

Improvisational Music Therapy for Preschool Autistic Children: a Research Project and Process

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The research project presents:

- long-term **qualitative multiple-case study** (2011 – 2015)
- including **four preschool autistic (ASD) children**
 - from public kindergarten with special ASD classes in Brno, Czech Republic
 - with impairment in social interaction
 - without previous experience of music therapy

Character of music therapy (MT) intervention:

- **improvisational + individual**
- 30 minutes/ week for one school year (each child)

Research questions:

1. How do the preschool autistic children **accept and experience** the music therapy?
2. How does music therapy intervention influence the **social interaction** of preschool autistic children?
3. Do **teachers** of preschool autistic children **perceive the influence** on the social interaction of these children? Eventually, how do they perceive it?

Partial research results (case study of M.):

Ad.1.: The acceptance of music therapy by M. performs in cyclic returning to **contradicting expressions**, namely he starts to play the instrument immediately after talking about stopping.

From the beginning shows no anxiety in using new instruments but mostly refuses singing.

Ad.2.: The music therapy by M. influences the social interaction in **sharing attention** (interest, activities and emotions).

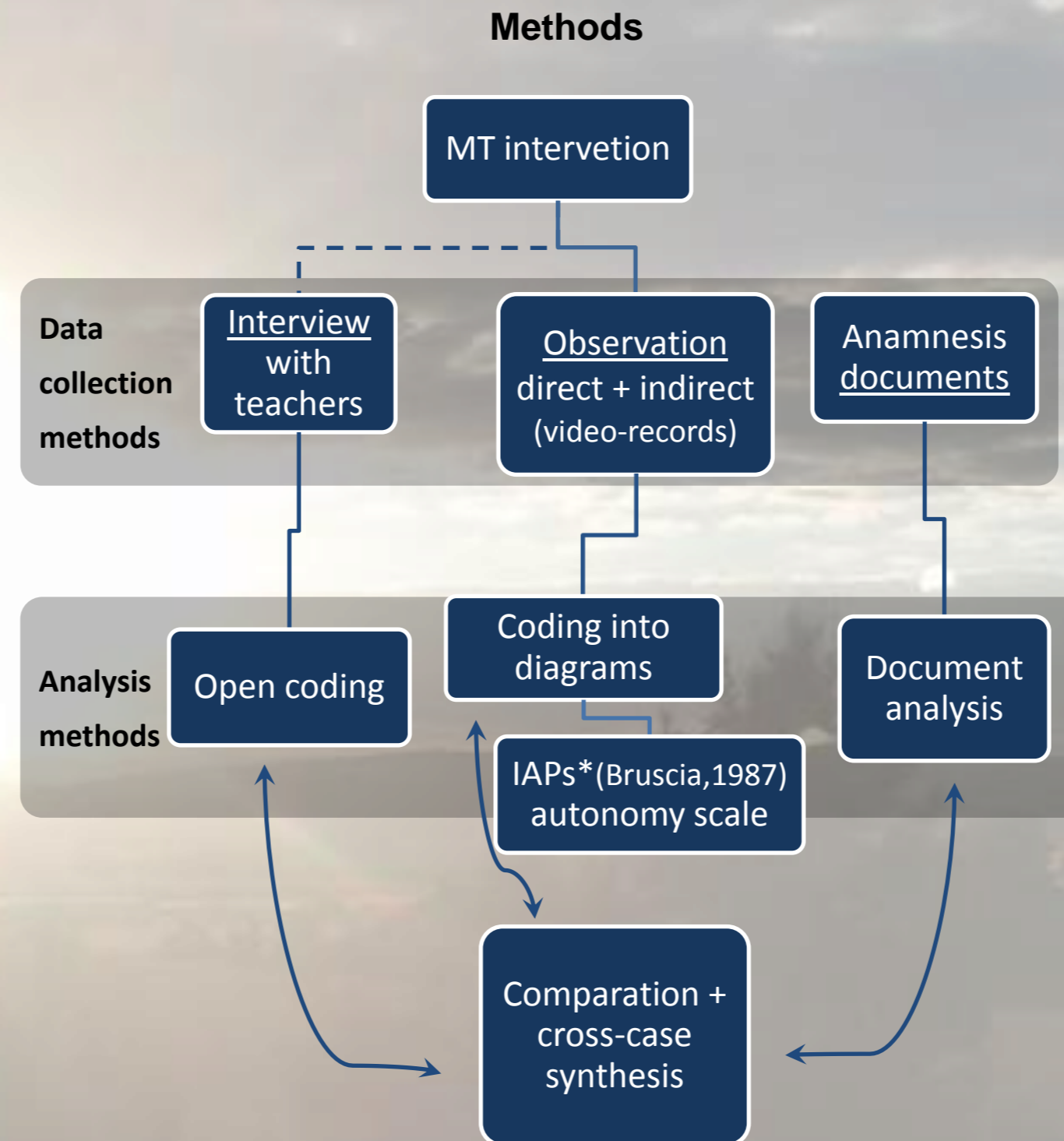
M. gradually learns interactional activities he finds interesting and uses them with a longer attention span; for example: joins turn-taking plays, imitates therapist's play after being imitated by therapist.

Conclusion:

The research is going to be completed in 2015.

Considered intervening conditions:

- Child's development (during 10 months of intervention)
- Mother's and family situation or changes
- Changes in pharmaceuticals



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Resources:

BRUSCIA, K. E. 1987. *Improvisational models of music therapy*. Springfield, Ill., USA: C.C. Thomas. * IAPs – Improvisational Assessment Profiles