An Investigation of Personality Trait on Asynchronous Computer-Mediated Communication Supporting Speaking Performance

Mei-Jen Audrey SHIH[*] **& Jie Chi YANG**
Graduate Institute of Network Learning Technology, National Central University, Taiwan
*audreyshih32@gmail.com

Abstract: The study was designed to offer an extended thread of speaking practice and performance with regard to in-class instruction and after-class exercise in EFL learning environment. To allow students to outspread speaking practice in class, an implementation of asynchronous computer-mediated communication in terms of audioblog was utilized to manage the after-class speaking practice and performance. In the meanwhile, individual difference has been seen as one of the most affected factors to shape learning, such as feature of personality. Thus, the study intended to understand the impact of personality trait would react on audioblog use for speaking performance in English, and the product of the presentation of speaking performance on audioblog. Two research questions were managed as R1: how does personality trait influence students' speaking performance on audioblogs? R2: how do students with different personality trait manage the speaking performance on audioblogs? The participants were three hundred and twenty one male high school students. They were taking an English speaking class for a semester and recruited in the study. After each thematic speaking class, they were instructed to accomplish one thematic speaking performance and post it on their audioblogs accordingly. A mixed method of quantitative and qualitative was analyzed to collect the responses from the students with different personality trait. A few of affected matters from students, as well as the overall presentation of speaking performance on audioblog were gathered for data analysis. The findings of the study showed students with different personality trait affected distinctly on confidence and willingness in English after engaging with audioblog for speaking performance. Those who were inclined to be introverted showed the potential to accomplish more speaking performance than those who were more extroverted. In addition, the implementation of speaking performance on audioblog seemed to significantly influence students' willingness in English after a long-period engagement, particularly to the introverted ones. On the other hand, the overall presentation of students' performances on audioblogs revealed an astounding achievement that not only for the recording style but also the presentation format, and either extroverted or introverted students were apt to favor some presentation formats by the trait of personality.

Keywords: English as a foreign Language (EFL), personality trait, audioblog, speaking performance

1. Introduction

Language skills in term of listening, speaking, reading, and writing were distinguished from general language learning, which to provide an emphasis on specific language skill improvement. However, Sun and Yang (2013) indicated that speaking skill has been seen to have a desperate need of practice in the second language learning. Especially for English as foreign language (EFL) students who lacked of an authentic environment speak in English in daily life (Chiu, Liou, & Chen, 2007; Pong, 2010). As a result, a number of emotional and affected reactions might occur from students' behaviors. For instance, students were deficient in confidence to speak and an influence on their willingness in English. Besides, the individual difference played as an important factor to power English language learning differently. For example, the personality trait was one of the individual differences, but scant of studies have been viewed to apply this feature in language learning context. To this end, a consideration

of not only how to inspire student to be positively affected and be willing to speak more English also how individual difference would impact the language learning with regard to English speaking performance need a well investigation. The study attempted to demonstrate an alternative English speaking instruction design with content and context to fulfill the above-mentioned consideration. In the meanwhile, a facilitation of computer-mediate communication (CMC) was implemented within the study for efficient teaching and learning. Hegelheimer and Tower (2004) revealed the CMC tool has been widely accompanying with its benefits on assisting language learning, and can assist particularly on speaking performance (Alastuey, 2011; Sun, 2012; Yanguas, 2012). There were two modes of CMC tool, which were synchronous and asynchronous approaches, such as chat room or blog, referred to different functions to support various language learning needs. Thus, the study aimed to provide more opportunities for speaking practice in English for students regarding the proposed instructional design, and a highlight on the asynchronous CMC mode was utilized as a tool in the study for after-class English speaking performance. The research questions were addressed as shown. R1: How does personality trait influence students' speaking performance on audioblogs? R2: How do students with different personality trait manage the speaking performance on audioblogs?

2. Literature review

2.1 Speaking practice in EFL environment

Alastuey (2011) showed that a lack of practice resulted in inefficient English language development. Regarding the EFL environment, speaking skill was seen to be the most challenged language ability for students due to the insufficient practice. So, several affected matters such as being anxious and being worried about not having confidence would easily block students' speaking development in English. These emotional states often further directly and indirectly influence their willingness in English. Consequently, even if how well-designed speaking activities and exercises were delivered to the students, the instructor did not notice those affected aspects from students on English speaking; the speaking practice from the designed activities would not be affected at all.

2.2 Asynchronous CMC- audioblog

One of the effective CMC tools in terms of audioblog was confirmed to provide an asynchronous (delayed time) way to offer learners flexible time to manage communication. Huann and Thong (2006) showed the elements of an audioblog not only consisting of audio condition but also supplementary features, as like visual supports in terms of texts, illustrations, and animations. In addition, Hsu, Wang and Comac (2008) and Sun (2009) have disclosed an implementation of audioblog into an English language class to support speaking development. The results showed positive effects on students' speaking improvement with regard to the engagement of the use of audioblog, and further influenced their motivation and strategy use.

Furthermore, the study attempted to apply the use of audioblog into an English speaking instruction to offer an alternative channel to students for speaking practice in English. In the meanwhile, Fareed (2010) indicated that an aspect on pedagogical setting was important while building an instructional design, which would affect its effectiveness regarding what engagement would be considered into the instruction. Therefore, the study aimed to utilize the audioblog as facilitation to support students' speaking practice in English after class. The reason that not using the audioblog into the classroom instruction was because several concerns which went against the feature of audioblog and might further interrupt the nature of speaking practice in a classroom-based setting. Those concerns were an influence of class size while engaging audioblog-based activity in the classroom; a nonappearance of face-to-face interaction, which lacked of authentic communication; and a limited class time might not afford students to complete tasks on audioblogs. As a result, the use of audioblog in the study was considered as facilitation for the after-class activity, which provided a space to students to develop individual speaking performance concerning the extension of the classroom lesson. Moreover, the study was designed within one phase of a cycle of English speaking instruction, which the audioblog was taken as facilitation to assist after-class speaking practice in English for students. More precisely,

the use of audioblog served the students for speaking practice after school rather than a supplementary in the classroom.

2.3 Personality trait

Personality trait was one of the featured individual differences has been discussed in the language learning. Eysenck and Eysenck (1975) firstly exposed the dimension of personality trait in terms of extroversion and introversion. With the definition, an extroverted learner tended to be fond of engaging with outer world and depended on external information for learning. On the other hand, an introverted learner tended to be fond of the inner space, which would like to think before acting, and was more independent on learning. In other words, the former ones were likely to show their ideas without restrictions while the latter ones were likely to express themselves in a more conservative way. Several previous studies indicated the students with different personality trait showed distinct preferences and language learning performances correspondingly. MacIntyre and Charos (1996) pointed out the introverted learners might be deficiency of willingness in the target language while comparing to the extroverted ones. The result echoed the study of Ehrman (2008) to understand the extroverted learners might be more effective in the target language learning due to the fact that they were more energetic in language learning activities. However, a study from Ehrman and Shekhtman (2005) argued that regarding the characteristics of introversion, the introverted learners have had the latent ability to learn language successfully. Therefore, the consequence of how the personality trait would impact the target language learning was yet answered; especially to the influence of speaking practice and performance in the target language.

3. Methods

3.1 Participants

Three hundred and twenty one high school students in Taiwan were recruited in the study. They attended an English speaking class in order to obtain more speaking opportunities and confidence in English for a semester instruction. Apart from the required English subject class, they did not have other practices and class relevant to English subject at school. Furthermore, all of the students had elementary computer ability, and were familiar with accessing web pages, surf the Internet, and other web 2.0 facilitations, such as email and blog.

3.2 Instruments

Both quantitative and qualitative analyses were employed in the study. Concerning the quantitative analysis, Eysenck Personality Inventory (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1975) enclosed with fifty seven yes and no questions and answers. In order to distinguish students' personality trait on introversion and extroversion, the study focused on examining the measurement of extroversion. By the examining outcomes, it classified students with extroverted leaning (n=164) and with introverted leaning (n=157). Moreover, a self-report survey (α=.92) was used to see how students' English speaking performance would be affected by engaging with the audioblog facilitation. The survey was a five-point Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutrally, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree). On the other hand, the qualitative analysis was examined by the content and context from the students' audioblogs, and *Google Blogger* was chose for students' audioblog use. It aimed to provide alternative information to apprehend how was the relationship of the performance on their audioblogs and their personality trait.

3.3 Procedure

The English speaking class was keen to offer more various speaking opportunities in English and affected students' speaking performance. Therefore, the study took place in the speaking class every other week at school. There were six thematic English speaking lessons were applied with in-class instruction and practice, and after-class speaking performance. Figure 1 demonstrates a four-phase

cycle of the lesson charted by *thematic oral practice*, *thematic oral composition*, *interpersonal appreciation*, and sharing *and reflection*. More specifically, the first and the last phases of thematic oral practice and sharing and reflection were taken in a classroom-based environment while the second and the third phases of thematic oral composition and interpersonal appreciation were for after-class performance. In the study, the audioblog was applied in the second phase for the after-class thematic oral composition, and allow students to have time to create and complete their individual speaking performance which was relevant to the in-class theme. After each thematic lesson in the classroom, some prompts were given to the students. Such as, a theme "A Dream Trip", and the following prompts would guide as "what kind of trip would you like to take? When/ where would you like to go? What would you like to do on the trip? Would you like to buy any souvenirs?" The purpose of the prompt was to give students some directions and to build the theme relevant ideas before having an individual speaking performance on their audioblogs, especially to those who have not had initial thoughts to construct their own speaking performance. Later, they had to upload their recordings on their audioblogs as an after-class speaking performance. In order to make sure all the students could accomplish a recording successfully on their audioblogs, the instructor gave a demonstration and showed a complete process of using online recording and embedding on the audioblog. Furthermore, there was no restriction of the length of a recording, and the format of recording is flexible, too. Similarly, the recording was highlighted its clearness and comprehension, which the grammatical error was not the focus in the study.
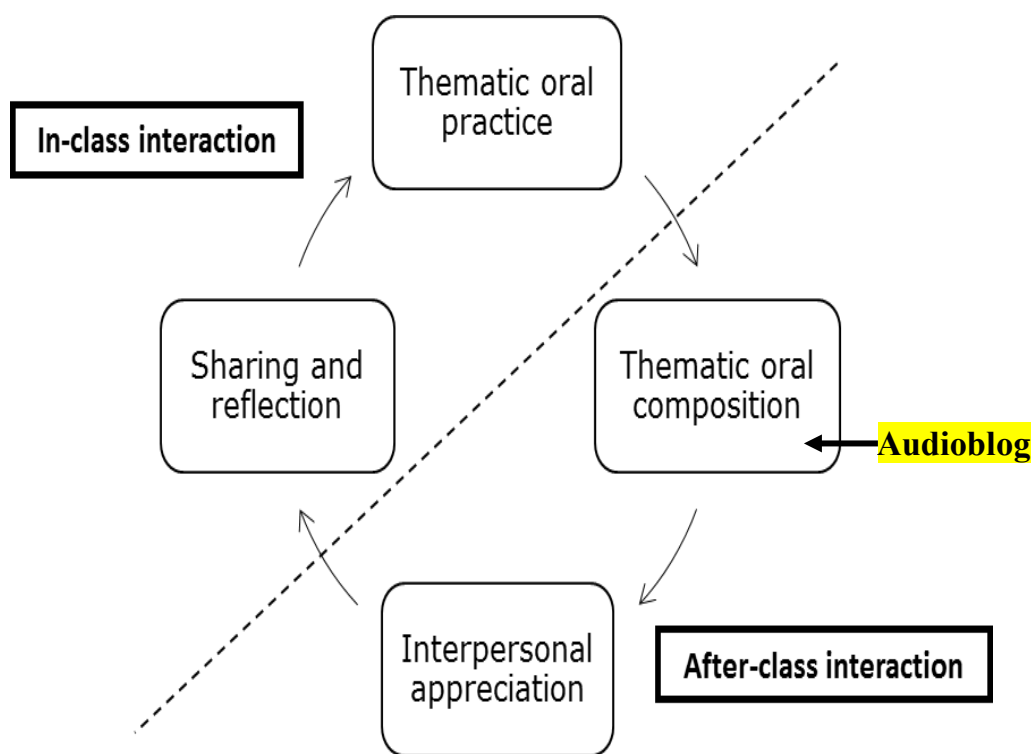

Figure 1. The four-phase cycle of English speaking lesson.

4. Results and discussions

Two research questions were answered regarding the study results. R1referred to the influence of personality trait on students' speaking performance on audioblogs, and R2 discussed the diverse speaking performances of students with different personality trait accordingly. First of all, the descriptive analysis showed that the average speaking performance uploaded on students' audioblogs, which the introverts (mean= 4.14, S. D.= 1.94) and the extroverts (mean= 3.37, S. D.= 1.93). The result indicated that the introverted students have accomplished more speaking performances on their audioblogs than the extroverted ones, and might further lead to a potential outcome that the introverted

students could gain more advantages towards the use of audioblog for the after-class activity on speaking practice and performance. Besides, an examination of *t*-test was to show an impact of the personality trait to students' speaking performance on audioblogs.

Table 1 displays the students with extroverted and introverted tendency would affect separately after engaging with speaking task on audioblog for a semester. The results presented a significant difference on willingness in English (*t*= 2.60, *p*<.01) between the extroverted and introverted students. However, there was no significant difference on the impact of confidence in English (*t*= 1.73, *p*>.05) between the extroverted and introverted students. In other words, the implementation of recording exercise on audioblog seemed to make an influence to capably encourage students' willingness in English after a long-period engagement although it was a pity to see there was no statistical effect on students' confidence in English.

More specifically, Table 2 illustrates the mean score of confidence and willingness in English to identify whether the significant difference appeared between the extroverted and introverted students. Thus, with regard to the effect significantly acted on willingness in English between students with extroverted and introverted inclination, the result further uncovered that the introverted students (mean= 3.74, S. D.= .79) outperformed the extroverted ones (mean= 3.48, S. D.= 1.02). In sum, the introverted students were more likely to obtain profits from the exercise of English speaking practice and performance on their audioblogs for after-class exercise than the extroverted students. The benefits in terms of reinforcement on willingness in English greatly exhibited to the introverts. The finding was remarkably to previous studies that mentioned the introverts were more reticent than the extroverts, which exhibited a less willingness in the target language. However, with alternative channel facilitation, as the study engaged with audioblog for after-class speaking practice and performance, it offered the introverted students to have the target language speaking practice in a more comfortable zone. Ultimately, the audioblog facilitation for the after-class speaking exercise created a means to benefit more the introverted students on target language speaking development than the extroverted ones.

Table 1: Impact of personality trait on confidence and willingness in English.

		t-test for Equality of Means			
		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference
Confidence	Introvert	1.73	315	.09	.17
	Extrovert				
Willingness	Introvert	2.60	305	.01	.26
	Extrovert				

Table 2: The mean of confidence and willingness in English for introverts and extroverts.

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Confidence	Introvert	157	3.77	.83
	Extrovert	164	3.60	.96
Willingness	Introvert	157	3.74	.79
	Extrovert	164	3.48	1.02

In addition, R2 was to see the overall presentation of speaking performance in English on audioblogs from both extroverted and introverted students. The speaking practice and performance on audioblog in terms of speaking recording exercise was founded with a theme which was a following-up of the in-class English speaking practice. Furthermore, a few theme-relevant prompts would list to allow students to extend, brainstorm, and construct ideas for speaking exercise on their audioblogs individually. As a result, students could feel free to manage the time to upload their speaking recording

exercise on audioblog before next class. The average duration of each recording was approximately between half a minute to two minutes. Due to the fact that there was no limitation of recording style, the role of students was various while producing the recordings. Regarding students' recording performances, it was fascinating to discover some of the students not only simply played as a narrator but also acted as a double role for Q and A, a radio host, and even a video channel host. The creativity of recording style shaped how the students constructed the recording content and context. Likewise, with regard to the presentation format of the recording on audioblog, several examples of the recording on audioblog presented diverse appearances.

Figure 2 illustrates vivid examples of a few recording performances on students' audioblogs. Not only to upload the audio recording, but also to supplement the oral recording content with (A) text note/ script, (B) drawing/ picture, and (C) text with picture. Additionally, a presentation of reflection as a journal (D) was captured. The use of audioblog offered individual student a space to maintain his speaking performance every other week. Initially, the purpose of the audioblog use was to give students an alternative opportunity for speaking practice after class. Therefore, the expected outcome of students' performance was the audio recording solely. However, concerning the feature of audioblog which allowed diverse types of presentation, it was attention-grabbing to see other varied presentation formats of performance from students' efforts. Not only with a combination or supplementary of text or script messages, images, but also a maintenance of journal reflection was illustrated from students' performances. Moreover, a different inclination of the presentation format of performance was discovered through students with dissimilar personality trait. The extroverted students were found out more attempted to utilize complementary information and figures to enrich their audio performances (see examples A/ B/ C of figure 2) while the introverted students less endeavored to add supplementary within their audio performance. Yet, an introverted student was inclined to demonstrate a reflected performance on his audioblog (see example D of figure 2). By keeping a text memo within each audio recording, he tried different approaches to complete the performance, which in turn to reveal an inner interaction of carrying out the performing progress. In sum, students' performances on audioblogs showed a surprising accomplishment which not only for the recording style but also the presentation format. Furthermore, either extroverted or introverted students were apt to favor some presentation format by the trait of personality.

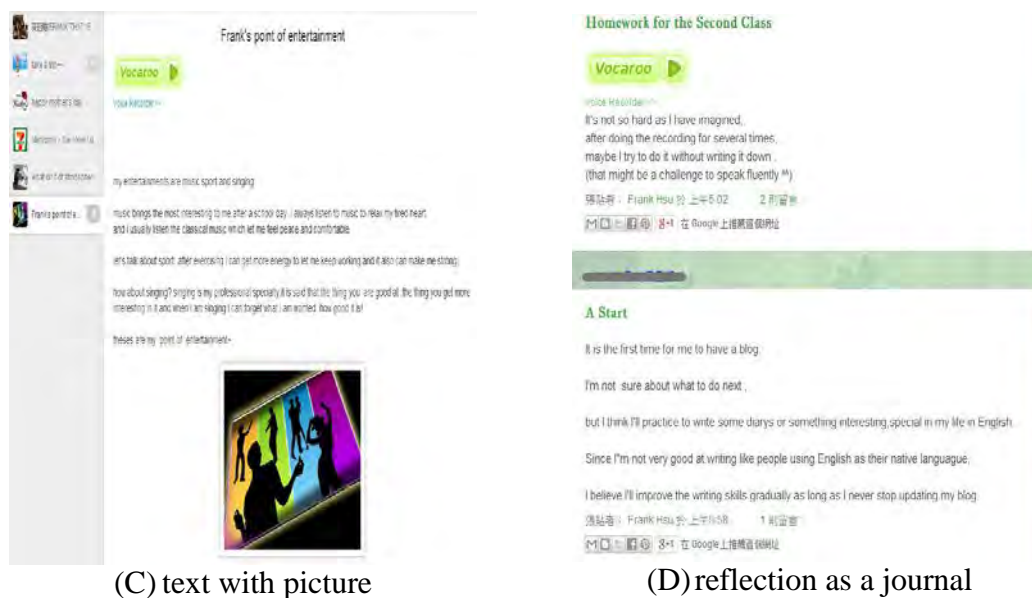(A) text note/ script

(B) drawing/ picture

(C) text with picture   (D) reflection as a journal

Figure 2. Examples of the presentation format of recording on audioblog.

5. Conclusion

The study conducted an EFL speaking instructional design in order to outspread speaking practice in English from the classroom-based environment to the after-class setting. With the extension of the in-class thematic speaking lesson and practice, students needed to accomplish a thematic relevant speaking performance on their own audioblogs during the after-class time. The form and structure of the speaking performance was yet restricted as long as it was related to the theme. Additionally, students could either refer to similar discussion or other aspects with regard to the theme to complete their own speaking performances on audioblogs afterwards. Therefore, an understanding of how the personality trait would affect students on the speaking practice and performance on audioblog, and a general presentation of speaking performance towards students with different personality trait. As a result, through extending the in-class thematic speaking instruction every other week, students were guided to complete one thematic speaking performance in English on their audioblogs after class. The findings of this study showed that students with different personality trait did influence distinctly on confidence and willingness in English after engaging with audioblog for speaking performance. More precisely, those who were inclined to be more introverted showed the potential to accomplish more recording exercises than those who were more extroverted. In other words, the implementation of speaking performance on audioblog seemed to impact on students' willingness in English after a long-period engagement, particularly to the introverted students. However, the students' confidence in English did not reveal any improvement regarding the study. Additionally, the overall students' performances on audioblogs showed an astounding achievement that not only for the recording style but also the presentation format, and either extroverted or introverted students were apt to favor some presentation formats by the trait of personality. By the understanding can further examined qualitatively how the students with different personality trait would prefer the recording style and presentation format on audioblog for an implication on sharpening EFL speaking instruction.

Acknowledgments

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