



OVERVIEW CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

Tuesday 13:30-14:30

Charlotte van de Molengraft & Sonja van de Molengraft (The Netherlands)

Acquired deafblindness and its influences on identity construction.

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to get more insight in the identity construction of people with acquired deafblindness.

Relevance:

In order to make decisions about what support a person with acquired deafblindness needs, it is important to know at what stage the person is, in her or his inner process of dealing with the consequences of deafblindness, on her or his identity. Therefore, based on the theory of dialogicality, we want to obtain more insight in the identity construction of people with acquired deafblindness. Identity is conceptualized as a multidimensional entity, consisting of multiple components, called I-positions (Batory, 2010; Hermans, Kempen, & van Loon, 1992) It has a dialogical nature and is constantly reorganized, because of its internal dynamics and context-dependency (Batory, 2010; Markus, Wurf, 1987; Andersen, Chen, 2002; Hermans, 2003; Kashima et al., 2004; van Halen, Janssen, 2004; Oleś, 2008a).

During the workshop Charlotte (who has acquired deafblindness) will share her collage and her life stories. We will show the different steps of a Collage Life Story Elicitation Technique (CLET) and together we will apply the Personal Position Repertoire (PPR). The CLET (van Schalkwyk 2010) provides a channel for making sense of the past and integrating these experiences with the present and an anticipated future, providing a valuable mode for eliciting and exploring autobiographical memories. The PPR (Hermans, 2001) enables the study of the organization and reorganization of a person's repertoire with attention to the personal meanings that are associated with the different positions. It is based on the theory of the dialogical self.

Marga Martens (The Netherlands)

Fostering affective involvement between people who are congenitally deafblind and their communication partners.

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to focus on the concept of affective attunement and sharing emotions.

Relevance:

Affective involvement, or the mutual sharing of emotions, helps people maintain consistent orientation to the social environment, and to elicit and maintain positive emotions and limit negative emotions (Feldman, 2003). The inability to engage in shared attention through eye contact and speech hinders people with congenital deafblindness and their communication partners from sharing dynamic emotional exchanges (Hart, 2010; Janssen & Rødbroe, 2007). It makes people with congenital deafblindness highly vulnerable to negative emotions and tensions because it is hard for them to understand what is happening around them and to exchange thoughts and feelings with their communication partners about their experiences.

Video- analysis:

During the workshop we will see video-examples of a person with deafblindness in interaction with a communication partner, to illustrate the dynamic affective exchanges during two different interaction situations.

Jonathan Reid (Scotland)

Towards an aesthetic praxis: An exploration of creativity within a deafblind/non-deafblind dyad.

Aim:

The workshop will focus on broadening an understanding of what may be termed “the aesthetic space” in relation to communication partnerships. Using filmed examples of deafblind people and their social partners engaging in creative, arts focused activities we will discuss the impact of an aesthetic approach with particular attention to declarative communication and the joint-construction of the other within a dialogical framework.

Relevance:

Pathways to intersubjectivity and co-authored meaning are likely to be both more memorable and meaningful if the communicative agency of both partners is equally realized. Within a declarative communicative episode, such as a creative music or dance session, the I-positions of both partners can adopt a wider, improvisational quality, promoting a route towards co-constructed meaning and travelling from an ‘I-‘It’ relationship to a ‘I-‘Thou’ dynamic (Markova, 2008). In exploring the I-positions of the social partner within creative, communicative episodes we shall attempt to “create a world of shared experience which gives bases for negotiating shared meanings and shared vocabularies” (Nafstad & Rødbroe, 1999).

Video-analysis:

Several short clips featuring people with congenital deafblindness and their communication partners engaging in creative, arts led situations will be shown. Particular attention to the social partner’s I-positions within the aesthetic dynamic will be explored in relation to the co-constructed communication of the partnership.

Annika Johanessen (Norway)

How can we observe the expressions of agency during conversations between persons *with congenitally deafblindness (cdb) and their partners?*

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to apply the concept of Agency in the analysis of a conversation (three-party context) between a person with cdb and his partners. The focus will be on how the three-party context may provide a framework for recognising agency of a person with cdb.

Relevance:

Persons with cdb is in high risk of not being able to have access to dialogues where the interlocutors in the conversation share their thoughts, emotions and experiences. It seems that the conversations that persons with cdb participate in are often limited to established contexts of prepared daily activities and thus will affect the development of communication. To get access to participate in dialogues that on one hand are characterized in establishing intersubjectivity, diminish conflicts and increase symmetry in exchanges and reciprocal relations, and on the other hand characterizes by the strive for positions, perspectives and recognitions from others are rarely accessible for persons with cdb (Markova 2008). It is the tension and strive that that forms a reason to communicate (Markovà 2008). Agency is understood as; *“a sense of self as one worthy of being listened to by the other (generalized other)”* (Nafstad 2009, p.3). This involves the important psychological dimension of communication and that is why it is important to support persons with congenital deafblindness access to such dialogues.

Video-analysis:

Video-examples of a person with cdb in interaction with his social partners (three-party context) will be shown to illustrate how the three-party context can support the possibilities for the person with cdb to reveal his agency.

Tuesday 14:45-15:45

Rita Gerkema-Nijhof (The Netherlands)

Expressions of agency in storytelling sessions with a multi-sensory method.

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to analyze how a child with congenital deafblindness can express agency in storytelling when a multi-sensory method (Experience stories; Drissel, 1991; Lewis & Tolla, 2003) is repeatedly used.

The goal is to support storytelling with persons with congenital deafblindness, by considering the actual experiences as a way of storytelling, from a bodily-tactile and socio-cultural perspective (Bakhtin, 1986; Grove, 2012; Klapproth, 2004; Souriau, 2009a; Vege, 2008).

Relevance:

When a person has severe disabilities, such as congenital deafblindness, storytelling seems more difficult (Grove, 2012). A multi-sensory storytelling method might offer a useful framework to stimulate storytelling, however, it can become a rigid frame as well (Fogel, De Koeyer, Bellagamba & Bell, 2002; Souriau, 2009b). Thus, it is helpful to know what elements in adapting a multi-sensory storytelling method stimulate the agency of the child and the co-creation of the story (Nafstad & Rødbroe;1999).

If storytelling is approached as a *form, a cultural tool* (Vygotsky, 1987; Wertsch, 2000), the co-creation of narrative structures as an activity is valuable in itself, regardless the content of the story (Nelson, 1996; Nicolopoulou, 1997; Owen, 2011). When the same experiences are repeatedly offered in a narrative way, it is an enjoyable, shared communicative activity, that stimulates a bodily-tactile way of storytelling in which the child might experience space to express agency (Ask Larsen, 2013; Crites, 1971; Nafstad, 2015).

Video-analysis:

Some video-fragments of subsequent storytelling-sessions of a child with congenital deafblindness and a communication partner are part of this workshop, to illustrate and analyze the development of communicative agency in the dyad, and the narrative structure of the experience, when they repeatedly shared the same Experience story.

Sue-Lane Wood (Canada)*Exploring the Intervenor Role Through Dialogicality.***Aim:**

The aim of this workshop is to understand and apply elements of the Canadian Intervention model, specifically the role of the Intervenor, through video analysis with attention to dialogical concepts of trust, intersubjectivity and third party alters.

Relevance:

Dialogicality presupposes that “language is interpretive, not simply a tool used by humans, but is a natural capacity or inclination towards self-expression as something we are all born with regardless of our degree of ability towards self-expression” (Marková, 2003). According to dialogicality, “communication is something that fully engages its participants, thus when we discuss communication we must bear in mind the person as a whole”(ibid). This statement points to why dialogicality is particularly relevant towards the study of deafblind communication. As humans, we all have the capacity, drive and need to participate in the communicative process and as ontology suggests we are all born with this ability, regardless of how it is actualized.

The Canadian intervention model with its emphasis on the role of the Intervenor is best considered as “the process that takes place between the person who is deafblind and the person providing support in such a way that the disability caused by the loss of the effective use of the distance sense of sight and hearing are minimized” (McInnes, 1999, p.76). The goal of intervention then is to “to allow the deafblind individual as much control on his or her own life as appropriately possible” (McInnes, 1999, p. 12). “intervention is completely guided by the needs of the deafblind individuals and not by the skill of the facilitator.”

Video-analysis:

In the workshop we will analyze two video-clips. In each of the two clips we see an individual with CDB and a social partner in interaction.

Jacky Smith (Scotland)

The application of communication theory to find out what is important in the lives of people who have complex communication support needs.

Aim:

The purpose of this workshop is to explore how the application of theoretical models of communication and cognition may enhance perspective taking and consultation with people who have complex communication support needs, and therefore give voice to that person.

Relevance:

Grove, Bunning, Porter and Olsson (1999) maintain that when supporting someone who has complex communication support needs in decision-making, any interpretation of communication is of a provisional and contingent nature. Ulvik (2015) asserts that practitioners, when consulting (in this case with young people who use services), must co-construct meaning together with the young person. This way of regarding consultation and participation chimes with several current theories on communication. The most closely linked of these theories are the theory of dialogicality, as most notably espoused by Ivana Markova (2003) and Per Linell (2009). In this theoretical approach, communication is seen as a process of negotiation, with no utterance having explicit meaning without interpretation. Linell (2009) asserts that dialogical theories are concerned with human sense making, in so far as they relate to how human beings make sense of the world, each other and ourselves. This meta-theory can be related back to Ulvik's description of professionals engaging in the work of meaning production and co-construction of meaning with the people that they support (Ulvik, 2015).

Video-analysis:

During this workshop we will look at some video examples of focus groups made up of social care professionals responding to video clips of communicative episodes. We will explore how the theory of dialogicality, as well as other relevant theories of cognition and communication can help everyone who is involved in the support of a person complex communication support needs to find out what is important to that person.

Marga Leefkens (The Netherlands)

The role of vision and touch in joint attention and congenital deafblindness.

Aim:

It is the purpose of this workshop to identify joint attentional engagements in a Dutch sign language conversation between a 9,5 year old boy with congenital deafblindness, caused by the CHARGE syndrome and his social partner. The special focus will be on the use of the tactile modality which contributes to deepen the joint attentional engagements.

Relevance:

Joint attention is recognized as a key element (Carpenter, 2010). It makes language acquisition possible (Carpenter, Nagell and Tomasello, 1998) and it is fundamental to social abilities at all ages (Mundy and Newell, 2007). During joint attention there is mutual awareness of this shared focus (Ingsholt, 2002; Hobson, 2005; Tomasello & Carpenter, 2007; Robijn, 2013). Focusing on the joint and reciprocal active participation to the dyadic system can make imbalances clear (Nafstad, Rødbroe & Daelman, 1993). Detailed Video-observations and video-analysis of the interaction, communication or language between the child with CDB and his social partners can reveal the contribution of both (Linell, 2009; Marková, 2006, 2008; Reddy, 2008; Hart, 2010). Touch is fundamental in the regulation of emotional wellbeing (Nicholas, 2010), therefore it may be interesting to explore the extent to which touch can be used in joint attention in case of congenital deafblindness.

Video-analysis:

We will show examples of the case study to illustrate the joint attentional engagements between the person with congenital deafblindness and his social partner. We will analyze what contributes to establish and deepen the joint attentional engagements.

Wednesday 13:30-14:30

Emilie Stroem (Denmark)

The Body as Meaning Creating.

Aim:

The aim of the workshop is to focus on the body as meaning creating. That means preverbal meaning making through movement complemented by emotions exemplified by values.

Relevance:

Preverbal meaning creation can be observed by the concept of image schemas (Johnson, 1987). The concept of values is taken from the cognitive behavioural therapy Acceptance & Commitment Therapy (ACT) (Hayes, Strosahl & Wilson, 2011). Values contains both an emotional and a motivational part. Together image schemas and values provide an opportunity of analysing meaning creation as a whole.

Video-analysis:

During the workshop we will analyse video examples of children with congenital deafblindness in interaction with a communication partner to illustrate image schemas and values.

Note: Due to the absence of Emilie Stroem, this workshop was replaced by a workshop about Touch Qualities, presented by Saskia Damen and Marja Cantell.

Kari Schjøll Brede (Norway)

Joint attention; tactile language development and meaning making in meaningful and shared activities.

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to understand parts of language development in the tactile modality through video analysis. The focus is on joint attention in meaningful activities, and the understanding of both communication partner's linguistic contributions.

Relevance:

Keigl states that language is an extremely resilient human capacity that expresses itself even under adverse conditions such as limited cognitive capacities [...] or lack of access to auditory /or visual modalities (Morgan and Woll 2002 p 207). In children with CBD we need to see their language as a variation among all the ways linguistic competencies are developed and used across cultures (Souriau 2008). Tomasello discussed joint attentional frames as one of three manifestations important for language acquisition: "The joint attentional frame is those objects and activities that the child and the adult know are part of the attentional focus of both of them." (Tomasello 2003). Meaningful activities are scaffolding the communication (Gibson 2006), creating a social and practical frame for joint attention and giving access to linguistic culture. The project BUA-MI is a practical project with a focus on meaningful activities and language development. The activities in building a small cabin (small enough to tactilely getting access to it and large enough to be interesting and useful), helped scaffolding social interaction and joint attention in the tactile modality (Brede 2012, 2014).

Video:

During the workshop we will watch video-examples of a young boy with deafblindness in interaction with his teacher, to illustrate how tactile language developed in the activities and joint attentional frames.

Gøran Andreas Gregor Caspian Forsgren (Norway)

Recycling of meaning constructions in the process of sign construction based on the exploration of the form and function of objects.

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to apply the concepts of the analogue building model of linguistic iconicity (Taub, 2001), depicting handshapes (Cormier et al., 2012) and tactile iconicity when analyzing sign constructions, made by persons with congenital deafblindness, based on exploration of objects.

Relevance:

Taub (2001) states that in creating an iconic item (i.e. sign) the language user goes through the process of image selection, schematization and encoding. If the language user is deafblind, the iconicity comes from the tactile interaction with the object and will look different than if it had been based on the visual modality. But still the depicting handshapes (Cormier et al., 2012) often come close to those emerging from iconic items based on visual cues.

Due to the fact that the sign constructions are based on a bodily-tactile modality and are not resembling our understanding of “cultural language”, this gives the sign constructions low readability. A strategy to counteract the low readability of these expressions is to look more in-depth at sign constructions that come from the process of exploration (Forsgren, 2016).

Video-analysis:

During the workshop we will have a look at a video named ‘THE WALL’, which shows a boy with congenital deafblindness in interaction with his teacher. They are exploring a wall and the aim is to find out what the object is and to name the object using a sign.

Dominique Spriet (France)

Graphic and tactile support as part of the conversation and meaning construction between people with congenital deafblindness and their social partners.

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to focus on: “how can visual (or tactile) conversation be supported to obtain joint attention, memory and co-creativity?”

Relevance:

It is often difficult for interaction partners of people with CDB to recall what has been communicated. Graphic or tactile support can help the different partners to ensure more comprehension in conversations.

Video analysis:

We will analyze a video of Dominique interacting with a small boy, she did not meet before. During this first and unique encounter they had a physical rhythmic conversation that Dominique tried to put into a tactile permanent trace, to help him have a future exchange with another interaction partner.

Wednesday 14:45-15:45 (open sessions)

Carolyn Monaco (Canada)

The Education of Intervenors at George Brown College.

This workshop will provide insight into the role intervenors play within the system of support for individuals of all ages who are deafblind in Canada. It will focus on the education and training provided within a two year college diploma program that is offered at George Brown College in Toronto, Canada. The impact the program has had on various aspects of the field of deafblindness will also be shared.

Vula Ikonomidis & Shirley Maia (Brazil)

Educational service for students with deafblindness in public schools in São Paulo.

The agreement of cooperation between Ahimsa and the Municipal Secretary of Education of São Paulo was first initiated in 2014 and consists of a consultancy to six bilingual schools for the deaf and two bilingual base-schools.

In the first year the consultant worked with case studies and each schools selected a student to be followed up during one year, when we carried out studies and organized some modifications in order to meet the needs of each student in the classrooms , we used MAPs (Making Action Plans) and IEP (Individualized Educational Plans) and also organized actions with the families, at their homes and in the school environment.

In the second year, the secretary decided to organize meetings with the teachers in each school during the period they had scheduled for their in-service training, focusing on communication and educational resources to support the development of classroom activities. We used a protocol we produced based on our document for a responsible inclusion of the person with deafblindness.

This year we started by using the following instruments: Communication Matrix (by Charity Rowland), an Activity Assessment Form (produced in our center) and a table with pieces of information from the principals of the Universal Design for Learning.

In the workshop we shall present partial results of the development of the students with deafblindness who are included in public schools in the city of São Paulo.

Helle Buelund Selling & Anne Søbbye (Denmark)

Transfer – How can Action Research support transfer and organizational development?

Aim

To share and discuss our findings and experiences from an Action Research process at CDH, Aalborg where the purpose was to support the transfer process from knowledge to action, from tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge.

Relevance:

It is essential to people with CDB to have access to competent communication partners. At CDH we discovered that facilitating staff development through Action Research processes can support an interdependent transfer process from theoretical knowledge to action on the one side and from tacit knowledge and action to explicit knowledge and action that can be verbalized on the other side. Our hypothesis is that this interdependent transfer process is important for staff to experience in order to reproduce in other contexts and develop their best practice.

Ingrid Korenstra (The Netherlands)

Outdoor activities; a project on outdoor activities for people with congenital deafblindness and how the Bartiméus Expertise Center on Deafblindness gives substance to this project.

Aim:

The aim of the workshop is to focus on the concept of outdoor activities and on how the principles of Joe Gibson (Gibson, 2000) are applied in our daily routine.

Relevance:

By using outdoor activities, the Bartiméus Expertise Center on Deafblindness creates unique opportunities for people with congenital deafblindness (CDB) to share outdoor experiences, to improve the interaction with others and to enlarge their world.

We have organized several outdoor activities, following similar projects in Scotland and Scandinavia. Six adults with CDB, each in their own unique way, have experienced meaningful outdoor activities adapted to their own specific interests.

In this workshop we will discuss the design and execution of outdoor activities by looking at: the choice of the activity, the preparation, the implementation, how to share the experience and in which way the adults with CDB are involved in the whole process in order to participate within their own opportunities.

Video-analysis:

We will show a video example of this project to illustrate one of the outdoor activities: “walking the mudflats” with persons with CDB.

Thursday 13:30-14:30

Kirsten C. Schou (Norway)

Embodied cognition and communication: Recycling with difference.

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to apply the concept of recycling with difference and the associated linguistic concepts of format tying, stance markers and rhemes in analysis of the embodied sense-making activities of a child with congenital deafblindness and his teacher.

Relevance:

Embodied cognition is an increasingly important perspective within cognitive science with obvious importance for work within the field of congenital deafblindness in which the bodily-tactile sensory mode is the central source of, and crucial for constructing cohesion in sensory experience. The notion of cognition as dependent on a process of mental representation or simulation is common to most theories of cognition (Barsalou, 2003). Within a simulation perspective of cognition, 'recycling' is seen as repetition of conversational elements, albeit for the communicative purposes of the individual speaker. In recycling with difference (Anward, 2005; 2014; Derrida, 1981), emphasis is placed instead on the generative aspect of recycling as each new recycling of an old turn produces a difference in the sense of Derrida (1981): difference as it unfolds or is constructed in time (Anward, 2005; 2014). Recycling with difference involves use of several linguistic elements, among them frame or format tying (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1987), stance markers, and rhemes, or the part of a turn that develops the theme of the conversation (Anward, 2005). Viewing recycling in this way emphasizes the role of language appropriation (Dufva, Suni & Aro, 2014) in (embodied) sense-making and communication.

Video analysis:

The context of the video is a situation of ordinary interaction between a child with congenital deafblindness and multiple disability and his teacher, getting ready to go swimming. We will apply the concepts of recycling with difference in identifying format tying and rhematic expression in the case example, as well as the construction of stance within the communication between the child and the teacher and by the child in conversation with himself. This analysis will illustrate cognitive and communicative tactics

employed by the child and the constructive and generative nature of recycling as a cognitive-communicative resource.

Eija Lundqvist (Norway)

The moving body creating meaning in space and time.

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to show how the core concept SPACE was applied in analysis of interactions/conversations between people with congenital deafblindness and their social partners. We will apply the concept of multi-person interactional frame (as space/signing space here-and -now) in which the moving body makes sense of the world and creates meanings.

Relevance:

Perspective taking, as an essential aspect of social cognition, seems to be grounded in the experiences of self-produced bodily movements. Multi-person interaction creates a frame where person with cdb can literally move as an active agent, with his/her whole body, to explore their social environments, make sense of the world and create meanings. Multi-person interactional frame can be understood as a developmental path which is gradually expanding. By experiencing from another person's physical position, the person becomes able to relate to both the other person's perspective and his own situation. The intertwining of social scaffolding and self-produced locomotion behavior might be fundamental to the development of joint attention activities. Meaning is created by the moving body in space and time, enabling the mind later on engage in multi-person conversations flexibly move between, here-and-now and a narrative-space.

Video-analysis:

We will show video-examples of persons with and without deafblindness in interaction with multiple social partners in multi-person context, to illustrate how concept of space can be applied in analysis.

Note: Due to the absence of Eija Lundqvist, this workshop was executed by Anne Nafstad, Marlene Daelman and Mijkje Worm.

Saskia Damen (The Netherlands)

Intersubjectivity; Attunement and Meaning Making in Conversations between People with Congenitally Deafblindness and their Social Partners.

Aim:

The aim of this workshop is to apply the concept of Intersubjectivity in the analysis of videos of conversations between people with congenital deafblindness and their social partners, with specific focus on attunement and meaning making.

Relevance:

Trevarthen states that human beings are born with 'intersubjectivity', the ability to share subjective states. This ability can be observed and develops through meaningful social interaction with social partners (Bråten & Trevarthen, 2007). Social partners use strategies to mediate intersubjectivity, which can be clustered into two main partner strategies: attunement and meaning making. Social Partners of individuals with CDB, such as parents, caregivers and teachers, often have difficulty with the adaptation of attunement and meaning making strategies in order to meet the needs of individuals with congenital deafblindness.

Video-analysis:

We will show video-examples of a person with deafblindness in interaction with a social partner, to illustrate intersubjective behaviors at three layers of intersubjective development and the use of attunement and meaning making strategies by the partner.

Kirsten Wolthuis (The Netherlands)

Intersubjectivity; monitoring communication development between students with congenital deafblindness and their teachers.

Aim:

The aim of the workshop is to demonstrate the different layers of intersubjective communication development and to discuss the strategies teachers can use to monitor and stimulate communication skills of their students with congenital deafblindness.

Relevance:

According to Trevarthen's theory of intersubjective communication development, three major developmental steps can be distinguished. First, parents and children share their direct attention for each other. This is followed by a phase in which parents and children can share objects with each other. The last step is that they can also share mental states, they are able to take the perspective of others (Bråten & Trevarthen, 2007).

All of these steps emerge through social interaction and interpersonal communication, which makes it a very relevant theory to use when analyzing children with deafblindness. Using this theory has been proven effective in interventions at the first two layers of intersubjective communication (Janssen et al., 2003, Damen et al., 2015) and might be helpful to stimulate behavior at the highest level of communication development as well. A detailed analysis of each layer of development is needed to get more insight in developmental steps and to help communication partners of children with deafblindness.

Video-analysis:

During the workshop we will analyze videos of a children with deafblindness communicating with their teacher. We will look at behaviors of the different communication layers and discuss what strategies teachers and other communication partners might use to stimulate communication development.