



EDITOR'S PAGE

It's finally here – our first academic journal specifically focused on Communication and Deafblindness. I am incredibly proud of the collaborative efforts and achievements of the authors of the articles in this first issue, and the huge engagement of the editorial board and external reviewers.

Because this is the first issue I think it is important to emphasize that, as stated by the editorial board, this journal is linked to the International Master's in Pedagogical Sciences on Communication and Deafblindness at the University of Groningen. This Master's degree programme was initiated nine years ago. Authors in this journal can be Master's students, scholars and professionals from the deafblind field or other relevant fields, as long as the focus remains meaning-making in the context of face-to-face communication. Different theoretical perspectives can be the starting point to advance our knowledge, not only in educational practice but certainly also scientifically.

In recent years in the Master's programme, dialogical theories and cognitive semiotics have been emphasized in connection with developmental-psychological and educational perspectives. In most of the Master's theses persons (children and adults) with congenital deafblindness have been the focus, and in some also those with acquired deafblindness. Many case studies have been performed and new insights, approaches or instruments have been described, developed and evaluated, which is very useful for practitioners putting them into practice and researchers taking them as the starting point for further research. This new knowledge can also be used for other target groups, like people with autism, people with intellectual and sensory disabilities, or people with disabilities in communication and language in general.

As well as publishing articles, this journal will also be a forum for the exchange of ideas, the airing of controversies and the discussion of issues. There is room for a range of interesting and current features and commentaries in the form of reports on good practice, good leadership, conferences, books or interviews with scientists and professionals.

In this issue of the *Journal of Deafblind Studies on Communication*, the first article is about the theoretical concept of 'Real Space Blend', which was originally worked out in the field of sign languages. In the article the author explores the

possibility of extending it to contexts that do not involve sign language. Applicability of this concept is tried out on one example of video analysis drawn from the field of congenital deafblindness.

In the second article the author uses dialogical theory to develop the concept of 'communicative agency' in relation to persons with congenital deafblindness. The author concludes that in terms of this theory persons with congenital deafblindness can develop a voice of their own, even if they do not possess many linguistic skills. It is furthermore stated that the antinomy between striving for subjectivity and for intersubjectivity seems relevant to communication intervention within the field of congenital deafblindness.

The third article is about a study of the transfer process from knowledge to action in order to propose suggestions for better staff development in the different organizations for persons with deafblindness. Dialogical theories were used as a scientific perspective. The findings show that a strong feeling of a potential 'I' position as a competent communication partner is essential for the transfer process. The authors recommend interventions that foster a proactive culture towards staff development.

In the fourth article the authors describe a narrative-based approach to everyday conversations between children with congenital deafblindness and their communication partners. This approach was evaluated in two case studies. The findings show an increase in the quality of the conversations with enhanced participation and a wider variation in expressive forms of communication.

This first issue of JDBSC contains articles covering a wide range of topics, but all are related to Communication and Deafblindness. Alongside these articles, you may also find something of interest in the Features and Commentaries section, including a Book Review, a Film Review, and a Conference Report. We are proud that this issue has been published and that a known expert from the field of Dialogicality, Ivana Markova, has written a short inspiring and supportive contribution. Enjoy!

Marleen J. Janssen
Editor-in-Chief