

Development and validation of English as an international language perception scale

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Abstract

Although studies on English as an international language (EIL) perception have received much attention among EIL scholars, to date, there is no validated EIL Perception Scale (EILPS) that EIL researchers and practitioners can employ in an accessible fashion. To address this gap, this study develops and validates EILPS through Exploratory and Confirmatory Factor Analyses with Korean EFL students ($n = 555$). This study produces a four-factor solution that constitutes *Current Status of English*, *Varieties of English*, *Strategies for Multilingual and Multicultural Communication*, and *English Speakers' Identity*. These results contribute to helping ELT professionals utilize a validated EILPS for measuring EIL perception in an approachable manner.

Keywords

English as an international language (EIL), EIL Perception Scale, Korean EFL students

Introduction

During the last two decades, studies on EIL perceptions and teaching EIL have received much attention (Matsuda 2012, 2017). However, there is no validated EIL Perception Scale (EILPS) that EIL researchers and practitioners can employ in an accessible fashion. Thus, the purpose of this study is to develop and validate EILPS, so that EIL researchers and practitioners can gauge students' EIL perceptions in a practical and accessible way.

1 Methodology

1.1 Participants and contexts

This study was carried out in 19 EFL classes of three different Korean universities. A total of

277 students provided usable data for Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), and 278 participants for Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA).

1.2 Procedure

Data were collected and analyzed from fall 2015 to fall 2017 in the following eight steps: 1) Focus of measurement, 2) Item pool generation, 3) Format for measurement, 4) Expert review of item pool, 5) Development administration, 6) Further item improvement, 7) EFA, and 8) CFA.

2 Results of EFA ($n = 277$)

EFA yielded the four-factor solution, satisfying factor extraction criteria: eigenvalues (>1), scree plot, communalities ($>.5$), rotated factor loading ($>.5$), the cumulative percentage of variance ($>60\%$), and theoretical alignment for the extracted factor structure. Results of internal consistency (Cronbach's α ; $>.7$), convergent validity (Composite Reliability; $>.8$), and discriminant validity (Average Variance Extracted; $>.5$) for the extracted factors demonstrated that the four factors were valid and reliable. Based on these results, each factor was labeled as follows: Factor 1 (Current Status of English [CSE]), Factor 2 (Varieties of English [VE]), Factor 3 (Strategies for Multilingual and Multicultural Communication [SMC]), and Factor 4 (English Speaker's Identity [ESI]) (See Appendix for all items).

3 Results of CFA ($n = 278$)

CFA was conducted with a new sample to confirm the four factors extracted from EFA. All goodness-of-fit indices of the model met acceptable cut-off levels: χ^2/df (1.85), CFI (.94), GFI (.95), RMSEA (.06), and AGFI (.90).

4 Conclusion and implications

This study set out to develop and validate EILPS. The results of EFA produced a 14-item scale encompassing four factors with sound psychometric properties. Results of CFA confirmed the four-factor solution identified by EFA.

From a research point of view, the results of this study may provide a reliable and validated scale for objectively gauging EIL perception. Additionally, a valid and reliable EILPS may help Pedagogically, EIL practitioners can easily employ EILPS to measure students' EIL-related components (e.g., EIL awareness) in the classroom setting.

As EIL researchers and practitioners are increasingly engaging in EIL research and the volume of such study is accumulating rapidly, we hope the present study contribute to helping like-minded professionals utilize a validated EILPS for measuring EIL perception in an approachable as well as scientifically convincing manner.

5 References and appendix

5.1 References

- Matsuda, A. (Ed). (2012). *Principles and Practices of Teaching English as an International Language*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.
- Matsuda, A. (Ed). (2017). *Preparing Teachers to Teach English as an International Language*. Bristol: Multilingual Matters.

5.2 Appendix

Current Status of English (CSE)

- (CSE1) English is used today as an international language to communicate effectively with people from around the world.
- (CSE2) Many non-native English-speaking countries currently use English as their official or working language.
- (CSE3) English is the language of business, culture, and education around the world today.

Varieties of English (VE)

- (VE1) Different varieties of English, such as Hong Kong English, Indian English, and Singaporean English, are acceptable today.
- (VE2) Teachers can use English listening materials that are recorded by people who have different kinds of English accents.
- (VE3) Different varieties of English, such as Indonesian English, Taiwanese English, and

Japanese English, are acceptable today.

(VE4) Teachers can include the interaction between non-native and non-native English speakers (e.g., Indonesian-Japanese speakers) in English listening materials.

Strategies for Multilingual and Multicultural Communication (SMC)

- (SMC1) I can adjust my conversational style according to my interactions with people of other cultural backgrounds.
- (SMC2) I can explain my own culture and customs clearly in English to people from other cultures.
- (SMC3) I am open-minded about accepting speaking/pronunciation patterns that are different from those of my home country.
- (SMC4) I can behave appropriately according to English users I speak with.

English Speakers' Identity (ESI)

- (ESI1) English teachers should not push me to speak like a "native" English speaker.
- (ESI2) I don't mind if people laugh at my English accent when I speak because it is my own English.
- (ESI3) It is unnecessary to speak like American or British English speakers as long as my English is intelligible (or understandable) to others.