

An aerial photograph of a colorful, geometric floor pattern in shades of pink, purple, blue, and orange. Several people are walking across the pattern, their shadows cast on the ground. The pattern consists of large, overlapping geometric shapes and lines, creating a complex, abstract design.

# Addressing Inclusive Educational Environment In Finnish Adult Education Center

## Language Teachers' Professional Agency In Navigating Classroom Diversity

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# Focus of Research

Step1.

Explore challenges to teach heterogeneous student group with diverse study objectives.

Step2.

Investigate how **teachers' professional agency** influence their ability to address and leverage classroom diversity effectively.

## Teacher professional agency

- the capacity of teachers to act purposefully and constructively.
- influence educational practices and policies.

(Eteläpelto et al., 2013; Priestley et al., 2016; Cordingley et al., 2019; Jeroen et al., 2020; Li et al., 2021; Yli-Pietilä et al. 2023; Hempkin, 2023)

# Research Questions

1. What challenges do teachers face in navigating diverse classrooms?
2. What strategies do language teachers use to manage the multiple aspects of diversity in classrooms?

## Objectives

- the strategies used by teachers to address diversity.
- the influence of professional development and institutional support on their agency.
- how this agency affects teaching effectiveness in diverse classrooms.

# Backgrounds

- An essential aspect of liberal adult education is that **everyone has the right** to participate. (Ministry of Education and Culture [OKM], , purpose and objectives, 2024).
- **Individuals of various ages and educational levels** can enroll in courses. (Finnish Association of Adult Education Centers, 2022).
- The educational policy (Ministry of Education and Culture [OKM], 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2024) reshapes the curriculum and **acknowledges competences as study credits**. (Finnish National Agency for Education, 2021).

# Societal Relevance

## Multiple aspects of students' diversity

- Different age groups => intergenerational learning.
- Educational backgrounds.
- Linguistic and cultural differences.
- Learning motivations and purposes => personal, professional, academic.
- Competence-based education => qualification, study credits.

# Quotations from Language Teacher Interviews

“In mixed-class teaching, the workload increases and the pressure is higher.” (Teacher 3)

“A realistic problem is, students with different motivation and purpose study together. Especially when students learning a language as a hobby have to study in the same class with credit-students, this situation changes the atmosphere. Credit-course class and traditional class should be separate.” (Teacher 4)

“Learning together in a good atmosphere and a relaxing environment are important. The content of the lesson should respond to students’ needs, but an adult education centre is not just about the competence.”  
(Teacher 5)

Unpublished

# Figure 1. Teacher enthusiasm for teaching the competence-based courses

## Figure 2. Suitability of adopting competence-based course for language teaching

1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= neutral, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree

Figure 1.

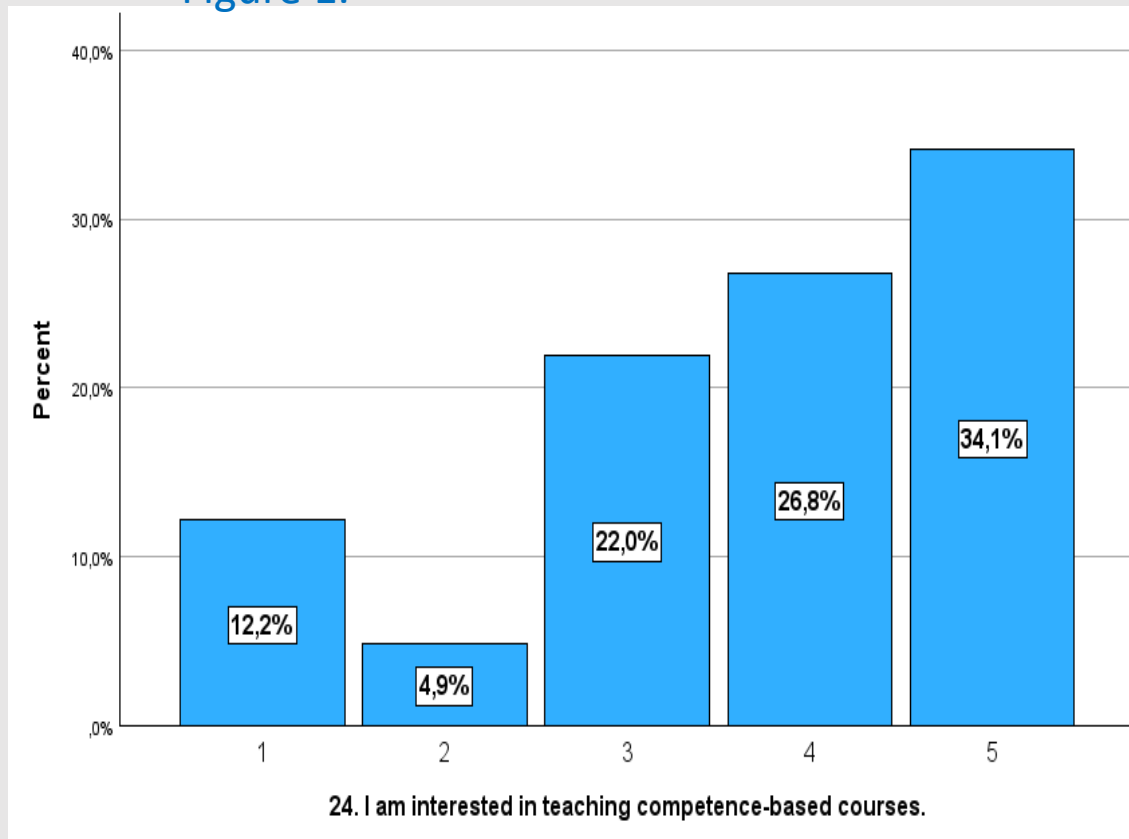
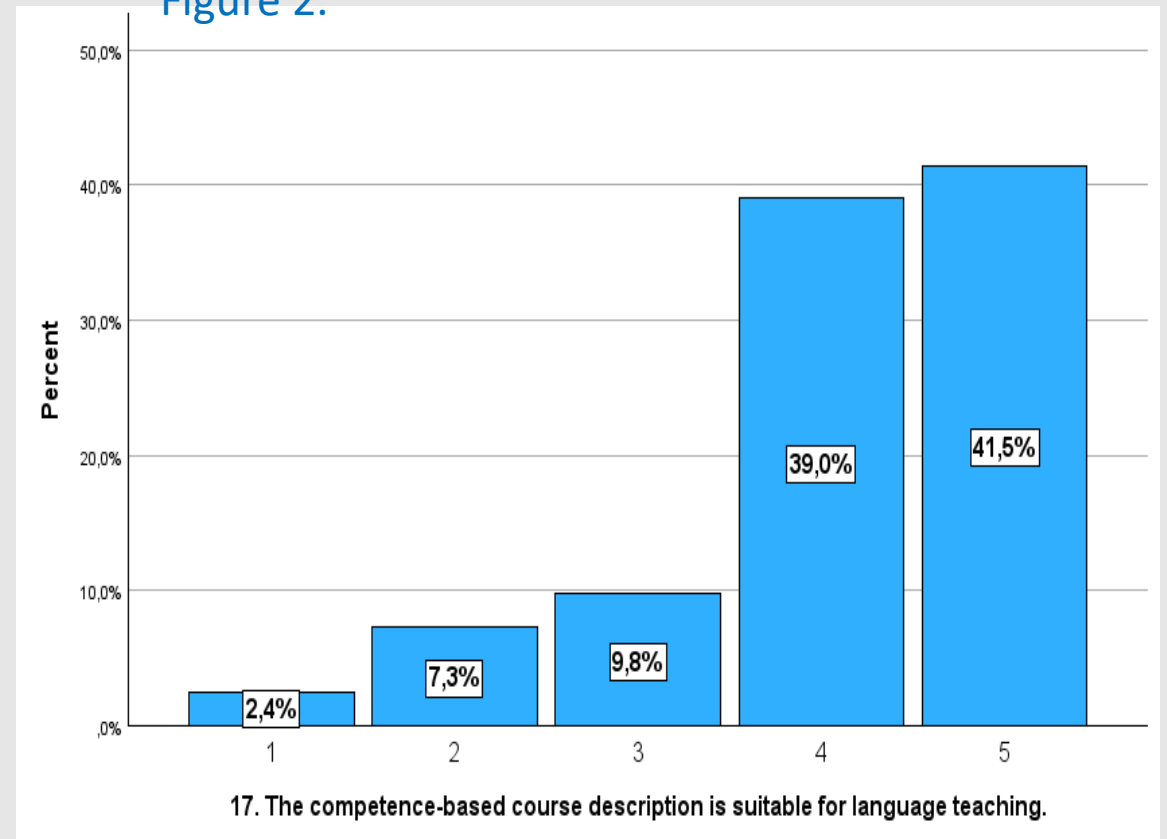
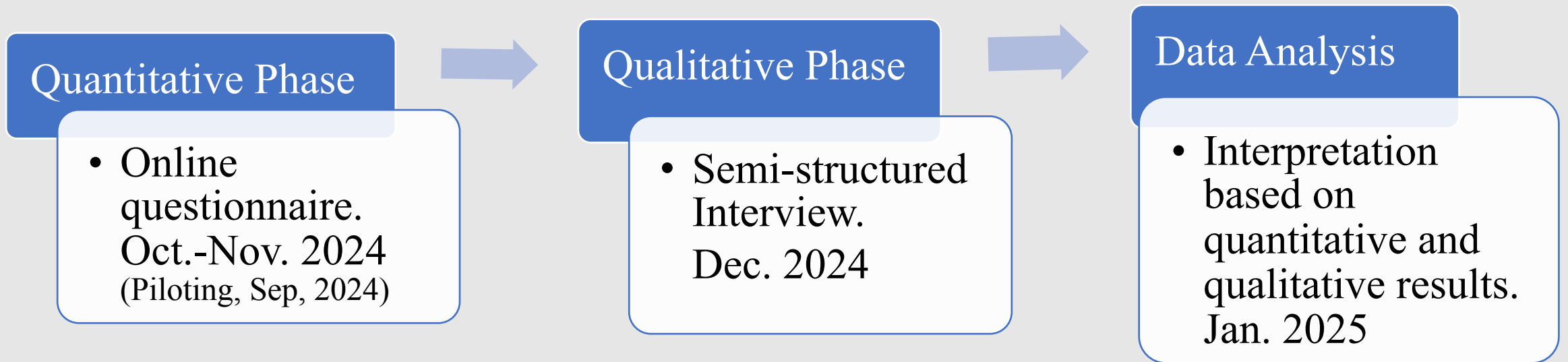


Figure 2.



# Explanatory sequential mixed methods

(Creswell & Plano Clark: 2011, Creswell, J. W & Creswell, J. D: 2018)



# Social Benefits

Understanding how language teachers manage diverse classroom dynamics and their agency:

- enhance student engagement and learning outcomes.
- improve teacher training programs by incorporating effective strategies.
- contribute to educational practices that better support diverse classrooms, teachers autonomy, and job satisfaction.

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# Thank you!

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