

This thesis presents and discusses theoretical roots and background of Instrumental Enrichment. Reuven Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment was originally designed to overcome cognitive difficulties of culturally different children and adults in after second war Israel. Today this program is used all over the world in wide educational contexts. We introduce this program as a part of large body of research and knowledge in so called "thinking skills" domain too. This thesis also presents data from one year evaluation of this program as a tool for improving cognitive abilities and thinking skills of culturally and socially disadvantaged children in Czech primary school.

Research design of our study refers to pilot (never published) evaluation study of Instrumental Enrichment in Czech Republic. It was prepared as a comparative, pre-post experimental design. We were interested in differences between experimental and control groups in performance on assessment battery before and after intervention. Assessment battery consisted of measures of cognitive abilities and IQ, school attainment tests and measures of self-esteem. For qualitative analyses we included diary of Instrumental Enrichment's lecturer and some tests from the assessment battery too.

Data from both experimental (N=9, aged between 9 and 11) and matched control group (N=9) were analysed using a nonparametric Mann-Whitney test. For assessing measure of effect of our intervention, we were comparing effect sizes of both groups performance on assessment battery. Analyses revealed significant differences in performance on reading fluency test and Rey-Osterrieth Figure in favour of experimental group. Effect sizes for experimental group were large in tests of cognitive abilities and nonverbal IQ. Positive effect of training was also demonstrated at the level of improvements of children's behaviour in the classroom, learning and problem solving strategies.