Critical Appraisal Form

Date:23-Feb-22
Members in Discussion: 3

Article:
Stipancic, K. L., Palmer, K. M., Rowe, H. P., Yunusova, Y., Berry, J. D., & Green, J. R. (2021). "You Say Severe, I Say Mild": Toward an Empirical Classification of Dysarthria Severity. *Journal of Speech, Language, and Hearing Research : JSLHR*, *64*(12), 4718–4735.

Summary:
The focus of this study was to create an empirical classification system for Dysarthria severity. The validity and reliability of SLP's ratings of dysarthric speech, secondary to ALS were explored.
Method and Results:
Participants were 52 speakers with ALS and 20 healthy controls.
10 SLP's calculated four severity-surrogate measures: speech severity (normal, mild, moderate, severe, profound), the effort it took to understand the speakers, speaking rate, and intelligible speaking rate. Interrater and intrarator reliability were calculated for each measure. ROC curves created cutoff points for defining severity categories. Interrater and intrarator reliability measures were excellent. Strong construct validity was suggested b/c clinician severity ratings were strongly associated with the severity-surrogate measures.
It was noted that intelligibility measures lack sensitivity for early/milder dysarthria detection. Speaking rate measures were less responsive to change, while other features declined over time. Listener effort measures were surprisingly reliable and were objectively superior to the other severity-surrogate measures for several reasons.

Strengths and Limitations of research article:
-Additional data needed from participants with diverse diagnoses in order for results to conclusively generalize to other populations

	Compelling	Suggestive	Equivocal/Uncertain
Validity		x	
Clinical importance		x	

Clinical Implications/Discussion:
- Members remarked on how listener effort as an intelligibility measure was found to be sensitive and accurate although it is a subjective measure
- Members mentioned that they would be interested in further guidance on how to measure listener effort
- Conversation broadened into discussions about options for mentorship and discussion groups for SLP's who work with adults