On motor prediction in autism spectrum disorder

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BACKGROUND
Can people with ASD use their motor system to make sense of other people’s behavior?

QUESTION
Is ASD associated with a decreased ability to predict others’ actions?

METHOD
20 children with ASD
22 typical children.

Each child tested in 20-200 trials.

RESULTS
RT and accuracy not different for ASD vs neurotypical children, $F(1,40) = 1.44$, $p > .2$.

All children respond faster to chosen over directed actions, $F(1,40) = 8.9$, $p = .005$.
No interaction, $F < 1$.

CONCLUSION
These results suggest that basic action prediction is not affected by ASD. Further studies will focus on control mechanisms over motoric prediction and imitation.

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