

Scientific presentations, focussing mainly on the content of 'reciprocal' intervention studies

The following presentations were held:

1. Iris Oosterling (Randomized Controlled Trial of the Focus Parent Training for Toddlers with Autism: 1-Year Outcome)
 - Focus parent training, replication and extension of Drew et al. (2002)
 - N = 67, mean age 34 months, mean DQ = 58, majority Autism, some PDD-NOS
 - Professional as consultant, parent as therapist, eclectic approach within social-pragmatic & developmental context
 - Aims on child & parent level (focus on interaction – improving language via joint attention)
 - Group meetings + home visits
2. Helen McConachie: The Preschool Autism Communication Trial
 - Focus on parent-child dyad (enhancing communication)
 - N = 152, children with core autism. 2 – 4y11, >12 months non-verbal mental age
 - intervention principles: communication focused, developmental, naturalistic, synchrony & balance of interaction, parent empowering
 - structure: individual sessions (total 18 sessions over 1 year), delivered by speech & language therapists, video feedback in every session (parent-child play)
 - aims: six stages: establishing joint attention, synchrony & sensitivity, language input, establishing routings and anticipation, increasing communication functions, extending language and conversations
3. Bernadette Rogé: Anti-Qol (early intervention & quality of life)
 - On top of effectivity evaluation also evaluation of program's effect on family quality of life
 - N = 27, age 30 – 85 months, experimental group N = 16 (2 girls and 14 boys) / control group = waiting list N = 11 (2 girls and 9 boys)
 - Structure: 15-20 hours (per week for one year / three years) of 1:1 intervention (ABA & structured teaching)
 - curriculum focused on language, communication, motricity, social skills, "pivotal skills" & adjusted continuously.
 - Parents trained & involved as much as possible.
 - Future plans: Early Start Denver Model (Sally Rogers): replication
4. Filippo Muratori: (Effects of treatments as usual in Italy)
 - follow-up evaluation after first 6 months of treatment (different types of treatment)
 - N = 70, age 2 – 4 years, IQ > 50, DSM-IV diagnosis plus ADOS
 - Extended battery of outcome measures

- Evaluate the role of: a) hours of active treatment, b) hours of parent support, c) hours of regular school, d) presence-absence of specialized teachers at school.
5. Helen McConachie : Evaluation of More Than Words (Hanan Centre, Canada)
 - Parent group training for up to 8 families
 - Structure: Pre-programme consultation, 8- 10 group sessions + 3 home visits (filming & discussing)
 - led by speech & language therapists, trained by Hanen, agree to fidelity
 - content: daily routines, visual support, focus on interpersonal interaction, follow the child's lead, adapting the environment. (similar to Focus parent training (cfr presentation Iris Oosterling), more directive than PACt (cfr. Presentation Helen McConachie)
 6. Michele Noterdaeme: T-ASK: a parent-based intervention for young children with ASS
 - Newly funded study, will start in coming months
 - Content: adaptation of German training for parents of late talkers (Heidelberger training + elements of the Hanen program
 - About 30 children with autism, between 30 and 60 months of age. Waiting list control groups.
 - 5 month period, group sessions (6 à 8 parents), 10 sessions (each 2 hours) with feedback on video.
 - Delivered by Speech-language therapist + psychologist.
 7. Petra Warreyn: Promoting imitation and joint attention in preschoolers with ASD
 - Mixture of developmental and behavioural approach: Following child's leads and interests, Scaffolding the interaction (different levels of support), Social and natural reinforcers
 - Provided by therapist (psychologist or speech-language therapist) to child in 24 one to one sessions
 - N = 36, age 3 – 7 years, mean IQ = 77, diagnosis = ASD
 - Sessions: both imitation and joint attention, playful, increasing difficulty
 8. Petra Warreyn: Ongoing study: the evaluation of three types of intervention in Flanders
 - Comparison of ABA / imitation-joint attention training / treatment as usual
 - Aim: 3 * 20 children, preschool age
 - Treatment delivered in independent centres by child's psychologist or speech-language therapist

Group discussion: what should be our focus for work during the next years?

The following points were discussed:

1. What is the content of therapies that seem to have a lot in common (categorized in summary Table under 'reciprocity').
2. What are key skills targeted and how do we measure them?
3. What are useful outcome measures (including parent-child interaction, as core to 'reciprocity' interventions)?
4. How to we look at treatment fidelity, including what parents do at home?

5. How to measure treatment as usual (TAU)? What does treatment as usual mean for the different countries involved in the Action?
6. Possibilities for future STSM's within WG4
7. Possibilities for future summer school