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**THE HISTORY OF THE EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF
EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND COMMUNICATION
TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN HUNGARY
IN CONTEXT OF THE UN CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS
WITH DISABILITIES**

DOCTORAL (PHD) DISSERTATION THESIS

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Contents

REASON FOR CHOOSING THIS SUBJECT, THE QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES	3
THEORETICAL OUTLINE OF THE EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND COMMUNICATION.....	4
AN ATTEMPT TO DEFINE THE CODING METHOD OF AN EASY-TO-UNDERSTAND MESSAGE.....	6
RESEARCH PLANNING STRATEGY FOR THE RESEARCH.....	7
SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS OF THE RESEARCH	10
DISABILITY POLICY OBJECTIVES IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UN CONVENTION.....	10
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR DESIGNATING NEW DISABILITY POLICY GOALS.....	13
RESULTS OF EXPLORING EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND THE IMPLEMENTED PROGRAMMES	15
RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT GOALS FOR ADULT EDUCATION, HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES AND ORGANIZATIONS INTERESTED IN EDUCATIONAL DEVELOPMENT	18
BIBLIOGRAPHY	20
REFERENCED LEGISLATION, LEGAL INSTRUMENTS.....	21
COMMUNICATIONS CREATED IN THE SUBJECT OF THE THESIS	22

Reason for choosing this subject, the questions and objectives

I choose the subject of my thesis based on the experiences I have obtained in the field of easy-to-understand communication in multiple workplace environments since 2002 (Hungarian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability, the ministry in charge of disability policy, Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities Public Fund, ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Faculty of Special Needs Education, University of Szeged Juhász Gyula Faculty of Education) and led by my personal curiosity as a researcher. I participated in the first exploration of the Hungarian situation of easy-to-understand communication in 2002, in the publication of easy-to-understand materials, in the educational development of easy-to-understand communication, and from the first semester of the 2015/16 academic year I also teach easy-to-understand communication, primarily in special needs education BA programmes (*Gyene, Babolcsay & Horváth, 2002*).

My hypothesis is that in the last two decades easy-to-understand communication did not become a practice that makes the life of persons with intellectual disabilities easier, not even in institutions (e.g. schools, social institutions) or organizations (e.g. protection associations) that offer services for persons with intellectual disabilities.

At the start of my research programme there were no publicly available, systematically collected and ordered databases about programmes teaching easy-to-understand communication (or their content, the teaching materials or the number and typical characteristics of the participants). The novelty of this doctoral research lies exactly in my effort to collect this data and information systematically.

There are barely any Hungarian language literature sources about the results of scientific research on the subject of easy-to-understand communication (*Almási, 2018; Fischborn, 2018; Hegedűs, 2018*). There are virtually no teaching materials suitable for programmes teaching easy-to-understand communication. There is no publicly available, systematically collected and organized summary about the Hungarian good practices for using easy-to-understand communication. I have also undertaken to compile such a summary during my doctoral research.

The UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities can be seen as the basic document of disability policy. However, I have not found any analysis in the technical literature or in the disability policy documents that explored or analyzed the provisions of the UN Convention applicable to easy-to-understand communication.

A novel and unique feature of my research programme is that I do not present the educational development process by itself, but rather in the context of the provisions of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities applicable to easy-to-understand communication.

Based on the results of the empirical exploration of the already implemented educational development, I would like to make recommendations for an educational programme package that would serve the broader use of easy-to-understand communication in Hungary and it would define everyday practice. I will also make suggestions for the disability policy measures required to reach this goal.

My research programme could make easy-to-understand communication more broadly available in everyday life. This could improve the quality of life of persons with intellectual disabilities.

Theoretical outline of the easy-to-understand communication

The concept of easy-to-understand communication (“easy-to-read”, “easy-to-understand”, “accessible information”, “Leichte Sprache”) is not the same as the idea of “plain language” (“Einfache Sprache”). The primary goal of plain language is to make information generated during government work more accessible. However, the aim of easy-to-understand communication is to provide equal opportunity access to all information. While the target group of plain language communication is the people that require a lower level of support when reading or interpreting a text (the general population), easy-to-understand communication is essential to people who need a high level of support for both the perception and interpretation of all kinds of information. The rules for creating plain language information are mainly focused on understandability, these rules are less complex and less complicated. Creating easy-to-read and easy-to-understand information suitable for the language competence of a target group is governed by complex and complicated rules, which also apply to perceptibility (i.e. the formal appearance of the text) and understandability (i.e. the content of the text). There is no logo designed, implemented and used to mark plain language texts, while easy-to-understand information is marked by a logo created by mutual agreement, following the rules of logo usage. There are no mandatory rules for verifying the understandability of plain language texts. The understandability of easy-to-understand information however must be verified by one or more members of the target group, as paid work, if possible (*Baumert, 2016, Bredel & Maß, 2016, Csató, Farkas, Gráf-Jaksa, Monostori & Móricz, 2009, European Union, 2013, Farkasné, 2018, Katona & Maleczki, 2016*).

Determining the target group of easy-to-understand communication is a highly debated topic on the international stage. The primary target group includes people who need support when performing intellectual tasks, for example persons with intellectual disabilities. The target group could also include deaf people, whose use sign language as their first language, and in practice they learn the national language as a second language. Easy-to-understand information could also be useful for persons with low language competency, for persons with a different native language than the language of the easy-to-understand information source, or also for children and the elderly (*Bredel & Maß; 2016*).

In the 2011 census **58 761 persons self-reported having a communication or information gathering disability** (*Tausz, Bácskay, Csordás, Kovács, Németh, Panyik & Tóth, 2015*).

Consistently using the marking on the information sources aimed at persons with intellectual disabilities provides predictability for them. **Easy-to-understand information sources are usually marked by the logo designed by Inclusion Europe, which is free to use, if the rules determined by Inclusion Europe are followed.**

The function of a rule system is to help the person communicating the message find the methods for coding their message to the level closest to the decoding competence of the recipient of the message. Rules are the fundamental pillars of easy-to-understand communication, without them there would be no easy-to-understand communication. We see a great number of different rules both on the international and the national stage.

In Hungary there are currently five rule systems available in the Hungarian language. Four of them are translations of foreign language rules, while the fifth one is a Hungarian language extract based on these four (*Csató, 2002; Gruiz, n.d.; Inclusion Europe and the Hungarian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability, 2009a – 2009b – 2009c*). All five rule systems were developed and published by civil organizations. Their use is not mandatory in Hungary (*Csató, 2002; Gruiz, n.d.; Inclusion Europe and the Hungarian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability, 2009a – 2009b – 2009c*). The first rule system was published in 2002 (*Csató, 2002*), this was superseded by three inter-connected rule systems created in 2009 through international cooperation. (*Inclusion Europe and the Hungarian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability, 2009a – 2009b – 2009c*). The publication year of the Hungarian rule system is unknown (*Gruiz, n.d.*).

As for their scope, four of them are used nationally (Csató, 2002; Gruiz, n.d.; *Inclusion Europe and the Hungarian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability*, 2009a – 2009b – 2009c), and one is especially used in the civil organization that published it (Gruiz, n.d.).

Easy-to-read and easy-to-understand information is verified usually as paid work by persons with intellectual disabilities, who received training for this task. The names of the persons, who verified the understandability of the information must be indicate in the publication (*Inclusion Europe and the Hungarian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability*, 2009a). In the last decades good practices were developed for the education of persons with intellectual disabilities, for example in Germany and Austria. There are still no such education programmes in Hungary (Horváth, 2017).

An attempt to define the coding method of an easy-to-understand message

Instead of defining the idea of “easy-to-understand communication”, it would be more appropriate to define the concept of “coding an easy-to-understand message”. Based on the literature and taking into account the interview answers I received during my empirical research, I have the following proposal for defining this idea:

The objective of an easy-to-understand message is to ensure that persons with intellectual disabilities, who require a high level of support to understand standard information will be able to enjoy reading and accessing the cultural goods of humanity in the same way as others, and it should also ensure that in possession of this information they will be able to make decisions about their life on the same terms as others, and this way they can exercise their human and civil rights to self-determination. When talking about coding an easy-to-understand message we mean the process, where the communicator composes their verbal, written, picture or film based message in accordance with written coding rules that match the decoding capabilities of the person with intellectual disability receiving the message, i.e. their competence in detecting, perceiving and interpreting the message. In this process the communicator pays one or more persons from the target group of recipients to verify the understandability of the easy-to-understand message communicated in writing or as an image or film. The goal of coding an easy-to-understand message may be to convert an existing message to an easy-to-understand message or to create a new easy-to-understand message. Converting an existing message to an easy-to-understand message is done in the same language (my own definition).

Research planning strategy for the research

My view of humans is defined by the view of disability science. I approach research typically as a qualitative paradigm based on pragmatist knowledge philosophy. Fundamentally this is exploratory research. To improve the reliability and validity of the result of my qualitative and exploratory research, I utilize various research methods, techniques and sources (triangulation). I interpret the sources discovered during this exploratory research in a multidisciplinary framework.

Questions for interpreting the text of the UN Convention and for the theoretical research aimed at systematically presenting the connected good practices:

- What rights to easy-to-understand communication can be identified in the text of the UN Convention? What is the content of these rights? Who is designated by the legislative body to enforce these right, or who is implied to have this obligation?
- What information and data is available about the enforcement of these rights? Are there any good practices? If yes, what is their content?

The primary source of this analysis is the UN Convention. In my professional sample selection I choose additional secondary sources, as “we can utilize... also non-technical literature as primary and additional data sources”. (*Corbin & Strauss, 2015. 82.*)

- General Comment No 2 of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, 2014)

During the systematic examination of the text of the UN Convention as the primary source, I looked for parts in the text that aim to determine the conditions necessary for exercising the human right to easy-to-understand communication.

The size of the sample of good practices connected to the implementation of the UN Convention cannot be determined. Therefore the sample of analyzed sources chosen by expert sample selection and a method similar to snowball sampling cannot be seen as all encompassing. These are not suitable to draw far-reaching conclusions about the implementation of the Convention. By reading the text of the UN Convention we can see “the need”. Collecting the good practices gives us information about “what is”. The difference between these two gives us a scope for the policy recommendations we can formulate in this doctoral thesis.

Questions for the empirical research aimed at exploring the history of educational development in Hungary:

- What happened during the implementation of the educational development programme titled Social Renewal Operational Programme (hereinafter: TÁMOP) 5.4.5/07/01 “*A fizikai és infokommunikációs akadálymentesítés szakmai hátterének kialakítása*” [Creating the professional background for implementing physical and infocommunication accessibility], planned by Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities Non-profit Ltd.?
 - What was the targeted expert group of this programme?
 - Was this training aimed at preparing the participants for this profession or at providing further education for experts already working in this field?
 - What is our capacity on the educator side?
 - What is the number of available qualified experts?
 - What do we know about the quality of the content of these programmes, including the available teaching material?

These research questions can be answered in part by systematically analyzing the contents of written educational development documents made available to me, and in part by conducting partially structured interviews with the people working in educational development and education.

I determined the documents to be analyzed in connection with educational development and the implementation of the programmes in part based on my preliminary plans and partially based on the information uncovered during my research. The sources I choose to analyze also included three feasibility studies about the three stages of educational development made in the planning stage. The people working in educational development made the programme materials submitted for accreditation available to me, including the documents authorizing the programme. I have also received the programme logs, the teaching materials used in the programme, the educational films, and they also gave me access to the online portal with teaching materials, and I was able to get a glimpse into the examination products of the participants in the programme.

I needed different questions for my theoretical and empirical research. When I started gathering the empirical information, I had a preliminary idea about the question I wanted and had to ask.

However, during collecting sources and conducting the interviews I gained information that made it reasonable and also necessary to make changes and additions to the planned questions, as well as creating completely new sets of questions.

Therefore the research instruments were constantly changing during the research. A typical set of questions contained 20-25 main questions and many sub-questions. These sets of questions were organized around four main ideas, along the main questions of my research: defining the idea of easy-to-understand communication, the roads leading to educational development, exploring educational development and the implementation of the programmes, and collecting good practices and outlining the necessary future tasks.

The people selected for answering my research questions were all included in the sample by expert sample selection and with snowball sampling. The research programme focused on the educational development implemented by Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities Non-profit Ltd. (hereinafter: FSZK). I interviewed everyone, who was in charge of the development of easy-to-understand communication in the first, second or third stage of the FSZK TÁMOP 5.4.5. „*A fizikai és info-kommunikációs akadálymentesítés szakmai hátterének kialakítása*” [Creating the professional background for implementing physical and infocommunication accessibility] project (3 people). I interviewed all members of the workgroup directly responsible for educational development (4 people) and all teachers in the programme (4 people). This resulted in 6 interview due to overlaps. Some of the programmes were implemented by the Hand in Hand Foundation in Budapest at the commission of FSZK. The seventh person I interviewed was the managing director of the Hand in Hand Foundation. The third stage of educational development included the so called “secondary school programme”, where they tried out the easy-to-understand communication programme in a secondary school. My eighth interview was with the person responsible for implementing the project in the secondary school. Based on the available information, besides the above mentioned organizations only the Hungarian Association for Persons with Intellectual Disability (hereinafter: ÉFOÉSZ) applied for accreditation for programmes teaching easy-to-understand communication in adult education and as social further education. My ninth interview was with the president of ÉFOÉSZ. This choice was also justified by the fact that among all the civil organizations only ÉFOÉSZ was invited by FSZK to its educational development workgroup.

Two additional interview subjects were included in the sample by random selection. There were two professional reasons for including them in my research. They are the colleagues of the interview subject, who did not participate in educational development and obtained practical teaching experience from only one group.

This made it reasonable to complement the personal recollection of the teacher with the direct experiences of their colleagues. Also all three of them work in a school for students with severe and cumulative disabilities. Skill developing schools are an area of easy-to-understand communication, where the method can only be implemented in a group of children requiring the highest level of support by taking into account the rule systems, and also complementing them with additional special content. All in all, I interviewed 11 people.

Summary of the results of the research

Disability policy objectives in the context of the UN Convention

Hungary signed the UN Convention in 2007, and promulgated it in the same year in Act XCII of 2007. The UN Convention entered into force in Hungary on 3 May 2008 with Decision No. 22/2008. (V. 9.) K M on the entry into force of Sections 2-3 of Act XCII of 2007 on the Promulgation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the Optional Protocol.

The UN Convention is an excellent starting point to evaluate the responsibilities of the member states in connection with easy-to-understand communication.

On the one hand, the UN Convention includes horizontal provisions on easy-to-understand communication that can and should be taken into account when interpreting the full text of the UN Convention. On the other hand, it highlights those areas of everyday life, where taking into account easy-to-understand communication was deemed especially important by the creators of the UN Convention.

UN Convention articles 2, 3 and 4 and article 9 on accessibility are important from a horizontal aspect. Article 2 defines the idea of communication, article 3 declares the fundamental principle of accessibility, article 4 determines the necessary governmental obligations, and these articles expressly contribute to the realization of the human right to easy-to-understand communication.

From the definitions given for “communication” it clearly follows that whenever “communication” appears in the text of the UN contention, it should also mean “easy-to-understand communication”.

Based on the definition given for “disability” in the UN Convention, we should also think of persons with intellectual disabilities, when the text generally mentions persons with disabilities.

Article 3 of the UN Convention defines accessibility as a general fundamental principle in point f). Therefore the principle of accessibility should also be taken into account and should be enforced even if at a given target area of equal opportunity the UN Convention does not expressly mandate the use of the accessibility principle.

In Article 4 of the UN Convention the member states undertake *to adopt all appropriate legislative, administrative and other measures* for the implementation of the rights recognized in the Convention, for example to realize the right to easy-to-understand communication. A remarkable provision among the general obligations requires that in the development and implementation of legislation and policies concerning issues relating to persons with disabilities, the member states shall closely consult with and actively involve persons with disabilities through their representative organizations, i.e. for example the empowerment department of ÉFOÉSZ.

The UN Convention highlights four areas of everyday life especially for the use of easy-to-understand communication. They are the freedom of expression and opinion, and access to information (article 21), education (article 24), participation in political and public life (article 29), and participation in cultural life, recreation, leisure and sport (article 30).

By analyzing the text of the UN Convention, comparing its text with other texts, and based on the presented good practices and the observations from the interviews conducted during the empirical research, we can ascertain that the UN Convention provides numerous essential facts to help interpret and give context to the human right to easy-to-understand communication.

The important message of the UN Convention is that persons with intellectual disabilities have a right to access easy-to-understand information with equal opportunity in all areas of life. Among these areas we have to highlight broadly defined public services, the world of education, the exercising of political rights and the access to cultural goods. To exercise these rights, it is essential that easy-to-understand communication becomes part of the political agenda.

There are multiple conditions for enforcing the right to easy-to-understand, equally available communication. This includes issuing a decree on the standards (rule systems) of easy-to-understand communication prepared based on surveying the infocommunication environment and on new infocommunication development. The Hungarian legislative environment must be aligned with the UN Convention.

I would like to especially highlight that making easy-to-understand daily news available every day can only be done with the cooperation between journalists and journalists with intellectual disabilities.

In case of access to cultural goods, e.g. museum pieces or tourist guides, persons with intellectual disabilities should be looked at as employees, who can provide easy-to-understand guidance in museums or during sightseeing tours in the city.

To ensure the availability of easy-to-understand literature works, we should consider an annual tender based on the Scandinavian practices, organized for example by the Natural Cultural Fund.

We should also deliberate how the daily production of easy-to-understand information sources can be organized in the most optimal way. Taking into account the practices established in German speaking countries, the most optimal way would be a state-subsidized nationwide office network operated by the organization safeguarding the interests of persons with intellectual disabilities.

Recommendations for designating new disability policy goals

1./ To put easy-to-understand communication on the agenda of disability policy, the Hungarian Parliament should hold a professional policy day of debate about easy-to-understand communication. Furthermore, the Parliament and the government should re-examine the National Disability Programme, which is seen as the base document of Hungarian disability policy, and it should be amended with provisions on easy-to-understand communication based on the UN Convention.

2./ Although easy-to-understand communication is not a separate language, in our case it is a version of the Hungarian language, the right to easy-to-understand communication should be added to the Constitution, in a way similar to the Hungarian language.

In addition, to ensure the right to easy-to-understand communication derived from the UN Convention, the Hungarian Parliament should create a separate law on easy-to-understand communication, similar to the regulations of Act CXXV of 2009 on Hungarian Sign Language and the use of Hungarian Sign Language. If this does not seem to be an attainable goal, as another possibility these legal conditions could also be established by amending Act XXVI of 1998 on the Rights and Equal Opportunities of Persons with Disabilities.

3./ The government or the minister in charge of disability policy should issue a standard (rule system) for easy-to-understand communication, which would be preceded by drafting a new standard (rule system) based on scientific research.

In addition, Government Decree No. 253/1997. (XII. 20.) on the National Requirements Regarding Town Planning and Construction should be amended with a provision on equal opportunity access to the information found in the buildings. However, I think it is important to first survey the infocommunication obstacles faced by persons with intellectual disabilities in our man-made environment (especially in schools, live-in social and health care facilities, and in the typical workplace environment of persons with intellectual disabilities).

Furthermore, Act LXXV of 2018 on the Accessibility of Webpages and Mobile Applications of Organizations in the Public Sphere should be revised to make these webpages and mobile applications also available to persons with intellectual disabilities. Prior to these legislative tasks or by delaying their entry into force, infocommunication research and development should be carried out in connection with easy-to-understand communication (e.g. user-friendly screen reading software for persons with intellectual disabilities, the possibility of automating the

translation between the standard language and the easy-to-understand language, automatically verifying whether an easy-to-understand information source is actually easy-to-understand).

4./ Taking a cue from sign language interpreting offices, easy-to-understand communication offices should be created in the capital and in all counties. The regulation of the operation and financing of these offices would be implemented by creating implementing regulation(s) similar to Decree 62/2011. (XI. 10.) NEFMI on the Rules of Operating a Sign Language Interpreting Service and Utilizing Sign Language Interpreting Services.

These offices would create new workplaces not only for experts in easy-to-understand communication (similarly to sign language interpreters), but also for persons with intellectual disabilities, who are able to verify the understandability of the materials (as an employment policy goal). To meet the demand for easy-to-understand information sources generated by legal obligation would only be feasible in my view by employing full time writers, translators, interpreters and persons to verify the understandability in these offices, and the operation and upkeep of these offices would require support from the government. These offices could be established for example in the framework of the ÉFOÉSZ empowerment centers.

5./ The National Cultural Fund should issue a separate tender for translating literature works into the easy-to-understand language, for creating easy-to-understand introductions for museum pieces and for the development of easy-to-understand theatrical productions.

6./ Similar to the regulations on making programmes accessible for deaf persons, Act CLXXXV of 2010 on Media Services and Mass Communication should also be amended. Creating easy-to-understand news programmes can be done gradually, however there must be at least one easy-to-understand news portal that publishes easy-to-understand news daily. In addition there should be at least one television or radio programme per week in public media that communicates easy-to-understand messages for at least 2 hours.

7./ Regarding the education of children with intellectual disabilities in kindergartens and schools, the “Directive on the kindergarten education of children with special needs and the Directive on the school education of students with special needs”, and the related general curriculum should be revised and amended with provisions on easy-to-understand communication.

8./ The library collections of public education institutes teaching children and students with intellectual disabilities should be expanded with easy-to-understand publications.

These rights can only be exercised, if there are people working in this field, i.e. human resources will also be necessary.

Results of exploring educational development and the implemented programmes

Human resources are necessary for easy-to-understand communication. All existing or possible legal provision for the mandatory utilization of this method would be useless, if there are not enough qualified experts available, educated with the highest quality teaching materials. I will now summarize the result from five aspects based on the data and information found during my exploratory research: the target expert group of the programme; do the programmes aim to prepare people for the profession or to provide further educations for existing professionals; what is our capacity on the educator side; what is the number of available qualified experts, and what do we know about the quality of the contents of these programmes, including the available teaching materials.

We can identify that the target groups of the implemented programmes were teachers, professional already employed in the health care or social work fields, students preparing for a special education career and teachers already working in special needs education, as well as people who wish to teach easy-to-understand communication. This gives us four profession groups besides the training of educators, however many profession groups are missing, and the target groups do not include people who can produce high quality easy-to-understand information, and those persons (primarily with intellectual disabilities), who are able to teach easy-to-understand communication based on their experiences, or who would be able to verify the understandability of easy-to-understand information.

Among the higher education programmes for training teachers for special needs education, the University of Szeged Juhász Gyula Faculty of Education BA programme has an elective 30 hour “Easy-to-understand communication with persons with intellectual disabilities” lecture, and this is a mandatory 15 hour material in the pedagogy of person with intellectual disabilities specialization.

In the further education of teachers already working in special needs education the easy-to-understand communication is a 30 hour mandatory lecture at the ELTE Bárczi Gusztáv Faculty of Special Needs Education in the specialist examination further education programme for teachers in special needs education.

When it comes to the training of educators, FSZK has an accredited adult education programme, however this is no longer available, and it is also a mandatory 6 hour lecture in the special needs education pedagogy-teacher specialization, there is also an elective 20 hour lecture, which has not yet been announced. This means that currently there are no programmes to train educators, the number of experts qualified for this task is 8, and 4 of them have actual teaching experience. Another 2 persons working as teachers in higher education have not completed the training for educators, however they have teaching experience.

Although previously FSZK had accredited programmes in health care (40 hours) and teacher further education (30 hours), these authorizations have expired; and they have not been renewed. FSZK had a 30 hour accredited further education programme as part of its TÁMOP 5.4.5 and 5.4.6 special programmes, but this was organized by the Hand in Hand Foundation. The authorization was extended twice, however the contents have not changed since 2009. The authorization for starting their social further education programme expired on 31 March 2019.

The adult education accreditation of ÉFOÉSZ has expired, and the accreditation for their social further education programme also expired on 30 September 2019.

In the programmes in our view, 11 persons received training for easy-to-understand communication in the health care system, 9 persons in teacher further education, 127 persons in the social institution system, 39 person in special education BA programmes, and 116 persons in special education further education. At the same time we have no information about how these qualified experts use the knowledge they have obtained. However, we must note that based on the information obtained during the exploratory research, we have information about the sample required for another exploratory work (i.e. we know in what circles and where such research must be done), naturally by complying with the research ethics rules on data protection.

Looking at the quality of these programmes, we can say that the content of these training programmes has not changed since they were first prepared for accreditation. We saw four teaching materials: one online material, one compilation of texts for students published by FSZK, one educational film, and a teaching material identified as a student book and workbook for a secondary school project. This is four products in total. An even bigger problem than the number of materials is that the content of the online teaching material and the student book is outdated. The secondary school project was only implemented in one public secondary school with one main teacher (who continues to use this method even today). However this programme was not disseminated.

Although I cannot say that I gained a complete picture about the human resources required for easy-to-understand communication during my research, there is a good chance that I am not far from the truth. After factually describing the results, now it is time to make evaluative observations.

The range of programmes falls significantly short of the range of programmes found in the UN Convention. The educational capacity, including the absolute number of secondary schools (2 institutions) and civil organizations (2 organizations) offering these kinds of programmes, and the number of qualified persons (8 persons) and persons with actual educational experience (4+2 persons) could be seen by itself as extremely low. Also, when comparing it to the educational requirements indicated in the UN Convention we can without a doubt say that this capacity will not be enough to make further steps.

The content of the further education programmes accredited in the various fields remains unchanged since their creation; by the second half of 2019 - without additional measures - there will be no programmes that are authorized to start. In the examined higher education institutions the content of the programmes was just created, these programmes are usually continuously offered.

The teaching materials required for these programmes are still very scarce; some of them can still be used today, but most of them are outdated and do not contain the knowledge gained since their publication.

The number of qualified experts is 328, but we know nothing about how they use their knowledge in their everyday life after finishing the various programmes. It is important to note here that none of the programmes in Hungary require payment from the participants themselves; and due to effective governmental regulations and financial aid from the government many of the programmes were implemented during the highlighted project. Programmes especially aimed at easy-to-understand communication implemented outside of the highlighted project were also only started, if they had financial backing from the government.

We do not know whether the qualified experts are still working in a position where they need the knowledge they obtained in the programmes. If yes, are they using the verbal rules of easy-to-understand communication, do they use easy-to-understand information sources, and are they creating such sources.

We also do not have any reliable information whether the easy-to-understand information sources created in the last 20 years have reached their target group, and whether this group has used them.

Based on the above, we need new educational development and accreditation procedures; there is justification for government backed programmes, and we also need to develop teaching materials. Without further exploratory and descriptive research the effectiveness of these programmes is still uncertain.

In the next section I will make recommendations for solving these problems.

Recommendations for new educational development goals for adult education, higher education institutes and organizations interested in educational development

1./ A higher education professional training programme with a high number of lessons should be created for teaching easy-to-understand communication translation and interpreting.

2./ A programme module should be developed for teaching the verification of the understandability of easy-to-understand information sources, and then this module should be implemented in schools for students with intellectual disabilities. To achieve this, the module must be implemented in the general curriculum of skill developing schools, and teachers suitable for teaching this module must also be trained.

3./ Higher education institutions offering special needs education BA programmes should include easy-to-understand communication, if possible as a mandatory separate unit, in their curriculum implemented in the educational and graduation requirements of the special needs education BA programmes - at least on the pedagogy of persons with intellectual disabilities specialization.

4./ An at least 60 or 90 hour further education programme should be created and submitted for accreditation for teachers already in special needs education - primarily with a pedagogy of persons with intellectual disabilities specialization.

5./ Looking at the results of the secondary school project of FSZK, we should consider creating and accrediting a further training programme for teachers not in special needs education (primarily Hungarian language and literature teachers in grade schools and secondary schools).

6./ The representatives of the social and health care fields should consider revising the existing, accredited and tried training programmes, then they should be re-accredited. From an educational results based planning aspect, the starting point for this revision should be a job analysis and a systematic review of the actual workplace tasks of the persons participating in this further education programme. Professionals offering social and health care services for persons with intellectual disabilities should not have to become translators or interpreters. The most important goal of this training should be the improvement of their verbal easy-to-understand communication capability. In addition, the participants should become able to convert basic information occurring in everyday situations into easy-to-understand messages. If they encounter a more difficult situation, it is enough that they know from where and what kind of assistance they request.

7./ Articles 4 and 9 of the UN Convention identify “professionals and staff working with persons with disabilities” and “stakeholders” as the target group for education. In case of the above mentioned profession groups, I think that the creation of a shorter, but intensely practical adult education programme would be sufficient. This programme would aim to make people able to properly communicate with persons with disabilities, who they meet as clients, and to make sure that they know where they can ask for and receive additional help, if needed.

Regarding points 1-7, new traditional and multimedia learning materials should be created for the new training programmes, maybe also in an online environment (also including for example translating the available foreign language sources and learning materials into the Hungarian language), however the already published learning materials must be revised and modernized.

I also think that as a first step there is a need to create a national organization with the cooperation of the higher education institutions and civil organizations, e.g. creating the “center for the research, development and training of easy-to-understand communication” as an institutional unit at a university.

During the research process I found many new directions for further research. Amongst them the exploration of whether easy-to-understand information sources are actually easy-to-understand is the most urgent.

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