

# REPORT ON THE WORK AND PROGRESS

by the HAS-ELTE 'Autism in Education' Research Group

in the

1st year (September 2021 – August 2022) of the Project

## *“How your teachers adD Autonomy To Activity”*

*Developing evidence-based digital methods for supporting autonomy and inclusion in students with autism and/or with intellectual disability, learning in mainstream education*

Our research group was founded in 2016, on the basis of a community of researchers and practitioners having worked together in autism education research and development for some two decades (<https://maszk.elte.hu/>). Our recent project builds heavily on the DATA digital support system for individuals with autism, which we developed in collaboration with the Hungarian Autism Society in our previous project. Now, we are developing evidence-based pedagogical methods, based on the DATA system, for supporting autonomy and inclusion in students with autism and/or with intellectual disability, learning in mainstream education.

Three major activities were allocated (partially) to the 1<sup>st</sup> project year:

- *Completing and submitting publications from studies completed in our previous research period (2016-2021).* Two papers have been published in international journals, one in a Hungarian journal. A book chapter and a journal paper (both in English) are in press. Significant progress has been made in the completion of 4 further manuscripts.
- *Developing the manual of the pedagogical methodology for using the DATA support system with pupils with autism by teachers in the mainstream education.* A detailed literature review was completed. A detailed outline of the manual was developed, and an extended abstract has been completed for each content unit.
- *Developing a teachers' training programme in the implementation and application of the pedagogical methodology (above), for teachers in the mainstream education.* Here, too, a literature review was completed. Based on this, a detailed outline of the training was developed.

The activities below were not allocated to the 1<sup>st</sup> research year, but progress has been made in them:

- A review work was completed for planning the evaluation field study research methodology, and key progress has been made in planning the study, based on the review results.
- Preparatory work has been done for the future adaptation of the to-be-developed autism-specific methodologies to the target group of pupils with intellectually disability.

Beyond these core research activities, we stepped forward in building up our international network of research partners. Our key collaborators have been *Prof Valsamma Eapen* (University of New South Wales, Australia) and *Dr Ryan O. Kellems* (Brigham Young University, Provo, Utah, USA). We are especially glad to report that *Ágnes Havasi*, one of our key researchers is going to defend her Ph.D. thesis in October 2022. It is one of our key priorities to disseminate our results and our new methods to our target communities. Hence, we re-built our website to make it more informative and up-to-date, and reached hundreds of people with autism, parents, and professionals via our conference presentations and trainings in this project year.