**Appendix**

List and brief description of the diagnostic instruments of the studies included in the meta-analysis.

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| **Diagnostic instrument** | **Description of the diagnostic instrument** |
| Childhood Asperger Syndrome test (CAS) | is a 39 items parental questionnaire to assess in children the severity of autism spectrum symptoms. |
| Autism Diagnostic Interview-Revised  (ADI-R) | structured interview conducted with the parents of children and adults with mental ages from about 18 months and above who have been referred for the evaluation of possible autism. The ADI-R focuses on behavior in three main areas: reciprocal social interaction; communication and language; restricted, repetitive, and stereotyped interests and behaviors. |
| Autism Diagnostic Observation Schedule  (ADOS) | is a semi-structured standardized assessment of communication, social interaction and play behaviors. The ADOS has four modules corresponding to varying expressive language levels ranging from pre-verbal/single words to fluent speech. |
| Childhood Autism Rating Scale  (CARS) | is a 15 item behavioral rating scale filled out by parents for assessing the presence and severity of symptoms of autism spectrum disorders. |