



# A Review of EFL Students' English Writing Self-efficacy

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## **1 Introduction**

Writing is the most difficult of all language skills (Zhang & Guo, 2012) and it involves a cognitive process (Bruning et al., 2013; Hayes, 2000). Self-efficacy refers to subjective beliefs in one's abilities to perform a task (Bandura, 1997) and it belongs to cognition. Therefore, writing self-efficacy was studied widely on the ground that the two concepts share something in common: cognition.

Writing self-efficacy refers to individuals' judgments of how well they can accomplish a writing task based on their assessments of "various composition, grammar, usage, and mechanical skills" (Pajares & Valiante, 2001, p. 369). Previous studies demonstrated that writing self-efficacy was positively correlated with writing outcomes (Woottipong, 2020; Sun & Wang, 2020; Micheaux & White, 2019) Paramartha, 2016; Kirmizi, 2015; Pajares & Valiante, 1999). Hence, it is of great importance and necessity to research writing self-efficacy.

The research purpose of this study is to compare the differences in English writing self-efficacy of different majors and explore potential factors of variations.

## **2 Literature Review**

The literature review consists of three dimensions: theoretical frameworks on self-efficacy in different fields; empirical studies on self-efficacy of students' English writing and the present study. Each part will be discussed specifically in the following.

### **2.1 Theoretical Frameworks on Self-efficacy in Different Fields**

Several disciplines have come into the current stream of self-efficacy. The most obvious two are the sociological and psychological fields.

#### **2.1.1 Self-efficacy in Sociological Field**

The sociological flow has two major branches: alienation theory and symbolic interaction theory.

##### **I. Alienation Theory**

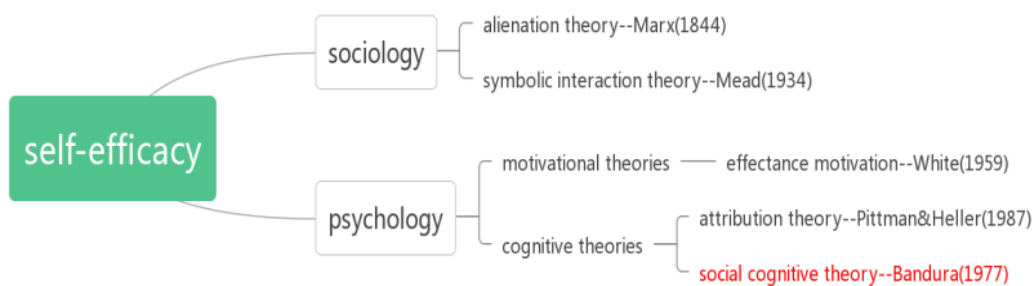
The central theme in alienation theory proposed by Marx (1844) was that of self-creation through efficacious action in the context of work or "praxis." The self is created and affirmed through the individual's work activity. Under conditions of alienation, however, the sense of self-efficacy is frustrated or inhibited because of a disjuncture between action and self, wherein work activity is no longer a reflection and affirmation of self. At the heart of the problem of alienation for Marx was the issue of control, that is, the extent to which the individual has control over his/her labour and its products. A key feature of alienation, therefore, is powerlessness. Marx, of course (and most contemporary sociologists), placed much more emphasis on the social structural context for the emergence and maintenance of power, powerlessness, and control.

## II. Symbolic Interaction Theory

Symbolic interactionism proposed by Mead (1934) has strongly emphasized an active and creative view of the self. Grounded in the philosophy of pragmatism, with its emphasis on action and its consequences, the individual is viewed primarily as an actor in the environment, shaping and creating his/her world as well as being created by it. The concept of "I" in the reflexive self of Mead is the source of such agentive qualities as spontaneity and creativity. The active, efficacious self is also quite evident in more contemporary symbolic interactionist writings.

Most sociological work on self-efficacy is grounded in either the Marxian tradition or the symbolic interactionist perspective, or both. For example, Gecas & Schwalbe (1983) extend this discussion of efficacy-based self-esteem by linking it to social structure and utilizing both Marxian and interactionist perspectives. The pattern of self-efficacy in different fields is seen in paradigm 1.

Paradigm 1 Self-efficacy in different fields



### 2.1.2 Self-efficacy in Psychological Field

Two lines of development in the psychological flow have emerged: (a) motivational theories, which conceptualize self-efficacy in motivational terms; and (b) cognitive theories, which conceptualize self-efficacy in terms of expectancies and perceptions of control.

#### I. Motivation Theories

Motivation theories tend to emphasize the experience of causal agency and see it as a fundamental human need and a basic element in one's sense of self. White's (1959) influential theory of "effectance motivation" was an early statement of this position. Effectance motivation was conceptualized as an intrinsic motivation to produce effects on the environment, that is, to make things happen. It was characterized by White as an exploratory, creative, and playful activity. Emphasis on "control" rather than "competence" is evident in some of the motivation theories of self-efficacy.

#### II. Cognitive Theories

Cognitive theories of self-efficacy, emphasizing more beliefs and perceptions of causality, agency, or control and less on the motivations, have major two branches: attribution theories and social

cognitive theories.

### **i. Attribution Theories**

Attribution theory emphasizes that causal attributions are made in order to make the social world predictable and controllable (Pittman & Heller, 1987). Particularly relevant here are the self-attributions individuals make with regard to personal control over events that affect them.

### **ii. Social Cognitive Theories**

From the perspective of social cognitive theory centred on self-evaluation processes, Bandura put forward the classic self-efficacy theory and distinguished between efficacy expectations and outcome expectations. The central idea of social cognitive theory is reciprocal interactions among environment, behaviour, and personal factors including physiological, cognitive and affective aspects (Bandura, 1977).

## **Definition and Sources of Self-efficacy Theory**

Self-efficacy in social cognitive theory is defined as a context-specific perception (Bandura, 1986) and refers to one's subjective beliefs about how well one can perform a specific task, including a judgment about one's own skills (Pajares, 1996). There are four sources of self-efficacy: enactive mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological and affective states (Bandura, 1997).

## **Key Concepts in Self-efficacy Theory**

It's easier to confuse several key concepts in self-efficacy theory. Therefore, it is of great necessity to distinguish them. Firstly, self-efficacy emphasized judgment of personal capability (Bandura, 1997, pp10). Self-concept emphasized a composite view of oneself this presumed to be formed through direct experience and evaluations adopted from significant others (Bandura, 1997, pp10). Self-esteem emphasized the judgment of self-worth (Bandura, 1997, pp11). Secondly, efficacy expectation refers to a belief that one can successfully perform a particular action and focuses on a belief about one's competence while outcome expectation refers to an estimate that a given action will lead to a certain outcome and focuses on a belief about one's environment (Bandura 1977, pp193).

## **Classification of Self-efficacy**

According to the subject, self-efficacy can be classified as personal efficacy and collective efficacy. Personal efficacy works for cognitive, health, clinical, athletic and organizational functioning. Cognitive functioning consists of students' cognitive self-efficacy, teachers' perceived self-efficacy and collective school self-efficacy. According to the task, research on students' cognitive self-efficacy can be divided into five dimensions: writing, reading, listening, speaking and translation self-efficacy.

Writing self-efficacy is defined as one's perceptions of his or her capabilities to successfully plan and execute writing tasks (Zimmerman & Bandura, 1994). A considerable number of research findings have consistently shown that writing self-efficacy beliefs have a predictive and mediational role on writing performance (Woottipong, 2020; Sun & Wang, 2020; Paramartha, 2016; Kirmizi, 2015; Pajares & Valiante, 1999). Furthermore, writing in L1 was studied most while there is a scarcity of research on writing in L2. Therefore, it's of great necessity and significance to study students' English writing self-efficacy. Research on the self-efficacy of students' English writing will be discussed in

the next section.

## 2.2 Empirical Studies on Self-efficacy of Students' English Writing

A large body of research focuses on the self-efficacy of students' English writing. Three themes emerge from these articles: (1) overall level of English writing self-efficacy ;(2) factors influencing English writing self-efficacy;(3) impact of English writing self-efficacy on contextual variables.

### 2.2.1 Overall Level of English Writing Self-efficacy

Some studies consistently showed that EFL students have moderate or high self-efficacy in English writing (Wu, 2021; Zhang, 2021; Sun & Wang, 2019; Bai & Guo, 2018; Zhang, 2018).To be specific, according to Sun and Wang (2019), the Questionnaire of English Writing Self-Efficacy (QEWSE) was administered to 319 sophomore Chinese students and the results showed that EFL students reported a moderate level of self-efficacy in English writing. Focusing on self-efficacy in primary school students' English writing, Bai & Guo (2018) conducted a questionnaire on a total of 155 fourth graders from government-funded primary schools in Hong Kong. The students reported self-efficacy in English writing was at a medium level and they had a higher level of self-efficacy in content than in other aspects (e.g., language and grammar). Different from the previous participants, Wu's research investigated 237 English major graduates from 31 universities in China, including the second year and third year and found the overall writing self-efficacy of graduates majoring in English was relatively high.

### 2.2.2 Factors Influencing English Writing Self-efficacy

According to the subject involved in the implementation of the whole instruction, factors influencing English writing self-efficacy consist of individual difference factors and learning contextual factors. Each aspect will be discussed respectively. Details can be seen in Figure 2.1.

<b>(1) Overall level</b>	
	➤ medium or high(Wu, 2021; Zhang, 2021; Sun& Wang, 2019)
<b>(2) Factors influencing English writing self-efficacy</b>	
	➤ Individual difference factors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● affective constructs(Sabti et al., 2019;Kirmizi, 2015)</li> <li>● learning behaviors(Woottipong,2020; Bai &amp; Guo ,2018)</li> <li>● cognitive variables(Chung et al., 2021; Lee, 2019)</li> <li>● previous experiences(Lee, 2019; Pajares et al., 2007)</li> </ul>
	➤ Learning contextual factors
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Teacher-related factors                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ persuasion on beliefs (Mbato,2020)</li> <li>◆ guidance on knowledge(Ruegg,2018)</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Teaching process-related factors                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ instructional approaches (Talaat, 2021)</li> <li>◆ instructional activities(En-Chong, 2021)</li> <li>◆ instructional curriculum and syllabus(Rayner et al.,2016)</li> <li>◆ instructional assessment(Xie, 2021; Cheng, 2021)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>(3) The instruments of measuring English writing self-efficacy</b>	
	➤ English as the first language context(Bruning et al. ,2013; Woodrow, 2011)
	➤ EFL context(Sun, Wang & Kim,2021; Teng et al. , 2018)

Figure 2.1 Empirical Studies on EFL Students' English Writing Self-efficacy

## **I. Individual Difference Factors**

According to the research focus, individual difference factors can be divided into affective constructs, learning behaviours, cognitive variables, previous experiences, gender and grade.

### **i. Affective Constructs**

Numerous studies focus on affective factors influencing English writing self-efficacy, such as anxiety (Sabti, Rashid, Nimehchisalem, & Darmi, 2019; Kirmizi, 2015; Woodrow, 2011) and willingness to participate in writing activities (Jalaluddin, 2017). Writing anxiety as a predictor of writing self-efficacy was widely studied and the results consistently showed that writing anxiety has a negative influence on writing self-efficacy (Sabti, Rashid, Nimehchisalem, & Darmi, 2019; Kirmizi, 2015; Woodrow, 2011). High-efficacious writers feel more confident and tend to have less anxiety about their English writing tasks (Cheng, 2002; Woodrow, 2011). Kirmizi (2015), for instance, conducted a study on Turkish college EFL learners' English writing self-efficacy and found that students with a higher level of self-efficacy tended to have a lower level of anxiety.

### **ii. Learning Behaviors**

Learning behaviours include self-regulated learning (SRL) strategy use (Woottipong, 2020; Bai & Guo, 2018), planning and goal setting (Chung, Chen & Olson, 2021; Soyulu, Zeleny, Zhao, Bruning, Dempsey & Kauffman, 2017), publication in writing and engagement in academic writing courses (Ho, 2016) and language exposure (Parina & Leon, 2013, progress feedback (Schunk & Swartz, 1993). The results of studies on self-regulated learning strategies used as an influencing factor of English writing self-efficacy are conflicting (Woottipong, 2020; Bai & Guo, 2018). Self-regulated learning refers to the way one uses his/her own resources to plan, control and analyze the execution of activities, and tasks, and the preparation of learning products (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1994). Woottipong (2020), for example, surveyed 768 Thai high school students and found cognitive strategies (i.e. Text Analysis, Mnemonics & Rehearsal), metacognitive strategies (i.e. Planning & Organizing, Writing Monitoring) and motivational strategies (i.e. Interest Enhancement, Self-talk) in self-regulated learning strategy had small to moderate influences on English writing self-efficacy. Differently, Bai & Guo (2018) proved that the use of planning and self-monitoring strategies had the strongest impact on English writing self-efficacy. The differences may lie in the fact that several students perceive writing as a non-stop process, therefore paying attention to producing a whole piece of written text instead of deploying various methods to produce clear ideas before writing (Woottipong, 2020).

### **iii. Cognitive Variables**

A number of empirical studies focus on cognitive factors influencing English writing self-efficacy, such as awareness level of writing strategies (Demir, 2018), self-assessment and reflection (Chung, Chen & Olson, 2021), social comparisons (Lee & Evans, 2019) and level of apprehension on writing (Wachholz & Etheridge, 1996). For example, 671 students from 5, 6, 7 and 8th grades students of four secondary schools were chosen from every educational region in the city of Aksaray in Turkey through a simple random sampling method and a questionnaire was conducted.

Eventually, Demir (2018) found writing strategies awareness predicted writing self-efficacy significantly. In addition, Wachholz & Etheridge (1996) further explored the reason for differences in English writing self-efficacy between high- and low-comprehensive writers through interviews and found differences lie in prior writing experiences.

#### **iv. Previous Experiences**

A substantial amount of studies focused on previous experiences influencing students' English writing self-efficacy (Lee & Evans, 2019; Pajares, Johnson & Usher, 2007; Wachholz & Etheridge, 1996). These scholars confirmed that prior learning experiences are important sources of students' English writing self-efficacy.

Taken as a whole, the results regarding grade level and English writing self-efficacy are unclear. Some studies showed that younger students displayed a lower level of self-efficacy for English writing than older students (Ho, 2016; Zhang & Guo, 2012; Shell et al., 1995). However, younger students displayed a higher level of self-efficacy for English writing than older grade students (Anderman, 1992). There is no difference in English writing self-efficacy beliefs between younger and older students (Graham et al., 1993). There was a rebound in self-efficacy with an increase in grades (Pajares & Valiante, 1999).

#### **v. Gender**

Results on gender differences in English writing self-efficacy are still contradictory. Some findings showed there were no statistically significant differences between male and female students in their writing self-efficacy in English (Sun & Wang, 2020; Salem & Dyar, 2014). However, some researchers have found that girls report stronger confidence in their English writing capabilities than boys do (Pajares & Valiante, 1997, 2001; Pajares, Miller, & Johnson, 1999). Nonetheless, studies conducted by Kirmizi (2015) and Pajares and Johnson (1996) found boys rated their own confidence to complete English writing tasks higher than girls. According to Bandura (1997), different metrics in writing self-efficacy should be adopted for male and female students.

## **II. Learning Contextual Factors**

According to the subject of learning contextual factors, they can be divided into teacher-related factors and teaching process-related factors.

### **i. Teacher-related Factors**

Teacher-related factors consist of persuasion on beliefs and guidance on knowledge. Persuasion on beliefs places a premium on teachers' encouragement and persuasion for students' English writing self-efficacy while guidance on knowledge emphasizes instruction on professional writing knowledge will enhance students' English writing self-efficacy.

#### **Persuasion on Beliefs**

A considerable body of research found persuasion on beliefs from teachers would promote students' English writing self-efficacy (Mbato 2020; Pajares, Johnson & Usher, 2007). Mbato (2020), for example, explored how English Education Master Students maintain their self-efficacy to accomplish their academic writing and found graduate students' academic writing self-efficacy is



motivated continuously by their lecturer. Different from Mbato (2020) focusing on graduate students, Pajares, Johnson & Usher (2007) focused on sources of writing self-efficacy beliefs of elementary, middle, and high school students and also found that social persuasions from teachers enhanced their writing self-efficacy.

### **Guidance on Knowledge**

There are some studies regarding guidance on knowledge from teachers influencing students' English writing self-efficacy (Ruegg, 2018; Jalaluddin, 2017). In the study conducted by Ruegg (2018), for example, students received one-year teacher feedback on knowledge, such as vocabulary, topic sentence, coherence, part of speech, organization and content descriptions, increased writing self-efficacy significantly. In a similar vein, Jalaluddin (2017) investigated the learners' English writing self-efficacy by using a combination of quantitative and qualitative (classroom observation) and also found learners' self-efficacy in completing written tasks enhanced after instructors' assistance on knowledge was given.

#### **ii. Teaching Process-related Factors**

According to the research focus, teaching process-related factors include instructional approaches, instructional activities, instructional curriculum and syllabus as well as instructional assessment. It's easier to confuse instructional approaches and instructional activities. Therefore, it's of great necessity to distinguish them. Instructional approaches refer to general strategies to conduct instruction. Instructional activities refer to specific procedures or parts of the whole strategy.

### **Instructional Approaches**

Some relevant quasi-experimental intervention studies focus on the effect of systematic teaching approaches on English writing self-efficacy, such as Interactive Writing Approach Based Strategy (Talaat, 2021), Self-Regulated Strategy Development-Based Revision Instruction (Chen, Zhang, Wang & Zhang, 2021), explicit writing instruction (Peng, 2021); Writing Support Circles approach (Plakhotnik & Rocco, 2016) and blended learning mode (Meng, 2011). Most results consistently showed that the English writing self-efficacy of students with an instructional approach was higher (Talaat, 2021; Peng, 2021; Plakhotnik & Rocco, 2016). However, Chen, Zhang, Wang & Zhang (2021) came to a different conclusion. To investigate the impact of the self-regulated strategy development (SRSD) instruction on the self-efficacy of students for text revision in English-as-a-foreign-language (EFL) writing, the study utilized questionnaires and did not detect any significant differences between the experimental group and control group, which can be explained by a limited instructional impact on English writing self-efficacy of students.

### **Instructional Activities**

Different instructional activities will stimulate the English writing self-efficacy of students, such as digital storytelling activities (Özüdogru, 2020), feedback (En-Chong, 2021; Lee & Evans, 2019; Ruegg, 2018) and use of Facebook (Alberth, 2019). These scholars consistently found that after these instructional activities, the English writing self-efficacy of students significantly improved. However, different research designs were adopted, such as treatment group and control group (Lee, & Evans, 2019; Miller, Russell, Cheng & Skarbek, 2015) and pretest-posttest surveys (Özüdogru, 2020; Alberth, 2019; Ruegg, 2018; Woody, Zeleny, D'Souza, Harder, Reiser & Szto, 2014). For example, adopting a



pre-treatment questionnaire and post-treatment questionnaire, Ruegg (2018) found there was an increase in student English writing self-efficacy in both groups but the teacher feedback group increased in English writing self-efficacy significantly more than the peer feedback group.

### **Instructional Curricula and Syllabuses**

Some studies focus on the effect of instructional curriculum and syllabus impacting English writing self-efficacy of students, such as certain writing courses (Rayner, Papakonstantinou & Gleadow, 2016; Miller, Russell, Cheng & Skarbek, 2015; Woody, Zeleny, D'Souza, Harder, Reiser& Szto, 2014), a negotiated syllabus(Abbasian & Malardi, 2013). To be specific, Rayner, Papakonstantinou & Gleadow (2016) focused on the effect of the SCI2010 course on students' English writing self-efficacy, Miller, Russell, Cheng & Skarbek (2015) effect on the writing intensive course and Woody, Zeleny, D'Souza, Harder, Reiser& Szto (2014) effect of a required writing course on Social Work.

### **Instructional Assessments**

Some scholars studied different means of assessment impacting students' English writing self-efficacy, such as the automatic essay scoring (AES) system (Xie, 2021); Teacher-Student Collaborative Assessment model (Cheng, 2021); process portfolios (Nicolaidou, 2012); three self-assessment tools (Covill, 2012). For example, Nicolaidou (2012) studied the impact of process portfolios on students' writing self-efficacy and found English writing self-efficacy of students who used portfolios for their essay writing process over an academic year increased significantly ( $p < .05$ ), compared to control students who did not. Similarly, Xie (2021) found AES system has a positive effect on the writing self-efficacy of non-English majors by comparing the treatment group and control group. Nonetheless, Covill (2012) came to a different conclusion. Three self-assessment tools (i.e. a long rubric, a short rubric, or an open-ended assessment tool)were adopted to assess sixty students' 5-page paper and results demonstrated that there was no effect of three self-assessment tools on students' self-efficacy for writing.

### **2.2.3 Impact of English Writing Self-efficacy on Contextual Variables**

Numerous studies focus on the impact of English writing self-efficacy on contextual variables. According to the research focus, two themes emerge from the articles: (1) the impact of English writing self-efficacy on writing outcomes; (2) the impact of English writing self-efficacy on writing strategy use.

#### **2.2.3.1 Writing Outcomes**

Previous research has shown that writing outcomes can be demonstrated in many different forms, such as writing performance (Woottipong, 2020; Sun & Wang,2020; Paramartha,2016; Kirmizi, 2015; Pajares & Valiante, 1999), writing quantity(Daniels, McCurdy, Whitsitt, Skinner, Schwartz-Micheaux & White,2019) and level of writing apprehension(Singh& Rajalingam,2012; Pajares & Valiante, 1996; Pajares & Johnson,1994). Writing performance is assessed by test scores (Woottipong, 2020; Sun&Wang, 2020; Kirmizi, 2015) and teachers' ratings (Pajares & Valiante, 1999). Writing quantity was counted according to the total words written. The level of writing apprehension is assessed by the

Adapted Daly-Miller Writing Apprehension Test (EWAS) scale (Singh & Rajalingam,2012; Pajares & Johnson,1994).

Self-efficacy is a powerful predictor of EFL writing performance (Mills, Pajares, & Herron, 2007). Almost all relevant studies found that English writing self-efficacy exerts a positive and significant influence on writing performance (Woottipong, 2020; Sun & Wang, 2020; Kirmizi, 2015). Highly self-efficacious students perform well in their English writing and are willing to exert more effort (Woodrow, 2011) and higher English writing self-efficacy would contribute to better English writing performance, independent of students' actual English writing ability (Martinez, Kock & Cass, 2011).

On the contrary, studies showed English writing self-efficacy negatively influences writing apprehension (Singh & Rajalingam,2012; Pajares & Johnson,1994).To be specific, to investigate whether the self-efficacy factor is related to the level of writing apprehension, Singh & Rajalingam(2012) surveyed 320 pre-university students from a northern region college and found that students with high self-efficacy beliefs had lower writing apprehension levels.

### **2.2.3.2 Writing Strategy Use**

Writing strategy use includes SRL strategy use and summary writing strategy use. According to Tragant, Thompson, and Victori (2013), writing SRL Strategies includes Environmental strategy (i.e. strategy, persistence strategies; review of records strategies, Behavioral strategy (i.e. seeking opportunity strategies; self-monitoring strategies; self-consequences strategies), Personal strategy (i.e. self-evaluation strategies; organization and transformation strategies; goal setting and planning strategies). Summary writing strategy includes discourse synthesis strategies, source use strategies and metacognitive strategies of planning and evaluation

Some scholars concentrate on the effect of English writing self-efficacy on SRL use (Mitchell, McMillan & Rabbani, 2019; Chae, 2013; Williams& Takaku, 2011). Findings of studies showed that English writing self-efficacy had a negative influence on help-seeking strategy use in SRL strategy use (Mitchell, McMillan & Rabbani, 2019; Williams& Takaku, 2011). Conversely, the results of Chale(2013) are inconsistent with that of Mitchell, McMillan& Rabbani (2019). Specifically, studies by Chae(2013) proved that English writing self-efficacy positively influenced planning and revision strategy use while Mitchell, McMillan& Rabbani (2019) demonstrated that there is no significant impact of English writing self-efficacy on planning and revision strategy use.

English writing self-efficacy positively influenced part of summary writing strategy use (Golparvar & Khafi, 2021). To investigate the contribution of L2 writing self-efficacy to the summary writing strategies used by EFL learners and in a reading-to-write task, Golparvar & Khafi (2021) conducted integrated writing tasks and questionnaires. The result showed that linguistic self-efficacy as a component of English writing self-efficacy predicted discourse synthesis and source use strategies.

### **2.2.4 The Effectiveness of English Writing Self-efficacy Scale**

A substantial number of scholars put forward English writing self-efficacy scales and confirm their validity and reliability. The subscales of the most prominent scales are (1) ideation, skills, use of English writing and self-regulation proposed by Sun, Wang & Kim (2021); (2) linguistic self-efficacy,

self-regulatory efficacy and performance self-efficacy (Teng, Lin, Sun, Paul & Xu, 2017); (3) writing ideation, writing conventions, and writing self-regulation (Bruning, Roger, Dempsey, Michael, Kauffman, Douglas, McKim, Courtney, Zumbrunn & Sharon, 2013); (4) self-efficacy for micro, macro, translation and test (Woodrow, 2011). The most convincing and persuasive one is the framework by Sun, Wang & Kim (2021) because they examined the psychometric properties of QEWS (Questionnaire of English Writing Self-efficacy) based on the Standards in terms of test content, response processes, internal structure, relations to other variables, and consequences of testing, surveyed English writing self-efficacy of 316 sophomores and 53 junior students from three major universities and found high reliability and validity of QEWS.

### **3 Summary**

To summarize, first of all, research on factors influencing English writing self-efficacy, particularly, occupies the lion's share. To be specific, factors influencing EFL students' English writing self-efficacy include individual difference factors and learning contextual factors. For one thing, individual difference factors consist of cognition variables, affection variables, and outcome variables. Many studies were conducted to investigate Engineering students' social cognition. Research on social and psychological aspects of Engineering students focuses on factors influencing social and psychological aspects and the relationship between relevant social and psychological aspects and academic performance. In addition, the overwhelming majority of studies focus on descriptive characteristics of English writing self-efficacy within a group such as level, factors influencing English writing self-efficacy, and impact of English writing self-efficacy and have ignored the differences of English writing self-efficacy among different groups. Research on factors influencing English writing self-efficacy, particularly, occupies the lion's share. According to the topic, factors influencing the social and psychological aspects of Engineering students can be divided into cognition variables, affection variables, and outcome variables. Cognition variables included understanding or learning the material. Affection factors included academic motivation, enjoyment, interest, and satisfaction associated with the course and its material. Outcome variables included academic performance, enrollment at the university, and status as an engineering major.

For another, learning contextual factors can be divided into teacher-related factors and teaching process-related factors (eg. instructional approaches, instructional activities, instructional curriculum and syllabus as well as instructional assessment). Teacher-related factors include persuasion on beliefs and guidance on knowledge. Teaching process-related factors include instructional approaches, instructional activities, instructional curriculum and syllabus as well as instructional assessment. Few studies focused on Engineering students' English self-efficacy, especially English writing self-efficacy. It was found that a factor influencing English writing self-efficacy was online writing courses. In an attempt to if there were any changes in the self-efficacy levels of a group of students before and after they attended a blended MOOC on English Technical Writing skills, Phan and Chen (2022) questioned 113 full-time undergraduates and 9 part-time graduate engineering students and found students became more self-efficacious towards English writing after they attended the blended MOOC.

In addition, there are few measurements in the EFL context. Measurements of writing self-efficacy were mostly constructed and operationalized in the English as a first language context (e.g., Self-efficacy for Writing Scale in Bruning et al., 2013, Writing Skills Self-Efficacy Scale in

Pajares & Valiante, 1999, Writing Self-Efficacy Instrument in Shell et al., 1989) and few were constructed in the EFL context (Sun, Wang & Kim, 2021; Teng et al., 2018), which could be explained by the fact that writing in L1 was studied most while there was a scarcity of research on writing in L2 (Sun, Wang & Kim, 2021). Bruning et al. (2013) criticized that most writing self-efficacy measures (e.g., Pajares & Valiante, 1999; Shell et al., 1989) “have broadly sampled writing related skills and tasks, making them less than ideal for yielding information about writers’ self-efficacy for specific dimensions of writing”. Some researchers failed to propose an adequate conceptual definition of the construct of writing self-efficacy and its factors (e.g., Woodrow, 2011). However, whether Bruning’s model was still valid to elaborate on the features of L2 writing self-efficacy was not clear (Teng et al., 2018). The existing writing self-efficacy measures were validated in terms of psychometric properties (e.g., validity and reliability evidence) for a measure as a whole and our knowledge about the item-level information of these instruments was limited.

However, Sun, Wang & Kim (2021) constructed QEWSE (Questionnaire of English Writing Self-efficacy) from the perspective of linguistic skills, semantic capabilities and self-regulation with consideration of item level in the EFL context. Sun, Wang and Kim (2021) examined the psychometric properties of QEWSE (Questionnaire of English Writing Self-efficacy) based on the Standards in terms of test content, response processes, internal structure, relations to other variables and consequences of testing. Wang et al. surveyed the English writing self-efficacy of 316 sophomores and 53 junior students from three major universities and found high reliability and validity of QEWSE. Therefore, Wang et al.’s scale is adopted in the following study.

Last but not least, quantitative methods were widely adopted and qualitative methodologies were called for in future studies to explore in-depth findings (Sun & Wang, 2020). Numerous scholars employed questionnaires to investigate the English writing self-efficacy of students from pupils to graduates. Moreover, most studies on factors influencing learners’ English writing self-efficacy were designed as a comparison between the treatment group and control group or a comparison between pre-test survey and post-test survey. Results revealed the majority of interventions were of benefit to the increase of learners’ English writing self-efficacy.

The findings may shed light on future studies on EFL students’ English writing self-efficacy.

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