PHD research project by
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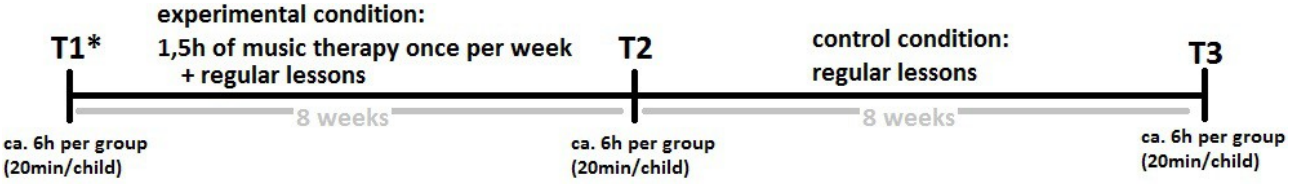
The Influence of Music Therapy on the Acquisition of the Second Language in 5 to 7 year old Children

Hypothesis

Music therapy improves second language skills of children (5-7) in an 8-week experimental condition compared to a 8-week within-subject control group.

Method

The music therapy intervention will be based on training techniques that are already used e.g. in neurological rehabilitation and in language training for children with ASD (Thaut/Hoemberg 2014), however an adaption of the techniques to meet the needs of normally developing children is obligatory.
The study will use a within-subject design. A randomization of the control group is not possible due to practical circumstances. 2 months of experimental condition will be followed by 2 months into the control condition – or vice versa.
Quantitative testing (PPVT, Bus Story Test) will take place in the beginning and after each condition. The focus of the research is on vocabulary, expressive language and pronunciation before. The analysis of videos of the sessions using Grounded Theory will provide additional qualitative data.
The study will be conducted in two research areas: with Italian children learning English and with migrant children learning Italian.



*** The test T1 is not conducted in children without any experience in with the second language.**

Expected Results

There will be most likely measurable results in expressive and receptive language (Hoskins 1988; Schwantes 2009), vocabulary (Peterson/Thaut 2007; Schoen et al. 2008; Schwantes 2009;) and pronunciation (Wilcox 1995; Milovanov et al. 2008).

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