Examining Barriers to English Language Use in the Field of Educational Administration Through Exploratory Factor Analysis

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Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine the barriers of English language use in the field of educational administration. A survey based on existing literature was distributed to 330 respondents. The data was analyzed using exploratory factor analysis (EFA), and the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy achieved a score of 0.904 and Bartlett's test confirmed the adequacy of the data. EFA identified four components that accounted for 66.352 percent of the variance: Psychological and Academic Struggles in English (PASE), Workload and Institutional Time-related English Barriers (WITE), Digital and Technological English Barriers (DITE), and Lack of Instructional and Training English Support (LITE). The findings of the study highlight the emotional, professional, technological, and organizational dimensions of the barriers of English use in educational administration. Identifying these barriers is a valuable starting point for developing targeted language assistance and support programs.

Keywords: barriers, English language use, educational administration, language barriers, exploratory factor analysis (EFA)

1. Introduction

The use of English language influences almost all aspects of educational administration influenced by technology and digitalization which encourages regional integration and global mobility in education (Pandey & Pandey, 2025; Pankanokpong & Seritanondh, 2025; Reynolds et al., 2023). Those in educational settings may draft and exchange, negotiate, present and translate policy briefs in English because the language is the global language, including in the academia and work fields. In Thailand, English is an international language (Alsagoff, 2014) and is a language of administration and education in the region and is used in compliance with the standards of ASEAN and the worldwide educational frameworks. Thus, developing the use of English in administration can help develop international partnerships, access to global information and digital education, and compete better as an institution.

At the same time, Thai educational administrators operate in a system influenced by internationalization, regional cooperation, and the demands of quality assurance. Thailand's higher educational institutes and professional units have broadened the scope of international activities and cross-border partnerships, notably in the ASEAN region. This trend heightens the demand for English proficiency to perform various administrative functions, including the management of international programs, correspondence with partner institutions, and facilitation of staff and student mobility. Research into the higher education system in Thailand has indicated that internationalization has been a sustained focus at the national and institutional levels, leading to an increase in the prominence of English in administrative tasks (Pankanokpong & Seritanondh, 2025; Pratoomrat & Rajprasit, 2014).

Reporting, policy writing, and international diplomacy, for example, are all areas of reliance on English that most administrators have in common, yet for some, proficient use of this language in the daily operations of the organizations is inconsistent (Pandey & Pandey, 2025; Pratoomrat & Rajprasit, 2014; Than, 2025). In explaining the diversity of the causes, the reason could be personal beliefs, previous encounters, and the type of culture an organization has espoused. The most important type of correction is, in most cases, the type of correction that is most needed, and it is this type of correction that most people have identified as one of the major reasons for the failure to practice the very language skills they have (MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991).

Many administrators also rely on English for daily reports, policy papers and international meetings, but language proficiency in the workplace remains inconsistent and stressful for some who need for at the workplace (Pandey & Pandey, 2025; Pratoomrat & Rajprasit, 2014; Reynolds et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2025). The causes of this are as varied as the individuals involved and may include personal attitudes, past experiences and institutional culture. English policy and Thai civil servants remarked that within government institutions, English and the public sector developed English more, not just from individual initiatives, but from distinct policy frameworks, motivating factors, and access remedial support systems. Moreover, the recent English-in-education policy discourse in Thailand has shown that the policy's aims might not align with the actual state of learning and the practice of the profession, particularly when it comes to resources and training.

In addition, Hyland (2006) argues that specific genres, tones, and formats should be followed in professional writing at a fluent level, and this is not something acquired through shallow acquaintance. Carless and Boud (2018) state that without regular feedback, language development tends to plateau; therefore, meaningful feedback is what fine-tunes this understanding. To explain why English language engagement is so challenging, Borg (2015) describes how institutional culture tends to discourage staff, suggesting that the focus here is more on the system than on the learners. As opinions remain divided on which barriers to English language use are most important among workers, it might not say that how these challenges interact in different contexts.

To fill this unclear gap, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) would be a promising method to organize the barriers to the use of English in educational administration. It is a statistical method that helps researchers find patterns in large amounts of questionnaire data to identify latent variables that cannot be observed but could explain how different items are related (Sukserm, 2025). The aim of this study is therefore to investigate the barriers to the use of English in the field of educational administration to create targeted support for those working in this field. Accordingly, the study addresses the following research question: What underlying factors explain the barriers to English language use among educational administrators?

2. Literature Review

English language use in professional and administrative settings has become increasingly important, especially in non-native English-speaking countries (Agustina et al., 2024; Jacob, 2020; Leung, 2023; Loy & Wahab, 2020; Pandey & Pandey, 2025; Than, 2025; Zhang et al., 2025). However, many educational administrators face barriers that limit their ability to use English effectively in their workplace. These barriers can be explained as follows:

The psychological barrier is one of the most powerful obstacles to the use of English (Asnaini et al., 2025; Gobena, 2025; Than, 2025). Speaking English in front of others is emotionally uncomfortable for some. Also, language apprehension is common, and people are often reluctant to use the language in some situations. This is a primary characteristic of behavioral avoidance syndrome, which describes an educational administrator choosing not to speak in an English-language meeting or not to write in English, instead assigning that responsibility to someone else. Such emotional barriers to constructive activities and the progress they may bring are also linked to self-efficacy (Bandura, 1997), as people may feel they are not competent. Additionally, emotional barriers such as fear, embarrassment, and apprehension about one's abilities are valid reasons for not using English in the work environment.

Linguistic difficulties are another major barrier that affects those in educational contexts in using English (Mahdi, 2024; Makena, 2025; Ullah et al., 2023). These difficulties often involve limited vocabulary, poor grammar, and lack of familiarity with formal or technical expressions used in administrative contexts. According to Hyland (2006), using English for professional or academic purposes requires more than basic language skills—it requires genre knowledge, understanding of formal register, and the ability to express ideas clearly and appropriately in writing (Hyland, 2021). This means these specific skills have not been formally taught, especially in the context of education policy or office communication for many administrators. In addition, understanding and producing English texts—such as policy documents, manuals, or official letters—requires strong reading and writing skills. Furthermore, Nation (2001) notes that a lack of vocabulary depth and knowledge of word collocations can lead to ineffective communication. Therefore, linguistic difficulties can limit confidence, cause errors, and reduce the willingness to use English in workplace situations.

Institutional barriers refer to the organizational and structural limitations that make it difficult for educational administrators to use or improve their English skills (Malik et al., 2025; McLure & Aldridge, 2022; Rusch, 2005). One common point is the shortage of time and training prospects. Due to the nature of their jobs, many administrators might carry tight schedules that do not allow them the time to enroll in English classes and practice the language. That means institutional culture and leadership support are central to either fostering or hindering the English language advancement. In the absence of the institutional support and arrangement that stresses the English language, administrators are likely to lack the encouragement to initiate efforts to improve. The lack of English language organizational resources, such as materials and support internal systems, is an organizational problem. When employees are left to their own devices or are not provided with English-related feedback to work on, they tend to become frustrated and perform poorly. There is also the case with Vroom's (1964) expectancy theory where those would not put in the effort because they do not think that such efforts would result in the prize of better English. As a result, without institutional support, incentives, and recognition, the development of the English language becomes a low priority in most educational workplaces.

As much as digital technologies help in today's education system, education administrators still need to use English in multiple digital tools and/or platforms (Pankanokpong & Seritanondh, 2025). However, barriers such as the lack of confidence in the needed technology, inadequate digital English resources, and insufficient support make use of English incredibly difficult. While no one can argue that technology in combination in some form of language education does prove to assist in new communication methods, there is still a lack of technology to assist in new forms of communication methodslanguage-basedtion methods that are based on a lack of English language tools, or support, or the use of tools such as Google Translate, Grammarly, or other English language based resources. Kukulska-Hulme (2012) states that just as tools that assist in language education should be easy to use, and other tools in the education environment should not be cluttered. Also, the use of tools should not be a source of frustration. This problem is also apparent when those who design the use of technology in an educational environment do not also create support tools such as web-based videos, or onsite training rather than leaving them to use the technology without support. An intimidating digital environment can therefore cause a loss of confidence and create anxiety when taking on online tasks, which could explain why administrators might refrain from practicing English skills.

3. Method

3.1 Samples

Determination of the sample size was followed by exploratory factor analysis (EFA). Considering Hair et al. (2018) recommend 1 participant per 5-20 variables and that the questionnaire included 24 items, the minimum would be 120 respondents, and maximum would be 480 respondents. For the sake of range and accuracy, the researchers settled for 300 respondents, which falls within the range that Comrey and Lee (1992) consider adequate for EFA. Even for Fabrigar et al. (1999) who advocated high participant-to-variable ratios, the recommended 10:1 ratio could be accommodated. Thus, the 12:1 ratio for this study, 300 respondents for 24 items; however, the final number of sample size was 330 which surpassed the set guidelines for EFA and provided for a thorough EFA analysis.

3.2 Research Instrument

The questionnaire focusing on the different types of barriers to the use of the English language in educational administration was constructed by synthesizing various literature and previous studies (Agustina et al., 2024; Carroll, 1994; Gobena, 2025; Horwitz et al., 1986; Hyland, 2006; Jacob, 2020; Krashen, 1982; Leung, 2023; Loy & Wahab, 2020; Macalister & Nation, 2019; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Mahdi, 2024; Makena, 2025; Pandey & Pandey, 2025; Pankanokpong & Seritanondh, 2025; Pratoomrat & Rajprasit, 2014; Reinders & White, 2010; Reynolds et al., 2023; Richards & Farrell, 2005; Than, 2025; Ullah et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2025). The aim of the constructed questionnaires is to evaluate the respondents' perceptions of the barriers to the use of the English language in the educational administration. The choice of not having a neutral option and using a four-point scale was to aid in the decisiveness of the respondents (Plengkham et al., 2025). The questionnaire was translated into Thai to the respondents to prevent the misunderstanding.

To achieve construct validity, all items were validated by three experts using the Item-Objective Congruence Index (IOC). The scoring of the instrument indeed confirmed construct validity as it fell between 0.67 and 1.00. Before administering the questionnaire, a pilot survey was done with a sample of 30. In this pilot testing, Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.922 was obtained which is above the commonly accepted upper limit for reliability (Sukserm, 2024).

3.3 Data collection & Data Analysis

To improve the response rate, the questionnaire was distributed via Google Forms, which allowed respondents to select the most appropriate time for them to complete the survey. This data process was collected in the 2025 academic year. Also, ethical approval was given by the Ethical Review Board for Research with Human Subjects (IRB No 348/68). The number of components was determined using multiple criteria. Initially, a factor analysis was conducted using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy (KMO) to evaluate the data's suitability. According to Hair et al. (2018), a KMO value equal to or greater than 0.5 is deemed acceptable and implies variable intercorrelation because it tends toward 1. Moreover, Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was utilized to test significance at $\alpha = .05$. Then, with Principal Component Analysis (PCA), a component was extracted if its eigenvalue was 1 or higher, and it explained at least 60% of the variance (Hair et al., 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). Varimax rotation was carried out on orthogonal rotation to obtain uncorrelated components. Using the Factor Pattern Matrix, factor loadings of variables with loading equal to or greater than 0.3 were included. the communality (h2) values greater than 0.5 were adequate for further scrutiny. In the end, factors that were extracted were labelled according to the most relevant character of the variables which required expertise (Sukserm, 2025a).

4. Results

To accomplish the research objective: To investigate the factors of barriers to English language use in the field of educational administration. Table 1 below contains the KMO results alongside the Bartlett test for sphericity results.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.904
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	2080.337
	df	276
	Sig.	.000*

p < .05*

The KMO value of 0.904 surpassed the benchmark (Kaiser, 1974) of 0.6, which confirms the sample can undergo factor analysis. This also suggests that the correlations among the variables can be accurately constructed using other variables present in the dataset. The Bartlett's test yielded a chi-square result of 2080.337 which dismisses the hypothesis where the correlation matrix is an identity matrix (Bartlett, 1950). Together, these findings substantiate that the data is appropriate for conducting exploratory factor analysis. Figure 1 below showed the results of an exploratory factor analysis (EFA), which focuses on the total variance explained by different components in the data.

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	10.498	43.743	43.743	10.498	43.743	43.743	4.588	19.116	19.116
2	2.440	10.165	53.908	2.440	10.165	53.908	3.874	16.140	35.256
3	1.908	7.952	61.860	1.908	7.952	61.860	3.779	15.747	51.003
4	1.078	4.492	66.352	1.078	4.492	66.352	3.684	15.349	66.352
5	0.955	3.978	70.330						
...	...	...	...						
...	...	...	...						
24	0.129	0.537	100.000						

Figure 1. Total Variance Explained

The analysis started with calculating eigenvalues as they show the amount of variance explained by each component. Components whose eigenvalues were above one were treated as important. In the current case, the first four components satisfied this requirement, the first of which having a very high eigenvalue of 10.498, which explains 19.116 percent of total variance. The accumulated variance explained by these four components was 66.352 percent on average, which was above the generally accepted 60 percent benchmark for factor analysis (Hair et al., 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019).

According to Figure 2, the scree plot showed guidance concerning the eigenvalues for every component. The plot demonstrates a steep drop off from the first component, which has an approximate eigenvalue of 11, to the second which is at 2. From the third component onwards, the eigenvalues form a nearly horizontal line signifying a lack of increasing change in variance.
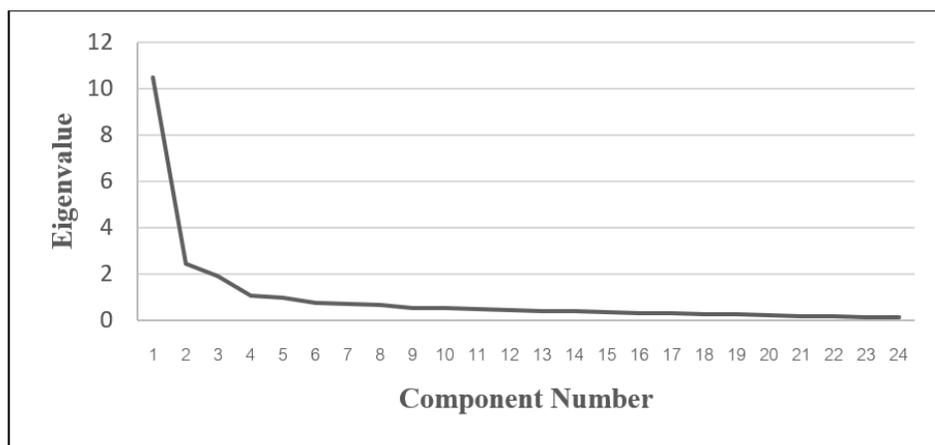

Figure 2. Scree plot

The rotated component matrix from the principal component analysis (PCA) using the Varimax method by orthogonal rotation employed was displayed in Table 2 below. This matrix demonstrated the loadings of individual items on the four identified components after rotation.

Table 2. Rotated component matrix

Statements	Components			
	PASE	WITE	DITE	LITE
3. I feel anxious when I must communicate with fluent or native English speakers.	0.859			
2. I fear making mistakes when using English in front of others.	0.815			
1. I lack confidence when speaking English in formal settings.	0.784			
4. I often avoid using English because I feel embarrassed about my proficiency.	0.750			

Statements	Components			
	PASE	WITE	DITE	LITE
7. I struggle to choose appropriate formal expressions in English.	0.642			
5.I am not familiar with educational administrative English vocabulary.	0.540			
8.I find it difficult to understand English policy documents or manuals.	0.475			
14. I have too many administrative responsibilities in education to focus on language use.		0.748		
13. I do not have enough time to improve my English skills.		0.737		
16. I find it hard to balance English learning with my routine job duties and other professional responsibilities.		0.685		
17. My workplace does not provide English-related resources or materials.		0.641		
15. English language tasks are often delayed due to other urgent duties.		0.638		
20. English is not prioritized in my professional environment.		0.532		
11. I cannot attend English training due to schedule conflicts.		0.515		
22. The software or systems I use have English language content or instructions that are too complex for non-native speakers.			0.833	
21. I am not confident using digital tools (e.g., Google Translate, Grammarly).			0.829	
19. I lack access to reliable online English resources.			0.753	
23. I do not receive technical support for English-related digital tools.			0.742	
24. I feel pressured when using online platforms (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams, Google Meet) that require English communication.			0.576	
12. I rarely receive feedback on my English language performance at work.				0.743
10. My workplace does not offer English language training for educational administrators.				0.741
18. The institution where I work does not have a formal English support system (e.g., proofreaders).				0.686
6. I find English grammar difficult to apply in writing tasks.				0.559
9. I have not received sufficient English language training.				0.440

The rotated component matrix explained four groups that constituted barriers to English language use in the field of educational administration. These factors emerged from clustering the different factors according to their loadings or the strength of the relationship each element had with a specific factor.
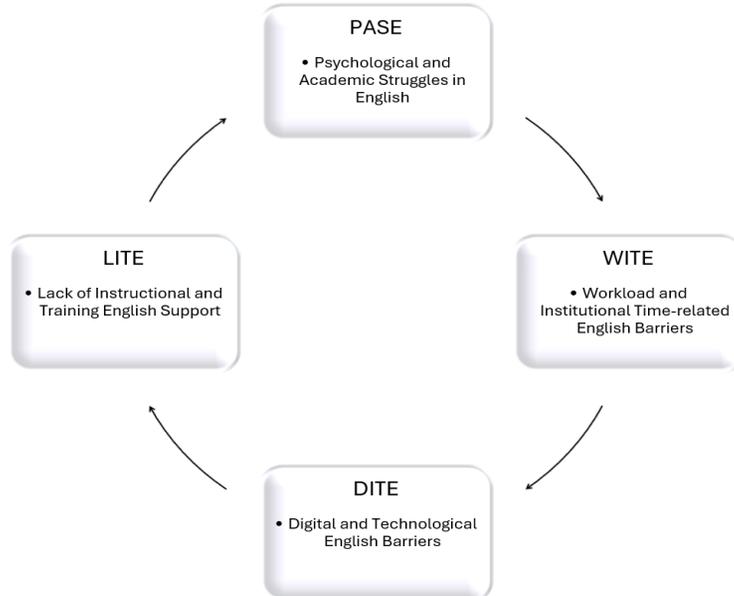

Figure 3. Barriers to English language use in the field of educational administration

Psychological and Academic Struggles in English (PASE) represented emotional and academic difficulties that hinder English language use in professional settings. This factor involved fear, anxiety, and a lack of confidence when using English in formal environments (Asnaini et al., 2025). The high loading of items such as "*I feel anxious when I must communicate with fluent or native English speakers*." (0.859) and "*I fear making mistakes when using English in front of others*." (0.815) indicated that emotional barriers such as anxiety and

fear of judgment significantly affected participants' willingness to use English. These may limit opportunities for practice in administrative contexts.

Workload and Institutional Time-related English Barriers (WITE) focused on the constraints of time, institutional barriers, and the development of English language skills. This factor illustrated the tensions participants felt between employment-related duties and the improvement of their language skills. The high loading items "*I have too many administrative responsibilities in education to focus on language use.*" (0.748) and "*I do not have enough time to improve my English skills.*" (0.737) indicate that educational administrators are so busy that they are unable to focus on English language skills. The findings indicate when English is not an institutional priority, language development becomes a substandard priority to the more pressing responsibilities at hand.

Digital and Technological English Barriers (DITE) focused on barriers pertaining to English used in digital and online tools. Participants noted the absence of or inadequate resources to help them use English in the digital format. The high loading items "*The software or systems I use have English language content or instructions that are too complex for non-native speakers.*" (0.833) and "*I am not confident using digital tools (e.g., Google Translate, Grammarly)*" (0.829) show that a lack of accessible digital resources and inadequate self-assessment of their technological skills can result in poor use of English. These difficulties are likely to result in a reluctance to use technology and an apprehension to communicate when technology is involved.

Lack of Instructional and Training English Support (LITE) refers to the systematic absence of formal mechanisms to help employees improve their English language skills. Respondents indicated that they receive too little feedback on written work, that there are almost no grammar seminars and that they rarely can participate in workshops with a language focus. "*I rarely receive feedback on my English language performance at work*" (0.743) and "*My workplace does not offer English language training for educational administrators*" (0.741) scored highly in LITE, highlighting how little support many professionals receive; there is little institutional support. As a result, the language skills of many administrators are stagnating, particularly in performance tasks.

5. Discussion

5.1 Psychological and Academic Struggles in English (PASE)

This group may be interpreted as representing internal psychological discomfort and formal language-related difficulties, which are likely interrelated. Items that loaded highly on this factor—such as "*I feel anxious when I must communicate with fluent or native English speakers.*", "*I fear making mistakes when using English in front of others.*", and "*I lack confidence when speaking English in formal settings.*"—suggest that emotional responses, such as anxiety, fear, and embarrassment, may inhibit English language use in professional contexts.

The emotional responses may be linked to language anxiety, which is well documented to negatively affect learners' performance and willingness to engage with the English language (Gobena, 2025; Horwitz et al., 1986; MacIntyre & Gardner, 1991; Than, 2025; Zhang et al., 2025). It is also plausible that affective barriers are heightened under the pressure to demonstrate one's skills to an audience or in a professional context, which typically requires greater structural accuracy (Mahdi, 2024; Than, 2025). The statement about avoiding English due to embarrassment about proficiency provides further evidence that a self-perception of inadequate language command may trigger a tendency to refrain from performance.

Also, the items about struggling to choose appropriate formal expressions in English or not being familiar with educational administrative English vocabulary share an academically oriented language dimension. These may still seem different from the affective items, but they are likely to contribute to the same mental load. Not knowing discipline-specific vocabulary can increase the fear of making a mistake and being judged, which reinforces anxiety. This explanation can account for why the items loaded on the same factor. In addition to the communicative context, apprehension associated with a lack of language also occurs in academic and professional contexts (Than 2025; Woodrow, 2006).

It is possible that the difficulties related to policy documents where respondents find it hard to understand English texts are not only cognitive but also stem from frustration and discomfort caused by highly specialized and formal English. Therefore, items as different as this one could still be considered to reflect the same dimension, as they indicate the impact of inadequate English proficiency on psychological stress and low self-efficacy associated with English use. People with low confidence in their skills are likely to avoid situations that may reveal their deficiencies. Thus, the grouping of these items into one factor suggests that emotional and linguistic challenges are not experienced in isolation. Instead, they are mutually reinforcing and contribute to a broader sense of psychological and academic struggle, particularly in high-stakes or formal English contexts.

5.2 Workload and Institutional Time-related English Barriers (WITE)

The second factor seems to focus on the organizational barriers that prevent the educational administrators from using and developing the English language. This factor combines the elements of scarcity of time, the institution's inadequate prioritization of English, and role overload. All of these can result in creating conditions under which English learning is likely to be disregarded. The highly loaded statements about too many administrative responsibilities in education to focus on language use and not having enough time to improve the English skills clearly show that the role and the accompanying overload do not leave any room for language practice or training.

It could be suggested that these barriers align with what Vroom (1964) identified as components of barriers arising from expectancy theory, which holds that people are less likely to expend effort on activities they believe will yield no reward or where success seems

unattainable given the circumstances. Employees may be justified in reducing the effort they devote to developing their language skills when English is not integrated into job functions or institutionally supported. Additionally, tasks involving English are often postponed due to more urgent responsibilities, and in some professional settings, English is not prioritized. This exemplifies the significant role that institutional culture and workload prioritization play in deprioritizing English (Malik et al., 2025; McLure & Aldridge, 2022). This means leadership vision and organizational structure are significant facilitators of staff language development in professional settings.

In addition, participants mentioned challenges integrating the learning of a new language with other responsibilities. Such issues point to a structural incompatibility between the demands of the job and the learning of a language. This could imply that, in addition to personal scheduling, the time poverty concept (Gershuny, 2000; Liu et al., 2023) could be more applicable to the educational workplace, where the learning of English is not integrated operationally.

A possible explanation for this factor may relate to the hidden curriculum present in the professions, where formal promotion of English proficiency may be documented in policies, but the conditions (e.g., workload, time, organizational culture) make such promotion less possible. The statement about the workplace not providing English-related resources or materials could support the interpretation that administrators are structurally disadvantaged in terms of time and support.

5.3 Digital and Technological English Barriers (DITE)

The third factor describes the complex, interrelated issues participants experience while using English and digital devices, applications, and resources (Pankanokpong & Seritanondh, 2025). These items appear to be related to different issues: confidence, access, support, and ease of use. However, they may be related to the same phenomenon: the barriers to the use of English for communication and learning through technology, particularly in the workplace.

Participants reported a lack of self-assurance with digital tools and constituted difficulties with online activities that require the use of English, which suggests that the digital environment may not always be empowering for users who do not speak English as their first language. Technologies with English as the primary language, regardless of usage level, increase users' self-doubt. The use of new technologies for language learning is a coin with two sides. Technology can promote equal access to language education; however, the use of technologies can also reinforce inequalities based on a lack of digital literacy or insufficient language ability (Mahdi, 2024; Makena, 2025; Ullah et al., 2023).

The unifying theme of insufficient institutional and technical support is most evident in the quoted items. Participants point out issues such as not receiving technical support for English-related digital tools and lack of access to reliable online English resources. Without proper guidance, participants seem to struggle with the technologies designed for English learning. Therefore, this issue is relevant to educational administrators because English often relies heavily on technology for report writing, international communication, and resource access. When these technologies are not language-appropriate and support is lacking, it is reasonable to expect increased anxiety and disengagement.

5.4 Lack of Instructional and Training English Support (LITE)

It could be explained by considering a mid-level educational administrator at a higher education institution who drafts reports in English, communicates with international partners, and reviews English-language policies. However, in their reports, they state that they have rarely received structured English training, formal feedback during English training, or access to language specialists. The statements grouped under this factor – especially rarely receiving feedback on English language performance at work and the lack of English language training for educational administrators – suggest that many professionals work in environments with little or no support for their professional English. These challenges do not stem from individual motivation or skills, but from a systemic lack of scaffolding, which Macalister and Nation (2019) identify as necessary for ongoing language learning in a professional context. The statements about the lack of a formal English support system and sufficient English language training indicate the absence of both summative and formative support systems. Feedback and mentoring in language use are critical (Carless, 2026); otherwise, administrators become stagnant. Carless and Boud (2018) noted this concern regarding feedback illiteracy, citing the need for feedback to be systemically embedded to facilitate growth.

Finding English grammar difficult to apply in writing tasks may indicate a structural support issue as much as a language competence issue (Hyland, 2021). From another perspective, one could argue that grammar problems result from writing instruction focused more on workplace writing tasks, such as formal memos, administrative reports, and policy summaries, which are relevant to a specific genre. According to Hyland (2006), such writing requires specific EFL writing instruction and cannot be assumed to develop organically. These issues are related because they concern not only training but also a systemic gap – where expectations for professional English use are not matched by opportunities for learning, practice, and support.

To enhance the findings, practical interventions can be linked to each barrier factor. For PASE, institutions can offer anxiety- and avoidance-mitigating strategies through low-stakes speaking routines and feedback that support self-efficacy building activities via guided practice and success (Sukserm, 2025b). For WITE, the most realistic solution is not more training hours, but structural changes: a combination of workload reduction, provision of time, and integration of English tasks into daily routines (e.g., bilingual templates, brief English micro-tasks within actual documents), as integrating practice is more effective for workplace learning than adding practice as an extra burden. For DITE, institutions should provide training for key English-based tools (e.g., translation tools, grammar checkers, online

meeting tools), along with prompt, clear technical assistance and language-sensitive guides, since the digital divide relates to insufficient support and meaningful use rather than just lack of access. Finally, for LITE, organizations can develop a sustainable support system of administrative genre workshops, mentoring and proofreading support, and feedback literacy practices (Carless, 2026), so staff can improve systemically through institutionalized feedback loops and explicit instruction in feedback genres.

6. Conclusion

The study is to investigate the barriers to English language use in the field of educational administration, and the findings found that there were four key factors related to barriers to English language use, including Psychological and Academic Struggles in English (PASE), Workload and Institutional Time-related English Barriers (WITE), Digital and Technological English Barriers (DITE), and Lack of Instructional and Training English Support (LITE).

The practical implications attempt to show that each barrier needs to be addressed individually. For PASE, institutions can overcome avoidance by implementing low-stakes practice, providing supportive feedback, and offering activities that strengthen self-efficacy. For WITE, it is necessary to adjust workloads and allocate time for activities aimed at improving foreign language skills, as motivation alone may not be sufficient if time and work pressures prevent participation. In the case of DITE, providing instruction and ongoing technical assistance is needed for the use of English-based tools, which can help alleviate the second-level digital divide. For WITE, it is recommended that institutions assign paperwork and activities related to employees' actual job responsibilities, such as drafting memos, reports, and policy summaries, and providing feedback, as training in professional writing for specific genres and in the use of feedback is necessary. However, one of the shortcomings of this study is that findings of this study were based on data collected from individuals working in the field of educational administration within a particular sociocultural and institutional context—likely within the Thai educational system. As such, the four identified factors may reflect barriers that are specific to this national, linguistic, and professional setting. Those should therefore exercise caution when attempting to generalize these findings to different educational systems or administrative contexts, particularly where English holds a different institutional role or status. Another limitation is that the data relied entirely on self-report surveys, which may introduce common method bias and lack direct observation of workplace performance; these issues may be more apparent when analyzing the survey responses. Furthermore, since exploratory factor analysis (EFA) is exploration by nature, further studies should confirm this factor structure via confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with a different sample to determine whether the factor structure fits across various demographic groups.

Future research could rigorously implement these programs and evaluate them through pre-test-post-test comparisons or sustained longitudinal monitoring. For example, an intervention targeting PASE could include confidence-building exercises, systematic feedback loops and outcome surveys to measure whether increased self-efficacy encourages participants to use English more frequently in formal communication in subsequent months.

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Authors Contributions

Dr. Pennapa Sukserm and Dr. Patsawut Sukserm were responsible for study design and revising. They were responsible for revising and drafting the manuscript. All authors read and approved of the final manuscript. prepared supplementary documents for the research project. All authors jointly analyzed the data, interpreted and discussed the findings. All authors equally contributed to the manuscript with their insights and regular discussions. All authors contributed equally to writing, editing, and proofreading the manuscript.

Competing Interests

The authors declare that they do not have any conflict of interest.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Sciedu Press.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics *(COPE)*.

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

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