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A Writing Self-Efficacy Scale for Non-Native Students of Turkish Origin: A Validity and Reliability Study

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to develop a scale to measure the writing self-efficacy of non-native students of Turkish origin (Uzbek, Kazak etc.) who come from abroad to Turkey for education. Firstly, the distinctiveness of each item in the item pool was examined in the data analysis. Exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were used in the second phase of the data analysis. As a result of the analysis, a scale with 2 factors and 17 items was obtained. These two factors explain 58.45% of the variance. The factor loads of the items vary between .479 - .867. Consistency index values obtained as a result of CFA were found to be GFI=0,90, AGFI=0,86, CFI=0,99; NFI= 0,97, RMSEA=0,049 and SRMR=0.041; (X2=158.07, df=114, p<.01); and the X2 / df ratio was found to be 158.07/114=1.39. The Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of the scale was calculated as 0.81 and 0.93 for sub-scales and 0.94 for the entire scale.

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Keywords:
Self-efficacy scale, validity and reliability, teaching Turkish as a second language.

Introduction

Developments in world politics and in educational policies led to an increase in the number of Turkish-learning foreigners and non-native students of Turkish origin in Turkey. The education programs of the European Union, different global organizations and various institutions of the Republic of Turkey, enabled thousands of students from abroad to come to Turkey for education each year. According to the statistics on the 2010-2011 academic year, published by the Student Selection and Placement Center (ÖSYM), there are 26,228 foreign students in Turkey. In the same academic year, 7273 new students were enrolled in Turkish universities (ÖSYM, 2011). Approximately 50% of these students are non-native students of Turkish origin.

Both non-native students of Turkish origin and other international students share a common purpose, access to a quality education. This can only be possible by learning the Turkish of Turkey in the best way and through the provision of a minimum level of improvement in all language skills. Because writing directly affects the homework and the exam performance of foreign students who study abroad and affects them in the subsequent years (Cheng, Myles and Curtis, 2004; Rosenfeld, Leung & Oltman: 2001); and it is an essential part of their educational experiences, writing skills are important among these skills. The levels of foreign students' improvement in writing in a second language and their speeds of writing depend on the education they received in their home countries, their background, the levels of their writing skill in their

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native languages, the second language education they have already received and their motivation for learning a second language (Cumming, Kim and Eouanzoui, 2007).

In examples across the world, it is seen that motivation has a big impact on the success of students who learn a second language and accordingly, some studies have been conducted on motivation in second language education (Dörnyei and Csizér, 2002; Mori and Gobel, 2006; Lamb, 2007; Chang, 2010). In these studies, some researchers have tried to analyze the motivation structures of students based on general motivation theories, while others have tried to define motivation structures only in relation to learning a second language (Gardner and Lambert, 1959; Gardner, 1985; Crookes and Schmidt, 1991; Dörnyei, 1990; Koul, Roy, Kaewkuekool and Ploisawaschai, 2009; He, 2008). Specific studies of the motivation for writing in a second language have also been conducted; student perception of writing in the second language and their future goals were the core research problems of these studies (Cumming, Kim and Eouanzoui, 2007, Sasaki, 2011). As a result of the studies conducted, it was revealed that there was an important relation between skill perceptions, namely self-efficacy perception, and writing achievement (Pajares 2003; Pajares, Valiante and Cheong, 2007; Büyükikiz, 2011). When evaluated in this context, it is seen that self-efficacy perception can be used as an important explanatory or predictor in the studies for teaching Turkish as a second/foreign language to both foreign and non-native students of Turkish origin.

Self-efficacy perceptions, which were first introduced by Bandura (1977) in the second half of 1970s, are the judgments of an individual about his/her capacity for learning or doing something (Bandura, 1997). Individuals make these judgments mostly with knowledge obtained from four sources. These sources are prior experiences, knowledge gained from experiences of models, being verbally persuaded and their physical and emotional states at the moment of realizing a task (Bandura, 1995).

Self-efficacy perception has been the subject of many studies in fields such as education, health, economics, and the political sciences. The studies in the field of education revealed that the self-efficacy perceptions affected the choices made from among the educational tasks; the determination of targets concerning the task chosen; the amount of effort paid in order to manage the task given or chosen; the determination and insistence shown for continuing a task when a difficulty is encountered; resistance to stress and pressure caused by responsibilities; and finally the achievement itself (Pajares, 1996, 2008; Wood and Bandura, 1989; Schunk and Pajares 2002, 2009). Moreover, the studies conducted revealed that self-efficacy related to other motivational structures such as work references, target orientations and internal motivation; and they played an active role in the self-organization process (Schunk, 1981, 1982, 1990; Zimmerman, Bandura and Martinez-Pons, 1992; Schunk and Ertmer, 2000). When evaluated in this context, it is seen that self-efficacy perceptions can be used as the explanatory of the learning/behavior and the predictor of the learning/behavior of the future. That indicates the importance of self-efficacy perceptions in educational activities and in research. However, problems are still encountered related to the measuring of self-efficacy perceptions in many studies (Bandura, 2006; Schunk and Pajares, 2009). The first step towards the solution of this problem is to use assessment tools which have a strong theoretical basis and which have the qualifications required for the context of the study (Schunk and Pajares, 2009).

The purpose of the present study, which is concerned with writing skills, is to develop a writing self-efficacy scale in order to measure the motivation of non-native students of Turkish origin, who are considerable in number, and who come from abroad to study in Turkey.

Method

The present study is based on the scaling prepared for determining the structural validity and internal consistency reliability coefficient of the Writing Self-Efficacy Scale (for non-native students of Turkish origin).

Study Group

A total of 168 students were approached and involved in the process of developing the scale. Three papers taken from the students were found to have inadequate markings, or more than one marking, and

these papers were excluded from the analyses. Two students participated in the item correction study only. Validity and reliability analyses of the scale were made with the data obtained from the remaining 163 students. These students came from Azerbaijan (19), Iraq (Turkmen-83), Iran (Turkmen-5), Turkmenistan (18), Syria (Turkmen-3), Kazakhstan (13), Mongolia (Kazakh-2), Kyrgyzstan (19), and Tatarstan (1).

The students who were included in the study group are non-native students of Turkish origin who were learning the Turkish of Turkey in three Turkish learning centers in Ankara (Gazi University TÖMER, Ankara University TÖMER and Hacettepe University HÜDİL) and they were at the C level or another language level equivalent to C, in the months of May and June in 2010, when the study data were collected. Study group does not cover Turkish children living abroad (Germany, Belgium, France, USA etc.), since these children classified as bilingual children (their first language is Turkish and their second language is the language which is spoken in the country they live).

The ideal, in the process of developing scales which are to be used in the measurement of this kind of psychological structure, is to aim for a group which can cover the range between the highest and the smallest measurement (Erkuş, 2003). Accordingly, the plan was to have 3 times more items than the item number in the trial scale (48 items) or to compose the "study group" with more students. During the implementations, all the students, who were studying in the abovementioned institutions, and who were at the C level or another language level equal to C were determined and communicated.

Data Collection and Instruments

The research data is composed of the data obtained from the trial scale that 163 non-native students of Turkish origin filled out. The trial scale is a 7-graded Likert type scale and includes 48 items. No data revealing the identity of students were collected except for their country of origin, their purposes in learning Turkish, whether or not they had Turkish lessons before, and their genders. This was so that the students could give correct information about themselves in the data collecting process (Tezbaşaran, 1997).

Data Analysis

Answer matrixes were formed before analyzing the data collected with the trial scale. Positive and negative items in the scales used were determined. Negative items were graded oppositely with the positive items so that high grades taken from the scales show constantly high self-efficacy perception. For the answers given to positive expressions, 1 point was given to “I definitely disagree”, 7 points were given to “I definitely agree”. For the answers given to negative expressions, 7 points were given to “I definitely disagree” and 1 point was given to “I definitely agree". SPSS 15.0 package program and Lisrel 8.7 were used in the data analysis.

Research Process

In the first phase of the research, the literature was scanned in order to compose the pool of items which would be used to measure the writing self-efficacy perceptions of non-native students of Turkish origin students learning the Turkish of Turkey as a second language (Bandura 2006; Pajares, 2007). The prior education received by the non-native students of Turkish origin from abroad and the expectations they had for the future after having this education were also taken into consideration while composing the items. In the first phase of the study a pool of items was formed with 55 items.

The items in the pool were presented to experts in the second phase of the study. The experts examined the items in terms of whether or not they were suitable for measuring the writing self-efficacy perceptions; and whether or not they included other psychological structures apart from self-efficacy perceptions. The ability of measuring other psychological structures such as self-concept, result expectations, self etc. were excluded from the items, which is important for the reliability of the results (Bandura, 2006; Schunk and Pajares 2009). As a result of the expert proposals, 7 items were added; 2 items were corrected; and 48 items were included in the draft scale.

It is important for expressions used in the scale to be comprehensible for the target audience (Likert, 1967). The comprehensibility of each item is very important so as to prevent subjective measurement and to completely reveal the psychometric features of the scale, especially in a scale which will be used in the teaching of a second language or a foreign language (AERA, APA, NCME, 1999). Accordingly, 2 students from the target audience were separately asked to read the scale items aloud in the third phase of the study. After reading each item, the students were asked whether they understood or not. If they stated that they had understood, they were asked to explain what they understood. While implementing this method, which is used by Roettger, Szymczuk and Millard (1979) in order to reedit scale items according to students' levels, the students stated that they understood all the items they read. However, it was seen that these 2 students interpreted the same 2 items differently. Thus, these items were reviewed and corrected.

After making the necessary revisions, the trial scale composed of 48 items was applied on 166 students who were studying in 3 Turkish learning centers in Ankara. During the implementations, the researchers read out the items in the scale and the students marked the grades by following them on the form they had in their hands. Then the collected data collecting instruments were examined. One hundred and sixty three data collecting instruments, which were suitable for using, were taken for evaluation. Item distinctiveness analysis, exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were made; and the reliability coefficients of the scale were calculated based on the data obtained.

Results

Results on Item Analysis

Different item analysis methods can be used while preparing Likert type scales. The item analysis method "based on internal consistency criterion" was used in the present study. By this method, it was examined whether each item was distinctive or not for lower and upper groups (27%) (Tezbaşaran, 1997; Erkuş, 2003). Two-way t-test was made in independent groups; and t-statistic values and significance levels were determined for each item. The item analysis results for the items in the scale are presented in Table 1. Only results for 17 items situated in the scale after all analysis are presented because other items will not be used anymore.

T-test results ($p < .01$ for all the items) show that all the items in the scale can make distinct the students with high and low self-efficacy perceptions at a level which can be considered as statistically significant.

Results on Exploratory Factor Analysis

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett tests were made before making an exploratory factor analysis with the data collected. The value calculated for the KMO test which shows whether the size of the study group, namely the data obtained, is suitable or not for making exploratory factor analysis was found to be 0.937; and the Bartlett sphericity test chi square value was found to be 5645.10 ($X^2_{(1128)}=5645.10$, $p<.01$). The KMO value which is above 0.90 is interpreted as the fact that the data set is at a suitable level for making factor analysis (Kalaycı, 2006). Moreover, the "correlation matrix is unit matrix" zero hypothesis was rejected at a significance level of .01 as a result of the Bartlett test (Kalaycı, 2006). First of all, unrotated factor analysis was made by using the principal component analysis (PCA) method after having collected statistical proofs showing that data set is suitable for factor analysis.

In the unrotated factor analysis, it was seen that 45 items out of 48 items in the trial scale were in the first factor and the remaining 3 items were in the other factor. It was decided that the 3 items in the other factors were excluded as they lacked the ability of measuring only one structure, and that the rotated factor analysis was made with 45 items which were in the first factor.

The Varimax method was used in the rotated factor analysis. In the analyses, the factors whose eigenvalues are above 1 were considered as significant. Furthermore, the break point of the scree plot was also taken into consideration while determining the structure. The lower limit in the examination of factor loads was taken as .45. As a result of the rotation, a structure with 7 factors whose eigenvalue is above 1 and which explains 65.55% of the total variance was obtained. In this phase, 6 items whose factor loads were

below .45 and which were in different factors were determined. Moreover, it was seen that there was a factor which included only 2 items whose factor loads were above .45. These 2 items and 6 items which have factor loads below .45 were excluded from the scale. The items in the remaining factors were examined; and it was seen that the items which were significantly clustered in theoretical terms were only in the first and third factors even though some items were not consistent. The items which were not theoretically coherent in these two factors were separated; and the remaining 17 items were included in the scale.

After the rotation, following the exclusion of items from the scale, a factor analysis was made again. As a result of the factor analysis, a structure with 2 factors whose eigenvalues were above 1 and which explained 58.45% of the total variance was obtained. After the rotation, it was determined that 13 items were under the first factor and 4 items were under the second factor. It was seen that factor loads of the item varied between .479 and .867. It was determined that 2 items in the first factor were also found with a factor load above .45 in the second factor. However, a difference above .10 was seen between the factor loads of these items in different factors and these items were not excluded from the scale. The scree plot of the last version of the scale is presented in Figure 1 and the factor load pattern matrixes are presented in Table 2.

Table 1. T-tests for distinctiveness of the items chosen

Scale Item No	Group	N	$\bar{x}$	Ss	sd	t	P
1	Lower	44	3.02	1.48619	87	-7.506	.000
	Upper	45	5.20	1.23583			
2	Lower	44	3.55	1.31988	87	-7.921	.000
	Upper	45	5.60	1.11600			
3	Lower	44	4.11	1.38456	87	-7.421	.000
	Upper	45	5.93	.86340			
4	Lower	44	4.18	1.38552	87	-9.895	.000
	Upper	45	6.49	.69486			
5	Lower	44	4.07	1.28312	87	-5.992	.000
	Upper	45	5.84	1.50689			
6	Lower	44	4.09	1.13748	87	-10.788	.000
	Upper	45	6.31	.76343			
7	Lower	44	3.55	1.20955	87	-11.706	.000
	Upper	45	6.09	.79264			
8	Lower	44	3.66	1.37998	87	-11.758	.000
	Upper	45	6.47	.78625			
9	Lower	44	3.55	.97538	87	-12.628	.000
	Upper	45	6.00	.85280			
10	Lower	44	4.30	1.13259	87	-7.566	.000
	Upper	45	6.07	1.07450			
11	Lower	44	3.43	1.24635	87	-6.026	.000
	Upper	45	5.38	1.76183			
12	Lower	44	4.02	1.15111	87	-11.198	.000
	Upper	45	6.36	.77329			
13	Lower	44	3.45	1.20955	87	-8.891	.000
	Upper	45	5.82	1.30190			
14	Lower	44	3.70	1.15294	87	-10.351	.000
	Upper	45	6.13	1.05744			
15	Lower	44	3.93	1.24635	87	-9.778	.000
	Upper	45	6.11	.80403			
16	Lower	44	3.80	1.09075	87	-12.424	.000
	Upper	45	6.27	.75076			
17	Lower	44	3.73	1.12815	87	-11.202	.000
	Upper	45	6.20	.94388			

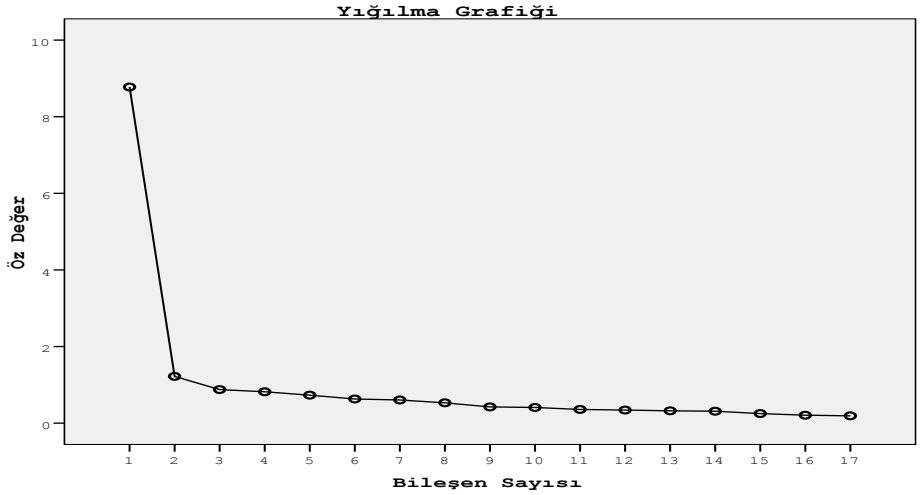


Figure 1. Writing self-efficacy scale (for non-native students of Turkish origin) scree plot

Table 2. Factor loads of the items chosen

Scale Item No	Scale Item No	1st Factor	2nd Factor
44	14	.777	
43	13	.776	
37	11	.729	
45	15	.705	
46	16	.703	
23	7	.684	.468
26	8	.684	
38	12	.638	
47	17	.633	
22	6	.629	.452
29	9	.605	
30	10	.575	
13	5	.479	
5	3		.867
6	4		.796
3	1		.643
4	2		.623

When the two-factored structure of the scale was examined, it was seen that the items in the first factor were about expression and form characteristics, namely composition competences, and 4 items in the second factor were about the usage of grammatical rules in writing. Based on these results, it was concluded that the scale was qualified to measure only one structure in two factors; and it was decided to build the confirmatory factor analysis on a two-factored structure.

Results on Confirmatory Factor Analysis

In the confirmatory factor analysis, a model which is prepared based on the previously obtained information is checked in order to see whether or not it is consistent with the data obtained. In this analysis, latent variables represent a theoretical structure while observed measurements are designed as the indicators of this structure (Jöreskog and Sörbom, 1993). Accordingly, as is seen in Figure 2, confirmatory factor analysis is based on an equity that 2 latent variables can correctly predict 17 observed variables. Two latent variables are the factors determined in the previous factor analysis. Seventeen observed variables are the items in the scale.

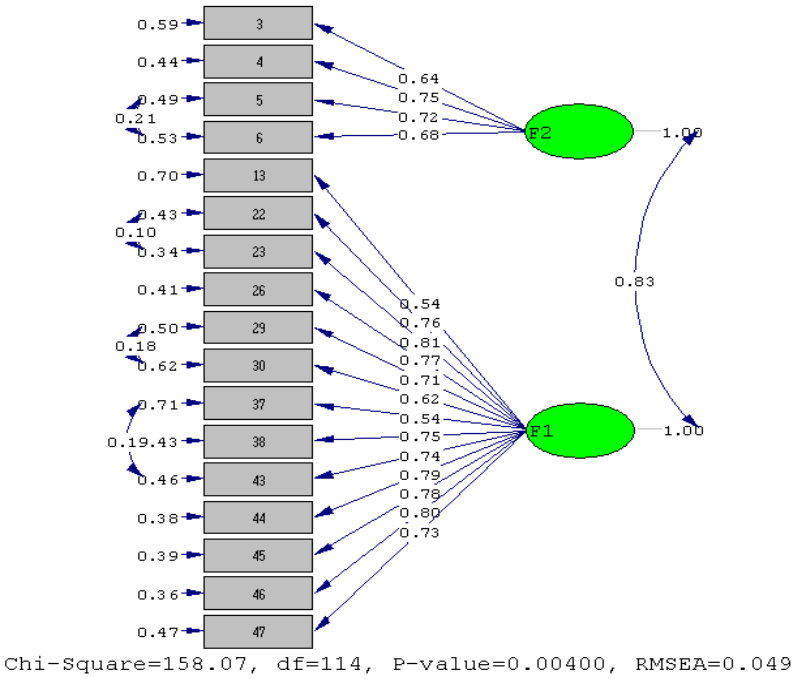


Figure 2. The analysis of standardized confirmatory factor analysis of the model

During the analysis, the correction indexes were examined; and error variances of 5th and 6th items, 22nd and 23rd items, 29th and 30th items, and 37th and 43rd items which were in the same factors were associated with each other.

In the confirmatory factor analysis, RMSEA, SRMR, GFI, AGFI, CFI, NFI values were taken into consideration among the model fitness criteria for the structure fitness. According to the results obtained, it was determined that the RMSEA value, which was supposed to be below 0.05 if the model was suitable, was 0.049; and the SRMR value was 0.041. Moreover, it was seen that the GFI value, which was supposed to be 0.90 in the event that the model is suitable was 0.90; the AGFI value was 0.86; the CFI value was 0.99; and the NFI value was 0.97 (Schumacker and Lomax, 2004; Şimşek, 2007; Kline, 2005).

The chi-square value ($\chi^2_{(114)}$=158.07, p<.01) which was additionally calculated for the fitness of model was found to be statistically significant. Moreover, the χ^2/ df ratio (158.07/114=1.39) which was obtained by including the impact of sample size to the calculation was found to be very small. The ratio which is below 2 is accepted as an indicator of the perfect fit (Kline, 2005). These results show that the model is confirmed by the data.

Results on Reliability

The internal consistency coefficient, namely Cronbach alpha value which is often used in psychological tests, was calculated as 0.81 for the first factor; 0.93 for the second factor; and 0.94 for the entire scale. These results show that the scale is adequately reliable (Alpar, 2003).

Discussion and Conclusion

The structure reliability and reliability analyses of the scale, which was prepared to measure the self-efficacy perceptions of non-native students of Turkish origin who come from abroad to learn writing in the Turkish of Turkey, comprises the scope of this research. When the Turkish literature is examined, it is seen that there are 2 scales which can be used for measuring the writing self-efficacy. The first of these scales was

adapted into Turkish by Demir (2011); and it is for measuring the writing self-efficacy perceptions of students whose native language is Turkish. The scale has 2 sub-scales and 10 items.

The other scale was developed by Büyükikiz (2011). The target audience of the scale is students who learn Turkish as a second language. The scale has 2 sub-scales and 16 items. The writing self-efficacy scale of Pajares (2007) was prepared to measure the writing self-efficacy perception levels of 4th-11th grade students; and proofs about the psychometric characteristics are collected via this scale. The scale has 2 sub-scales and 10 items. In the present study, it was examined whether the items in the scale obtained were distinctive for lower and upper groups of 27%. As a result of two-way t-test analysis, each item was found to be distinctive in the independent groups ($p<.01$ for all the items).

The structure validity of the scale was analyzed by EFA and CFA. The KMO value (0.94) which was examined before the EFA and the result of the Bartlett sphericity test ($X^2_{(1128)}=5645.10$, $p<.01$) showed that the data set was suitable for EFA. As a result of EFA, a two-factored structure, which explains 58.45% of the total variance and whose eigenvalue is above 1, was obtained. The factor loads of 17 items which are in the 2 mentioned factors vary between .479 and .867.

Fitness of the two-factored structure determined in EFA with the data collected was analyzed with CFA. Chi-square value obtained as a result of CFA ($\chi^2_{(114)}=158.07$ $p<.01$); and the Chi-square/ Degree of freedom ratio (1.39) were found to be significant. Moreover, the goodness of fit indexes of the model (GFI=0.90, AGFI=0.86, CFI=0.99; NFI= 0.97, RMSEA=0.049 ve SRMR=0.041) also show that there is a good fitness between the model and the data. Thus, it is seen that the two-factored structure of the scale is confirmed by the data.

When the items in the two-factored structure, which was also confirmed by the data as a result of CFA, were examined, it was seen that the items in the first factor were for general composition efficacy. It was also seen that the items in the second factor were for basic grammar efficacy and the efficacy of using spelling rules in written expression. This result is consistent with other scales in the literature. Also, in the previous scale developing and adapting studies, researchers determined that efficacy perceptions for the style and content characteristics of the written expression, and the efficacy perceptions for the implementation of basic grammar rules in writing, are separate; and they are comprised of 2 different factors (Pajares, 2007; Demir, 2011; Büyükikiz, 2011). This situation can be considered to be the result of evaluating grammatical rules as special in the education in writing in both the native language and in the second language. Most of the time, when students write a text in the classroom, first of all, whether all the words are written correctly, whether they correctly use punctuation or not; and whether they use the suffixes in the right places or not, are controlled. Such qualifications as language, register, expression and style are put in the second plan, even though they are more important, as they are relatively more difficult to assess and it takes a long time to assess them. For this reason, the feedback given to students does not cover all the dimensions of written expression in a balanced and constant way; and it has an influence on the formation of self-efficacy perceptions.

Analyses for the reliability of the scale developed in the present study show that both the sub-scales of the scale (.81 and .93) and the entire scale (.94) are adequately reliable.

In this study we worked with students came from several countries. Languages spoken some of these countries (Azerbaijan, Iraq, Iran, Turkmenistan, Syria) like Turkish spoken in Turkey more than languages spoken the other countries (Kazakhstan, Mongolia, Kyrgyzstan, Tatarstan). We also control whether this variable has an impact on students writing self efficacy beliefs or not. We divided students into two groups on the basis of language spoken in their home countries. Then perform a t-test. Results show that there is no statistically meaningful difference between these two groups' writing self efficacy beliefs [entire scale ($t_{(161)}=-,186$; $p>0,05$), first subscale ($t_{(161)}=-,201$; $p>0,05$), second subscale($t_{(161)}=-,118$; $p>0,05$)].

In conclusion, the results obtained from the reliability and validity analyses of the scale, which was developed in order to measure the self-efficacy perceptions of non-native students of Turkish origin students for writing in the Turkish of Turkey, show that the scale fulfills the minimum conditions required. It is thought that it would be useful to thoroughly examine the reasons for the separation of the self-efficacy

perceptions for general composition competence and the self-efficacy perceptions for implementing grammatical rules in the written expressions of the students.

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Appendix

Yazma Öz Yeterlilik Ölçeği (Türk Soylu Öğrenciler İçin)

No	Maddeler	Katılmıyorum						Katılıyorum
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Bir sayfalık bir kompozisyonun bütün kelimelerini doğru yazabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2	Kompozisyon yazarken noktalama işaretlerini yerinde ve doğru kullanabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3	Yazı yazarken dil bilgisi kurallarına uygun, doğru cümleler yazabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4	Yazı yazarken ekleri doğru kullanabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5	Kendimi yazarak tam anlamıyla ifade edebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6	Kompozisyon yazarken konuya uygun örnekler verebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7	Kompozisyonumu belirli bir plan içerisinde yazabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	Kompozisyonuma uygun bir sonuç yazabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9	Anlatma istediğimi, tam karşılayabilecek kelimeler bulabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10	Anlamca açık ve anlaşılır bir dil kullanabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11	Bir hikâye yazabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12	Öğrenim hayatımı anlatan bir yazı yazabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13	Yarım bırakılmış bir hikâyeyi yazılı olarak tamamlayabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14	Resimlerle anlatılan bir olayı yazılı olarak ifade edebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15	Dinlediklerimi kendi cümlelerimle tekrar ifade edebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16	Gördüğüm bir olayı yazılı olarak ifade edebilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17	Kompozisyon yazarken kelimelerin mecaz anlamlarını da kullanabilirim.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7