Title
Does the Brief Observation of Social Communication Change (BOSCC) help in moving forward in measuring change in early autism intervention studies?

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Abstract (350 words)
Introduction: The choice of outcome measures in autism research is highly varied. This enormous variation in outcome measures has kept autism research from effective comparisons between intervention studies and compromises conclusions regarding the most effective intervention types for children with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Given the differences in developmental patterns between children with ASD, a common outcome measure or a set of measures is highly needed to detect change over time and to identify who will benefit most from which interventions. The current study aims to investigate the usefulness of an in-development change-measure of key autistic behaviours (i.e. Brief Observation of Social Communication Change – BOSCC) as a promising candidate outcome measure in treatment studies. Methods: Existing tapes of parent-child dyads used in an intervention study that was previously published (Oosterling et al., 2010) are recoded using the BOSCC. Results will be related to commonly used outcome measures in autism research, namely the Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule (ADOS) and the MacArthur Communicative Development Inventory (CDI). Furthermore, the clinical relevance of the BOSCC will be investigated by relating these change scores to scores on the Clinical Global Impression – Improvement scale (CGI-I). In addition, the feasibility of obtaining reliability will be explored by examining the coding process of both experienced clinicians and inexperienced students. Results: Preliminary results (not yet available) will be presented and their meaning discussed.