Reviewer’s report

Title: Arm hand skilled performance in cerebral palsy: activity preferences and their movement components.

Version: 1 Date: 29 January 2014

Reviewer: Lijuan Wang

Reviewer’s report:

• Major Compulsory Revisions (which the author must respond to before a decision on publication can be reached)

1. Please clarify the diagnostic criteria of CP in your study.

2. The fifth inclusion criterion is “mentally able to comprehend and perform tasks”, how do you assess the mental status of the CP children? If any instruments or scales are employed in your assessment, please clarify it.

3. The first exclusion criteria of methods (severe structural contractures of the muscles of the upper extremity) is difficult to understand, please describe it more clearly and elaborate the details correctly.

4. Statistical analysis should be involved in order to testify the reliability and validity of your research.

5. The severity of disease may affect the patients’ arm-hand skilled performance and the ADL they want to improve on. Have you ever consider this factor? And if so, please clarify it.

6. Patients with CP may have difficulty in verbal and gestural expression, which could affect the assessment of their motor functions and identification of goals, so how do you make sure those factor may not affect the assessment of arm-hand skilled performance?

• Minor Essential Revisions (such as missing labels on figures, or the wrong use of a term, which the author can be trusted to correct)

1. As to the writing of the title, “arm hand “ should be replaced with “arm-hand”.

2. The methods and conclusions in abstract need to be further refined.

3. CP patients with severe structural or functional impairment of the arm-hand were excluded in your study, which could potentially produce inclusion bias. It will be more objective to state this as study limitation in your manuscript.

4. A total of only 53 patients were included in your study and divided into three age subgroups. Such a small sample size will weaken the power and validity of your data. Please state this clearly as your study limitation or enlarge your sample size.

• Discretionary Revisions (which are recommendations for improvement but which the author can choose to ignore)
1. According to your paper, the third purpose that “c) determine the 10 most preferred goals of children with CP in three different age groups” is mainly illustrated other than the other two purposes. The purpose of a and b are somewhat redundant.

2. It is reported that there are difference between girls and boys with respect to the motor performance. Have you consider that gender may be another factor that affects patients’ goal and should taken into consideration.

**Level of interest:** An article whose findings are important to those with closely related research interests

**Quality of written English:** Needs some language corrections before being published

**Statistical review:** Yes, but I do not feel adequately qualified to assess the statistics.

**Declaration of competing interests:**

No conflicts of interest.