

DUTCH TRANSLATION, VALIDATION AND NORMATIVE DATA OF THE VOICE HANDICAP INDEX THROAT (VHI-T)

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Introduction: Discomfort at the vocal tract is frequently reported by voice patients, but is often not included in voice assessment. Lyberg et al (2010) designed the Voice Handicap Index – Throat (VHI-T), a questionnaire to investigate subjective laryngeal discomfort. The throat scale consists of 10 items in addition of the VHI. The aim of this study was to translate the VHI-T to the Dutch, to validate it and to collect normative data.

Method: The VHI-T was translated to Dutch by two linguists and two speech therapists. Back translation was performed by a native English speaker. 99 Persons with a normal voice and 56 persons diagnosed with a voice problem completed the Dutch versions of the VHI-T and the Vocal Tract Discomfort scale (VTD).

Results: Analysis of normative data showed a mean score on the throat scale of 7,68 (SD = 5,33). The mean score for the voice disordered group was 14,21 (SD = 5,74). A significant difference between the voice disorder group and the norm group was found. No significant differences were found for age or gender. A significant difference was found between professional voice users and nonvocal professionals, and between nonvocal professionals and nonvocal nonprofessionals. Strong correlation were found between the score of the T-scale and the VHI-P ($r = 0.70$, $p = 0.00$) and between VTD and VHI-T results ($r = 0.74$, $p = 0.00$).

Conclusions: The Dutch VHI-T offers valuable additional data in the clinical voice assessment. The prevalence of throat related symptoms is significantly higher in subjects with voice disorders than in the normative group. Based on our findings, VHI- T scores ≥ 18 should be considered as abnormal.