**Meeting Tactile Reading and Braille professionals**

Date: 15.03.2024 (on Teams)

**Those who attended the meeting:**

Melissa Auðardóttir - Iceland

Tine Hansen – Denmark

Marja Lounaskorpi – Finnland

Carina Söderberg - Sweden

Victoria Bergström - Sweden

Liselotte Kürstein Andersen - Denmark

**The subject of the meeting:**

Tina Hansen introduced us to the Mantis Q40 they have been working with. They feel that certain keys are missing on the keyboard which restricts user actions. She wanted to check if this device was being used e.g. in Sweden, but Victoria and Carina have not tested this device.

The need for discussion groups for teachers of braille users in public schools was discussed. Everyone at the meeting agreed that there is a lot of demand for such networks, but due to privacy laws, it has been difficult to connect teachers together. Possible groups of such networks could discuss different themes e.g. social, math, ICT, arts and crafts and so on. We agreed that it would be great to be able to comply with these wishes, but due to personal protection, our hands are unfortunately rather tied.

As a result of these discussions, we talked about the possibilities of blind students to meet. In Finland, there is a weekly event once a year where students are invited to come to the center. They are there studying the subjects they would otherwise be studying in school at that time, but with the help of special teachers at the institute. They also have the opportunity to meet students who use braille. Denmark and Sweden offer similar in their summer school and they also have a so-called computer school. Institutions have also invited students and students teachers to come with them to theme-related workshops, e.g. related to mathematics. There are also certain teachers, e.g. math teachers who are in charge of the workshops each time at the institutes. Iceland has not offered such a thing, but has had limited entertainment courses, but they are not related to their studies at school.

Marie shared with us a brilliant math box they have prepared for students. And Liselotte reviewed for us the various materials available related to mathematics on their website <https://mediateket.synref.dk/> - under *materialer og hjælpemiddler.* Then Liselotte also showed us a 10-sided cube that they have made together with the so-called Vocal stair, which is used with braille students.

**Due to national holidays next meeting is scheduled for 24.05.2024**

The agenda for the next meeting will be a film that Marja from Finland is going to show us about this annual week, which they offer to braille students.

Then Marie from Denmark is going to present to us her final project for her master's degree, which is about special education teachers with braille students in traditional schools, and the preparation time (or lack of it more precisely) that teachers are required to work with.

In the following meeting we will discuss the Mountbatten Brailler. Marja has been working with this device and feels that there are certain flaws in its use that she is going to talk to us about.

<https://mountbattenbrailler.com/mountbatten/>