

Methods

Search Strategy

Articles related to the topic of interest were discovered using the following search databases: Google Scholar, PubMed, and Western Libraries. The following search terms were used:

(((selective mutism) OR (selectively mute child)) AND (children) AND ((language disorders) OR (speech disorders) OR (language and academic abilities)) AND ((language assessment) NOT (treatment))).

Selection Criteria

Articles included in this review had to contain measures of oral or expressive language obtained from participants with a diagnosis of selective mutism. Articles looking at multilingualism and selective mutism or detailing specific treatments of selective mutism were excluded from this critical review.

Data Collection

Results from the literature yielded five articles congruent with the previously mentioned search strategy and selection criteria. Two of these studies involved a between groups, nonrandomized case-control design (McInnes et al. 2004 and Manassis et al. 2007), one study involved a within group (repeated measures) design (Klein et al. 2012), one paper involved multiple case studies (Cleator & Hand, 2001) and the last (Cohan et al. 2008) involved a survey research design.

Results

C^r tor H n explored the prevalence of communication disorders in children with selective mutism using a multiple case studies design involving five monolingual, English-speaking children (ages three to eight). Three of their study participants were boys and two were girls and they were all required to have a DSM-IV diagnosis of selective mutism which excluded the criterion stating that their disturbance is not better accounted for by a communication disorder. Purposive sampling was used to recruit participants by contacting professionals known to come into contact with children with selective mutism and having them nominate participants. This study conducted an assessment battery at the participants' homes and collected data via audiotapes, observations, and standardized assessment measures. The assessment battery used to examine expressive language abilities consisted of the LARSP, social-conversational analysis, and systematic observation in order to analyze the child's oral language samples collected via audiotape or observation. They also used the Smit-

Hand Articulation and Phonology Evaluation (SHAPE) to look at the child's articulation and phonology from their recordings and observations. Statistical analyses were not provided but rather consisted of a summarized yes/no table and thus were unable to be deemed appropriate. It was found that 4 of the 5 participants had a communication disorder. These communication disorders were found to be variable in presentation from case to case involving deficits in speech, semantics, expressive syntax, prosody, and speech acts and followed no pattern. Notably, each participant's assessment involved variable measures to determine the presence of their communication disorder. The incidence of communication disorders in this population was deemed higher than previously thought. The incidence of speech problems was also high which was consistent with previous literature.

A strength of this study was the ability to collect expressive language data from this population due to the alteration of the traditional assessment process. However, this study consisted of a 771(S)0.T834(.)JTJ50JTJ T[(a

Discussion used a between groups, nonrandomized case control trial to determine if differences in oral language characteristics, working memory, and social anxiety differentiate children with selective mutism from children with anxiety and normal controls. Participants consisted of twenty-eight children with anxiety, forty-four children with selective mutism, and nineteen controls (all ages six to ten). Purposive sampling was used by recruiting study participants from three clinics that specialized in anxiety disorders. This study involved multiple measures of receptive language, anxiety measures, and working memory, however, did not explicitly test oral language abilities as stated in the purpose of the study. Appropriate statistical analyses of the data were carried out and it was found that children with selective mutism scored significantly lower on standardized language measures than both controls and children with anxiety while also scoring lower on measures of working memory. Age and receptive grammar ability were found to predict less severe mutism, while social anxiety predicted more severe mutism.

Strengths of this study include its design and appropriate statistical analyses, however, there are several limitations. These include the bias sampling method, small sample size of the groups, low replicability, and inappropriate use of receptive language tasks to measure oral language characteristics. Overall, this study is equivocal and contains no information pertaining to the oral language characteristics of children with selective mutism.

Insights used a between groups, nonrandomized case-control trial to explore the differences in anxiety and nonverbal cognition, receptive language, and expressive narrative abilities between seven children with selective mutism and seven children with social phobia (ages seven to fourteen). Participants were selected from a previous study in which purposive sampling was used. Measures of direct assessment as well as parent questionnaires were used to examine language in this study, however, only the Children's Communication Checklist (CCC) filled out by parents was used to examine oral language characteristics. Appropriate statistical analysis was conducted. It was found that the children with selective mutism had normal nonverbal cognition skills and receptive language abilities but produced significantly shorter expressive narratives than children with social phobia.

Strengths of this study include its design and appropriate statistical analysis; however, the sample size was quite small. Other limitations include the bias

sampling method and the use of a parent questionnaire as the sole measure from which they drew their conclusions pertaining to oral language. Overall, this study is suggestive, due to the strengths and limitations previously mentioned, that children with selective mutism may have expressive language 44653(r)-4.53656(i)0.3-4.9

