically conducted study, the statistical analysis of linguistic data has justified the presumption.

The result of this study leads to the following suggestions:

1. Negative personality should be treated psychologically for bringing better results in EFL learning.
2. EFL teachers should administer their students with negative traits of personality with additional care for better and useful EFL teaching.

This research has only found out the effect of learners' personality in general. It attempts only to find which personality traits are positive and help the learners learn better as well as which are negative and do not facilitate learning. But this is not the only way of measuring the effect. The researchers who are interested to work in this field can work on others sides of this field. Personality can be different among learners regarding their heritage that is whether they are from village or town or city. Personality can be different due to the

influence of gender and socio-economic personality factors. Research can be carried out to find out how other individual factors such as motivation, attitude, cognitive style etc work with personality or work against personality.

The effects of learners' personality do not remain constant. One trait that is facilitative in one study can be found harmful in another study. But still it is an important factor in considering success or failure in learning a foreign language.

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Appendix 1

Questionnaire for Measuring Learners' Personality

Put tick mark for each answer.

| Question | Content of the question | Yes | No |
|----------|--|-----|----|
| 1 | Do you get your sense of self-worth from the approval of others? | | |
| 2 | Whenever things go wrong in life, do you blame yourself? | | |
| 3 | Do you believe that being hard on yourself is the best motivation for change? | | |
| 4 | Do your good points seem ordinary and your failing all important? | | |
| 5 | Do you begin each day with a negative attitude? | | |
| 6 | Do you often feel frustrated because you cannot meet your goals? | | |
| 7 | Do you seldom able to meet your high standards for performance? | | |
| 8 | Do you have high expectations for yourself? | | |
| 9 | Do you try to do your best at everything you do? | | |
| 10 | Do you hardly feel that what you have done is good enough? | | |
| 11 | Would life with no danger in it be too dull for you? | | |
| 12 | Would you agree that an element of risk adds spice to life? | | |
| 13 | Would you prefer a job involving change, travel and variety even though the job is insecure? | | |
| 14 | Do you quite enjoy taking risks? | | |
| 15 | Do you think people spend too much effort guarding their future, with savings and insurance, etc.? | | |
| 16 | While speaking in foreign language class, do you feel quite sure of yourself? | | |
| 17 | Do you feel worry about making mistakes in language class? | | |
| 18 | Do you tremble when you know that you are going to be called on a language class? | | |
| 19 | Does it frighten you when you do not understand that the teaching is saying in the foreign language class? | | |
| 20 | Would more language classes bother you? | | |
| 21 | Do you feel like crying when watching a sad movie? | | |
| 22 | Can certain pieces of music really move you? | | |
| 23 | Is seeing a hurt animal by the side of the road very upsetting? | | |
| 24 | Do you not give others' feelings much thought? | | |
| 25 | Does seeing people being nice to each other makes you happy? | | |
| 26 | Do you think that an expert who does not come up with a definite answer probably does not know too much? | | |
| 27 | Would you like to live in a foreign country for a while? | | |
| 28 | Is there any problem that cannot be solved? | | |
| 29 | Do you think that people who fit their lives to a schedule probably miss most of the joy of living? | | |
| 30 | Do you think a good job is one where what is to be done and how it is to be done are always clear? | | |
| 31 | Are you the life of the party? | | |
| 32 | Do you not mind being the centre of attention? | | |

| | | | |
|----|--|--|--|
| 33 | Do you feel comfortable around people? | | |
| 34 | Do you start conversation? | | |
| 35 | Do you talk to a lot of different people at party? | | |

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