

## **Haptices and haptemes**

### **A case study of developmental process in touch-based communication of acquired deafblind people**

#### **Abstract**

This research is the first systematic, longitudinal process and development description of communication using touch and body with an acquired deafblind person. The research consists of observational and analysed written and video materials mainly from two informants' experiences during period of 14 years. The research describes the adaptation of Social-Haptic methods between a couple, and other informants' experiences, which have been collated from biographies and through giving national and international courses. When the hearing and sight deteriorates due to having an acquired deafblind condition, communication consists of multi-systematic and adaptive methods. A person's expressive language, spoken or Sign Language, usually remains unchanged, but the methods of receiving information could change many times during a person's lifetime.

Haptices are made from haptemes that determines which regulations are analysed. When defining haptemes the definition, classification and varied meanings of touch were discovered. Haptices include sharing a personal body space, meaning of touch-contact, context and using different communication channels. Communication distances are classified as exact distance, estimated distance and touch distance. Physical distance can be termed as very long, long, medium or very close. Social body space includes the body areas involved in sending and receiving haptices and applying different types of contacts. One or two hands can produce messages by using different hand shapes and orientations. This research classifies how the body can be identified into different areas such as body orientation, varied body postures, body position levels, social actions and which side of the body is used. Spatial body space includes environmental and situational elements. Haptemes of movements are recognised as the direction of movements, change of directions on the body, directions between people, pressure, speed, frequency, size, length, duration, pause, change of rhythm, shape, macro and micro movements. Haptices share multidimensional meanings and emotions.

Research describes haptices in different situations enhancing sensory information and functioning also as an independent language. Haptices includes social-haptic confirmation system, social quick messages, body drawing, contact to the people and the environment, guiding and sharing art experiences through movements. Five stages of emotional differentiation

were identified as very light, light, medium, heavy and very heavy touch. Haptices give the possibility to share different art, hobby and game experiences.

A new communication system development based on the analysis of the research data is classified into different phases. These are experimental initiation, social deconstruction, developing the description of Social-Haptic communication and generalisation of the theory as well as finding and conceptualising the haptices and haptemes. The use and description of haptices is a social innovation, which illustrates the adaptive function of the body and perceptual senses that can be taught to a third party.

Keywords: deafblindness, hapteme, haptic, haptices, movement, social-haptic communication, social-haptic confirmation system, tactile, touch