

Measuring Properties of an English Language Self-Efficacy Scale for EFL Undergraduate Students in Thailand

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Abstract

The objective of this research was to examine the measurement of the properties of a Questionnaire of English Self-Efficacy (QESE) among EFL undergraduate students in the Thai setting. The purposive sampling was used to obtain the participant sample which included 421 final-year King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL) undergraduate students who took the English Exit Exam as a requirement before their graduation. The research instruments used is comprised of the QESE and the English Exit Exam. Confirmatory factor analysis was used to examine the structure of the Thai version of the QESE scale with a second-order four-factor model. The results suggested that the scale had the construct validity, the convergent validity, and the good internal consistency of the four factors of English language self-efficacy. This revealed that the QESE could be used to measure specific English self-efficacy of EFL Thai undergraduate learners with the four competencies of sub-skills of English language.

Keywords: English Self-Efficacy, Properties of an English Self-Efficacy Scale, English Exit Exam, Confirmatory Factor Analysis, Undergraduate Students

1. Introduction

In attempts to understand the success of some learners, self-efficacy is one of the significant factors and has been explored for several decades. Self-efficacy can be referred to as learners' beliefs in their capabilities to organize their own learning process to achieve their academic goals (Bandura, 1993). The concept of self-efficacy has emerged on the basis of the Social Cognitive Theory that was developed by Albert Bandura in the 1990s. The theory suggests that people learn from their own experiences as well as by observing others' behavior and experiences. According to Bandura (1986), such a learning process occurs when there are reciprocal interactions among the three influences: environment, behavior, and personal factors which include physiological,

cognitive, and affective aspects. Thus, with regard to the three factors (environmental, behavioral, and personal), learners' self-efficacy, which can be considered their beliefs in their capabilities to accomplish a task, could determine their success with that particular task (Bandura, 1999, Schunk, 2003).

Since self-efficacy was conceptualized as learners' judgement of their capabilities to perform an academic task and achieve an academic goal, a relationship between self-efficacy and success in various disciplines, including language learning, has been explored. In the EFL setting, an association between self-efficacy and language accomplishments has been investigated in many ways. In several research studies, a relationship between self-efficacy and language achievements in sub-skills have been examined, ranging from oral communication abilities (Mohamed Khatib & Mmaarof, 2015) to reading (Naseri, 2012) and writing abilities (Sun & Wang, 2020). Additionally, some researchers investigated an association between self-efficacy and language proficiency in various educational levels, including the university level, as can be seen in research conducted by Magogwe and Oliver (2007), Apridayani and Teo (2021), and Truong and Wang (2019).

To yield an effective probe on a relation between self-efficacy and language proficiency of EFL learners, a validated scale of an English language self-efficacy questionnaire is needed. Among a range of scales aimed to measure learners' self-efficacy, a 32-item-Questionnaire of English Self-Efficacy (QESE), developed by Wang (2004), can be considered one of the pioneering scales used to measure self-efficacy learners in the ESL/EFL settings in the four English language skills. To obtain the generalizability of the scale, Wang et al. (2013) explored the properties of the questionnaire in the Korean college context. Despite the proof of its reliability, more evidence of its validity is required since the items did not include a wide range of the observed variables. The QESE scale was investigated in terms of its properties once again in another study conducted in the Chinese context at the college level (Wang et al., 2014), and the results were in line with those gained from the previous study implemented in the Korean context. That is, the high reliability of the scale was found. Yet, the items included in the questionnaire did not cover the continuum of the observed variables, and thus more difficult items were needed to be included to be able to measure a sample with a range of English language abilities. To be specific, in exploring the relationship of the participants' English language ability and the item difficulty measures, a good match between students with good language ability and the difficult items could rarely be seen. With an effort to contribute a reliable as well as valid tool to measure self-efficacy of ESL/EFL learners, Wang and Bai (2017) examined the psychometric properties of the QESE scale in the Chinese setting. Based on the results revealed, a high reliability and an acceptable validity of the scale were found among a sample of Chinese secondary school students.

In spite of the satisfactory reliability and validity of the QESE scale in the Chinese context at the secondary level, more research studies in a variety of cultural contexts and educational levels are needed to ensure the generalizability of the scale in the EFL setting. At the university level, few studies were discovered that investigated the properties of the QESE scale. Nguyen and Habók (2022) showed evidence of

reliability and validity of the QESE scale in a sample of Vietnamese university students with the A2 CEFR level. Nonetheless, as far as the researchers are concerned, none of the studies were found to report on reliability and validity of the QESE scale among university students with a wide range of English language abilities in the Thai setting.

In the Thai context, in order to better equip undergraduate students with effective English language proficiency, Thailand's policy about educational reform in a wide range of educational levels, including the tertiary level, was enforced in 2017 (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2016). Since then, Thai universities have had to administer English exit exams for final year undergraduate students before their graduation. This is aimed to reveal their English language abilities on the basis of the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) or other standards. That is why English exit exams have been organized nationwide in Thailand at the undergraduate level in order to best prepare new graduates who are proficient in English language for the national as well as international job markets.

In spite of the vital role of English exit exams in reflecting Thai undergraduate students' English language proficiency, as far as the researchers have explored, few studies have been found to examine the relationship between students' English exit exams results and psychological factors, including English self-efficacy, which has played an important part in English language learners' success. Furthermore, few research studies which focus on measuring a scale of an English language self-efficacy questionnaire have been conducted. As aforementioned, among a wide range of English self-efficacy questionnaires, the revised version of a QESE developed by Wang (Wang & Bai, 2017) can be considered one of the promising scales since it aims to measure learners' English language self-efficacy in all four skills (listening, speaking, reading, and writing) with satisfactory validity and reliability as its statistical evidence obtained (Wang & Bai, 2017).

To fill such a gap, the present study aims to investigate the measurement of the properties of an English language self-efficacy scale for EFL undergraduate students who participated in an English exit exam before their graduation in Thailand. Specifically, this study examined the two main properties of the QESE: its construct validity (the extent to which a particular scale measures what is supposed to measure [Brown, 2000]) and reliability (the degree of consistency of a scale in respondents' results elicited on a number of replications of the scale [Chapelle, 2013]). Moreover, in order to gain better statistical confirmation of the construct validity found, the present study aimed to explore the two sub-types of the construct validity, namely the convergent validity (the extent to which the scale measures similar characteristics as similar scales do) and the discriminant validity (the degree to which a scale does not correlate with another scales intended to assess constructs unrelated to those which the particular scale aims to assess) (Fink, 2010).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Definition of Self-Efficacy

As aforementioned, self-efficacy refers to an individual's beliefs in accomplishing a particular task based on the judgment of their capabilities (Bandura, 2006). According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is rooted in four major sources, namely, mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states. First, mastery experiences are associated with previous experiences which can be success or failure, and thus they could raise or lower one's self-efficacy beliefs. Second, vicarious experiences involve opportunities in observing and comparing themselves to highly competent learners that could help transfer knowledge and teach them effective skills. Third, verbal persuasion used by "significant others" (Bandura, 1997: 101) could make a person believe in their capabilities. Lastly, physiological and affective states in a particular situation affect an individual's self-efficacy. That is, positive comments can foster one's self-efficacy, while negative feedback can diminish one's self-efficacy. As can be seen, self-efficacy involves a learner's motivation, affect, and behaviors (Bandura, 2006), and it has become one of the keys to successful learning in many fields of study, including language learning.

2.2 Social Cognitive Theory and Other Concepts Related to Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy is intertwined with Social Cognitive Theory and it is associated with other psychological factors such as goals, self-regulation, and motivation. To obtain better understanding about self-efficacy, Social Cognitive Theory and other related concepts will be reviewed as follows.

Social Cognitive Theory was proposed by Bandura in the mid-1980s. The theory involves human functioning in a social environment, and it is based on the belief that people react to stimuli with the responses activated by themselves (self-activated) (Harare, 2016). That is why it differs from how machines react to external stimuli, which is an automatic response. According to Bandura (1997), such reactions are associated with a mechanism that intertwines stimulus and response, and can be considered a cognitive processes. As a result, the theory revolves around human functioning which is initiated by the interaction among the environment, behavior, and psychological functioning (Boeree, 2006).

The central parts of the principles that underlie Social Cognitive Theory consist of the four following aspects.

1) Observational learning

Bandura (1986) noted that people learn through observation. Specifically, observational learning can occur through modeling via four processes comprising attention, retention, production, and motivation. That is, students' attention can be caused by the characteristics of the model, such as unusual size, shape, color, or sound,

which help make the relevant task more distinctive to the students. In the second process, retention relies on cognitively organizing, rehearsing, coding, and transforming modeled information so as to obtain storage in the students' memory. The third process is production, referring to transferring the modeled information stored in their memory into their behaviors. The fourth process is motivation since it helps the students more engaged in the preceding three processes.

2) Outcome expectations

Outcome expectations can be defined as “the believed consequences of a person's behavior” (Fasbender, 2020, p. 3377) and it involves how people anticipate the physical, affective (self-evaluative), and social outcomes of their behavior (Fasbender, 2020). Such beliefs are formed through observation of others over their past experiences. Outcome expectations are a significant aspect of Social Cognitive Theory because they have an influence on the decisions that people make about how to take the actions and to retrain the behavior (Harare, 2016).

3) Perceived self-efficacy

As mentioned above, self-efficacy is associated with people's beliefs in achieving their success for a particular task (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy is related to one's motivation. More specifically, self-efficacy, along with other psychological factors, such as goals, has an effect on a student's motivation. Motivation can hence be boosted over time when people have their self-efficacy – the belief that their efforts can lead to the success of a task (Schunk, 2012).

4) Goal setting and self-regulation

Goals represent the outcomes that students anticipated or desired (Bandura, 1986; Schunk, 1990). As stated, goals are related to perceived self-efficacy as they encompass the outcomes students expect from performing a particular task as well as their self-confidence in accomplishing it. In addition, goals, together with other factors such as self-efficacy, have an influence on students' self-regulation (Schunk, 2012). Self-regulation, which refers to students' learning, results from their thoughts and behaviors, which are generated through the achievements of the goals in such learning (Schunk & Zimmerman, 2013). Thus, self-regulated students with their learning goals lead students to success when performing an academic task.

In summary, self-efficacy has been rooted in Social Cognitive Theory which involves human functioning in a certain social environment. According to the theory, people react to stimuli with the responses activated by themselves via several concepts such as self-efficacy, goals, and self-regulation. Such concept thus function with each other to help yield the input when people learn new particular things.

2.3 Self-Efficacy and English Language Learning

As stated, self-efficacy plays a vital role in one's learning in a variety of disciplines. As for language learning, self-efficacy is very important in learning a first (Wang et al., 2021) as well as a second/foreign (Kim et al., 2020) language. To illustrate,

self-efficacy can be considered as internal motivation which has an influence on learner's behavior for a particular learning activity. Consequently, the way learners overestimate or underestimate their abilities may have an effect on their actions they pursue to accomplish that academic task (Hoy & Spero, 2005). Moreover, learners' self-efficacy beliefs are linked to motivational constructs such as goal setting and self-regulation (Pajares, 1997). As a result, self-efficacy has been reported to have a close relationship with learners' academic performances as evidenced in several research studies as follows.

Nasari (2012) investigated the relationship between reading self-efficacy beliefs and reading comprehension level of EFL learners in the Iranian context. Based on the findings, a strong positive correlation between reading self-efficacy beliefs and reading comprehension was noted among 59 college both senior and junior English-major students. Similarly, in a study conducted by Sun and Wang (2020), a significant relationship was found between self-efficacy and English language test scores in a sample of 200 Chinese and 160 German college students who learned English in China and Germany. The results of the studies mentioned above also corresponded with what Apridayani and Teo (2021) discovered in a study about English self-efficacy and English proficiency of 215 non-English major undergraduate students in Thailand. The findings revealed that students with higher proficiency tended to have higher levels of self-efficacy than those with lower proficiency did. Likewise, in a study implemented among 767 Vietnamese college students, a positive relationship was found between self-efficacy beliefs and English language proficiency of the participants (Truong, & Wang, 2019).

The results gained from the aforementioned studies help show a close association between English self-efficacy and accomplishments in English language sub-skills as well as in overall English language proficiency in tertiary education. That is why an effective scale of an English language self-efficacy questionnaire is required, and properties of such a scale need to be explored in the context of ESL/EFL at the university level.

2.4 Measuring Self-Efficacy in the Second/Foreign Context

Measurement of self-efficacy in the ESL/EFL context can probably be traced back to the development of the two instruments used to measure self-efficacy in reading and writing skills, namely, the Reading Self-Efficacy Instrument and the Writing Self-Efficacy Instrument (Shell et al., 1989). The Reading Self-Efficacy Instrument comprises two subscales which included a task subscale of 18 reading tasks with various levels of difficulty and a skill subscale of nine reading component skills, and the Writing Self-Efficacy Instrument consists of two subscales which cover a task subscale of 16 writing tasks with a variety of levels of difficulty and a skill subscale of eight writing component skills. Each of the two instruments yield the high internal consistency reliability for the two subscales with evidence of criterion-related validity. Yet, the two instruments have not been designed to measure language learners' self-efficacy in four English language skills.

Since then, there has been an attempt to create an instrument to measure learners' self-efficacy in overall language skills, and the Self-Efficacy Subscale in Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ) has been developed. The MSLQ was proposed by scholars from the University of Michigan, and it was published in a study conducted by Pintrich and DeGroot (1990). The instrument is comprised of 15 subscales with 56 items, and the 9-item subscale of "Self-Efficacy for Learning and Performance" was designed to measure self-efficacy. The high reliability of the self-efficacy subscale was reported, and the factor analysis was conducted to examine the construct validity of this instrument. In spite of its validation as evident in several studies, the MSLQ cannot be claimed to measure self-efficacy in a particular language learning setting. This could be explained by what Bandura (2006) has stated, that measuring self-efficacy needs to be adjusted to the specific context, and this is why it is essential to devise an instrument which can be used to specifically measure self-efficacy of English language learners.

The instruments which have been developed in later years were aimed at measuring self-efficacy of each of the four skills in English, such as the Reader Self-Perception Scales (RSPS) proposed by Henk and Melnick (1995), and the Writing Self-Efficacy Scale developed by Pajares et al. (2000). This was until the QESE by Wang (2004) which was created as part of his dissertation. The scale can be considered one of the milestones in measuring learners' self-efficacy English language learning since it has been designed to measure learners' self-efficacy in all four areas of English in the ESL/EFL context.

However, since the QESE was originally developed to be implemented among young English language learners, the scale has been examined in terms of its properties at the university level in several studies. The exemplar research included a study conducted by Wang et al. (2013) in a Korean context and the one carried out in a Chinese setting (Wang et al., 2014). In the two studies, the relationship between the participants' English language ability and the difficulty of the items were investigated. According to the results, although the high reliability of the revised version of the scale was revealed, the items included in the instrument did not cover a wide range of the observed variable (English language ability). In other words, despite the fact that, mostly, the items were rather well matched to the English language ability of the participants, the gaps could be seen when it came to the distribution of item difficulty estimates. This suggested that more difficult items should be included in the questionnaire so that the difficulty of the items could closely match the levels of the participants' English language ability. Consequently, more items with a high level of difficulty are supposed to be integrated into the scale so as to obtain its validity.

In an attempt to gain both reliability and validity of the revised version of the QESE scale, Wang and Bai (2017) investigated the psychometric properties of the scale at the secondary level in a Chinese setting. To be specific, the QESE was administered twice in the study. The results from both the first assessment and second assessment reveal that the scale had the construct validity and the good internal consistencies for all four aspects: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Nevertheless, despite high reliability and acceptable validity of the scale reported, the results may have to be

carefully interpreted in terms of its generalizability at the university level. Thus, more research about the validity and reliability of the revised version of the QESE scale (Wang et al., 2013) needs to be conducted in tertiary education to gather evidence of the properties of the scale in the ESL/EFL setting.

3. Objective of the Study

The objective of the present study was by using a second-order confirmatory factor analysis measure the properties of the revised version of a QESE developed by Wang (Wang & Bai, 2017) for EFL undergraduate students in Thailand, which are namely: 1) the construct validity; 2) the two sub-types of the construct validity – the convergent validity and the discriminant validity; and 3) the reliability .

4. Research Question

By using a second-order confirmatory factor analysis, what are the properties of the revised version of a QESE, developed by Wang (Wang & Bai, 2017) for EFL undergraduate students in Thailand, which are namely: 1) the construct validity; 2) the two sub-types of the construct validity – the convergent validity and the discriminant validity; and 3) the reliability?

5. Methodology

5.1 Participants

The context of the study was King Mongkut's Institute of Technology Ladkrabang (KMITL), a public university located in Bangkok, Thailand. The study population comprised approximately 4,800 final-year KMITL undergraduate students who were required to take the English Exit Exam which was administered monthly to reveal their English language abilities and knowledge aligned to the CEFR, as stated by the Office of the Higher Education Commission (2016) in the announcement made in order to promote English language proficiency of university students all over Thailand. In the present study, purposive sampling was utilized to collect the participant sample which included a batch of 421 final-year KMITL undergraduate students who took the exam in October of the Academic Year 2022. Out of the 421 participants surveyed, a gender breakdown showed that 144 students (34.20%) were male, and 277 students (65.80%) were female. The age distribution of the participants was dominated by the 20-21 years old range. The participants' grade point average (GPA) was mainly distributed in the range of 3.01 to 3.50 (44.20%) and 2.51 to 3.00 (37.50%). The Faculty of Science had the highest representation among the participants (38.50%), with 15.90% from the Materials Innovation and Technology College.

5.2 Instrumentation

The instrument used was the QESE developed by Wang (Wang & Bai, 2017). This scale was selected to measure its properties in the present study since it emphasizes reflecting learners' English language self-efficacy in all four skills, namely, listening, speaking, reading, and writing, together with its satisfactory statistical evidence in terms of validity and reliability as shown by Wang and Bai (2017).

The questionnaire consisted of 32 items aimed at asking the participants to make judgments about their abilities to accomplish particular tasks in English language, as seen in Table 1. The scale used in the questionnaire was a 7-point rating scale, which ranged from (I cannot do it at all) to 7 (I can do it very well) covering four constructs of English language abilities, namely, listening (8 items), speaking (8 items), reading (8 items), and writing (8 items). The questionnaire was reviewed by a panel of experts in English language instruction and English language assessment and evaluation to yield their content validity as well as language appropriateness before its implementation among the study participants. Nevertheless, due to the fact that the QESE developed by Wang (Wang & Bai, 2017) was created to be implemented in the Chinese setting, it was adapted to suit the Thai context at a tertiary level in the six items (Items 4, 5, 10, 15, 22, 29) as can be seen in Table 1 (see Appendix).

Table 1

The Original Questions Included in Wang's QESE (2017) and The Revised Questions included in the QESE in the Present Study

The Original Questions included in Wang's QESE (2017)	The Revised Questions included in the QESE in the Present Study
1. Can you understand stories told in English?	1. Can you understand stories told in English?
2. Can you finish your homework of English reading independently?	2. Can you finish your homework of English reading independently?
3. Can you understand American English TV programs?	3. Can you understand American English TV programs?
4. Can you introduce your school in English?	4. Can you introduce your university in English?
5. Can you compose messages in English on the internet through social network (e.g., WeChat and blogs)?	5. Can you compose messages in English on the internet through social network (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Tiktok)?
6. Can you give directions from your classroom to your home in English?	6. Can you give directions from your classroom to your home in English?
7. Can you write English compositions assigned by your teachers?	7. Can you write English compositions assigned by your teachers?

8. Can you tell a story in English?	8. Can you tell a story in English?
9. Can you understand radio programs in English speaking countries?	9. Can you understand radio programs in English speaking countries?
10. Can you understand English TV programs made in China?	10. Can you understand English TV programs made in Thailand?
11. Can you leave a message to your classmates in English?	11. Can you leave a message to your classmates in English?
12. When you read English articles, can you guess the meaning of unknown words?	12. When you read English articles, can you guess the meaning of unknown words?
13. Can you make new sentences with the words just learned?	13. Can you make new sentences with the words just learned?
14. Can you send email messages in English?	14. Can you send email messages in English?
15. If your teacher gives you a tape-recorded English dialogue about school life, can you understand it?	15. If your teacher plays an audio recording of an English dialogue about university life, can you understand it?
16. Can you understand the English news on the Internet?	16. Can you understand the English news on the Internet?
17. Can you ask questions to your teachers in English?	17. Can you ask questions to your teachers in English?
18. Can you make sentences with English phrases?	18. Can you make sentences with English phrases?
19. Can you introduce your English teacher in English?	19. Can you introduce your English teacher in English?
20. Can you discuss in English with your classmates some topics in which all of you are interested?	20. Can you discuss in English with your classmates some topics in which all of you are interested?
21. Can you read English short novels?	21. Can you read English short novels?
22. Can you understand English movies without Chinese subtitles?	22. Can you understand English movies without Thai subtitles?
23. Can you answer your teachers' questions in English?	23. Can you answer your teachers' questions in English?
24. Can you understand English songs?	24. Can you understand English songs?
25. Can you read English newspapers?	25. Can you read English newspapers?
26. Can you find the meaning of new words by using English-English dictionaries?	26. Can you find the meaning of new words by using English-English dictionaries?

27. Can you understand telephone numbers spoken in English?	27. Can you understand telephone numbers spoken in English?
28. Can you write diaries in English?	28. Can you write diaries in English?
29. Can you understand English articles about Chinese culture?	29. Can you understand English articles about Thai culture?
30. Can you introduce yourself in English?	30. Can you introduce yourself in English?
31. Can you write an article about your English teacher in English?	31. Can you write an article about your English teacher in English?
32. Can you understand new lessons in your English textbook?	32. Can you understand new lessons in your English textbook?

5.3 Data Collection and Analysis

The QESE in a hard-copy version was distributed to the participants who enrolled in the October batch of the English Exit Exam in Academic Year 2022. The administration was conducted with the informed consent process approved by KMITL's Institutional Review Board (IRB).

In the present study, descriptive statistics of frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation as well as a second-order confirmatory factor analysis performed using LISREL software were used to explore: 1) the construct validity; 2) the two sub-types of the construct validity – the convergent validity and the discriminant validity; and 3) the reliability of the QESE. To be specific, a second-order confirmatory factor analysis was used since this study was aimed at obtaining the data by analyzing English self-efficacy for all four related factors: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, which were four aspects of English language abilities (Silpcharu & Boonrattanakul, 2021).

In addition, the model fit was also applied including three categories of fit indices: absolute fit (χ^2 goodness-of-fit and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual [SRMR]), parsimony fit (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation [RMSEA]), and comparative fit index (CFI). A chi-square to degree of freedom ratio of less than 3.00 was considered as an indicator of model fit. As for RMSEA, a value of 0.05 or less was considered acceptable, while a CFI value of 0.95 or higher indicated model fit. Additionally, SRMR was considered to fit the model if the value was 0.08 or less (Hair et al., 2010; Schreiber, 2017). Modification indices were used to identify potential error term covariance in the model to improve model fit, and modification indices higher than 10 were considered for free error term covariance.

The construct validity of the model was assessed through evaluating its convergent validity and discriminant validity. In so doing, high item factor loadings (≥ 0.5) and factor Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values which were greater than or equal to 0.5 were considered as the indicators of the convergent validity (Brown, 2014). Also, the discriminant validity of the questionnaire was evaluated by comparing the factor AVE and its Shared Variance (SV), and the value of AVE, which was lower than

the SV, indicated the discriminant validity. Moreover, the range for the Cronbach alpha test of the reliability of the questionnaire should be equal to or above 0.7 to be considered as acceptable (Cortina, 1993).

6. Findings

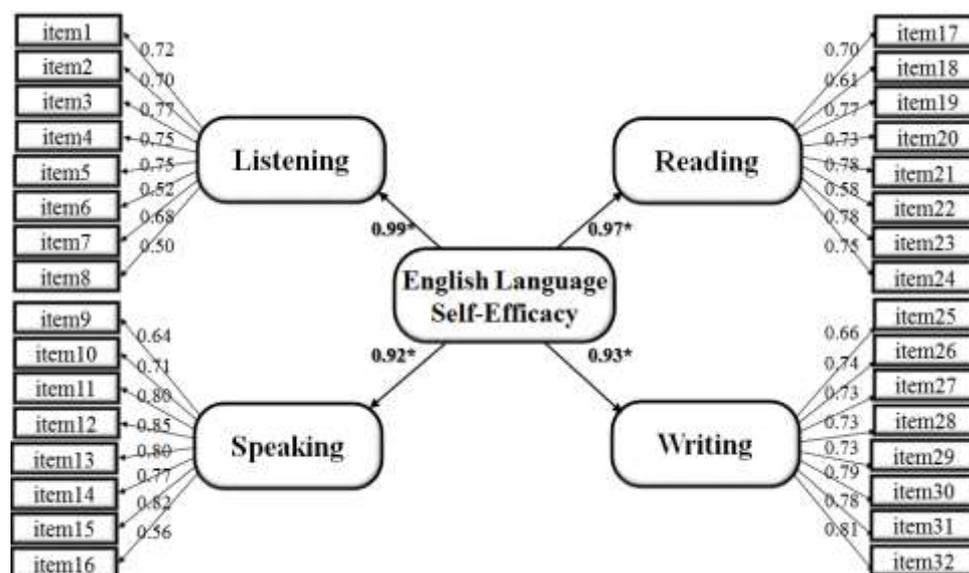
The findings are presented as follows to answer the research question: By using a second-order confirmatory factor analysis, what are the properties of the revised version of a QESE developed by Wang (Wang & Bai, 2017) for EFL undergraduate students in Thailand, which are namely: 1) the construct validity; 2) the two sub-types of the construct validity – the convergent validity and the discriminant validity; and 3) the reliability?

1) Construct validity of the QESE

The construct validity of the QESE was explored as shown in Figure 1 and Table 2.

Figure 1

Result of Second Order Confirmatory Factor Analysis of the QESE with Standardized Coefficients and Covariance between Errors Omitted for Model Simplification



Based on Figure 1, a second order model of the QESE was specified based on the model used by its original authors (Wang & Bai, 2017), and the model tested showed a poor fit to the data: $\chi^2(460) = 2,307$; $p < .01$, CFI = 0.97; RMSEA = 0.09 (90% CI 0.09 to 0.10; $p < 0.01$) and SRMR = 0.06. To improve the model, MI was then examined and it was revealed that there were potential error term covariances added to the model. After model modification, the modified model (Figure 1) showed a good fit based on all fit index $\chi^2(404) = 806$; $p < .01$, χ^2/df ratio = 2.01, CFI = 0.99; RMSEA = 0.04 (90% CI 0.04 to 0.05; $p = 0.60$) and SRMR = 0.04.

Table 2

The Result of Second Order Model of Questionnaire of English Self- Efficacy (QESE) Including Factor Loading (L), Standard Error (SE), t-test statistics (t), Standardized Factor Loading (λ), and Reliability (R^2)

Variables	L	SE	t	λ	R^2	Variables	L	SE	t	λ	R^2
Listening						Reading					
Item1	0.72	--	--	0.72	0.52	item17	0.81	--	--	0.70	0.49
Item2	0.77	0.05	15.73	0.70	0.49	item18	0.66	0.06	11.84	0.61	0.37
Item3	0.87	0.06	15.37	0.77	0.59	item19	0.77	0.05	14.83	0.77	0.59
Item4	0.83	0.063	15.01	0.75	0.56	item20	0.91	0.06	14.12	0.73	0.53
Item5	0.75	0.05	15.00	0.75	0.56	item21	0.91	0.06	15.08	0.78	0.62
Item6	0.77	0.07	10.34	0.52	0.27	item22	0.79	0.07	11.33	0.58	0.34
Item7	0.72	0.05	13.49	0.68	0.46	item23	0.88	0.06	15.05	0.78	0.61
Item8	0.58	0.06	10.03	0.50	0.25	item24	0.88	0.05	16.23	0.75	0.56
Speaking						Writing					
Item9	0.70	--	--	0.64	0.41	item25	0.72	--	--	0.66	0.43
Item10	0.78	0.06	12.79	0.71	0.51	item26	0.93	0.07	13.70	0.74	0.55
Item11	0.94	0.07	13.99	0.80	0.64	item27	0.77	0.05	16.39	0.73	0.53
Item12	0.96	0.07	13.44	0.85	0.72	item28	0.83	0.06	13.49	0.73	0.53
Item13	0.91	0.07	14.03	0.80	0.65	item29	0.87	0.06	13.51	0.73	0.53
Item14	0.90	0.07	13.64	0.77	0.60	item30	0.95	0.07	14.41	0.79	0.62
Item15	0.90	0.07	12.96	0.82	0.67	item31	0.93	0.07	14.24	0.78	0.60
Item16	0.57	0.05	10.57	0.56	0.32	item32	0.92	0.06	14.70	0.81	0.65
Second-order											
Listening	0.99	0.06	16.46	0.99	0.98	Reading	0.97	0.06	15.46	0.97	0.93
Speaking	0.92	0.07	13.65	0.92	0.85	Writing	0.93	0.07	14.24	0.93	0.87

$\chi^2=814$, $df=404$, $p\text{-value}<0.01$, χ^2/df ratio=2.01, CFI=0.99, RMSEA=0.04, SRMR=0.04

Table 2 shows that the factor loadings (L) of all measures were significant ($p<0.01$) within the acceptable limits ranging from 0.57 to 0.96. That is to say, the first factor (Listening) revealed the standardized factor loadings (λ) from 0.50 to 0.77, with those from 0.56 to 0.85 for the second factor (Speaking), those from 0.58 to 0.78 for the third factor (Reading), and those from 0.66 to 0.81 for the last factor (Writing). That is to say, the construct validity of the QESE in the four aspects of English self-efficacy could be found in the present study. In addition, it was found that the second-order

factor loadings of the English self-efficacy were the highest on Listening (0.99), followed by Reading (0.97), Writing (0.93), and Speaking (0.92), respectively.

2) The two sub-types of the construct validity – the convergent validity and the discriminant validity, and 3) the reliability of the QESE

The two sub-types of the construct validity – the convergent validity and the discriminant validity – and the reliability of the QESE were investigated as shown in Table 3.

Table 3

The Summary of Composite Reliability (CR), Average Variance Extracted (AVE), Shared Variances among Factors (Bold above the Diagonal), and Cronbach's α

Variables	1. Listening	2. Speaking	3. Reading	4. Writing	CR	AVE
1. Listening		0.62	0.70	0.59	0.91	0.46
2. Speaking	0.79*		0.62	0.77	0.94	0.56
3. Reading	0.84*	0.79*		0.67	0.93	0.51
4. Writing	0.77*	0.88*	0.82*		0.94	0.56
Cronbach's α	0.89	0.90	0.90	0.89		

According to Table 3, the results of the AVEs, shared variances, and factor correlations could be seen. Specifically, the construct validity of a second-order four-factor model was evaluated by examining its convergent validity and discriminant validity. The convergent validity was demonstrated by the presence of significant and high item standardized factor loadings for each proposed factor, as well as AVE values, which was greater than 0.5 for all factors except for the Listening factor that was slightly below the cut-off value of 0.5 (0.46). However, the model showed insufficient discriminant validity for all factors, as the shared variance between all factors (ranging from 0.62 to 0.77) was higher than the AVEs of each factor. Moreover, Cronbach's alpha showed that all factors were reliable; that is, they ranged from 0.89 to 0.90 among all of the factors. Simply put, based on the findings, the convergent validity and the reliability of the QESE could be discovered in the study despite the insufficient discriminant validity of the scale.

7. Discussion

In this study, confirmatory factor analysis was used to examine the structure of the Thai version of the QESE scale with a second-order four-factor model. The results suggest that the scale had the construct validity as well as the convergent validity in the sample of final-year Thai university students who participated in the English Exit Exam before their graduation as well as their career launch in the workforce. In spite of the insufficient discriminant validity, such findings imply that the QESE used in the study accurately measures what it is supposed to measure (construct validity) (Brown, 2000), and it correlates with measures of similar characteristics (convergent validity) (Fink, 2010). Based on the findings, the QESE implemented in the tertiary educational Thai context also contained the good internal consistency for the four competencies: listening, speaking, reading, and writing) as shown by the Cronbach's alpha value. The findings on the construct validity found on the four factors of the model correspond with those found in Wang and Bai (2017). Furthermore, the good internal consistencies of the scale for the four competencies discovered in the study are consistent with what previous QESE literature reflected at a secondary level (Wang & Bai, 2017) as well as at the university level (Wang et al., 2013; Wang et al., 2014). This shows the similarities of the properties of the QESE scale found in the present study and those revealed in prior research as documented.

The correspondence of the findings of the present study, the two properties (the construct validity and the reliability) found, with those of the previous studies, could be explained by the learning context of the study being quite similar to that mentioned in each of the aforementioned studies. To illustrate, this study was implemented in Thailand which is an Asian country, which corresponds with the contexts of the studies conducted by Wang et al. (2014) and Wang and Bai (2017) which were Korea and China, respectively. Like Korean and Chinese students, Thai students start to learn English language at a very young age (approximately 4-5 years old), and English language has been announced as a compulsory subject integrated into the core curriculum of entire basic education (Bureau of Academic Affairs and Educational Standards, 2022). Apart from that, English language was included in Section 2 of the General Aptitude Test (GAT), which Thai students are required to take in order to be accepted to study in a university. Moreover, good proficiency in English language has become one of the keys for their exit from the program of study at an undergraduate level (Office of the Higher Education Commission, 2016), and it has been a vital factor for the admission to as well as the exit from the study program of Thai students at a graduate level. From the research documented, we can also see such a scenario in Asian countries such as Korea and China.

As for the four competencies of the QESE scale, the results disclosed that the internal consistencies for Speaking (0.90) and Reading (0.90) were slightly higher than those for Listening (0.89) and Writing (0.89). The findings regarding Speaking were in line with those revealed by Wang et al. (2014). The reason behind this might involve students' exposure to English language via social media platforms such as YouTube and TikTok (Nasution, 2019; Saeed et al., 2021; Zhai & Razali, 2021). The familiarity with the language they perceive may help them increase their positive belief in their

speaking skills, and this could bring about their accomplishments when they have to perform a speaking task. Unlike Speaking, the strong internal consistency for Reading found in the present study was not found in previous research. However, this is probably associated with what Krashen (1985) mentioned in the Input Hypothesis about reading, a receptive skill, as the stem of productive skills including speaking and writing. To be specific, when it comes to reading, since language learners are meant to receive as well as to understand the language, they are not required to produce it. Thus, this might lead to their strong self-efficacy in this particular competency when were about to perform an academic English task. Apart from the nature of the skill, students' learning styles in an information technology age, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, which highly emphasized online teaching and computerized tests (Ockey, 2021; Ockey et. al., 2021; Wagner & Krylova, 2021), may result in students' confidence in the success of a reading task.

To probe more on the construct validity of the QESE, the two sub-types (convergent validity and discriminant validity) of it were explored. In this study, the convergent validity could be found, and it shows that the scale measures the similar characteristics (self-efficacy in all four skills of English) as similar measures do (Fink, 2010). Hence, to some extent, it could be claimed that the scale could be used to measure English self-efficacy of undergraduate students in the Thai setting. Nonetheless, the discriminant validity found in the present study was insufficient. Thus, this probably suggests that some of the items of the questionnaire were measuring similar factors. In other words, in the participants' view, the scale might contain some items which were overlapping with each other (Ab Hamid et al., 2017). For example, the participants probably found some similarities between Item 9, 'Can you understand radio programs in English speaking countries?' and Item 16, 'Can you understand the English news on the Internet?'. That is, although the former (Item 9) aims to measure the English self-efficacy in their listening skills, and the latter (Item 16) focuses on the English self-efficacy in the participants' reading skills, the focal point of the two items are on understanding messages delivered via social media platforms. This might cause some confusion for some participants. Consequently, in order to increase the generalizability of the study results to a larger extent, the study might have to be replicated among other groups of samples as well as in various contexts.

8. Implications of the Study

Based on the findings of the study, the following pedagogical implications can be proposed. As can be seen from the findings, the three properties of the QESE could be found. That is, the scale contained the construct validity, together with the convergent validity as the one of the sub-types of the construct validity, and the good internal consistencies of the four factors of English self-efficacy (listening, speaking, reading, and writing). This reveals that, with some adjustments of the items to suit the Thai context, the questionnaire can be implemented to measure undergraduate students' English language self-efficacy in the Thai setting, particularly those who will become new graduates to start their career path in national as well as international job markets.

Such a validated and reliable tool plays a significant part for English language instructors, course/curriculum developers, and administrators, who aim to measure English language self-efficacy, which is one of psychological factors determining success of English language learners. Apart from this, so as to yield the optimum implementation of the scale, the results concerning English self-efficacy obtained from the QESE can be used to show the English language instructors, course/curriculum developers, and administrators what aspects of English language self-efficacy of this particular group of students should be promoted. As a consequence, the findings obtained from such an accurate English self-efficacy scale could be used by the aforementioned stakeholders when developing guidelines on what aspects of English self-efficacy should be highlighted and integrated into English language courses.

9. Limitations and Recommendations for Further Studies

Since the present study provides valuable insights into English self-efficacy in the Thai university context and EFL classroom, there may be limitations to the findings, such as the lack of discriminant validity of the scale or potential biases among the measurement covariances. Further research could explore additional factors that impact English self-efficacy and language learning outcomes.

10. Conclusion

When considering the results gained, the QESE had the construct validity, as well as the convergent validity, and the good internal consistencies for the four competencies: Listening, Reading, Writing, and Speaking. This helps provide additional evidence for the structure of the QESE scale and contributes to more understanding of English language self-efficacy among university students. With statistical confirmation of the multi-factor structure of the scale, the results showed that the QESE measured specific English self-efficacy, with the four competencies which could be considered one of the crucial factors for successful English language learning at various levels of education, including at tertiary education. Based on such findings, the QESE can be used to measure English language self-efficacy in Thailand. The validated and reliable questionnaire could then help advance the four aspects of English language self-efficacy and guide instructors regarding what aspects should be emphasized and integrated into particular English language courses.

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Appendix

Questionnaire of English Language Self-Efficacy (QESE)

Notes: Please read the following questions carefully and make an accurate evaluation of your current command of English no matter whether you are doing it or not. These questions are designed to measure your judgment of your capabilities, so there are no right or wrong answers.

Please use the following scales to answer these questions accordingly. Please choose the number accurately representing your capabilities.						
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
I cannot do it at all.	I cannot do it.	Maybe I cannot do it.	Maybe I can do it.	I basically can do it.	I can do it.	I can do it well.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Can you understand stories told in English?							
2. Can you finish your homework of English reading independently?							
3. Can you understand American English TV programs?							
4. Can you introduce your university in English?							
5. Can you compose messages in English on the internet through social network (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and Tiktok)?							
6. Can you give directions from your classroom to your home in English?							
7. Can you write English compositions assigned by your teachers?							
8. Can you tell a story in English?							
9. Can you understand radio programs in English speaking countries?							
10. Can you understand English TV programs made in Thailand?							
11. Can you leave a message to your classmates in English?							
12. When you read English articles, can you guess the meaning of unknown words?							
13. Can you make new sentences with the words just learned?							
14. Can you send email messages in English?							
15. If your teacher plays an audio recording of an English dialogue about university life, can you understand it?							

16. Can you understand the English news on the Internet?									
17. Can you ask questions to your teachers in English?									
18. Can you make sentences with English phrases?									
19. Can you introduce your English teacher in English?									
20. Can you discuss in English with your classmates some topics in which all of you are interested?									
21. Can you read English short novels?									
22. Can you understand English movies without Thai subtitles?									
23. Can you answer your teachers' questions in English?									
24. Can you understand English songs?									
25. Can you read English newspapers?									
26. Can you find the meaning of new words by using English-English dictionaries?									
27. Can you understand telephone numbers spoken in English?									
28. Can you write diaries in English?									
29. Can you understand English articles about Thai culture?									
30. Can you introduce yourself in English?									
31. Can you write an article about your English teacher in English?									
32. Can you understand new lessons in your English textbook?									