

## DBI Communication Network News Report

### Alumni network Master Communication and Deafblindness

On September 26 the annual alumni seminar of the master Communication and Deafblindness was held at the University of Groningen. The topic of the seminar was “Moving Together – co-creating meaning within the bodily-tactile modality”. The first speaker was dr. Marja Cantell, who is an assistant professor specialized in research on movement in individuals with special needs. Her presentation, titled “Meaning in movement: interaction in motion”, focused on movement analysis. She showed examples on video to explain how movement qualities can be observed. Dr. Cantell described the psychological aspects of movement and the influence movements can have in social interactions.

The second presentation was given by Itay Yatuv from Hakvutza Dance School, Israel. His talk concerned the use of contact improvisation and the role of partner competencies. Itay showed video-clips in which he used movement to interact with a toddler and with a person with deafblindness. The presentation revealed that moving together can create shared understandings and mutual trust. After the lunch, participants practiced with contact improvisation in a workshop held by of Itay Yatuv. The overall impression after the seminar was that a focus on movement is a relevant perspective for research on communication of people with deafblindness and can also provide relevant input for interventions.

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### Master Communication and Deafblindness network

On September 26th 2018 seven students of the Master Communication and Deafblindness graduated at the University in Groningen, Department Special Needs Education and Youth Care. Here an overview of the graduated master students and their topics. If you are interested in a thesis you can contact Marleen Janssen or you can contact the authors yourself.

- Graham Nolan (UK): Using Mindfulness and Self-Massage techniques to improve the quality of tactile interactions with partners who are congenitally deafblind
- Christine Oskamp-Maas (the Netherlands): Assigning meaning to tactilely observable images and symbols. A case study.
- Gro-Anita Nummedal (Norway): Identifying cognitive strategies within the bodily tactile modality through social interaction between a person with congenital deafblindness and a partner

- Wija van der Kaaden-Huttinga (the Netherlands): I support you in your loss. Evaluation of an approach to coach caregivers in their support in the loss of a beloved one.
- Johanne Godø (Norway): A communicative encounter between a fluent signer and a youngster with CDB. What tools can be used to describe spatial elements?
- Ismael Byaruhanga Kus (DR Congo): Analysis of social construction of congenital deafblindness in relation to education in East and Central Africa.
- Camilla Foote (Norway): Access to cultural language out of the ordinary. A translanguaging perspective on conversations with a child with congenital deafblindness.

In this new academic year 2018-2019 nine students are doing the master. They have to write their research proposal and their thesis more in line with other international master tracks at the University of Groningen. We have four students from Africa, one from Canada, one from the UK, one from Denmark and one from the Netherlands.

If new students want to apply for this master track in Pedagogical Sciences Communication and Deafblindness for the academic year 2019-2020 they can contact the academic advisor at the University of Groningen, Alette Arendshorst: A.M.Arendshorst@rug.nl, or Saskia Damen: S.Damen@rug.nl or Marleen Janssen: h.j.m.janssen@rug.nl.

### **Concrete meetings of the Communication Network**

#### **Preconference Australia**

On Saturday August 11, 2019 we will organize a preconference at the conference in Australia with the theme: Video analysis and Video feedback in Communication. If you want and can join this preconference you can apply. We have already contributions from Japan, the Netherlands and a request from the Nordic countries. If you have ideas let us know.

#### **Network meeting Australia**

On Wednesday August 14 2019 in the afternoon we are planning a meeting of the Communication Network. We do not know the details yet, but the main goal is to have a presentation on video analysis of communication and after that to discuss new ideas for: a) expanding the number of members of the Communication Network, b) plan concrete meetings with concrete themes, and c) how to use social media better to share knowledge around the globe.

For more information contact Marleen Janssen, on behalf of the DBI Communication Network Team: h.j.m.janssen@rug.nl.

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