

EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF INTROVERSION AND EXTRAVERSION ON
STUDENTS' AUDIENCE AWARENESS IN ACADEMIC WRITING

A Project

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Cindy Cam Ho

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Cindy Cam Ho

Approved by:

_____, Committee Chair
Mi-Suk Seo

_____, Second Reader
Daniel Melzer

Date

Student: Cindy Cam Ho

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_____, Graduate Coordinator
David Toise

Date

Department of English

Abstract
of
EXPLORING THE EFFECTS OF INTROVERSION AND EXTRAVERSION ON
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For the last century, composition researchers have provided us with various methods for audience consideration in hopes of dissecting the necessities of proficient writing. However, students of composition continue to be challenged with writer's blocks and anxiety, even after detailed instruction on process and audience awareness. In this multiple-case-study, Carl G. Jung's concepts of introversion and extraversion are examined as possible variables that factor into writer's block and anxiety. Three extraverts and three introverts, who were classified by the Myers-Brigg Type Indicator, completed a questionnaire and an interview, regarding their psychological disposition as they considered their audience in a mock essay assignment. Results imply that students from both attitude spectrums have similar difficulties with audience consideration; however, introverted students may need additional aid in order to overcome their psychological resistance to conformation, psychological civil warfare, and regression. Written as a conference paper to be presented at the 2015 Multicultural Education Conference at California State University, Sacramento, this study provides us with evidence that indicates the need for further research that explores the ambiguous relationship between composition and personality.

_____, Committee Chair
Mi-Suk Seo

Date

DEDICATION

This project is dedicated to Mr. Robert Lewis Van Court, Jr. for being an inspiring and dedicated teacher and the first to motivate me onto the path of academic excellence. Thank you for guiding the many underprivileged children into recognizing our intellectual potential. May you rest in peace and be forever honored in your students' memories.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Introduction

As a graduate student of English composition, I have not encountered many studies that draw a direct correlation between personality and composition. However, at one point in my career, my desire to investigate these two concepts came into existence when I encountered a student who used her introversion as an excuse for neglecting to ask her teacher for help, regardless of her failing grade. I found her use of personality to justify her actions fascinating and decided to explore introversion and its opposite, extraversion, as the topic of research for my graduate project. My goal with today's presentation is ultimately to encourage further studies that consider the role of personality in written composition. To do so, I will first explain introversion and extraversion through their original creator, the Swiss psychiatrist and psychotherapist, Carl G. Jung; illustrate what past research has accomplished with this area of study; present the discoveries of my research; and finally discuss the implications my study may have on our current writing education system.

Theoretical Background

Description of Jungian Theory of Personality

Introversion and extraversion were introduced to the world through Carl G. Jung's (1921) landmark book, *Psychologische Typen (Psychological Types)*. Contrary to popular belief, the concepts of introversion and extraversion are not defined by one's "outgoingness" or ability to socialize. Rather, Jung's creation of this bipolar dimension is meant to describe one's attitude toward the world that exists beyond the physical self that ultimately decides one's personality. According to his disciple, Joan Corrie (1927), who translated Jung's German book into English laymen's terms, this attitude refers to one's "*libido*" or psychic energy that is "expressed in instinct, desire, and function, and it varies in intensity, form, direction, and aim" (pp. 18-19). When a person's *libido* is heavily drawn toward the

subjective or inner self (away from the realities that occur beyond one's body and mentality), he or she would be considered an introvert. On the other hand, when that *libido* is heavily drawn toward the objective or outer world (away from the realities that occur within the body and mind), he or she would be considered an extravert.

It must be understood, however, that no one is purely an introvert or an extravert; in fact, everyone harnesses both attitudes. One's tendency toward introversion or extraversion is analogous to one's tendency to be right-handed or left-handed (DiTiberio & Jensen, 1989). Two ends of the attitudinal spectrum exist just as the two hands exist to allow the bearer to function through life's vastly diverse demands. For example, when a person attempts to understand inner turmoils - such as deciding what career path to follow - he or she taps into his or her introversion to dissect and analyze the abstract mental self. On the other hand, when one attempts to understand materialistic events that occur beyond the self (such as figuring out what the teacher desires in writing assignments), one taps into one's extraversion. Table 1 below further illustrates characteristics of the introvert and the extravert.

Table 1

Comparison of Attitudes

Introversion	Extraversion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interest is more directed toward big ideas and feelings to give depth to life ● Nature of self is more intensive ● Tend to know the soul but not the world ● Bottle up emotions ● Moral and social values are self-constructed based on analyses ● Never quite at home in the external world of men and things; may suspect and fear it ● Feel pushed inward by the external world ● Spend greater part of the day reflecting ● Enjoy moments of solitude; need privacy ● Plan a lot for future ● May distrust and reject adaptation to environment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Interest is more directed toward things and other people to give breadth to life ● Nature of self is more extensive ● Tend to know the world but not the soul ● Tend to express emotions ● Moral and social values are those of environment and time ● Enfold the world in their arms and cheerfully seek adventure therein ● Feel empowered by the external world ● Spend greater part of the day acting ● Detest solitude; need relationships ● Spontaneous ● Adapt easily to environment
<p style="text-align: center;">Common Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May appear to be dull and uninteresting ● Easily misunderstood to be overall anti-social and selfish people ● Unable to express self freely and comfortably ● Want to preserve freedom of action; hate feeling bound by circumstances to adopt a certain course ● Do not take objective factors in their life sufficiently into consideration ● Struggle to maintain subjective freedom against the just claims of the object 	<p style="text-align: center;">Common Issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● May appear to be an attention-hog and needy ● Easily misunderstood to be overall shallow and materialistic people ● View their unconscious subjective life with suspicion and fear, resisting introspection ● Unable to understand broad ideas and engage in critical thinking ● Unable to fully understand themselves and construct a concrete identity that is not conditional on external factors

* Drawn from Joan Corrie's *ABC of Jung's psychology* (1927) and Earle Page's *Looking at type: A description of the preferences reported by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator* (1983).

Depending on the nature of one's environment during adolescent years, one slowly develops into the preference of introversion or extraversion. Circumstances that place a child into seclusion or a place that is not easily susceptible to the opinions of others will build that child's introversion. Some examples are journal writing, video games, and puzzles because they require the child to think deeply within the self to analyze or reflect, without interruptions from the material world. On the other hand, circumstances that place a child into an exposed place, surrounded by numerous people and open expression, will build a child's extraversion. Some examples include the continuous nagging to earn good grades, acquiring a well-paying job, or the constant pressure to dress extravagantly to earn acceptance; these are likely to foster a child's extraversion because huge importance is placed on the objective world by the very people from whom that child learns and imitates. With such an environment, the extravert risks his/her personality being dictated by materialistic gain. These very experiences and environments contribute to the development of a person's personality.

Personality, in the eyes of Jung, is the part of the human character that consciously interacts with the materialistic environment or the world. Character traits like funny, friendly, honest, or adventurous are used to define a person's personality, because they are qualities that interact with the world beyond the self and define to others how that person is perceived. Those very character descriptions may also become that person's vocabulary choice for self-definition, depending on their acceptance.

As one draws deeper into introversion, however, one tends to pull farther away from or neglects their extraversion. This neglected end of the personality spectrum then falls under the unconscious part of the mind and occasionally resurface to the conscious mind as a weakness or, in more severe cases, fear. Imagine the awkwardness a right-handed person

would feel using his or her never-been-trained left hand to write an essay; that same awkwardness can be applied to an introverted being forced to socialize with classmates during a class activity. This level of awkwardness is indirectly proportional to one's level of introversion or extraversion.

Jung's Personality Typology and Composition

In my attempt to educate myself and build a foundation of prior research that drew a direct correlation between Jung's typology and composition, I discovered how studies of this genre were quite limited. Of the few I found, John K. DiTiberio and George H. Jensen's (1984) "Personality and Individual Writing Processes" provided the most relatable and informational content. Within their multiple longitudinal studies at the University of Illinois at Chicago and Georgia State University, they attempted to discover how an individual's personality may correlate with his or her writing processes and contribute to writer's block. To identify students' types, DiTiberio and Jensen utilized results from the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) and concluded that both introverts and extraverts have certain protocols that allow them to write more freely and with less difficulties. Furthermore, educating students about their types and their corresponding protocols seems to increase student success in writing.

With extraverts who "predominantly focus their energy outward, interacting with people and things, they tend to value outer experience (talking and acting) so highly that they often leap into tasks with little planning, then rely on trial and error to complete the task. Since they spend more time dealing with outer experience rather than inner experience (reflecting and observing), they think most clearly and develop more ideas while in action or in conversation" (DiTiberio & Jensen, 1984, p. 288). Therefore, extraverts often find free-writing a good method for developing ideas, allowing their uncaged ego to write quickly, impulsively,

and uncritically. However, they often feel guilty about not writing from outlines, and their pauses while writing are more frequently instances of an inability to generate ideas rather than moments of productive planning. Thus, their writer's blocks can be mitigated or lessened when they allow their first drafts to be relatively unfocused and filled with a wide range of data or ideas.

Introverts, on the other hand, "predominantly focus their energy inward through consideration and contemplation. More cautious about the outer world, they anticipate and reflect before becoming involved with it, in order to avoid errors. They think best and develop more ideas when alone, uninterrupted by people and events" (DiTiberio & Jensen, 1984, p. 290). In other words, introverts usually want most of their ideas clarified before actually entering the act of writing, finding writing easier when most of their argument is developed mentally before they put pen on paper. Thus, particular types of prewriting activities like outlining are much preferred by introverts. In addition, because students of this type are afraid of making errors, they may frequently have "writer's block" at the beginning stage of writing due to an abundance of reflection or dissatisfaction with the first sentence or transition, thinking it may be too poorly written or unrelated with the guiding thesis. Because introverts prefer to work alone and avoid social interaction, their essays can be improved through connecting their ideas with real-life experiences, a characteristic that is predominant in extraverts. With writing being an activity that requires inner thinking, introverts, according to DiTiberio and Jensen, generally have less difficulty with writing than extraverts. The following chart illustrates the additional different strengths and challenges of each type.

Table 2

Writing and Personality

Introverts	Extraverts
<p data-bbox="321 520 846 600">Overall writing holds physical distance from topic and audience.</p> <p data-bbox="526 669 646 699">Strengths:</p> <ul data-bbox="321 722 829 1157" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="321 722 829 802">● Tend to write more intensely about a limited range of ideas or topics <li data-bbox="321 821 829 900">● Usually reflect on topic enough to make abstractions from it <li data-bbox="321 919 829 1052">● Clearly perceive the audience as someone with values different than their own <li data-bbox="321 1071 829 1157">● At their best, they will condense ideas into a naturally formal style. <p data-bbox="509 1272 662 1302">Weaknesses:</p> <ul data-bbox="321 1325 829 1709" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="321 1325 829 1507">● Writing may be so distant from experience that it lacks vitality or fails to reflect clearly on the connection between experience and thought. <li data-bbox="321 1526 829 1606">● Reluctant to express ideas and feelings on paper or in person <li data-bbox="321 1625 829 1709">● At their worst, they will produce a lifeless and needlessly formal prose. 	<p data-bbox="868 520 1393 600">Overall writing holds physical proximity to topic and audience.</p> <p data-bbox="1073 669 1193 699">Strengths:</p> <ul data-bbox="868 722 1393 1205" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="868 722 1393 751">● Excel at writing from experience <li data-bbox="868 770 1393 903">● Likely to be vital and reflect on a connection between experience and thought <li data-bbox="868 921 1393 1001">● Excel at writing dialogues from outer speech <li data-bbox="868 1020 1393 1050">● Usually have a clear sense of voice <li data-bbox="868 1068 1393 1205">● At their best, they will write a vital, informal prose that reflects on immediacy of experience. <p data-bbox="1057 1272 1209 1302">Weaknesses:</p> <ul data-bbox="868 1325 1393 1759" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="868 1325 1393 1354">● Tend to write more fragmented thoughts <li data-bbox="868 1373 1393 1453">● Ideas touch superficially on a broad range of topics. <li data-bbox="868 1472 1393 1604">● May not adequately reflect on their topic or fail to differentiate their values from those of their audience <li data-bbox="868 1623 1393 1759">● At their worst, they will present undigested information in an inappropriate and conversational style.

In later years, Patricia Carrell and Laura Monroe (1993) expanded DiTiberio and Jensen's research into the field of second-language learners. Their article, "Learning Styles and Composition," documented their semester-long examination of three groups of freshman writers at the University of Akron – developmental or "basic" composition, traditional composition, and non-native ESL composition. Using the MBTI instrument for type identification as well, Carrell and Monroe investigated the relationships between the learning styles of the three groups and their performance on freshman writing tasks. Their results had various discoveries: their ESL students had a higher percentage of introverts compared to other groups; ESL writers who were classified as Intuitive, Feeling, and Perceiving (other dimensions of Jung's personality typology) tended to use greater lexical diversity in their writing; and those scoring lower on the Judging scale tended to write with greater lexical diversity than those scoring higher. Near the end, however, Carrell and Monroe warned readers to view their data as mere insights into the relationships between the learning or processing styles of different groups of writers and various writing measures. They stressed the need for additional investigation in research that combines the concept of personality and composition.

Research on Audience Consideration

Following in the footsteps of Carrell and Monroe's study, this research aims to expand our literature on how students' personalities affect their composition abilities. What makes my study different from previous research, however, is the direction of my focus. While my predecessors conducted protocol research, I desired more knowledge on students' psychological disposition while they compose, in attempt to discover the possible reasons for writer's block or writing anxiety. Thus, using Jungian theory as my lens, I decided to explore students' cognitive activities and possible internal conflicts as students considered their

audience for an academic assignment.

For many years, composition research has been linking quality written discourse with consideration of audience (Berkenkotter, 1981; Black, 1989; Kirsch, 1991; Kroll, 1978; Wong, 2005). The ultimate product of these studies is the increased inclusion of the phrase, “consider your audience,” in writing instruction. However, because the concept of audience awareness is quite abstract and ambiguous, theorists have been discussing for decades the various definitions of audience awareness and methods of teaching it. Audience was once thought to be “invented” (Long, 1980), then addressed or invoked (Ede & Lunsford, 1984), followed by “ignored” (Elbow, 1987), or evolving (Roth, 1987). In addition, research has grown from “single audience” studies (Berkenkotter, 1981; Flower & Hayes, 1980) to “multiple audience” studies (Aubry, 1995; Cohen & Riel, 1989; Hayes, Brandt, & Chantry, 1988; Kirsch, 1991; Redd-Boyd & Wayne, 1989). Furthermore, to aid instruction in the classroom, researchers developed different theoretical perspectives: rhetorical, information, and social perspectives (Kroll, 1984), heuristic models (Pfister & Petrick, 1980), and coding schemes (Berkenkotter, 1981). As extensive as the research on audience is, the growth seems to have come to a halt around mid-1990s with only a few articles published beyond the year 2000.

While there was past research that tied personality with various important variables in writing, it was interesting to discover that there was no research that investigated the possible connections between Jung’s typology and audience awareness. There were studies that explained how personality connected self-confidence (Houston, 1997) and reading ability (Vehar, 1968). There were also studies that examined composition through the lens of psychological variables such as cognitive egocentrism (Kroll, 1978), cognitive development (Carvalho, 2002), and the effect of teachers’ psychological presence on students’ writing-task

engagement (Spaulding, 1995). Although it has been recognized since the twentieth century that there are insufficient studies examining the cognitive activities that may constrain writers, we have not seen much growth in the research of this genre. Thus, in order to fill the gap and address the correlations between audience perception and personality, I have decided that my graduate project would be to dissect the psychological context of the introvert and extravert as they address an audience.

Research Design

Eleven students, who were previously enrolled in a composition course at California State University, Sacramento, were recruited to take the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). These students met me when I had to observe their teacher for a semester and also conduct lessons as part of my course requirements. After the results of the MBTI were obtained from the Consulting Psychologist Press, Inc., six students were asked to participate in the next level of the study, as they scored the highest in both ends of the spectrum. The others were not asked to continue the study as they scored too close to the middle, where it was difficult to reach a classification of introvert or extravert. Student **A**, **B**, and **C** scored 67%, 78% and 90% introverted, whereas Student **D**, **E**, and **F** scored 70%, 75%, and 85% extraverted. They were asked to write an essay to a prompt I constructed (See Appendix **A**) and complete a questionnaire that asked them about their feelings and perspectives on audience (See Appendix **B**). In addition, one-on-one interviews were conducted with each student to allow those who prefer verbal expression to use their preferred mode of communication.

As a novice teacher, many questions about audience awareness perturbed me through my years studying English education, and they became the guiding inquiries of this study. The central research question was “How do students’ introverted or extraverted personalities

affect their audience awareness in writing?” Sub-questions included the following: How do students define audience awareness? How are students writing to a specific audience? How do students see themselves as they write their papers? How do they perceive their supposed audience and how does it affect their writing? How are they feeling emotionally as they write to a designated audience?

Analysis of Results

As the study came to a conclusion, there were a few notable similarities and differences between the introverted and extraverted students. Students from both attitude spectrums were concerned about audience judgments, specifically in regards to their writing competence. Additionally, they all had difficulty deterring themselves away from perceiving the teacher or evaluator as the ultimate audience for academic writing assignments. As for their differences, responses from a couple introverted students were quite interesting as they induced the speculation of a few anxieties not shown in the extraverts of this study: fear of intrusion, psychological resistance to conformation, and psychological civil warfare. For one student, regression from the writing task was a struggling habit. Discussion of these mental problems with reference to Jung’s personality typology seems to shed some light on the complexity of writer’s block and anxieties.

Audience Judgment of Author’s Intelligence

Regardless of their introverted or extraverted personality, all students seemed to have varying levels of anxiety or discomfort over how their audience judge their competence in writing. When answering the question - “For what purposes do you think writing exists?” - Student **B** defined academic writing as “an activity to tell people what a person has to say and show people that he or she can write.” Student **C** was very swift and straight to the point with “It’s a way of demonstrating intelligence with your words.” Student **F** said, “It is a media of

expressed thought, knowledge, and a way to possibly convey intelligence,” while Student **E** said that the purpose of writing is to “sound intelligent while relaying a message.” Student **A** and **D** also made similar statements, expressing their desire to represent themselves as “intelligent” through their writing. When answering the question - “Do you think it is necessary for you to become a skilled writer? Why or why not?”, all of the students answered, “yes,” for the purpose of avoiding derogatory classifications such as “stupid,” “incompetent,” or “unintelligent.” Because all six definitions of audience awareness involved the aspect of performing as a competent or intelligent person, the participants of this study seemed to all draw a connection between writing competency and personal intelligence.

For some of the introverted and extraverted students, writing wasn’t enjoyable due to their previous experiences with academic writing leaving negative memories or trauma. When answering the question - “In general, do you like academic writing? Why or why not?”, many responses were interestingly voiced in relation to past evaluations. For instance, Student **B** said, “I’m usually scared of what grade I’ll get on papers because my parents would use that grade to hold me accountable for something.” In addition, Student **C** claimed, “I hate having grades on papers since I was a kid because it’s like telling the world that I’m stupid for not being able to write or speak English correctly.” Furthermore, Student **E** mentioned that “It’s hard for me to like writing in school because there’s always corrections with every draft; I can never perfect it. So, it feels like the teacher is indirectly telling you that you can never be perfect or good at this.” Student **F** also added, “Every year, the teacher will always have something new to correct; it’s much more annoying than math where I know I learned and grew intellectually because of the 100% grade, and I don’t really have to go back and relearn it once I memorized a formula.”

With their perception of a direct correlation existing between writing assignment

grades and personal intelligence, these students seemed to habitually view themselves as incompetent writers in need of remediation, rather than writers reconstructing knowledge through composition. Only Student A out of six students voiced “self-exploration” when answering the question - “For what purposes do you think writing exists?” All the others responded with answers related to communication and performance purposes. Only Student A saw the benefits of writing and consciously wrote to discover; however, during the interview, she expressed that such writing happened more commonly in creative writing and rarely occurred in academic settings. Thus, it would be no surprise if teacher comments were viewed as continuous torture by these students, where comments like “this is what’s wrong with your writing,” were absorbed as “this is what’s wrong with you.” Regardless of what their college professors may say, students inevitably struggle with the reality of their professors evaluating their writing with a grade – a grade that has the power to label students’ competence as writers and the power to stigmatize them.

Perceiving the Hypothetical Audience Beyond the Evaluator

According to Lisa Ede, “teachers of writing try to attenuate [decontextualized learning] by making the audience and the goal explicit for the student in a role playing exercise. The exercise remains hypothetical, however, because the text is never read by anyone except the teacher and the student knows it” (as cited in Cohen & Riel, 1989, p. 156). Many students of this and past studies fully recognized the teacher as being the audience of written assignments and struggled to invoke another specified audience due to their knowledge of reality. In response to the interview question – “What kind of discomfort did you have (if any) when you were required to be aware of your audience?”, a student from each side of the attitude spectrum had a commonality. “It doesn’t matter if the teacher keeps telling me to imagine this guy as a reader or that girl as a reader because I already know that deep

down, I'm writing this paper because I need that grade from that teacher" said Student A. "I know that my paper is better when I try to imagine who my audience is beyond my professor, but of course I ultimately have to cater to my professor because she's the one reading the paper and giving me a grade," claimed Student F. Because they perceived their teacher as a judge measuring their intelligence, both groups of students admitted to having at least a slight level of anxiety when composing for any class. They also admitted that, although their essays would be read by me, and not by their teacher, they still felt a hint of anxiety and pressure to perform well due to their work being evaluated and eventually representative of their skill and intelligence.

Dealing with the Anxiety to Perform in Writing

What was eye-opening from this study, however, was how a couple of the students stood out in difference to the rest of the subjects when dealing with this anxiety to perform. While Student F, who was 85% extraverted, acknowledged that writing was representative of one's intelligence, he expressed that "it doesn't represent you as a whole; I imagine that they will think whatever they want to think. I just want to finish knowing that I have done my best, and I hope that they like my work. It would be a lot easier if the teachers just told me what they like, making all our lives easier." His last comment especially correlates with Jung's claim that extraverts are able to "adapt himself easily and well to his environment" (as cited in Corrie, 1927, p. 33). Student F seems to acknowledge the inescapable performance aspect of academic writing but has very little to no qualms about it. He further states, "If I fail, I fail; what can I do about it but move on?" Such comments may be attributed to extraverts' nature being extensive as opposed to intensive. For an extraverted student like Student F, life has more to offer than to waste time on brooding over failure. After all, when questioned about his methods on addressing the audience, Student F claimed that he would spend some time

thinking about what the teacher wanted but eventually knew that he still needed to write what he wanted to say, making sure it was in formal language, and moved on. Although the other two extraverts did not exude the same easygoing attitude, Student **F**'s adaptability and acceptance of external judgments may be a helpful factor in decreasing students' anxiety with writing.

On the other hand, Student **C**, who was 90% introverted, responded quite oppositely, which illustrates the difficulties students may have with writing and audience awareness when they are unable to accept judgments and evaluations from others. In the middle of the interview, amidst the topic of writer's representation through product, he veered off with "it's stupid how there's even timed writing assignments. If teachers already know that those written products aren't representative of our true capabilities, they should stop putting us through such a torturing process. I mean, I don't really care what people think of me, but it's not like I have a choice when someone writes a fat 'C' on my paper, telling me I need to become better and smarter person by changing my writing to how they want it to be." Through these comments, one may infer that Student **C** is not only unable to accept his fate as an evaluated student but is emotionally disturbed by how his intelligence is measured unfairly through timed writing assignments.

Fear of Intrusion

Rather than recognizing the writing teacher as an individual reader giving comments for improvement, Student **C** generalizes them as a negative entity, "torturing" and "changing" him as a person. Jung explains that "because the introvert consciously withdraws from the object and assert the superiority of his ego, unconsciously the object dominates him and fills him with fear" (as cited in Corrie 1927, pp. 35-36). Although Student **C** asserts that he does not care for people's opinion of him, the comments that followed seem to illustrate an

unhealthy fixation on the object's (the teacher's) power to evaluate his intelligence. Comments on Student C's writing may even be perceived as intruding weapons on his being, capable of altering his writing which inherently alters him. Even if the comments may make him "smarter," "the first reaction of the introvert to the object is apt to be a negative one" (Corrie, 1927, p. 34). The introvert's nature is to be intensive, and that may be the cause of Student C's heavy, possibly subconscious, focus on defending against the object. It is, after all, the introvert's desire and instinct to always preserve his freedom of action. In contrast, Student F is readily accepting of external judgments and able to move on with his life, for he sees the merits of the great external world that awaits his exploration, all of which are characteristics of the extravert's extensive nature.

Psychological Resistance to Conformation

In response to the request, "Describe your confidence in your writing abilities," Student C explained that his writing "could be good to some people, but bad to some, depending on who they were; if they're people who didn't really have much in common with me, then they'd most likely have a hard time understanding where I'm coming from." In other words, Student C's anxieties with writing do not stem from low self-confidence issues, but rather his audience as perceived by his ego. In this comment, he does not see a problem with his own writing; instead, he places the problem on the discordance he has with his audience, or rather the discordance his audience has with him. According to Jung, "The significance of the object [for the introvert] lies not in itself but in how it appears to him. It is not the situation objectively considered, but the situation as he sees it that is the decisive factor (as cited in Corrie, 1927, pp. 33-34). Student C's proclamation, "I don't like how the teacher is telling me how to think or who to be; I want to write what I want, but teachers would always have something they want to change," corresponds to Jung's description of the introvert. In

Student C's eyes, instructor comments can be a scary weapon threatening him to conform in writing and in ideology, even if the intentions of the instructor are entirely sincere in reality.

When questioned about his writing process of addressing the audience, Student C admitted that there were times in the past where he took a long time to rewrite a draft due to his reluctance to cater his paper to the teacher's comments. Writing a first draft when an audience was designated beforehand would occasionally be challenging as well if the audience wasn't interesting to him. Student C's reluctance to change his writing for his audience's needs resonates not only with Jung's description of the introvert but also the "psychological resistance" mentioned in Ede and Lunsford's (1984) past research:

"It is the writer who interprets the suggestions - or even commands - of others, choosing what to accept or reject. Even the conscious decision to accede to the expectations of a particular addressed audience may not always be carried out; unconscious psychological resistance, incomplete understanding, or inadequately developed ability may prevent the writer from following through the decision" (p. 166)

Even if the introvert may recognize that it may be an easy task to adjust their writing for the sake of accomplishing a decent grade, they may encounter a conscious or unconscious psychological resistance that ultimately gives them anxiety over achieving the task. For example, when teachers suggest the need to explain concepts and definitions to allow more chances for successful comprehension, Student C vented "It's not my fault that they don't know the things I know; it's their fault for being ignorant, so why should I have to change my ways?" Yet, even with the ego fighting hard to defend its owner, introverts eventually have to face the harsh reality that life does not always allow them to stay "un-intruded" or stagnantly "un-conformed."

Psychological Civil Warfare

Introverted or extraverted, students of an education system cannot deny the fact that graduation requires good grades, and many times, these are dependent upon the teacher's judgment of written assignments. Therefore, the task of conforming to instructors' comments is undeniably difficult or even impossible to escape if one desires graduation. For the introvert who naturally rejects the external world but consciously acknowledges the necessity of the good grade, the task may generate a writer's block that holds layers of psychological complexity. Student C's writer's block or tendency to "take a really long time" when addressing teachers' comments on drafts may be explained with Jung's comment that "many disturbances of the mind... are caused by the overdevelopment of the superior function to the detriment of the others... When the neglect is too great, the... conscious and unconscious may assume the attitude of civil war" (as cited in Corrie, 1927, pp. 55-56). Based on his overall responses in this study, Student C's overdeveloped introversion may have caused the detriment of the important extraverted function that is his adaptability to the external world. Then, what is perceived as writer's block in Student C's case may actually be his consciousness rendered stagnant as his mentality suffers from a civil war between his introverted ego and the external reality (the grade) that dictates the course of his life. As the weak extravert, Student C may consciously acknowledge what must be adapted or done to achieve his grade and attempt to do so with his neglected function; however, his unconscious but powerful introversion stands in the way to protect the impenetrable ego. A summary of this phenomenon is aptly explained through the following passage:

"The battle is waged between the ego and the object - human or otherwise - which consciously, as has already been said, he disparages by his indifference and unrelatedness to it. Unconsciously, according to the law of the opposites, it assumes a

disproportionate importance, which threatens the superiority of his ego, to guard which is the introvert's supreme care. He is apt to identify this with the subject or self, of which it is only the conscious focal point. This leads to desire for power over the object, which nevertheless continues to dominate him... Out of such desire for power, on the one hand, and domination on the other, a conflict ensues of which the individual may know nothing but its effects. He becomes a prey to emotions within" (Corrie, 1927, pp. 61-62).

It is important to emphasize that the introvert may not even recognize the existence of this civil war and enter a state of unexplainable and conflicted emotions, as stated above. Student **C** repetitively stated that he did not care for others' perceptions of him, but his answers clearly illustrate that he does, insinuating an unconscious contradiction between his need to get a good grade (an extraverted quality) and his need to protect himself from change induced by external factors (an introverted quality) in his writing. In the eyes of an outsider or the uninformed writer, the complicated emotions erupting from this psychological civil warfare can easily be generalized as writer's block.

Regression

If a student decides to avoid this psychological civil warfare, there is apparently an alternative as discussed by Student **B**, who is also an introvert, - regression. Jung defined regression as "a sinking back to a more or less childish level, and so seeking to escape difficulties with which one finds oneself incompetent to deal - [a] way of trying to evade life" (as cited in Corrie, 1927, p. 63). Student **B**, who was the shyest of all the subjects, continuously repeated how she "sucks at writing" and how she used to avoid doing writing assignments when she was in middle school. "At least I won't have to see the 'F' in front of me on paper telling me I'm dumb," she explained. Jung mentioned that "a conflict arises

when a person finds himself up against a problem which cannot be solved by the superior function, and which the inferior function is inadequate to deal with” (as cited in Corrie, 1927, p. 56-57). In Student **B**'s case, her superior function of introversion fails to provide her with the skills necessary to adapt her writing to the external audience. She voiced how she had gotten better since then, but sometimes she would have habits of procrastinating because of her reluctance to be judged by an audience. Furthermore, she occasionally avoided the exertion of her best effort in order to protect her true intelligence from criticism, especially when she was feeling insecure. Because addressing the audience is a social act that requires extraversion (recognizing the objective such as the judging audience), introverted students seem to be at a higher risk entering a mode of regression, compared to extraverts who are able to adapt easily to their external environment.

Overall, it has been fascinating to analyze how students from both attitude spectrums react to the task of addressing an audience in this study. Students' concern for their written product being judged illustrates the extent to which their psychological disposition can be affected or even attacked by instructor or evaluator comments. In addition, their inability to deter themselves from seeing the evaluator as the ultimate audience of an academic assignment is representative of how our past and current methods of educating audience awareness may need revision. With Jung's personality typology as our theoretical lens, we may have acquired a more in-depth analysis of writer's block and the different types of writing anxieties. However, with only three introverts and three extraverts as participants of this study, the evidence in this study should not be used to generalize introverted and extraverted students, as the purpose of this study has always been exploration. More research is necessary to validate the effects of introversion and extraversion on students' audience awareness in writing.

Suggestions for Future Research in the Writing Classroom

Many of the problems discussed in this study are not necessarily new to the composition field. For example, Kroll's (1978), Carvolho's (2002), and many other cognition-related studies argued for the need to "decenter" students from their egocentrism to improve their composing abilities. In addition, Fishman, Lunsford, McGregor, and Otuteye (2005) provided explanations and insights on decreasing performance anxieties. Furthermore, Wong (2005) illustrated the benefits of students' perceiving the audience beyond the lecturer or evaluator. Students choosing to escape from the writing task (regression) and retaliating against teachers' constructive criticism (resistance to conformation) are quite common difficulties English instructors everywhere face continuously. However, with the help of Jung's typology, we can now have a better understanding of these different problems - be it writer's block or writing anxieties - under the influence of a single variable - personality. My predecessors, DiTiberio and Jensen, found that the education of the Jung's typology had led to many students' "heartfelt appreciation for being understood and accepted as an individual" and a decline in writing difficulties (DiTiberio & Jensen, 1989, p. 109). In later years, Houston (1997) also joined the motion to educate students of Jung's theory, documenting an increase in self-confidence when students became aware of their preferred processes.

The collected data in this study, on the other hand, suggest that introverts may need additional aid from composition instructors to decrease their internal conflicts when practicing audience awareness in writing, especially since this highly regarded ability is definitively an extraverted process. Although answers from students did not correlate with their fellow introverts or extraverts enough to confirm any concrete generalizations, Student **C**'s fear of intrusion and tendency to resist conformation, in addition to Student **B**'s regression, are undeniably problems that need to be addressed and researched further. With the help of

Jung's personality typology, we may have acquired the appropriate classifying lexicon for the mental conflicts that plague composition students. After all, to find the solution for any problem, we must first identify and analyze the problem. Regardless of the validity of Jung's theory, however, the audience of this study may still be questioning one thing: "How are teachers supposed to help students with their psychological conflicts when teachers are not professional psychologists themselves?"

In regards to that, DiTiberio and Jensen provides us with the following:

"If instructors can encourage students to write in a process that is comfortable to them, that is well suited to their personality type, or at least be open to students exploring a wide variety of approaches to writing, then fewer students will probably develop writing anxiety. If instructors encourage students to learn to write in a more balanced way, to employ primarily their preferred cognitive processes but also to consult and develop their less preferred processes, the students will probably be more effective decision-makers and experience fewer blocks (DiTiberio & Jensen, 1989, p. 130).

DiTiberio and Jensen suggest that teachers should never act as amateur psychologists; however, they must not deny the powerful impact they have on "how students feel about themselves as people and writers" (p. 116). With the use of the MBTI, teachers can guide students to develop their preferred processes before the un-preferred processes, which could then prepare them to be more adaptable to environments of all types. According to Jung, "by revealing his unconscious tendencies to the extravert, it teaches him to introvert and find values within himself, and by the same means the introvert learns to adapt himself with great ease and better result to the outside world" (as cited in Corrie, 1927, p. 52). How might Student **B's** and **C's** writing processes change if they learn from Student **F's** extraverted ability to accept failure and people's judgments in the absence of strife? How might students'

anxieties with writing change (if at all) when they learn that they are not alone in their personality tendencies and interests; when they learn that their supposedly stagnant “weaknesses” are actually common and can possibly mature into strengths through practice? Besides educating students on their preferred processes with the MBTI, what are some concrete activities teachers can conduct in the classroom to help students understand Jung’s typology and remove themselves from their egocentrism? Questions like these are a few ideas to experiment with in the classroom and initiate a new era of personality research within the field of composition instruction.

As a strategy to help introverted students break out of their egocentrism, it might also be worthwhile to see how students react to a teacher who candidly learns about himself or herself through the MBTI, together with the class. According to DiTiberio and Jensen (1989), “rater’s or teacher’s personality type will tend to have an effect on how he or she evaluates essays” (p.134), and “instructors may become more frustrated when teaching ‘others’ because these students will yet need to learn skills that seem, to the instructors, so fundamental. These students who are easier to teach may receive the highest grades” (p. 139). If we, as teachers, can fearlessly analyze our own egocentric biases and strive to be more cognizant and patient of other types; if we can explicitly analyze our own shortcomings and display our persistence in self-improvement, our students would then have a live role model of a person working towards becoming a “balanced individual.” Inspiration of any kind begins with a role model, after all, to portray that a goal can be achieved or that a dream can come true with relentless effort. The fact that many students of this study voiced how their childhood trauma of teacher comments affected them until their current college years illustrates a probable need to re-establish the teacher persona in writing instruction. If teachers could be more cognizant of students’ psychological anxieties with writing and vocalize that it is “okay” to be weak at

something and that it is “okay” to not know something, students would theoretically have less chances of entering regression with writing, due to the decreased pressure to perform for an unapproachable teacher.

As I bring my presentation to an end, I sincerely hope you would at least consider reviewing Jung’s personality typology and DiTiberio and Jensen’s (1989) *Personality and the teaching of composition* and experiment with how their findings may impact your writing instruction or classroom. I encourage teachers and students to use the MBTI instrument for type identification and for a deeper insight into their own personality; however, no one should feel trapped or obligated to act in a certain way due to the resulting classification. Jung’s typology was developed for the purpose of analyzing the differences in people’s preferences and not to reduce human beings to caricatures through labeling; in other words, the typology categorizes behavior but does not determine behavior. Because “reductionistic labels [have the ability to] delimit individuals and slight their potential as human beings,” users of the MBTI need to be well-informed of Jung’s description of personality and advice to human kind, which is to ultimately become “balanced individuals” (DiTiberio & Jensen, 1989, p. 6). Thank you very much for your time and patience.

Appendix A

Essay Prompt**Introverted/Extroverted Personality & Audience Awareness Study**

Directions: Imagine you are in Professor Elaine McCollom’s English 20 class again near the end of the semester. She asks you to write a persuasive essay according to the following prompt.

“English 20 is now currently in danger of being removed from its status as a CSUS General Education requirement. Some people seem to believe that the course is merely a waste of time since many students still fail the Writing Proficiency Exam even after achieving a passing score in English 20. Others believe English 20 offers students valuable knowledge, such as analytical skills, that every student in college should acquire. Write an essay describing your position in this debate and with a specific audience in mind. You may use your observations, personal experiences, and any textual references to support your argument.”

Appendix B

Questionnaire for Introverted/Extroverted Personality & Audience Awareness Study

Directions: On a separate document, please answer the following questions as honestly as you can with the corresponding numbers; there is no maximum or minimum number of words, but please answer in complete coherent sentences. The more details you provide, the more they will aid the study. You have the right to leave any question blank if it makes you uncomfortable.

Pseudonym: _____ Age: _____ Gender: _____

Academic Writing Questions

1. In your opinion, is academic (school-related) writing an activity that only involves you expressing your opinions and thoughts, or is it a social activity which you must communicate effectively to an audience?
2. In general, do you like academic writing? Why or why not?
3. Describe your confidence in your writing abilities. Low? Moderate? High?
4. Describe the steps you typically or most often take in tackling a writing assignment.
 - a. What type of prewriting activities do you do?
 - b. How many drafts do you usually write before submitting your final paper?
 - c. What difficulties with academic writing do you usually have?
5. Do you think your writing represents you as a person? Explain.
6. For what purposes do you think academic writing exists?
 - a. To communicate? To explore the self? To demonstrate one's skill? To persuade?
7. Do you think it is necessary for you to become a skilled writer? Why or why not?
8. What is your definition of audience-awareness in writing? Explain.
9. What writing techniques (if any) have you learned about addressing your audience?

General Communication: *On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the most, rate and explain...*

1. How accurate do you think the words you use to communicate verbally represent what you think?
2. How often do people understand you and the way you think?
3. How often do people agree or share an understanding with you?
4. How often do you feel misunderstood?
5. How often are people interested in what you have to say?

6. How important it is for people to hear or understand you?
7. The effort you usually put into communicating effectively in person.
8. The effort you usually put into communicating effectively in writing.

When writing your essay...

1. Do you feel like you're writing for yourself, for others, or for both? In other words, what responsibilities do you think you have in writing this assignment?
 - a. Demonstrate your knowledge and understanding?
 - b. Communicate a message?
 - c. And/Or something more?
2. Who did you picture as your audience? Describe him or her in as much detail as possible.
 - a. Is this person someone you respect, fear, or wish to impress? Why?
 - b. Is this person someone you could care less, or not worth your time? Why?
3. How do you think your audience will perceive your piece of writing?
 - a. Good? Bad? Skilled? Unskilled? Why?
4. How do you think your audience will perceive you as a writer?
 - a. Skilled? Unskilled? Reliable? Unreliable? Why?
 - b. On a scale of 1-10, how well do you think your reader understands your intentions in your written piece?
5. Did you do anything specific in your essay that shows your awareness of your audience? If so, what did you do?
6. What kind of discomfort did you have (if any) when you were required to "be aware of your audience?"
7. Did you find having a designated audience (the teacher) help make the writing process easier or harder? Why?
8. Do you think you would have written a different essay if you weren't asked to address the audience? If so, explain how different that essay would be in comparison to the one you first wrote for this study.
9. Do you think your essay will improve if you have received a very detailed description of your audience or increase in difficulty?
10. Do you think you would've written a better essay if you have received explicit instruction on what it means to address the audience?

Myers-Briggs Type Indicator: On a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the most accurate and 1 being the least, how accurate do you think your score is on the MBTI? Explain your reasoning.

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