

Annual report from “The Nordic network on Tactile Language” to the Nordic leadership forum of deafblindness. An overview over the process and work of the network in -2020.

Aim and purpose of the network

The purpose of the network is to find the core points in tactile language, in order to understand how the tactile modality is used when people with congenital deafblindness speak. The network sees a need for being more specific about language in a tactile modality.

More knowledge is needed to develop intervention that supports language development in the tactile modality. The network aims to spread the knowledge into the practitioner field to support language development among people with deafblindness.

Members of the network

Jenny Näslund / Caroline Lindström (Sweden)

Nedelina Ivanova (Iceland)

Helle Buelund Selling / Bettina Kastrup Pedersen (Denmark)

Camilla Foote / Kari Schjøll Brede / Johanne Dybdahl Godö (Norway)

Network meetings in 2020:

March 3rd : Meeting in CDH, Aalborg, Denmark

- Evaluation of course in Eikholt in November 2019
- Planning for course in Denmark in May 2020

April 22nd: Online meeting

- Planning for a webinar about Tactile language in May 14th

June 4th : Online meeting

- Evaluation of the webinar

November 6th : Online meeting

- This autumn we had to say goodbye and good luck to four very cherished members of the network.
- Planning activities in 2021

Activities 2020

To achieve the purpose and overall aim for the network these tasks have been accomplished during 2020:

March 4th Collaboration with the Nordic network Communicative relations, CDH, Denmark

- Our two networks met to discuss the future for the networks. We discussed similarities and differences of the networks. We agreed on that both networks share the same basic beliefs and the theme for both networks is closer now than before. The knowledge, developed within Communicative relations, is incorporated and built upon further in Tactile language.
- The Nordic network on Tactile Language suggest that we continue our collaboration as both networks also influence and are influenced by the Nordic master on Atypical communication.
- Both networks planned to continue the collaboration and discussion of the future in relation to the Nordic Conference in Tampere, Finland in September 2021. Unfortunately, the conference had to be postponed due to Covid19 and therefore the collaboration and discussions between the networks have been delayed and postponed to -2022.

April 2020 Published article about the book “If you can see it you can support it”

- Three members of the network have been responsible of writing an article for the Magazine “Dbi Review”, with the aim of spreading information of the new booklet.
- The article was published in Dbi Review in april -2020, issue 63 [Dbi Review Archive – Deafblind International](#)

May 14th One day webinar about “Tactile language”

The Network had planned for a three-day course in Denmark in May 2020. Due to Covid19 we had to reconsider and decided to arrange a webinar instead. The webinar was hold during one day and was very successful reaching out to 250 participants from 16 different countries. It is clear that this is an attractive topic and that people in many countries want and need more knowledge.

- Six authors of the booklet gave presentations in the webinar about these topics:
 - Introduction to the theme of tactile language: How and why do we wear the “language glasses”?
 - A dialogical perspective on language
 - Tactile language: The essence
 - Understanding concepts and meaning making in a bodily/tactile modality
 - Multimodal languaging and expressive language growth
 - How to recognise bodily tactile expressions as language.
 - Introduction to the circle model on tactile language.

September 24th Attending the Alumni network meeting for the masterprogramme in Groningen

This year the meeting was held online via Zoom.

- The theme for the alumni network meeting was “Revealing hidden potentials: assessing cognition in individual with congenital deafblindness”.
- Two members from the network attended the alumni meeting and thereby cooperated with the alumnis.

January - December 2020: Spreading information and knowledge through the Network's Facebookgroup "Nordisk Taktil sprogligheds gruppe"

- A facebook group that was founded in 2011
- A channel to spread information and to reach professionals and families in different countries
- Now counting 99 participants

Future plans:

- Welcoming new members in the network
- Arranging a webinarserie about "Tactile language" based on different chapters in the book "If you can see it you can support it" in -2021.
- Arranging a shared workingday online with the network Communicative relations about the topic "Inclusion in social and cultural situations through a bodily / tactile modality" -2021.
- A shared network day and further cooperation with the network "Communicative relations". Discussions and thoughts about the future and consequences for the networks. Hopefully it will be possible to meet physically in 2022.
- Attending and contributing at the Nordic conference in Tampere, Finland 2022
- Arranging a course in Denmark. We had many participants for our course in Eikholt in November 2019. Therefore, we plan to hold the same course again.

Next meetings:

April 20th 2021: Skype meeting

June 22nd 2021: Skype meeting

Norrköping, April 30th 2021

Caroline Lindström, Mo Gård, Sweden.