

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 The Background of the Study

Personality plays an important role in learning a second language. For second language learners to make maximum progress with their own learning styles, their individual differences must be taken into account. Personality is considered to be a pattern of unique characteristics of person's behaviour.

Personality can be defined as a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviours in specific situation (Ryckman, 2004).

According to Cook (1991) "there are three reasons for being interested in personality, i.e. first, to gain scientific understanding, second, to access people and third, to change people". For Cook, the first reason is theoretical means to gain scientific understanding of a person's personality concerned with or involving the theory of a personality or area of study rather than its practical application; while the second reason means that personality can be as an access to understand a person behaviour and attitude, then the third reason could change a person, the reasons are relevant and can be applied in real life situation.

It can be concluded that personality should be studied by the language teachers as well as the language learners. Considering personality is important to provide a more fruitful learning and convenient teaching environment both for the teachers and the learners, because there is a close connection between the personality of the student, the learning style and the learning strategy that the student develops in order to achieve better academic performance. For the

teachers, this consideration will help them to adjust the most appropriate strategy or method in teaching. Furthermore, for the students, recognizing their own personality dimension will give them a greater chance to acquire the second language successfully. This could be done by adjusting their personality and their learning style to increase their performance and achievement in the class.

Since the beginning of 1990s, there has been a growing interest on how personality correlates to the academic performance. Spolsky (1989) suggests that an individual's personality can have an effect on to what extent he is able to achieve information (1996). Personality, where extrovert-introvert exists, in general is viewed to be responsible factors for learners' success in learning second language or L2. Many language acquisition theories claim that the extroverts are the better language learners since they tend to be sociable, more likely to join groups and more inclined to engage in conversations both inside and outside the classroom (Cook, 1991). Davies (2004) describes a finding that from 6 out to 8 studies that employ oral language test extroverts performed better than introverts. Suliman (2014) also found that extroverts easily communicate in English classes and they would succeed. Meanwhile introverts seemed to avoid interaction in English classes.

Based on relevant studies shown above, extrovert students are better than the introvert one in the speaking performance. This assumption tends to affect teachers' evaluation on students' speaking performance. Intuitively, many second language teachers assume that a student with extrovert personality should get higher grade than students with introvert personality.

Intuitive feeling and generalization of perception that extrovert students is better than introvert students in speaking performance cannot be accepted as whole. It is supported by an event observed by the writer. When the writer had a chance to observe second semester students of speaking class in English Literature, State University of Medan, the writer found an interesting phenomenon. A student possessed introvert personality, turned to have a better performance than the extrovert students. In that occasion, the lecturer asked the student to give their prompt opinion about how corruption in Indonesia is. It is such a warming up before continuing to the next topic about reporting a news. Here are the the extrovert and introvert students' speaking performances.

Extrovert student said,

*“Corruption is big problems that is growing fast in Indonesia nowadays. The rule that is owned by Indonesia is low so there is no fear to do corruption again. Commission for corruption, emmmm I mean KPK must free us from corruption and also monitoring the government. But I myself pointed out that KPK is more focus on tackling lower profile figures although recently some high profile figures such as emmmm judges, police have done corruption. Even, KPK also did corruption. There is no need of KPK anymore or the KPK must be also investigated”*

Introvert student said,

*“In my opinion, corruption has become a tradition in our country. It happens from the lowest to the highest level in government structure. Emmmm...Corruption affects and breaks all systems in Indonesia. Therefore, we should eradicate every single root of corruption for better Indonesia.”*

In line with the speaking performances above, extrovert student uttered longer explanation than introvert one. The sentences was uttered in high fluency. But, the problem is the content or range of the explanation is merely focused on KPK, not corruption itself. It is also lack of accuracy since there are some grammatical errors such as *corruption is big problems*, it should be

*corruption is a big problem, and KPK must free us from corruption and also monitoring the government, it should be KPK must free us from corruption and also monitor the government.*

Meanwhile, introvert student in this case uttered shorter explanation in low fluency. But, the key point is that the introvert student successfully explained about how corruption is, who involve, what the effect is and what should be done as the solution. The content or range of introvert student is better than the extrovert students and there is no grammatical error found. All sentences are also coherent.

Fluency tends to be used as the only aspect to be evaluated in speaking performances. In fact, based on the indicators of speaking assesment suggested by Bachman and Alderson (2004), there are five indicators should be considered including range, accuracy, fluency, interaction, and coherence.

This observation which drawn that introvert students is better than extrovert students is different from the relevant studies which state that extrovert students have better speaking performance than introvert students. This gap encourages the writer to conduct as further qualitative research entitled Students' Speaking Performances with Different Personalities.

## **1.2 The Problems of the Study**

Based on the background in the previous part, the study attempts to answer the following questions:

1. How are speaking performances of extrovert and introvert students?
2. Why do extrovert and introvert students speak the way they are?

### **1.3 The Objectives of the Study**

In line with the problem of the study, the objective of this study is aimed:

1. To find out the speaking performances of extrovert and introvert students.
2. To find out why extrovert and introvert students speak the way they are.

### **1.4 The Scope of the Study**

This study is limited to the speaking performances of students with different personalities. John and Srivastava (1999) state that there are five dimensions of personality trait namely extrovert/ introvert, agreeableness/ antagonism, conscientiousness/ lack of direction, neuroticism/ emotional stability, openness/ closedness to experience. In this study, the personalities investigated are only extrovert and introvert. Kind of speaking task observed must be prompt speaking which are limited to debate, dialogue, and discussion. Speaking activities using note or a kind of presentation, gossiping are not observed. Indicators of speaking performance are limited to range, accuracy, fluency, interaction and coherence.

### **1.5 The Significance of the Study**

This study is important theoretically and practically.

1. Theoretical significance

This study is useful for the enrichment of linguistics knowledge especially second language acquisition and individual differences affecting the acquisition. It also enhances the knowledge in language teaching field related to personality.

## 2. Practical significance

Practically, the usefulness of findings is described as the following:

- a. This study is useful for the students since taking personality into account can make them realize the weakness and the strength of their speaking ability based on the five speaking indicators. It can help them to improve their learning style which can maintain the strength and improve the weakness. It will lead the students into a better speaking performance.
- b. This study is important for the second language teacher. By considering the personality trait can help teachers to adjust the most appropriate learning strategy in classroom activities especially in speaking class. It also prevents the teachers to evaluate the students' speaking performance based on intuitive feeling and generalization due to the students' personality