

Main Difficulties Of Non-Native Speakers In Written Production

Chrysovalantou Kapeta

(Faculty Of Italian Language And Literature, Aristotle University Of Thessaloniki, Greece)

Abstract:

Background: Scientists have been exploring the field of Readability for many decades through various tools, such as special software or indicators (Gulpease, Dale-Chall, Gunning Fox, etc.), in order to make careful measurements of the Readability degree. The purpose of the present research is to identify those criteria, which first determine the level of difficulty, and second, the language level of a written text.

Materials and methods: In order to measure the Readability grade and the Language Level in written production, 316 texts from the state certificate for Italian language in Greece (KPG) were selected between May 2015 and November 2016. Specifically, from 1000 randomized KPG notebooks, a total of 80 notebooks of language level B1 and B2 were used, that were first digitized in manual form. All data were collected from the examinations of the Greek Certificate (KPG) of May 2015 and November 2016. 316 written texts, including both levels, B1 and B2, were digitized manually in Word form. In the second phase, they were measured by using the Read-It tool, and the values and results of this process were evaluated. Through SPSS.24, and in particular, with factor analysis, the final results were achieved.

Results: 1. The texts produced by Greek users of the Italian language show that the Readability degree seems to vary by language level and degree of difficulty both through the use of vocabulary as well as grammatical and syntactic features. 2. There seems to be a great difficulty in producing secondary texts, correctly worded in Italian, at both levels. 3. Another phenomenon that reduces both, the readability grade and the language level is the vocabulary confusion with other languages, e.g. we see Greek users writing English or Spanish words confusing them with Italian.

Conclusion: These valuable findings and this research are likely to pave the way for future scientists to delve even deeper into the parameters of writing with the ultimate goal of developing more advanced software that will help to improve the use of languages by foreign users and to prepare tests more accurate and fair by certification entities.

Keywords: Non-native Speaker, Written Production, Text Difficulty, Language Level

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I. Introduction

In general, the procedure followed to choose suitable texts according to the language level has always been very tough compared to the requirements that must be put at the forefront. Therefore, it is very useful to distinguish the meaning of each specific term if you want to convey more information regarding how each term works in an entire text. Starting with learnability, according to Ellis (2005: 150-151), after a certain sensitive age, students whose first languages lack morphological markers of key grammatical functions such as articles, for example, will find these difficult to acquire as implicit knowledge, although they may be able to develop explicit knowledge. Students who started learning a second language (L2) as children are more likely to show high levels of implicit knowledge, while those who started as teenagers or adults, especially if they are educated people, are more likely to show high levels of explicit knowledge (Ellis, 2005: 152).

First of all, the concept of the linguistic level of a text constitutes the starting point of this research, because in the end all the result revolves around the same rules: 1. how to create a test of reasonable evaluation in front of all Italian language users and 2. how to write a text according to the degree of difficulty and language level having at hand fundamental criteria that emerge from this investigation.

Therefore, appropriate tools lead to valid and fair measurement, processing and evaluation of texts produced by foreigners in a different language (Elder & Harding, 2008: 341-342).

On the other hand, the results of this study are very important in order to create exam instructions and tests depending on language skills (in this case B1 and B2 based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Foreign Languages) and the difficulty grade, i.e. the readability grade (Lenzner, 2014: 678-681).

It is very necessary to have a global rating scale, because every foreign language user needs to know to which linguistic level their acquired linguistic knowledge and skills belong. This fundamental purpose is put in

the foreground for work reasons, in other cases for academic reasons, other times to certify one's skills or for simple self-evaluation reasons.

This grid, then, can be found in the CEFR which proposes six common levels and interprets each linguistic-communicative competence separately. For each level there is a series of indicators to observe to verify the level of competence, and in almost all cases it is a question of "knowing how to do with the language" (Balboni, 2012: 13). The six levels of competence follow with their terminology in English (Diadori, 2003: 10-11).

- ✓ A1 = Contact level (Breakthrough)
- ✓ A2 = Survival level (Waystage)
- ✓ B1 = Threshold level
- ✓ B2 = Level of progress (Vantage)
- ✓ C1 = Effectiveness level (Proficiency)
- ✓ C2 = Mastery level

The indicators vary according to the level of linguistic competence and, before evaluating a text by classifying it with respect to the level, we also think about the qualitative evaluation of the text. According to C. Matthiae, it is not a real mathematical grid, but a list of macro parameters and indicators without evaluation scores. On the other hand, the very order in which the three macro parameters are presented is very indicative (Matthiae, 2012: 105):

- content of the text (organicity, plausibility, originality...),
- communicative and textual appropriateness (respect for delivery, register;
- appropriate, respect for the textual genre, coherence and cohesion, effectiveness),
- linguistic accuracy: lexicon (appropriateness, richness);
- morphology (nominal, verbal morphology);
- syntax (simple/complex sentence order); spelling;
- punctuation.

In accordance with these data, there are also other parameters that influence the result of a written production, which count a lot and are found in other certifications such as, for example, CILS (Matthiae, 2010: 106).

- Fluency (good/various breaks/blanks).
- Communicative effectiveness (the message is intelligible/practically incomprehensible/blank paper).
- Morphosyntactic correctness (almost no errors/some errors/many errors).
- Lexical appropriateness (good/acceptable/insufficient).
- Spelling (does not compromise the message/compromises it often/commonly compromises it).

According to Laviosa, through the interaction between writer, text and reader, there is a list of strategies to develop the improvement of the production of a text and to make people understand the true message that they want to communicate: the use of language mechanisms, the rules of grammar, syntax structures, correct layout convention as for example in letters or emails, connecting ideas and information through sentences to develop an argument and organize the content in a clear and convincing way (Laviosa, 1994: 485-488).

Furthermore, after a study by Binder, for most of a group of educated adults, copying a passage of text quickly will probably be a simple matter of copying between 100 and 150 letters in a single minute (Binder, Haughton & Bateman, 2002). This would be a widely accepted estimate of fluency performance on written production proficiency (Binder, Haughton & Bateman, 2002: 9).

Goertler, Kraemer and Schenker (2016) present in a study that at the end of the first year of German with the duration of 100 hours, students of the MSU (Michigan State University) should be able to reach the A1 level; at the end of the second year of German with 200 hours of teaching, students should be able to reach A1/A2; at the end of the third year (350 hours of education), minors should be able to reach B1; and at the end of the fourth year (500 hours of instruction), students should be able to reach B1/B2 (Goertler, Kraemer & Schenker, 2016). Vetter (2011) almost followed the same study by observing that German-speaking students of a Romance language (e.g. French) with receptive skills in Italian can interact with non-German speakers (with receptive skills in another language). in a multilingual receptive norm and use Italian and French, Italian and English, Italian and German - according to the receptive abilities of the people with whom they interact. The only prerequisite is that these students have acquired receptive skills in Italian (Vetter, 2011: 4).

In Austria, the proficiency levels relevant to Romance languages, in particular Italian, which is usually taught as a second or third foreign language, students reach level B1 after four years of study and B2 after six (Vetter, 2011). According to Grin and Faniko's study, social initiative seems to be highly associated with having German or Italian as an L2, while flexibility is more closely associated with having English as an L2 (Grin & Faniko, 2012: 42).

The substantial aim of the present research is to find factors with which we could distinguish whether a text is oriented towards level B1 or B2, always thinking about the fact that these are productions written by Greek citizens, non-native speakers of the Italian language, and according to specific criteria that are presented in the end of this paper.

II. Material And Methods

The main purpose is to find factors with which we could distinguish whether a text is oriented to the B1 or B2 level, always keeping in mind that these are productions written by Greek citizens. In fact, this last particular reflection would be the starting point for having new useful information, provided by the final product of this research that will help foreign language users to improve their language skills. Furthermore, it will help the constructors of different tests to produce exams based on real and scientifically approved factors, and first of all, based on the validity and fairness of the tests created for foreign candidates.

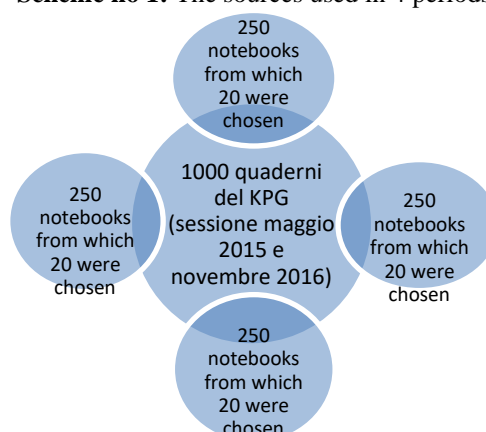
For the above purpose, 316 texts of the KPG exams¹ (exams of the Greek State Certificate) produced by non-native Greeks should have been digitized. All the texts produced (316 in total) were written with accuracy manually using the software Word (Windows 2010). The Gulpease index (Mich, Pianta & Mana, 2013: 34-44) and READ-IT tool (Dell’Orletta, Montemagni & Venturi, 2011: 75-76) were used to process all the data of the produced texts. Through the READ-IT and Gulpease indexes, the variables were found, and for the final results, the IBM SPSS STATISTICS VERSION 24 software was chosen.

Table no 1: Overview table of data for this research

Number of texts analyzed	316
Source	Greek State Certification
Period	May 2015-November 2016
Language Level	B1, B2
Formula used	Gulpease, Read-IT
Program of statistic analysis	SPSS.24

Furthermore, the productions written in these notebooks belong to the May 2015 and November 2016 sessions. Furthermore, in each notebook there are four written productions, two for level B1 and two for B2, as required by the KPG exam for the part of written production. In addition to this requirement, we observe that in one notebook there are only two compositions, in another three and in a third we find only one. For this reason, instead of having 320 written productions for a total of eighty notebooks, we have 316.

Scheme no 1: The sources used in 4 periods



In the last phase, all the variables collected from the SPSS table were analyzed, using SPSS graphs and tables to arrive at the conclusions and results of the hypotheses mentioned in the introduction.

¹ KPG, [ΚΠΓ]-Κρατικό Πιστοποιητικό Γλωσσομάθειας, Χρονικό ανάπτυξης του συστήματος εξετάσεων ΚΠΓ. Ανακτήθηκε στις 19-10-2019, από shorturl.at/nrMOR.

III. Results

The measurement and evaluation of the texts produced is carried out according to Italian rules. Consequently, it would be essential to emphasize that when writing one must reflect in Italian and not Greek, thus avoiding errors such as in spelling or grammar. Another important phenomenon is that sometimes Greek words are used with Greek characters, perhaps because people don't know how to write them in Italian. Even in this case, an Italian native speaker and evaluator will not be able to understand the text. All these important points have been thoroughly researched and analyzed as they are to be presented later on the next table.

Speaking in more detail, on table 2, we see the words that are not part of the appropriate language with respect to the number of the written test and the linguistic level:

Table no 2: Very important errors found in texts produced in Italian by Greek non-native speakers according to the Language Level B1 or B2

Nr.2	B2	Phonetics
Nr.4	B2	honora,risponsibile
Nr.6	B2	endirizia, speridate
Nr.7	B1	laografico, esposizione, attivite,caratita, vuo, Aschia
Nr.8	B2	Supporte, organizzato, attivite, utilita, programme
Nr.14	B2	Septembre, Ioanna Filippu, Via Papadopulu, Piazza Omonia, comunicazione
Nr.15	B1	Di Ampiente, piu du centociquanta mille visitatori, andraci
Nr.16	B2	Visitore, Laografia, ampiente, l'ampiente, i visitatori, l'ampiente,
Nr.19	B1	attivitì del'arte, attiviti, Messogeia
Nr.20	B2	Attiviti, Messogeia, attiviti, attiviti, attiviti
Nr.21	B1	la città, que, cuando, que
Nr.22	B2	il curso, que, conseguito,Specificarò, Ioanna Filippu, Aspetarò
Nr.23	B1	Incontrarà, 150.000 turistes
Nr.27	B1	Messogia, grecasi presedanno, tradizionali, ecologichi
Nr.28	B2	Mesogia, Fando, incontrerate, dipente
Nr.30	B2	Jiugno,
Nr.31	B1	Visitore, vuò fare
Nr.32	B2	Visitore, vuò rilassare, vuò abinare, vuò conscere, ecologichi, realtiva
Nr.35	B1	Attivite, lebberi
Nr.36	B2	Attivite, piadare
Nr.37	B1	Cantautore,
Nr.38	B2	Curso, senderlo, senderlo
Nr.39	B1	Politismo, offrè, attivitè, attivitè, Mesogeia
Nr.40	B2	Differento, opportunità
Nr.42	B2	Qualre, physik
Nr.43	B1	Parko
Nr.44	B2	Visitore, greka, visitatori, sul proteggio
Nr.47	B2	Idela, altrenative, manifestazionial, opportunità
Nr.48	B1	den mosaino
Nr.54	B1	Μεσόγεια (Mesogia), visitatori, jiugno
Nr.55	B2	Μεσόγεια (Mesogia), visitatori, unversiti, Europà, culturà
Nr.56	B2	Septembre
Nr.65	B1	Noticia,
Nr.66	B2	Informacioni, noticia
Nr.67	B1	Mesogeia, visitatori
Nr.68	B2	Kilometro, visitatori, pick nick, Laografico
Nr.70	B2	Otobre, giugno
Nr.72	B2	Festazione, diadisionale, dimenticetale, camping
Nr.79	B1	Priciparano, visitatori, ogne, ampiente, 5 gigno, senzpilizzazione, ampientali, prodotti, tradizionali
Nr.80	B2	Senzibilizzazione, ogne età, l'ampiente, prodotti tradizionali, etc., l'aqua
Nr.89	B1	Kerkura, belenza, Kerkura, azzura aqua, nuovare
Nr.90	B2	a Europi, symbolo, Acropolis, Parthenonas
Nr.91	B1	10 luglio,
Nr.97	B1	Niko, Akropoli e il Parthenona, la Salonica, piazza Aristotelous
Nr.98	B2	il Frourio, diventirsi
Nr.99	B1	Jugno, grechi e stranteri, Ligourio, Epidavros
Nr.100	B2	Gli skopi, Ligourio, Epidavros, Jugno
Nr.104	B2	si luoge, giovani studenti, Epidavros, partecipare
Nr.109	B1	Interesante
Nr.110	B1	avaliabile, in 2 periode, dalle 22 Luglio, performance, un altro interessona idea, Gli proffessori

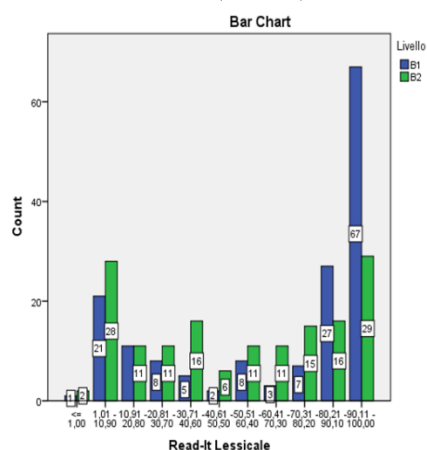
Nr.111	B2	Performazioni, partecipare
Nr.112	B2	Traducioni, Un grante museo, fare gire
Nr.113	B1	i Turki, il Junio
Nr.117	B1	Athene perche Athene, Soublaki, parko, Akropolis, Athene
Nr.118	B2	Io vuole visitato Venetia perche Venetia, Tu compri un macchina in Venetia, Perche in mare è molto persone e afaccio molta nuova amica, caratteriche in venetia
Nr.119	B1	Lygourio, interessante, in 22 juneo e seconda 10 luglio
Nr.120	B2	Le scuola internazional, lygourio, Bagelis Παρθενασίου
Nr.121	B1	isole dell' Aigaio, sambia,
Nr.130	B2	Signorela, Turkia
Nr.131	B1	6 luglio, 10 del Lugglio al 24 del Lugglio, hospitarà
Nr.135	B1	Epidabro, teatrichi
Nr.142	B1	La scula, 22 gugno dal 6 guglo, 24 guglo
Nr.143	B2	le nuove techice difficile role
Nr.145	B1	Athena, preferei hospitare
Nr.146	B2	Sympatici, organizzare, gitta al Kastrà
Nr.147	B1	Participare, 6 luglio, personni
Nr.148	B2	I partecipanti deve essere, migliori, ossupano, attivite
Nr.149	B1	Athen, museum di Akropolis
Nr.150	B1	è in Aigoupio in Epidaro, di drammatiche scuole
Nr.151	B2	in Aigourio in Epidaro, La prima period, 22 giuni alle lugli
Nr.152	B2	Athen, In Athen ci sono il museum di Akropolis, il Parthenon sul Akropoli, In Athen, in Plaka, archaological region
Nr.153	B1	gari olympiachi, montage
Nr.159	B1	liceo Epidaurou, Likourgo, impatienza
Nr.162	B1	della civiliazione, degle arte, performare
Nr.163	B2	I visitatori, la civiliazione,
Nr.168	B2	un grande spazie, museum, La domenico, I visitatori, il museum
Nr.171	B1	5 giungio, visitarerlo, con themi, energie surce, la fierra
Nr.173	B1	museo Greco laografia, presedanno libri, un unico experienza
Nr.176	B1	Representazioni, alternative resourse
Nr.177	B2	resourse di energia, giochi ecologichi
Nr.184	B1	prodotti biologichi, imformarti, ecologichi modi, excibitioni,
Nr.185	B2	Culturare, 5 Giugno, ai presentrivi, Ti initarvi, 5 Giugno, villaggio traditional, prodotti biologichi, gli ezibizioni
Nr.188	B1	la protecta, indimedicabile
Nr.189	B2	5 gugno, l'acqua
Nr.192	B1	Ciao Tammaso, Mesoggia, visitatori, di giochi biologichi, un pik-nik
Nr.193	B2	molti visitatori, stragneri, prodotti biologichi, 5 gugno, un pik-nik
Nr.196	B1	25.000 q.m., Giugno, o jiocci, l'abiente, sensionare, l'abiente
Nr.197	B2	Sivilisazioni Stadi, il Greco politismo, o jiocci, belezze dell' abiente, l'abiente
Nr.210	B1	cinque lugnio, cilumetri, in Crezia, nella Crezia, criasuto, è.c., produte
Nr.211	B2	visatori, visitonno, è.c., cilometri, abiente, lugnio
Nr.220	B2	Othomani, il Tzami, traditionali
Nr.222	B2	"Partenonas" e "Cariatides", grande stadeo,
Nr.227	B2	22 Gugno, Obbieto, osservare
Nr.228	B2	e bisantico, molte jorelly, un caratteristico, un visitore
Nr.234	B2	Alla piazza, . Piccoli viaggi e villeti vicini, debbe essera
Nr.235	B1	Grupi, 22 Gugno,
Nr.241	B1	fare water sports, Il Parthenon
Nr.246	B2	un dei spachi più storichi, questi spaci, per scoprire
Nr.248	B2	questo specio, teatro, un spacio
Nr.253	B1	Athene e Thessaloniki, in village cinemas o Allou Fun Park, Athene, Parthenonas, In Athene, andare in parko Attico, Thessaloniki, bugatsa, In valdi, in Grezia
Nr.254	B1	in teatro di Epidabros, Luceo di Epidabros, 6 Luglio e la seconda periodo, 24 di Luglio, teatro, in valdo tra Llugourio e il teatro antico di Epidabros,
Nr.255	B2	in altro livello, o theatri,
Nr.256	B2	Caratteristiche, avere theatri, I theatri, theatrico
Nr.259	B1	Hospiteranno
Nr.261	B1	Secomo me, extreme sport, tipo aventeroso
Nr.262	B2	Turkia,
Nr.263	B1	vicino al Aigourio,
Nr.267	B1	molti paidagogia, 6 giuglio, 24 giuglio
Nr.270	B2	Dimocratia, Parthenonas, museo Benaci
Nr.272	B2	grandi greci e strageri, stragneri, periode,

Nr.277	B1	più intressanta città, visitatori, con i bibi
Nr.278	B2	Visitatori, posti archeologici
Nr.279	B1	22 giugno
Nr.283	B1	speciale reativa, Aygourio,
Nr.285	B1	alle isole cycladi, democratia, Delfoi, cyclismo
Nr.286	B2	Gentile Signore, ogni sera cadera,
Nr.288	B2	fare lezioni, a ligourio, giugno all sei luglo, 10 all 24 luglo
Nr.290	B2	Riproduzuoni, può ospedare attività
Nr.291	B1	essere attori e attricci giovani, tipo camping
Nr.293	B1	Parthenon, local e altre cose
Nr.297	B1	Adeventure Park”
Nr.301	B2	Atèna, della Grecia che del estero a venirce, cinematographi
Nr.303	B1	ventidue Gugnio e finisce il sei liuglio, liuglio, impacienza
Nr.304	B2	Gugnio fino al sei Liuglio, Liuglio, il nostro site
Nr.307	B1	conoscere persone, dalle 22 Jugno alle 6 Juglio, dalle 10 alle 24 di Juglio
Nr.308	B2	molti scuoli, il jugno, turisti,
Nr.310	B2	incredibile monumenti i tutto positani, cathedrici, molti differenti tessori
Nr.311	B1	I partecipati, grupo inizia alle 22 June, Possono partecipare ogni ragazzo, in attivite,
Nr.312	B2	molte attivite, I partecipati, grupo inizia alle 22 Jugno dalle 6 luglio, La scuola chiama “Lichio Epidaourou”, una grante opportunita, i partecipanti, partecipare
Nr.314	B2	l’ architettura, e.c.c., monumenti storici

Table no 3: Total result of the Read-IT Lexical index according to the linguistic level

Read-IT Lexical* Language Level Crosstabulation				
Count				
		Language Level		Total
		B1	B2	
Read-It Lexical	<= 1,00	1	2	3
	1,01 - 10,90	21	28	49
	10,91 - 20,80	11	11	22
	20,81 - 30,70	8	11	19
	30,71 - 40,60	5	16	21
	40,61 - 50,50	2	6	8
	50,51 - 60,40	8	11	19
	60,41 - 70,30	3	11	14
	70,31 - 80,20	7	15	22
	80,21 - 90,10	27	16	43
90,11 - 100,00	67	29	96	
Total		160	156	316

Graph no 1: Illustration of the total result of the Read-IT Lexical index according to the Language Level (Livello)



The Read-IT Lexical index focuses on the lexical characteristics of the text, consisting both of the composition of the vocabulary and its lexical richness. On table 3 and graph 1, the majority of texts (96), i.e. 67 from B1 and 29 from B2, reached the maximum frequency of lexical elements (90.11-100.00%). Furthermore, there are many different percentages for texts corresponding to levels B1 and B2, and another large number of different percentages for texts produced corresponding to both levels. Thinking about the purpose for which the Lexical Read-It was invented, we see from the present data that there are several texts produced, in which lexical elements are used (VdB meaning Basic Vocabulary, high lexical density, fundamental vocabulary, highly used vocabulary).

Table no 4: Correlation between the variables “nouns”, “adjectives”, “verbs”, “proper nouns”, “conjunctions”, “coordinators”, “subordinates”, “main propositions”, “subordinate clauses” and “language level”

		Correlations									
		Nouns	Proper Nouns	Adjectives	Verbs	Conjunctions	Coordinators	Subordinates	Main Propositions	Subordinate clauses	Language Level
Nouns	Pearson Correlation	1	-.052	.027	-.209**	-.008	.211**	-.210**	.213**	-.212**	.224**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.361	.632	.000	.892	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316
Proper Names	Pearson Correlation	-.052	1	-.083	-.123*	-.017	.104	-.127*	.150**	-.150**	-.039
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.361		.139	.0229	.758	.066	.024	.008	.008	.489
	N	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316
Adjectives	Pearson Correlation	.027	-.083	1	-.008	-.023	.103	-.084	.031	-.032	.167**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.632	.139		.893	.688	.068	.136	.580	.577	.003
	N	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316
Verbs	Pearson Correlation	-.209**	.123*	-.008	1	.126*	-.480**	.488**	-.436**	.435**	-.204**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.029	.893		.025	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316
Conjunctions	Pearson Correlation	-.008	-.017	-.023	.126*	1	-.087	.159**	-.310**	.310**	-.259**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.892	.758	.688	.025		.124	.005	.000	.000	.000
	N	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316

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Coordinators	Pearson Correlation	,211**	,104	,103	-,480*	-,087	1	-,945**	,469**	-,470**	,362**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,066	,068	,000	,124		,000	,000	,000	,000
	N	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316
Subordinates	Pearson Correlation	-,210**	-,127*	-,084	-,488*	,159**	-,945**	1	-,508**	,509**	-,372**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,024	,136	,000	,005	,000		,000	,000	,000
	N	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316
Main Propositions	Pearson Correlation	,213**	,150**	,031	-,436*	-,310**	,469**	-,508**	1	-,1000**	,222**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,008	,580	,000	,000	,000	,000		,000	,000
	N	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316
Subordinate clauses	Pearson Correlation	-,212**	-,150**	-,032	-,435*	,310**	-,470**	,509**	-,1000**	1	-,222**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,008	,577	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000		,000
	N	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316
Language Level	Pearson Correlation	,224**	-,039	,167*	-,204*	-,259**	,362**	-,372**	,222**	-,222**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,489	,003	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	,000	
	N	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316	316
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).											
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).											

On table 4, we observe a very close correlation between many variables that play a precise and particular role in the text produced. Starting the analysis, a distinction is made between inversely proportional correlations with an asterisk of very heavy importance and between inversely proportional correlations with two asterisks that are important.

In the first category, we see verbs and proper nouns (-, 123%) and proper nouns with subordinates (-, 127%). The more the number of verbs used increases, the lower the number of proper nouns and subordinates. This correlation indicates that in many texts produced by Greek candidates, a large number of verbs are used (despite these being the most frequent and common verbs for all two levels), but not many proper nouns or even subordinating ones are used. On the one hand, this observation shows the ease of Greek users to include lexical items.

On the other hand, although it seems to be easier for them to combine verbs, it is more difficult to find proper nouns and subordinating nouns. Similar correlations also follow in the next paragraphs. Inversely proportional, we would say that the lower the percentage of the number of verbs, the higher the number of the

percentage of proper nouns and subordinates. When we see texts produced in which few verbs are used, we notice a high percentage of proper nouns and subordinate clauses.

In this research, texts produced by Greeks must be presented in which we observe more frequent verbs such *as to have, to be, to go, to eat, to play* (sometimes with great ease without grammatical errors and sometimes with many errors). Instead, in others more common proper names appear that are the same in the Greek language, for example *Maria, Anna*.

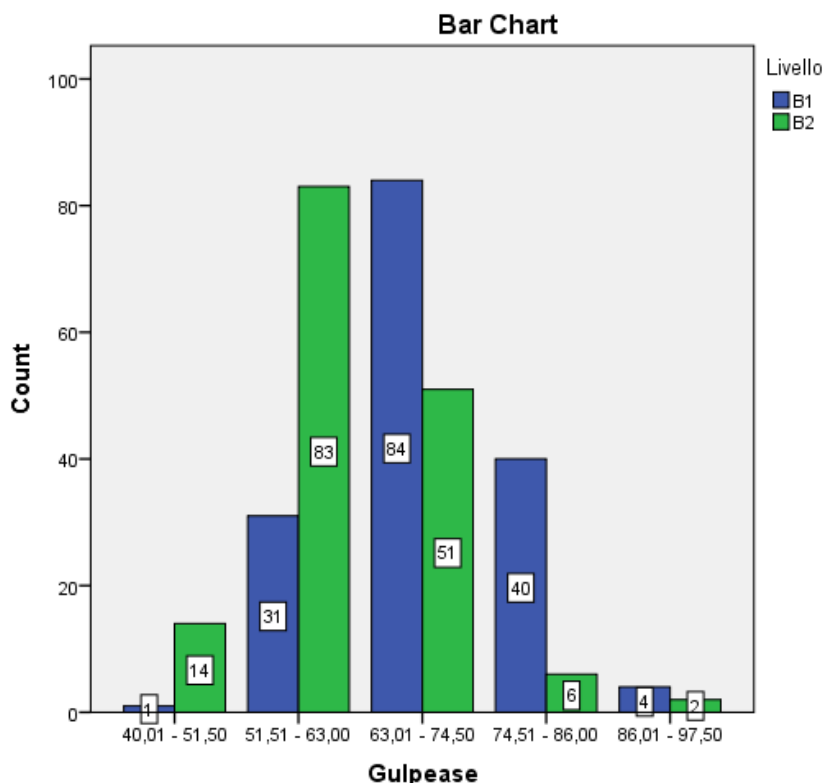
On the other hand, if the percentage of all these elements were higher, the linguistic and readability level would probably also be higher.

In the second category, we see an inversely proportional relationship between: verbs and nouns (-, 209%), subordinates and nouns (-, 210%), coordinates and verbs (-, 480%), main clauses and verbs (-, 436%), subordinate clauses with nouns (-, 212%), subordinates and coordinators (-, 945%), subordinate clauses and main clauses (-1,000%), level and verbs (-, 204%), the language level and conjunctions (-, 259%), the language level and subordinating clauses (-, 372%), the language level and subordinate clauses (-, 222%), the main clauses and subordinating clauses (-, 508%), main clauses and conjunctions (-, 310%).

Table no 5: Total result of the Gulpease index according to language level

Gulpease * Livello Crosstabulation				
Count				
		Language Level		Total
		B1	B2	
Gulpease	40,01 - 51,50	1	14	15
	51,51 - 63,00	31	83	114
	63,01 - 74,50	84	51	135
	74,51 - 86,00	40	6	46
	86,01 - 97,50	4	2	6
Total		160	156	316

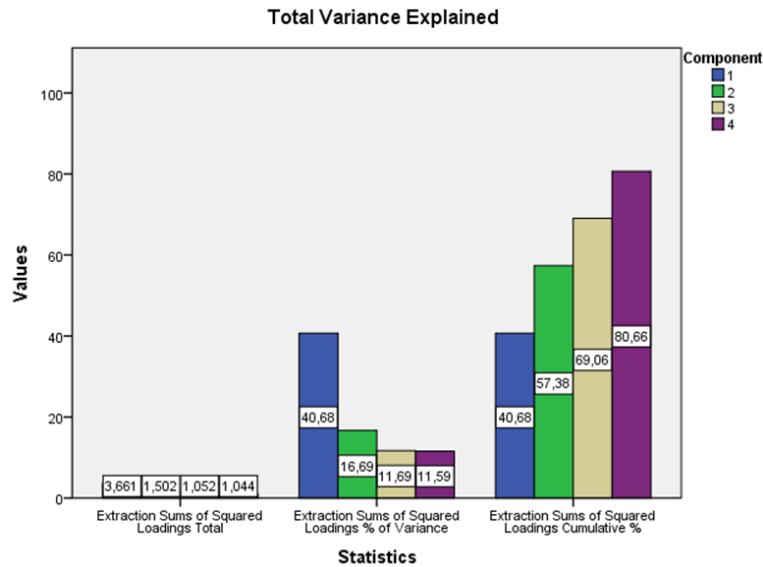
Graph no 2: Illustration of the total result of the Gulpease index according to language level (Livello)



The Gulpease index measures the ease of the text. Consequently, the closer it is to 100%, the easier a text is. Table 5 and graph 2 demonstrate that for the Gulpease formula, i.e. the measurement of word and sentence length for the B1 level, we find 84 written productions of B1 and 51 of B2 which make up the majority (63.01-74, 50%). As a result, many texts exceed 50% of the Gulpease index, which could show that many Greek candidates have difficulty using long words and sentences. According to this data, there are texts

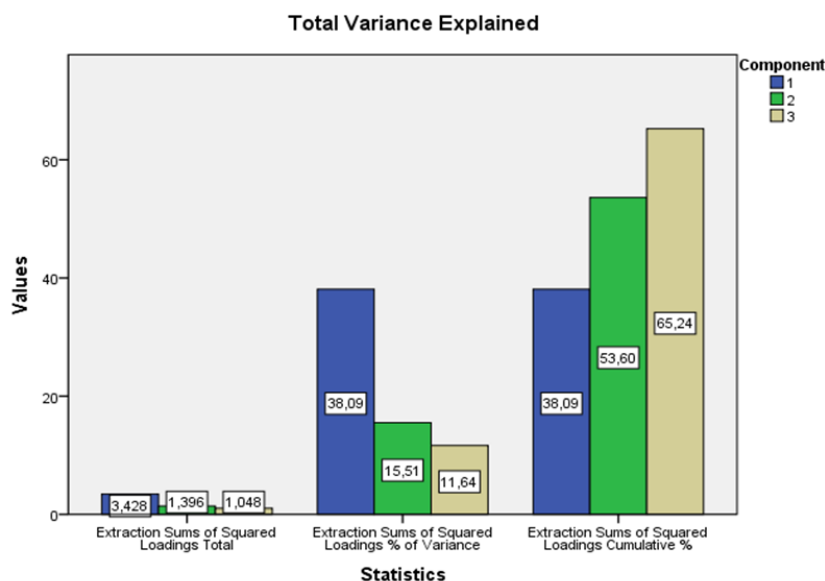
produced in which polysyllable words are rarely used (e.g. important, unforgettable, fascinating, worrying, professor, continue, warn, consumer, etc.). The same also happens in the case of sentences which often include the simplest form, i.e. short sentences containing a subject, a verb and an adjective. This information perhaps leads to results with lower linguistic levels and degrees of difficulty.

Graph no 3: Illustration of the variance, eigenvalues and loadings concerning the variables “Nouns”, “Proper nouns”, “Adjectives”, “Verbs”, “Conjunctions”, “Coordinators”, “Subordinates”, “Main clauses” and “Subordinate clauses ” according to language level B1



After the factor analysis, graph 3 contains a total of 3.66% and the variance of the initial eigenvalues for the texts produced at level B1 is 40.68%. The first four factors make up 11.59% of the total variance. The number of factors is the same as the number of variables, i.e. 9. The columns below the general center contain the same values as those in the first general column, but appear only for the first four factors. The cumulative value represents the sum of the variance of both the four previous and initial self-values and those of the framed loads, i.e. 80.65%. The percentage of the total is 3.1%, after rotating the sum of the loads included.

Graph no 4: Illustration of the variance, eigenvalues and loadings of the variables "Nouns", "Proper nouns", "Adjectives", "Verbs", "Conjunctions", "Coordinators", "Subordinates", "Main clauses" and "Subordinate clauses" according to the language level B2



Graph 4 contains a total of 3.43% and the variance of the initial eigenvalues for the texts produced at level B2 is 38.1%. The first three factors account for 38.1% of the total variance. The number of factors is the same as the number of variables, i.e. 9. The columns below the central general one contain the same values as those in the first general column, but appear only for the first three factors. The cumulative value represents the sum of the variance (38.1%) of both the three previous and initial self-values and those of the framed loads. On the other hand, after rotating the sum of the loads included, the percentage of the total is 3.42%.

IV. Discussion

The contribution of lexical, grammatical and syntactic elements to the level of linguistic competence seems to be significant through the correlation between the linguistic level and content elements (lexical, grammatical, morphosyntactic factors) of productions written by foreign, i.e. Greek, composers.

Moreover, the readability of a text can contribute to a better evaluation in written production. This result is achieved using grammatical, lexical and syntactic elements. Having a B1 level text we could evaluate it as B1, if we think about the components found in the entire research. This procedure can also be used for all other levels and for all types of written production (email, letter, composition, etc.). According to this assumption, the use of these characteristics is not only productive when preparing for an exam, but also in the case, where a foreign language is used in everyday life (communication, tourism, work, etc.).

A favorable reason for Greek society is that the starting point for this research is level B, because an intermediate level certificate gives Greek users the opportunity to participate in state or private competitions in the work field. A foreign composer cannot be capable of producing texts like an Italian or a Swiss, because his mother tongue, in our case Greek, is a different linguistic system from Italian, in the sense that there are differences between the linguistic systems of the Greek and Italian. Consequently, we do not have to expect very high values, if they are compared with the parameters analyzed in this research. On the contrary, distinguishing the strongest and weakest points of a Greek user during the written production of level B helps both the user himself and the test creators to increase the level of textual readability. This fact leads to the discovery of criteria with which we could, for example, produce tests more suitable for intermediate level candidates. In this respect, candidates will also be able to produce more complex texts while knowing which factors to use for a given level.

Perhaps even more important is the fact that through the characteristics sought in this survey, a user can advance their linguistic level in any specific field. Sometimes, for example drafting a contract, an email, an article, a court file, a medical diagnosis etc. seems to be a very difficult procedure for non-Italian users. Thinking about such factors and also using electronic tools such as READ-IT, facilitates a foreign composer to produce more understandable and readable texts for native Italian-speaking readers.

V. Conclusions

We have seen in detail which important elements are most frequent and used incorrectly from a grammatical and lexical point of view. This useful observation also applies to errors regarding their confusion with words from other foreign languages such as Spanish, French or German which must be learned from the Greeks. In other cases, we see confusion with the native speaker. In fact, in some texts produced Greek words are confused with Italian ones (for example, some Greek examinees write *Athina* or *Athena* instead of Athens).

We referred to errors involving nouns, proper names, adjectives and verbs. Furthermore, in the case of verbs, they are not declined according to the correct person, nor is the correct tense used in the majority of written productions at both levels.

As regards the variables "Conjunctions", "Subordinates" and "Main clauses", they rarely appear in many texts. Instead, in others they are not used at all in either level.

Another phenomenon that indicates a notable influence on the linguistic level is the rare frequency of conjunctions, subordinating clauses and subordinate clauses, for which we have seen great difficulty on the part of the Greeks. As a result, texts have been produced without the use of these features or when used, their use is incorrect. The level of difficulty, in general, as we see with the Read-It Global index with respect to the linguistic level, depends on all these morphosyntactic and lexical elements. The more the percentage of the Global Read-It index increases, the lower the linguistic level appears to be. We also see the same with the Gulpease index and the Read-It Lexical index.

First, it might be useful to know whether Greek candidates know how to use these factors in their native language. Otherwise, no one can expect positive results. Another parameter is their age. At a young age, it should be noted that test-takers may not be aware of some grammatical or lexical phenomenon in their mother tongue. However, even if they know, for example, the hypothetical period and subordinate clauses in their native language, perhaps they do not know well the metalanguage that could contribute to the foreign language lesson. Finally, each user's educational level plays an indicative role in their perception of problems concerning a foreign language exam, as well as whether they have acquired the experience to apply, e.g. grammatical and

syntactic rules. All of these are reference points regarding the factors found in this research and should also be taken into consideration.

In conclusion, the present product aims at a future investigation by upcoming researchers who would like to collect important data and results from similar works for each foreign language included in the Greek State Certificate exams (KPG exams) to find out the difficulties or ease of Greek users according to the language levels proposed by the Framework European Common for Languages. Furthermore, it would be very interesting to find results from similar exams in other countries where the Italian language is taught to compare the linguistic and readability level in texts produced by Greek and other users, such as Germans for example.

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