

Systematic review of assessment strategies in pediatric motor speech disorders

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Strategies for classification and description of pediatric motor speech disorders remain controversial given challenges in differential diagnosis, the paucity of well developed standardized measures, and continuing debates concerning the role of expert opinion and informal measures. Therefore, in this systematic review, we examine methods used from 1996 to 2016 for these two assessment purposes in the research literature(s) on childhood apraxia of speech, childhood dysarthria, and pediatric motor speech disorders not otherwise specified. Articles obtained from a search of eleven databases are examined for their justification and operationalization of speech diagnoses. In addition, these data are used to examine participant descriptions in studies of the nature versus assessment versus treatment of these disorders. Recently, research guidelines and systematic reviews tend to focus on the quality of research designs and outcomes. Nonetheless, participant methods are crucial for researchers seeking to replicate or compare their results to those in the literature as well as for clinicians wishing to determine how likely results are to generalize to their own clients. Recommendations regarding assessment methods and descriptions will be discussed based on these results.