

# Instrumental Enrichment: impacts upon learners who are deaf

DAVID S. MARTIN<sup>1</sup>

## **Abstract**

Feuerstein's Instrumental Enrichment (FIE) has positively affected the learning capacity of many populations; among those have been the effects with deaf and hearing impaired learners. The long history of negative expectations for deaf learners' intellectual potential is reviewed, together with later significant breakthroughs from meta-analytic research. Two reasons are provided for the relative rarity of implementation of FIE in deaf education. However, the often little-understood differences in the learning styles of deaf vs. hearing learners can explain how FIE has a uniquely relevant application to the cognitive needs of learners who are deaf. A summary of research studies on cognitive intervention programs provides a context for the introduction of FIE as a systematic and explicit intervention in different learning environments involving deaf learners; a synthesis of these studies indicates significant positive outcomes for FIE in that context in North America. A detailed description of a comparative international study of deaf learners in two countries further indicates that these positive effects may also be cross-cultural. A view of ongoing current and future training and implementation of FIE for deaf learners shows that FIE will persist as a cognitive tool in the hands of educators of the deaf.

## **Keywords**

Deaf, Hearing impairment, Cognition, Feuerstein Instrumental Enrichment Programme, cognitive processing