



V:InD:O:W

# V:InD:O:W

## Inclusion from an international perspective

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# Outline

1. Theoretical backdrop
2. Methodology
3. Results
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# 1. Theoretical backdrop

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- **Main problem to be tackled:** The dropout rate of students with various learning disabilities is increasing across European higher-education institutions (Breier, 2010; Werblow, 2009).
- **V:InD:O:W** (Virtual - Inclusive - Diversity focused - Open educational - Work Modules) (KA203-34ECD999) has been granted by the German National Agency on the basis that the design of digital resources can assist teachers in the integration and academic progress of students with different abilities.

- **Main objective:** to create digital learning modules for tertiary foreign language teacher education, which demonstrate how the principles of inclusion can be applied in the field of foreign language education.



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- **Social justice and democratic values** have been in the foreground of second language education for a long time (Courville-Myers & Figueroa-Flores, 2009).
- Learning a foreign language can often prove **challenging**, especially to learners with **special educational needs**, as they experience pedagogical **disadvantages** (Carpenter, 2007).



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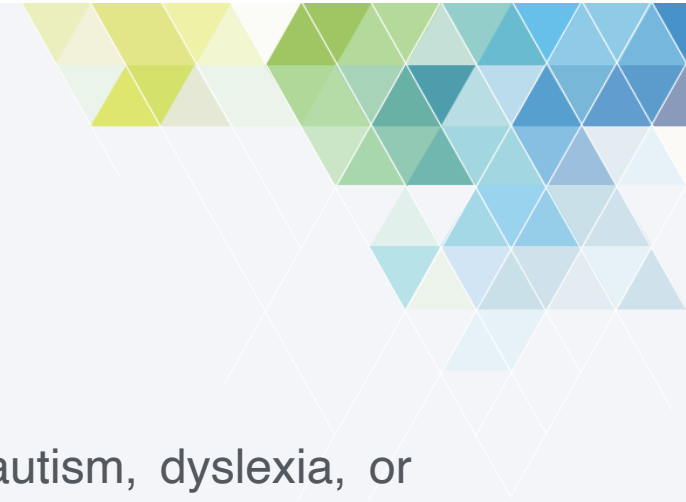


- International organizations (e.g., UNESCO & OECD) acknowledge the risk, so they promote the implementation of **inclusive education systems** that enable all learners to actively engage in learning and reach their potential.
- Some foreign **language teachers** even report strong feelings of being **overwhelmed** and disillusioned with the prospect of offering **equal opportunities** to all their students (Dose, 2019).



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- **5 digital courses** (e.g. multilingual/multicultural challenges, autism, dyslexia, or neurodiversity in the foreign language classrooms, among others).
- **V:InD:O:W** modules: **interdisciplinary**.
- **V:InD:O:W** modules: **digitalization** as an **asset**.



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- **Primary target group:** foreign language educators (teaching of FL pre- and in-service teachers).
- **Secondary target group:** pre- and in-service teachers.

- These two target groups are natural multipliers who have the capacity of transferring knowledge and competences to a secondary target group of V:InD:O:W: FL language learners.



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# 2. Methodology

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1. Design of  
V:InD:O:W  
modules

2. Peer-review  
(2 rounds)

3. Piloting

4. Survey  
distribution &  
data gathering

5. Data analysis

## Steps

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# 2.1. Participants

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- **Population:**

- 1 group of teachers

- 17 language teachers (Parma - Italy): face-2-face

- **Gender:**

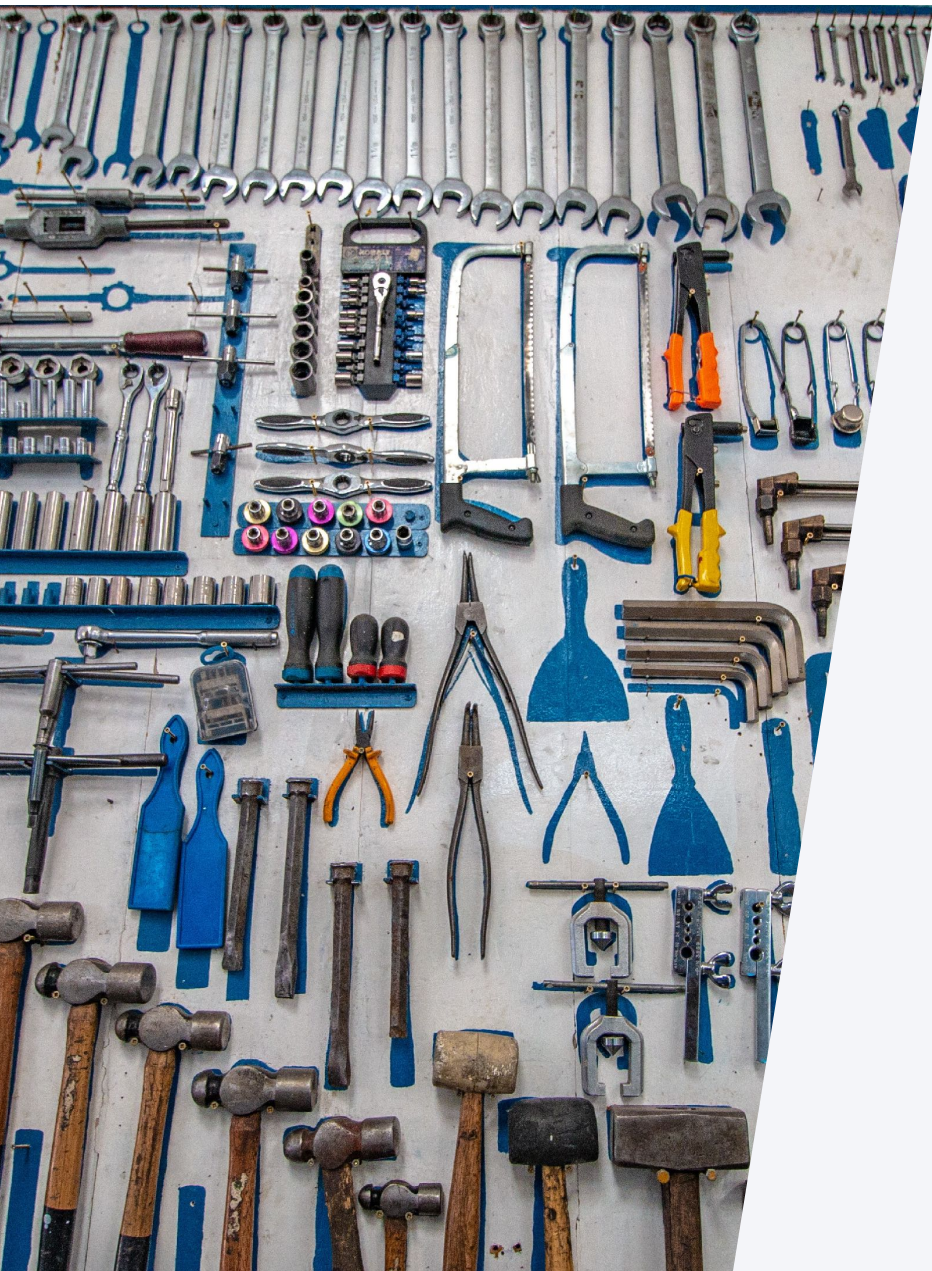
- ✓ 70,59% women

- ✓ 29,41% men



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## 2.2. Instrument



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**Questionnaire** (= 0.871 Cronbach's alpha)

Very reliable (Oviedo & Campo Arias, 2005)

6 questions

- Qs 1, 4, 5 & 6: qualitative data
- Qs 2 & 3: quantitative & qualitative data

- **Scale:**

✓ 1-5 Likert scale

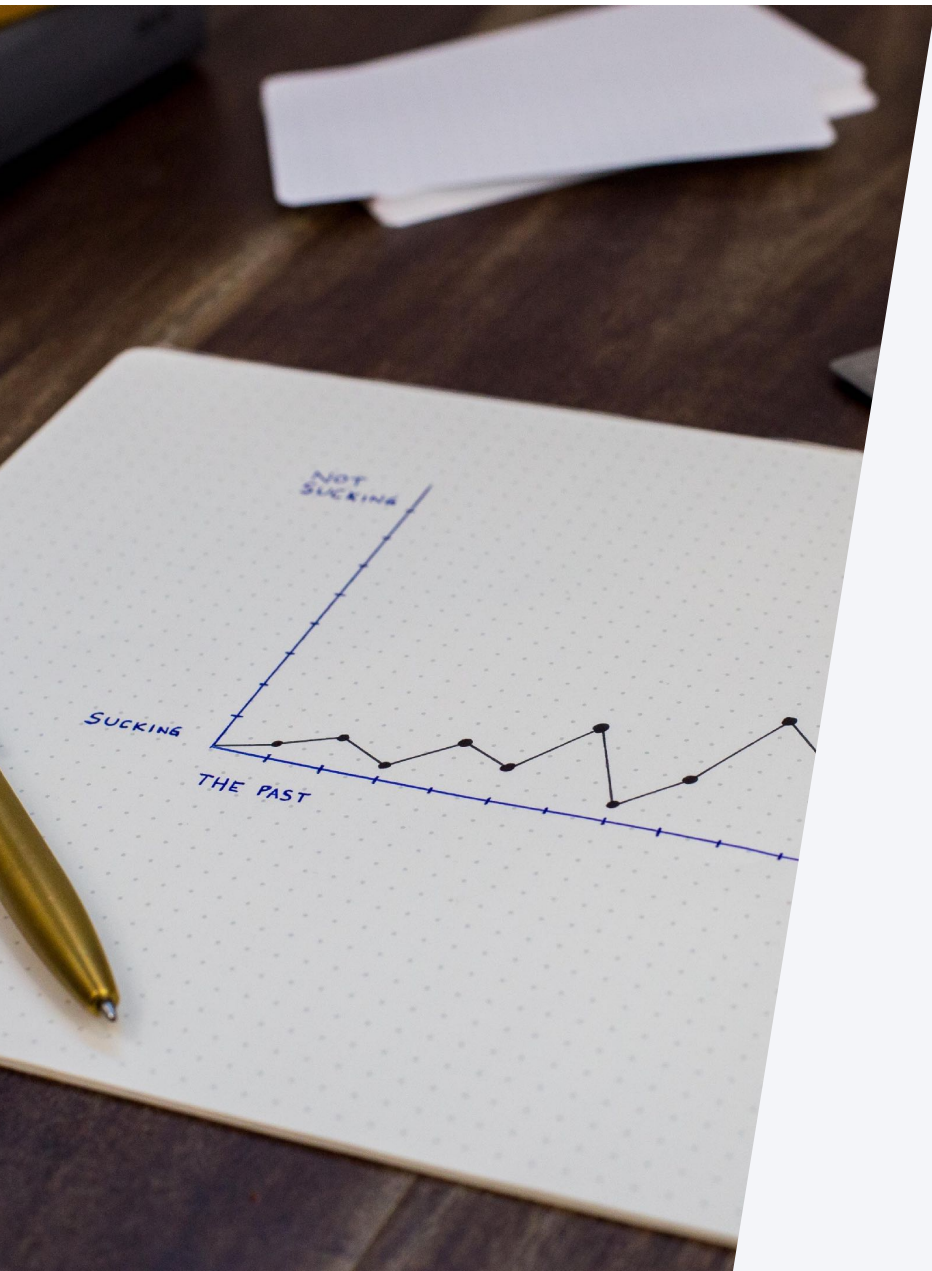
✓ 1 = 'not at all' / 5 = 'very much'

**Questions 2 & 3 for this research**



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## 2.3. Procedure

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**jamovi** Stats.  
Open.  
Now.

V. 1.2.5.



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# 3. Results

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### 3.1. Quantitative data

Questions	1 <i>Not at all</i>	2	3	4	5 <i>Very much</i>
Q2. <i>How interesting was this set of activities for you?</i>	-	-	-	23,53%	76,47%
Q3. <i>How informative/helpful was this set of activities?</i>	-	-	-	52,94%	47,06%

Table 2. Quantitative data of V:InD:O:W piloting of the multilingual/multicultural module.

## 3.2. Qualitative data

3.2.1. Interest and understanding of the content: Participants showed high level of interest in the V:InD:O:W multilingual/multicultural module, as they mostly declared not to be familiar with the contents delivered by these modules before this implementation. These are some representative quotations:

*P. 5: "I found every aspect of the lesson very interesting. As a student of foreign languages, I found it really helpful because it made me learn some new things that I didn't know but at the same time it helped me to improve my knowledge with some concepts I had already studied. For example, the concept of culture..."*

*P. 12: "The unit is very interesting because it offered new content for me. Also, I found that it will be important for most language teachers, who often deal with learners of different countries."*

*P. 14: "I felt very interested and excited to learn new topics."*

## 3.2. Qualitative data

### 3.2.2. Helpful and informative activities:

P. 2: *“The activities, in my opinion, weren’t difficult. They helped me to understand the concepts and, for sure, I think I will use some of them for my teaching with my diverse Secondary Education students. It is crucial to be aware of diversity in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and I think teachers must be specifically trained to do so in a proper and sensible way.”*

P. 9: *“In my opinion activities weren’t that much difficult; everything was very simple and well explained. I think I will use some of the concepts with my students when I become a teacher, though I will have to adapt them to the level of my pupils (Primary Education).”*

P. 15: *“I was familiar with some of the concepts because I’m attending a course where the main topic is the culture, as well as the connection and communication among different cultures. During this class I have found a lot of themes that can help me understand better all the ideas behind this subject. I think that I will be able to implement many of them in a near future. This module has helped me to be aware of how important it is to cope with diversity from languages and cultures in a not-so globalised world.”*





# 4. Discussion & Conclusions

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# Discussion (I)

- Qualitative data confirm quantitative results.
- Overall evaluation: Satisfactory.
- Valued as ‘interesting’ by participants who state that the module has helped them to improve already-existing knowledge.



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# Discussion (II)

- The **Theory of Funds of Knowledge / Identity (FoK/I)** (Volman & Gilde, 2021, p. 1):  
“makes a plea for teaching that draws on students' knowledge, skills and experiences.”
- Although some of the concepts were new for participants in this module, the **general frame and contents** dealt with were **known** by students.



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# Conclusions (I)

Piccardo et al. (2022, p. x):

“The theoretical construct of funds of knowledge is explicitly incorporated into the approach as a way of integrating linguistic and cultural diversity and culturally-specific ways of knowing into the design of language education.”

Participating language teachers can envisage the **usefulness** of V:InD:O:W multilingual/multicultural module to cope with diversity of students who come from different nationalities (participant no. 12).

Motivation towards new learning can also be observed among participants of this module (participant no.14).



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# Conclusions (II)

**Helpfulness of activities:** positively rated by participants (quantitative data yields 100% for values 4 and 5 for question no. 3.)

Qualitative data support this idea: participants explain that they will be able to **use the knowledge acquired** in their (future) teaching.

Students have acknowledged the **possibilities** that this module has opened for language teaching in a world where **diversity** is the key.

Teachers' beliefs and attitudes towards language learners and diversity seem to be **positively changing** in the last decades (Kim, 2021), so the declarations of this group conform to this **new stance of language teachers**.



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# Conclusions (III)

V:InD:O:W modules: **transnational dialogue** between various agents who have combined knowledge and experience to deliver solutions for a more **sustainable implementation of the inclusive approach to foreign language education** that can be generalized to many contexts.

The unique experiences with inclusive education through the piloting of this V:InD:O:W multilingual/multicultural module has brought to the table interesting insights, such as participants' acknowledgement of the need of coping with diversity, as well as the new conceptualization of the diverse language learner in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.



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Questions?  
Comments?





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thank you!



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