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Self-Efficacy in Intercultural Communication: The Development and Validation of a Sojourners' Scale

Jeffery Chaichana Peterson, Tema Milstein,
Yea-Wen Chen & Masato Nakazawa

This study designed and validated an instrument for measuring sojourners' intercultural and everyday communication self-efficacy. Factor analysis of a Likert-type scale completed by Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme respondents (N = 213) identified a unidimensional-factor solution with 34-items loading ($\alpha = .95$). It revealed negative, positive, and no correlation with existing scales that lent validity to the resulting Sojourner Self-Efficacy in Communication (SSEC) Scale. The authors present both the full scale and a shortened 8-item version ($\alpha = .86$), and discuss ways the SSEC Scale offers new directions from which to explore issues of intercultural communication and cultural adaptation.

Keywords: Sojourning; Self-Efficacy; Scale Validation; Intercultural Communication; Cultural Adaptation

The person who truly crosses over into another culture comes back a different person and looks at the world with fresh eyes. (Kauffmann, Martin, Weaver, & Weaver, 1992, pp. 141–142)

Cultural displacement, or being immersed in a culture that is not one's own, provides an experience that is rife with communication challenges, as well as opportunities for personal growth. The present study takes Bandura's (1995, 1997, 1999) concept of self-efficacy, a conceptual framework that provides a lens through which to observe personal growth and belief in one's abilities, and develops and validates a scale to measure sojourners' perceptions of their intercultural and everyday communication self-efficacy.

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Sojourners represent people who have voluntarily traveled to, and stayed in, a place foreign to them for a period of at least 6 months and who are not immigrants because they do not intend to settle abroad (Lie, 1995). Though there are distinctions regarding long-term versus short-term sojourners, sojourners do not include those who must leave their home countries out of necessity, such as refugees.

Here, we utilize Lie's (1995) suggestion that the sojourn is "neither unidirectional nor final" but instead is a process often encompassing "multiple, circular, and return migrations, rather than a singular great journey from one sedentary space to another, across transnational spaces" (p. 304). We believe that once individuals have experienced a sojourn, their communication behaviors are measurably affected, both in terms of confidence to communicate in their home countries in a variety of challenging situations and confidence to communicate in future sojourns. This study is an endeavor to create a tool for researchers to measure self-efficacy in communication for individuals post-sojourn.

In developing this scale, the authors have moved beyond studies primarily predicting sojourners' psychological well-being in terms of effectiveness in encountering unfamiliar environmental demands within host cultures (Kim, 1987, 2001), though we acknowledge the importance of such work in suggesting that psychological well-being (e.g., related to tension, depression, anger, confusion, etc.) is one of the key dimensions of adjustment (Berry, 1994; Ward & Kennedy, 1993). In so doing, we heed calls to bypass an exclusive emphasis on the negative aspects of geographic movement (Furnham & Bochner, 1986) and focus instead upon possible positive growth outcomes of the sojourn, especially in the realm of communication and self and cultural understandings (Adler, 1975; Kristjansdottir, 2009). The authors align with Kim (2001) in situating such experiences of cross-cultural adaptation as at once both problematic and growth producing.

An extensive body of research on self-efficacy provides a constructive framework with which to examine people's beliefs in their capabilities to manage prospective situations (Bandura, 1986). Whereas self-efficacy has become an illustrative conceptual framework with many real life applications, such as health, education, and immigration, communication scholars have only relatively recently begun to explore its research possibilities. Shefner-Rogers, Rao, Rogers, and Wayangankar (1998) have argued that communication scholars have left the most important theoretical contributions to understanding empowerment as a communication process to scholars in other related fields. More recently, Afifi and Weiner (2004) designated and emphasized the role of efficacy in information management within an interpersonal context. However, they acknowledged their theory did not include cultural variables, though they recognized the likelihood of strong cultural effects on the process of information management. This study attempts to develop and validate a self-efficacy scale for communication in intercultural situations. Because the sojourner experience is a challenging, often transformative, process that directly affects one's communication experiences and understandings of one's abilities, the study's efforts to develop and validate a self-efficacy scale focuses on the relationships among self-efficacy, communication, and the sojourn.

In the space below, we first explain the conceptual framework of self-efficacy and illustrate some ways it may be heuristically useful as a research tool in the field of intercultural communication. We then explain ways Bandura recommends measuring self-efficacy and show how we follow his guidance in building the Sojourner Self-Efficacy in Communication (SSEC) Scale. We outline our methods for scale validation and provide our validation results. Finally, we discuss ways this scale offers new directions from which to explore issues of communication affected by intercultural experiences, including cross-cultural immersion and cultural adaptation.

Self-Efficacy

The concept of self-efficacy helps explain why people's behavior may differ widely even when they possess similar knowledge and skills. Behavior is better predicted by one's beliefs regarding one's capabilities to bring about change than by the reality of what one is actually capable of doing. Bandura (1986, 1997) specifies four information sources that can be used to form self-efficacy. The most effective source in creating a strong sense of efficacy is *mastery experiences*, or successes in meeting challenges that are essential if one is to build a robust belief in one's personal efficacy. Successes achieved in the face of adversities are particularly beneficial. Three additional sources for strengthening efficacy beliefs also influence self-efficacy and are likely to play a role in sojourners' evaluations of their efficacy in communication. Social models provide the second self-efficacy source, *vicarious experiences*. Seeing people similar to themselves succeed by perseverant effort raises observers' beliefs that they, too, possess the capabilities to master comparable activities. The third source, *social persuasion*, illustrates how self-efficacy is heightened if significant others express faith in one's capabilities rather than conveying doubts. The fourth source is *physiological and emotional states*. How one feels, either physically or emotionally, is especially relevant in domains that involve physical accomplishments, health functioning, and coping with stressors experienced while living in different cultures (Kavanagh & Bower, 1985).

Effective studies of self-efficacy focus on particular domains in which self-efficacy can be examined and measured. For instance, recent research examining self-efficacy in the domain of health has focused on health promotion with evidence suggesting that self-efficacy positively impacts the use of health information (Lee, Hwang, Hawkins, & Pingree, 2008) and positively influences preventive practices such as condom use (Casey, Timmerman, Allen, Krahn, & Turkiewicz, 2009). Thus, health promotion campaign practitioners are encouraged to create prevention messages aimed at increasing "people's belief in their capabilities to mobilize the motivation, cognitive resources, and courses of action needed to exercise control over given events" (Ozer & Bandura, 1990, p. 472). Moreover, Witte and Morrison (1995) suggest that, though there are culturally specific variables that influence health-related behaviors (e.g., fatalism and family values), self-efficacy is a universal variable

that affects an individual's motivation to comply with recommended health behaviors regardless of cultural background.

In this study, we focus particularly on mastery experiences, both because Bandura identifies this source of self-efficacy as the most effective, and because sojourns generally provide numerous and diverse challenges in the form of intercultural adjustment during sojourners' acculturation in a host country and re-acculturation upon return to the homeland (Onwumechilia, Nwosu, Jackson, & James-Hughes, 2003). Bandura (1997) explains that developing a sense of efficacy through mastery experiences is not a matter of adopting ready-made habits, instead it "involves acquiring the cognitive, behavioral, and self-regulatory tool for creating and executing appropriate courses of action to manage ever-changing life circumstances" (p. 3).

Thus, this study aims to develop a scale that can be used to examine whether sojourns have the potential to increase self-efficacy in the domain of intercultural and everyday communication. Relatedly, self-efficacy has been positively correlated with academic achievement, such as in foreign language learning (Mills, Pajares, & Herron, 2007), as well as with confidence related to communicating in a variety of social situations (Dwyer & Fus, 2002; Lucchetti & Phipps, 2003). Further, studies support the positive relationship between "language brokering" (interpreting and translating between linguistically and culturally different parties), acculturation, and academic self-efficacy (Acoach & Webb, 2004; Buriel, Perez, De Ment, Chavez, & Moran, 1998). Additionally, studies suggest that self-efficacy is related positively to intercultural adaptation, including among American expats in Europe (Harrison, Chadwick, & Scales, 1996) and among Chinese students in the United States (Zhang, 2004).

We have noted that this study focuses solely on the realm of intercultural and everyday communication efficacy as it relates to the sojourn experience. To maintain this focus, we have followed Bandura's (1995) proposition that self-efficacy is context-specific and we have created our scale based on experiences most salient to sojourners. However, we acknowledge that self-efficacy in one area may be related to self-efficacy in another, or even that there may be a broader sense of "general self-efficacy" (see G. Chen, Gully, & Eden, 2001; Scholz, Gutierrez Doza, Sud, & Schwarzer, 2002). Thus, of particular importance to sojourners, a self-efficacious intercultural communicator may navigate more efficiently and confidently in numerous unfamiliar situations. Conversely, those who believe themselves to be inefficacious communicators may perceive threats in situations that, if they were more confident and motivated to engage in them, would provide potential learning opportunities. Barriers to self-efficacy include cognitive, affective, motivational and behavioral limitations. Bandura (1995) states, "There are countless attractive options people do not pursue because they judge they lack the capabilities for them" (p. 7).

Cultural Adaptation and Self-Efficacy

Scholars have conceptualized the processes of cultural adaptation experienced by a sojourner in a variety of ways. The terms "culture shock" and "reverse culture shock"

(or reentry shock) have been used to refer, often with negative connotations, to the processes of cultural adaptation experienced by sojourners during and after the sojourn due to “(1) the loss of familiar cues, (2) the breakdown of interpersonal communications, and (3) an identity crisis” (Weaver, 1994, p. 171). The term “acculturation,” however, better encompasses both the positive (e.g., new opportunities) and negative (e.g., discrimination) aspects of cultural adaptation, in which cultural and psychological changes are the result of individuals and groups meaningfully encountering cultural differences (Berry, 2005). Unlike concepts of culture shock, concepts of acculturation tend to emphasize the interactive (i.e., communicative) aspects of intercultural immersion (Kim, 2008).

Intercultural transformation theory, which represents an individual’s experience of cultural adaptation by using a systems metaphor, provides a way to conceptualize how a sojourner might acquire an increased sense of self-efficacy. According to intercultural transformation theory’s stress-adaptation-growth dynamic, when incoming messages do not fit an individual’s expectations, the individual’s equilibrium is disturbed (Kim, 2001; Kim & Ruben, 1988). The resulting stress forces the individual to take adaptive measures to regain a new state of equilibrium. Much like a challenging mastery experience, each experience with disequilibrium teaches the individual an experiential lesson. Thus, the individual is less stressed in subsequent similar encounters because of a greater cognitive, behavioral, and affective capacity from the mastered stressful encounter. The individual’s new perspective not only serves to decrease her or his levels of stress, but also to increase levels of flexibility. Kim (2008) argues that individuals who experience prolonged and cumulative adjustments in the stress-adaptation-growth dynamic evolve interculturally to have a sense of “intercultural personhood.”

Stress is an inevitable component of the sojourner’s mastery experience, as “intercultural experiences are inherently stressful” (Kim & Ruben, 1988, p. 301). Thus, we equate the management of stresses associated with acculturation with a communication mastery experience, or a string of such successive mastery experiences, and argue those sojourners who successfully encounter and engage such mastery experiences will probably also develop self-efficacy in the realm of intercultural and everyday communication. During the stay abroad, a sojourner’s culturally constructed and socialized expectations, values, beliefs, and attitudes are shown to be deficient in dealing with intercultural problems that arise (Gudykunst & Kim, 1997). A sojourner must constantly adjust, through trial and error, many of the cultural cues by which she or he formerly guided decisions and interactions. In addition, a sojourner’s established communication effectiveness is often challenged—for instance, sojourners who are well spoken or witty in their own cultural milieu and language may be perceived as communicatively clumsy or humorless when immersed in a new culture and language, or sojourners who are good listeners at home may miss the meaning of an interaction in their host cultures, and such mistakes could place them or others in embarrassing or even dangerous situations. The constant adjustments one makes in the face of such challenges can be seen as a string of acculturations that can lead to mastery experiences.

The reactions to stress that arise during a sojourn, however, may not always lead to immediately positive outcomes, such as increased flexibility, intercultural competence, or increased self-efficacy. If sojourners' inner resources, which can be interpreted in many ways as perceived levels of self-efficacy, do not allow for restoration of equilibrium, one may "experience states of extreme panic, causing serious and prolonged damage to their psyches" (Kim, 2001, p. 60). Such extreme negative responses to the challenges of intercultural adaptation are in the minority (Kim & Ruben, 1988). Nevertheless, a considerable number of sojourners give up their sojourns and return to their passport cultures earlier than originally planned. For sojourners who stay, however, we expect that both negative and positive outcomes from mastery experiences will lead to greater levels of self-efficacy in intercultural and everyday communication. In an intercultural setting, the trials sojourners face and errors sojourners make usually enable them to better understand the appropriate cultural norms of their host countries, which then allows them to adapt and adjust to their host cultures. Unsuccessful or awkward adjustments may have negative psychological effects on individual sojourners. However, we assume *adjustment* means gradually learning to conduct oneself in accordance with the norms of host cultures (Weaver, 1994).

Measuring Self-Efficacy

Bandura (1999) cautions that there "is no all-purpose measure of perceived self-efficacy" because "most of the items in an all-purpose test may have little or no relevance to the domain of functioning that is being studied" (p. 1). Scales of perceived self-efficacy must be tailored to the particular domain of functioning that is the object of interest. Here, the domain is former sojourners' intercultural and everyday communication. Bandura stated further that efficacy scales must determine attainments in the selected domain of functioning. Scale items should measure not whether one can perform activities in the domain occasionally, but whether one perceives one has adequate efficacy to perform them regularly in the face of different types of dissuading conditions. As such, scale items should contain sufficient gradations of difficulty, and be phrased in terms of *can do* rather than *will do* (*can* is a judgment of capability whereas *will* is a statement of intention).

The Sojourner Self-Efficacy in Communication (SSEC) Scale measures how strongly a former sojourner believes in her or his ability to succeed at different tasks in the particular domain of everyday and intercultural communication. The 42 scale items asked sojourners for their self-reported beliefs in their communication, both before and after their sojourns in Japan. The items measured intercultural and everyday communication in terms of resiliency in the face of adversity. Thus, for example, we focused on measuring the quality of functioning in a diverse setting and quality of functioning while experiencing anxiety, stress, depression, and various levels of motivation to communicate. Many scale items reflected problems in communication specifically encountered in intercultural situations (whether at home or on a subsequent sojourn), such as communicating with people from different

cultures, communicating in discussions criticizing one's own culture, and shifting among languages. Other items reflected common communication challenges, such as explaining abstract concepts, guessing at meanings of messages, and reaching consensus, though we believe these are also especially acute in the re-acculturation process for sojourners.

Construct Validity

Two existing scales and one existing subscale were used to determine the construct validity of the SSEC Scale. First, it was expected that the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale's Interaction Engagement subscale (ISS-IE; G. M. Chen & Starosta, 2000) would be positively related to self-efficacy as measured by the SSEC Scale. G. M. Chen and Starosta (1998) argue that successful intercultural communication demands interactants have intercultural awareness based on learning cultural similarities and differences, and that the process of achieving awareness of cultural similarities and differences is enhanced by intercultural sensitivity. Intercultural sensitivity is distinct from intercultural awareness in that intercultural sensitivity goes beyond passively knowing there are differences toward actively embracing these differences. Thus intercultural sensitivity refers to individuals' "active desire to motivate themselves to understand, appreciate, and accept differences among cultures" (G. M. Chen & Starosta, 1998, p. 231). Sojourners who have awareness of cultural similarities and differences and are high in intercultural and everyday communication self-efficacy should also score highly in interaction engagement.

Burgoon's (1976) Unwillingness to Communicate Scale (UCS) measures a predisposition or "chronic tendency to avoid and/or devalue oral communication" (p. 60). Individuals who are unwilling to communicate feel anxiety about interpersonal encounters and, therefore, perceive less communication ability. We predicted a negative correlation with the SSEC Scale based on Bandura's (1995) assertion that those with low perceived self-efficacy feel they lack capabilities to engage in certain activities. Therefore, the higher the perceived intercultural and everyday communication self-efficacy, the lower the individual would score on the UCS.

Finally, Rubin and Rubin's (1982) Television Affinity Scale (TAS), a measure of the importance a person assigns to television programs, was expected to show no correlation with the SSEC.

Three hypotheses (H) are proposed:

- H1: Self-efficacy in intercultural and everyday communication is correlated positively with levels of engagement during intercultural interaction.
- H2: Self-efficacy in intercultural and everyday communication is correlated negatively with unwillingness to communicate.
- H3: Self-efficacy in intercultural and everyday communication is not associated with television affinity.

Methods

Following established precedent in scale construction (see Hui & Triandis, 1985), the first stage of scale development utilized open-ended questions posed to former sojourners about their acculturation and re-acculturation processes ($N=17$). Answers obtained informed creation of Likert-type scale items to measure potential barriers to communication or perspective situations in which cognitive, affective, behavioral, and motivational tools would be used in sojourners' everyday and intercultural communication. The second stage validated the Likert-type scale items via questionnaires completed by a different group of former sojourners ($N=213$).

Stage 1

Participants. Participants in stage 1 were 14 female and 3 male volunteers who had completed one or more sojourns in the past. The respondents, a convenient sample of students at a university in the U.S. Southwest, comprised participants with diverse nationalities (United States = 10, Japan = 4, Germany = 1, Chile = 1, Canada = 1) and a range of ages (21 to 62 years).

Procedures. The first two authors created an open-ended questionnaire to elicit former sojourners' perceived barriers to communication. The questionnaire consisted of 11 open-ended questions about individual perceptions of sojourning mastery experiences (e.g., "What factors contributed to your ability to succeed in your overseas experience?"), perceived experience of culture shock (e.g., "Did you experience any problems or difficulties during your overseas experience? Please explain."), and the relationship of these changes to the sojourn (e.g., "Do the changes in your communication behavior relate to your overseas experience or some other factor(s)? Please explain."). In posing the questions, the present researchers asked the former sojourners to focus answers, as Bandura (1999) suggests, on their own challenges within the domain of self-efficacy under study, sojourners' intercultural and everyday communication.

The method of constant comparison (Strauss & Corbin, 1998) was used in this study to code the qualitative data into exclusive and exhaustive categories. We utilized two steps: open coding and axial coding. Open coding refers to the initial and unrestricted coding of data. The goal was to open up the inquiry, and naturally it involved coding as many categories as we could from the data. Thus, the first two authors culled themes and keywords from the answers. All the open-ended questionnaire data were coded sentence by sentence to identify an exhaustive list of themes. The unit of analysis was the themes emerging from the data, which were later compared, sorted, and generated into unique and exclusive themes as agreed upon by both coders.

As a result, themes and behaviors included those related to resiliency to adversity, quality of functioning in a diverse setting, quality of functioning when anxious or vulnerable to stress and depression, and quality of functioning when experiencing

various levels of motivation to communicate. Resiliency to adversity related to how well respondents felt they could communicate, especially after having a negative sojourning experience. Quality of functioning in a diverse setting involved the perceived ability to recognize, infer, invent, explain, listen, and be patient during communication in uncertain or unfamiliar situations. Anxiety and vulnerability to stress and depression involved perceptions about how well respondents felt they could communicate while experiencing these states. Level of motivation involved participants' perceived skill at communicating in a variety of situations understood to be more or less relevant to the ability to adapt on a sojourn; these opportunities included situations such as asserting one's opinion or approaching someone in a position of authority.

An example from a Japanese sojourner in the United States illustrates experiences related to multiple themes, including resilience, stress, and motivation, that, combined with similar responses, were thematized into questionnaire items such as "How well can you ask a question to get what you need?" "How well can you communicate with people who do not share your language?" and "How well can you explain abstract concepts?":

[There are] so many problems and difficulties. Everything is different from Japan. I did not have any friends here. Here, I cannot do many things by myself. I often have to ask other people in order to do a small thing. It is really uncomfortable and embarrassing for me to be helped because I am not a child and I could do many things by myself in Tokyo. I often feel that I am worthless here. . . . I cannot express in English what I want to say and what I really think or feel.

An American sojourner to Germany and Vietnam explained an experience upon returning to her home country that helped form the basis of questions such as "How well can you assert your opinion when you communicate?":

I'm not sure my communication skills have improved but I can say that I have become more confident, and certainly more assertive in expressing what I want. Both Germany and Vietnam are somewhat similar in their communication patterns in that you have to really know someone before you give out personal information. Yet, both countries can be very direct in non-personal, public situations. Thus, I have become more direct in saying what I want or don't want.

We thematized and then reworded comments from the open-ended questionnaire such as those presented above into Likert scale questions that would capture experiences common to sojourners but unique to their domain of functioning. We followed Bandura's (1999) examples of self-efficacy scale questions, beginning each statement with "How well can you . . ." in order to measure the perceived ability to overcome barriers that one might face in intercultural and everyday communication. We derived a total of 42 items to create the SSEC Scale.

This procedure provided the instrument with both face and content validity. Face validity, or the extent to which an operation measures what it is intended to measure, was achieved via tailoring the SSEC Scale to measure the domain of sojourner intercultural and everyday communication. Bandura (1999) cautioned that there can be no all-purpose measure for self-efficacy. This study creates a measure for

self-efficacy for a population and domain where a measure had not previously existed. Content validity, or the accurate measurement of a concept, was achieved in the careful crafting of scale items that measure self-efficacy's concern with perceived capability. As mentioned, SSEC items were phrased in terms of *can do* rather than *will do* to measure judgments of capability rather than statements of intention. While perceived ability to act often leads to intent to act, the two constructs are conceptually and empirically separable.

Stage 2

Participants. We note the sample used to validate the present scale represents one type of sojourner. There is a great deal of scholarship identifying the various groups of individuals who cross national borders each year and the dimensions of these groups vary (Onwumehilia et al., 2003). The acculturation literature, for instance, focuses on "the process of cultural and psychological changes that involve various forms of mutual accommodation" among groups interacting for a number of reasons, including sojourning, whether in the form of "tourism, international study, or overseas posting" (Berry, 2005, p. 699). Thus, acculturation in the sojourning process can proceed at different rates, for different purposes, with differing degrees of "voluntariness" and intensity. Onwumehilia and colleagues (2003) offer a taxonomy of "intercultural transients" that differ on the basis of two dimensions: length of stay and function of transient activity (e.g., socioeconomic/political or employment).

Each of our respondents in our sample is among many of the millions of people who voluntarily travel and live abroad each year with the expectation of returning to their home countries. Our sample included former participants ($N=213$) in the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme, a program sponsored by the Japanese government. JET is aimed "at promoting grass-roots international exchange between Japan and other nations" (JET, 2011). Local authorities, working with a number of Japan's ministries, started the program in 1987 to help increase mutual understanding between the people of Japan and other nations and to promote internationalization in Japan's local communities. More than 50,000 people (including the first author) from more than 50 different countries have sojourned to Japan via JET since its inception, including 4,334 participants from 38 countries in 2011 alone. JET participants work in locations throughout Japan and are usually deeply culturally immersed in their host culture.

These sojourners differ from other typical sojourners in important ways. First, though JET is an exchange program, each participant is a college or university graduate who accepts a one-year renewable contract for employment. Some participants stay up to 5 years. This distinguishes them from study abroad students who typically spend a semester (roughly 4 months) abroad and whose process of acculturation may be more akin to long-term tourists whose motivation to acculturate may be affected by the short length of stay. Our participants also differ from many traditional international business travelers as the program focuses on "youth exchange." Thus, participants must be younger than 36 years old, and mainly

teach English in junior high schools and high schools. We believe, however, that the combination of shared and unique sojourner attributes in our sample population allows for the creation of a generally useful scale.

Study participants came from seven nations: the United States (58.3%), Canada (26.5%), Great Britain (6.6%), Australia (5.2%), New Zealand (2.4%), Germany (.5%), and Lebanon (.5%). The average age of the respondents was 29, with a range from 23 to 44. More women (68%) than men (32%) completed the study questionnaire. Respondents spent an average of 29 months living in Japan, ranging from 12 to 96 months. Just under half the respondents (46%) reported having lived abroad for 6 or more months before living in Japan; the remaining respondents (54%) reported the time spent in Japan was their first sojourn.

Instrument

The instrument was placed on a website created for the project and participants were alerted to its availability via e-mail to international JET alumni associations and individual JET directory listings. Study participants were told the questionnaire was designed to help gain understanding of communication behaviors engaged in by individuals who have returned from an extended “overseas experience.” Individuals were instructed to consider their latest overseas experience of 6 months or more and “rate how well you could do the things described below both *before* your overseas experience and *now*.” The pre- and post-data were collected for an intended future study to measure the effect of the sojourn on self-efficacy once the scale was validated. Based on the conceptualization and components previously discussed, 42 items were developed to measure sojourner self-efficacy in communication. A 7-point Likert scale was used to respond to each item ranging from 1 (*not well at all*) to 7 (*very well*). Explicit instructions to focus on the sojourn experiences when completing the questionnaire are crucial for researchers who want to utilize the SSEC Scale in the future as many of the items detailing intercultural and everyday communication behaviors could be mistaken for “general communication behavior” if asked out of context.

Extant literature suggests strengths and limitations of Web-based survey research in general. Holbrook, Green, and Krosnick (2003) suggest response quality is lower in Web surveys versus other modes because respondents are less inclined to expend mental energy answering questions, more inclined to multitask, and because Web-based surveys elicit more item nonresponse. Heerwegh (2009), however, suggests Web-based surveys engender less socially desirable responses than face-to-face surveys, though recent research suggests the differences in data quality, as well as social desirability, are “surprisingly small” (p. 119) when compared to face-to-face administration.

A total of 213 JET alumni completed the Web-based questionnaire. The instrument included 42 Self-Efficacy Scale questions, seven questions from the Unwillingness to Communicate Scale (Burgoon, 1976), seven questions from the Intercultural

Sensitivity Scale (G. M. Chen & Starosta, 2000), and five questions from the Television Affinity Scale (Rubin & Rubin, 1982), plus several demographic questions.

G. M. Chen and Starosta's (2000) measure of intercultural sensitivity, which was previously found to correlate positively with the Interactive Attentiveness Scale, the Impression Rewarding Scale, the Self-Esteem Scale, the Self-Monitoring Scale, the Perspective Taking Scale, the Intercultural Effectiveness Scale, and the Intercultural Communication Attitude Scale, was measured with seven items from the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale using a 5-point Likert scale (5 = *strongly agree*, 4 = *agree*, 3 = *uncertain*, 2 = *agree*, 1 = *strongly disagree*). These seven items constituted the Interaction Engagement subscale, which consisted of items concerned with "participants' feelings of participation in intercultural communication" (G. M. Chen & Starosta, 2000, p. 6). The Cronbach α reliability coefficient of the ISS subscale was .74.

A second validation scale, Burgoon's (1976) Unwillingness to Communicate Scale (UCS), had criterion-related validity supported by various studies on group members, total participation, and information giving. Concurrent validity was supported when the UCS was positively correlated with such dimensions as social anxiety, avoidance, and communication apprehension (Daily, 1978). The UCS contains two dimensions. Approach-avoidance is the "degree to which individuals feel anxiety and fears about interpersonal encounters and are inclined to actively participate in them or not" (Burgoon & Hale, 1983, p. 240). The reward dimension reflects the degree to which people perceive that friends and family seek them out for conversation and opinions, and that interactions with others are not manipulative or untruthful (Burgoon & Hale, 1983). We chose to use seven of the 10 approach-avoidance items from this scale in the present study ($\alpha = .70$), choosing for the sake of economy to leave out items we felt were redundant. A 7-point Likert scale was used to respond to these items, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Rubin and Rubin's (1982) Television Affinity Scale (TAS) was expected to have no relationship with the SSEC scores. The TAS has face validity, supported by findings that the more motivated people are to watch TV, the more important they believe TV to be (Greenberg, 1974). In addition, construct validity was provided by Armstrong and Rubin (1989), who found that television is more important to respondents who have fewer opportunities for mass or interpersonal communication. The present study used the entire five-question Television Affinity Scale ($\alpha = 0.83$). A 7-point Likert scale was used to respond to these items, ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*).

Results for Factor Analysis

Exploratory factor analysis with principal axis-factoring was utilized to determine the measurement quality of the scale, following the procedure recommended in Worthington and Whittaker (2006). We chose exploratory factor analysis (EFA) instead of confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) because the subject of self-efficacy in intercultural and everyday communication among sojourners had not previously

been investigated and, therefore, remained untested. In addition, we chose principal axis factoring, instead of principal components analysis, as the extraction method because this extraction is more appropriate for scale development and provides results more comparable to CFA (Worthington & Whittaker, 2006). Excellent factorability was indicated by both Bartlett's Test ($p < .001$) and KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy ($KMO = .92$).

Four criteria were used to determine and interpret the factors. First, a scree plot was used to determine the number of factors to be retained. Second, if two or more factors were retained, Promax oblique rotation would be used, since no theory exists that suggests extracted factors be uncorrelated. Third, scale items had to have a primary loading of .5, instead of the usual primary loading of .4, and the primary loading had to be at least .2 greater than any potential secondary factor. Fourth, at least three scale items were needed for a factor.

A single factor was retained based on the scree plot: It accounted for 33.17% of the variance. We named this factor the Self-Efficacy in Communication factor. The unidimensional factor was represented by 34 items with salient factor loadings (.50 ~ .73), and yielded an α coefficient of .95 (Table 1). We averaged the retained items and used the resulting SSEC scores as the primary variable in the subsequent analysis.

Construct Validity of the SSEC Scale

We used three scales, ISS-IE, UCS, and TAS, to validate the SSEC Scale; all had acceptable levels of α in the present study ($> .70$). Within each scale, we averaged the items. Because some of the variables were highly skewed ($|\text{skew}| > 1.0$) and kurtic ($|\text{kurtosis}| > 2.0$), we calculated nonparametric Spearman correlation coefficients, instead of Pearson correlation coefficients, between the pairs of the three scores and the SSEC scores to establish construct validity (Table 2). As expected, the two scales, ISS-IE and UCS, positively correlated with communication self-efficacy in the expected directions (ISS: $R_s = .30, p < .01$; UCS: $R_s = -.30, p < .01$). Also, as predicted, we found no significant correlation between sojourner communication self-efficacy and television affinity scores ($R_s = .00, p > .20$). Thus, construct validity of the SSEC Scale is established. The three hypotheses are supported.

While we shortened the instrument by nearly 20%, researchers may not have room to include 34 items in their questionnaire, especially if they already include other instruments. Thus, we further shortened items based on quantitative as well as qualitative criteria. First, we categorized each of the 34 items into eight dimensions of intercultural competence according to Koester and Olebe (1988): empathy, interaction posture, orientation to knowledge, interaction management, relational role behavior, self-oriented role behavior, tolerance for ambiguity, and display of respect. These dimensions can be considered as the lower order factors that together constituted the higher order Self-Efficacy in Communication unidimensional factor. Two of the authors categorized each item separately; their initial intercoder reliability in terms of Krippendorff's α (Krippendorff, 2004) was .70. Then the authors

Table 1 Factor Analysis of the Self-Efficacy in Communication Scale (SEFFICAC) Items
(*N* = 213)

Scale item		Factor loading
2.	How well can you introduce new or different ways of solving a problem in an interaction?	.57
3.	How well can you ask questions to get what you need?	.53
4.	How well can you infer or guess at the meaning of messages in an interaction?	.57
6.	How well can you inspire others to gain new insight when you communicate with them?	.66
7.	How well can you invent new words or phrases to illustrate unique circumstances?	.55
8.	How well can you stand up in a group of people and give your opinion?	.53
9.	How well can you think possible outcomes through before you speak?	.63
10.	How well are you able to adapt to an interaction in which the topic changes from familiar to unfamiliar territory?	.67
11.	How well can you communicate with people who do not share your language?	.55
12.	How well can you explain abstract concepts?	.60
13.	How well can you communicate with people who are in positions of authority?	.57
14.	How well can you assert your opinion when you communicate?	.53
15.	How well can you communicate when people are trying to intimidate you?	.57
16.	When in a face to face conversation, how well can you gauge what another person wants you to communicate?	.73
17.	How well can you recognize subtle shades of meaning in an interaction?	.69
18.	How well can you communicate in a discussion criticizing your own culture?	.55
19.	How well can you communicate with people from different cultures within your own country?	.60
20.	How well can you gauge the appropriate manner in which you are expected to communicate in an interaction (for instance, in a job interview)?	.54
21.	How well can you shift your communication between words and body language to get your point across?	.60
22.	How well can you predict what another person will say in an interaction?	.67
23.	How well can you listen when you are in a communication situation?	.57
25.	How well can you communicate in impromptu situations?	.68
26.	How well can you communicate with people from different countries?	.56
27.	How well can you recognize whether it is appropriate to engage in confrontation?	.63
29.	How well can you see things from another person's point of view in an interaction?	.59
31.	How well can you take criticism?	.58
32.	How well can you communicate your agreement or disagreement in an argument?	.60
33.	How well can you communicate with people with disabilities?	.52
36.	How well can you communicate with people who are of a significant different age than you?	.57
37.	How well can you use humor in your communication?	.58

Table 1 (Continued)

Scale item		Factor loading
38.	How quickly can you find common ground with others when you communicate?	.63
39.	How well can you communicate with people you strongly disagree with?	.53
<u>41.</u>	<u>How well can you build consensus when you communicate?</u>	<u>.70</u>
<u>42.</u>	<u>How well can you communicate with people you don't like?</u>	<u>.59</u>

Note. These items represent the 34 of 42 retained items, thus explaining the nonsequential numbering. Underline indicates the eight items included in the shortened version of the instrument.

discussed differences to resolve disagreements, achieving intercoder reliability of 1.00. Second, from each category we selected the item with the highest factor loading. We thus selected eight items to create a shortened version of the instrument with very high reliability of $\alpha = .86$. The underlined items in Table 1 identify the eight items of the shortened SSEC Scale. SSEC scores based on the shortened and full versions were highly correlated ($R_s = .93, p < .01$). More importantly, the shortened scores were significantly correlated with the ISS ($R_s = .30, p < .01$) and UCS ($R_s = -.29, p < .01$) but not with television affinity scores ($R_s = -.00, p > .20$), consistent with the full version results.

Discussion

The development and validation of the SSEC Scale offers a foundation for understanding sojourners' self-efficacy in intercultural and everyday communication. The scale provides a tool for communication researchers to further explore self-efficacy, a conceptual framework until now largely overlooked by intercultural

Table 2 Spearman Correlation Coefficients Among Five Scales ($N = 213$)

Items	SEFFICAC	SEFFICACS	INTCULT	UCS	TAS
SEFFICAC	1.00				
SEFFICACS	.93**	1.00			
INTCULT	.30**	.30**	1.00		
UCS	-.30**	-.29**	-.26**	1.00	
TAS	.00	-.00	-.136	.138*	1.00
<i>M</i>	5.59	5.52	6.22	2.31	2.06
<i>SD</i>	.84	.78	.59	.83	1.19
Skew	-2.42	-0.48	-1.27	0.60	1.31
Kurtosis	12.24	-0.10	2.66	0.00	1.34
α	.95	.86	.74	.70	.83

Note. SEFFICAC = self-efficacy, SEFFICACS = self-efficacy shortened, INTCULT = intercultural sensitivity, UCS = unwillingness to communicate, TAS = television affinity. Underline indicates hypotheses of primary interest.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$.

communication scholars even while pursued extensively and fruitfully by interdisciplinary scholars. Though communication scholars such as Afifi and Afifi (2009), Afifi and Weiner (2004), and Johnson (1997) have examined how efficacy affects processes of information seeking and management, this study uniquely develops a communication self-efficacy scale based in the domain of intercultural experience.

The SSEC Scale may be particularly valuable in advancing intercultural communication research, including investigations into how self-efficacious communication as a result of mastery experiences might inform classic concepts regarding culture shock (Furnham & Bochner, 1986), or the theory of cultural adaptation as a progression from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism (Bennett, 1993), as well as more recent concepts rooted in contemporary realities of globalization, such as Kim's (2008) stress-adaptation-growth dynamic of intercultural transformation as it relates to creating individual senses of intercultural personhood. Future research might look at whether the progressions through return cultural adjustment, or the path from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism, are positively related to an increase in perceived intercultural and everyday communication self-efficacy, or whether already existing high levels of perceived self-efficacy mitigate the potentially severe effects of culture shock and reverse culture shock or the positive progression from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. Future research could also look at how increased self-efficacy in returned sojourners might align with Kim's concept of intercultural personhood in ways that nurture being more open and flexible, or having more inclusive orientations to oneself and the world.

Further, the scale provides intercultural communication studies with an additional framework for exploring cross-cultural immersion and adaptation as both potentially problematic and growth producing (Kim, 2001). For instance, future investigation might use the SSEC Scale and qualitative questioning to specifically investigate how both positive and negative outcomes of cross-cultural adaptation might affect self-efficacy.

In addition, the SSEC Scale can be used to comparatively measure pre- and post-sojourn communication self-efficacy levels in different populations, such as those who must culturally adapt out of necessity, including refugees or other reluctant border crossers, or those who in these globalized times experience acculturation without leaving home, such as people in large urban centers who routinely experience cultural difference (Kim, 2008). We hope the SSEC Scale provides both researchers and those who experience cultural adaptation with another tool for evaluating outcomes connected to self-efficacy, communication, and the sojourn. We encourage such comparative studies in furthering understanding of intercultural and everyday communication efficacy, as well as cross-cultural immersion and adaptation.

The validated SSEC Scale addresses the measurement of barriers that must be overcome for sojourners to be efficacious in intercultural and everyday communication situations faced during and after re-acculturation to their passport cultures. Retained items for the SSEC Scale are representative of the cognitive, affective, motivational, and behavioral barriers to self-efficacious communication (Bandura, 1995). For example, Question number 3, which represents the behavioral barrier,

asks, “How well can you ask questions to get what you need?” while Question number 9, which represents the cognitive barrier, asks, “How well can you think possible outcomes through before you speak?” While some items seem to represent just one barrier, many items represent barriers that are interrelated and overlapping. For example, Question number 27, “How well can you recognize whether it is appropriate to engage in confrontation?” represents both cognitive and affective barriers—a cognitive barrier is met when one must judge whether something is appropriate and an affective barrier is met in the states of stress and regulation of emotion that confrontation implies.

The exploratory factor analysis produced a single, internally consistent communication self-efficacy factor with moderate to strong factor loadings. The unidimensional factor’s correlations with the three existing measures established construct validity for the SSEC Scale. The scale showed face validity based on the study’s stage 1 open-ended questionnaires. Used comparatively to measure pre- and post-sojourn self-efficacy in communication levels, the SSEC Scale can assess the degree to which people who have lived abroad gain in intercultural and everyday communication self-efficacy as a result of their sojourns.

In terms of study limitations, the SSEC Scale shows content and construct validity, but the scale cannot be considered representative of the full range of barriers expected to effect self-efficacious communication for sojourners. A future scale might try to distinguish more precise dimensions, especially those that may be more clearly resonant with cognitive, affective, motivational and behavioral dimensions. The current scale was unidimensional and, therefore, did not clearly distinguish among these barriers. Future research could look more closely at distinctions among barriers; dimensions might be explored from a qualitative vantage for a better understanding of their overlapping breadth and depth, in order to create an even more precise measure.

Additionally, there were limitations in participation. In stage 2 of this study, all participants were alumni of the JET Programme, and thus sojourners to Japan. Further studies should focus on sojourners with a more diverse set of overseas experiences to mediate the effect one particular host culture might have on results. Relatedly, the majority of respondents to the SSEC Scale came from English-speaking countries perhaps limiting their range of sojourning experiences. Furthermore, the sample population was not randomly selected, but self-selected. Response was biased toward those individuals who were members of JET alumni groups. A willingness to maintain communication with other former sojourners may signal that these individuals have a higher-than-average level of communication self-efficacy. On the other hand, as noted earlier, some research suggests that Internet use of surveys tends to engender less socially desirable responses than face-to-face surveys (Heerwegh, 2009), which may strengthen this scale, as respondents would in likelihood be more honest in reporting perceived self-efficacy. Our sojourners also differed widely in the time that had elapsed since their sojourn which may have created variance in the way they remembered their experiences. Future research could be conducted longitudinally, capturing sojourners’ perceptions immediately upon return and

then at a later date to assess the extent to which perceived self-efficacy changed over time.

Lastly, we acknowledge that while our results (e.g., the scree plot and high reliability) strongly suggest a single factor solution, a single EFA study is not enough to conclusively prove scale validation. For this reason, we plan on conducting a cross-validation study using CFA on a different set of participants. If the future study's results are consistent with present results, we will be more confident of the validity of our self-efficacy instrument as a valuable tool for intercultural communication scholars. Nonetheless, the SSEC Scale opens up new research possibilities for understanding self-efficacy's role in intercultural communication.

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