

Assessing the Validity of a Direct Measure of Attitudes of Preschoolers Who Stutter

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This study examines the validity of the KiddyCAT (Vanryckeghem, 2005) -- an instrument designed to assess the speech-related attitudes of preschool-aged children who stutter.

Although this instrument has been widely used to assess stuttering preschooler's attitudes, clinical researchers at the University of Vermont have experienced a high-degree of acquiescent mind-set in children they have tested with the KiddyCAT. In other words, children who stutter seem to answer with responses they think the clinicians want to hear, such as denying any problem with their speech. Two methods are being used to examine the instrument's validity. 1. Preschool-aged children who stutter and preschool-aged children who don't will be tested using the KiddyCAT to see if speech-related attitudes of the two groups are different. 2. Mothers of the preschool-aged children who stutter will be given *The Impact of Stuttering on Preschool Children and Parents* (ISPP) – a published questionnaire (Langevin, Packman, & Onslow, 2010) that asks them about their perception of their children's attitudes in regard to their speech. The information gathered from parents will be compared to the children's answers on the KiddyCAT to see if they are consistent. Preliminary information suggests that the KiddyCAT does not discriminate between children who stutter and those who don't. Informal observations indicate that children who stutter appear to be displaying an acquiescent mind-set. Follow up studies will be designed to improve this instrument.