Investigating the Relationship between Personality Type and Writing Performance of Iranian EFL Learners

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Abstract

The present study was an attempt to investigate the relationship between personality type, measured by MBTI questionnaire and writing performance in three different genres: argumentative, descriptive and narrative. A Total number of 60 high–intermediate participants from both genders took part in this study at Pooya Jamae Institute in Tabriz. The Aims of this study were to explore the relationship between personality type and different genres of writing: argumentative, descriptive and narrative. Some Parts of the data were collected by MBTI questionnaire to determine the participants' personality type. Another part of the data which was the participants' writing performance was gathered by three different writings administered twice each. The collected data went through proper statistical tests and the results of statistical analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between personality type and argumentative writing performance. Also significant relationship was shown between personality type and descriptive writing performance. But there wasn't any statistically significant relationship between personality type and narrative writing. Finally the data analysis indicated that gender is not a significant factor in writing performance.

Keywords: personality**,** individual differences, Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI), second language acquisition.

1. Introduction

Adapting a similar syllabus design to teach language skills at different contexts is more likely to fail. Although the learners of English language have nearly the same objectives; their methods and learning strategies are remarkably different from each other. Teachers are expected to be aware of differences among learners; moreover, they must be able to tailor the teaching materials such as the textbooks so as to fit the target teaching context (Harmer, 2007). Introverts and extroverts have different priorities in choosing their favorite activity to learn the language skills. While extroverts are interested in having more social interactions with others, introverts prefer concentration and self-sufficiency. These examples confirm the notion that instructors of language should know the answer to *'Does personality type affect the quality of learning language skills or no'*?

Teachers usually complain that some students show little interest to the topics of their writing assignments. Also they grumble about the learners' little care and attention to syntactic, semantic or pragmatic aspects of language (Gebhard, 2006). Experienced teachers have a pile of examples stating that some learners write as if they do not like the topic and have tried to whitewash the task; while some others spent enough time to deal with the issue patiently and discuss it with suitable examples and facts. These are only a few examples indicating that instructors of writing courses come across some difficulties in choosing the better or even best methods of teaching how to write. Therefore, the researchers should investigate individual differences in general and personality in specific alongside with the language skills to check if there is any relationship between personality background and language performance. Findings of these kinds of researchers will equip the teachers with useful information and techniques about how to interact with every individual learner (Miller, 2005).

2. Literature Review

During 1950s, teaching English to foreign students was not regarded as a serious and significant academic discipline and writing may be sadly confessed to be the last skill of language which came under academic investigation in the second half of the twentieth century. The reason is quite obvious; the central teaching method during the 1950s put emphasis on oral rather than written proficiency.

Audio Lingual Method (ALM) is an outstanding example that paid little attention to literacy education. But by the 1960s, the number of international students had rapidly increased (Zhang, 2008). Therefore a large number of foreign students entered higher education in English speaking countries. Language teachers of that time felt the need for ways to teach second language writing to the nonnative students but they had not been able to clarify the task.

First language composition was a common practice for L1 students and teachers but the story was a bit different for nonnative speakers of English who needed to improve their writing skill in order to survive in academic world. Pincas (1962) was one of the pioneers who presented her own idea on how to teach L2 writing. Since the dominant language teaching methodology was ALM, her method applied the behaviorism approach to writing instruction and encouraged controlled pattern practice. Various progressive practices were recognized afterwards. Teachers showed great interest in practical application of syntactic structure to paragraph creations which consequently led to emergence of Contrastive Rhetoric (CR).

It did not take a lot of time for L2 teachers to realize that in multicultural classes, students transfer their native language patterns into L2 writing. Kaplan (1966) found the origins of such diversity in ESL students' native language and cultural impact. According to his study about learners' cultural thought patterns, he came across noticeable findings. For example, English-speaking writers employed a linear structure with specific details to support the theme. Arabic learners utilized a considerable number of coordination words compared to English writers' compositions. After Kaplan contrastive rhetoric research more and more empirical studies about CR features were conducted across many languages. Kaplan's (1966) research is said to sparkle the field of second language writing research. CR research which was later on followed by other valuable researches had a great influence on L2 writing issues. It showed the nature of L2 writers' texts and highlighted the impact of the writers' cultural context on the text (Hinkel, 2002).

Another significant research done on CR was Kobayashi's (1985) study about the differences of writing organizations between English and Japanese. She found that American students as native speakers of English utilized general-specific patterns. These groups of writers initially mentioned a general statement and followed it with details, whereas Japanese students of English language, as nonnative speakers used specific-general patterns in which they implied the details first that reflected a general description. If the third research on CR which was again conducted in the US with the participation of both Japanese and American students is mentioned, it may seem suspicious or ambiguous that why again the same setting?! The answer is pretty obvious. Thousands and thousands of Japanese students entered the USA in 1970s and 1980s. More important than any other problem that any typical immigrant may have in the destination country, language competence definitely plays a vital role in immigrants' quality of life. That is why researchers found it academically interesting to investigate the English language use of these immigrants and that's why Japanese immigrants were the main participants of the researchers of CR. Hinds (1984) examined the structures of argumentative writings between Japanese and English.

In an English piece of writing, the *Introduction* section of the writing included the entire content and thesis statement with specific points such as background of the topic, problem, reason, result, etc. On the other hand, the *Introduction* in Japanese puts a concise topical sentence without any explicit statements and the thesis statement is expected to come in the final section. Moreover the Japanese sentences were difficult to comprehend because they expressed their ideas ambiguously and the reader had to make his own inference from the text.

As for future researchers about CR, Connor (2001) points out that coming researches should not view the writers as people who belong to separate, identifiable cultural groups. In his terms, researchers should consider the writers as individuals who may differ from each other, though sharing the same culture or community. Connor's perspective leads this area of research more into individual characteristics features than cultural or any other kind of similarity or unity.

Research in L2 writing field entered a new realm in 1980s. This change in research can be referred to as a transition from product-oriented research into process-oriented. The process approach emphasized how learners manage to follow a process through writing; while in product approach of earlier time, the emphasis was on the ruled structure pattern practices. In the early 1990s, researchers recognized that the process approach differ completely from the product approach. Process-oriented research 'came to emanate the issues of institution which emphasize a particular purpose such as EAP (English for Academic Purposes) and ESP (English for Specific Purposes) to value the audience in writing rather than the writer'(Kaplan, 1988).

 Hirose and Sasaki (1994) attempted to investigate the traits of process writing between experienced and inexperienced L2 writers. The results clearly showed that the experienced writers favored the macro (planning, coherence, and revising) and micro (cohesion, vocabulary use and texts) levels. On the other hand, the inexperienced writers dealt with the process to a limited extent because of few writing experiences and motivations.

Callahan (1997, as cited in Marefat, 2006), analyzed the relationship between reflective writing and character types of the learners and found that those participants who preferred extraversion, best respond to reflect about the outer world. Extroverts like to talk more than write. On the other hand for introverts, setting goals and standards is an interesting task. The written product of students with sensing type preference is lengthy and detailed. Such individuals regard reflective writing as a way to go back and see if they have missed anything? In contrast, the intuitive types, 'read between the lines'. Regarding the thinking /feeling dichotomy, thinking group like to describe their strengths and weaknesses in writing. For thinking group some elements of successful writing are organizational patterns and rhetorical features. It is not surprising that if the feeling group is asked to choose the elements of successful writing, they would be excited by a piece of writing that evokes a strong feeling. With judging / perceiving preferences in mind, it was revealed that the judging personality type usually sets goals for future improvement and they offer tidy and organized projects. But for perceiving group exploration on the future plans is not desired and they have difficulties in drawing conclusions.

Marefat (2006) attempted to discover if there was any relationship between learner personality type and his writing ability. She used the MBTI questionnaire to realize the personality type of the learners. With the

participation of eighty-six male and female graduate and undergraduate EFL students, she concluded that the learners who had preferred sensing and intuition types were significantly more successful than other types.

 Research Questions and Hypotheses

The research questions and hypothesis posed in this study are as the following:

Research Question 1) Is there any statistically significant relationship between the personality type and the argumentative writing performance of Iranian EFL learners?

Null hypothesis 1) There is no statistically significant relationship between the personality type and the argumentative writing performance of Iranian EFL learners.

Research Question 2) Is there any statistically significant relationship between the personality type and the descriptive writing performance of Iranian EFL learners?

Null hypothesis 2) There is no statistically significant relationship between the personality type and the descriptive writing performance of Iranian EFL learners.

Research Question 3) Is there any statistically significant relationship between the personality type and the narrative writing performance of Iranian EFL learners?

Null hypothesis 3) There is no statistically significant relationship between the personality type and the narrative writing performance of Iranian EFL learners.

Research Question 4) Is there any statistically significant difference in the writing score of male and female language learners across different personality types?

Null hypothesis 4) There is no statistically significant difference in the writing score of male and female language learners across different personality types.

3. Methodology:

3.1 Design of the study

Relying on quantitative approach based on correlation research to collect data, this study attempted to investigate the relationship between personality type and writing performance. Personality type was the independent and writing score was the dependent variable of this study. Participants of this study were high–intermediate learners of English as Foreign Language at Pooya Elme Jamae Institute in Tabriz. They were explained that their responses to the questionnaire, etc. will be used only for research purposes. Then by using a language proficiency test (adopted from TOEFL questions), topics to write on three different genres and a questionnaire measuring the personality type the data were collected. The achieved data went through statistical analysis so that all four research questions were answered.

3.2 Participants

A total of 90 language learners with the age range of 17 – 22 were given the instruments needed to collect data. Among them, 18 learners returned the questionnaire, language proficiency test, etc. blank so that the researcher had to remove them. Moreover, 12 learners couldn't be placed at the same level of language proficiency as other participants. It means that the language proficiency level of these 12 learners belong to very low levels of language proficiency, though, they have been placed by the institute. At last 60 learners could meet the requirements of this research study who included both males and females at high-intermediate level.

3.3 Materials   The materials used in this study were a modified language proficiency test, MBTI personality type indicator, and 6 topics of writing which are explained in depth below.

3.3.1 Modified Language Proficiency Test

 In spite of the institute's placement of the learners, the researcher ran a modified language proficiency test to be sure that all the participants belonged to the same language proficiency level. The test was a modification and collection of TOEFL tests. There is no doubt that the more skills are included in the placement test, the better but the fact was that there were not enough time, space and facilities in hand to administer a full version of TOEFL test.

The test includes 40 questions: 20 vocabulary, 10 grammar and 10 reading comprehension questions. Questions 1 – 20 tested the learners' vocabulary knowledge.

3.3.2 MBTI Personality Type Indicator

The other instrument was a questionnaire (MBTI) to determine personality type known as Myers–Briggs Type Indicator. It totally included four parts and each part was composed of six questions with 5 choices. The first part determines the participant['s preference of Extroversion/Introversion. After all 6 questions were answered, the numbers of the answers were added up. If the number is less than 19, the person is Extrovert (**E**); and if it is more than 19, s/he is Introvert (**I**). The second part of the questionnaire determines the participant's preference of Sensing /iNtuition. Also in this part the participants answered 6 questions. Then the numbers of each answer were added up. If the total score of an individual on the second part of the questionnaire is less than 18, then s/he is a Sensing

(**S**) individual, and if it is more than 18, an iNtuitive (**N**) individual. The third part of the questionnaire determines the participant's preference of Feeling/Thinking. Like the previous parts, after answering 6 questions, the total number of answers will show the Feeling (**F**) or Thinking (**T**) preference. If the

number is less than 20, the individual is Thinking type; if it is more than 20, s/he is Feeling type. The last part of the questionnaire determines the person's preference of Judging/Perceiving. If the total score of the participant is less than 21, s/he prefers Judging (**J**) type and if it is more than 21, s/he prefers Perception (**P**). The reason why these scores have been set as the criteria is that they are the observed value for the local standard of the questionnaire-based on percentile ranks.

Criteria for classifying the participants into personality types based on percentile ranks(Myers-Briggs**)**

	MBTI Questionnaire	If the total number of the scores is	
Form 1	**E**xtroversion / **I**ntroversion	less than 19 = E	more than 19 = I
Form 2	**S**ensing / i**N**tuition	less than 18 = S	more than 18 = N
Form 3	**T**hinking / **F**eeling	less than 20 = T	more than 20 = F
Form 4	**J**udging / **P**erceiving	less than 21 = J	more than 21 = P

The final outcome of this questionnaire is a personality type for each participant which is shown by four letters such as **ESFP** which stands for Extroverted, Sensing, Feeling and Perceiving personality type. All 16 possible types that can be elicited from the questionnaire are shown in the following table and each participant was supposed to be labeled as one of these types (MBTI handout).

All sixteen types of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

ESTJ:	Extroversion, Sensing, Thinking, Judgment
INFP:	Introversion, iNtuition, Feeling, Perception
ESFP:	Extroversion, Sensing, Feeling, Perception
INTJ:	Introversion, iNtuition, Thinking, Judgment
ESFJ:	Extroversion, Sensing, Feeling, Judgment
INTP:	Introversion, iNtuition, Thinking, Perception
ENFP:	Extroversion, iNtuition, Feeling, Perception
ISTJ:	Introversion, Sensing, Thinking, Judgment
ESTP:	Extroversion, Sensing, Thinking, Perception
INFJ:	Introversion, iNtuition, Feeling, Judgment
ENFJ:	Extroversion, iNtuition, Feeling, Judgment
ENTJ:	Extroversion, iNtuition, Thinking, Judgment
ISTP:	Introversion, Sensing, Thinking, Perception
ISFP:	Introversion, Sensing, Feeling, Perception
ENTP:	Extroversion, iNtuition, Thinking, Perception
ISFJ:	Introversion, Sensing, Feeling, Judgment

3.3.3 Six Topics of Writing

In addition to the previously mentioned instruments the researcher used two topics for argumentative writing; two topics for descriptive writing and two topics for narrative writing.

*Argumentative topics of writing:***1) **What are the negative aspects of technology in our lives? 2) Discuss the dangers of air pollution to the human health and environment?

*Descriptive topics of writing:***1) **Do you remember the worst news you have ever heard in your life? Describe it. 2) Who is your life hero? Describe his/her outstanding characteristics.

*Narrative topics of writing:***1) **How have you changed within the last five years? (Physically and personality). 2) Do you remember the first day of your school? Narrate it.

3.4 Procedures

As explained previously, three sets of data were needed to conduct the present study: a test of language proficiency, a questionnaire to determine personality type and compositions to measure writing performance.

Arrangements were made with the officials of the Pooya Elme Jamae Institute to collect data from their high-intermediate classes. The researcher explained both to the officials and the learners that their responses would be used only for research purposes. Then each participant was given the pack of instruments. It should be mentioned that all the participants were told NOT to write their names on the instruments, because it may affect their honesty in responding. Each pack of data had a code, 1,2,3,4, etc. For completing the MBTI questionnaire, the allocated time was 10 minutes. 60 minutes were given to write an argumentative, a descriptive and a narrative writings (20 minutes for each). And finally the participants had 20 minutes to answer the language proficiency test. So the collection of data took around an hour and half. They were told that in a second session, a few days later they would receive three more topics to write about. This was done simply because the

researcher wanted to retest the learners writing performance. A few days later, they were given other topics for argumentative, descriptive and narrative writings. Therefore, for each participant the following raw data was collected.

Participant code:		
Personality type		
Language proficiency score		
Argumentative writing score	1st score	2nd score	Mean score
Descriptive writing score	1st score	2nd score	Mean score
Narrative writing score	1st score	2nd score	Mean score

Fortunately, the institute's placement test was accurate enough because our language test also showed that all the participants belonged to the same language proficiency test. The participant's writings were rated by two raters according to the scoring standards of TOEFL (taking cohesion and coherence, grammatical accuracy, appropriate word choice into account). So for each participant there was a number (ranging from 0 to 100) which showed his or her argumentative, descriptive and narrative writing performance. Since each participant had written two essays for each style of writing, the more additionally the writing, were rated by two raters, the scores would enjoy a very high level of reliability.

Since scoring writing tasks has a subjective nature, therefore the mean score of two writings were recorded as the final writing score.

Data then were entered into SPSS statistical software. The first three research questions went through Pearson Correlation test and for the last research question independent sample t-test was run.

4. Results

4.1 Testing the first hypothesis

Table4.1. shows the frequency of different personality types. ISTJ type is the most common personality type among 60 participants including 27.9 percent of all participants (N = 17). Two personality types (ESFP and ISFJ) were not observed in the data analysis process. That is why there are 14 types mentioned in the table.

Table 4.1 Frequency of different personality types

Descriptive statistics

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	ESTJ	15	24.6	25.0	25.0
	INFP	4	6.6	6.7	31.7
	INTJ	6	9.8	10.0	41.7
	ESFJ	1	1.6	1.7	43.3
	INTP	1	1.6	1.7	45.0
	ENFP	1	1.6	1.7	46.7
	ISTJ	17	27.9	28.3	75.0
	ESTP	2	3.3	3.3	78.3
	INFJ	5	8.2	8.3	86.7
	ENFJ	1	1.6	1.7	88.3
	ENTJ	1	1.6	1.7	90.0
	ISTP	2	3.3	3.3	93.3
	ISFP	3	4.9	5.0	98.3
	ENTP	1	1.6	1.7	100.0
	Total	60	98.4	100.0	

According to the descriptive statistics presented in table 4.2 below, a total number of 60 participants took part in the study. The minimum and maximum argumentative writing scores were respectively 35 and 95 out of 100 and the mean score is 71.25.

Table 4.2. Argumentative writing Mean score Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Argumentative Writing Score	60	35.00	95.00	71.2500	15.88158
Personality Type	60	1.00	14.00	5.5667	3.86364
Valid N (listwise)	60				

Table 4.3 shows the frequency of each personality type and the mean score of their writing performance. The highest argumentative score belongs to ENFP personality type and the lowest belongs to ENTJ. According to table 4.3, two personality types are more common than the others. They are ESTJ with the frequency of 15 and mean score of 56.66 and ISTJ with the frequency of 17 and mean score of 78.23.

Table 4.3 Argumentative writing score and personality type

Descriptive statistics

Personality Type	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
ESTJ	56.6667	15	14.71960
INFP	80.0000	4	13.54006
INTJ	72.5000	6	16.35543
ESFJ	65.0000	1	.
INTP	95.0000	1	.
ENFP	95.0000	1	.
ISTJ	78.2353	17	12.49264
ESTP	67.5000	2	10.60660
INFJ	76.0000	5	8.94427
ENFJ	75.0000	1	.
ENTJ	50.0000	1	.
ISTP	82.5000	2	17.67767
ISFP	71.6667	3	12.58306
ENTP	65.0000	1	.
Total	71.2500	60	15.88158

The results of Pearson correlation test as shown in table 4.4 indicate that there is a statistically significant relationship (P value is smaller than .05) between the personality type and argumentative writing performance of learners (r=.00). Therefore the first null hypothesis "There is no statistically significant relationship between the personality type and the argumentative writing performance of Iranian EFL learners" was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was confirmed.

Table 4.4 Pearson Correlation between personality type and argumentative writing performance

Correlations

		Total of Personality Type Questionnaire	Argumentative Writing Score
Total of Personality Type Questionnaire	Pearson Correlation	1	.436[**]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	60	60
Argumentative Writing Score	Pearson Correlation	.436[**]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	60	60

4.2 Testing the second hypothesis

Table 4.5 shows the frequency of each personality type and the mean score of their descriptive writing performance. The highest descriptive writing score belongs to INTP personality type and the lowest belongs to ENTP. According to table 4.5, two personality types are more common than the others. They are ESTJ with the frequency of 15 and a mean score of 55.33 and ISTJ with the frequency of 17 and a mean score of 59.41.

4.5 Descriptive writing score and personality type

Descriptive statistics

Personality Type	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
ESTJ	55.3333	15	14.57330
INFP	67.5000	4	29.86079
INTJ	60.0000	6	14.14214
ESFJ	70.0000	1	.
INTP	85.0000	1	.
ENFP	80.0000	1	.
ISTJ	59.4118	17	14.23929
ESTP	62.5000	2	3.53553
INFJ	79.0000	5	12.94218
ENFJ	70.0000	1	.
ENTJ	70.0000	1	.
ISTP	70.0000	2	.00000
ISFP	56.6667	3	20.81666
ENTP	40.0000	1	.
Total	61.9167	60	16.23690

Table 4.6 Descriptive writing mean score

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	60	1.00	2.00	1.6000	.49403
Descriptive Writing Score	60	20.00	95.00	61.9167	16.23690
Valid N (listwise)	60				

The mean score of descriptive writing (61.91) is less than the argumentative writing score (as shown in table 4.5) and the difference between minimum and maximum score is 75. To explore the relationship between personality type and descriptive writing performance, once more Pearson Correlation test was run (table 4.6). For the second research hypothesis, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. It means that a statistically significant relationship was found between personality type and descriptive writing performance of Iranian EFL learners (.018).

Table 4.7 Pearson Correlation between personality type and descriptive writing performance

Correlations

		Total of Personality Type Questionnaire	Descriptive Writing Score
Total of Personality Type Questionnaire	Pearson Correlation	1	.304[*]
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.018
	N	60	60
Descriptive Writing Score	Pearson Correlation	.304[*]	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	
	N	60	60

4.3 Testing the third hypothesis

Relying on the descriptive statistics presented in table 4.7, the average narrative writing score is 60.41 which is very similar to descriptive score but moderately different from argumentative score.

Table 4.8 Narrative writing Mean score

Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Gender	60	1.00	2.00	1.6000	.49403
Narrative Writing Score	60	35.00	90.00	60.4167	16.18986
Valid N (listwise)	60				

Table 4.8, shows the frequency of each personality type and the mean score of their narrative writing performance. The highest narrative writing score belongs to ESFJ personality type and the lowest belongs to ENTJ. According to table 4.8, two personality types are more common than the others. They are ESTJ with the frequency of 15 and a mean score of 54.33 and ISTJ with the frequency of 17 and a mean score of 63.82.

Table 4.9 Narrative writing score and personality type

Descriptive statistics

Personality Type	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
ESTJ	54.3333	15	12.37317
INFP	66.2500	4	11.08678
INTJ	61.6667	6	20.65591
ESFJ	85.0000	1	.
INTP	80.0000	1	.
ENFP	70.0000	1	.
ISTJ	63.8235	17	18.41615
ESTP	47.5000	2	3.53553
INFJ	64.0000	5	17.81853
ENFJ	40.0000	1	.
ENTJ	35.0000	1	.
ISTP	70.0000	2	14.14214
ISFP	56.6667	3	10.40833
ENTP	55.0000	1	.
Total	60.4167	60	16.18986

To find out if there is any statistically significant relationship between narrative writing and personality type, again Person Correlation test is used. But table 4.9 showed that contrary to the previous two research hypotheses, the third null hypothesis was shown to be true because the P value is .16 which is more than .05. So there is no statistically significant relationship between the personality type and the narrative writing performance of Iranian EFL learners.

Table 4.10 Pearson Correlation between personality type and narrative writing performance

Correlations

		Total of Personality Tarit Questionnaire	Narrative Writing Score
Total of Personality Tarit Questionnaire	Pearson Correlation	1	.182
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.163
	N	60	60
Narrative Writing Score	Pearson Correlation	.182	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.163	
	N	60	60

Using Pearson correlation test revealed that personality type has a statistically significant relationship with

argumentative and descriptive writing performance, but no significant relationship with narrative writing.

4.4 Testing the fourth hypothesis

According to statistical rules, when it is supposed to investigate the role of gender (either male or female), independent sample t-test must be used. The last research question of this study attempts to investigate the difference between writing score of male and female language learners across different personality types. Table 4.11 indicated no statistically significant difference between the writing performance of males and females. Therefore the null hypothesis comes true that there is no statistically significant difference in the writing score of male and female language learners across different personality types.

Table 4.11 Independent Sample T- Test

Independent Sample T- Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means				
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference
Total of Personality Type Questionnaire	Equal variances assumed	1.392	.243	-3.082	58	.003	-7.73611	2.51018
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.919	40.274	.006	-7.73611	2.64986

5. Discussion

The first research question of the current study concerned with the relationship between personality type and argumentative writing performance. Apparently the higher language proficiency level leads to better performance in writing skill. But it cannot be always true, simply because in this study all the participants belonged to the same language proficiency level but there were remarkable differences in their writing scores (minimum 35 and maximum 95). Where does such difference originate from? Murray (1990) has explained that individual differences play an important role in the language achievement of language learners and Terveen (2001) believed that some personality types dramatically perform better than other types in writing skill. Data of this study showed that ENFP (Extrovert, iNtuition, Feeling, Perception) type has a significantly better argumentative performance. According to MBTI handbook, ENFPs are social people who are generally good at communicating. They are enthusiastic and can persuade other people to join in. They adapt to changes as they go. Three terms are shown to be outstanding characteristics of this personality type:

✓ good at communicating

✓ can persuade

✓ adapt to changes

Considering the theoretical structure of argumentative writings, Freedman (1985) believes that purpose of argument is to persuade the other party and this is what ENFPs are good at. Also it is necessary to be able to establish effective communicative channels while arguing. As MBTI handbook has said, ENFPs can adapt to changes and it means that they are realistic people who see the changes and adapt themselves. To conclude, it is reasonable and logical to claim that realistic, persuasive and skilled communicative people can be better argumentative writers.

The second research question of this research was related to the relationship between personality type and descriptive writing performance. Data analysis revealed that INTPs have better performance in descriptive writing. INTPs prefer Introversion, iNtuition, Thinking and Perception. In order to discuss the relationship between all four aspects of INTP and descriptive writing, it is necessary to investigate this personality type in more depth. INTPs are creative and use logical ideas when they need to respond. They can be very analytic and their natural curiosity enables them to find discrepancies in logical situations.

Therefore among the outstanding features of INTPs are creativity and being logical. These features are closely related to one's ability to describe something. In other words, creative and logical individuals are like photographers who take a photo without any change in the size, quality or physical aspect of the subject. For a photographer it is not important what the subject is like. Whatever or whoever the subject is, the photographer takes the photo. This is so similar to what a descriptive writer does. Descriptive writing

requires the writer to describe whatever/whoever s/he sees and for doing so, creativity and logic plays an important role.

The third research question explores the relationship between personality type and another genre of writing, narrative writing. No significant relationship was found between personality type and narrative writing performance. It seems that when it comes to narrative writing, not personality type, but most probably language proficiency level marks the failure or success of a learner. In other words, no specific personality type performs better in narrative writing.

The last research question investigates the role of gender in writing. It was shown that gender plays no important role in writing. This is not far from reality to expect same levels of performance from both males and females in language learning. One reason to justify this is that these days both males and females have access to the same facilities. It means that the learning conditions are nearly identical for both genders and language learning and teaching policies show no bias toward one specific gender. Therefore when the learning conditions are the same for males and females, it is reasonable to expect the same level of language performance such as writing.

6. Conclusion

As mentioned before, the main concern of this study was to investigate the relationship between personality type and writing performance of different genres. In In order to obtain evident proof for this relationship, the collected data were analyzed through Pearson Correlation test and independent sample t-test the results of statistical analysis revealed that there was a statistically significant relationship between personality type and argumentative writing performance. Also significant relationship was shown between personality type and descriptive writing performance. But there wasn't any statistically significant relationship between personality type and narrative writing. Finally the data analysis indicated that gender is not a significant factor in writing performance.

The findings of this study can be initially useful for teacher of writing skill. Knowing this fact that some specific personality types perform better than other types in language performance, enables teachers to pay more attention to individual characteristics of language learners. For example if a learner is more introvert thinking type and intuitive then the teacher can predict that s/he is more capable of being a better descriptive writer. Also material developers can find the results of this study beneficial in terms of this fact that text books can be designed and developed to be more suitable for specific personality types.

Obviously, no research study seems to be perfect and without any limitations, and this study is not an exception and it has its own limitations that need to be acknowledged. The first limitation was that relatively little number of participants attended this study. The bigger the number of participants, the more reliable and generalizable the findings will be. The second limitation was lack of accessibility to different institutes. The data needed for this study were collected from one context. Finally the third limitation was that there was no control on the participants" honesty in completing the MBTI questionnaire.

This study investigated the relationship between personality type and writing performance. Other studies can be done to study the relationship between other language skills such as reading, speaking or listening. Also other instruments such as Eysenck's Introversion/Extroversion scale can be used to determine personality type. The participants of this study were young adults. Other studies can be done with the participation of children or teenagers.

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