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Szakdolgozat

Kondorosi Fanni Mercédesz
angol nyelv és kultúra tanára – francia nyelv és kultúra tanára
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Szakdolgozat

Tanárok és diákok véleménye az introvertáltság előnyeiről és hátrányairól az idegennyelv-elsajátításban:

Interjúvizsgálat magyar középiskolai környezetben

Learners' and teachers' views on the advantages and disadvantages of being an introvert in second language acquisition:

An interview study in a Hungarian secondary school context

Témavezető:

Dr. Kálmán Csaba

egyetemi adjunktus

Készítette:

Kondorosi Fanni Mercédesz

angol nyelv és kultúra tanára –

francia nyelv és kultúra tanára

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Budapest, 2021. április 21.

Kondorosi Fanni

Aláírás

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Abstract

Introversion is a personality variable that is gaining increasing attention in SLA research. However, findings about introverts' and extraverts' L2 proficiency are rather ambiguous. This thesis intends to shed light on Hungarian teachers' and learners' views of the possible benefits and drawbacks that introversion can exert on second language acquisition. The research focuses on the perceptions of the advantages and disadvantages of being an introvert in language learning and introverts' preferred task types and work forms. In order to explore the aforementioned topics, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six teachers and six learners, complemented with an observation diary to increase the validity of the findings. The interviews and observations took place at Óbudai Árpád High School. The findings revealed that the majority of the participants would not think that introverts were successful language learners; however, they only named speaking skills as their weakness. According to the results, introverts are considered more proficient in receptive skills (listening and reading) than extraverts, and they were claimed to have a huge advantage in planning and structuring their writing. Finally, it was confirmed that they tend to favour individual or pair work, multiple-choice tasks, gap fills, matching headings and grammar drills.

1 Introduction

In a language classroom, it is rather unlikely that everyone will understand a new grammatical structure taught with a certain technique, or that each student will learn it at the same speed. That is why – apart from cognitive ones – the affective variables of learning should also be taken into consideration when researching the process of acquiring a second language. According to Brown (2006), the affective domain constitutes the emotional side of human behaviour, and the intrinsic facet of affectivity is what we call personality factors, which form one of the most important fields of individual differences research. Individual differences (IDs) are “characteristics or traits in respect of which individuals may be shown to differ from each other” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 1). In second language studies, one of the most researched aspects of personality within IDs is the extraversion–introversion dimension (Dörnyei, 2005), which is the focus of the present thesis as well.

According to stereotypes, introverts are quiet, shy and self-conscious individuals who are reluctant to speak; therefore, it is not surprising that most people would not associate the idea of an efficient language learner with them. According to researchers (e.g., Cain, 2012; Da Costa, 2012; Leung, 2015), most teachers favour active, enthusiastic and overly extraverted learners who dominate the discussions and raise their hands to answer all of their questions. However, Cain (2012) argues that teachers should recognise the potential lying in introverts. They may not be as fluent and accurate in speech as extraverts (Dewaele & Furnham, 2000), but speaking is only one aspect of a language, and as Kayaoğlu (2013) argues, L2 proficiency should not be judged exclusively on the basis of observable speech production. Contrary to common belief, successful language learners are not necessarily the extraverted ones; what is more, introverts can be even more proficient in some aspects of the language (e.g., Alavinia & Sameei, 2012; Boroujeni, Roohani & Hasanimanesh, 2015; Busch, 1982).

Eysenck (1965) argues that introverted learners are generally more proficient in receptive skills due to their personality traits (e.g., attentiveness, deeper and longer concentration). A wide range of studies has managed to prove this hypothesis (e.g., Alavinia & Sameei, 2012; Busch, 1982; Hasan & Yulianti, 2018; Zafar, Khan & Meenakshi, 2017); however, some others have not found such correlation between introversion and language proficiency (e.g., Farley & Truog, 1970; Jafarigohar, Ramezani & Soleimani, 2013). Similarly to reading and listening skills, introverted and extraverted L2 learners’ writing skills have been researched with ambiguous results. However, introverts have been found to have an

advantage over extraverts in the range of vocabulary and their well-thought-out and thoroughly planned compositions (Boroujeni, Hasanimanesh & Roohani, 2015; Ghani & Qanwal, 2019; Jensen & Ditiberio, 1984).

In the light of the above, it can be declared that research conducted on the link between the introversion-extraversion dimension and L2 proficiency is rather ambiguous. Thus, this area requires further investigation. In order to contribute to this research niche and find out more about the possible effects that introversion might exert on SLA, I conducted a qualitative interview study with six learners and six teachers of a Hungarian high school. Moreover, I kept an observation diary in which I noted my observations about introverted students and the scores they gave after ten lessons for each language task we had done that day. I was also curious about how teachers and learners view introversion and its effect on the four major linguistic skills. Finally, I intended to explore what language tasks and activities introverted learners tend to prefer, and how teachers differentiate in order to meet introverts' and extraverts' differing needs. The uniqueness of the study lies in the fact that it investigated learners' views on two foreign languages (English, French) simultaneously, and that the data from the observation diary were combined with learners' and teachers' beliefs extrapolated from the interviews. In line with the literature, my hypothesis was that teachers would report better performance for extraverted students in all fields, and that introverts would be more inclined towards individual or pair work, writing tasks and creative projects.

In the following section of the Literature Review, I will give an overview of the theoretical background of individual differences and personality research in language studies; moreover, I will expand on the views of society and teachers of introverts, on their L2 proficiency in terms of the four major linguistic skills (speaking, writing, reading and listening) and on their preferred language tasks. Subsequently, I will present the research method including the design of the instrument. In the Results and discussion section, I will describe and analyse my findings, comparing them to the literature. Finally, on the basis of my results, I will suggest a set of possible pedagogical implications and some topics for a follow-up study.

2 Literature review

The literature review focuses on how introversion affects SLA according to research, and presents a set of relevant studies conducted to determine the differences between

introverted and extraverted learners' L2 proficiency. First, I will present individual differences and personality in general, subsequently, I will elaborate on one specific personality variable, the extraversion-introversion dimension, closely examining its effects on the four major skills: speaking, writing, reading and listening.

2.1 Personality

The process of acquiring a language has been thoroughly researched by a great number of researchers; however, there have always been certain contradictions and differences in the results. One possible explanation for this ambiguity of data is that the affective domain of SLA and individual differences were not taken into account until the 19th century. Individual differences became a widely researched area in the educational context in the 1960s (Dörnyei, 2005). Dörnyei (2005) defines the term of individual differences as “dimensions of enduring personal characteristics that are assumed to apply to everybody and on which people differ by degree” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 1). One such variable is personality.

The notion of personality was defined by Pervin and John as follows: “personality represents those characteristics of the person that account for consistent patterns of feeling, thinking, and behaving” (Pervin & John, 2001, p. 4). As a result of the diverse studies conducted in the area of personality, two dominating paradigms emerged in the second half of the 20th century. One of them was Eysenck’s model (e.g., Eysenck, Eysenck & Barrett, 1985), which identified three major dimensions: *extraversion-introversion*, *neuroticism-emotional stability* and *psychoticism-tender-mindedness*. While the early Eysenck Personality Inventory (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1964) contained 57 items, this number was extended to 100 in the Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire (Eysenck, Eysenck & Barrett, 1985). Later on, the length was decreased again in order to maximise the reliability of the questionnaire, and the short form of the Revised Eysenck Personality Questionnaire was developed, featuring *extraversion*, *neuroticism*, *psychoticism* and the *lie scales*, each containing 12 items (Francis, Brown & Philipchalk, 1991).

The second major construct was the Big-Five model, which has also gained significant popularity in the field of personality research. It has certain overlaps with Eysenck’s model as it kept its first two dimensions; however, it replaced the third one, *psychoticism*, with *conscientiousness*, *agreeableness* and *openness to experience*. The uniqueness of this model is that it was developed by describing the primary traits of people with adjectives. For instance, the key adjectives that Dörnyei (2005) listed in order to associate introversion with

were “passive, quiet, reserved, withdrawn, sober, aloof, and restrained” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 15). However, the model was overly criticised by a number of researchers and was claimed to be insufficient to describe personality.

On the other hand, the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is still widely used both in scientific terms and in everyday life. For instance, many employers require that candidates should do a MBTI test before accepting their application, and it became the military’s primary instrument as well (Gerras & Wong, 2016). Gerras and Wong (2016) suggest that the model’s popularity may reside in its non-offensiveness (that is, there are no negative and positive indicators) and in the Barnum effect. The latter means that the statements can be applied to a wide range of people; therefore, it is likely that everyone will find something accurate in it (Dickson & Kelly, 1985).

The MBTI is based on the theory of the renowned psychologist, Carl Jung. He identified three dichotomies: Extraversion–Introversion, Sensing–Intuiting, and Thinking–Feeling, to which Myers and her daughter added a fourth one: Judging–Perceiving (Dörnyei, 2005). Some combinations of these variables are good indicators of an ideal employee of some kind; therefore, some researchers attempted to identify the ideal L2 learner with the aid of the MBTI. To mention one example, Ehrman (1989) outlined the strengths and weaknesses of each dichotomy. For instance, he argued that the benefits of introversion are “concentration and self-sufficiency”, and one of its drawbacks is the fact that the “need to process ideas before speaking sometimes led to avoidance of linguistic risks in conversation” (Ehrman, 1989, as cited in Brown, 2006, p. 160). Also, Lawrence’s study (1984) found that extraverts perform better in group work whereas introverts prefer individual work. Thus, with this point, we arrived at the main focus of this thesis.

2.2 The extraversion-introversion dimension

2.2.1 Teachers’ views on introversion

The MBTI defines the extraversion–introversion dichotomy based on “where people prefer to focus their attention and get their energy from: the outer world of people and activity or their inner world of ideas and experiences” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 19). Brown’s (2006) definition of these two terms is the following:

Extroversion is the extent to which a person has 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, on the other hand, is the extent to which a person derives a sense of wholeness and fulfilment apart from a reflection of this self from other people (Brown, 2006, p. 151).

The above-mentioned definitions suggest that the reason behind an extraverted learner's talkativeness is not necessarily their superior knowledge: they may simply need the affirmation of others. Nevertheless, Da Costa (2012) observed a strong bias in favour of extraverts when he interviewed ten language teachers on their views of introversion/extraversion and language proficiency. The results clearly demonstrate that most teachers (70%) strongly agree with the statement that extraverted learners perform better in language classes.

Leung (2015) argues that students are generally defined by talkativeness; therefore, negative assumptions about introverts may arise in the classroom. According to her, teachers tend to regard the introverted student as "someone with a problem" (Leung, 2015, p. 57). This might happen because of certain misconceptions about introversion. For instance, Cain (2012) claims that some people tend to confuse *shyness* with *introversion*; however, in reality, these are two separate terms: "Shyness is the fear of social disapproval or humiliation, while introversion is a preference for environments that are not overstimulating" (Cain, 2012, p. 24). Consequently, the concept of shy extraverts is just as real as that of shy introverts. At the same time, Leung (2015) considers it worthwhile to mention that introversion and extraversion are not fixed traits but a spectrum; therefore, no one is entirely introverted or extraverted. However, according to Jung, everyone has an inherent preference of one over the other.

Burruss and Kaenzig (1999) claim that introverts need to be left alone sometimes to recharge, they form very few but deep attachments and they communicate best one-on-one. They argue that the school environment is often overstimulating for introverts because it is loud, crowded, superficial and focused on action, not reflection. Their suggestions for teachers are to differentiate instruction and to provide private space, quiet time and small group work for introverts, and even coping strategies for those times when they have to act extroverted. Such coping strategies might be the following: practice public speech, debate, drama, music, social skills, dance and mentoring. Further areas that need differentiation are "assignments, grouping patterns, activity levels, assessment options, wait time, and expectations" (Burruss & Kaenzig, 1999). However, according to Cain (2012), there is a

deep-rooted bias in our society promoting that extraversion is the norm and introverts should also try to behave in a more extraverted way. She intends to raise awareness of the dangers of this bias, that is, children can internalise the message that something is inherently wrong with them. Moreover, she claims that most workplaces and even the school environment are designed for extraverts, from the arrangement of classroom desks to the constant promotion of collaborative work. Respecting the importance of group work, she advises letting introverts think and reflect by themselves and leaving them some privacy, autonomy and freedom to liberate their flow of ideas and creativity.

Thus, partly driven by Cain's (2012) and Burruss and Kaenzig's (1999) work, Leung (2015) decided to investigate teachers' views on introverted learners, exploring how teachers differentiate instruction to meet both extraverted and introverted learners' needs. She found that some teachers lay emphasis on the idea that introverts should physically be alone sometimes; therefore, they create separated spaces for introverts with the aid of collapsible walls where they could work and concentrate alone, safe from outside stimulation. Another suggestion was to provide different options for students about how to learn (e.g., alone or by working with a partner), and how to be tested. Moreover, teachers claimed that introverts feel reassured by discussing their responses with a partner before having to present them in front of the whole class, so they generally allow time for that. Finally, one teacher suggested the organisation of heterogeneous groups where introverts and extraverts could work together and learn from each other. Leung's (2015) conclusion was that all teachers should differentiate instruction in terms of space, grouping strategies and choice and flexibility regarding the tasks.

2.2.2 Introverted learners' L2 proficiency

The amount of research dealing with extraverts' and introverts' L2 proficiency and in-class performance is huge; however, findings are rather ambiguous. Initially, most researchers had the preconception that extraverts should be more successful in SLA than introverts due to their talkativeness and their willingness to communicate. For instance, Busch (1982) conducted a study among Japanese students in order to prove that extraversion has a beneficial effect on L2 proficiency. However, the findings contradicted her hypothesis and, in fact, revealed that extraversion correlates negatively with pronunciation. In the discussion, she suggested the explanation that introverts might focus more attentively on the clear articulation of the words. What is more, introverts scored better on reading and grammar tests as well.

Contrary to early assumptions, Dörnyei (2005) claimed that research shows a negative correlation between extraversion and academic success “due to the introverts’ greater ability to consolidate learning, lower distractibility, and better study habits” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 21). Brown (2006) concluded that extraverts might have certain advantages over introverts in terms of communication and face-to-face interactions; however, not in listening, reading, and writing. In the next sections, I will present introverted learners’ advantages and disadvantages in terms of the four linguistic skills: reading, listening, writing and speaking.

2.2.2.1 Introverted learners’ advantages and disadvantages in speaking skills

The effect of the introversion-extraversion dimension on speech production and fluency remained an underresearched area up until the early 21st century when Dewaele and Furnham (2000) set out to investigate its relevance in SLA, unifying the research on short-term memory, psycholinguistic and applied linguistic studies and personality psychology studies. They explored six subsets of speech production: style (formal/informal), speech rate, hesitation, lexical richness, accuracy and length of utterance. The findings revealed a significant positive correlation between extraversion and speech rate, both in informal and formal situations, which can be a consequence of introverts’ lower tolerance for stress. The same could be observed in terms of hesitation as it correlated negatively with extraversion in formal situations, which also indicates that introverts speak with more pauses when under pressure. However, lexical richness showed a positive correlation with introversion in formal situations, implying a trade-off between fluency and lexis. Finally, the researchers found that introverts produced longer utterances in informal situations than in formal ones; however, when pressure increased, “their arousal levels exceed the optimal level and, having less cognitive resources at their disposal, their utterances become shorter, their speech is less fluent and there are more unintended pauses” (Dewaele & Furnham, 2000, p. 362). In conclusion, the authors suggest that the interpersonal stress arising in formal situations has a stronger effect on introverts’ speech production; as a consequence of which, their speech loses its automaticity, the cognitive processes overload their working memory, and their speech slows down, becomes more segmented and less accurate. On the other hand, they use a wider range of vocabulary than extraverts.

Furthermore, when Suliman (2015) investigated the role of the extraversion-introversion dimension in SLA, she found that introverted learners tended to avoid interaction

in English lessons for fear of embarrassing themselves by saying something incorrectly. “When they spoke; however, they produced well-formed sentences taking time to compose them” (Suliman, 2015, p. 112). Her findings resonate with Busch’s (1982) conclusion that introverts speak with a better pronunciation than extraverts: “When they were asked to read out loud in the class, they were reading slowly and carefully with good pronunciation but with low speech rates” (Suliman, 2015, p. 112).

2.2.2.2 Introverted learners’ advantages and disadvantages in writing skills

Although a vast number of studies have been conducted to determine which personality type, extraverted or introverted, is more proficient in writing, there has been no consensus reached among researchers. However, certain subsets of writing (e.g., accuracy, lexical richness, spelling, etc.) were found to correlate either with introversion or extraversion.

Boroujeni, Hasanimanesh and Roohani (2015) conducted a study with Iranian EFL learners, exploring the possible impact of the introversion-extraversion dimension on their writing performance in terms of the following subsets: content, organization, language, mechanics and vocabulary. The results revealed that introverts scored significantly better in all subsets except organisation. The writers reasoned as follows: “This may be due to some of the introverts’ personal characteristics that the extroverts lack, such as being careful, having more concentration in their solitude, and ability to generate much more ideas alone” (Boroujeni, Hasanimanesh & Roohani, 2015, p. 212).

Jensen and Ditiberio (1984) explored the link between each dimension of the MBTI and writing skills, intending to identify the possible difficulties students might experience in writing and the solutions to these problems. First, they observed that extraverted learners are not likely to work from outlines or drafts; on the contrary, they leap into action with no planning. Moreover, extraverts find writing too isolated a process; they develop more ideas by engaging in conversations or discussions about the topic. Thus, the authors came up with the solution that extraverted learners should speak their drafts into a tape recorder or engage in a freewriting process because “they think better when writing quickly, impulsively, and uncritically” (Jensen & Ditiberio, 1984, p. 289). They also suggested that teachers should allow extraverts to present a talk on the topic instead of, or before, writing about it.

Introverted learners were found to have less difficulty with writing because, contrary to extraverts, they plan the content of their texts in advance and they tend to follow the advised steps of the writing process: prewriting, writing and rewriting. The authors claim that introverts generate more ideas in isolation and they think and reflect on their arguments; therefore, “teachers should give advance notice and time for reflection ("wait time") for introverts to consider before becoming involved in activities or discussions” (Jensen & Ditiberio, 1984, p. 288). On the other hand, introverts may face the same difficulty as one of the writers’ participants who became blocked because “he wanted to have practically every word thought out before putting anything on paper” (Jensen & Ditiberio, 1984, p. 290). For these learners, the authors advise starting writing in an extraverted way, without thinking too much, and develop points while in action.

2.2.2.3 Introverted learners’ advantages and disadvantages in reading skills

Eysenck (1965) claims that introverted learners are generally more proficient in receptive skills: “they generally have a reflective and thoughtful personality type that suits the receptive kinds of tasks” (Eysenck, 1965, pp. 59-60). A vast number of studies managed to reveal a positive correlation between introversion and reading skills; however, some others showed no such difference between introverts’ and extraverts’ scores.

For instance, Farley and Truog (1970) explored the relationship between the extraversion-introversion variable and reading skills; however, they found no correlation. Jafarigohar, Ramezani and Soleimani (2013) studied the performance of introverts and extraverts on multiple-choice and true/false reading tests with the same result. Moreover, Mall-Amiri and Nakhaie (2013) intended to investigate the difference between introverted and extraverted EFL learners’ L2 proficiency in terms of reading and listening skills, and they found that introverts performed fairly better on reading tests; however, the correlation was not statistically significant.

On the other hand, Busch (1982) conducted a study in order to prove her hypothesis that extraverts are more proficient language learners than introverts, and contrary to her presumptions, the findings revealed that introverted learners had better reading skills and were more accurate in grammar and pronunciation than extraverts. In addition, Hasan and Yulianti (2018) observed that the more introverted a learner was, the better he or she scored on reading comprehension tests.

Mall-Amiri and Nakhaie (2013) explain introverted learners' higher reading proficiency with their studious, attentive and conscientious nature. Similarly, Eysenck (1957) argues that extraverts are too sociable to concentrate for a long time and to learn as attentively as introverts. In conclusion, while speaking and group work fit extraverts' way of learning, reading is the primary means for independent learning; therefore, it is more convenient for the attentive and less sociable introverts (Mall-Amiri & Nakhaie, 2013).

2.2.2.4 Introverted learners' advantages and disadvantages in listening skills

Research shows that introverts are actually more proficient in listening than extraverts. To begin with, a significant positive correlation was found between introversion and listening skills by Alavinia and Sameei (2012) when they investigated introverted and extraverted Iranian EFL learners' listening skills. Moreover, when Mall-Amiri and Nakhaie (2013) compared the performance of extraverted and introverted intermediate female EFL learners on listening and reading tasks, they reported significantly higher scores for introverts on listening tests.

Another similar study was conducted by Hasan, Muharrami and Setiyadi (2013) in order to reveal whether the introversion-extraversion variable influences learners' achievement in listening skills. According to the results, introverted learners scored better on listening tests than extraverts. What is more, different subsets of listening were also measured, such as listening for the main idea, listening for specific information, inference and vocabulary; and introverts achieved higher scores on each subset. The authors relate the results to introverts' personality traits, such as thoughtfulness and carefulness, arguing that these characteristics help them perform better on listening tasks while extraverts' sociability and talkativeness make them more proficient in speaking.

Finally, Zafar, Khan and Meenakshi's (2017) research addressing the differences between introverts' and extraverts' L2 proficiency showed a strong positive correlation between introversion and listening skills. The writers conclude their paper by laying emphasis on the fact that their findings refute extraverted learners' academic superiority presumed by a number of researchers and teachers.

2.2.3 Introverted learners' preferred task types and work forms

Cohen (2003) defines language tasks in the following way: "it is primarily meaningful but may also be intended to elicit certain grammatical forms, it has a goal which needs to be worked towards, it is evaluated by means of the outcome, and it has a link to the real world" (Cohen, 2003, p. 281). He argues that the type of language tasks can highly influence learners' performance, and that each task requires different strategy use.

Cain (2012) claims that introverts tend to like individual projects whereas extraverts prefer movement, stimulation and collaborative work. Similarly, Leung (2015) found that introverts preferred working on their own while extraverts favoured inductive instruction, open discussions, physical movements and colourful tasks. According to Myers and McCaulley (1985), introverts tend to search for learning situations that enable them to work individually or in small groups, and which require written performance and deductive approaches. Lestari, Sada and Suhartono (2015) observed that extraverts performed best in tasks involving some kinds of physical activities; however, they found it difficult to quiet down, read or engage in listening tasks. On the contrary, introverts seemed to enjoy reading and writing activities, and they preferred to work individually. That is why Burruss and Kaenzig (1999) argue that introverts and extraverts need different instruction and methods. They suggest the application of small groups, individual learning opportunities, journaling, quiet time and book clubs. They also raise awareness of the fact that most introverts need wait time and a lower level of stimulation in order to work the most effectively. Moreover, they encourage teachers to modify the curriculum to fit introverts' needs as well, given that it was created for the "typical student".

In conclusion, there is a growing body of literature on the impact of the extraversion-introversion variable on SLA, and the original view that extraverts are more efficient language learners than introverts now seems obsolete, having been refuted by a vast number of studies (e.g., Hasan & Yulianti, 2018; Kayaoğlu, 2013; Mall-Amiri & Nakhaie, 2013;). Nevertheless, the bias against introverts is still present in our society, and most teachers still associate extraversion and talkativeness with bigger academic success (Cain, 2012; Da Costa, 2012). Research conducted on the relationship between extraversion-introversion and language proficiency reveals that introverted learners do face difficulties in terms of speech production; however, they tend to perform better in receptive skills. In writing, introverts have the considerable advantage that they plan and reflect before beginning to write the text; on the

other hand, they might get blocked by too much reflection (Jensen & Diliberto, 1984). It is also apparent from the literature that introverts prefer working individually or in small groups, they prefer to manifest their knowledge in writing and to learn in a deductive way (Lestari, Sada & Suhartono, 2015). Researchers (e.g., Leung, 2015) suggest that teachers should differentiate instruction and modify the curriculum if it is necessary in order to fit both introverted and extraverted students' needs.

3 Research method

After reviewing the literature on perceptions of introverts and the multiple ways introversion might affect SLA, I was curious to find out more about the views of Hungarian secondary school teachers and learners on the advantages and disadvantages of being an introvert in language learning. Moreover, I intended to explore what language tasks and activities introverted learners tend to prefer and whether teachers provide an opportunity to practice them as well besides the more extraverted-compatible tasks (e.g., group work, group discussions, inductive learning). Thus, the research questions I formulated were the following:

1. What are teachers' and learners' perceptions of introversion and its effects on language learning?
2. What advantages do introverted language learners have over their extroverted classmates in learning a second language in teachers' and learners' views?
3. How do introversion and extraversion influence language learners' writing proficiency according to teachers and learners?
4. Which task types are the most suitable for introverts in teachers' and learners' views?

Having been interested in an affective factor of language learning, which, according to Dörnyei (2005), should be regarded as a dynamic and situated variable, qualitative research methods seemed to be the best options for data collection. As Corbin and Strauss (2008) argue, qualitative research is more suitable to explore the inner experience of participants and to conduct a holistic and comprehensive study; moreover, it provides an opportunity for the researcher to connect with participants and learn more about human nature. In order to connect with participants and to shed light on their views and perceptions, a semi-structured interview guide complemented with an observation diary seemed to be the best choice.

According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), observation is recommended to be used as an additional form of data collection as it provides an insight into situations and is extremely useful when the participants cannot answer some questions in the interview due to their lack of awareness of the underlying causes of a phenomenon. In addition, keeping a diary prevents researchers from relying solely on their biases and assumptions, and encourages them to come up with reasons for making decisions (Corbin & Strauss, 2008). Finally, the semi-structured interview guide seemed to be the most suitable research tool taking into consideration its flexible nature. What is more, it gives way to the rise of additional questions and topics, enabling the researcher to delve deeper into the subject (Corbin & Strauss, 2008).

3.1 Setting and participants

I conducted the interviews and the observations at Óbudai Árpád High School in Budapest, which is a state-funded school that lays particular emphasis on language development. The language teachers I contacted were mostly middle-aged females with at least nine years of teaching experience. They all work at Óbudai Árpád High School and have 22 to 23 language lessons per week, except for one participant who is vice-principal; therefore, she only has one group this year. Most of the participants teach languages from A1 to C1 level (see Table 3).

Table 3 Participants of the teacher interviews

Pseudonyms	Age	Workplace	Experience (years)	Languages taught	Other subjects	Grades and levels	Language lessons per week
Patricia	56	Óbudai Árpád High School	35	Russian (no longer taught), English	Hungarian (no longer taught)	9th, 10th and 11th graders, all levels	22
Lauren	34	Óbudai Árpád High School	9	English and French	-	8th, 9th, 10th and 11th graders, all levels	22
Emily	52	Óbudai Árpád High School	27	English	Hungarian (no longer taught)	7 th to 11 th graders, all levels	22
Melissa	57	Óbudai Árpád High School	24	English and Russian	-	7 th to 11 th , A2-C1	22

Kim	58	Óbudai Árpád High School	22	English	maths and chemistry (no longer taught)	all grades and levels	23
Paris	58	Óbudai Árpád High School	35	English	Hungarian (no longer taught)	at present moment, only 11 th graders (she is vice principal) who are at B2 level	4

I sought out my learner participants from the two groups where I was teaching French and English. First, I set out to observe my students, continuously taking notes about their in-class behaviour in my observation diary. Subsequently, I devised a questionnaire based on the Eysenck Personality Inventory (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1964) in order to seek out the introverted learners. From my French group of 11th graders, four students out of 11 turned out to be introverted, and from my English group of ninth graders, seven learners out of 15 gave typical introverted responses (see Tables 1-2 in Appendix D). Thus, I continued their observation and later on, I conducted the interviews with the six most introverted learners chosen from these two groups.

The class of ninth graders is specialised in mathematics. They are learning English in two separate groups created on the basis of their level of English. The introverted participants of the interviews are from the intermediate group in which I am teaching. They are 15 years old, they have three English lessons per week and English is their first foreign language. The majority started learning a second foreign language in this school term. In the other group from which I have chosen two introverted participants, the students have been learning French for two and a half years as their second foreign language, and currently, they are at A2-B1 level. They have four lessons per week, and they come from various classes (from class “A” specialised in English, class “B” specialised in mathematics, class “C” specialised in sciences and class “D” specialised in German).

Table 4 Participants of the learner interviews

Pseudonyms	Age	School	Foreign languages	Number of years learning the language	Level	Lessons per week	Using the languages outside school
Clara	15	Óbudai Árpád High School	Spanish and English	English: 7 Spanish: 0,5	Eng.: B2, Sp.: A1	Eng.: 3, Sp.: 2	watching films
Dean	15	Óbudai Árpád High School	German and English	English: 7 German: 4,5	Eng.: B2, German: A2	Eng.: 3, German: 2	holidays abroad
Madeline	15	Óbudai Árpád High School	English and Spanish	Eng.: 9, Sp.: 0,5	Eng.: B2, Sp.: A1	Eng.: 3, Sp.: 3	pen pals
Tana	17	Óbudai Árpád High School	English and French	Eng.: 13, Fr.: 2,5	Eng.: C1, Fr.: A2-B1	Eng.: 6, Fr.: 4	watching films, reading
Brad	17	Óbudai Árpád High School	English and French	Eng.: 9, Fr.: 2,5	Eng.: B2-C1, Fr.: B1	Eng.: 5, Fr.: 4	watching films
Shira	14	Óbudai Árpád High School	English, Spanish, French	Fr.: from early childhood, Eng.: 5, Sp.: 0,5	Fr.: C1-C2, Eng.: B2, Sp.: A1	Eng.: 3, Sp.: 3	communication with her family members ¹

3.2 The instruments

On the basis of the literature, I devised a semi-structured interview guide for the interviews with teachers, consisting of a biographical question part and four big sections covering my research questions. The biographical questions aimed to find out some personal information about my interviewees including their age, workplace, years of experience, the languages and other subjects they taught, the level and grade of their groups and the number of lessons they had per week. In the next section of the interview, I intended to explore teachers' views on introversion and language learners in general, focusing particularly, and indirectly, on whether they consider introverted learners to be disadvantaged in language

¹ Her stepmother is English and her father is half-French, so they use these two languages on a daily basis. She also needs to speak Spanish because her father lives in Barcelona.

learning. The next part focused on the advantages of introverted learners in SLA. The third part investigated the effects of introversion on writing skills. Finally, the last set of questions attempted to discover which language tasks and work forms introverts tend to prefer based on their experience, which makes it possible for them to apply differentiation techniques. Minor modifications were made to the questions after the guide had been reviewed by my supervisor. For instance, the questions “Does it occur sometimes that you more often call on students who are talkative, more active and keener to speak than on the quiet ones?” and “Do you view introversion as something that prevents learners from becoming proficient users of a foreign language?” were found to be biased; therefore, they were changed to “What kind of students do you tend to call on more often?” and “How does introversion affect language learning in your opinion?”.

The interview guide I devised for the learners followed the structure and the questions of the teacher interview guide, altering them here and there if it was necessary (e.g., the question “What kind of students do you tend to call on more often?” was altered to “How often do you raise your hand or speak voluntarily during language lessons?”). The biographical questions covered the same topics with one additional question about the application of foreign languages outside the classroom. I conducted the interviews with learners after having finished interviewing the teachers; therefore, I was able to include their suggestions for additional questions in the interview guide of learners. For example, one of the teachers suggested asking learners about their opinion on digital learning in the hope of proving the teacher’s presumption that they like learning in solitude and being away from the chaos of an ordinary school day. Furthermore, more interviewees reported on a highly fascinating phenomenon that some introverted students feel more self-confident when speaking in a foreign language than speaking in their native language. I became curious, so I included this question in the first section of the interview guide.

In order to increase the credibility and validity of my research findings, I used the method of triangulation and employed another research method as well: the observation. I started to observe my students at the beginning of the school term; although the process became more efficient after having conducted the personality tests. After that, I was able to focus only on the introverted students, noting down their in-class behaviour, their performance on oral and writing tests and the ways they interacted with me or their classmates. In order to make the data sought out from the last part of the interviews dealing with introverts’ preferred task types even more reliable, I had my students fill out a brief

questionnaire on Google Forms, rating the tasks that we had done that day on a scale of four where one was “I did not like that task at all” and four was “I really liked that task”. We repeated the process after ten successive lessons, first with the 11th graders, next, with the ninth graders. I administered the scores they gave for each task in tables (e.g., Table 5).

Table 5 9th graders’ scores for the tasks of the English lesson of 18 January

Pseudonyms	Speaking: recording their voice	Speaking in pairs: storytelling on a chosen prompt	Vocabulary (collecting crimes based on a picture)	Listening exercise (radio programme)
Clara	4	3	4	2
Colin	3	3	3	4
Madeline	3	4	3	4
Jess	3	4	3	4
Robert	4	3	4	4
Shira	4	4	3	4
Extravert 1	4	4	4	4
Extravert 2	3	3	4	3
Extravert 3	3	3	4	4
Extravert 4	4	4	4	4
Extravert 5	3	4	4	4
Extravert 6	3	4	4	4

3.3 Procedure

I started the interview process with the teachers in January 2021. After conducting the first pilot interview, it was suggested that the questions should be simplified because my interviewee was not able to answer a few of them. However, after the second pilot interview, I became convinced that no simplifications were needed; I only had to elaborate on some of the questions. Thus, the only alteration I made was concerning the question about introverts’ strength in writing and about teachers’ differentiation techniques. For the former, I listed a few aspects of writing skills that could be mentioned, that is grammatical accuracy, spelling, range of vocabulary or following a model/sample. As regards the latter, I included a set of possible answers in brackets (e.g., giving time for students to discuss their ideas with their partners first, offering the option to work alone, giving them alone time, forming homogeneous/heterogeneous groups, inductive/deductive teaching etc.). On the interview guide for learners, I made no alterations. After the first pilot interview, it became apparent that the guide was ready to use.

In January, two interviews with the teachers took place in the school and the rest was conducted online on Zoom due to the pandemic. Having finished the teacher interviews, I continued with the learners between January and February. With the learners, all interviews were conducted online. In all cases, the interviews were in Hungarian, the quotations in the Results and discussion section are my own translations. With the teachers, the interviews lasted from 30 to 40 minutes whereas with the learners, the interviews took 20 to 30 minutes as they gave less detailed answers.

3.4 Data analysis

To begin the data analysis, I transcribed the audio recordings of the interviews. The transcripts of the teacher interviews reached 10302 words and that of the learners were 3767 words; therefore, I possessed a sufficient amount of data to analyse and compare. In order to analyse the data and to increase the validity of my findings, the Constant Comparative Method (CCM) was used. This method consists of categorizing, coding, delineating categories and connecting them (Boeije, 2002). The first comparison should be made within a single interview; next, between interviews within the same group and finally, between different groups (Boeije, 2002). Thus, I set out to analyse the interviews one by one, collecting themes that I considered worthwhile to include in the analysis. If the themes reappeared in another interview, I wrote down the number of occurrences (e.g., 4/6 teachers) in order to keep count of what was mentioned and how often. First, I analysed the teachers' responses, comparing them to my observations and to the literature. Second, I proceeded with the interviews of the learners. Finally, I contrasted the answers of the two groups, drawing the relevant conclusions.

4 Results and discussion

4.1 Teacher interviews

4.1.1 Teachers' views on introversion

After the biographical questions, I intended to investigate high school teachers' views on introversion and on language learners in general. I asked them to describe their favourite students, introverted learners and the ones that they consider efficient in SLA. I was curious

whether they view introversion as a deficit that can have negative effects on SLA or as a simple personality trait.

The results reinforced Leung's (2015) study arguing that most teachers favour extraverted students. Three out of six teachers listed typical extraverted traits – humorous, talkative, mischievous – when asked about their favourite students. Moreover, their definitions of the successful learner had the terms “communication” and “speaking” in common. Later on, all of them agreed that introversion has negative effects on speaking. This shows that none of the teachers would associate introverts with efficient language learners. Paris even went so far as to declare that “Thinking about successful learners, the first thing that comes to my mind is definitely not an introverted learner” (Paris)¹. Thus, Leung's (2015) claim that “Students are predominantly defined by talkativeness” is reflected in my findings as well (Leung, 2015, p. 8). Melissa explained this phenomenon as follows:

... with extraverts, the result of the teaching process is more immediate, more spectacular, they start speaking earlier. They know ten words but they use them in a varied and accurate way, which impresses language teachers and flatters their vanity, making them go „Oh, that's so great, that kid has such a big knowledge and can even use it!”. (Melissa).²

Furthermore, three teachers defined the introverted learner as someone who does not raise his or her hand, five teachers also underlined their tendency to avoid speaking and two of them described them as antisocial and reserved. It was only Melissa's definition that almost entirely equalled Dörnyei's (2005) one. Dörnyei (2005) claimed that introverts are people who get their energy and focus their attention on their inner world rather than the outside world. In Melissa's words: “Introverted learners are not necessarily the ones who don't speak that easily during a lesson (...), but the ones who don't expect motivation and reinforcement from the outside world. They go their own ways” (Melissa)³. Moreover, she claimed that introverts are more autonomous and less teacher-dependent learners.

On the contrary, Paris not only described introverted learners as quiet ones, but she also implied that introversion is generally a learning difficulty: “I have an introverted student who has no problem at all, even if he's awfully introverted. But I also have a few who were diagnosed with this and that” (Paris)⁴. According to Leung (2015), introverts differ so greatly

from the usually extraverted teachers that they tend to see the introverted student as someone with a problem.

Also, two teachers claimed that introverts have more effective or thorough learning strategies; therefore, they are exceptionally smart and hardworking students. This proves the results of the studies described by Dörnyei (2005), reporting that introverts have a “greater ability to consolidate learning, lower distractibility, and better study habits” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 21). Indeed, in the observation diaries I kept (see Appendix E), I noted that every single introverted student was extremely hard-working and amongst them were the most proficient users of the language. For instance, I stated that “(Tana) always does the extra homework and takes notes during the lessons” (p. 1), and that Colin scored the best on the proficiency test they did at the beginning of the term (p. 6). I also observed the following concerning a simple note-taking task: “(Jess) prepared a detailed and thorough essay as homework while I only asked them to take notes (keywords) on a chapter in the book. He’s very hard-working, always being among the first people to turn in assignments” (p. 7).

However, introverts have little opportunity to show their knowledge at school, given that they almost never raise their hands to speak, as stated by three teachers. In my diaries, I observed the same. I described most introverts by being “shy” and “quiet”, and I stated a number of times that they never raise their hands or speak voluntarily. In Kim’s explanation, “they might be afraid of saying something wrong” (Kim)⁵. According to Suliman (2015), introverts tend to avoid situations in which they can embarrass themselves by saying something wrong or being unable to speak. As a consequence, three teachers admitted that they call on extraverted students more often and that they have to consciously remind themselves to make introverts speak as well.

4.1.2 Introverted learners’ advantages in SLA

In the next section of the interview, I explored what advantages introverted learners could have over their extraverted classmates. To begin with, three teachers out of six mentioned grammatical accuracy and logic as introverts’ most significant strengths. I also observed that most of my introverted students had outstanding knowledge and understanding of grammar. One particular occasion when I took notice of it was when we learnt a new grammar with my French group and, as I noted: “(Rory) understood the grammar quite easily and quickly. In the pair work, she was put together with a less talented student, and she explained the rule to her and helped her do the drilling exercises. She was acting like a real

teacher, guiding her partner and giving her feedback (“Yes, very good! Now, how should you form the next sentence?”) (p. 3).

However, opinions about introverts’ range of vocabulary compared to extraverts varied to a great extent. Half of the teachers stated that extraverts have a wider range of lexis, reasoning that “they seem to be picking up vocabulary without a conscious effort” (Patricia)⁵. On the other hand, the three other teachers claimed that vocabulary is rather the strength of the hardworking and methodical introverts who “learn the expressions and vocabulary in a thorough way” (Emily)⁷. But surprisingly, all of them agreed that introverts use a richer vocabulary in writing, when they have enough time to think and recall the best vocabulary options. Paris added the following: “(In writing,) they can express their opinion more freely given that only the teacher will see it, whom they have already accepted” (Paris)⁸.

According to Dewaele and Furnham (2000), introverts do have a richer vocabulary than extraverts, however, in speech, to the detriment of fluency. This is what I observed when I asked my group to present their project or to tell a summary in speech. Brad “spoke a bit hesitantly and slowly with a few grammar mistakes” (p. 3), Madeline “used simple words and grammatical structures. She was a bit slow and hesitant and her story was less coherent” (p. 10), and Robert “used complex grammatical structures and linking words, but spoke less fluently with more pauses” (p. 10). What is more, some of them became so nervous that they completely blocked down and could not speak at all: “She couldn’t even start it, and looked as if she was going to faint. I had to ask whether she was alright and some helping questions to elicit the summary” (p. 7).

Therefore, it is not surprising that all teachers agreed that introversion has a negative effect on speech production. However, according to Lauren, it depends on whether they have to speak in front of the whole class or face-to-face with the teacher. She also emphasised that it is their “self-consciousness” which prevents them from concentrating on what they say: “They feel too self-conscious, thinking that everyone is watching them, especially when they have to give a presentation. Because then, they focus on the performance rather than on the content of it.” (Lauren)⁹. Moreover, as Melissa added, “They tend to read out from their notes and improvise less” (Melissa)¹⁰. This is what I observed when I asked Tana to perform the rehearsed dialogue with her partner: “She couldn’t really take her eyes off the book, and she spoke quietly and very slowly”. Another similar occasion was when Dean had to tell the summary of a text and he retold the story almost word by word (p. 7).

It is also interesting to mention Melissa's opinion about introverts' speech production. She claimed that introverts' speech is extremely accurate and well-thought-out, however, the main difference is that they do not use circumlocutions; therefore, they sound less natural and fluent than extraverts. In her words:

I think that introverts' speech is less superficial and better thought out, each and every word is at its right place, they think twice before saying something, they cling to their own ideas, they manipulate and play less and they rarely employ those strategies that an average learner would during a language exam in order to survive the situation. Introverts have to be taught to use these techniques, and that they don't need to remain silent when they don't know what to say..." (Melissa)¹¹

All in all, as Paris put it, introverts' speech can be accurate and to the point, although teachers and examiners tend to value it less because of their disfluency and quietness.

With regard to the other three skills (writing, listening and reading), four of the teachers claimed that on the whole, introverts are better at receptive skills. When asked about the possible reasons, they said that introverts are more thorough, they can delve deeper and can concentrate better. In Melissa's words: "They don't settle for the superficial, easier answers; therefore, they don't fall for the hidden obstacles that can occur in the reading and listening parts of an exam" (Melissa).¹² However, the two other teachers claimed that introverts are less proficient in listening than extraverts. Emily gave the following explanation: "Due to their introversion, they pay less attention to others, so if we don't develop their listening skills enough, they skim over the main ideas" (Emily)¹³. In research, findings are rather ambiguous regarding this aspect. For instance, Daneshvari (1996) also found that introverts were less efficient users of listening strategies than extraverts, however, Mall-Amiri and Nakhaie's (2013) study proved the opposite.

4.1.3 Writing skill

In this part, I will present the findings about one specific skill: the writing skill. Four participants agreed that introverts are generally more proficient writers than extraverts. First, I explored what benefits they can have in this skill. Out of the six teachers, two highlighted content and logical structure as introverts' core strength in terms of writing. In Kim's words: "In writing, they can think through their ideas, the structure of the text, and they can build it

up in a more logical way than those who just act in haste. An extraverted learner tends to rush through all paragraphs and think less about the logic behind them” (Kim)¹⁴.

What Kim describes above can also be found in Jensen and Dittberio’s (1984) study. They argue that extraverts leap into action with little planning and they write down whatever comes to their mind. Also, some of their most considerable problems are the lack of oral feedback and the isolated nature of the writing process. They “develop more ideas while in action or in conversation” (Jensen & Dittberio, 1984, p. 288).

I have given a number of writing tasks to my students, and I also observed that content and structure were two of the most remarkable aspects of introverts’ writings. I noted the following: “(Madeline) wrote a well-structured essay with very clever ideas” (p. 11) and “I gave her (Clara) maximum points for task achievement due to the clear content and logical structure of her essay” (p. 11).

Moreover, three participants claimed that introverts are more accurate in grammar, four of them said they are better at spelling, and five of them stated that they can bear in mind the characteristics of a genre (e.g., a letter of complaint or an essay) and follow given patterns more easily than extraverts. Concerning grammar and spelling, Patricia reasoned as follows: “In my opinion, (introverts) apply grammar in a more disciplined manner, they always think twice before writing anything down. I think they have fewer spelling mistakes, maybe because they read more” (Patricia)¹⁵. In regard to introverts’ greater ability to follow a model, Lauren stated the following: “(It is) definitely better, especially because, due to their introversion, they don’t want to open up and expose themselves, they would rather choose to follow a given pattern” (Lauren)¹⁶.

Boroujeni, Roohani and Hasanimanesh (2015) argued that introverts search for the best vocabulary choice which might make their speech less fluent but it also makes their writing more professional. Half of the teachers admitted that introverts’ writings tended to show a richer vocabulary than that of extraverts. Conversely, Emily had a rather negative view about the effects that introversion can have on writing:

Those who can’t speak can’t write either. They write the minimum and no more, it might be nice and accurate but it is not enough. (...) It can be improved until it reaches an appropriate level; however, it will never be that sophisticated, close-to-native writing that can be observed with extraverts (Emily)¹⁷.

Finally, four teachers claimed that introverts are more likely to write drafts than impulsive extraverts who jot down the first things that come to their mind. In Lauren's words, "Extraverts kick off haphazardly, without thinking, and it gets all over the place" (Lauren)¹⁸. Similarly, Jensen and Ditiberio (1984) claim that introverts anticipate and think about what they are going to write before leaping into action, they are more likely to write a draft and to follow the advised order of the writing process: prewriting-writing-rewriting. This anticipation and reflection phase is what Melissa expressed in the following way:

They should certainly have a kind of inner vision of the text they want to create, and after that, they have to have an inner dialogue with themselves about what to write and how to write it. If it works, their writing can turn out to be really good (Melissa)¹⁹.

4.1.4 Introverts' preferred task types

In the last section of the interview, I explored what language tasks and work forms introverts tend to prefer and what techniques teachers use in order to meet introverts' and extraverts' differing needs.

First of all, two interviewees claimed that introverted students enjoy working on their own and learning in solitude. When Lawrence (1984) investigated the introversion-extraversion variable in terms of SLA, he also found that while extraverts perform better in group works, introverts prefer individual work. Lauren's opinion resonated with this statement, she said that introverts especially like studying vocabulary on their own. I also observed that my students prefer to work alone even when put together with a partner. For instance, during pair work, I noted that "(Rory) worked with one of the most proficient boys in the class, but they didn't cooperate. Both of them did the task alone and sent their answers separately. She didn't even ask him for help when she didn't understand a few words and got stuck, she asked me instead" (p. 4).

According to Lauren, the same applies to projects and creative tasks. Four participants claimed that introverts enjoy creating a product, let it be a poster, a menu of a restaurant or the map of an imagined city; however, only as long as they do not have to present it and if it is not group work. Lauren said the following:

When it comes to creative tasks, introverts share their ideas much less willingly. They easily get dominated by louder extraverts, especially if it's a storytelling task, because

then extraverts go like “boom boom boom, it’s done” and introverts are like “OK”. However, if it’s an individual task, introverts can be equally creative (Lauren)²⁰.

Apart from individual tasks and projects, introverts also excel in grammar drills, as stated by two teachers. In Lauren’s opinion, introverts have a higher tolerance for monotony, and Paris added that it might be because in controlled practice, there is no spontaneity and speaking.

As regards introverts’ preferred work forms, three teachers emphasised that pair and group work are highly sensitive issues for introverts, they only feel comfortable with someone they have already accepted, or, in Lauren’s words, “with whom they have already let in their inner circles, and maximum in small groups” (Lauren)²¹. She also observed that when experimenting with the reorganisation of groups, most introverts express their dissatisfaction. I have made similar observations in my diary when it came to reorganising the pairs because of a new student: “(Clara and Dean) can work together really effectively and it makes them feel more at ease with speaking tasks. It was advised to reorganise the pairs, but they were reluctant to change partners” (ENG - p. 4). When asked about how they organise pairs and groups, three teachers believed that each group should consist of both introverts and extraverts in order to give way to an ongoing discussion and to avoid silence.

As regards differentiation techniques, four teachers frequently provide time for students to discuss a question in pairs before having to answer in front of their classmates. According to Lauren, this correction phase is inevitable because this way, we do not force them to answer immediately, but instead, “this gives them time to prepare for the moment when they will have to answer” (Lauren)²². I also experimented with this technique, and I observed the following: “(Shira and Madeline) could more easily perform their discussion after having the time to rehearse it in a private breakout room (ENG -p. 3)

However, it is also important to mention that according to two teachers, it is rather challenging to differentiate instruction during an ordinary lesson based on the introversion-extraversion variable. Paris attributes this difficulty to the ever-growing pressure to take a language exam before applying for a higher educational institution.

To sum it up, introverted learners are generally regarded as shy, quiet and unsocial children who do not normally raise their hands during language lessons. Also, almost none of the teachers would associate introversion with language proficiency as these learners often

have difficulties with speaking; however, they admitted that introversion might have certain advantages in some other aspects of language learning.

First of all, they are, in general, highly studious and hardworking students who are able to concentrate for a long time. Thus, most teachers believe that introverts are more proficient in receptive skills than in productive ones; moreover, they perform better in writing and reading skills than extraverts. In terms of writing, their most frequently mentioned advantages are grammatical accuracy, spelling and their ability to follow a given model; however, they usually lack ideas whereas extraverts' writing is extremely imaginative and rich in creative ideas. On the other hand, extraverts' ideas come in a disorganised manner; therefore, they tend to be weaker in structuring and logically building up their texts as opposed to introverts who even write drafts and set out by organising their ideas.

According to teachers, introverts prefer working individually to working in groups or pairs because the latter is a highly sensitive issue for them. They do not accept cooperating with anyone, they need to know and like their partners. Moreover, they tend to favour individual tasks and projects, and they have a higher tolerance for grammar drills.

4.2 Learner Interviews

4.2.1 Learners' views on introversion

I repeated the interview process with six introverted learners, exploring the same four topics with the aid of similar questions. In this part, I was curious about their perception of introversion and its connection with language learning. When I asked my participants to define introversion, two of them described introverts as reserved, two of them as less sociable, one said that introverts are quiet, and one claimed, speaking in the first person singular, that the key term here is nervousness. In her words, "For example, I'm way more nervous during oral tests than I should be, and actually, it would be better if I weren't that nervous during other tests either, because I can feel that it's not that easy for me" (Madeline)²³. Matthews et al. (2000) explain Madeline's problem with extraverts' biggest tolerance for high arousal. They argue that higher stimulation has a beneficial effect on extraverts' performance whereas introverts get over-aroused.

Another student got personally involved with the definition created for introverts. First, he stated that introverts are "people who prefer spending time alone or in a certain company, for example with family, if it's also an introverted family, and they are less sociable" (Brad)²⁴, and later on, he described himself as being exactly like that. Concerning

sociability, Kayaoğlu (2016) claimed that extraverts are indeed more sociable, therefore, they “create more opportunities and social situations for themselves to engage in conversation in the target language” (Kayaoğlu, 2016, p. 822). Thus, it is not surprising that a great number of SLA researchers consider extraverts to be more proficient users of the target language.

However, it is not only researchers but also introverted language learners themselves who believe that this is true. When asked about their views on the successful language learner, four of the participants stated that they must be the opposite of introverts, that is, they are generally confident and able to speak freely about almost anything. However, Madeline added that in spite of being less proficient in speech, she can be good at writing. According to Kayaoğlu (2016), it is a mistake to evaluate learner’s L2 proficiency uniquely on the basis of speech production.

Three students admitted that they almost never raise their hands to speak in language lessons, and the remaining three claimed that they do it solely when they are 100% sure of their answers. Madeline stated the following: “In most cases, I just listen and wait until someone braver answers. Or it depends on how certain I am of my answer, because if I’m not, I’d rather stay silent” (Madeline)²⁵. This proves Suliman’s (2015) observation that introverts avoid speaking in English classes for fear of saying something incorrectly.

However, it does happen from time to time that introverts have to overcome their fear of speaking in front of the whole class. For instance, when they have to give a presentation, which, according to Tana, takes a great amount of time and energy for them. When asked about their techniques, the twins, Dean and Clara, said that they always rehearse it in front of a mirror or they record themselves with a camera. Two other learners have similar techniques: “I always write some notes which I read through several times, then I try to present it to someone who is near me” (Tana)²⁶.

Self-confidence issues were not included in the interview guide; however, two learners frequently mentioned them during the interview. For instance, Madeline has several books about self-confidence and she is trying to improve in that regard. In my diary, I made similar observations about her. To highlight one, I wrote the following at the beginning of the online teaching period: “Initially, she had a problem with the camera, she was too self-conscious to turn it on and it made her uncomfortable” (p. 8). Moreover, when we ended the first half of the school term with a short, face-to-face discussion with my French group, I observed that introverts had not interacted with me nor did they reflect on the term, contrary to extraverts who even commented on my teaching. Cain (2012) argues that on the one hand, introversion

must not be confused with shyness given that the two terms have different meanings. On the other hand, they sometimes overlap, as in the case of Madeline, and that is why most people use these terms interchangeably in everyday life.

4.2.2 Introverted learners' advantages in SLA

In the next section of the interview, I explored introverted learners' strengths in terms of various skills and their subcomponents.

First of all, four participants out of six agreed that they perform significantly better in receptive skills than in productive ones. This reinforces Eysenck's (1965) statement according to which introverts "generally have a reflective and thoughtful personality type that suits the receptive kinds of tasks" (Eysenck, 1965, p. 59-60). Or, as Brad put it, they might be more successful in receptive skills because they spend more time studying. Eysenck (1957) came to a similar conclusion, arguing that introverts are able to concentrate for a long time as opposed to extraverts who are too sociable to learn as attentively.

Within receptive skills, five students highlighted reading as one of their most considerable strengths, and four of them mentioned their listening skills. With regard to the former, Dean reasoned as follows: "We find the main ideas in a text more easily" (Dean)²⁷. Clara added the following: "We don't get lost in the details; we notice the core meaning. Also, it's better if it's written down and we can read it through several times" (Clara)²⁸. Moreover, according to Tana and Madeline, their reading proficiency can also be a beneficial consequence of them reading a lot in the target language. In most research, introverts have been found to score better on reading tests. For instance, when Busch (1982) examined the differences between extraverts' and introverts' L2 proficiency, the results showed a positive correlation between introversion and reading comprehension. Therefore, as Mall-Amiri and Nakhaie (2013) concluded, introverts' attentive personality may be a significant advantage when it comes to tasks that need quiet concentration.

Concerning the other receptive skill, Shira said the following: "Usually, I'm quite good at listening comprehension. I understand if someone talks to me, even if I can't respond" (Shira)²⁹. At the beginning of my observation diary (p. 6), I noted down the results of the proficiency test that all students had written, and four introverted learners out of seven scored the best on the listening part of the test (as shown in Table 6).

Table 6 Learners' scores on the three parts of the proficiency test

	Jess	Robert	Colin	Shira	Madeline	Clara	Dean
Reading	70%	55%	85%	95%	45%	35%	50%
Writing	63%	57%	82%	82%	47%	72%	60%
Listening	64%	56%	96%	92%	68%	96%	60%

In addition, Mall-Amiri and Nakhaie (2013) conducted research in which they investigated extraverted and introverted learners' reading and listening proficiency, and introverts were observed to score significantly better on listening tests than extraverts.

However, most learners expressed their negative attitude towards speaking. In Madeline's words: "I don't really like speaking in front of people. (...) I don't know, maybe my subconscious mind believes that I don't have a good voice and it holds me back, too" (Madeline)²⁹. Tana, Dean and Clara also claimed that they did not like speaking in front of others; however, no other difficulty was mentioned in terms of speaking other than nervousness and self-consciousness.

In fact, one learner highlighted a subcomponent of speaking as one of his most considerable strengths: Brad believes that a huge advantage of his is that he speaks with good pronunciation. In my observation diaries, there is a lot of evidence of what Brad stated; what is more, it applies to several other introverts as well. Similarly, when Busch (1984) measured introverts' speaking skills during an oral interview, she found that introverts were significantly better at pronunciation than extraverts. Also, in Suliman's (2015) study, learners were asked to read out some texts in the class, and introverts were reading more slowly and carefully, however, with great pronunciation.

4.2.3 Writing skills

In the previous section of the interview, two students claimed that they considered writing skills as one of their strengths. In this part, I intended to investigate the relationship between introversion and the different subsets of writing.

Boroujeni, Hasanimanesh and Roohani (2015) explored extraverts' and introverts' writing proficiency in terms of vocabulary, content, organization, language and mechanics, and the results revealed that introverts scored better on each subset apart from organisation. To explain these findings, Kafryawan (2020) argued that careful and thoughtful introverts can focus on the task and pay attention more easily than outgoing extraverts.

When the participants of this study were asked to explain why they favour writing tasks, three of them responded that they enjoyed expressing their opinion about a subject without having to speak. In Madeline's words: "In writing tasks, I like that I can express myself and I don't have to speak about my opinion. It's easier to write it down" (Madeline)³⁰. Moreover, Clara highlighted the following: "I like that I have the time to think it through, correct the possible mistakes and plan what I would like to write about in my head" (Clara)³¹. That is why Jensen and Ditiberio (1984) emphasise the importance of teachers giving more time for students to reflect and generate ideas before beginning to write about or discuss a topic.

Moving on to introverts' advantages in terms of the various subsets of writing, three learners mentioned spelling and two of them highlighted their ability to organise the text into a logical structure. I would like to quote two relevant sentences from my observation diaries that prove that my introverted students did perform well regarding all subsets of writing: "I gave her (Clara) maximum points for task achievement due to the clear content and logical structure of her essay" (p. 11) and "Her (Shira's) essay was well-structured, the content was very clever and she used an exceptionally wide range of vocabulary and grammar. Thus, I gave her maximum points for structure, coherence, grammar and vocabulary" (p. 11).

Concerning their weaknesses, Dean admitted that his huge concern is always the length. That is, he would write less than the required number of words if it depended on him. Brad revealed to have similar problems with writing tasks. He summarised this in the following words: "Even if I have an idea, I can't write that much about it. I summarise it in one or two sentences instead" (Brad)³². Moreover, Madeline admitted searching for the best grammatical and lexical choice for a relatively long time. According to Jensen and Ditiberio (1984), introverts usually search for the best vocabulary choice; therefore, they might spend more time writing the text than extraverts do. However, the consequence is a more sophisticated, highly professional and well-thought-out text.

Finally, encouraged by the study of Jensen and Ditiberio (1984) according to which introverts are more likely to write drafts and reflect on the topic before beginning to write, I asked my students whether they write drafts or plan the outline of their texts beforehand. Four learners never or rarely write whole drafts; however, they plan the content of the text in their minds. Moreover, two learners tend to make short outlines including the keywords they want to elaborate on. For instance, Brad said the following: "Generally, if I have to write an essay, I begin by writing, let's say, three or four points, and then, I start the essay. There's no

detailed draft, only these three or four points that evoke something in me” (Brad)³³. It clearly shows that introverts plan their writings beforehand, even if without writing an actual draft.

4.2.4 Introverts’ preferred task types

Cohen (2003) argues that language tasks have a huge impact on how learners perform, and each task requires the use of different strategies. Therefore, it is essential to consider the nature of the task when teaching introverted and extraverted learners. That is why I investigated in the last section of the interview what language tasks and activities introverts tend to prefer and which ones cause less amount of stress in them.

Two students named multiple-choice tasks as a specific task they like, Clara added identifying information tasks (true/false/not given), Tana prefers matching headings and Madeline mentioned gap-filling tasks. Apart from these ones, listening comprehension tasks were also considered as one of the favourite task types of three learners. Indeed, these tasks gained significant popularity during my lessons as well. I asked my students to fill out a brief questionnaire at the end of ten consecutive lessons, and to rate the tasks we did that day on a scale of four. As shown in Tables 8-10 in Appendix D, all introverted students liked the listening comprehension exercises and awarded them with the maximum of points, similarly to Table 7 where almost all students gave four points out of four with the exception of one student who gave three. Which are, in fact, higher scores than the ones given by extraverts; therefore, in most cases, introverted students favoured listening tasks more than extraverts did.

Grammar tasks and controlled practice (drills) were favoured by two students. For instance, Shira said the following: “Usually, I prefer grammar exercises. It’s not that they are actually easier, but still, I feel like they are” (Shira)³⁴. As noted in my diaries (see Tables 11-14 in Appendix D), grammar exercises and drills almost always received the maximum point from introverted learners.

With regard to individual, pair and group work, four students preferred pair work on the condition that they work with someone they know and like, and Clara inclined towards individual work, reasoning that this form of working provokes the lowest level of stress for her. According to Kayaoğlu (2016), introverts are less likely to use social strategies; therefore, they would not normally choose to cooperate with peers in the classroom.

In spite of claiming pair work as an appealing activity, I observed some difficulties, even denials to cooperate in my observation diaries. One such occasion was the following:

“During a task which required pair discussion, I observed that he (Jess) didn’t really interact with his partner, Robert (also an introvert), they were just looking at their exercise book and exchanging muttered words” (p. 7). What is more, Rory showed the same attitude when put together with one of the most proficient boys in the class, and even though she had plenty of difficulties, she did not ask him for help, she asked me instead (p. 4). Having made similar observations, Kayaoğlu (2016) concluded that introverts “preferred interaction with their teachers, who were proficient users of the language being studied” (Kayaoğlu, 2016, p. 822).

Not surprisingly, half of the learners claimed that they did not approve of working in groups at all. Clara reasoned as follows: “There’s always someone in the group who is not that close to us, or whom we don’t really know, so I prefer individual or pair work” (Clara)³⁵. Likewise, Brad feels less comfortable with group work:

The smaller the group is the more I like to work in it because I feel more at ease with talking to one person. I am a bit introverted in that regard, if we are there the eight of us in a group, I somehow get more excluded from the discussion than with only one person. The latter is more comfortable for me (Brad)³⁶.

As shown by Tables 15 and 16 (see Appendix D), introverted learners have given significantly more points for the task requiring them to speak in pairs than to the one involving group discussion. Moreover, all six students said that they would not normally take the role of the spokesperson after group work, and would rather leave the task of reporting back the group’s consensus to someone else in the group. When asked about the reason, five students responded that they did not like speaking in front of others.

Creative tasks and projects were claimed to be preferred by four learners, however, it turned out to depend on a series of other factors. For instance, three learners emphasised the importance that the project should be done individually rather than in groups. Moreover, in Clara’s opinion, project tasks lose their enjoyability if they have to present their work afterwards. In my observation diaries, I noted one specific occasion when my French group had to carry out a project in groups. The task was to create the map of an imagined city and to present it, and most introverts in the group chose to draw instead of presenting the city. I noted the following: “(Rory) decided to draw and let the others present her work. It was clear that she had worked hard, and I’m slightly suspicious whether it was the speaker or her who had written the script (because the speaker was obviously reading out a coherent text) (p. 3)

and “(Tana) chose to draw instead of presenting the city so she could remain silent” (p. 3). Later on, they were asked to rate this task, and all introverts gave maximum points whereas the points given by extraverts varied more greatly. The concrete results are indicated in Table 17 in Appendix D.

In conclusion, according to the six learners, introverts are quiet, reserved and less sociable people who tend to become nervous when having to express themselves. The majority of the participants would not think that introverts are successful language learners; however, one of them added that they can be proficient in writing. Also, everyone admitted that they almost never or rarely raise their hands during language lessons because of their self-consciousness, which, for some of them, extend to other areas of their lives.

Concerning the four major linguistic skills, learners said that they perform better in receptive skills because they can find the key elements in longer texts or dialogues due to their attentiveness and strong concentration. Having more time for reflection is also important for them; consequently, they tend to prefer writing tasks to speaking.

In writing, their most considerable strengths are spelling and logical structuring, while they tend to have more difficulties with the length of their writings given that they would normally write less than the required number of words. Also, they spend some time organizing their ideas before leaping into action, and they usually write a few points as a draft that later on facilitate the writing process for them.

The learners named multiple choice tasks, gap fills, matching headings and listening tasks as their preferred task types. Also, they prefer individual or pair work to group work; however, they consider it indispensable that they know and like their partners in pair work.

4.3 Comparative analysis

In this section, I intend to compare the results of the two sets of interviews, juxtaposing the six teachers’ and six learners’ responses.

4.3.1 Learners’ and teachers’ views on introversion

First of all, teachers’ and learners’ definitions of introversion were largely analogous. The most frequently repeated adjectives (unsociable, quiet, reserved, reluctant to speak) imply that most students and teachers would associate introversion with shyness and unsociability. However, when asked to describe the successful language learner, two teachers and four

learners listed typical extraverted traits (sociable, confident, good at speaking, willingness to engage in a conversation with natives at any time and about any topic), what is more, one teacher and one learner declared that they would not normally consider introverts as successful language learners.

Teachers also highlighted that introverted students do not raise their hands during language lessons, which was actually reinforced by all six learners, claiming that they are not usually willing to speak in front of the whole class for fear of embarrassing themselves. This can contribute to some teachers assuming that introverted learners are less effective language learners. As Leung (2015) put it, “negative assumptions about introversion are in the school system, leading teachers to believe these students are lacking in some way” (Leung, 2015, p. 11).

On the other hand, introverts are believed to be highly studious and attentive learners by most teachers, which resonates not only with Brad’s statement according to which he studies and prepares more for lessons and tests than most of his classmates but also with my observations and with Dörnyei’s (2015) following claim: introverts have “greater ability to consolidate learning, lower distractibility, and better study habits” (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 21)

4.3.2 Introverted learners’ advantages in SLA

With regard to introverts’ strengths, four teachers claimed that introverts perform better in receptive skills compared to productive ones, and the learners’ responses confirmed this hypothesis. Altogether, reading skills were the most frequently mentioned skills, and teachers reasoned with introverts’ attentiveness, deeper concentration and their ability to find the keywords in longer texts. Clara and Dean explained their exceptional reading proficiency in the same way: “We find the main ideas in a text more easily” (Dean)²⁷, “We don’t get lost in the details; we notice the core meaning. Also, it’s better if it’s written down and we can read it through several times” (Clara)²⁸.

However, teachers’ opinions about introverts’ listening skills did not harmonise with my observations and with the fact that most learners (four out of six) considered listening skills as one of their biggest strengths. No teacher attributed any advantages to introverts in terms of listening, what is more, two of them even emphasised the detrimental effect introversion can have on this skill. On the contrary, Mall-Amiri and Nakhaie (2013) found that introverts actually scored better on listening tests than extraverts. In this respect, the

findings of this study stemming from interviews with the learners confirm Mall-Amari and Nakhaie's results.

Brown (2006) claims that "extroversion may be a factor in the development of general oral communicative competence, which requires face to face interaction, but not in listening, reading, and writing" (p. 152). Indeed, introverts were claimed to have certain advantages in listening, writing and reading; however, all teachers and most learners agreed that introversion has a negative effect on speaking. One of the teachers attributed this to introverts' self-consciousness, which was later confirmed by Madeline and Tana. Both of them stated that they lacked self-confidence, and Tana, Clara and Dean admitted their fear of speaking in front of others. Also, another teacher believes that what makes introverts' speech less fluent is the lack of using circumlocutions and other types of conversation, which is similar to Madeline's concern, namely that she cannot improvise in speech, not even in her L1. According to another teacher, introverts have difficulties with presentations as well, given that the preparation takes more effort for them if they want to avoid improvisations. This was confirmed by Tana, Dean and Clara.

4.3.3 Writing skill

Learners seemed to prefer writing tasks to speaking because, on the one hand, they have more time to think, and on the other hand, they can express their opinions without having to reveal them to the whole class. According to Jensen and Dittberio (1984), introverts have less difficulty with writing because they follow the advised steps of the writing process (prewriting, writing, rewriting). This resonates with what teachers said, namely that introverts are more likely to write drafts and to organise their ideas before beginning to write than extraverts. Learners confirmed this statement, admitting that they usually write the outline of the text in a few points.

Spelling was listed as a strength by most teachers and learners, however, one of the teachers argued that introverts' huge disadvantage in terms of writing is length and content. Emily's concern was later confirmed by two learners who stated that their difficulty with writing is always to reach the required number of words.

4.3.4 Introverts' preferred task types

According to one of the teachers, introverts tend to prefer tasks that require the minimum of writing, for example multiple-choice, true or false and matching headings tasks. Each of these was mentioned by at least one student during the learner interviews. Also,

teachers claimed that introverts have a higher tolerance for monotony; therefore, they tend to like grammar drills more than extraverts. Indeed, two learners mentioned controlled practice when asked about their preferred task types, and the questionnaires in which students rated the tasks we had done during that lesson also showed introverts' highest preference for drills.

Concerning introverts' preferred work forms, most teachers emphasised that pair and group work are highly sensitive issues for introverted learners, they only accept to cooperate with a partner they know and have already accepted. Learners claimed the same, and they also admitted their discomfort towards group work. According to Kayaoğlu (2016), introverts use fewer social strategies than extraverts in the classroom; therefore, they are less inclined to cooperate with their peers. My diaries contain similar observations about introverted students.

Moreover, one of the teachers stated that after a group activity, it is most certainly not introverts who report their discussion back to the whole class, and this was confirmed by all learners without exception. They said that speaking in front of others provokes a higher stress level in them. Matthews et al. (2000) explain this by extraverts' bigger tolerance for high stimulation, arguing that while extraverts tend to perform well under pressure, introverts get more easily over-aroused.

In conclusion, there were numerous overlaps between teachers' and learners' responses, especially in their description of introverts and in the way that introversion might affect SLA. Moreover, learners confirmed teachers' hypothesis that introverts tend to perform better in receptive skills than in productive ones, which also harmonises with the literature. However, teachers' belief that introverts have a major disadvantage in terms of listening skills compared to extraverts seems to be contradicted by learners and the literature. Regarding writing skills, the conclusion can be drawn that introverts have a considerable advantage in planning and structuring their writing, similarly to what Jensen and Diliberto (1984) found. Finally, teachers' presumption that introverts prefer working alone or with a partner they know and accept seemed to be confirmed by learners as well.

5 Implications

In this section, I will present some possible pedagogical implications of my findings in terms of classroom application. To begin with, teachers' awareness should be raised concerning the fact that both extraverted and introverted learners have advantages in SLA and

can be successful in language learning at different levels. As Dörnyei argues, “Both extraversion and introversion may have positive features, depending on the particular task in question (Dörnyei, 2005, p. 27). Thus, it appears to be worthwhile for teachers to be more accepting of individual differences and to lay more emphasis on learners’ strengths rather than accentuating the areas in which they lack knowledge.

Based on the findings of my research, it seems to be a good idea for teachers to take the time to get to know their students and to differentiate instruction in order to fit the needs of all kinds of learners. Some of the differentiation techniques that the participants of the teacher interviews advised are the following: give students an option to choose to work individually instead of working in pairs or in groups, provide an opportunity to quiet down and work on a task requiring concentration and self-reflection and allow students to discuss their responses with a partner before having to present them in front of the whole class. Also, teachers should encourage introverts to engage in individual learning activities, such as studying vocabulary with Quizlet, watching films and videos and reading books in the target language.

On the basis of my findings, it would also be essential to create a positive and safe atmosphere in the classroom where everyone knows and accepts each other given that introverted learners need time to open up and confide in their peers. Moreover, it is also advisable to consider the introversion-extraversion variable when grouping students. Teachers should make sure not to choose a highly extraverted partner for an introverted learner in order to avoid uneven student talking time. It also appears to be worthwhile for teachers to maintain the usual pairs and groups because introverts are more at ease with working with someone who they are used to. One of the teachers suggested an excellent idea for grouping students, namely that teachers should nominate a few introverted learners to make their own groups, choosing students with whom they think they could cooperate effectively.

Based on another teacher’s suggestion, teachers should not insist on introverted learners giving oral feedback on whether they understood something or not and speaking voluntarily during the lesson. Sometimes these students do not give voice to their thoughts, which does not imply any problems or gaps in their understanding. According to Leung (2015), “students are predominantly defined by talkativeness” (Leung, 2015, p. 8) and quieter students are regarded as less talented and less bright than the dominant and talkative extraverts. Although my findings show that introversion generally has a detrimental effect on speaking skills, teachers should refrain from judging students’ speech uniquely on the basis of

speech rate, volume and fluency; accuracy is just as important. According to one of the teachers, examiners tend to give lower points for students who speak quietly, slowly and a bit hesitantly, regardless of how accurate the content is; therefore, she is trying to pay conscious attention not to rate these students down. I believe that all teachers should follow her example. Furthermore, the interviews shed light on one possible reason for introverts speaking hesitantly, which is the ignorance of conversation strategies. They do not know how to fill in the pauses in their speech; thus, it would make sense to lay more emphasis on teaching them the conscious application of these strategies. Moreover, teachers should pay attention to call on quiet students as well because a great number of teachers admitted that calling on extraverts who always raise their hands and actively participate in the lesson is an easier and more rewarding option.

On the basis of my results, teachers should refrain from forcing introverts into situations that are stressful for them because pressure has a detrimental effect on introverted learners' performance (Dewaele and Furnham, 2000). Instead, they should test introverted students' speaking skills by talking to them one-on-one, further away from the rest of the class. According to Cohen (2003), other stress-provoking factors might be time pressure, the importance of errors in performing a task and the nature of the task (whether it is spoken or written or whether performed alone or with a partner). It was later confirmed in the interviews; thus, it seems to be a good idea for teachers to give enough time for students to prepare and plan the performance of the task, let it be a discussion, presentation or writing activity.

With regard to the four skills, my findings clearly show that introverts' most considerable strength is reading; however, teachers should acknowledge introverted learners' advantage in listening as well, as listening emerged as a major strength and one of the most preferred activities of introverts. In addition, the study of Mall-Amiri and Nakhaie (2013) also found that introverts significantly outperformed their extraverted peers in listening comprehension tests. Moreover, teachers should accept the irrefutable differences between extraverts' and introverts' writing styles and preferences, that is, introverts plan their texts and generate more ideas alone whereas extraverts excel in generating ideas on the spot, while engaging in discussions about the topic. Therefore, based on Jensen and Ditiiberio's study (1984) and on my findings, it is advisable for teachers to encourage extraverts to interview others or present their work instead of having to write it down, and to let introverts work in isolation.

6 Conclusion

This study intended to explore Hungarian language teachers' and learners' views of the advantages and disadvantages of being introverted in SLA. Qualitative research was conducted at Óbudai Árpád High School with the aid of observations and semi-structured interviews. Even though these two research tools provided an insight into the participants' learning patterns and beliefs, the collected data is not enough to draw universal conclusions about introverts and the views present in Hungarian secondary education.

Concerning the first research question about the perception of introverts, it was found that they are regarded as quiet, shy and unsociable individuals who never raise their hands in lessons and who are not the most spectacularly improving learners of foreign languages. Due to these characteristics, language teachers and even the learners themselves believe that introverts are not likely to be as successful users of an L2 as extraverts.

Nevertheless, the findings related to the second research question prove that introverts do have multiple advantages in language learning. My observations about introverted students and the interviews show that they are hard-working and highly studious learners who particularly excel in grammar and reading skills. However, their proficiency in listening was a controversial topic: the students referred to it as one of their strengths but some teachers strongly disagreed.

The third research question investigated the effect of introversion on writing skills. My presumptions formed on the basis of the literature proved to be right: introverts have a huge advantage in structuring and planning their writings due to their reflective and attentive nature. My observations and the data from both the student and the teacher interviews indicate that introverts write with excellent spelling, rich vocabulary and logical structure; however, they tend to struggle with generating enough ideas and reaching the required length of a text.

Regarding the last research question about the most suitable task types for introverts, it was discovered that they tend to prefer tasks that require the minimum of writing (matching headings, multiple choice, true or false) and controlled practice (drills); thus, tasks in which they do not have to speak spontaneously or expose their personality. Moreover, they are generally more inclined towards individual work and prefer one-on-one conversations to group discussions.

Although I used triangulation and a thoroughly designed interview guide to make my study as credible and trustworthy as possible, it has its limitations. For instance, I was unable to seek out all introverted learners from my groups as some students did not fill out the

personality questionnaire, and due to the pandemic, I could not contact them or ask them to do it. Similarly, when I asked my students to rate the tasks after each lesson, those who did not participate in the online lesson could not respond. Therefore, the data retrieved from these questionnaires do not represent the perceptions of all of the participants. Moreover, the last student I interviewed, despite being an introvert, gave unexpected and absolutely different answers to some questions than the other introverts, contradicting all assumptions and previous data. She might be in an exceptional situation given that her father is French and lives in Spain, so she has to travel a lot, using foreign languages on a daily basis. This might have changed her attitude towards language use; however, further qualitative studies would be required to find out the underlying causes of these dissimilarities.

I would like to conclude my thesis by proposing some possible future research directions. First, it would be exciting to repeat the study with teachers and learners of different schools to find out if the results are generalizable in broader contexts. In addition, extraverts could be interviewed as well in order to make the comparison more effective. Finally, if teachers also filled out the personality test, it would be interesting to investigate the relationship of introverts with introverted and extraverted teachers.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Eysenck Personality Inventory (1964) adapted to the context

My name is Fanni Kondorosi, and I am a teacher trainee at Eötvös Loránd University majoring in English and French. I would like to ask for your help with my research. The purpose of the following interview is to examine the advantages and disadvantages of being an introvert in language learning. The interview will be recorded for later use and only I will listen back to it during the analysis of the research. The interview is anonymous and volunteer.

I am curious about your personal opinion, so please give your honest answers. This is very important for the credibility of the research.

Please read the following questions and answer with Yes or No.

1. Can you always come up with a witty response to the comments directed at you?
2. Do you usually act quickly and self-confidently?
3. Can you easily let yourself go?
4. Are you a talkative person?
5. Do other people think of you as being very lively?
6. Do you willingly take the lead in a group activity?
7. Are you rather lively?
8. Do you find it hard to loosen up even with easy-going people?
9. Do you prefer to stay invisible in the company of others?
10. Do you usually take the initiative when meeting new people?
11. Do you easily get embarrassed?
12. Have you taken part in the organisation of a group?
13. Do you like to take an active part in gatherings?
14. Do you find it uncomfortable when people are watching you in the street or in shops?
15. Do you feel so self-conscious when people are watching you that you are less efficient than other times?
16. Do you find it hard to talk or present in front of other people?
17. Do you often long for excitement?
18. Are you usually carefree?
19. Do you stop and think things over before doing anything?
20. Do you often do things on the spur of the moment?
21. Do you prefer to have few but special friends?
22. If there is something you want to know about, would you rather look it up in a book than talk to someone about it?
23. Are you mostly quiet when you are with other people?
24. Do you like doing things in which you have to act quickly?

25. Do you like talking to people so much that you never miss a chance for talking to a stranger?
26. Would you say that you were fairly self-confident?

Appendix B - Interview guides

The interview guide for teachers- Translated from Hungarian

I. Biographical questions

Please tell me a little about yourself as a teacher.

1. How old are you?
2. Where do you work?
3. How long have you been teaching languages?
4. What kind of languages do you teach?
5. Do you teach other subjects too apart from languages?
6. What grades and levels do you teach?
7. How many language lessons do you teach a week?

II. English teachers' views on introverted learners

My research focuses on the benefits and drawbacks of introverted language learners, and in this part of the interview, I would like to know how you perceive introverted students and language learners in general.

1. How would you describe the efficient language learner?
2. What are your favourite students like?
3. What kind of students do you tend to call on more often?
4. How would you describe introverted students?
5. How does introversion affect language learning in your opinion?

III. Benefits of introverts- skills

Introversion might have both positive and negative effects on language learning, but the next section of the interview focuses on the positive aspects only.

What advantages do introverted language learners have over their extroverted classmates in learning a second language?

1. In general, which of the four skills is the biggest strength of introverts?
2. What kind of differences have you observed between introverts' receptive (reading, listening) and productive (speaking, writing) skills?
3. What kind of advantages do introverted learners have in receptive language skills (reading and listening) compared to extroverts?
4. What kind of advantages do introverted learners have in productive language skills (writing and speaking) compared to extroverts?
5. Do they show a wider range of vocabulary in speaking or writing? Why do you think this is?

IV. Introverted learners' writing skills

In the next section, we will focus on one particular skill, namely the writing skill.

How do introversion and extraversion influence language learners' writing proficiency?

1. What kind of students tend to prefer writing tasks?
2. What are the strengths of introverts in terms of writing skills?
3. What are the strengths of extroverts in terms of writing skills?
4. What kind of students are more likely to write drafts?

V. Introverted learners' preferred task types and teachers' methods to meet their needs

Finally, I would like to ask you about the special needs of introverts.

Which task types and teaching methods do introverts prefer?

1. How do you differentiate instruction for introverted and extroverted students (e.g., giving time for students to discuss their ideas with their partners first, offering the option to work alone, giving them alone time, forming homogeneous/heterogeneous groups, inductive/deductive teaching etc.)?
2. What are introverts' reactions to group work?
3. Why and when do they prefer drilling or creative tasks?
4. What kind of learners are better at tasks that require logic and to recognise patterns and reapply techniques (=convergent tasks)?
5. What kind of learners are better at tasks that require creative thinking (=divergent tasks)?
6. What kinds of evaluation work best for introverts?

The interview guide for learners- Translated from Hungarian

I. Biographical questions

Please tell me a little about yourself.

1. How old are you?
2. Where do you study?
3. How long have you been learning languages?
4. What languages are you learning?
5. What level are you at?
6. How many language lessons do you have a week?
7. Besides school, what role do foreign languages play in your everyday life?

II. Learners' views on introversion

First, I would like to ask you about your views on introversion and language learning.

In your opinion, what is introversion?

1. How does introversion affect second language acquisition?
2. How would you describe the efficient language learner?
3. How often do you raise your hand or speak voluntarily during language lessons?

4. How do you prepare for an oral presentation? How much time and energy does it take you to prepare?
5. In which language do you feel the most confident in speech, including your native language? Why do you think this is?
6. How do you like digital learning?

III. Benefits of introverts- skills

In this part, we will focus on your strengths in terms of language acquisition.

What are your advantages over your classmates in learning a second language?

1. Which skill do you think your strongest point is: reading, listening, speaking or writing? Why do you think so?
2. In general, are you better at passive skills, namely reading and listening or in writing and speaking? Why do you think so? When do you experience a lower stress level?
3. What are your advantages in the aforementioned skills compared to your classmates?
4. Do you use a richer vocabulary in speaking or in writing? Why do you think this is?

IV. Introverted learners' writing skills

Now, let's focus on one specific skill.

How good do you think your writing proficiency is?

1. What do you like in writing tasks?
2. What are your strengths in writing (grammatical accuracy, spelling, range of vocabulary, following a model/sample, content)?
3. What are your weaknesses in writing (e.g., always in search for the best word choice, it takes too long, criteria in question 2)?
4. When and why do you write drafts?

V. Introverted learners' preferred task types and work forms

Finally, I would like to ask you about the activities and language tasks you prefer.

Which task types and activities do you prefer in language lessons?

1. Which task types make you feel more at ease in language lessons?
2. What kind of tasks do you prefer as homework? (writing an essay, creating a project on your own or in a group, learning words on your own, grammar drills, reading comprehension) Why? What do you like about them?
3. How comfortable are you with pair work/ group work/ individual work? Why? When you work in pairs or in groups, who is the one who usually takes the lead during the discussion and who reports back to the whole class what you discussed together? Why do you think this is?
4. When and why do you prefer using logic and following a rule (drilling, convergent tasks) or thinking creatively (divergent tasks)?

5. How does it make you feel when there are more possible solutions (divergent)? Why do you feel so?
6. What kind of evaluation do you prefer (oral presentations or summary-telling, projects, tests, writing)? Why?
7. Which is the best way for you to learn grammar (e.g., when the teacher explains the rule first and gives exercises afterwards (deductive approach) or when you have to identify the rule yourself based on examples (inductive)? Why?

Appendix C - Excerpts from the interviews

Teachers

¹ „Hát, elsőre biztos nem jutna eszembe, hogy ez az introvertált tanuló lenne...”

² „... az extravertáltaknál hamarabb jön a látványos eredmény, ők hamarabb elkezdnek beszélni. Tud 10 szót, de már remekül tudja variálni és használni, és elkápráztatja a nyelvtanárt, és ez iszonyúan legyezgeti a nyelvtanár hiúságát, hogy hát milyen klassz, már ennyi mindent tud a gyerek, és ezt milyen jól használja.”

³ „Az introvertált tanulók valamilyen módon... nem is igazából azok, akik esetleg nehezebben szólalnak meg egy órán (...), de az introvertált emberek azok, akik (...) nem kívülről várják a megerősítést és a motivációt. Az introvertált tanulók mennek a saját fejük után.”

⁴ „De nekem van olyan introvertált diákom, akinek semmi problémája nincsen, és mégis nagyon introvertált, egyszerűen ilyen az egyénisége. De van olyan, akit diagnosztizáltak ezzel-azzal.”

⁵ „vagy pedig azért nem teszik (kommunikálnak), mert félnek, hogy rosszat mondanak.”

⁶ „... az A-sokra (extravertáltak) egyszerűen ragad a szókincs...”

⁷ „... kifejezések, szókincsnek a pontos megtanulása az inkább erősségük”

⁸ „(Írásban), mert ott ugye jobban kifejtheti az álláspontját, csak a tanár fogja látni, akit valószínűleg elfogadott.”

⁹ „Tehát ez a self-consciousness az, ami nagyon bennük lehet, hogy most akkor engem néznek, főleg, ha egy kiselőadást kell tartani. És akkor inkább a produkcióra koncentrálok, mint a tartalomra...”

¹⁰ „Nehezebben szakad el talán a leírt szövegtől, kevésbé rögtönöz...”

¹¹ „Úgy gondolom, hogy az introvertált tanulóknál a beszéd az kevésbé felületes, nagyon átgondolt, minden egyes szó a helyén van, nagyon meggondolja, hogy mit mond, nagyon ragaszkodik a saját elképzeléseihez, gondolataihoz, kevésbé manipulál, kevésbé játszik, kevésbé alkalmaz olyanfajta stratégiákat, amit mondjuk egy átlag nyelvtanuló egy nyelvvizsgán használna, például, hogy hogy lehet egy nehéz helyzeten túllenni. Ezeket az introvertáltaknak külön meg kell tanítani, hogy nem kell nagyon csendben lenni, ha nem tudunk mit mondani, hanem nyugodtan használhatja a töltelékeket is.”

¹² „... nem elégednek meg a felszínesebb vagy könnyen jövő válaszokkal, tehát az olyanfajta rejtett buktatók, amiket egy nyelvvizsga readingben vagy listeningben elhelyeznek az oktatók, az őket kevésbé vezeti meg, ők alaposabbak.”

¹³ „A listeningnél meg miután introvertáltak, nem nagyon figyelnek másokra, és ha ezt nem fejlesztjük náluk, akkor általában elsiklanak a mondandó felett...”

¹⁴ „Hát a writingban az, hogy át tudja gondolni a gondolatait, a szerkezetét, logikusabban fel fogja építeni, mint aki esetleg csak kapkod. Egy extravertált tanuló hajlamosabb kapkodni a bekezdések között és kevésbé gondolja át a logikáját az egésznek szerintem.”

¹⁵ „Szerintem talán fegyelmezettebben alkalmazzák a nyelvtant, ők jobban megrágják talán azt, amit leírtak. Szerintem kevés helyesírási hibájuk van. Talán azért, mert sokat olvasnak.”

¹⁶ „Modell követése az mindenképp jobb, főleg azért, mert épp azért, mert introvertált, nem akarja kiadni saját magát, és inkább egy mintát követ.”

¹⁷ „Mert ugye productive skilleknél nincs nagy, mert aki nem tud sokat beszélni, az általában írni se tud. Minimumot ír, keveset ír, most lehet, hogy az szép és pontos, de mennyiségben kevés.”

¹⁸ „Az extravertált inkább bumm bele és össze-vissza van az egész.”

¹⁹ „Biztos, hogy a szövegalkotásnál kell, hogy valamilyen fajta belső vízió legyen arról a szövegről, amit majd létre akar hozni, és ha ez megvan, ehhez kell egyfajta belső párbeszéd saját magával, amit magával lefolytat, hogy mit fog írni, hogy és mint, és ha ez működik, akkor a szövegalkotás nagyon nagyon jól szokott sikerülni.”

²⁰ „Ha kreatívkodni kell, az introvertáltak sokkal kevésbé osztják meg az ötleteiket. Inkább a hangadók fogják, főleg, ha egy történetet kell összerakni, akkor kábé az van, hogy az extravertált ilyen “puff puff puff, így lesz az egész”, a többi meg “hát jó”. De hogyha meg önállóan kell, akkor nagyon kreatívak tudnak lenni.”

²¹ „Ha már párban kell dolgozni, akkor olyannal, akit már beengedett a belső körébe és maximum kiscsoportban.”

²² „... legyen egy előellenőrzés-szerűség, és épp ezért, hogy ne az legyen, hogy hirtelen neki választ kell adni, de közben legyen kész, hogy egyszer választ ad. Tehát, hogy legyen ideje felkészülni a dolgokra.”

Learners

²³ „Például felelésnél sokkal idegesebb vagyok, mint kéne, de egy dolgozatnál is jobb lenne, ha nem lennék olyan ideges, mert ott is azért érzem, hogy annyira nem megy könnyen.”

²⁴ „Szerintem az, aki szívesebben tölt el egyedül időt, vagy egy bizonyos körben, mondjuk a családjával, hogyha az szintén egy ilyen introvertált család, és kevésbé ilyen szociális, megyünk ide-oda.”

²⁵ „Többnyire inkább csak hallgatom és várom, hátha valaki bátrabb és jelentkezik. Vagy az is közrejátsszik, hogy mennyire vagyok biztos a válaszomban, mert ha nem vagyok annyira biztos, akkor inkább nem mondom be.”

²⁶ „És mindig írok jegyzetet, és azt átolvasgatom, aztán megpróbálom felmondani valakinek, aki a környezetemben van”

²⁷ „Kiszűrjük a lényegét.”

²⁸ „Igen, könnyen észrevesszük a részletekben a fontosat. Jobb, ha így le van írva és többször átolvashatjuk.”

²⁹ „Értelmezni általában egész jól tudok, megértem, ha hozzám beszélnek, még ha válaszolni nem is tudnék.”

³⁰ „... kevésbé szeretek beszélni több ember előtt. (...) Még akár az is lehet, hogy a tudatalattim azt hiszi, hogy rossz a hangom, és esetleg ezért valahogy ez is kicsit hátráltat benne.”

³¹ „Talán leginkább azt (szeretem a fogalmazós feladatokban), hogy ki tudom fejezni magam, de mégse elmondanom kell, hanem le lehet írni, és az így kicsit könnyebb.”

³² „Én azt szeretem benne, hogy van idő átgondolni, és esetleg javítani a hibákat, többször megfogalmazni magadban, hogy mit szeretnél.”

³³ „Ha van is egy ötletem, azt se tudom hosszasan kifejteni, hanem egy-két mondatban leírom az egészet.”

³⁴ „Általában az van mondjuk egy esszénél, hogy írok néhány, mondjuk 3-4 pontot, aztán elkezdem a fogalmazást. Nincs ilyen nagyon részletekbe menő vázlat, csak az a 3-4 pont, ami elindít bennem egy ilyet.”

³⁵ „Általában inkább a nyelvtanikat szeretem. Nem is az, hogy könnyebb, de valahogy könnyebbnek érzem mégis.”

³⁶ „Általában mindig van valaki a csoportban, aki nem áll annyira közel hozzánk, vagy nem ismerjük, úgyhogy én jobban szeretem az egyénit vagy a párost.”

³⁷ „Nekem a minél kisebb csoport a jobb, leginkább a két fős beszélgetésekben érzem magam a legjobbnak, mivel egy kicsit introvertált is vagyok ilyen szempontból, ha ott vagyunk nyolcan egy csoportban, akkor általában hátrébb kerülök egy beszélgetésben, mintha ott lennénk ketten, és akkor valahogy nekem kényelmesebb úgy valakivel beszélgetni.

Appendix D – Tables

Table 1 9th graders’ responses to the personality questionnaire and their personality types

Extraverted responses:	S 1	S 2	S 3	S 4	S 5	S 6	S 7	S 8	S 9	S 10	S 11	S 12	S 13	S 14	S 15
1. Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
2. Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
3. Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
4. Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
5. Yes		Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
6. Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
7. Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
8. No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
9. No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
10. Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No		No	No	No	Yes	Yes
11. No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No
12. Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
13. Yes		Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
14. No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
15. No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No
16. No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No
17. Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
18. Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
19. No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
20. Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
21. No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
22. No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
23. No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
24. Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
25. Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
26. Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	8/26	8/26	9/26	18/26	3/26	19/26	14/26	11/26	10/26	21/26	22/26	15/26	14/26	9/26	7/26
	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.	Int.

Table 2 11th graders’ responses to the personality questionnaire and their personality types

Extraverted responses:	S 1	S 2	S 3	S 4	S 5	S 6	S 7	S 8	S 9	S 10	S 11
1. Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
2. Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
3. Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
4. Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

5. Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
6. Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No
7. Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
8. No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
9. No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
10. Yes		Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
11. No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
12. Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
13. Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
14. No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No
15. No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
16. No	No	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	Yes	No
17. Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
18. Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
19. No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
20. Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
21. No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
22. No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
23. No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No
24. Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	Yes
25. Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
26. Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
	14/2 6 Int.	15/2 6 Ex.	19/2 6 Ex.	16/2 6 Ex.	18/2 6 Int.	15/2 6 Int.	18/2 6 Ex.	17/2 6 Ex.	26/2 6 Int.	17/2 6 Ex.	17/ 26 Ex.	

Table 3 Participants of the teacher interviews

Pseudonyms	Age	Workplace	Experience (years)	Languages taught	Other subjects	Grades and levels	Language lessons per week
Patricia	56	Óbudai Árpád High School	35	Russian (no longer taught), English	Hungarian (no longer taught)	9th, 10th and 11th graders, all levels	22

Lauren	34	Óbudai Árpád High School	9	English and French	-	8th, 9th, 10th and 11th graders, all levels	22
Emily	52	Óbudai Árpád High School	27	English	Hungarian (no longer taught)	7 th to 11 th graders, all levels	22
Melissa	57	Óbudai Árpád High School	24	English and Russian	-	7 th to 11 th , A2-C1	22
Kim	58	Óbudai Árpád High School	22	English	maths and chemistry (no longer taught)	all grades and levels	23
Paris	58	Óbudai Árpád High School	35	English	Hungarian (no longer taught)	at present moment, only 11 th graders (she is vice principal) who are at B2 level	4

Table 4 Participants of the learner interviews

Pseudonyms	Age	School	Foreign languages	Number of years learning the language	Level	Lessons per week	Using the languages outside school
Clara	15	Óbudai Árpád High School	Spanish and English	English: 7 Spanish: 0,5	Eng.: B2, Sp.: A1	Eng.: 3, Sp.: 2	watching films
Dean	15	Óbudai Árpád High School	German and English	English: 7 German: 4,5	Eng.: B2, German: A2	Eng.: 3, German: 2	holidays abroad
Madeline	15	Óbudai Árpád High School	English and Spanish	Eng.: 9, Sp.: 0,5	Eng.: B2, Sp.: A1	Eng.: 3, Sp.: 3	pen pals

Tana	17	Óbudai Árpád High School	English and French	Eng.: 13, Fr.: 2,5	Eng.: C1, Fr.: A2-B1	Eng.: 6, Fr.: 4	watching films, reading
Brad	17	Óbudai Árpád High School	English and French	Eng.: 9, Fr.: 2,5	Eng.: B2-C1, Fr.: B1	Eng.: 5, Fr.: 4	watching films
Shira	14	Óbudai Árpád High School	English, Spanish, French	Fr.: from early childhood, Eng.: 5, Sp.: 0,5	Fr.: C1- C2, Eng.: B2, Sp.: A1	Eng.: 3, Sp.: 3	communication with her family members ²

Table 5 9th graders' scores for the tasks of the English lesson of 18 January

Pseudonyms	Speaking: recording their voice	Speaking in pairs: storytelling on a chosen prompt	Vocabulary (collecting crimes based on a picture)	Listening exercise (radio programme)
Clara	4	3	4	2
Colin	3	3	3	4
Madeline	3	4	3	4
Jess	3	4	3	4
Robert	4	3	4	4
Shira	4	4	3	4
Extravert 1	4	4	4	4
Extravert 2	3	3	4	3
Extravert 3	3	3	4	4
Extravert 4	4	4	4	4
Extravert 5	3	4	4	4
Extravert 6	3	4	4	4

Table 6 Learners' scores on the three parts of the proficiency test

	Jess	Robert	Colin	Shira	Madeline	Clara	Dean
Reading	70%	55%	85%	95%	45%	35%	50%
Writing	63%	57%	82%	82%	47%	72%	60%
Listening	64%	56%	96%	92%	68%	96%	60%

² Her stepmother is English and her father is half-French, so they use these two languages on a daily basis. She also needs to speak Spanish because her father lives in Barcelona.

Table 7 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the French lessons between 8-13 January

Pseudonyms	Grammar: writing questions for a given answer	Writing: summary and description of characters	Speaking: asking and answering questions	Listening comprehension	Grammar drills
Brad	4	3	4	4	4
Tana	4	3	4	3	4
Rory	4	3	4	4	4
Extravert 1	3	3	4	3	4
Extravert 2	3	2	3	2	3

Table 8 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the French lessons between 22-27 January

Pseudonyms	Pronunciation: Reading out loud a dialogue and recording their voice	Grammar drills online	Speaking: asking indirect Qs	Vocab: Matching pictures to terms	Speaking: Discussion in pairs based on pictures	Listening	Speaking in pairs: Role play
Brad	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Tana	2	4	3	3	2	4	3
Extravert 1	4	4	3	4	3	3	4
Extravert 2	4	2	4	2	3	4	3
Extravert 3	2	3	3	4	2	2	1
Extravert 4	1	3	3	4	4	2	2

Table 9 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the French lessons between 29 January- 3 February

Pseudonyms	Vocab- matching, Grammar- gap-filling: online exercises	Speaking warmer	Grammar: online exercises	Listening
Brad	4	4	4	4
Rory	4	4	4	4
Extravert 1	4	3	4	2
Extravert 2	4	4	4	4
Extravert 3	3	3	2	3
Extravert 4	2	4	4	4

Table 10 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the English lesson on 5 February

Pseudonyms	Listening	Speaking practice in pairs
Madeline	4	3
Robert	4	4
Extravert 1	4	4
Extravert 2	3	4
Extravert 3	2	3

Table 11 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the French lessons between 11-16 December

Pseudonyms	Grammar drills	Speaking: discussion on their preferred winter activities based on pictures	Creative writing and video: watching a trailer, writing the film's summary and imagining the ending
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Brad	4	3	3
Tana	4	3	4
Rory	3	4	4
Extraverted 1	3	4	3
Extraverted 2	2	4	4
Extraverted 3	2	4	2
Extraverted 4	4	4	4

Table 12 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the French lessons between 8-13 January

Pseudonyms	Grammar: writing questions for a given answer	Writing: summary and description of characters	Speaking: asking and answering questions	Listening comprehension	Grammar drills
Brad	4	3	4	4	4
Tana	4	3	4	3	4
Rory	4	3	4	4	4
Extraverted 1	3	3	4	3	4
Extraverted 2	3	2	3	2	3

Table 13 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the French lessons between 15-20 January

Pseudonyms	Grammar drills	Pronunciation (silent letters)	Grammar (imperative sentences)	Grammar: Baamboozle-indirect speech
Brad	4	4	4	4
Louise	3	4	4	4
Tana	4	3	3	3
Rory	4	4	4	4
Extraverted 1	3	4	4	4
Extraverted 2	4	3	4	4
Extraverted 3	2	2	3	4
Extraverted 4	3	3	4	4
Extraverted 5	2	4	4	4

Table 14 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the French lessons between 22-27 January

Pseudonyms	Pronunciation: Reading out loud a dialogue and recording their voice	Grammar drills online	Speaking: asking indirect Qs	Vocabulary: Matching pictures to terms	Speaking: Discussion in pairs based on pictures	Listening	Speaking in pairs: Role play
Brad	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Tana	2	4	3	3	2	4	3
Extravert 1	4	4	3	4	3	3	4
Extravert 2	4	2	4	2	3	4	3

Extravert 3	2	3	3	4	2	2	1
Extravert 4	1	3	3	4	4	2	2

Table 15 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the French lessons between 18 November

Pseudonyms	Pronunciation: tongue twisters	Speaking in groups (picture description)	Listening comprehension
Brad	4	3	4
Louise	4	2	3
Tana	3	3	4
Extravert 1	3	3	4
Extravert 2	3	4	1
Extravert 3	4	4	3
Extravert 4	4	4	4

Table 16 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the French lessons between 20-25 November

Pseudonym	Vocab : Quizle t	Readin g	Vocab: online exercis e	Vocab: online exercise (learnin g apps)	Thinglin k platform	Speaking : reading a map	Speaking roleplay (giving directions)
Brad	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Tana	4	3	4	2	3	2	3
Rory	4	3	4	4	4	2	4
Extravert 1	4	3	4	3	3	4	3

Extravert 2	4	3	4	3	3	3	4
Extravert 3	4	3	4	4	2	4	4
Extravert 4	4	1	3	-	3	-	3

Table 17 Learners' scores given for the tasks of the French lessons between 4-9 December

Pseudonyms	Grammar: conjugation online worksheet	Pronunciation: collecting homonyms	Project: drawing the map of an imagined city and presenting it	Grammar competition on Baamboozle: conjugation	Grammar: online multiple- choice quiz
Brad	4	4	4	3	4
Louise	3	4	4	4	4
Tana	3	2	4	3	3
Rory	4	4	4	3	3
Extravert 1	3	2	4	4	4
Extravert 2	4	3	4	4	4
Extravert 3	4	2	3	4	4
Extravert 4	3	3	2	3	4
Extravert 5	3	4	4	4	4
Extravert 6	1	4	3	3	2

Appendix E - Observation diaries

French group

Initial observations during the first two weeks

Rory: She's quiet and shy but very smart and hardworking. She has great pronunciation.

Louise: She's one of the most proficient language users in the group, she almost always knows the answer. She pays attention to the T and actively participates in the lesson, raising her hand quite frequently to answer the T's question. She's among the very few Ss who actually tries to speak French when answering a question and does this with relatively good pronunciation and grammatical accuracy.

Tana: She's hardworking, she always does the extra homework and takes notes during the lessons. However, she's awfully quiet and shy, even if she knows the answer, she's quite reluctant to speak. When speaking, she's really slow, always thinking twice before saying something.

Brad: He's genuinely interested in French, he does extra-curricular activities (e.g., visiting the French Institute, reading in French etc.). During the lessons, he always pays attention, actively participates in discussions and helps his classmates study and understand the critical points of the lesson.

Offline lessons

9 November

Rory: not present

Louise: not present

Tana: Today, I asked her and her partner to role-play a dialogue. She couldn't really take her eyes off the book, and she spoke quietly and very slowly. But she didn't make any serious mistakes. Apart from this task, she didn't speak and didn't raise her hand during the lesson. When we were doing grammar tasks, I asked her a few times to say her solutions, and she answered quietly but correctly.

Brad: He volunteered to role-play a dialogue with his partner for a plus. He spoke with great pronunciation and self-confidence, and he didn't make many mistakes. When we learnt a new grammatical structure, he asked questions and during the pair work, he tried to help his partner and explain the rule to him.

Online lessons

18 November- Zoom

Rory: not present

Louise: During the pair work, her partner was the T (not me) and she didn't like that task (in the table above), she had a good pronunciation when I asked her to repeat the tongue twister,

and when I asked her a question (vocabulary) she didn't know the word but she tried to figure it out and said synonyms. She disappeared at the end of the online lesson.

Tana: She answered very slowly when I asked her a question, but she knew the answer. She had good pronunciation when repeating the tongue twister, and she was actively collaborating with her partner during the pair work.

Brad: He was the only one to turn on the camera when I asked them to turn it on, and he left it like that during the whole lesson. He knew the answers when I asked him something, and he took the lead in the group work. He liked every task, spoke with great pronunciation when repeating the tongue twisters, and was actively interacting with me.

25 November- Zoom

Rory: Today, we learnt about giving directions in French. After introducing the vocabulary, I asked them to role-play a dialogue when they give directions to each other. At first, she was struggling a bit with the words given that she had been ill before and she couldn't do the assignments. But at the end of the lesson, I chose her to describe one of the maps. Although she wasn't happy to speak in front of everyone (she started speaking quite hesitantly, with a quiet "I'll try..."), she managed to do it without serious mistakes.

Louise: not present

Tana: I didn't really hear her voice today. Sometimes I asked her a few questions but she didn't speak voluntarily.

Brad: He turned on the camera without me asking him to (he was the only one to do that) and interacted with me throughout the whole lesson. When I asked if they could see the task or if the link worked, he always answered or sent an emoji. I observed that he has quite a good relationship with teachers, it was always him who went looking for the teacher to ask something on the behalf of everyone (Which room are we in? When will we write the test? etc.) and he contacted me via messenger. What is more, he sometimes shares some personal details about his life, for example, a video of him and his dad practising French or a photo of the pancakes he made.

2 December- Zoom

Rory: She was more active than before, she answered some of my questions voluntarily and she was very good at the vocabulary game (it was a competition and she was the 3rd- place winner) and at the listening task. She didn't take the initiative in the group work but she participated in the brainstorming. Next time, they will present their work. She's in a group with two extraverts so I'll be curious.

Louise: not present

Tana: After a pair discussion, I asked her to retell what they had discussed. She doesn't like speaking but she was more relaxed this way, after discussing the topic with a partner. During the group work, she had ideas but the leader of the discussion (who shared his screen) was Brad.

Brad: Again, he was active, he answered my questions and worked well. He took the initiative in the group work, which might be explained by his love for French.

9 December- Zoom

Today, the groups presented their work (map of an imagined city).

Rory: She decided to draw and let the others present her work. It was clear that she had worked hard, and I'm slightly suspicious whether it was the speaker or her who had written the script (because the speaker was obviously reading out a coherent text). Apart from that, she actively participated in the lesson, however, she wasn't really good at grammar tasks.

Louise: In her group, she was the one to present their work. She spoke more or less fluently with some pronunciation mistakes but good grammar. During the lesson, she always tried to answer my question in French and was very good at grammar tasks. However, she didn't really interact with me voluntarily.

Tana: She was quiet as usual; she didn't even answer my questions directed at her (or not in French). She chose to draw instead of presenting the city so she could remain silent.

Brad: He presented the work of the whole group. He spoke a bit hesitantly and slowly with a few grammar mistakes and with relatively good pronunciation.

16 December

Rory: not present. She is quite often absent, but she always reacts to my comments on her assignments with at least a "Merci beaucoup". When she was ill for a long time, I extended the deadlines for her, and she was very grateful. She even wrote to me in French that it helped her a lot.

Louise: She doesn't go to my lessons and turns in the assignments at the last moment. Up until this moment, I haven't known why, she's such a smart and motivated student. But my mentor teacher has just informed me that she's been busy learning French with her grandmother and decided to take the final exam this April. They started learning French together during the lockdown of last spring, and in 1 year, she reached B2 level from absolute zero.

Tana: She was quiet as usual.

Brad: He was active as usual.

13 January, 2021

Rory: She understood the grammar quite easily and quickly. In the pair work, she was put together with a less talented student, and she explained the rule to her and helped her do the drilling exercises. She was acting like a real teacher, guiding her partner and giving her feedback ("Yes, very good! Now, how should you form the next sentence?"). She was equally good in the listening exercise.

Louise: not present

Tana: I observed that her pronunciation is a bit less accurate than the others', and sometimes she's struggling with basic words and translations (meaning of "espérer").

Brad: His comprehension of the new grammar was a bit less quick and profound than Rory's, but he was also helping his partner a lot in the drilling exercises.

20 January

Rory: Today, we discussed their mid-term results and their work throughout the first part of the school term. I spoke to everyone one-by-one, and she very kindly turned on her camera, unlike the others, and smiled at me while I was speaking. She was happy with her results, but didn't say anything apart from a "Thank you", not even when I asked her if she wanted to add or ask something. The other extraverted students made short comments on the quite exceptional term and on my teaching methods, but she didn't initiate a conversation with me. Also, she was quite good at the grammar exercises.

Louise: She didn't turn on her camera during our discussion, but she was grateful for her mark and interacted with me a little bit. We talked about her learning French with her grandmother. She was very good at the grammar exercises, but when I asked her to tell the rules of "Simon says", she spoke a bit nervously with quite a few grammatical mistakes.

Tana: She misunderstood one of the tasks, or just wanted to be over it very quickly. We played the game "Simon says", and it was her turn to give instructions, but she started all sentences with "Simon says...". Also, during our discussion, she didn't turn on her camera and didn't really react to my mini-speech.

Brad: Just like Rory, he didn't add anything to our short discussion, he just thanked me for his final grade. We did pronunciation practice as well, and he volunteered to read out the text for a plus. His pronunciation was good, he only made a few mistakes. He also did the extra homework, and actively asked questions during the lesson. However, he chose to work alone on the grammar drill tasks, even though I put them into small groups.

27 January

Rory: She was very good at the speaking task when they had to use the new grammar (indirect speech) in speech by transforming each other's questions into indirect questions. During the pair work, she worked with one of the most proficient boys in the class, but they didn't cooperate. Both of them did the task alone and sent their answers separately. She didn't even ask him for help when she didn't understand a few words and got stuck, she asked me instead. She didn't turn in the last two assignments. One of them was to record themselves as reading out a dialogue to practice pronunciation. Maybe she felt uncomfortable with this task.

Louise: not present

Tana: Concerning the homework, she read with excellent pronunciation and sounded way more fluent than in lessons. Maybe she practised it more times before recording herself. Today, she was acting like Rory and explained the task and the rules to her less proficient partner. However, when she was put together with another boy, they couldn't really work together effectively, I had to help them and encourage them to discuss the questions.

Brad: His pronunciation was great when reading out the dialogue, he did it with no mistakes. During the lesson, he always knew the answer when I asked him a question, but he didn't really speak voluntarily. When they had to role-play a situation, he misunderstood the task a bit and spoke in the third person singular, so he didn't imagine himself in the shoes of the character.

English group

Initial observations during the first two weeks

Jess: He's a nice, smart but awfully shy student. He always pays attention and doesn't really talk to others, except his also very introverted and shy neighbour. However smart he is, he doesn't like to be asked questions during the lesson. He almost never raises his hand, and if I ask him a question, he very often stays silent.

*English proficiency test (mock exam, Euroexam): **Reading 70%**, Writing 63%, Listening 64%*

Robert: He always works with Jess during pair works. He's just as shy and quiet as Jess, however, he is even mocked by other students because of that. He sometimes volunteers to present or retell something, and according to my mentor, he's slowly starting to come out of his shell. He has some foreign friends, and he often talks to them online to practice speaking.

*Proficiency test: Reading 55%, **Writing 57%**, Listening 56%*

Colin: He likes to speak and to ask questions, he interacts with me. He's really smart, he has great pronunciation and he scored one of the highest points on the proficiency test. However, he always uses Hungarian to ask questions.

*Proficiency test: Reading 85%, Writing 82%, **Listening 96%***

Shira: She's a quiet student, she never raises her hand but knows the answer when asked. She gets on really well with the other (mostly introverted) girls, she's never alone. Her parents' native language is not Hungarian, so she actively uses English to communicate at home. Maybe that's why she scored the highest point on the proficiency test. My mentor teacher expressed her incredulity towards the result of her test (Introversion-extraversion), reasoning that she always takes every opportunity to take part in school trips to abroad and in talks/presentations, and she is quite talkative and open with her. We agreed that her lifestyle (always travelling from one country to another) brought her out of her comfort zone, and that her introversion might show different colours than the others' (shyness and unsociability are not the unique indicators of introversion).

*Proficiency test: **Reading 95%**, Writing 82%, Listening 92%*

Clara: She's a nice, hardworking student, always smiling and paying attention. She always knows the answer, however, she only speaks when she's asked to.

*Proficiency test: Reading 35%, Writing 72%, **Listening 96%***

Madeline: She's a hardworking student, she writes good tests, however, she's not so fluent in speech.

*Proficiency test: Reading 45%, Writing 47%, **Listening 68%***

Dean: He's a reserved and quiet student with a huge vocabulary knowledge (especially in the topic of sports).

*Proficiency test: Reading 50%, **Writing 60%**, Listening 60%*

Offline lessons

4 November

Jess: Today, I asked him a question and he completely blocked down. He remained silent for a long moment, then instead of asking for clarification, he simply said that he didn't know. And it happened again during the same lesson. It wasn't because he didn't pay attention, he just doesn't like to be in the spotlight.

Robert: He was the only one who could answer my question related to grammar. It required some knowledge synthesis, because it wasn't about something we were learning about that time, but about something they had learnt years before.

6 November

Today, we did an oral interrogation and I asked Dean and Madeline to retell the story they had to learn in the autumn break.

Dean: He retold the story almost word by word. He was very fluent in speech, but mainly because he studied hard. He didn't have serious grammar mistakes, just a couple of minor ones.

Madeline: Contrary to Dean, she didn't study that much, or just forgot everything and panicked. She couldn't even start it, and looked as if she was going to faint. I had to ask whether she was alright, and ask helping questions to elicit the summary. Finally, she remembered some details, but she was only answering my questions instead of speaking fluently on her own.

Robert: He volunteered to retell the story, which very much surprised me. He was quiet but confident and grammatically correct.

Jess: During a task that required pair discussion, I observed that he didn't really interact with his partner, Robert, they were just looking at their exercise book and exchanging muttered words.

Online lessons

30 November:

They always turn on their camera when I ask them to.

Jess: He prepared a detailed and thorough essay as homework while I only asked them to take notes (keywords) on a chapter in the book. He's very hard-working, always being among the first people to turn in assignments.

Robert: He participated in the lesson more or less actively, but not in discussions. During the pair work, he mostly remained silent.

Shira: She wasn't afraid to ask questions, but she never volunteers to answer one.

Colin: He answers my questions when I ask him to, but never voluntarily.

Clara: She participates in the lesson, doing the tasks quietly but correctly.

Dean: He's very quiet, he hardly ever spoke this lesson.

Madeline: Initially, she had a problem with the camera, she was too self-conscious to turn it on and it made her uncomfortable.

4 December:

Jess: He didn't answer my questions voluntarily and he was rather inactive during discussions.

Robert: During the speaking task, he spoke slowly and self-consciously, but without mistakes.

Shira: She didn't really speak in front of everyone, but she was more active during the pair work.

Clara: She talked more confidently with her brother during the pair discussion, but when I asked her a question, she went shy again and waited for her brother to answer it (they are logged in on the same computer).

Dean: He didn't answer my questions voluntarily but discussed them with his sister more freely.

Madeline: She was quite inactive today, she seemed tired and unmotivated. Turning on her camera makes her feel uncomfortable.

11 December:

Today was my open lesson and everyone was nice, smiley and more active than usual.

Jess: With Robert, they are always the first pair to finish the discussion and when I enter their "breakout room", they always stop the discussion.

Robert: The same applies to him, but at least he answers me when I directly ask him about something.

Shira: She took the lead in the discussion with Madeline, and they could more easily perform their discussion after having the time to rehearse it in a private breakout room. She spoke fluently and with good pronunciation and grammar, however, she doesn't really use intonation and her speech is a bit monotonous.

Madeline: She replied with "I don't know" to almost all of my questions. But when I listened to their discussion with Shira, she seemed more confident so I nominated them to perform their discussion in front of everyone. Again, she lost her confidence and spoke with more grammar mistakes and less fluently than Shira.

14 December:

Colin: He didn't use English when speaking, and when I asked him a question, he paraphrased it and asked back in Hungarian. He's not really talkative since the digital period.

Madeline: She was passive again, when I asked her a simple question (What did we learn about last week?), she said she didn't know.

Jess: I asked him about his weekend and he answered in keywords (“It was good.”). But when I encouraged him to elaborate and share further details, he answered in more (short) sentences.

Robert: same as Jess.

Shira: Today, she had to rate the speaking performance of two of her classmates and she was quite generous and nice. Again, she spoke fluently.

18 December:

Clara and Dean: They performed today’s speaking task in front of everyone. They were smiley and giggly, but the time for private practice gave them enough confidence to do it based on the notes they took. They played with intonation and spoke fluently, and were more or less grammatically accurate.

Madeline: She told the story they were discussing with her partner, but she spoke for the smallest amount of time.

8 January:

Colin: He had no difficulties in using the new grammar (Third Conditional) in the homework (they had to write third conditional sentences based on a story), however, he couldn’t form such a sentence in speech during the lesson. I had to help him out several times.

Madeline: She interacts with me via Google Classroom more often and more easily than in person or during online lessons.

11 January:

Jess and Robert (one pair): It was Robert who started and led the discussion, even though he was quite slow and hesitant. But they are braver when put together as a pair. At the beginning of the lesson, I asked them about digital vs normal learning, and Jess said he enjoyed some aspects of it (no need to get up early, can stay home). When telling the picture story, he almost entirely relied on his notes (he wrote full sentences despite me telling them to write only keywords). Mostly, he was reading his notes, occasionally looking up. It made him more comfortable with speaking.

Clara and Dean (one pair, twins): They can work together really effectively and it makes them feel more at ease with speaking tasks. It was advised to reorganise the pairs, but they were reluctant to change partners.

Colin: He was great at the listening exercise and spoke more during this lesson.

18 January

Jess: Their homework was to record themselves roleplaying a dialogue by using the appropriate functional language. He spoke quietly but quite fluently with great pronunciation and intonation. He sounded more confident than in lessons.

Robert: He sometimes stopped to think or started stuttering a bit, but overall, he spoke with good pronunciation. However, he didn't use the right functional language in the last dialogue, she should have made a suggestion and instead of that, he asked "What are we going to do today?".

Madeline: Her pronunciation and intonation were great, seemingly she speaks better when she has the time to prepare.

Shira: She's always very fluent in speech, and she uses advanced vocabulary and complex structures. Her pronunciation is not that native-like, but given that she did the B2 language exam, her English knowledge is richer than the others'.

Clara and Dean: They did the dialogues together. They spoke naturally with great intonation and pronunciation. They are always very prepared and do exactly what the task requires.

Colin: He spoke slowly with an exceptionally native-like pronunciation and intonation; however, his vocabulary use was sometimes incorrect ("I have a stinging issue to go to the bar").

22 January

Today, I asked them to perform the picture story and the discussion in pairs (2 speaking tasks of the Euroexam we're preparing for).

Jess: He was exceptionally good at the picture story, maybe because he had time to take notes and prepare for that. He spoke with a rich vocabulary, he used various narrative tenses and made his story coherent and colourful with linking words. However, it was less than 2 minutes, which is not enough for the exam. Discussion with Robert: Their discussion sounded natural, they asked each other's opinion and interacted with each other ("Yes, that's true").

Robert: Just like Jess, he used complex grammatical structures and linking words, but spoke less fluently with more pauses. And it was less than 2 minutes.

Madeline: She made quite a few mistakes and used simple words and grammatical structures. She was a bit slow and hesitant and her story was less coherent, but she didn't finish it earlier. Discussion with Shira: It was Shira who took the lead, she was trying to ask Madeline's opinion, but Madeline was uncertain and less talkative. She said she had no idea, which is forbidden in the exam.

Shira: She spoke fluently and accurately, but she used the word "wonderful" too much. She told a coherent and colourful story.

Dean: He didn't use complex structures and various narrative tenses, but his vocabulary was broader and he linked his ideas together coherently. He spoke more or less fluently with good pronunciation. Discussion with Clara: They were really natural and fluent, they discussed the topic just as if it was a real conversation between two friends. They are twins and are seemingly at ease when put together to work in pairs. Also, they used the model phrases for discussions ("I agree", "On the other hand", "Can we come to a conclusion?" etc.) that we learnt together.

Clara: Her story was a bit simple and less coherent, she didn't use complex structures and words, but she was grammatically accurate and more or less fluent.

Colin: He spoke fluently with good pronunciation and more complex structures, but he only used Past Simple and Continuous. He didn't really use linking words or a considerably rich vocabulary, but he didn't finish the story earlier. Discussion: he and his partner misunderstood the task and instead of discussing the possible reasons for becoming vegetarian, they discussed whether it's good to be vegetarian. But otherwise, they were fluent and confident, and they used the model phrases.

27 January

The homework for today was to write an essay.

Robert: He wrote a wonderfully written essay organised in a logical structure that was very easy to follow. He made it coherent with linking words and separate paragraphs, and he used a wide range of vocabulary (arise, increasingly...) and grammatical structures.

Madeline: She wrote a well-structured essay with very clever ideas.

Clara: I gave her maximum points for task achievement due to the clear content and logical structure of her essay.

Shira: Her essay was well-structured; the content was very clever and she used an exceptionally wide range of vocabulary and grammar. Thus, I gave her maximum points for structure, coherence, grammar and vocabulary.