Author's response to reviews

Title: Study of trunk asymmetry in normal children and adolescent

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Version: 6 Date: 28 November 2006

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RESPONSE TO THE REVIEWERS’ COMMENTS

MS: 2902502161169225
Study of trunk asymmetry in normal children and adolescent
Theodoros B Grivas, Elias Vasiliadis, Georgios Koufopoulos, Dimitrios Segos and Georgios Triantafilopoulos

Reviewer: Tomasz Kotwicki

Minor Essential Revisions

Reviewer’s comment:
In “Background” the sentence “Its evolution by age was determined using a scoliometer” is not clear to the reviewer. In a cross-sectional study no follow-up exists.
Answer:
The sentence was replaced by the following: “The distribution of trunk asymmetry by age was determined using a scoliometer”.

Reviewer’s comment:
In the Methods section “seven degrees or more” should be used instead of “more than 7 degrees”. Otherwise the 7 degrees ATR children are not included in any group.
Answer:
In the Methods section the phrase “more than 7 degrees” was replaced with the phrase “seven degrees or more”.

Reviewer’s comment:
The suitable algebraic symbols should be used in the legends for tables 3 and 4.
Answer:
The algebraic symbols were corrected in the legends of tables 3 and 4.

Reviewer’s comment:
In “Methods” – it is not clear how the intra- and interobserver error was calculated. Did one of observers repeat his measurement twice or more? Were all patients examined by all observers?
Answer:
Intra-observer error was calculated by measuring asymmetry of 10 randomly selected children twice by one observer (TBG) using the formula: error = SDx2/√2, where SD is standard deviation.
The interobserver error was calculated using the readings of two observers (TBG and ESV) in the same group of 10 randomly selected children, using the same formula. All the above are clearly indicated in the “Methods” section.

Reviewer’s comment:
In “Results” the last sentence is too general (“In the majority of children .. the vertebral column was almost within normal limits”) and should be revised
Answer:
The above sentence was revised as follows: “No spinal deformity exceeding 10° of Cobb angle was found after the radiological assessment of children with 5° and 6° of scoliometer readings and strong clinical suspicion of scoliosis”.

**Reviewer:** Martha Hawes

**Reviewer’s comment:**
*The article needs one more going-over for minor formatting errors (e.g. format for 'figure' citations). I assume this will be part of the final editing process.*

**Answer:**
Figure citations were highlighted with bold fonts.