

## **Developing support methodologies for the social integration of children with autism spectrum disorder and their families**

**HAS-ELTE 'Autism in Education' Research Group (MASZK)**

### **RESEARCH PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1 September 2019 – 31 August 2020**

(A translation of the corresponding document in Hungarian,  
with minor adjustments in format.)

25 October 2019

#### **1) Research plan / work plan for the academic year 2019-2020**

The emphasis of our work plan for the fourth, closing year of the current project will be on publishing and disseminating our key results from all the three research studies having been completed, as well as on the promotion of the social utilisation and implementation of the developed methodologies. Accordingly, we do not plan any further data collecting in the 2019-2020 academic year. Our main activities will be, therefore, analysing already-acquired data sets in deeper and more complex ways than the so-far performed preliminary analyses, and publishing and disseminating the results and conclusions. We overview our more specific work plan in the table below.

TASK	RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND THEIR SCHEDULING
<b>Preparation and submission of publications</b>	<p>Preparing the following two manuscripts and submitting them to international, peer-reviewed, Q1 category journals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Quantitative quality of life study: a comprehensive analysis of the quality of life of parents of individuals with autism</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ analysing quantitative data; by 30 November 2019</li> <li>○ first manuscript version; by 31 December 2019</li> <li>○ authors' final manuscript, approved by the research group; by 31 January 2020</li> <li>○ submission: February 2020</li> <li>○ target journals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Autism (IF: 3,906) OR</li> <li>▪ Autism Research (IF: 3,768) OR</li> <li>▪ Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders (IF: 3,476).</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>'Star-bus' Inclusion Intervention Programme: a comprehensive analysis of the effectiveness study data</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ analysis of the quantitative data (aggregated variables); by 31 December 2020</li> <li>○ first manuscript version; by 31 January 2020</li> <li>○ authors' final manuscript, approved by the research group; by 29 February 2020</li> <li>○ submission: March 2020</li> <li>○ target journals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Autism (IF: 3,906) OR</li> <li>▪ Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders (IF: 3,476) OR</li> <li>▪ Journal of Special Education (IF: 1,537)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Conference presentations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>EduVision 2019, Ljubljana</i>  Our main aims are: presenting the first results of the SIIP programme effectiveness study; learning about novel pedagogical support programmes; regional networking (Central Eastern Europe). <i>Conference paper manuscript has been submitted.</i>  <a href="http://www.eduvision.si/Eng">http://www.eduvision.si/Eng</a> </li> <li>• <i>International Society for Autism Research (INSAR) – Annual Meeting 2020, Seattle, Washington, US</i>  The annual meetings of the INSAR belong to the most important and most up-to-date fora on autism research, internationally.  Our main aims are: presenting partial results of the SIIP programme effectiveness study; learning about novel pedagogical support programmes; global networking.  <a href="https://www.autism-insar.org/page/2020AnnMtg">https://www.autism-insar.org/page/2020AnnMtg</a> </li> <li>• <i>National Conference in Education Research (ONK; Autumn 2020)</i>  We plan to submit a thematic session (4-5 talks), to present all of our key results, with the participation of our researching and practicing teacher members/partners. </li> </ul>

TASK	RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND THEIR SCHEDULING
<b>Dissemination to the wider public</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Scientific closing event: ‘Dialogues on Autism, 2020’ (July 2020)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ we’ll announce it on the occasion of the World Autism Awareness Day, 2 April 2020</li> <li>○ with evidence-based contents and messages</li> <li>○ both for professionals and for the wider public</li> <li>○ emphasising the broader relevance of our work</li> <li>○ if resources allow, with the participation of our international partners.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>‘Leaflet 1’: a concise, well-focussed summary of our key results from the quantitative quality of life study; January 2020</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ a 10-12 page long, easy-to-understand summary</li> <li>○ target audience: wider public, advocates, policy-makers, decision-makers</li> <li>○ main foci: parental quality of life and well-being, their interaction with education and other services</li> <li>○ emphasises the need for evidence-based policies and decisions</li> <li>○ published in environmental-friendly format(s).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• <i>‘Leaflet 2’: a concise, well-focussed summary of the ‘Star-bus’ Inclusion Intervention Programme; February 2020</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ a 10-12 page long, easy-to-understand summary</li> <li>○ target audience: wider public, advocates, policy-makers, decision-makers, but especially teachers and other education professionals.</li> <li>○ main foci: an introduction to the programme; key results of the effectiveness and applicability study</li> <li>○ emphasises the need for evidence-based practices</li> <li>○ published in environmental-friendly format(s).</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Creating the final form of the ‘Star-bus’ Inclusion Intervention Programme (SIIP)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Making final, expectedly small, amendments (on the basis of feedback forms, interviews, training notes, direct observation notes).</li> <li>• Writing up occasionally missing minor elements of the manual.</li> <li>• Finalising the entire manual.</li> <li>• Revising the teacher training programmes (for class teachers and for the teacher community).</li> <li>• Elaborating the protocol of the access to the programme.</li> <li>• Preparations for the accreditation of the class teacher training.</li> <li>• If capacities allow: starting teacher trainings.*</li> <li>• Preparations for trainer trainings for the class teacher trainings.*</li> </ul> <p><i>* Note: our research group intends to run one class teacher training per year, with the admission of 25 teachers, as a maximum. This implies a maximum of 500 pupils per year reach.</i></p>

TASK	RESEARCH ACTIVITIES AND THEIR SCHEDULING
<b>Preparations for further publications</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Qualitative data on parental and child quality of life: improving inter-rater reliability of the first-level coding of the interviews, if still needed; finalising first-level coding scheme.</li> <li>• Further analyses of both quantitative and qualitative quality of life data.</li> <li>• Preparing the first international publication from the qualitative quality of life study; by 31 August 2020. Target journals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ Autism (IF: 3,906) OR</li> <li>◦ Autism Research (IF: 3,768) OR</li> <li>◦ Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders (IF: 3,476) OR</li> <li>◦ Journal of Special Education (IF: 1,537)</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Elaborating a more detailed plan for further international journal publications.</li> </ul>

## 2) Group development and sustainment plans (personal developments and changes in members)

### *Personal advancement and development of research group members:*

- Beyond the already-active 2 doctoral students of our research group, another one has been admitted into doctoral (Ph.D.) training – Vivien Németh.
- Ágnes Havasi will, expectedly, submit her doctoral thesis in 2019, while Zsófia Borsos in 2020. Endre Horváth, research assistant to our group, will expectedly begin his Ph.D. training in 2020.
- Dorottya Fazekas, also a Ph.D. student, has participated in the DATA project of our research group, since the academic year of 2018-2019.
- Miklos Gyori, the head of the research group, has been offered a promotion to a university professor in the present academic year.
- Krisztina Stefanik, lead researcher, intends to submit her habilitation application in 2020-2021, with its focus being on the Star-bus Inclusion Intervention Programme and its validation study results.
- Márta Vargáné Molnár, vice head of the research group, intends to submit her habilitation application within 3 years, with its focus being on the quality of life studies and/or the Star-bus Inclusion Intervention Programme and its validation study results. Márta Vargáné Molnár has recently been accredited as a co-supervisor in the Doctoral School of Education of ELTE University.

Overall, the number of researching and practicing teacher members of our research group, and also the number of university students involved in our research activities have grown considerably.

## 3) Perspectives: our vision on the future of the research group

We find it important to emphasise that our three related studies have provided a very rich data set in the field of better understanding autism, and also in the field of content pedagogy developments in relation to autism. We are deeply committed to analysing further this data set along several more specific aspects of the investigated issues, and to publishing the results of these analyses, both for

domestic and international professional audiences. Our improving cooperation with international partners seems promising in this respect, too.

We intend to continue the series of our joint dissemination events with the Hungarian Autistic Society (AOSZ). We have also made important steps in our joint project, the Digital Autonomy-Support in the Autism Spectrum (briefly: DATA) Project. We have prepared the detailed specification of the assistive software system for users with autism, the protocol of the validation studies, as well as the related user manuals, user training materials, and trainer training materials. This project will, expectedly, bring about important results from an educational-methodological point of view, too.

We intend to be very active in applying for domestic and international grants, in order to maintain the continuity of our research-and-development activities and the existence and effective functioning of our research group. In this respect, it seems to be an advantage that both research and research-and-development grants can potentially be targeted. We intend to cooperate closely with our partners, in this respect, too. This is true of our domestic partners, such as the Hungarian Autistic Society and several local organisations, and our international partners (the groups of Profs Karen Guldberg and Valsamma Eapen). For expanding our international cooperation, the Pedagogical University of Cracow, Poland (Prof Joanna Kossewska), and an earlier partner of ours, Prof Joseph Mintz (currently at the Institute of Education, University College London), represent promising directions.

We are optimistic on that we will be able to maintain our research group and its research and development activity, and we will be able to contribute to the enhancing of the quality of life of people affected by autism, as well as to the development of the Hungarian public education and other relevant institutional services.

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