

Theory of mind in deaf and deafblind children (Usher syndrome) with cochlear implants



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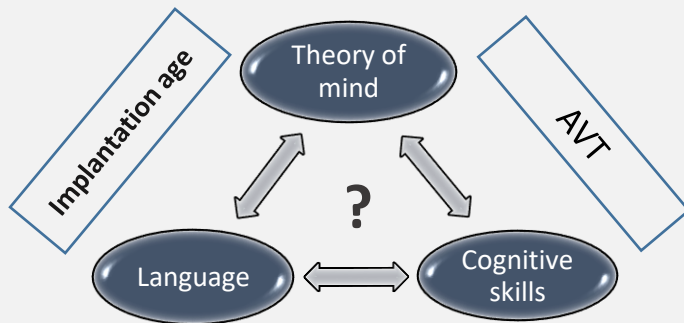
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Introduction

Theory of mind (ToM) is the ability to understand other people's mental states and it is related to language and cognitive skills. Deaf children with cochlear implants (CIs) show delay in the ToM development. Deaf and deafblind children (Usher syndrome) with CIs also achieve lower results on some **language** tasks and have poorer **cognitive skills** that are central for information processing in most language-related activities. One way of enhancing those skills could be **auditory verbal therapy (AVT)** that focuses on teaching auditory, speech, language, and cognitive skills. Additionally, providing early access to listening and language through **early implantation** can be beneficial for improving language and cognition.

Objective

This research aims to compare ToM, cognitive and language skills in deaf and deafblind children (Usher syndrome) with CIs with hearing parents to typically developing hearing children to determine the relationship between those variables and to examine the effect of implantation age and AVT on the said variables.



Methods

Participants

3 groups of participants age 6-9:

deaf children with CIs

deafblind children (Usher syndrome) with CIs
typically developing hearing children (control group)

Subgroups will be formed according to the **implantation age** (early < 3 years > late) and **inclusion in AVT**.

Instruments

Cognitive skills (working memory, phonological skills & lexical access) – computer based testing
Language skills (receptive and expressive vocabulary) – standardized tests
ToM (cognitive & emotional) – ToM scale



*instruments are yet to be determined

Further steps

After completing the research protocol and ethical approval, the data collection is expected to start in April 2022.

Reference list

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