Reviewer’s report

Title: Comparison of The French and CARDS Classifications for Lumbar Degenerative Spondylolisthesis: Reliability and Validity

Version: 0 Date: 19 May 2019

Reviewer: Mohamed Macki

Reviewer’s report:

The authors performed a reliability study on the French and the Clinical and Radiographic Degenerative Spondylolisthesis (CARDS) classification system. The authors should be congratulated on the novelty of this study.

BACKGROUND

A very nice introduction, but I encourage the authors to explain "why" the French and the CARDS systems were developed.

METHODS

The biggest question: how was the gold standard in classification identified? Who determined the "accurate" classification?

The authors state, "The CARDS classification [7] stratifies lumbar DS into four morphology subtypes based on three radiographic variables and one clinical variable (Figure 2)." However, the clinical variable is ill-defined. Figure 2 provides spinal alignment parameters

RESULTS

Not sure how Table 4 - Table 7 contributed to a reliability analyses. If I am missing an association/ confounding factors with these clinical variables, please provide an explanation in the manuscript. Otherwise, I encourage dropping this extraneous information.

DISCUSSION

The limitations section should include short-coming/ confounding variables in including orthopaedic fellows versus attendings.

FIGURE LEGENDS
The figures would benefit with actual angles and measurements annotated directly on the images.

**Are the methods appropriate and well described?**
If not, please specify what is required in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Does the work include the necessary controls?**
If not, please specify which controls are required in your comments to the authors.

Unable to assess

**Are the conclusions drawn adequately supported by the data shown?**
If not, please explain in your comments to the authors.

Yes

**Are you able to assess any statistics in the manuscript or would you recommend an additional statistical review?**
If an additional statistical review is recommended, please specify what aspects require further assessment in your comments to the editors.

I am able to assess the statistics

**Quality of written English**
Please indicate the quality of language in the manuscript:

Acceptable

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