



1st Hellenic Conference on Early Language Learning 14-16 June 2013

First Steps to Multilingualism:
The Greek Programme of English for Young Learners

*Investigating the impact of the PEAP Teacher
Professional Development programme on
teachers' theories and practices*



Co-financed by Greece and the European Union



Aims of the presentation

- ✓ Briefly discuss the framework of TPD for EFL teachers in Greece and present the TPD programme within PEAP
- ✓ Present findings of the survey about its impact upon PEAP practitioners
- ✓ Make suggestions about further development of the TPD programme to enhance quality in the implementation of the PEAP



EFL teacher training in Greece

- ✓ **Initial training** is carried out by the English Language and Literature Departments of the Universities of Athens and Thessaloniki
- ✓ Focusing mainly on preparing student teachers for teaching at the secondary school level in the past, presently it incorporates seminars and workshops in teaching YLs.



EFL teacher training in Greece

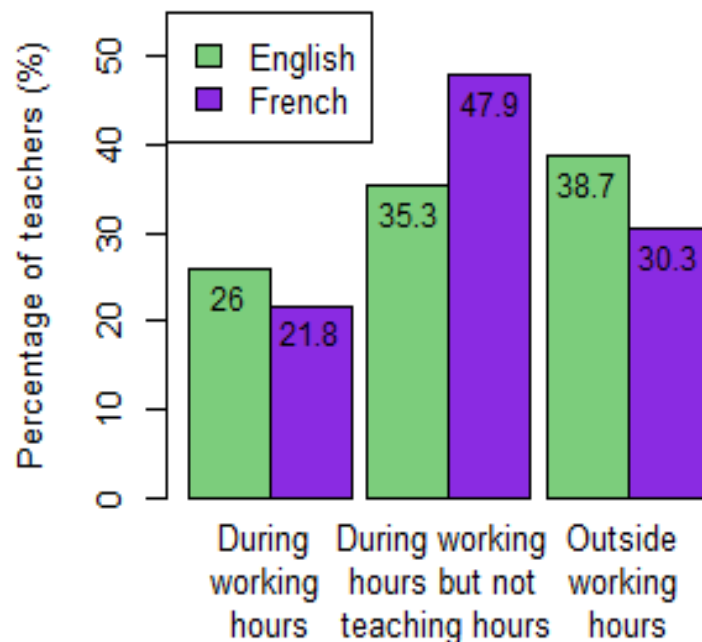
- ✓ **In – service teacher training** involves an **Introductory** programme for all newly appointed teachers:
 - 100 hours, into 3 distinct phases spreading throughout the school year
 - compulsory
 - delivered by Regional Training Centres
- ✓ **Aims:**
 - to facilitate novice teacher integration in school
 - to improve and update their knowledge of current teaching approaches and methodologies,
 - to raise teachers' awareness of the management structures of the Greek public school system
 - to develop their ICT skills



EFL teacher training in Greece

- ✓ **In-service training** for experienced teachers is not systematic.
- ✓ It is carried out by the School Advisors
- ✓ It takes the form of 3 hour seminars
- ✓ It takes teachers out of their classes

Organisation of in-service training

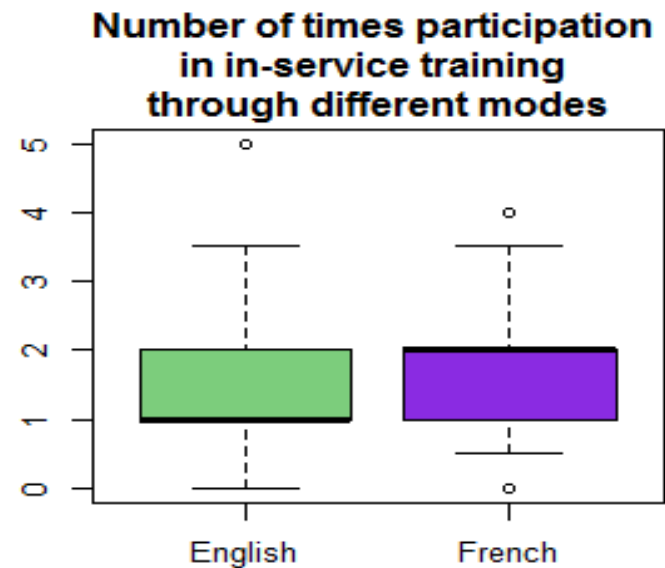
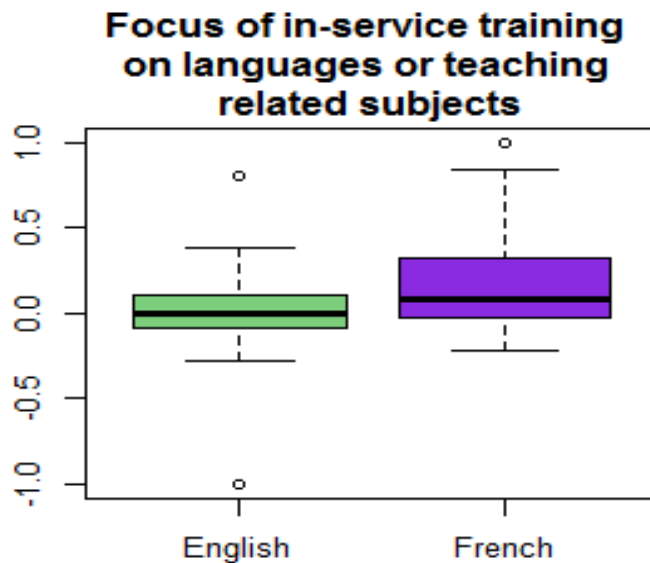


Source: European Survey on Language Competences: The Greek participation - Interim National Report at rcl.enl.uoa.gr/flane



EFL teacher training in Greece

- ✓ It focuses equally on themes related to the theory of teaching and to teaching practice
- ✓ It fairly manages to cater for teachers throughout the country.

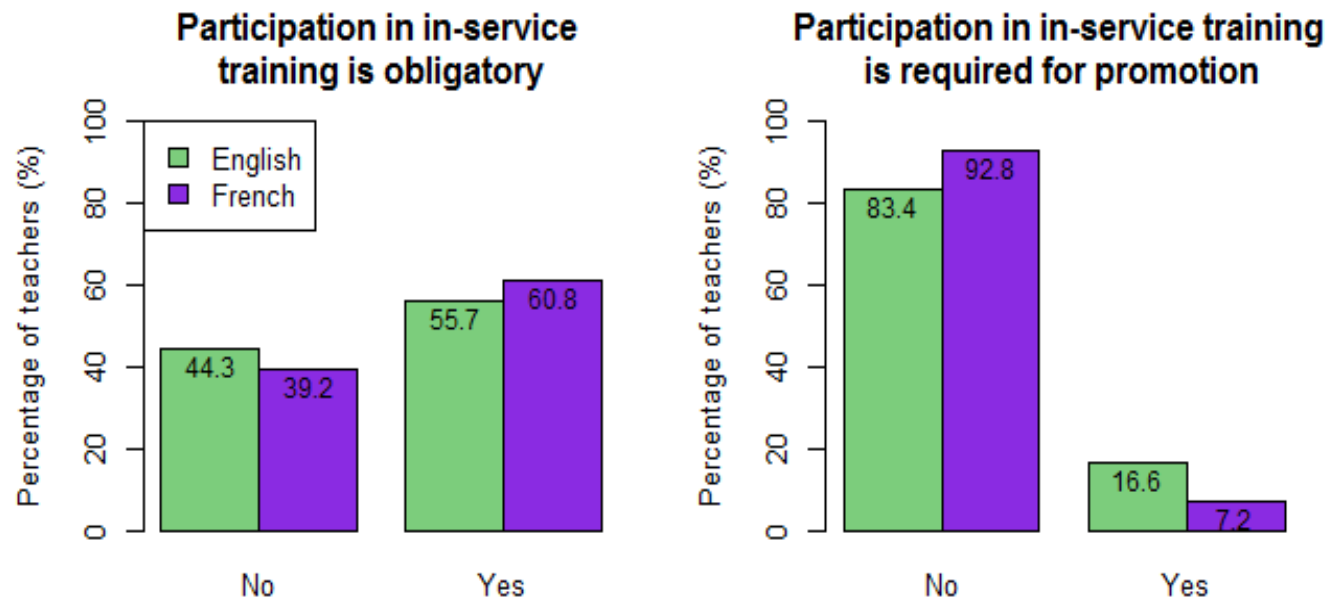


Source: European Survey on Language Competences: The Greek participation - Interim National Report at rcel.enl.uoa.gr/flane



EFL teacher training in Greece

- ✓ EFL teachers, generally, consider that in-service training is obligatory
- ✓ They do not consider it as a prerequisite for promotion



Source: European Survey on Language Competences: The Greek participation - Interim National Report at rcl.enl.uoa.gr/flane



The PEAP TPD programme

Main features:

- ✓ is developed and implemented by the Research Centre for English Language Teaching, Learning and Assessment of the Faculty of English Studies, University of Athens
- ✓ aims to prepare teachers at the All Day schools to implement the PEAP programme
- ✓ is flexible to cater for needs highlighted by research into the PEAP implementation context and/or arising due to changes connected with structural and administrative constraints which emerge constantly
- ✓ adopts a variety of modes of delivery so as to accommodate as many needs as possible
- ✓ is continuous and complements the training offered by the school advisors.



The PEAP TPD programme

Forms of delivery:

- ✓ **Online distance education modules**
- ✓ **Face to face seminars delivered by School Advisors using materials adapted from the online course**
- ✓ **Face to face seminars delivered by the project team and organized by the School Advisors using materials adapted from the online course**
- ✓ **One day conferences delivered by the project team and organized by the School Advisor**
- ✓ **Tele- training seminars delivered by the project team and organized by the School Advisors in remote areas of Greece**



A study on the impact of the TPD programme on teachers' personal theories and teaching practices

Rationale:

- ✓ **Successful implementation of a new programme depends on the teachers' participation and their feelings of gains or threats. At the early stages of an innovation, teachers concerns are more personal and involve awareness and information about the innovation, uneasiness about what the “new” will mean to oneself. Also, concerns about task implementation, the consequences that may arise and the change in the way of work.**
- ✓ **Professional development resolves teachers' personal concerns and helps them move towards concerns about the application of the innovation and its impact upon their theories and practices.**

(Vaughan 2002)



A study on the impact of the TPD programme on teachers' personal theories and teaching practices

Rationale:

- ✓ "Professional development ... goes beyond the term 'training' with its implications of learning skills, and encompasses a definition that includes formal and informal means of helping teachers not only learn new skills but also develop new insights into pedagogy and their own practice, and explore new or advanced understandings of content and resources. Current technologies offer resources to meet these challenges and provide teachers with a cluster of supports that help them continue to grow in their professional skills, understandings, and interests." (Fullan 1991)
- ✓ Teachers' Professional Development is a lifelong process of growth ...which involves the teachers' active participation in reflection and in the analysis of their practices.

(Fullan & Hargreaves 1992)



A study on the impact of the TPD programme on teachers' personal theories and teaching practices

Aims:

- ✓ To evaluate the TPD project and investigate its strengths and weaknesses
- ✓ to generate insights into teachers' future needs in training
- ✓ to contribute to feedback necessary for the internal and the external evaluation of the PEAP programme.

Survey questions:

- ✓ What is the impact of the **teachers' experience**, gained through PEAP implementation, upon their attitudes, beliefs and theories?
- ✓ What is the impact of the **TPD programme** upon the teachers' attitudes, beliefs and theories?



A study on the impact of the TPD programme on teachers' personal theories and teaching practices

❖ **Duration :**

22 April - 20 May 2013

❖ **Tool:**

**online personal questionnaire
(piloted with 4 PEAP teachers)**

❖ **Participants:**

135 PEAP teachers



Questionnaire

- ✓ 4 main sections
 - EFL Teacher's Profile (7 items)
 - **Impact from Teaching Experience** (13 Likert-type items)
 - Teachers' **involvement in PD activities** in the context of PEAP (7 items)
 - Teachers' **perceptions of the effectiveness of the PD activities** in the context of PEAP (6 Likert-type items)
 - **Impact from PD activities** (13 Likert-type items)
- ✓ 2 open-ended questions (Teachers' satisfaction from PD activities & Teachers' needs in TEYL methodology)



Participant teachers' profile

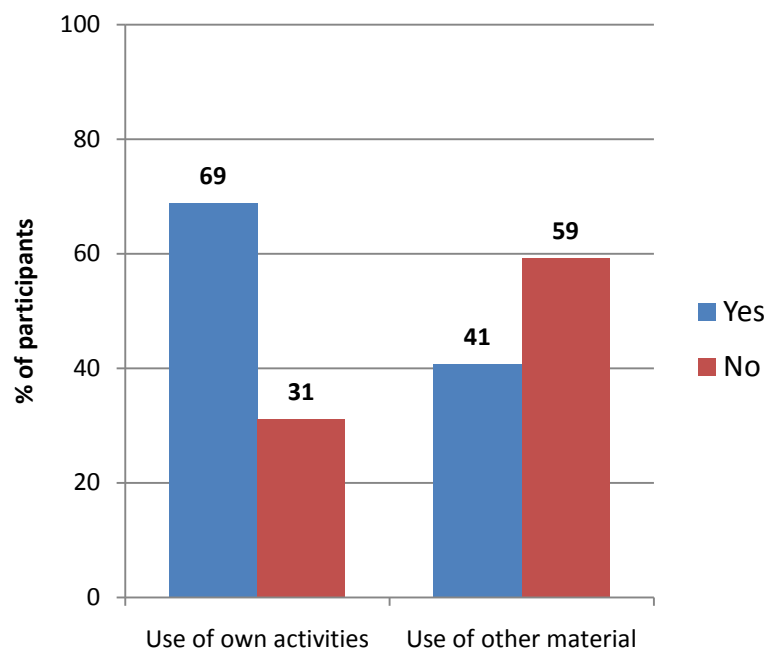
The majority of the participants

- **are women (90%)**
- **belong to age groups above 35 years (87%)**
- **teach PEAP classes currently (87%)**
- **have used the PEAP activities for at least 2 years (83%)**
- **use the PEAP activities alongside other materials (97%)**
- **25% use exclusively the PEAP activities**



Participant teachers' profile

Material used in PEAP classes



Other material used

- ✓ Activities from other English books or the Internet
- ✓ Websites with teacher resources
- ✓ Photocopiable worksheets
- ✓ Supplementary published material
- ✓ Youtube videos
- ✓ Story books and songs written by the teacher



Impact from teaching experience

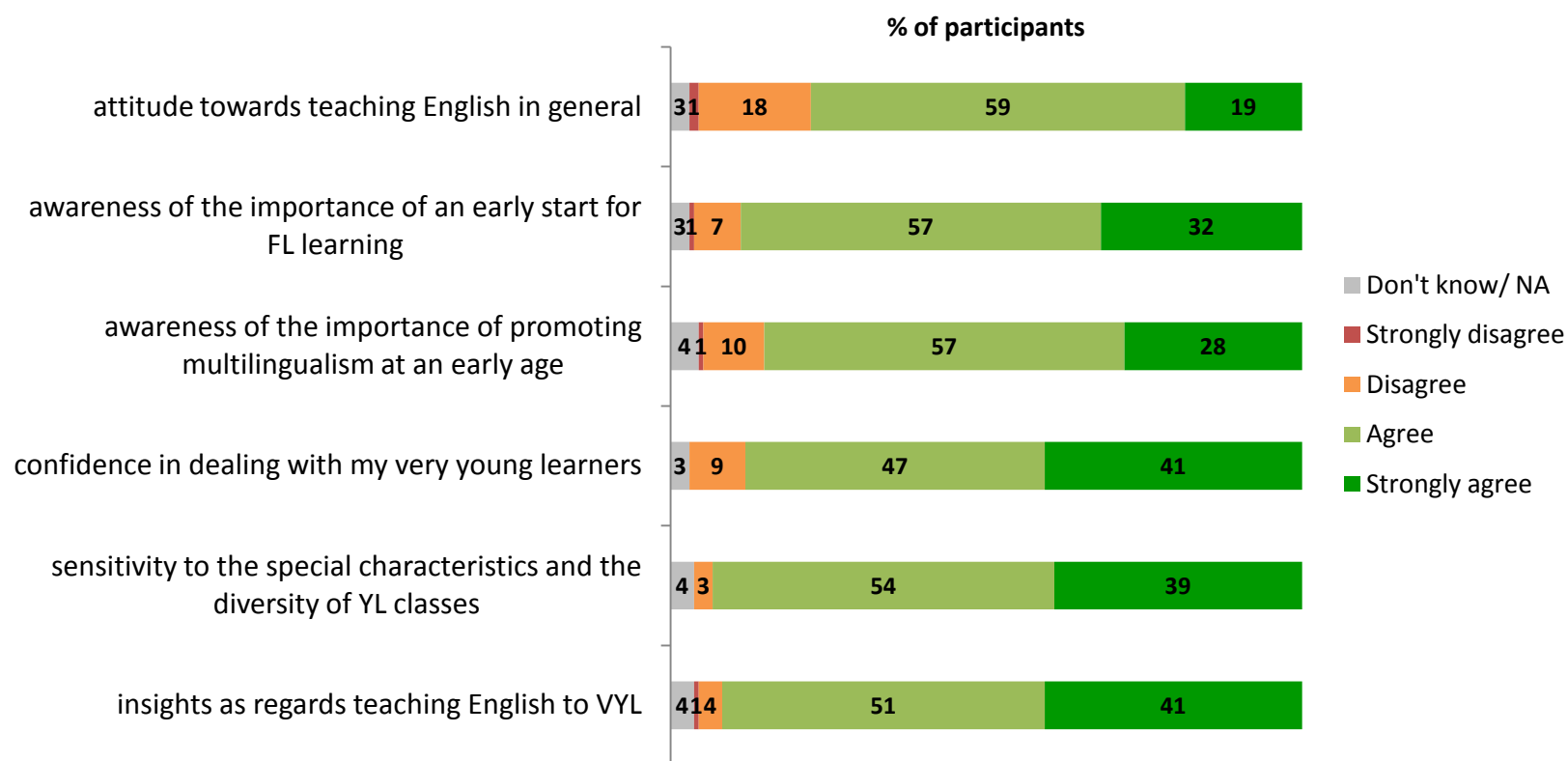
The analysis of the data (Principal Component Analysis) grouped the items into 3 interrelated categories

- **attitudes, beliefs & theories (6 items)**
- **professional skills (5 items)**
- **modes of work (2 items)**



Impact from teaching experience on attitudes, beliefs & theories

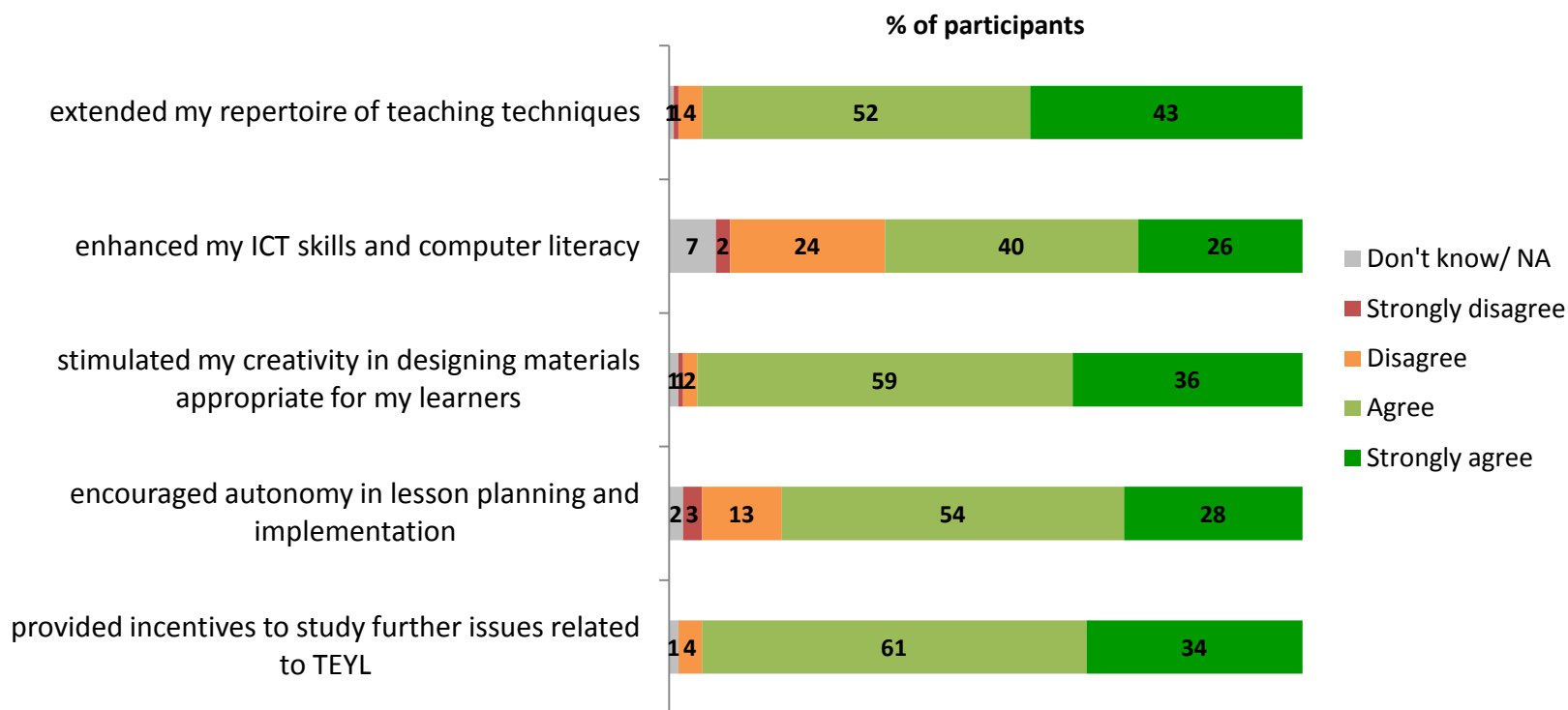
My teaching experience through PEAP has had an positive impact on ...





Impact from teaching experience on professional skills

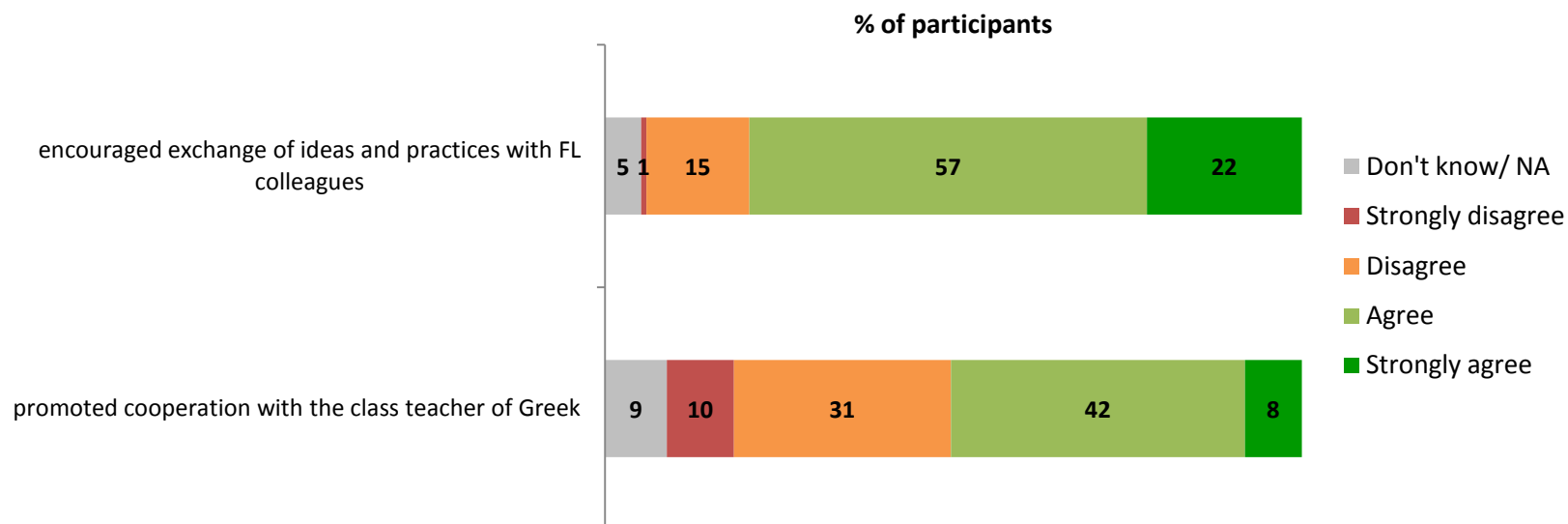
My teaching experience through PEAP has ...





Impact from teaching experience on modes of work

My teaching experience through PEAP has ...



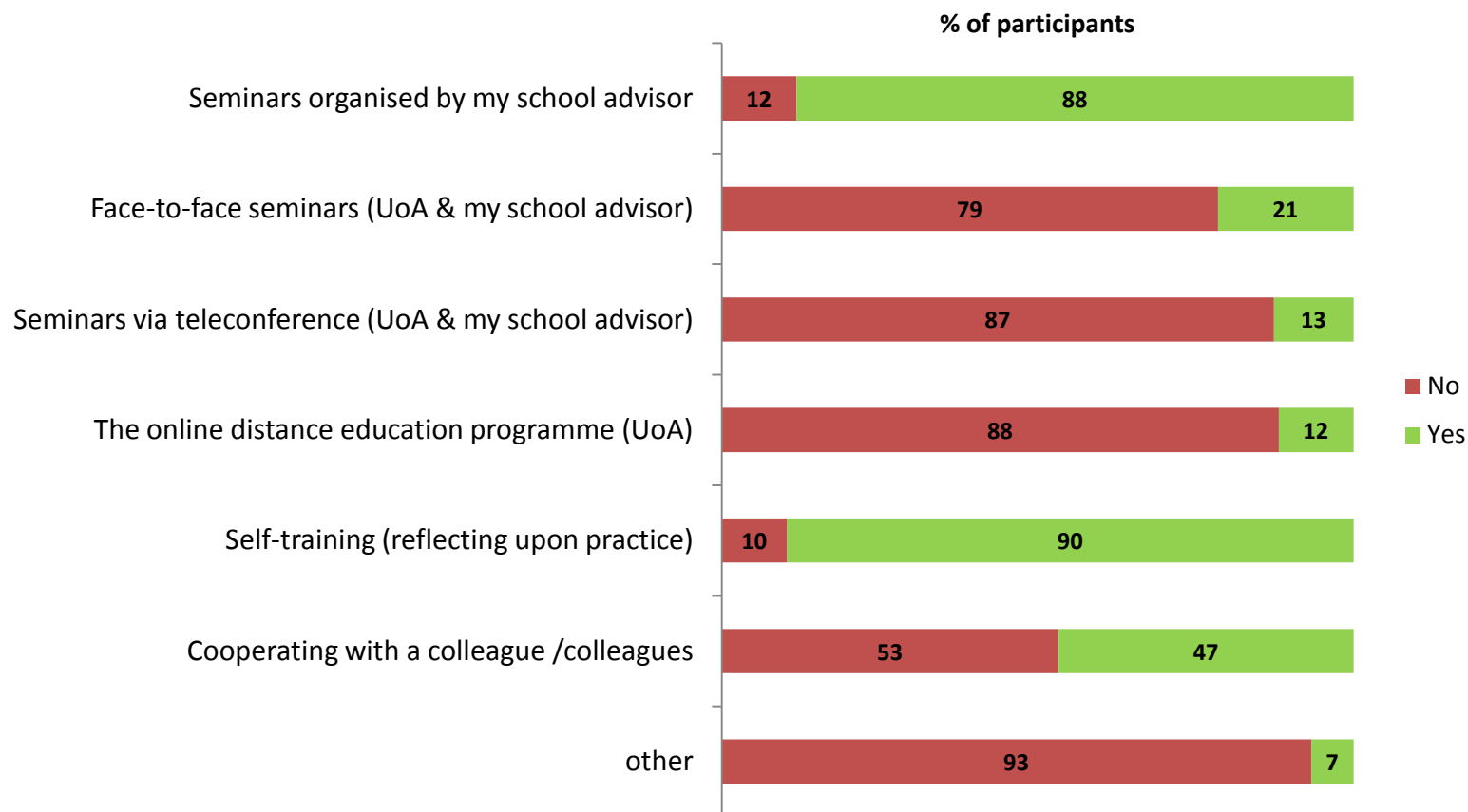


PD activities in the context of PEAP

- ✓ Teachers' involvement in PD activities in the context of PEAP
- ✓ Effectiveness of the PD activities (Teachers' perceptions)



Participation in PD activities

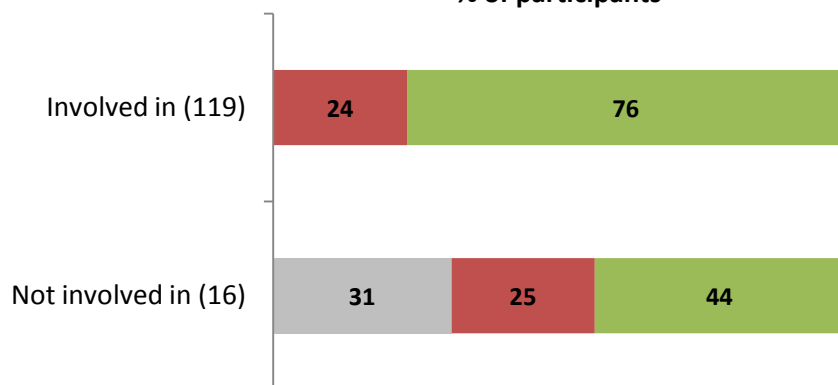




Teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of PD activities

Seminars organised by my school advisor

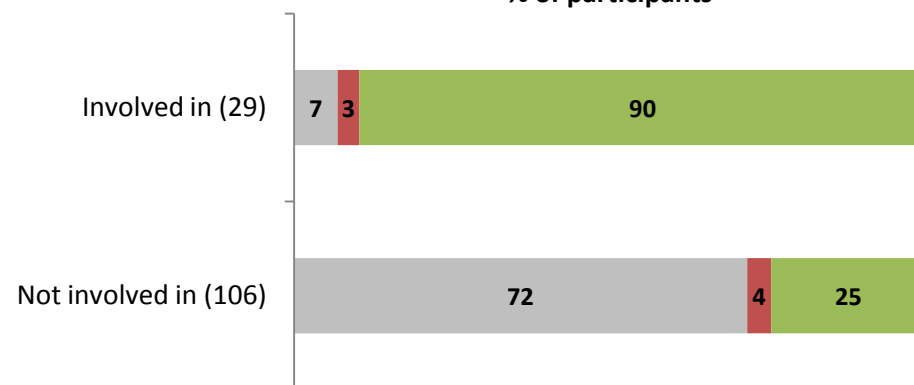
% of participants



■ Don't know/ NA ■ Ineffective/ Slightly effective ■ Quite/ Very effective

Face-to-face seminars (UoA & my school advisor)

% of participants

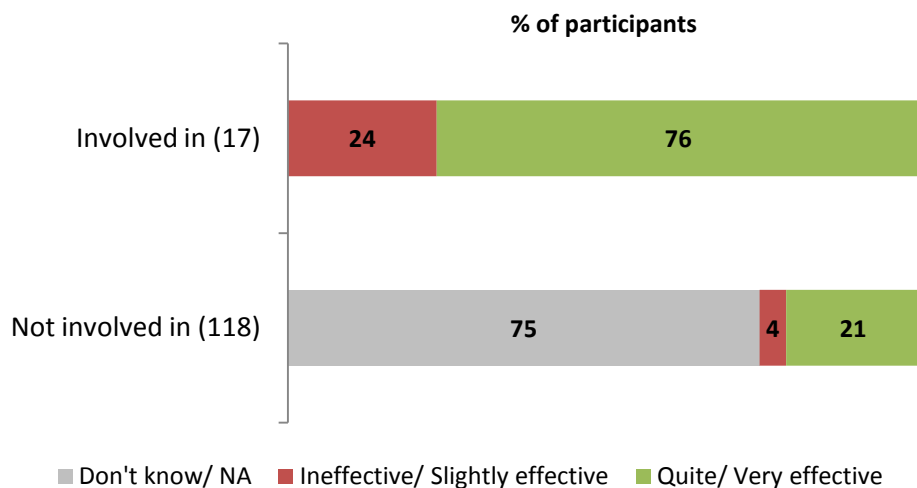


■ Don't know/ NA ■ Ineffective/ Slightly effective ■ Quite/ Very effective

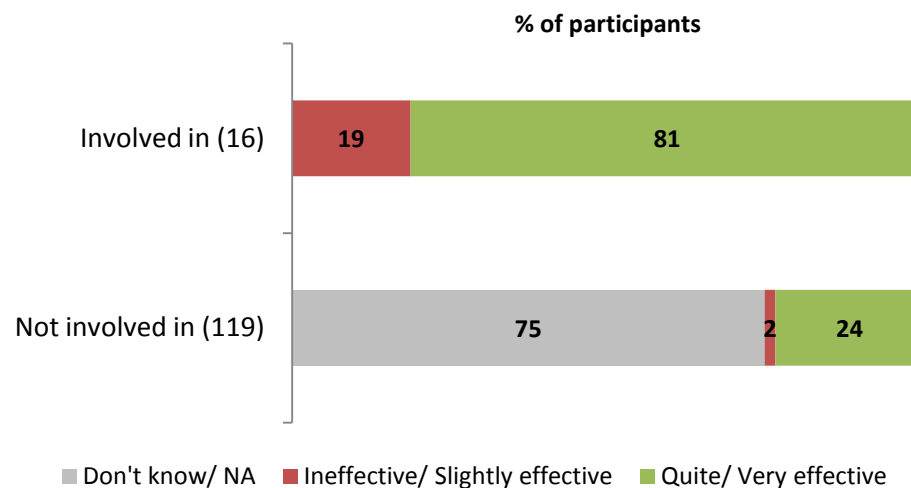


Teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of PD activities

Seminars via teleconference



The online distance education programme (UoA)

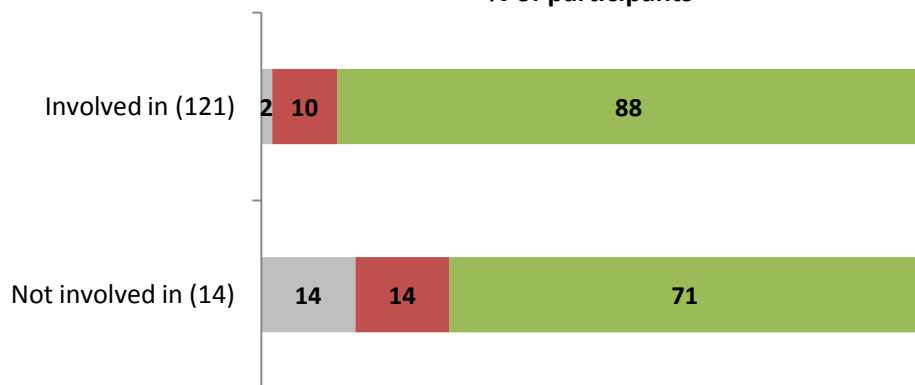




Teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of PD activities

Self-training (reflecting upon practice)

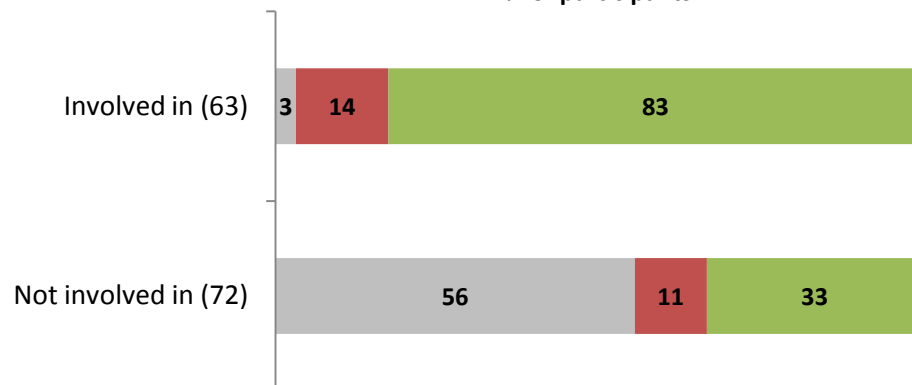
% of participants



■ Don't know/ NA ■ Ineffective/ Slightly effective ■ Quite/ Very effective

Cooperating with a colleague /colleagues

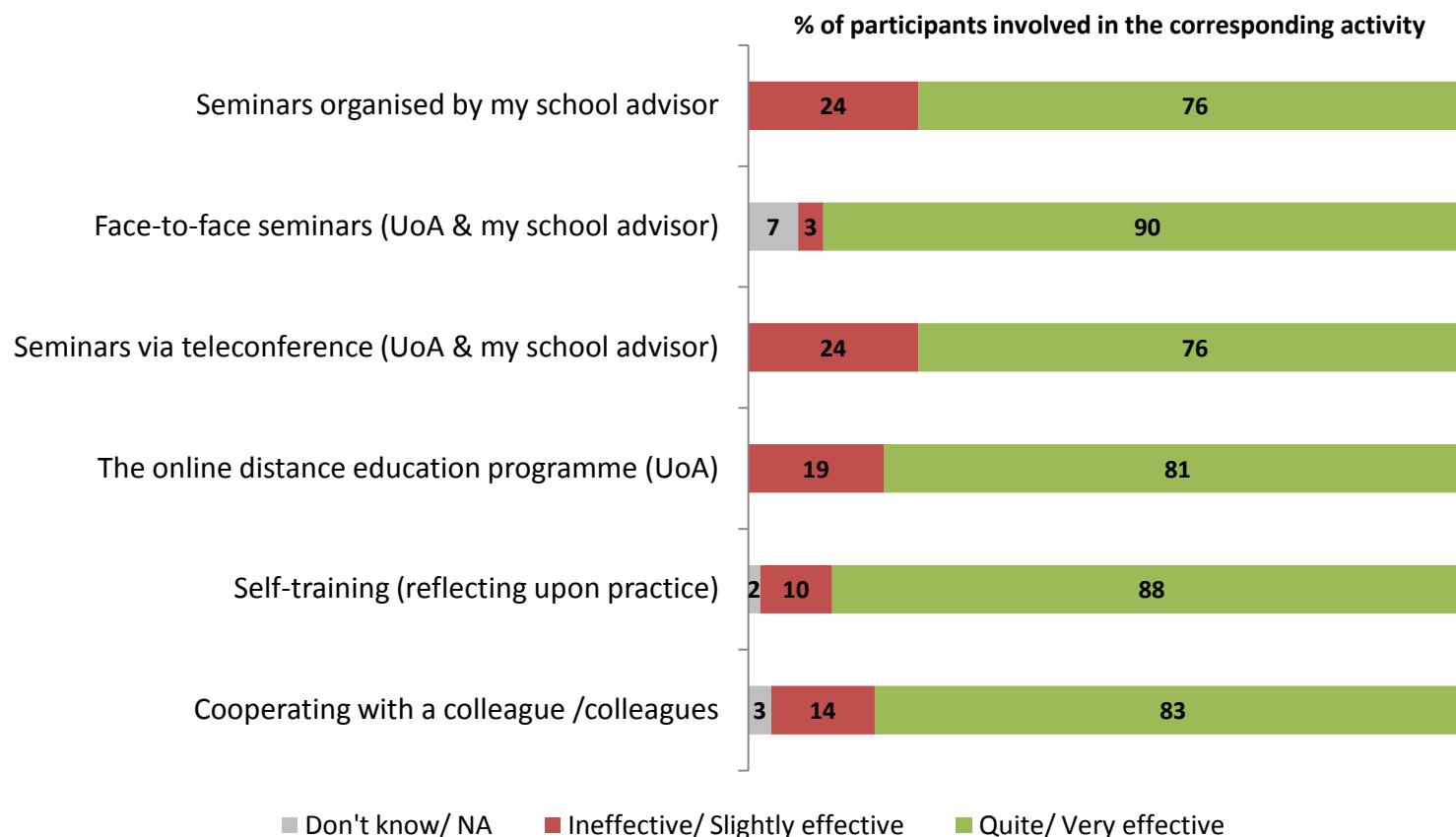
% of participants



■ Don't know/ NA ■ Ineffective/ Slightly effective ■ Quite/ Very effective



Teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of PD activities





Impact from PD activities

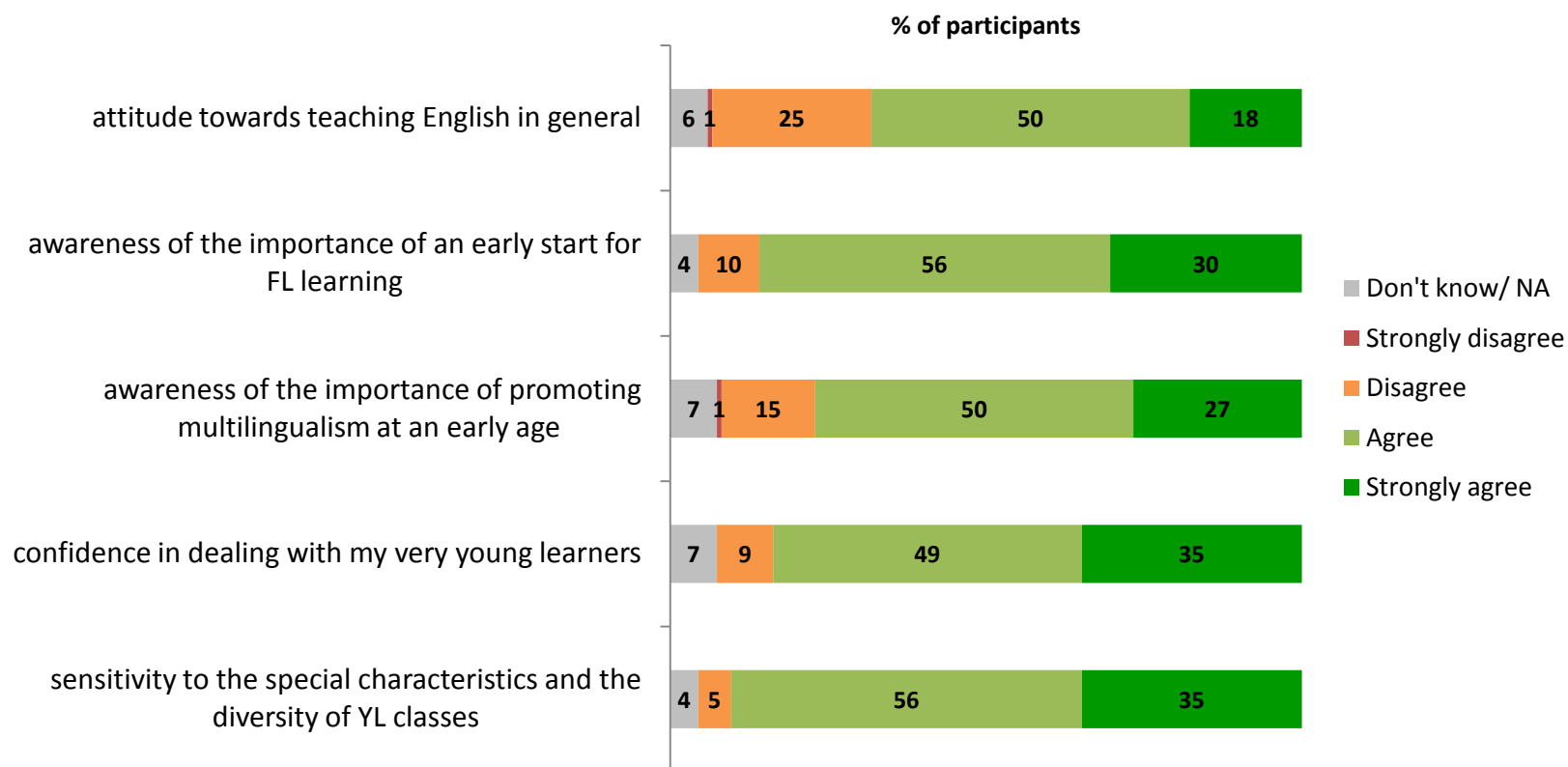
The analysis of the data (Principal Component Analysis) grouped the items into 3 interrelated categories

- **attitudes, beliefs & theories (5 items)**
- **professional skills (5 items)**
- **connecting theory to practice (3 items)**



Impact of the PD activities on teachers' attitudes, beliefs and theories

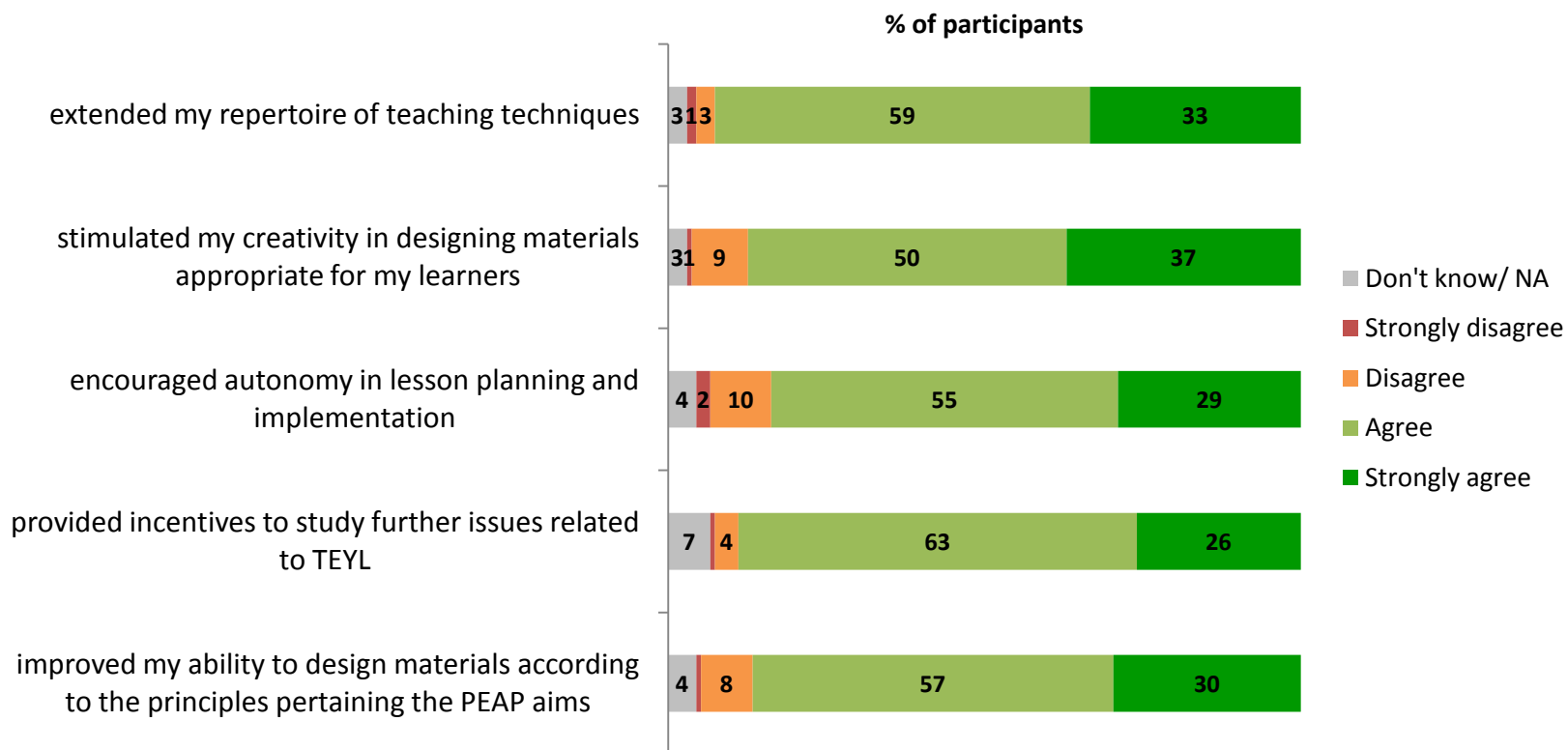
My involvement in the PD activities has had an impact on ...





Impact of the PD activities on teachers' professional skills

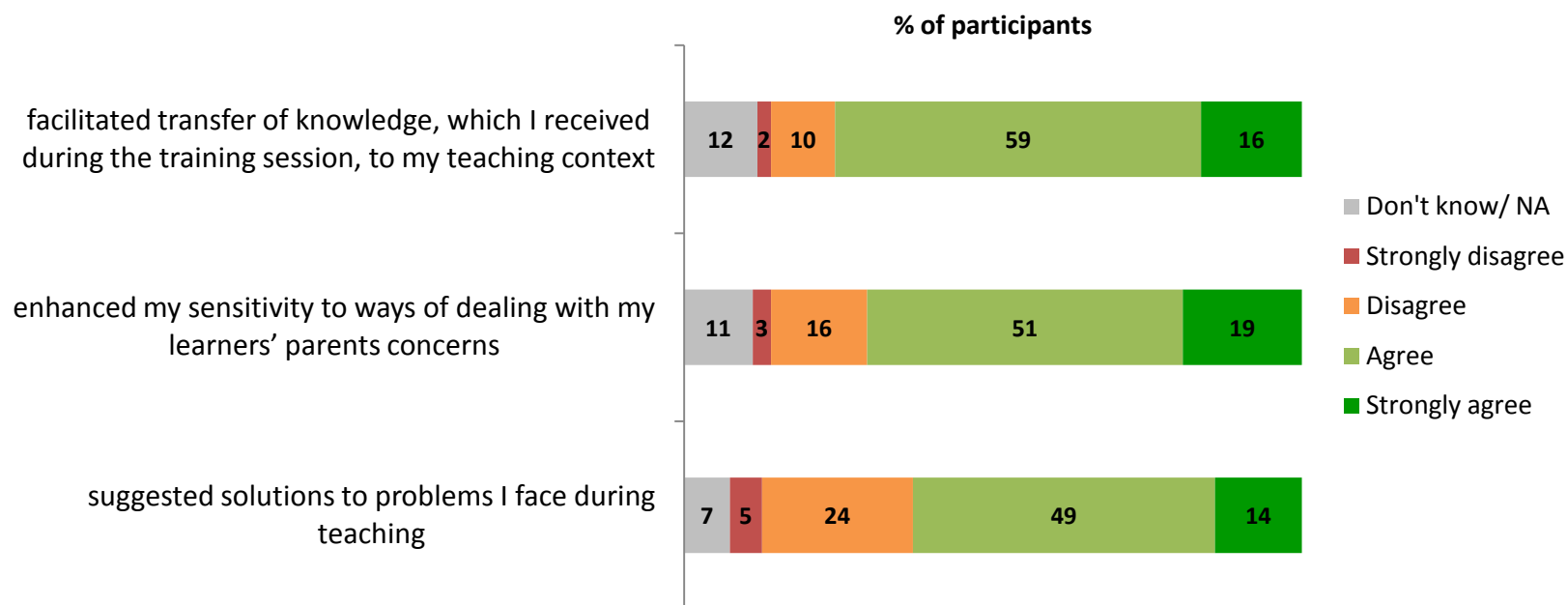
My involvement PD Activities has ...





Impact of the training: connecting theory to practice

My involvement in the PD activities has ...





Experiential knowledge vs. received knowledge (Wallace 1991)

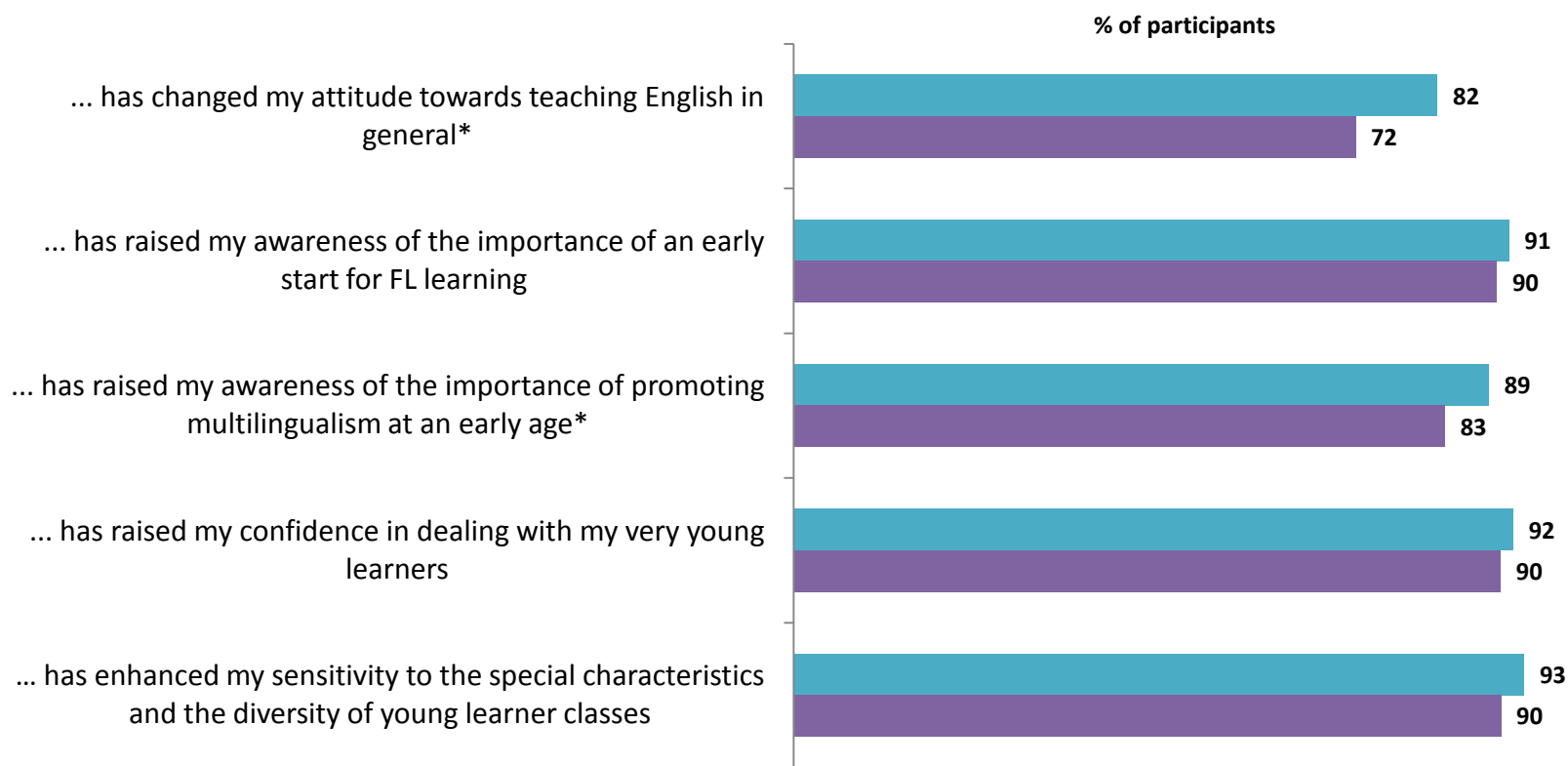
- **impact on teachers' attitudes, beliefs and theories**
- **impact on teachers' professional skills**



Experiential knowledge vs. received knowledge

Impact on teachers' attitudes, beliefs, theories

■ Teaching experience ■ Involvement in the PD activities



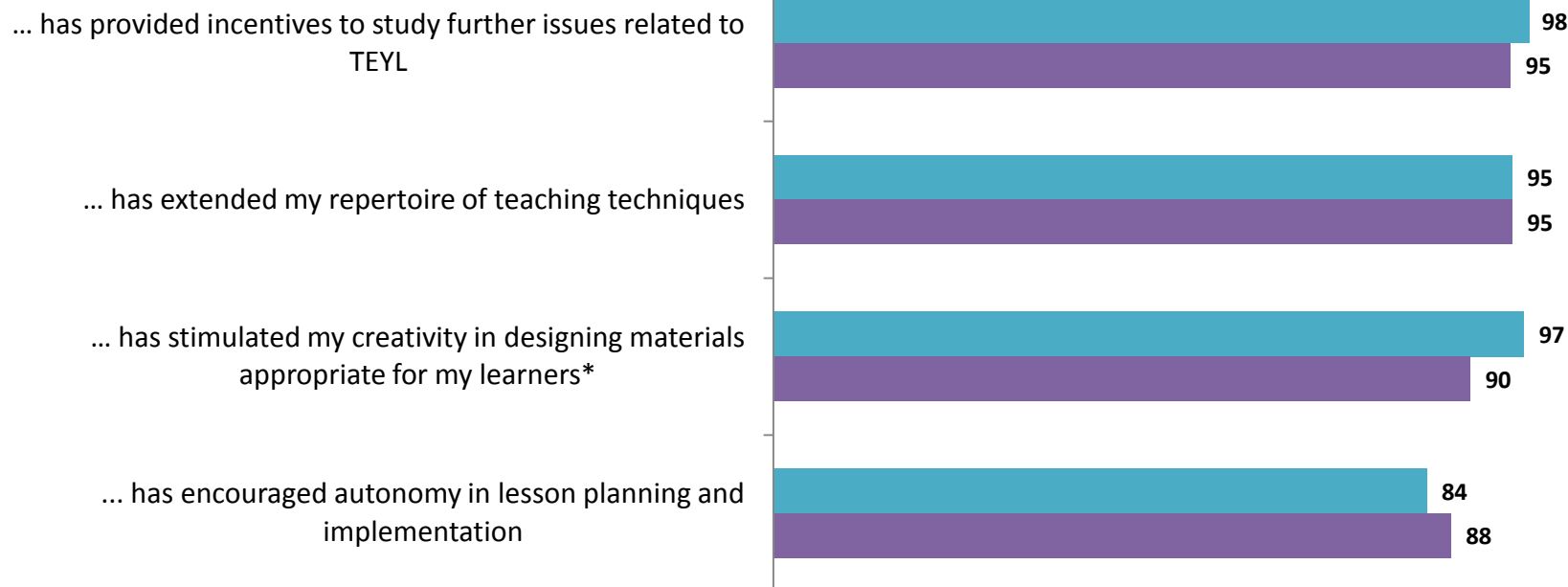


Experiential knowledge vs. received knowledge

Impact on teachers' professional skills

■ Teaching experience ■ Involvement in the PD activities

% of participants





Interim findings

- Teachers' involvement in the PEAP seems to have had a positive impact on both
 - ✓ their attitudes, beliefs & theories (TEYL, confidence in TEYL, early start)
 - ✓ their professional skills (techniques, creativity, autonomy)
- “ *[PEAP]... helped me a lot in the teaching process and at the same time it provided all the necessary material to motivate the young learners to participate effectively in class. Especially the use of songs, arts and crafts as well as dramatization increases the young learners' awareness*
- “ *I strongly believe that my teacher development needs have been met to a great extend. [] I am quite satisfied with the whole programme as well as with my involvement in it.*



Interim findings

- School advisors seem to have made a great contribution to the dissemination of the PEAP rationale & the suggested activities since they are in a position to approach great numbers of EFL teachers.

“ Being a substitute teacher who has only taught PEAP classes for some months it was my interest in gaining further knowledge and getting further training that led to my attending as many seminars and training sessions as well as professional development sessions organised by my school advisor as possible. I found those sessions very inspiring and they provided incentives to study issues related to teaching young learners in more depth. I would most certainly be keen on attending and participating in further training provided I am given the opportunity to do so.



Interim findings

However,

- 1 out of 4 EFL teachers in our sample who participated in seminars organized by their school advisor claim to find them slightly effective or no effective at all

“ *There was only one 2 hour seminar this year. We also need [..] more practical help by the school advisor.*

“ *So far all the seminars organized by the school advisor that I attended were a waste of time. I didn't learn anything that I didn't know before. The information was very general, and there was no practical advice on how to deal with problems. School advisors seem to be better informed about secondary education issues.*



Interim findings

- Developing multiple modes of training (face-to-face seminars, tele-training, online distance training modules) has offered more teachers the opportunity to
 - ✓ participate in PD activities, and
 - ✓ improve as educators and as professionals

“ *I think that the videotaped lessons and the e-training have been very helpful. I have also taken more interest in reading educational articles and researches. I feel that the e-journal is a very powerful tool and maybe it should published more often.* ”



Interim findings

- Developing the online distance mode of training aimed to provide a form of PD which would be flexible, would incorporate principles of adult education, and could be accessed by a great number of teachers, esp. those who work in remote areas

However,

- Evidence from this study implies that few teachers in our sample participated in the online distance mode of training. This maybe due to:
 - ✓ The fact that it is still not fully developed
 - ✓ Teachers have not been adequately informed
 - ✓ Not all teachers are acquainted with using ICT for educational purposes

“ *[..] I'm definitely trying the online distance education programme the next year.* ”



Interim findings

- Classroom practice seems to be a major factor towards PD

“ *The PEAP site, the lesson plans, the teacher's corner stuff, the school advisor seminars have helped me a lot and covered a part of my needs. **However, it was mostly the experience** that I gained working with very young learners the last three years that helped to be able to implement or adapt the materials and the ideas offered by the PEAP programme.*

“ *I [...] believe that more teacher to teacher meetings and exchange of practical ideas and experience at a local level could also be quite effective.*



Interim findings

TD needs seem to have been met to a considerable extent, but development is an on-going process

- “ *I think [my TD needs] have been partly met. I need further ongoing training opportunities.***
- “ *When you teach you never stop studying and learning. It's an ongoing process. Implementing the PEAP has helped but we still have a long way to go.***
- “ *I strongly believe that my teacher development needs have been met to a great extend. However, this is an on-going process, I mean there is still a lot to learn and practice***
- “ *[My PD needs have been met] Quite effectively, even though I strongly believe that training seminars should be conducted on more regular basis.***



Interim findings

Teachers need further education and training in

- ✓ How children develop and learn
- ✓ Teaching techniques
- ✓ Managing & motivating YLs
- ✓ Teaching children with learning difficulties
- ✓ Materials development
- ✓ Dealing with parents' concerns

“ [...] *my main problem with young learners is classroom management and effective techniques as far as their behavior in class is concerned. It would be great if we had some extra information about that age and the best ways to deal with kids that won't cooperate at all*



The picture till now...

- ✓ Classroom experience and use of project materials seem to have had a more significant impact on changing teachers' theories, attitudes and beliefs.
- ✓ Reflecting on classroom practice is seen as a powerful PD tool by the teachers themselves (much more than any other form of “conventional” training)
- ✓ Collaboration with colleagues is also viewed as an effective form of professional development



The way forward...

- ✓ The findings suggest the need for in-school support and training and for more opportunities for teacher collaboration and exchange of practices and ideas.
- ✓ Communities of practice offer a promising alternative to more conventional forms of training. The contribution of the School Advisor in setting up and developing, supporting teachers in CoP is crucial but implies changes in the school advisor/teacher roles and relationships. Diversification of the role of the School Advisor (coordinator, mentor, critical friend)
- ✓ The e- course needs to be further publicized in order to reach more project teachers and exploited to incorporate, support and sustain the work of communities of practice.



Thank you for your attention

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