

New standardised texts for assessing reading performance in Greek

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Standard visual tests in the clinical practice may not be predictive when it comes to evaluation of functional vision, like reading. Therefore, there is a need to develop standardized clinical reading tests that can better predict reading performance and diagnose reading deficits. One widely-used clinical tool is the International Reading Speed Texts (IReST) set, which is available in 17 languages world-wide so far. The aim of the current study was the development and validation of the Greek version of the IReST, for assessing reading performance.

The standardized English IReST have been translated to Greek, according to specific criteria which guarantee the homogeneity of the texts in terms of length, content, and linguistic complexity. The texts were tested with 25 young normally-sighted, native Greek speakers, at a 40 cm viewing distance and print size of 1 M unit. The participants read aloud the texts. Reading time was measured by stopwatch. Statistical evaluation of the texts included reading speed calculation in words per minute (wpm), tests for differences in reading speed among the 10 texts, and also investigation of textual and personal parameters which affect reading speed variability.

Three performance categories were obtained from the reading speed calculations. The average(SD) reading speed between subjects was 208(21) wpm. Statistically significant differences were found only in the reading speed of texts which belong to different performance categories. Variability in reading speed is caused by multiple parameters, such as the median word frequency ($r = 0.70$) and the mean word length ($r = 0.95$) of the texts, as well as the reading efficacy of the subjects ($r = 0.68$).

The Greek IReST set is designed to constitute a new diagnostic tool in low vision and reading disorders' research, and is suitable for repeated measures. The texts simulate everyday reading tasks, providing a reliable way to measure functional vision. The homogeneity of the texts allows for assessing reading performance under various conditions and methodological paradigms.