# The Development and Validation of the EFL Learning Context Questionnaire

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*Abstract*—A context where learning a language takes place may be one of many factors influencing the result of the learning. So far, there has been very few, if not at all, a ready-to-use instrument to examine systematically the condition of learning contexts, especially related to English as a foreign language. Therefore, this study intends to develop a self-reported questionnaire for that purpose, named the EFL Learning Context Questionnaire (ELCQ). The instrument was developed in reference to the existing theories and previous related studies. The development process started with writing the draft of the questionnaire in English and then translating into Indonesian language. The next stage would be validation the instrument, including: expert judgement for content validity and to gather constructive feedbacks (i.e. revisions and suggestions), initial piloting for analysing item validity and reliability (N = 64), and final piloting using Factor Analysis to obtain a stable self-reported instrument (N = 692). The validation result showed that the QELC has been proved to be a valid and reliable questionnaire. Since the ELCQ has been validated through some formal stages, it can be assumed that this instrument can be used in EFL contexts, especially in Indonesia. However, because this study took place in only one region, further studies across samples, time and countries are needed to improve the applicability of the ELCQ.

Index Terms-learning context, contextual factors, factor analysis, validity, reliability

## I. INTRODUCTION

The English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Learning Context Questionnaire (ELCQ) is a self-reported questionnaire for students which is developed to measure how good particular contexts, at school and out-of-school where EFL learning takes place, is. This is based on the understanding that not only do internal factors (e.g. motivation, aptitude, learning strategies) but also external factors, in this case referred to as contextual factors (e.g. parents, learning activities and resources) contribute to the success of language learning. In this research, the contextual factors are social, psychological and physical factors related to language learning environment at school and out-of-school contexts.

The importance of language classroom has been conjured up by Thapa and Lin (2013) who underlined that in an EFL context where students have limited opportunities to communicate in English, classroom interaction becomes an important way to enhance the students' linguistic resources and communicative skills in the target language. Meanwhile, according to Freed, et al. (2004) outside schools can also be a place for EFL students to be engaged in the target language, and at home, the involvement of significant others, such as parents, may have positive impacts on students' academic performance, motivation and positive behavior (Kek, et al., 2007; Fan & Williams, 2010).

The questionnaire was developed to figure out the condition of an EFL learning context which is measured through its contextual factors from the perceptions of secondary school students in Indonesia based on their own experience learning English at schools and out-of-schools. In this country, English is a foreign language and offered as a compulsory subject from secondary school to university levels and as an optional subject at elementary schools. This relatively long duration of time for Indonesian students learning English at schools was not guaranteed for their adequate proficiency in English, since according to Lamb (2002) students in an EFL setting have to deal with difficult circumstances (e.g. low exposure to the target language and educational limitations for development of target language skills).

Very few, if not at all, comprehensive instruments measuring contextual factors were available to use for EFL settings, in particular for the Indonesian context. Therefore, there was a need to develop such a questionnaire. The questionnaire was first developed in English, for future, wider uses, and then translated in the Indonesian language to

make sure that Indonesian students completing the questionnaire had no language problems and could focus on responding to the questionnaire items.

The primary purpose of this research was to develop and validate the EFL Learning Context Questionnaire through some stages: drafting the ELCQ, translating it into the Indonesian language, having expert judgement, and validating, including initial piloting for estimating its reliability and item validity, and final piloting for construct validity. In this vein, this paper aimed at addressing the following research questions related to the validation process after the questionnaire was prepared:

1. To what extent is the ELCQ reliable when the questionnaire is administered to senior high school students in Indonesia?

2. In terms of validity, how valid is each item on the ELCQ?

3. Does each scale construct the contextual factors?

# A. Literature Survey

The ELCQ covers two main educational settings, namely 'school' representing formal education and 'out-of-school' representing non-formal (e.g. private language courses) and informal education (home). Despite the fact that in EFL contexts most EFL learning takes place in classroom, learners are expected to exploit the target language outside the class as well. As Lamb (2002) ensured that good language learners are able to find learning opportunities in the context of their everyday lives even when learning resources are limited.

## Out of school

Although in EFL settings, like in Indonesia, opportunities to use the target language are limited, there are some learning resources and activities that motivated students can make use of. Lamb (2004) inventoried Indonesian students' activities outside school, as follows: attending private course, watching TV/video, listening to songs, studying, reading books/magazines, conversation, computer use and others, with the learning sources of such as dictionary, play station, conversation book, and exam practice book. In line with this, Ardhasheva and Tretter (2013) said that additional support in English learning could be beneficial, particularly for those in middle school where language and content demands are higher.

Related to support in English learning outside school, the attitude of the significant others to the learners, such as parents, siblings and peers, can be a crucial factor in motivating them to learn (Lamb, 2007; Mali 2015). According to Fan and Chen (2001), parental involvement in form of parents' expectation or aspiration for their children's academic achievement had the strongest relationship with students' academic achievement, as it motivated them to study through engagement and self-efficacy towards English (Fan & Williams, 2010).

#### At school

Classrooms are central organizing units of schools, where students are facilitated by teachers to learn, within a particular amount of time, through activities that result in learning (Schaper, 2008). Renandya (2014) argues that what was going on in the classroom in forms of classroom activities become the central elements of a language class. For developing the students' target language skills, these activities need to be intended for language use (Moss & van-Duzer, 1998), fun (Renandya, 2014) and personalized (Bernard, 2010). Through classroom activities students get input and produce output of the target language that trigger interactions or conversations between the teacher and students or among students. Referring to Vygotskian sociocultural theory (Hall & Walsh, 2002), interaction in language classroom is vital, because through this social activity the students construct knowledge with the help and scaffolding of more knowledgeable peers or teachers.

Teachers play a very important role in facilitating students to learn English as a foreign language. To ensure good teaching processes to take place in a classroom, effective teachers are essential (Dixon, et al., 2012), as the quality of effective teachers is described as teachers' ability to provide their students with clear, understandable, and motivating information, and to build effective communication, create comfortable learning atmosphere and pay attention to their students' condition, such as their learning and motivation, and course organization (Arikan, et al, 2008).

# II. METHOD

#### **Participants**

The participants of this research were senior high school students in Samarinda City in Indonesia. For the initial piloting, the number of the participants was 64 students selected randomly from a senior high school, and for the final piloting 692 students were randomly selected from 12 senior high schools in the city.

## The questionnaire

The questionnaire was developed in reference to some relevant theories and previous research findings with regards to contextual factors affecting EFL learning. The ELCQ is a closed, self-reported questionnaire comprising two sections that correspond to EFL learning contexts, namely 'at school' representing formal education and 'out-of-school' representing informal education (home) and non-formal education (private English course). It has 115 items in forms of statements distributed under 18 questions that represent the 14 scales of the contextual factors. These items are divided into the two sections, of which the out-of-school context comprises four scales with 34 items, and the at-school context has 10 scales with 81 items. The breakdown of the ELCQ design is shown in Table 1:

	T	ABLE	Ξ1.
	THE SCALE	ES OF	7 TH
Scales	No. of		Sca
	items		
Out-of-school context		Γ	Per

Out-of-school activities Learning resources at

Private English Course Parental involvement At-school context L2-use activities Fun activities

home

. .

14	DLL I.	
THE SCALES	OF THE ELCQ	
No. of	Scales	No. of
items		items
	Personalized activities	7
9	Interaction	5
10	Learning resources/facilities	6
	at school	
6	Teacher's English	9
	proficiency	
9	Learning materials	11
	Classroom atmosphere	7
8	Teacher personality	10
6	Teaching skills	13

To investigate students' views and opinions about a series of statements, the questionnaire uses a 6-point Likert scale (Brown, 2001), ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree for agreement scales, and from Never to very often for frequency scales. For scoring purposes, each response to a positively worded statement is given score similar to the point assigned to each response option (e.g. strongly disagree=1 and strongly agree=6), while the scores for negatively worded items are reversed (e.g. strongly disagree=6 and, strongly agree=1). At the end, the scores are summed up and averaged. The following criteria were used to interpret the scores of the ELCQ:

Mean	
Score	Interpretation
5 - 6	You perceive that you have a very good condition of EFL learning context
4 - 4.9	You perceive that you have a good condition of EFL learning context
3 – 3.9	You perceive that you have an average condition of EFL learning context
2 - 2.9	You perceive that you have a <b>poor</b> condition of EFL learning context
1 - 1.9	You perceive that you have a very poor condition of EFL learning context

#### Procedures

The English version of the ELCQ was translated into Indonesian language, and both English and Indonesian versions of the questionnaire were sent for expert judgement to three experts (i.e. a specialist in educational evaluation and research, and the other experts specializing in English language education) for the content validity of the instrument. They evaluated the questionnaires in terms of general evaluation and relevance of the questionnaire items to represent the contextual factors, and to give suggestions for its improvement.

After the drafts were revised in reference to the experts' suggestions, the Indonesia version of the ELCQ was piloted to 64 senior high school students in a public school in Samarinda. The result of this initial piloting was statistically analyzed using the IBM SPSS version 21 with Cronbach Alpha for reliability and Pearson Product Moment for item validity estimations.

In addition to that, this stage was also intended to evaluate the administration procedures, including to determine the time required for administering the questionnaire and assess the clarity of the questionnaire items and instruction. The results of the initial piloting were used to revise the ELCQ for further validation process. The next was final piloting, in which the ELCQ was administered to the 692 students in order to select which scales (the dependent variables) in the questionnaire significantly construct the contextual factors (the independent variable). The scales which were not affecting the independent variable would be removed. For this purpose, Factor Analysis using the IBM SPSS version 21 was employed to get a stable self-reported questionnaire.

For the initial and final piloting, the ELCQ was administered during regular classes by the researcher and two assistants. The teachers of the related classes were only present to introduce the researcher and then left the class. This is in line with Dörnyei's (2010) suggestions for confidence-building strategies that questionnaire administrators should be external persons, as in this study it would make students feel free to give objective responses related to their English class and teacher.

## III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

# A. Result

First of all, the ELCQ was evaluated by the three experts and they only gave minor revisions mostly on the wordings of the questionnaire items. After being revised, it was distributed to the students for the initial piloting, the data collected were entered and organized in the excel spreadsheet program as the preparation for further statistical analysis to answer the research questions. At this stage, the reliability and item validity were estimated statistically and the results are presented below.

Reliability

Reliability of the ELCQ was computed statistically using Cronbach Alpha, as Dörnyei (2010) argued that Cronbach Alpha is proved to give an accurate internal consistency estimate and appropriate for answers that are coded

dichotomously, such as a Likert scale. The result of the calculation using the SPSS program showed that the ELCQ had a reliability of .91.

Item Validity

In addition to reliability, the initial piloting measured item validity of the ELCQ. The correlational statistics analysis Pearson Product Moment using the SPSS program was operated to estimate the questionnaire item validity, and the result suggested that for the ELCQ, 28 of 115 items were invalid, leaving 87 valid items (>  $R_{table}$  =0.246).

Construct Validity

Once the ELCQ was proved to be reliable and had 87 valid items, this instrument was tried out to a bigger size of samples (692 students) in order to find out whether the scales (the independent variables) included in the questionnaire significantly construct the contextual factors (the dependent variable). For this purpose, Factor Analysis using the SPSS program was used, and the result of the computation was presented in the following tables.

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I ABLE 2.	
THE FIRST KMO AND BARTLETT'S TEST	
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.921
Approx. Chi-Square	4474.550
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity df	91
Sig.	.000

In order to continue further steps in factor analysis, two main requirements need to be fulfilled, they are the value of Measure of Sampling (MSA) should be above .5 and the significant level should be lower than 0.05. Based on the table above, the KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy for the ELCQ is .921 with the significance level of .000. This means that the data may proceed to further analysis.

The computation revealed that all dependent variables had the values of MSA higher than 0.5 which means that those variables were observable. The next data was the total variance, in which two components were identified since their total initial eigenvalues were higher than 1 (6.154 and 1.689 respectively). The next SPSS output presented in Table 3 shows the selection of the dependent variables that belong to component 1 or 2.

TABLE 3.			
ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX			
	Compo	Component	
	1	2	
Out-of-school activities	.768	.045	
Learning resources at home	.803	.146	
Parental involvement	.618	.323	
Private English Course	.467	.010	
L2-use activities	.522	.416	
Fun activities	.662	.181	
Personal activities	.661	.332	
Interaction	.622	.414	
Learning resources	.608	.228	
Teacher's English proficiency	.011	.843	
Learning materials	.532	.594	
Classroom atmosphere	.451	.607	
Teacher's personality	.099	.861	
Teaching skills	.259	.836	

After rotation, data were extracted and there were five scales deleted from Component 1 or categorized into Component 2, including: Teacher's English proficiency, Learning Materials, Classroom Atmosphere, Teacher Personality and Teaching Skills. One variable (i.e. Private English course) was removed, because its MSA was .467 (< .5). The KMO and Bartlett's test was conducted again for the extracted data.

THE SECOND KMO AND BARTLETT'S	S TEST
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	.884
Approx. Chi-Square	2.132.288
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity df	.28
Sig.	.000

The result presented in Table 4 shows that the extracted scales in component 1 may proceed for further analysis as the value of MSA was .884 (> .05) and the significant level was .000 (<.05). Compared to the initial MSA, the values of MSA after extraction of the four irrelevant scales were all lower but they still met the requirement (> .05), as presented in Table 5.

THE WISH VALUES DEFORE AND AFTER EXTRACTION				
No	Dependent Variables	Initial MSA	After Extraction MSA	
1.	Out of school activities	.880	.850	
2.	Learning resources at home	.887	.838	
3.	Parental involvement	.948	.929	
4.	L2-use activities/tasks	.936	.881	
5.	Fun activities	.952	.929	
6.	Personal activities	.951	.907	
7.	Interaction	.930	.868	
8.	Learning resources	.939	.909	

TABLE 5. THE MSA VALUES BEFORE AND AFTER EXTRACTION

As it has been revealed that the value of MSA was higher than .05, the next computation was to see the reliability of the questionnaire after the irrelevant scales were removed. To measure the reliability of the questionnaire, a reliability statistics was run and the result is shown in Table 6.

TABLE 6.		
RELIABILITY STATISTICS		
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items	
.865	8	

The result shows that Cronbach's alpha is .865, which indicates a high level of internal consistency for the questionnaire.

## B. Discussion

The result of the study will help answer the research questions posed previously in the Introduction session. Therefore, the following discussion will be organized according to those research questions.

To what extent is the ELCQ reliable when the questionnaire is administered to senior high school students in Indonesia?

Reliability indicates the consistency of a tool across different contexts (Salkind, 2007). This study measured the questionnaire's reliability in terms of its internal consistency, that is, according to Salkind, the reliability of measures (scales) that have multiple items. This study used Cronbach Alpha index to analyze the questionnaire. The result of the computation using Cronbach Alpha showed that the ELCQ had a reliability of .91, which means that the questionnaire can be said to be 91% consistent or reliable (and 9% inconsistent or unreliable). This reliability coefficient was considered high, as Salkind gives rules of the thumb that an alpha of .70 or higher is acceptable to establish reliability.

In terms of validity, how valid is each item on the ELCQ?

A high reliability is useless if an instrument is not valid. Three kinds of validity were examined in this study, namely: content validity, item validity and construct validity. Content validity is "the representativeness of our measurement regarding the phenomenon about which we want information" (Mackey & Gass, 2005:107). It was evaluated by the three experts before administering the ELCQ to the students for the initial piloting. The item validity is the extent to which an individual item measures what it purposes to measure (Nugent, 2013). It was also measured during the initial piloting and computed using Pearson Product Moment, resulting in 87 valid items. A questionnaire with valid items is important to make sure that data collected from this instrument represent the real meaning of the concept under investigation. In this study, the valid items of the ELCQ are intended to elicit information from the students concerning their own perceptions and facts on the contextual factors of English language learning at school and out-of-school contexts.

# Does each scale construct the contextual factors?

The last research question of this study refers to the construct validity of the ELCQ. Construct validity refers to "the degree to which the research adequately capture the construct of interest" (Mackey & Gass, 2005: 108). Mackey and Gass (2005) argue that construct validity is the most complex type of validity, because many of the variables observed (e.g. aptitude, language proficiency) are not easily or directly defined. Using Factor Analysis, the construct validity of the ELCQ scales was examined. The result revealed that of the 14 scales of the questionnaire, eight scales loaded predominantly on Component 1, which supported the construct of the contextual factors. Accordingly, the final version of the ELCQ covers eight scales, including: Out-of-School Activities, Learning Resources at Home, Parental Involvement, L2-use Activities, Fun Activities, Personalized Activities, Interaction and Learning Resources. Those scales were considered appropriate theoretically and statistically to represent contextual factors influencing students' EFL learning in and out of school contexts. Meanwhile, the other five scales which belong to Component 2 have the potential to be further developed as a questionnaire related to teacher factors that can be used in combination with the ELCQ.

# IV. CONCLUSION

The EFL Learning Context Questionnaire was intended to measure students' EFL learning contexts based on the students own perceptions. It was designed to measure how far the contextual factors contribute to EFL learning. To

make sure that the questionnaire is a consistent measure for the intended concept, it was piloted through drafting, expert judgement, initial piloting for item validity and reliability, and final piloting using factor analysis for construct validity.

The statistical results ensure that the ELCQ has valid items and all contextual factors covered in the questionnaire relate to the construct (the contextual factors). The results of factor analysis suggest that of the fourteen scales validated, one scale (private course) should be removed and the rest were split into two components. The first component includes all scales relating to the learning contexts and the second component relates to teachers.

Based on the validation results, this questionnaire for EFL learning contexts cover eight valid scales, they are out of school activities, learning resources at home, parental involvement, L2-use activities/tasks, fun activities, personal activities, interaction and learning resources.

# V. FUTURE SCOPE

Other researchers who are interested in investigating the contextual factors of language learning are encouraged to use the ELCQ, as this study has proved that the ELCQ is a valid and reliable questionnaire. They may find evidence whether the questionnaire will be reliable and valid if replicated in other EFL locations in and out of Indonesia. They can also prove whether a revised version of the ELCQ will be more reliable and valid than the version investigated in this study. As this study has resulted in two components representing two different constructs: the contextual factors and teacher-related factors, future studies may try to combine these two components into one questionnaire, considering that this study found evidence that the scales in both components are all valid.

## APPENDIX. THE ITEMS OF THE EFL LEARNING CONTEXT QUESTIONNAIRE

	I. Out-of-School Context			
1.1	How often are you exposed to English by doing the following activities outside school?			
a.	Reading books/magazine/novels, etc.			
b.	Conversation with parents/siblings/relatives			
с.	Using technology (e.g. computer, mobile-phone)			
d.	Self-studying (e.g. with exercise books)			
e.	Correspondence with friends			
2.1	How often do you use the following learning resources to help you learn English at home?			
a.	A computer (with internet connection)			
b.	English software (e.g. Learn English, Speak English)			
с.	Readings for pleasure (e.g. novels, stories, magazine, comics, poetry)			
d.	Readings for information (e.g. newspaper, articles)			
e.	Books to help with your school work			
3. H	Iow much do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements about your parents/siblings/relatives'			
	olvement in your learning English?			
a.	My parents ask me to study English			
b.	My parents ask me to practice my English			
c.	My parents want me to get a good score in English			
d.	I speak English with my parents/siblings/relatives			
e.	I learn English from my parents/siblings/relatives			
f.	My parents provide me with English learning resources (e.g. books, dictionaries, computer)			
g.	My parents/siblings/relatives inspire me to learn English			
II. School Context				
	11. School Context			
4. H	low often do you do the following task/activities in your English class?			
4. H a.	Iow often do you do the following task/activities in your English class? Classroom tasks require me to speak English			
	low often do you do the following task/activities in your English class? Classroom tasks require me to speak English Classroom tasks require me to write in English			
a.	low often do you do the following task/activities in your English class? Classroom tasks require me to speak English Classroom tasks require me to write in English I practice English in pairs or groups			
a. b.	low often do you do the following task/activities in your English class? Classroom tasks require me to speak English Classroom tasks require me to write in English I practice English in pairs or groups I read long texts (e.g. literature/poetry/stories) in English			
a. b. c. d. e.	low often do you do the following task/activities in your English class? Classroom tasks require me to speak English Classroom tasks require me to write in English I practice English in pairs or groups I read long texts (e.g. literature/poetry/stories) in English Classroom tasks require me to understand spoken English.			
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a. b. c. d. e. f. g. h. 5. H a. b. d. d. 6. H a. b. c. g. 7. H	low often do you do the following task/activities in your English class? Classroom tasks require me to speak English Classroom tasks require me to write in English I practice English in pairs or groups I read long texts (e.g. literature/poetry/stories) in English Classroom tasks require me to understand spoken English. I have class discussion using English I do a project in my English class English tasks require me to pay attention to language forms (e.g. grammar, vocabulary, pronunciation) low often do you do the following activities in your English class? I sing or listen to songs I play games while learning The learning activities in my English tasks relevant to your life/interest I talk about my life or interest I write about my life or interest When doing my English tasks, I am allowed to choose topics of my interest The task/activities in my English class relate to my life/interest How often do you interact using English class relate to my life/interest How often do you interact using English class relates?			

c. I have the opportunity to discuss in English with my friends.

e. I respond to my teacher's questions in English.

8.	Iow often do you learn English using the following learning resources/facilities available at school?	
a.	A library	

- b A language laboratory
- c. Computers
- d. Internet connection
- e. A tape recorder
- f. Videos

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