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**Perceptions of Introverted Students and Their Teacher in a Middle-School ELAR
Classroom**

Kimberly Rempel

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine introverted students' perceptions about their honor's ELAR class and to determine if they succeed better with choice board assignments versus non-choice assignments. This study was conducted at a West Texas middle school in an honor's eighth-grade ELAR classroom. Students completed the Myers-Briggs personality test to determine their status as introverted or extroverted (Myers & Myers, 2014). Data was collected through a survey, student and teacher interviews, and student assignment grades. Data was analyzed through the constant comparative method, and students' grades were compared using descriptive statistics. The study found that teacher and student perceptions were similar as they showcased that introverted students had a high level of negative thought regarding speaking in the classroom, a high level of concern regarding working with others, many negative feelings surrounding introvertedness, and a favoritism for choice in assignments. Additionally, introverted students performed better on choice board assignments.

Perceptions of Introverted Students and Their Teacher in a Middle-School ELAR Classroom

It is the first day of school. Students are flooding the classroom. There are over one hundred names and faces to memorize. Some come easy: the loud students who shout out every answer, the rambunctious students who push back against your every instruction, the teacher's pets who know when to speak, and when not to speak. One group of students goes unnoticed: the ones who do not particularly make an effort to stand out, who do not ask questions, who speak quietly if they speak at all, the introverted students. Their names do get memorized, but often much later than the rest.

Upon entering my clinical teaching placement for an M.Ed. in Teaching and Learning, I did not notice the quiet students immediately. However, during my students' first big assignment, one student, Mikaela, (all names have been replaced by pseudonyms) who did not initially leave a large impact on me during the first few weeks, turned in the most exceptional assignment out of the entire group of students. I was astounded. This led to my wondering how an introverted student (as I soon found her to be) experiences a class differently from an extroverted student.

Purpose

The purpose of this research was to determine introverted students' perceptions of an honors ELAR eighth-grade classroom. The purpose included a comparison of choice board assignments and non-choice board assignments to determine if student choice creates a better opportunity for success for introverted students. An added goal was understanding teacher perceptions of their introverted students and to observe the impact that personality types have on their instructional strategies. The research questions were as follows:

Research Question: What are the perceptions of introverted eighth-grade honors students regarding their honors English class?

Research Question: What are the teacher's perceptions of their introverted eighth-grade honors students in honors English class?

Sub Question: How do introverted students' performances compare between choice board and non-choice board assignments?

Sub Question: What is the impact on teacher instruction when knowledge of introverted students is considered?

Throughout this study, I was a yearlong clinical teacher/graduate student conducting action research within my placement classroom. The study was conducted in a central Texas town Title I middle school. The school's demographics were 13.7% African American, 46.9% Hispanic, 34.3% White, 0.2% American Indian, 1.1% Asian, and 3.8% Two or More Races. The school also hosts a special education population of 16.6% and an emergent bilingual/EL population of 7.1%.

Literature Review

The topic of personality traits, specifically extroversion and introversion, has been discussed often regarding work and employment roles. However, very little data exists regarding its effect on middle school students. Introversion and extroversion are two observable features that students regularly exhibit in the classroom. The concept of introversion and extroversion was developed by Swiss psychiatrist Carl G. Jung in 1921 as two large groupings of psychological individuals (Jung, 1921/2016). Introversion, as defined by its creator, is "an inward-turning of libido in the sense of a negative relation of subject to object" (Jung, 1921/2016, p. 415). Within introversion, interest does not move towards the object, but rather

withdraws from the object into the subject (Jung, 1921/2016, p. 415). Extroversion is the opposite—"an outward-turning of libido in which the subject moves toward the object and interest is transferred from subject to object" (Jung, 1921/2016, p.393). An introverted person draws interest from the object while an extroverted person imparts their interest onto the object. Today's use of the terms reduces them to something much less theoretical and usually defines an introverted person as one who pulls energy from being alone and is more withdrawn from society while extroverts pull their energy from large groups and interactions with others.

Various studies contain contradictory research about correlations between personality traits and success. For example, Danner (2016) suggested that if you want to increase creativity, you should find more introverted people to work for you. However, in many instances, the belief is that extroverted people have a stronger advantage over introverted people. Wilmot (2019) provided a categorized list of the advantages that extroverted people possess in the workspace, which include the categories of motivational, emotional, interpersonal, and performance advantages. Again, this data is contradicted by a study done by Flanagan and Addy (2019). These researchers found that in their study of introverts and group-based active learning questions, a topic in which introverts seem doomed to fail, there were no differences in advantages and disadvantages between introverts and extroverts (Flanagan & Addy, 2019). Nevertheless, Sparks (2012) found that introverted students were better at taking standardized tests because they are better at working alone. These differing results suggest that more research on the topic of personality traits and what advantages and disadvantages they offer is necessary.

Most teachers know that differentiation is key for all students to receive the education they deserve and the one that serves their needs best. For introverted students, this is especially true. Student voice and choice, as emphasized by Coppens (2021), takes a huge role in the

effectiveness of classroom environments. One simple way to allow students choice is through choice boards. A choice board is a selection of items that allow students to showcase their learning (Danley, 2020). Students select one or more options from a choice board instead of being given one kind of assignment for the whole class to complete. Danley (2020) conducted a study where future teachers were given the option to complete their final project through the use of a choice board. These students discussed how beneficial it was to have a way to showcase their learning in a way that they chose (Danley, 2020). They also emphasized the impact of creating choice board assignments as a means of differentiating. For introverted students, this may be a game changer.

Tsaniya (2022) began a conversation regarding these intro/extroversion roles in a high school math class, and Sumarno (2015) discussed particular methods of writing instruction that may correlate with different personality types. Tsaniya's (2022) study used Carl Gustav Jung's personality research and the Myer Briggs Type Indicator (which was created based on that research) to determine the identification of introverted and extroverted students. This study concluded through studies of student data that introverted students show better performance in mathematical abilities than extroverted students (Tsaniya et al., 2022). Sumarno's (2015) study considers what types of writing instruction work best for introverted and extroverted students. Sumarno (2015) also utilized the Myers Briggs Type Indicator along with observation notes and found that certain approaches work better with extroverts and that extroverts tended to have better writing than introverts. This study suggested that a significant relationship exists between personality type and writing quality (Sumarno, 2015). DuBrowa (2013) confirmed that in her college classroom, she immediately noticed that introverts and extroverts required different types of activities based on their personalities to succeed in an 8:00a.m. college class. There were

distinctions between the learning preferences of the different personality types, but there was not enough data discussing what types of activities work best for each group.

While previous studies have observed quantitative data on specific strategies or performance comparisons between introverted or extroverted students, my study allowed me to understand what introverted students think of their experiences and whether choice board assignments have a better performance level as compared to non-choice assignments. Previous studies also contain many discrepancies about achievement facts or traits that introverted students have. This study serves to bridge the gap by asking students what they think about their own experiences. It also contributes to existing research by collecting data on what the teacher in the classroom noticed about her introverted students and how her instructional style needed to adapt to fit the student's specific needs.

Methods

This study was a mixed methods study containing both qualitative and quantitative data. The qualitative data considered student and teacher perceptions of introversion and its effect on the education experience. The quantitative data considered whether choice board projects allowed students a higher rate of success.

Participant Selection

The participants of this study included three eighth-grade classes consisting of Honors ELAR students. One class consisted of 22 students, one of 13 students, and the last of 22 students. Of those students, there were 40 girls and 18 boys. Twenty-seven students identified as White, thirteen students identified as Hispanic/Latino, eleven identified as Black or African American, and seven identified as two or more races. Sixteen of the students were classified as Gifted and Talented, three students received Special Education (SPED) accommodations, two

students had a 504 accommodation, and four students were classified as having Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Out of this pool, thirteen students consented to the study and were identified as introverted. Of that population, the demographics consisted of eleven girls and two boys. Five students identified as Hispanic/Latino, two identified as Black/African American, one student identified as American Indian or Alaska Native/Hispanic, and seven students identified as White. Five students were classified as Gifted and Talented, two students had a 504 accommodation, and two students were classified as LEP.

Data Collection

All students were asked to complete a Myers-Briggs personality test placing them on a scale of introverted to extroverted (Myers & Myers, 2014). This test was completed once at the beginning of the study along with a survey. The survey consisted of three Likert scale questions and two open-ended questions, and it was given to all students who identified as introverts. I also collected informal field notes when I noticed activity that related to the study throughout the three-week time period. Along with this, I conducted semi-structured interviews comprised of open-ended questions (Hendricks, 2017). I conducted eight, 10-15 minute student interviews to receive the best variety of students. I used the data from the Myers-Briggs personality test and the survey to select participants for the interview (Myers & Myers, 2014). These students were ones who ranked themselves on the survey as varying levels of introverts. Four students ranked themselves a three out of four with four being most introverted, one was ranked a one, one was ranked a four, and two were ranked as two. This sampling also included a representative sample of ethnicities, gender, socioeconomic status, and current academic status. I conducted one 22-minute teacher interview. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and checked for accuracy.

Lastly, I collected students' assignment grades on choice and non-choice board assignments, compared them, and analyzed how well they succeeded on the different assignments.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed using the constant comparative method, with initial coding followed by creating hierarchies of categories and supporting level 1 and level 2 codes (Hubbard & Power, 2003). Fifteen level 1 codes were created from approximately the first 20% of the data. Level 1 codes focus on what is present in the data and explain the "who, what, and where" of the data. (Tracy, 2013, p. 189). The level 2 codes were then created using the level 1 codes and the remaining data. These codes focus explain, theorize, and synthesize the data (Tracy, 2013). At the end of my analysis, I had eighteen level 1 codes and four level 2 codes. I then created a codebook (see Appendix A) that listed the level 1 and 2 codes, definitions, and examples. I also wrote memos on the level 2 codes and organized them into an index which allowed me to create a clearer understanding of the codes' meanings, definitions, and connections to one another. The data from the student interviews, teacher interview, field notes, and survey responses were coded in this manner. I also compared grades on choice board and non-choice board assignments to determine which activities allow introverted students to succeed academically. I analyzed these grades by creating an average for choice board assignment grades and an average for non-choice board assignment grades and comparing them using descriptive statistics (Hendricks, 2017).

Findings

This following section discusses my findings after analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data that was collected over the three-week period. The qualitative data provided by the survey, student and teacher interviews, and field note observations revealed student and teacher perceptions of introvertedness and its effect in an honor's eighth-grade ELAR class. The analysis of qualitative data led to four major themes: motivation or confidence to participate; perceptions of independent, partner, or group work; feelings associated with introvertedness; and choice board/assignment feelings. To present my findings, I utilized poetic transcriptions for my qualitative and a bar graph for my quantitative data.

Qualitative Findings

I chose to use poetic transcriptions to showcase my qualitative findings. Poetic transcriptions are a type of found poetry the researcher creates from the words of participants to convey important findings from qualitative data (Glesne, 1997). For each poetic transcription, I used student quotes from the short answer questions on the survey, field note quotes, and interview quotes to create poetry that described teacher and students' perceptions about the four main themes that emerged from the data. One to two poetic transcriptions were created for each of the four major themes found in my data, and they represent both student and teacher words. Each poetic transcription expresses the words of a myriad of participants that fall under a specific code or theme.

Student Perceptions on Participating in the Classroom

“Unspoken”

I don't really like people, but at the same time, I do.

There's a certain level of vulnerability.

I feel very paranoid.

I always feel that someone will judge me—obviously.

It makes me anxious.

So,

I don't like talking in front of people.

I will sit on the same question for 5 minutes.

It's just harder to ask for help.

I don't like to ask questions or give feedback.

I'm *just* in the corner.

I *just* keep it to myself.

I *just* keep my mouth shut.

This poetic transcription was pulled from quotes from both student surveys and student interviews. Students described how talking in class made them feel and how confident they felt to participate in class. A theme that reappeared continuously throughout my data collection was the idea of participating in class, especially participating verbally. Students continuously stated their concerns about speaking in front of the class or asking for help. Based on my research, students most often do not actually feel confident enough to participate. A main contributor to this motivation and confidence has to do with the classroom environment and content. Some may ask how this differs from extroverted students or students with any personality type. This is evident in the fact that although many students stated that they felt confident in the class, comfortable with the classroom environment, and often knew the correct answer, they still did not always raise their hand or shout out the answers.

The field notes for this study revealed that out of the thirteen students in the study, only three students were seen to speak up in class on a regular basis. The rest spoke no more than twice per week. However, most if not all of these silent students knew the answer to questions when called upon specifically to answer. They expressed some trepidation about being called on individually but were almost always capable of responding in some manner. Those that did speak out and answer questions often stated that in their ELAR class, they felt they were more

extroverted than they were in other instances. They stated that they enjoyed the class in some manner related to environment or content which made them feel capable of speaking out more often. One student, Luke, stated that although he did not love being called upon by the teacher, he understood that “it’s a part of school”. The other students, those who did not speak out, stated that they still felt too nervous to speak out and would only do it if absolutely necessary. The teacher calling on them was one of the worst things that they experienced daily in class. Introverted students’ perceptions of their classes were that they found it extremely difficult to speak out most of the time, and it often seemed that little could be done to change this factor.

Teacher Perceptions on Participating in the Classroom

“Won’t Talk”

They’ll do the work,
but they still won’t talk.
They may emote with their faces,
but some don’t emote very much.
It’s harder to form a relationship.

I can see them bristle.
I can see them feel uncomfortable,
when they are not in control,
but they still won’t talk.

Most introverts don’t seem happy;
kids shut down
or
cry,
but they still won’t talk.

I want to hold them to the same standard.
Sometimes,
it’s impossible.
They still won’t talk.

This poetic transcription was pulled from the interview with Ms. Huff. She stated that she has taught introverted students for years; there are some in every class. She noted that it can often be more difficult to teach introverted students, especially when they “won’t talk” and you cannot read their faces to understand what they are thinking. It is much easier to make connections to the students who will talk, who will put themselves out there. To reach the students who do not speak out often, you must be intentional with the ways that you attempt to motivate them to participate. Ms. Huff saw her introverted students as intelligent, often stating that some of her brightest students are introverts. Nevertheless, relationships with these students come much slower than those with extroverted students who hold the same skill sets. Participation in class affects relationships between students and teacher.

Student Perceptions of Independent, Partner, or Group Work

“DONT DO GROUP PROJECTS”

Well, I’m fine with it.
I have to get it done,
But,
it’s out of my comfort zone.
It’s just... awkward.
Sometimes they don’t listen.
It becomes more awkward.

I get done a lot faster
with less people.
Being introverted,
group work is less fast.

I don't really talk to them,
and it makes everything awkward.

I always end up feeling really scared
about what they might think.
Make

sure
they
don't
make
fun
of
me.

Closely aligned to the idea of participating and talking, comes the topic of group or partner work. In an honor's ELAR classroom, group work, partner discussion, and whole class discussions are a constant part of the learning experience. Students are expected to debate one another, discuss hard issues, and communicate their thoughts with those around them. Not only is this an expectation in Ms. Huff's classroom, it is also a part of the eighth grade TEKS (Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills) for ELAR. However, many introverts would prefer to work alone. When interviewed, *all* students stated that if they could not work alone, they would prefer to work with a self-selected partner. Randomly assigned partners, whole class discussions, and large group projects were immediate causes for stress with students. On the other hand, many students stated that they may prefer to work with a partner if they could select them, and they enjoyed discussion, as long as it was controlled.

Group work brings its own difficulties. Sofia, a student in the study, stated that one main issue with group projects is that "They're always has to be a leader in the group, like, so sometimes I want to be the leader, but like I can't really talk to them because I struggle with talking to people so." These findings suggest that because of difficulties with communication skills, group work becomes more difficult, and more organization is required. Luke stated in all capital letters on his survey, "DON'T DO GROUP PROJECTS" proving his extreme distain for the concept. However, some students find a different perspective in group work. Isabelle stated that group projects and being introverted has allowed her to "...come out of my comfort zone to

talk to others. It has allowed me to make many friends over the past two years.” Although difficult, at times, even introverted students can see the benefits in these whole group interactions. Overall, introverted students’ perceptions of working with others were overwhelming more favorable in one-on-one interactions that are specifically allocated to fit introverted students.

Teacher Perceptions of Independent, Partner, or Group Work

“Underestimated”

Random grouping,
random pairing
is more difficult.

They must be,
paired with the right people,
or be able to choose.

However,

don’t pigeonhole them.
Don’t perceive that it may be too much.
Don’t underestimate them.

Sometimes, they surprise you.

Ms. Huff has noted that when teaching introverts, one of the most difficult skills to master is how to encourage them to work in groups or with partners. Deciding how to pair them up is a skill that comes with knowing your students. Sometimes you find that some introverts work better with other introverts, and sometimes you find them flourishing with extroverts. It really comes down to the student. Both Ms. Huff and I observed two students, who would not say a word or emote with their faces, be moved to sit next to one another. Suddenly, both students were much more expressive and were noticeably more engaged with the class. “Turn

and Talk” is a strategy that many teachers use in their classrooms daily. This can allow students to practice their communication skills with those who they feel more comfortable with before they move into larger group discussions or discussions with other people.

Large group discussion can be much more difficult. Ms. Huff remarked that although random grouping can be a cause for stress, it still is a skill that should be practiced in order to encourage students to grow socially and academically. At times, students surprise you. If we place all introverted students into a box, they can see that we do not believe that they can accomplish difficult things. Continual support and encouragement can allow students to reach outside of their comfort zones and attempt to gain new insight into things they may not have attempted without that support.

For example, many students find themselves being able to help others more than they know. Sofia expressed her fears about groups or partner work not having a leader, and in turn, the work did not get divided easily. However, through field notes it was seen that Sofia, Logan, Mikaela, Luke, Dakota, Isabelle, and Katy all had times in which they were observed to guide their classmates in group discussion, small groups, or partner work. This was not always verbally, but they still found ways to lead their classmates through non-verbal communication or body language. Often, introverted students are much more capable than even they think they are at working in groups or with partners.

Students’ Feelings Associated with Introvertedness

“Feelings”

afraid

to share my thoughts

uncomfortable

to talk to new people

nervous

to talk to others

overwhelmed

when there's too many people

frustrated

because they are less mature

awkward

working with people

to talk to people

annoyed

because you are ahead

because they take too long

scared

to ask a question,

to have a partner.

about what they might think

Students described choice words and emotions that they felt they encountered throughout their classes due to their introversion. On the survey, five students described their introvertedness as being mostly positive, six described it as mostly negative, and two described it as neutral. However, as the students were interviewed and observed, it appeared that most students found more negative aspects than positive. Dakota stated this when asked about the impact of her introversion on her schooling: "I would say that introversion affects schooling overall negatively as the current social system in modern day schools tends to favor extroverted people and the education part is also negative for various reasons." It came to light that most students enjoyed the positive aspects of being introverted such as being able to know themselves better, finish activities quicker, and focus better on tasks, but more often felt the negative aspects as described

in the poetic transcription above. As Dakota stated, the school system places a high value on skills associated with being more extroverted and this often places introverts at a slight disadvantage.

These feelings of fear, anxiety, and awkwardness were present anytime they were asked to do something in the classroom. While classroom observations showed that students were capable of completing these social activities without obvious fears, for some students, these fears were constant in the back of their minds. The negative emotions much outweighed the positive, although students often did not consider this until they were asked in-depth questions about their feelings.

Teacher Perceptions of Feelings Associated with Introvertedness

“Puzzle Master”

They're worried,
about what their peers are thinking of them:

self-conscious,
extra awkward.

A lot of them have social anxiety.
That can be a hurdle.

It's a puzzle.
You're not the ringleader;
you're the **puzzle master**.

I think I love to be surprised,
when I'm in that puzzle master role.
It's gratifying,
when I can see that they become more comfortable.

They sometimes connect with me,
but I don't have an opportunity to connect with them.
That surprises me too.

It's awesome.

Ms. Huff found that student emotions and feelings take major consideration in the daily instruction. However, as previously stated, sometimes it is hard to read introverted students' emotions. Ms. Huff remarked that extroverts are the "squeaky wheel". It is easy to see when they have issues or difficulties. Introverts do not showcase their feelings and emotions in that way. Students struggle silently with their anxieties. In turn, a teacher must take on the role of the "puzzle master" instead of the ringleader of a circus of extroverted students. Introverts take more time, more consideration, and more planning to understand. A teacher who loves her students will take this time to connect with her students and become the puzzle master they need to succeed in their classes.

Additionally, one interesting take on students' emotions was the way that they felt in the classroom. Ms. Huff remarked that she often thought that introverted students might be overwhelmed by her extroverted personality and that they may retract back. However, the opposite proved true often. Students loved having a teacher who was confident enough to reign in the extroverted students and who could fully showcase themselves without embarrassment. This appeared to allow introverted students to connect closely with a teacher, even if that teacher might take longer to connect with them.

Student and Teacher Perceptions about Choice Boards/Assignment

"Choice"

I LOVE those ones.

It's just better to have a *choice*,

more *choices* to fit our schedule of not interacting with people,

a wide *variety* of what to work with,

more advanced and different ways to express understanding of topics.

It's not like just like basic ones.

I actually got to do something different.

It's fun.

The final theme that emerged from the data had to do with assignments. All students were asked what type of assignment they enjoyed the most, and without prompting, over half stated that the projects they did in class were their favorite. These projects were always choice board projects. Students whose favorite assignment was not projects choose options like journal writing or partner work that required less whole group engagement. Students were clear in stating that choice board assignments were beneficial because they were able to make the decision themselves. On the final choice board assignment of the year, six out of the thirteen students in the study chose to work with a self-selected partner. This was interesting as it was assumed that most introverts would choose to work on their own. Additionally, three out of the six chose to work with partners who were extroverts. Data was inconclusive as to whether this differed from the first choice board assignment as no information was available about whether students worked with partners.

Ms. Huff reiterated the idea that introverts thrive when given choice board assignments. She stated that "Giving them a variety of ways to respond has really helped." As students were able to showcase their learning in different ways, it allowed the teacher to see more of their personality, their likes and dislikes, and grow a stronger relationship with them. It allowed them to "choose what they felt comfortable with and what they could shine on." However, Ms. Huff stated that it may also fail them in some way. "It doesn't help them bridge the gap between the skills that they're missing and the skills that they need to do some of those projects... It's an opt-out." This is important to realize for teachers creating assignments for students. Everything has a time and place. There are times for choice board assignments that allow students to shine, and

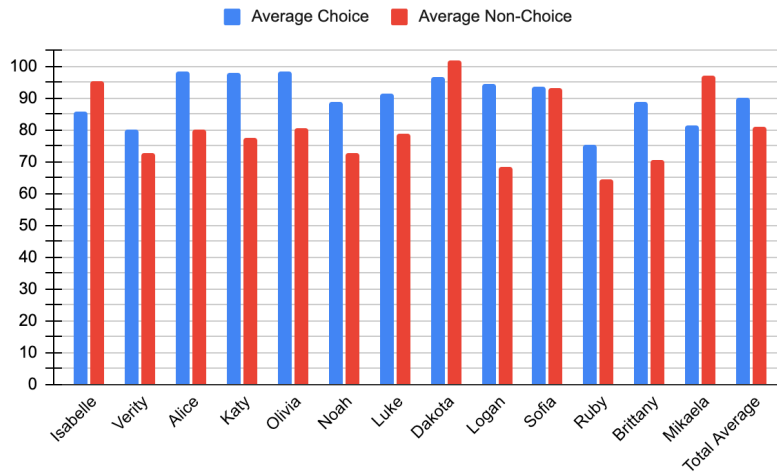
there are times when students must push through the awkwardness and learn new tools to allow them to continue to flourish. Nevertheless, despite Ms. Huff's concerns, as shown, often students would step outside of their own comfort zones when given the change. An introvert may decide to work with a group to create something they really want to try, or they may stick with what they know and work alone. Either way, options and choice are a necessity in any classroom when the time is right.

Quantitative Research

The last sub question of my research was "How do introverted students' performances compare between choice board and non-choice board assignments?" This answer is displayed through students' grades in Figure 1. Students completed three choice board assignments and three comparable non-choice assignments within three recorded grading periods. The students' average grade for non-choice assignments and average for choice assignments were calculated. (To see students' individual grades for each assignment, see Appendix B.) Each student's individual averages can be seen in Figure 1 and Table 1. The overall average grade for all thirteen students' choice assignments was 90.12 and for non-choice assignments was 81.13. Three students did better overall on non-choice assignments, and eleven students did better on choice assignments. This is visually displayed in Figure 2. The three who did better on non-choice assignments included the only two students who ranked themselves a four out of four for introvertedness. Overall, most students did significantly better on choice board assignments than on non-choice assignments.

Figure 1

Students Average Grades for Choice and Non-Choice Assignments



Note. This graph displays students’ average grade for both choice (blue) and non-choice (red) assignments. Each student’s three grades for both categories were averaged to find these two comparable numbers. The last two bars on the right displays an average of all students’ averages to find a total value.

Table 1

Students Average Grades for Choice and Non-Choice Assignments

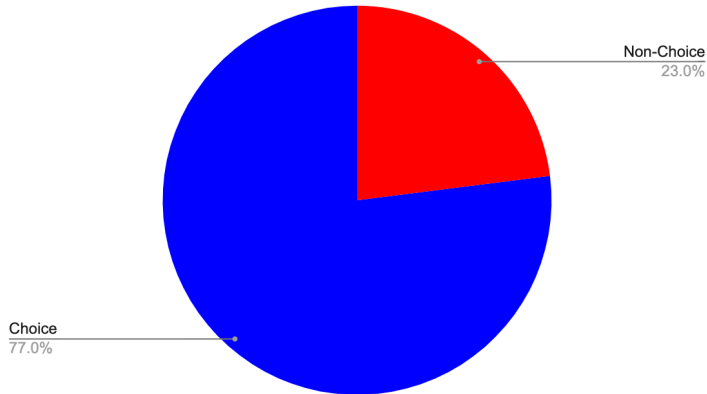
Student	Average Choice	Average Non-Choice
Isabelle	86	95.33333333
Verity	80	72.66666667
Alice	98.33333333	80
Katy	98	77.66666667
Olivia	98.33333333	80.66666667
Noah	88.66666667	72.66666667
Luke	91.66666667	79
Dakota	96.66666667	102
Logan	94.33333333	68.66666667
Sofia	93.66666667	93.33333333
Ruby	75.33333333	64.66666667
Brittany	89	70.66666667
Mikaela	81.66666667	97.33333333
Total Average	90.12820513	81.12820513

Note. This table displays each student's individual numerical averages for choice and non-choice assignments.

Figure 2

Percentage of Students Who Excelled in Either Assignment

Where did Students Excel?



Note. This chart compares students who did better on choice assignments (blue) to students who did better on non-choice assignments (red).

Implications for Teachers

In total, this study revealed the perceptions that introverted students had about their class and that their teacher had of them. The research found that introverted students had a high level of negative thought regarding speaking in the classroom, a high level of concern regarding group or partner work, many negative feelings surrounding their introvertedness, and a favoritism for choice in their assignments. The study also found that their teacher holds to the perception that introverted students had a harder time participating, often required specific thought from the teacher when placing them into groups, were often more anxious and overwhelmed, and preferred choice in their assignments. Finally, the study found that most introverted students performed better on choice board assignments when compared to non-choice assignments.

This research project allowed two extroverted teachers to gain an insight into the minds of the students whose voices often go unheard. These implications serve to answer my final question “What is the impact on teacher instruction when knowledge of introverted students is considered?” The main implication that any teacher can take from this study is to be aware of your students’ personalities. Preaching relationships can only go as far as a teacher allows it. Some relationships form easily; others will take serious effort. Introverted students, by no fault of their own, often do not make it easy. Teachers must remember to check in on these students, and not to assume they understand because their voices are silent.

Secondly, offer choice and a broad range of activities. On average, students succeed better this way. Do not get stuck into the same pattern of partner work or independent work. Challenge your students to find what works for them, allow them to test the different ideas, and give them available times to choose.

Students throughout the study offered some of their own advice as to how teachers can take students’ introverted personalities into consideration when instructing. Mikaela stated that teachers need to ask students one-on-one if they understand or need help. When that option is offered to the class broadly, introverts feel anxious and incapable of taking the help needed. Luke asked that teachers take seating arrangements into consideration. He stated that extroverted students can make friends with many people around them, but introverted people need to be placed next to at least one friend so that they have that comfort and support to encourage them. Luke also emphasized that teachers need to control classroom discussion. At times, students can get intense and overwhelm the others in the classroom. Create strong classroom management strategies that create order for all students.

All students discussed the classroom environment. When asked how the teacher could improve, most stated that they thought she did a sufficient job as is. When pushed, they offered these details about the classroom environment: “You and Ms. Huff make it fun”, “Open to communicate”, “Give off the right vibe”, “Make class interesting. Switch it up with interesting activities.”, “Everyone has a good attitude. The class is just lively.”, “The class is calm and relaxing”, “Teachers need to express themselves in silly different ways.”, “Goof off with your students”, and “Decorate to create a good aura”. Many of the skills that introverted students crave are present in good teachers’ everyday classrooms. However, if teachers find themselves stuck in the constant circle of discussion with only extroverted students, remember to reach out to those who will not reach out for themselves.

Questions for Future Research

This research provided some questions regarding how best to teach introverted students in the classroom. For example, how do introverted and extroverted students’ experiences compare in the classroom? Do they differ? Does one group think that they have a better or more difficult experience? What is the quantitative number of times that introverted students participate in the classroom? Does this number change when students are allowed to choose their own group work and seat partner? What can teachers do in the first days of school to make introverted students feel more included in the class? The experiences of introverted students are important. Children spend the vast majority of their time in the classroom, and we need to provide them with experiences that are memorable and positive. Introverted students are often seen to fall through the cracks as both teachers and other students do not hear their voices as loudly as the rest. Teachers must continue to question and observe how they can best benefit these students to ensure they receive the attention and care they deserve.

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Appendix A

Codebook

Code Name	Level	Definition	Example
Motivation or Confidence to Participate	2	This code describes the things that motivate students to participate in class and their confidence levels to do the same.	“I guess if nobody else knows the answer I’ll try.” - Mikaela Interview
Talking in Class and Being Called On	1	This code describes students' observations about talking in class and being called on in class. They describe the times that they do talk in class and the time they do not. It also discusses observations of times when students spoke up and class and teacher considerations and observations about calling upon students and times when she notices them speaking or not speaking in class.	“I think the worst one is the teacher calling on you randomly.” - Sofia Interview
Opinions on Talking and Asking for Help Ability to Share Thoughts or Questions	1	This code describes how students feel about talking in class or asking for help. It addresses instances where students have asked for help or have not asked for help when they needed it.	“...I don't like to ask questions or give feed back” - Alice Survey
Physical Behavior or Characteristics	1	This code describes students' physical behavior or characteristics in class and what difference that makes in students' motivation, participation, and confidence. This is both teacher observations, field notes, and student observations.	Mikaela still wears a face mask and her hair covers what remains of her face. She does not seem actively engaged, but her work proves that she is listening and following directions. She does not offer to answer questions or ask her own questions. - Field Notes; (2/23)

Classroom Environment and Things That Make Class Enjoyable	1	This code describes the classroom environment and students' opinions on what makes class enjoyable and what effect that has on students' motivation, participation, and confidence.	"...make it at least fun because we don't like learning in general so probably what would make a class more interesting is if you add like a little bit more fun and like doing the stations that we do in English and probably say you do sometimes Blookit or even a play..." - Katy Interview
Having Extroverted Teachers	1	This code describes the effect of having extroverted teachers and what difference that makes in students' motivation, participation, and confidence.	"I like it whenever people talk about themselves a lot because I don't really have to talk about myself to it kinda gives them alot of time to get their energy out and me time to just sit there and listen." - Sofia Interview
What Teachers Can Do	1	This code describes what teachers can do to influence students' motivation, participation, and confidence in the classroom.	Interviewer: "...do you mean that teachers would ask you more specifically one-on-one if you need help?..." Mikaela: "Yeah." Interviewer: "If they went up to you and were like "Hey are you doing okay with this?" individually one-on-one?" Mikaela: "Yeah." - Mikaela Interview
Past and Future of Introvertedness	1	This code describes students' perceptions of the past as introverts and what they believe will continue or change about their status as introverted in the future.	Sofia: "Um, I remember since I was little I could not talk to people at all." - Sofia Interview

Independent, Partner, or Group Work	2	This code describes students' feelings about the different ways to work on assignments and how their status as introverted affects their ability and desire to work in any of these methods.	"DONT DO GROUP PROJECTS" - Luke Survey
Helping Partners in the Classroom	1	This code describes observations of introverted students working with other students in which the introvert takes the lead in the situation and guides other students to be able to complete the tasks.	Logan guides partner, takes control over deciding what they will discuss. - Field Notes; (3/1)
Speed of Completion of Assignments	1	This code describes a major point that many introverts discussed which was the idea of how long it took them to complete assignments depending on if they were required to work with others or not.	"I don't talk to anyone, so that gives me more time to do my work and finish it quicker." - Mikaela Survey
Feelings about Being Alone	1	This code discusses specific feelings that introverts describe when they are by themselves.	Sofia: "I like, I like knowing a lot about myself. Like I talk to myself whenever I get home, whenever I'm alone, and I get to— it's like I'm my own friend. Like, I'm my number one friend." - Sofia Interview
Hallway Compared to Classroom	1	This code describes the comparison between students' interactions with one another in the hallways around class time as compared to their interactions once they are in class.	Isabelle shoves friends around in hallway; is silent once in class - Field Notes; (3/3)
Feelings Associated With Introvertedness	2	This code describes how introverted students feel in their classes, how they feel about being introverted, and how that	"either way, I just wanted to share my intrests and make sure they(people) don't

		affects their learning experience	make fun of me.” - Ruby Survey
Introversion’s Positive Effects	1	This code discusses the positive effects that students claim to receive from their introversion.	Noah: “It helps me recharge whenever I’m alone.” - Noah Interview
Introversion’s Negative Effects	1	This code discusses the negative effects that students claim to receive from their introversion.	“I feel that being introverted tends to make you more mature than your extroverted peers, and this can cause feelings of annoyance because you are ahead of your classmates and the curriculum at times, which is pretty frustrating, so overall a negative experience.” - Dakota Survey
Introversion’s Neutral Effects	1	This code discusses the neutral effects that students claim to receive from their introversion. Students who identified neutral effects described areas in which they feel that being introverted does not affect them.	"I think it’s pretty neutral, and I don’t feel like it impacts my learning experience that much” - Mikaela Survey
Introversion Levels Varying	1	This code describes how at times students are more introverted or extroverted. All methods of data collection observed this variation.	“Depends on the class. In most, positive, in some negative.” - Logan Survey
Choice Board/Assignment Feelings	2	In this code, students discussed how they feel about choice board assignments as well as any other types of classroom assignments.	“Personally, I prefer choice boards as they do typically offer a good selection to most introverted people as they can have more advanced and different ways to express their understanding of topics.” - Dakota Survey
Choice Board Option Selection	1	This code discussed how students make their choices regarding what activity they	Sofia: “Usually things that are like mor like with like working with hands. Like

		will choose for a choice board project. They describe what they think about the options and what led them to the one they chose.	with the I think it was <i>Fever</i> ? There was a choice to do the board thing. Yeah, and I chose that one because I actually got to do something different, and like build by myself.” - Sofia Interview
Favorite Type of Assignment	1	This code describes students’ favorite types of assignments. This contributes to their participation, engagement, and enjoyment of their class.	Interviewer: “So what would you say is your favorite thing that we do in class?” Katy: “Um, I’ll say like projects over certain books because you— whenever we finish a book Ms. Huff gives us a wide variety of projects that we’re able to do with like people if we wanted to do them with people and if we don't so there's like it makes it both so yeah.” - Katy Interview
Least Favorite Type of Assignment	1	This code describes students’ least favorite types of assignments. This contributes to their participation, engagement, and enjoyment of their class.	Interviewer: “Do you have a least favorite type of assignment?” Mikaela: “I guess whenever we have to like get together for group or something.” - Mikaela Interview

Appendix B

Individual Assignment Scores for Each Student and Assignment

