IN WHAT WAYS DO IN-SERVICE SEMINARS HELP ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING PRACTICE IN SERBIA?

Ivana Cirkovic MILADINOVIC, PhD
Faculty of Education in Jagodina
University of Kragujevac
ivanajag@yahoo.co.uk

Abstract: *There is a belief that professional development constitutes an important part of being a teacher (Cirkovic-Miladinovic, 2014: 171). It is also believed that teacher professional development should provide an opportunity for in-service English teachers to explore their teaching practice and to critically evaluate themselves as professionals (Richards and Lockhart 1994; Wallace 1991). One of the ways to enhance teachers' professional development is to conduct in-service seminars where linguistic and pedagogical theory is connected with their individual teaching experience. Ideally, these seminars would need to incorporate an approach where teachers are encouraged to combine theoretical knowledge with practice and to be able to use that knowledge in their classroom. One of the focuses of the paper, firstly, is to discuss teacher autonomy, learner training and teacher training focusing here particularly on EFL teachers as learners. Secondly, the teaching context of the seminar will be explained with the highlight on the reasons for conducting it and the importance of the evaluation of its practicality. Thirdly, rationale for the seminar session will be considered as well as the activities, materials and interaction among trainees. As a way forward, the analysis and discussion of research data will be presented with the aim to answer the research question: In what ways do in-service seminars help EFL teaching practice in Serbia? On the other hand, we may discuss this issue as just an opportunity to broaden theoretical knowledge. Finally, some broader implications of the analyses will be pointed out. The main purpose of this paper is to discuss the usefulness of the seminars for the English language teaching practice in*

Serbia and its implications on the EFL learning/teaching quality.

Key words: *EFL teacher, professional development, teaching practice, seminar session.*

1. Teacher training

1.1 Teacher autonomy

In the field of teacher education *autonomy* is widely regarded as a 'capacity for potential self-directed learning behaviours' (Sinclair, 1999: 311). In his article, McGrath (2000) points out two perspectives of teacher autonomy: 1) *teacher autonomy as self-directed professional development* where the teacher is a learner himself and 2) *teacher autonomy as freedom from control by others* where subject teachers are expected to act within a triangular structure of syllabus, examination system and textbook. He then goes on to explain another aspect of teacher education which is *preparing teachers to facilitate learner autonomy.* Teachers facilitate learner autonomy while being learners at the same time. This aspect of teacher education through in-service programme is the focus of this paper.

Further, Brandt (2006: 362) suggest that teacher training concept need to move away from a 'being told' transfer approach, which is expert-directed, towards an 'exploratory approach', which allows for different teaching and learning styles and encourages autonomy as well as critical reflection for the teacher. Wright (1987) echoes Brandt's view by proposes that language teachers in a process of continual professional development should take the initiative themselves in pedagogic planning and put the emphasis on critical enquiry as a basis for effective action in their teaching practice (TP). Namely, teacher who is willing to explore his/her teaching practice in order to discover learners' needs and preferences may contribute to learner autonomy achievement. Thus, this point accounts for the fact that language teachers capable of exploring TP and helping their learners in the process of learning to focus on *how* to learn rather on *what* to learn are more likely to make learners' autonomy plausible (Dickinson, 1992). In this way, learners may become more motivated and independent in the process of learning while the teacher may become more motivated and willing for the exploration of the teaching practice.

Being an explorer in the language classroom is just one of the roles teachers adopt in their TP. According to Cohen (1998), teachers are actually

taking on a series of roles in the classroom such as: diagnostician, researcher, coordinator, coach, learner trainer and language learner. In-service programmes provide an opportunity for trainees to explore these roles and to be teachers and learners at the same time. In Lake's (1997) view one of the teacher training objectives is to enable a learner to become more independent in the process of learning and to accept additional responsibility for making decisions in terms of self-directed learning. In order to do so, subject matter must make it possible for the trainee to see clearly the connection between theory and practical teaching work (Waters, 1988). After all, learner and teacher autonomy are interconnected.

According to McGrath (1997: viii) "we learn because we choose to participate in planned educational experiences and because we create opportunities for learning in the course of our own work". "After being an English language teacher for 5 years in Serbia, I am again a language learner which I find very interesting and helpful. It is interesting on one hand, because as a learner, I do not feel the pressure that I have to know everything and, on the other hand, it is helpful because I am improving various skills: ability to present an argument, exploring theory, applying theoretical ideas and ability of being critical" (Teacher 1, participant in the research). In this sense, being in the role of a language learner during the seminar, the teacher experiences learning problems and in that way he or she becomes more sensitive to their learners' needs and difficulties in language learning.

Waters (1988) advocates that the subject matter in teacher training courses should not only be theoretically sound but should also be the kind of thing the trainees will readily identify with. In the same manner, Waters (ibid.) points out that these seminars should make it possible for the trainee to see clearly how different areas and levels of teaching interconnect. One of the possibilities to examine the usefulness of the seminar may be through feasibility of applying presented theory into teaching practice. A more subtle corollary may be also applied: in order to answer the question in what ways in-service seminars help TP is to raise this question and ask teachers who participated in the seminar by conducting a research.

1.2 Teachers as Learners

One 'leitmotiv' of recent papers in the field of teacher education is that learning constitutes an important part of being a teacher (e.g. Smith, 2000; McDonough, 2002). Therefore, long-term professional development is essential for every teacher and can be realised either through individual development or through seminars.

Laycock and Bunnang (1991) point out that in-service training (INSET) programmes intend to initiate a stage of personal development with the focus on classroom practice. They also suggest that those participants who are willing to explore different teaching and learning procedures will have to work out why these procedures may be useful for their learners and themselves. Apparently, the INSET tutor will do little to foster teachers' professional development unless they are eager to see and realise things for themselves (ibid.) In the same style, Cullen (1991) argues that one of the purposes of the TP analysis is to help trainees discover the methodological principles behind a particular practice and vice versa in order to facilitate a successful learning outcome. These conditions may or may not appear to be met in the in-service session so, for this reason, Wallace (1996) points out that professional development may be enhanced through reflection of one's own TP and by using theory intervened within teachers' continuing practice. Thus, reflective reports in teaching practice might foster teachers' analytical skills enabling them to critically assess educational theory and research (Pennington, 1990).

Furthermore, Bailey (1996: 261) states that *collaborative learning* ("learning organized around learners working and learning together through face-to-face interaction") may provide an opportunity for teachers to explore their own conceptions of teaching and learning. Face-to-face interaction with colleague teachers might provide a possibility for exchanging and negotiating ideas among teachers who actually already have well-established teaching styles (Cullen, 1991). Therefore, it may be said that teachers are individuals and their styles are different as well as their teaching skills (Cirkovic-Miladinovic, 2010). Teachers possess a mixture of skills, attitudes, values, beliefs and knowledge areas, yet this mixture should not be observed as a disadvantage in the seminar, on the contrary, this variety seems to be an advantage (Woodward, 1991). To sum up briefly, being open to variety of principles and able to think about, discuss and change them in the light of work experience is according to Woodward (ibid.) definition of a good learner, teacher or trainer.

2. Teaching context: seminar for English teachers of secondary schools in Serbia

One of the first important steps towards becoming a better teacher involves an increased awareness about the importance of professional development and openness to the possibility of change. Learning to teach is a desire to move forward, to keep learning from what happens, to reflect on

what happened and to believe that creativity, understanding and experience are continuing to grow throughout one's life (Scrivener, 1994). Supporting this idea, Ho (1995) notes that the teacher educators may consider helping both pre-service and in-service teachers to become reflective professionals by giving them chances to actively participate in the seminar sessions. This can be especially important when teachers are at an early stage of their TP without much experience so their teaching skills need to be developed. Hence, seminars may be considered as a good way to prepare teachers for what happens in real school situation.

The aim of the seminar (outline of the seminar is given in appendix 1) for secondary school teachers, conducted in January the 16th 2015 in Serbia, was to have participants experience critical thinking by producing their own definitions and lists as well as to explore how theory can be transformed into practical tasks ready to be applied in their own classrooms. Namely, secondary school teachers' learning problem was how to improve their own critical thinking in order to help their learners to develop it. In this case-study, the teacher trainer's intention was to motivate teachers to become active in questioning and analyzing and to require evidence rather than to take their own opinions as the only relevant ones (reflection of a teacher trainer is given in appendix 2). Another purpose of this seminar was to challenge secondary school teachers, cognitively and affectively, to discover ways in which they can help their learners to become better language learners as it would appear that criticality is an intrinsic aspect of teacher training.

2.1 Seminar Rationale

Seminars provide an opportunity for teachers' professional development which may be associated with the notion of a teacher as "independent problem-solver" who takes responsibility for personal development (Roberts, 1998: 222). Learner training seminars for secondary school English teachers in Serbia seem important in ELT practice both as a possibility of improving teachers' abilities for teaching and a way of helping teachers to prepare lessons on their own.

The presented seminar in January 2015 was created for the non-native teachers of English in Serbia. The topic: *Promoting critical thinking through discussion* was chosen for the purpose of experiencing and accepting new ideas through cooperation with fellow participants who "shared relevant experiences and ideas, maybe for the first time ever, with colleagues who were really interested to listen" (see Appendix 2). The aim of the topic was to raise awareness of the importance to think critically, to give relevance to

personal experience and to express personal points of view on group-work results (see Appendix 1). According to (Cotterall, 2000: 111) content is "the hallmark of courses" or seminars, so activities and materials, in the teacher training context, should provide more detailed explanations in terms of skill development, teaching strategies and self-assessment. Activities and materials would need to leave space for self-directed learning as well (Sinclair and Ells, 1992). Therefore, "releasing control to the teachers can be very productive if they are motivated and enthusiastic about the activities and materials" (see Appendix 2).

Let us now turn to the session plan and performed activities (Session plan is given in Appendix 3). In the first stage, as pre-lead-in activity, participants are made aware of their language learning needs by giving them slips of paper in order to make a list of their expectations (see Appendix 4). The aim of the second stage was to raise awareness of the importance to think critically, not on the surface. In the next stage the aim was to give participants an opportunity in order to experience critical thinking by producing own definitions and lists (see Appendix 3). By producing their own definitions (10 minutes' activity), participants develop metalinguistic knowledge about language and criticality. Then, in the fourth stage, participants share own experiences in using discussion in ELT. The aim of this activity was to give relevance to trainees' personal teaching experiences. In this stage trainees were given an instruction in learning strategies such as self-awareness. Further, in the fifth stage, participants organize resources, material and time by making a debate with the chosen topic which is the preparation for the next stage. In the sixth stage presentation of posters by group representatives and peer evaluation of discussion takes place. In this way, participants take charge of their own learning and become autonomous strategy users. Besides, thinking about teaching seemed to bring about a greater awareness of learning (Assinder, 1991). Finally, participants evaluate the relevance of the session activities and materials to their own circumstances by completing the evaluation form (see Appendix 5) and make plans for continued language study.

3. Analysis and discussion of results

3.1 Data Collation

On the basis of the question: *In what ways do in-service seminars help teaching practice in Serbia?* this paper intend to address, a piece of research was conducted in September 2015. The purpose of this research was to confirm or refute the hypothesis: In service seminars do not help teaching

practice in Serbia. For the reason of not having a real insight into seminar's success and its applicability into TP after a one-hour session, this research seemed to be significant. Since the seminar was conducted in January 2015, we tend to believe that teachers had plenty of time to try out blending some of the seminar content into their classroom activities. In order to find out the usefulness of the January seminar session for the TP in Serbia, participants were given a questionnaire to fill in. The questionnaire of eleven questions (see Appendix 6) was designed to elicit teachers' perceptions in terms of the seminar's usefulness for their TP after they have been teaching for five months. Another reason for choosing a questionnaire is that questionnaires are economical in terms of time (they are usually easy to complete) and they are convenient for the respondents because respondents receive the same questions (Dörnyei, 2003). A questionnaire for English teachers in Serbia is a rating scale called *The Likert's scale.* The sample for the research was chosen purposively (seven teachers out of 20 who participated in the January seminar session). Postal method of the questionnaire distribution was chosen for this purpose.

3.2 Data Analysis and Data Interpretation

Twenty secondary school English teachers participated in the seminar while seven (35%) participated in the final research. Data of age and years of teaching experience is presented in a Table 1 and as a Chart 1 below.

Table 1. Age and years of teaching experience

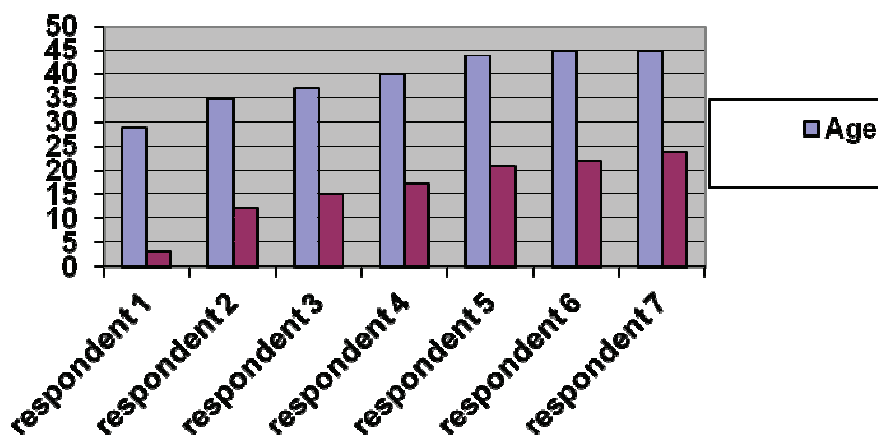| Number of question	Respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3	Respondent 4	Respondent 5	Respondent 6	Respondent 7
Age	29	35	37	40	44	45	45
Teaching experience	3	12	15	17	21	22	24

Chart 1: Age and years of teaching experience

Respondents' average age is 39.28 within the range of *max* 45 and *min* 29. Mode age, age that occurs most frequently, is 45. Median age is 40. Then, Mode age in terms of years of teaching experience is 21 while median age is 17. As a way forward, here is presented Table 2 which presents data in percentages. average teaching experience is 16.14 within the range of *max* 24 and *min* 3.

Table 2. Data given in percentages

Question number	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Strongly disagree	Disagree
1	28.57	57.14	14.29	0.00	0.00
2	0.00	85.71	14.29	0.00	0.00
3	0.00	71.43	28.57	0.00	0.00
4	0.00	28.57	28.57	28.57	14.29
5	0.00	71.43	28.57	0.00	0.00
6	0.00	42.86	42.86	14.29	0.00
7	71.43	28.57	0.00	0.00	0.00
8	57.14	42.86	0.00	0.00	0.00
9	14.29	42.86	42.86	0.00	0.00
10	42.86	42.86	14.29	0.00	0.00
11	28.57	28.57	42.86	0.00	0.00

Then, analysis according to four categories (evaluation of: a) activities and the topic appropriateness; b) materials; c) interaction among trainees and d) implications) that were taken into account for the purpose of evaluating

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seminar session (see Appendix 7). Further, the purpose of the questions in part A, the first category, was to find out the appropriateness of the topic and the usefulness of the activities for the TP. According to the first question results (four respondents (57.14%) answered that they agree with the statement, 2 respondents answered that they strongly agree (28.57%) and one respondent was neutral (14.19%) (see Table 3).

Table 3. Participants' responses in terms of the seminar quality

Question number	strongly agree	agree	neutral	disagree	strongly disagree
1	2	4	1		
2		6	1		
3		5	2		
4		2	2	2	1
5		5	2		
6		3	3	1	
7	5	2			
8	4	3			
9	1	3	3		
10	3	3	1		
11	2	2	3		

So we may come to the conclusion that the topic was relevant for the level teacher trainees teach (see Appendix 8, Chart 1). In terms of the appropriateness of the activities presented in the seminar 6 respondents (85.71%) answered that they agree with the statement while one respondent was neutral (see Appendix 8, Chart 2). Discussion tasks were evaluated as useful for the TP: 5 respondents (71.43%) agreed with the statement while 2 were neutral (see Appendix 8, Chart 3). The aim of the fourth question was to find out whether teachers used some of the activities presented in the seminar in their TP (see Appendix 8, Chart 4). Younger teachers, with less teaching experience, tend to use some of the activities in the classroom while older and more experienced teachers tend to use already known activities that they have used before. The reason for this situation, in terms of more experienced teachers, may be not being open to new ideas in ELT practice and not being willing to change the teaching methods that they have already used. Younger teachers tend to, at least, try some of the activities in order to fresh up the classroom atmosphere. Overall, teachers rarely used activities presented in the seminar: 2 respondents used some of the activities, 2 were neutral while 2 respondents disagreed and 1 strongly disagreed with the statement in question 4.

As far as part B (materials evaluation) of the questionnaire is concerned, it is consisted of two questions: question number 5 and 6. When asked whether seminar materials are useful for the ELT practice 5 respondents answered that they agree (71.43%) while 2 were neutral (see Appendix 8, Chart 5). Nevertheless, when asked did they use some of the materials in their everyday TP, 3 respondents replied positively (42.85%), 3 were neutral and 1 respondent answered negatively (see Appendix 8, Chart 6). Again, younger teachers with less teaching experience answered that they used some of the handouts for the classes they teach while teachers who are more experienced tend to use materials that were already tried out and available.

Part C of the questionnaire was designed to elicit teachers' attitudes towards interaction with the fellow colleagues. According to the results (see Appendix 8, Chart 7 and 8) it may be argued that teachers enjoyed sharing experiences, teaching methods, problems and ideas with peers (Vacilotto and Cummings, 2007). Sharing experience was evaluated positively 71.43% - strongly agree with the statement saying that interaction was useful in terms of sharing teaching experience and 28.57% - agree that interaction was useful in terms of learning from each other. This category was the one that was evaluated with the highest scores (100% positively evaluated). Finally, Part D of the questionnaire was designed to elicit participants' attitudes towards future professional development and seminar participation. Results of the question number 9 are: only 1 respondent (14.29%) strongly agreed with the statement that presented theory can be applied into TP, 3 respondents (42.85%) agreed while 3 respondents (42.85%) were neutral (see Appendix 8, Chart 9). What can be deduced from the results of the question number 10 is that younger participants would like to participate in future seminars (42.85% - strongly agree and 42.85% - agree). Only one respondent was neutral (see Appendix 8, Chart 10). Last but not least, results of the question number 11, shows that four respondents replied positively by saying that the seminar helped them to encourage their students to think critically while three respondents were neutral (see Appendix 8, Chart 11). The results of this last question may account for the fact that younger teachers are more willing to develop their teaching skills being open to new ideas and being ready to participate in the seminars. It is interesting to consider at this point that activities and materials presented in the seminar were evaluated as useful but were not applied and implemented into the regular TP. Furthermore, greater elaboration is needed in terms of theory presented in the seminar sessions and its applicability into ELT practice in Serbia.

4. Implications and conclusions

This paper was intended to address issues about the usefulness of the seminars for the TP in Serbia, as well as to discuss main differences between presenting and applying theory into ELT practice. Outcomes from this research showed that teacher-training courses have to be designed to meet their participants' needs not only as teachers, but also as trainees in order to make seminar sessions more successful and functional for the TP (Waters, 1988). Research on the most effective ways to present useful theory and to motivate and train teachers in using this theory in their foreign language classrooms' is also needed (Chamot, O'Malley, 1995). Clearly, two classes are never the same so it is not feasible to create seminar's activities and materials that will suit all teacher trainees and their language classes.

In spite of the mentioned limitations, the results of this study may have several positive applications within the context of teacher training. Firstly, participating in the seminar sessions might provide teachers with the opportunity to experiment and implement novel ideas and activities in their classes by sharing responsibilities with colleagues of the same status (Vacilotto and Cummings, 2007). On a more positive note, it could be said that seminar sessions may not provide panaceas but may contribute to a continuous process of learning and improving teaching skills. Moreover, teaching/learning in the field of teacher education belongs to a life-long learning area and needs to become part of each teacher's professional development not only through obligatory seminars but also through continuous self-evaluation and reflection.

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Appendix 1
Outline of the seminar
Title: Promoting Critical Thinking through Discussion

Expected audience: 30 English teachers of local secondary schools.

The topic is relevant for two reasons: First, raising awareness of the need to equip students with both thinking and communication skills are necessary if we want to help them to become active learners responsible for their (language) learning. Merely reproducing knowledge is not an adequate preparation for living in the present-day world that is very complicated to understand. Teachers are responsible for developing thier students' thinking skills so that they can process information and produce knowledge. Secondly, discussion in the foreign language classroom is an activity that can contribute

greatly to practicing both thinking skills and language fluency, allowing full participation of all students (even the shy and introverted ones).

Time/Duration: 60 minutes

Place: Jagodina, Faculty of Education in Jagodina, University of Krgaujevac

Objectives:

- By the end of the session the participants will have got acquainted with the concept of critical thinking and its implications for the ELT

- By the end of the session the participants will have got acquainted with the elements of successful discussion/debate in ELT

- By the end of the session the participants will have produced discussion tasks promoting critical thinking, ready to be used in their own ELT

Expected challenges/difficulties/anticipated problems and how to deal with them:

- Teachers may not respond efficiently in the activities that require their reflection and sharing of experience and ideas, or choosing a task, and where control will be released to them (activities 1, 3 and 4). I will deal with this challenge by assuming more control and distributing specific tasks to groups.

- Flexible timing may become a problem endangering proper dynamics and achievement of objectives. I will deal with it by monitoring the progress of group-work and checking if any of them need suggestions how to complete the tasks. If necessary, I will shorten the discussion in the closing activity, ensuring only that all participants view posters produced by the other groups.

Appendix 2
Reflection on the Session
Promoting Critical Thinking through Discussion
Jagodina, 16/1/2015

Analyzing my previous session, I kept thinking not only of the effectiveness of each session stage, but also of my role in facilitating the activities and session outcomes. I was thus faced with the question of my progress in moving from teaching to training. How self-aware have I become? What are my strengths? And my weaknesses? How much did I contribute to deepening the awareness of the teachers, to their opening up to new ideas and to sharing personal experiences, to their learning from the session in general (from the session content and from interaction with each other)?

I must say that I am not quite sure about where I stand on the line between a teacher and a trainer, but I know very well that my January session

has brought me a few steps closer to the training position and to the vision of a trainer I am striving to become. How? My new insights are as follows:

❖ Flexibility is one of the key words in functioning as a trainer. When I included the concept in my action plan for the January session, deciding to allow teachers freedom of task choice and flexible timing for performing the tasks, I had not thoroughly thought of the implications, but rather used my intuition (I am pretty sure that having a vision is not completely a conscious state, but implies some intuition as well, since we cannot be aware of all implications of what we foresee for the future).

I am satisfied that I managed to keep flexibility in the course of the session. Moreover, I feel that such flexibility contributed very much to raising teachers' understanding and to allowing their learning. I did not interrupt teachers in the lead-in activity when they spoke longer than I had planned because they all wanted to share their understanding of different perceptions and critical thinking. Then, in all other activities I let the teachers give own comments and exchange views whenever it was relevant as I understood how important it was for their clarifying the new concepts. A trainer can never know in advance what individual understanding and learning needs teachers bring into the session; therefore, exchange of experiences, ideas and views should be seen as an ideal learning opportunity for all of them.

The teachers' feedback to the January session has made me more aware of the need for flexible approach to session planning, sequencing activities in particular. I realised that completely different sequencing (starting with a discussion, and going back to describing its elements and critical thought necessary for expressing own views) could have been more productive for achieving the session objectives. Improvising is easy with experienced teachers, so it must be easy with experienced trainers. Till then, detailed planning is a must.

Flexible control over the session activities is something that I regarded as a challenge in my January 2015session plan, but managed to use widely in the session itself. Compared to my October 2014 session, when I was holding too much control over most activities, in the January session teachers were in charge of most of the activities. I was there for scaffolding if they needed me, but most of the time pairs and groups worked under their own steam. I felt in control only during the introduction stage, when giving instructions or distributing task material. Releasing control to the teachers can be very productive if they are motivated and enthusiastic about the activities, but they must be first well-prepared and led by the trainer.

 Paradoxically (or not?), January 2015 session has confirmed my belief that good planning is essential. Not only should the trainer plan the session in detail, but materials (handouts, slides, posters) should be fully appropriate to

the session. My January session materials were much better that the ones in the October 2014 session, I had thought them out very carefully, and so there was no misunderstanding or any surprises for me. My careful planning and good materials have become my real strength as a trainer.

❖ An important insight is that I still have to work hard to improve my instructions. Although I had no real problems in the January session related to this skill, I still feel that I sometimes checked understanding of instructions much later than I should have (I did it while monitoring pair or group work). I have thought of the reasons carefully and believe that one of them is that I feel uncomfortable asking teachers if they understand something as simple as instructions (this is not a problem with students), so I must get used to doing it in future.

Appendix 3

SESSION PLAN

Stage, timing, work	Procedure: what (explain shortly) and why (aim, in a few sentences)	Materials
Introduction 1 min CW	Brief outline of the session Aim: to focus participants' attention on the topic	Poster
Pre-Lead-in 1 min IW	Question: Do you find the topic relevant to the level you teach? Put down a few questions you want to be answered in this session or make a list of your expectations. Aim: again, to focus participants' attention on the topic from the standpoint of their needs and expectations; to make it easier for them to evaluate the session in the evaluation forms	
Lead-in 3 min PW	Different perceptions – optical illusion. Discussion on how our own perceptions (of the same picture) may differ from those of the others. Aim: to raise awareness of the importance to think critically, not on the surface	Power Point (Dali's picture of Gala / Lincoln)
Activity 1 10 min PW (Think-pair-share)	Defining critical thinking/critical thinker – in groups, participants produce a definition of critical thinking and a list of characteristics of critical/non-critical thinking/thinker. Definitions/lists are shared and pinned on the wall; lists are checked with Power Point slide.	Handout 1 Handout 2 Power Point

	Aim: to have participants experience critical thinking by producing own definitions and lists	
Activity 2 5 min PW	Discussion/debate in ELT – participants share own experiences in using discussion in ELT, focusing on its efficiency (when it worked – students' attitudes to this kind of activity) Aim: to personalize the topic and give relevance to personal experiences	
Activity 3 10 min GW	What makes a successful discussion/debate – in groups, participants discuss a chosen element of a successful discussion/debate by brainstorming ideas first and then produce a poster illustrating it. Participants are divided into groups on the basis of their own concerns/experiences regarding discussion as a communication activity. Aim: to have participants connect own experience to the theory and learn from each other	Power Point Handouts Poster
Activity 4 15 min GW	Preparing discussion tasks/five minute debates – in groups, participants prepare discussion tasks or five minute debates which promote critical thinking and can be used in their own ELT; each group produces a poster Aim: to explore how the theory can be transformed into practical tasks ready to be applied in their own classrooms	Poster
Closing 10 min CW	Presentation of posters by group representatives and peer evaluation or discussion Aim: to share the new knowledge, express personal points of view on group-work results and sum up the session activities	Poster
Feedback 5 min IW	Participants refer back to their notes in the Pre-lead-in activity (participants' needs and expectations) and fill in the evaluation form Aim: to evaluate the relevance of the session activities and materials to their own circumstances	Handout

Appendix 4

This slip of paper was given to teachers at the beginning of the seminar in order to focus their attention on the topic from the standpoint of their needs and expectations. Then, this would make it easier for them to evaluate the session in the evaluation forms. Moreover, this would be useful for the presenter to compare participants' expectations with the session plan that was carried out.

Promoting Critical Thinking through Discussion
Time/Duration: 60 minutes
Place: Jagodina, Faculty of Education
Date: xx/xx/xx

Answer these questions by writing full sentence on the given line.

1.   I have been preparing for this seminar through:
_____
_____
_____

2.   Out of this topic I expect to hear/learn this:
  _____
_____
_____

Appendix 5

Date: _____

WORKSHOP EVALUATION FORM

Note: This is an evaluation form on this session. Please complete this form because your opinion will help us improve it in the future. You need to think what you have expected to hear/learn and what has been actually accomplished. It is anonymous. Thank you for taking the time to complete it.

1. I have expected to hear/learn during the session

_____
_____
_____

2. I liked

_____
_____
_____

3. I did not like

_____
_____
_____

4. I suggest

_____
_____
_____

5. This session actually accomplished something that I did not expect and that is

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix 6

A Questionnaire for English Language Teachers

Directions:
This form of the QUESTIONNAIRE is for teachers of English as a foreign language.

You will find statements about the seminar session you attended on 16th January 2015. The topic of the seminar was *Promoting Critical Thinking through Discussion.*

Please read each statement and in the appropriate space mark your response (X) that tells how strongly you agree/disagree with the statement. This usually takes about 10 minutes to complete.

This questionnaire is anonymous.

Thank you for taking the time to complete it.

Date: _____

Country: _____

Mother tongue: _____

Age: _____

Teaching experience (circle the right answer or write on the line number of years)

less than 5 years   5 to 10 years   10-15 years more_____

Part A

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. I find the topic of the seminar relevant for the level I teach.					
2. Activities presented in the seminar are appropriate and useful for my teaching practice (TP).					
3. I find the discussion tasks/debates conducted in the seminar useful for my own TP.					
4. I used some of the activities in my own classroom.					

Part B

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
5. I find materials (handouts, power point presentation) presented in the seminar useful for					

my TP.				
6. I used some of the handouts for the classes I teach.				

Part C

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
7. Interaction between my colleagues and me during the seminar session was helpful in terms of sharing our teaching experience.					
8. Interaction between my colleagues and me during the seminar session was helpful in terms of learning from each other.					

Part D

Statement	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
9. A seminar was explicit in terms how theory can be transformed into practical tasks ready to be applied in my own TP.					
10. I would like to participate in another seminar relevant for my					

TP.					
11. The seminar helped me to encourage my students to think critically and to express their opinions in the class.					

Appendix 7
Part A

Number of question	respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3	Respondent 4	Respondent 5	Respondent 6	Respondent 7
1	4	4	3	4	5	4	5
2	4	4	4	4	4	3	4
3	3	4	4	4	4	4	3
4	3	4	4	2	2	3	1

Part B

Number of question	respondent 1	Respondent 2	Respondent 3	Respondent 4	Respondent 5	Respondent 6	Respondent 7
5	4	4	3	4	4	3	4
6	4	3	4	3	4	3	2

Part C

Number of question	respondent 1	respondent 2	respondent 3	respondent 4	respondent 5	respondent 6	respondent 7
7	5	5	4	4	5	5	5
8	4	5	5	5	5	4	4

Number of question	respondent 1	respondent 2	respondent 3	respondent 4	respondent 5	respondent 6	respondent 7	
7	5		5	4	4	5	5	5
8	4		5	5	5	5	4	4

Part D

Number of question	responde nt 1	respond ent 2	respond ent 3	respond ent 4	respon dent 5	res po nd ent 6	respon dent 7
9	3	4	5	4	3	3	4
10	5	4	5	5	4	3	4
11	5	4	5	4	3	3	3

Appendix 8

Chart 1. Response to question number 1

RESPONSE TO Q2

0%

0%

0%

14%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neutral
- disagree
- strongly disagree

86%
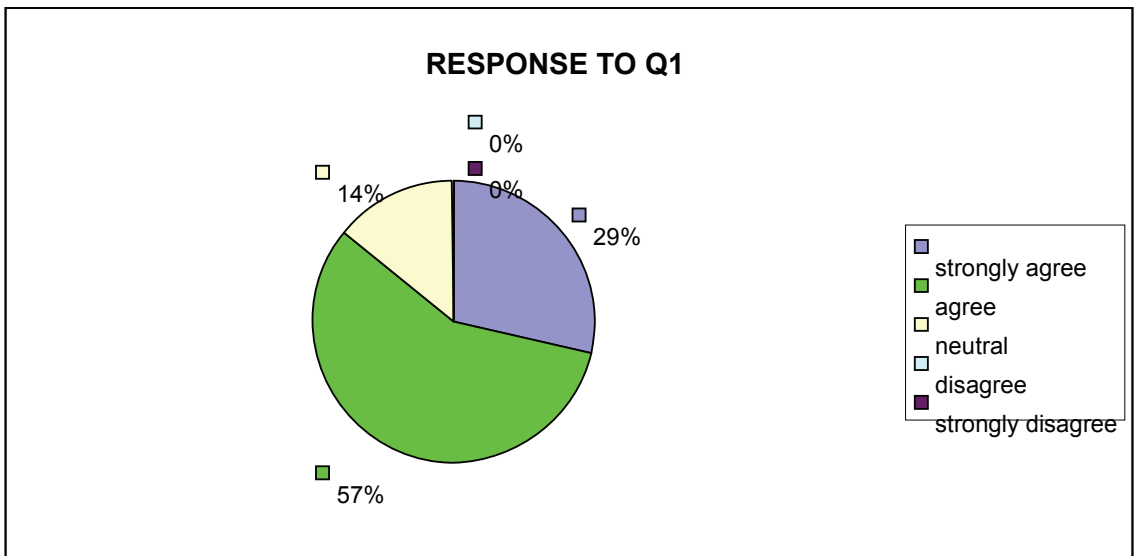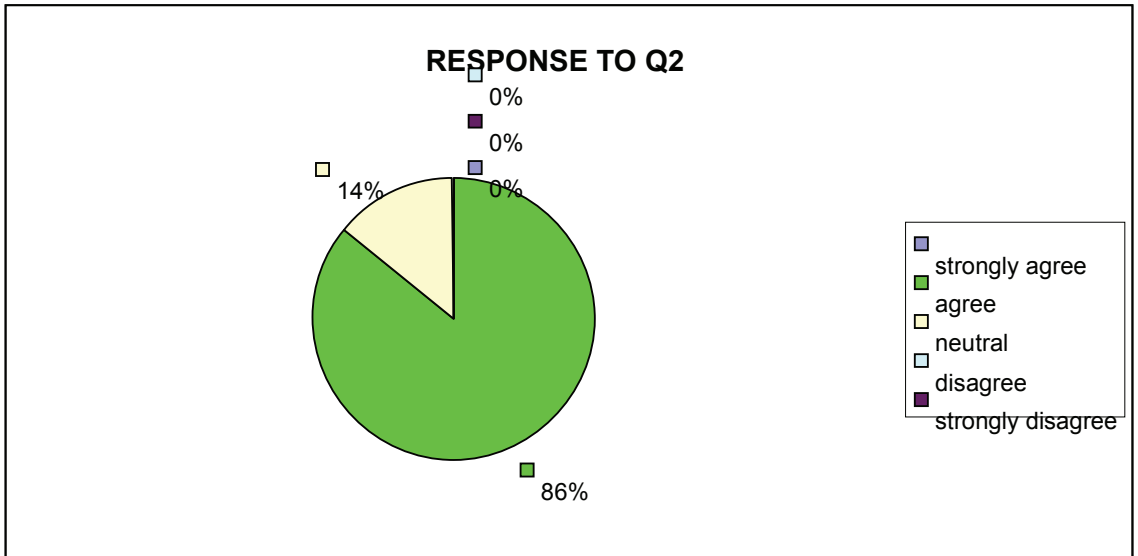
Chart 2. Response to question number 2

RESPONSE TO Q3

0%

0%

0%

29%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neutral
- disagree
- strongly disagree

71%
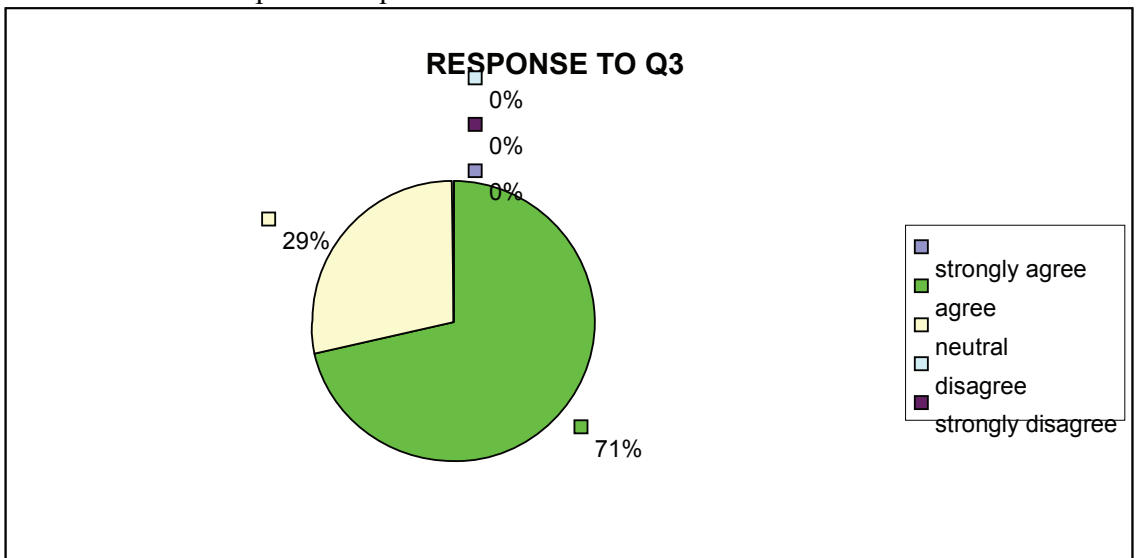
Chart 3. Response to question number 3
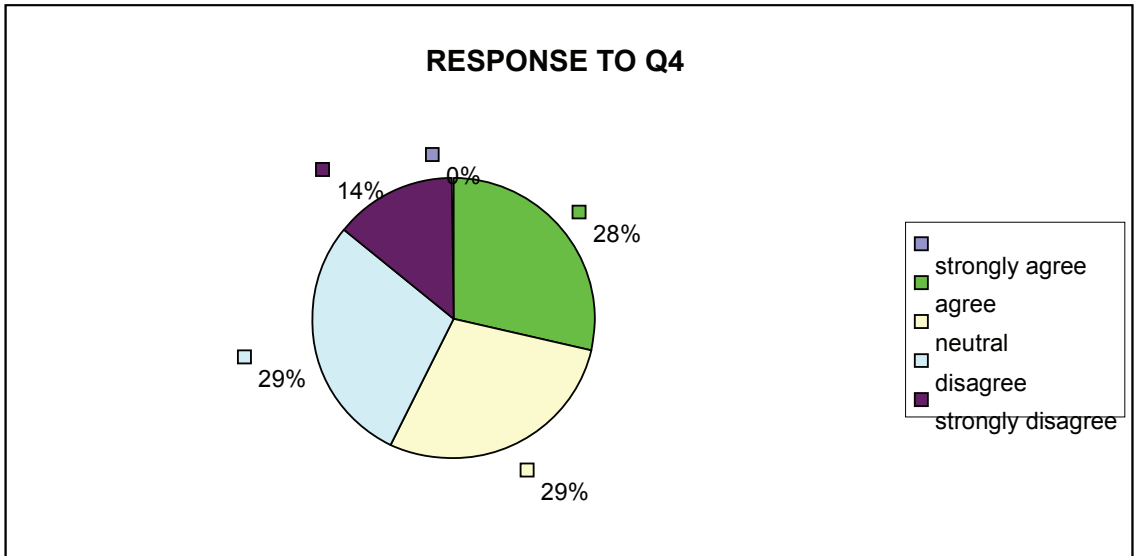
RESPONSE TO Q4

Chart 4. Response to question number 4
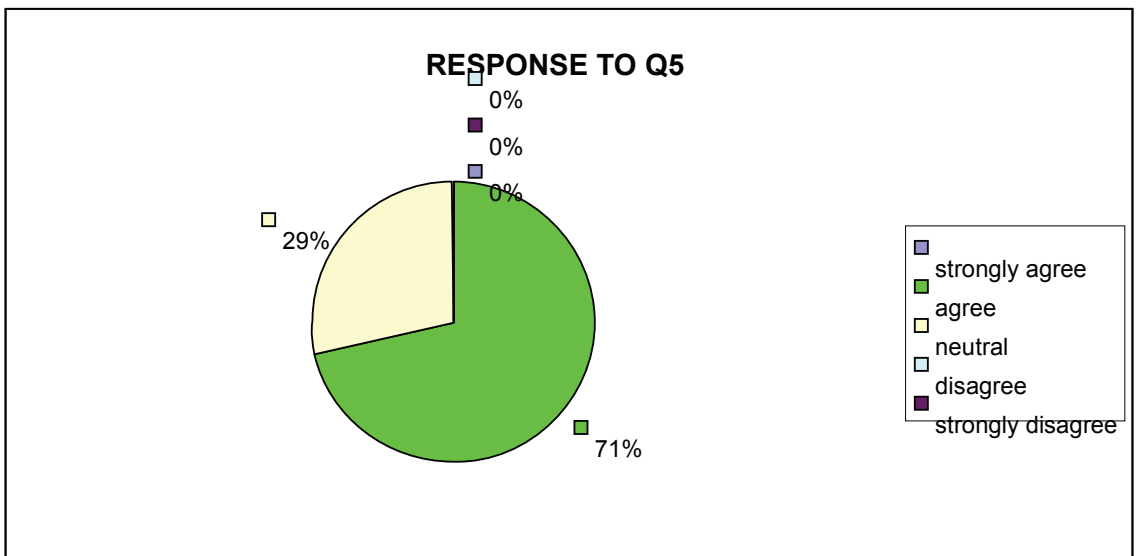
RESPONSE TO Q5

Chart 5. Response to question number 5
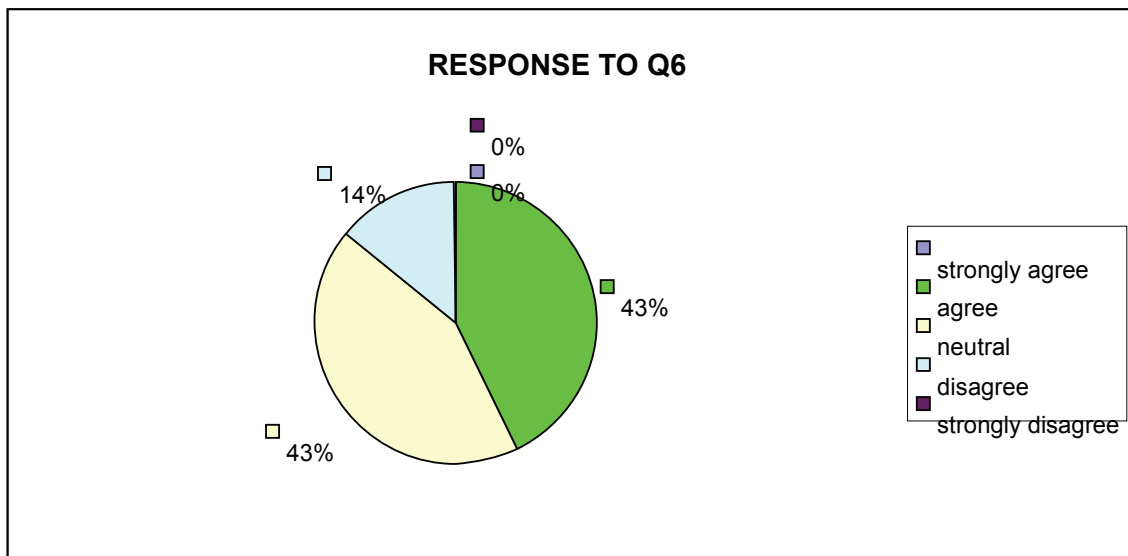
RESPONSE TO Q6

Chart 6. Response to question number 6
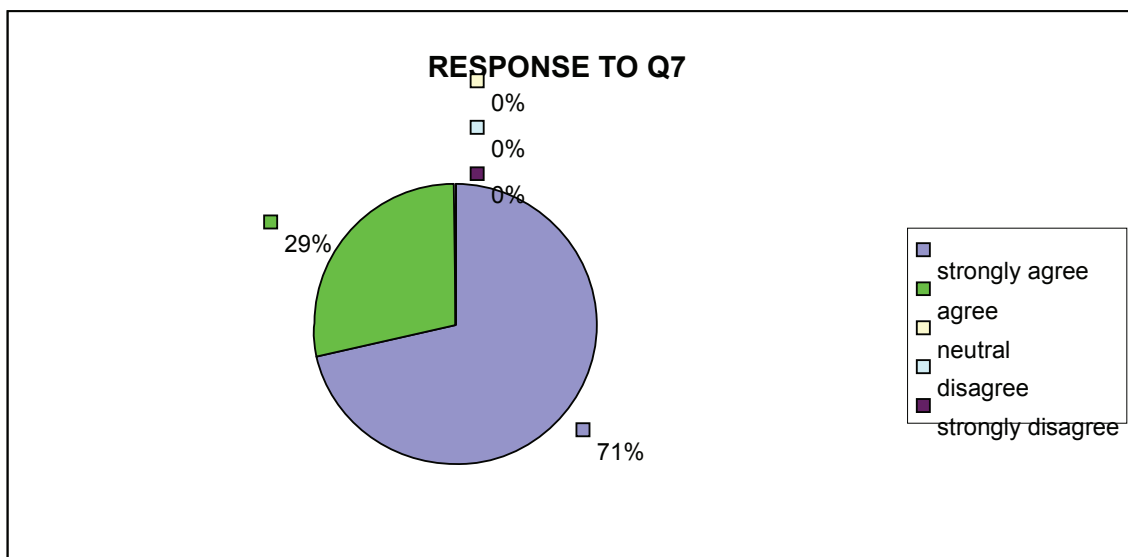
RESPONSE TO Q7

Chart 7. Response to question number 7

RESPONSE TO Q8

0%

0%

0%

43%

57%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neutral
- disagree
- strongly disagree
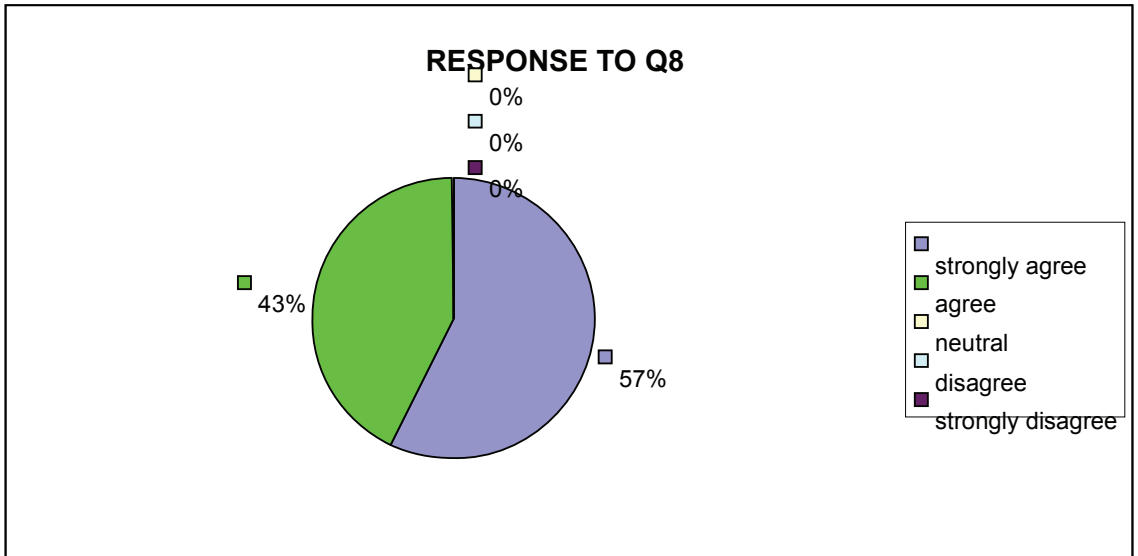
Chart 8. Response to question number 8

RESPONSE TO Q9

0%

0%

14%

43%

43%

- strongly agree
- agree
- neutral
- disagree
- strongly disagree
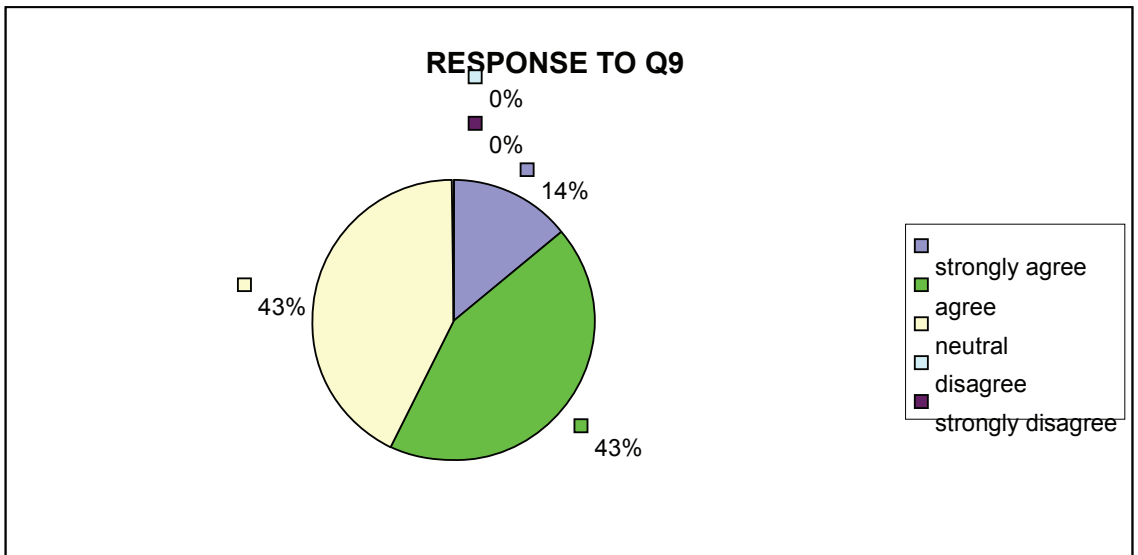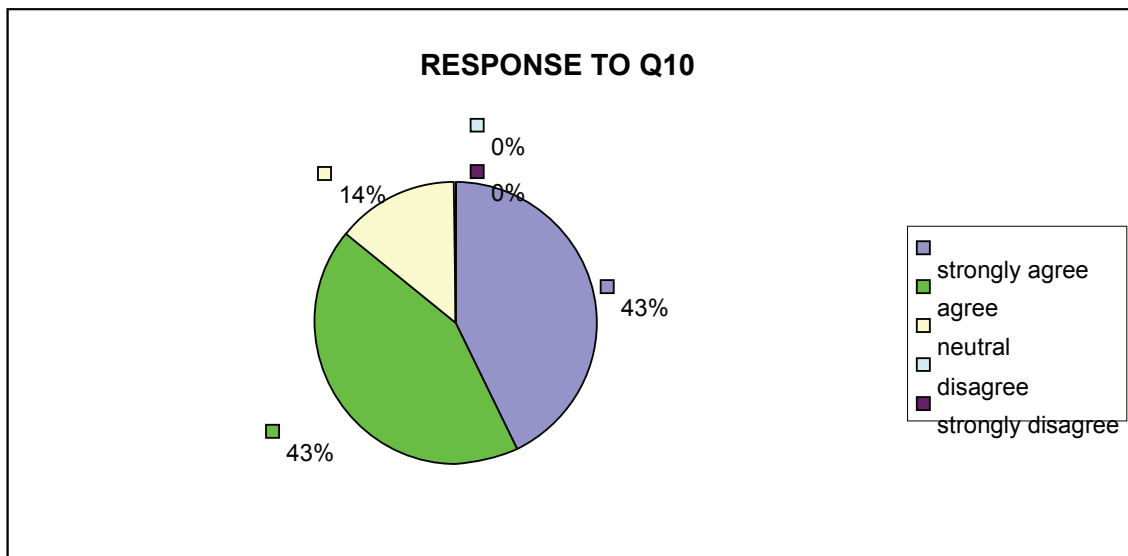
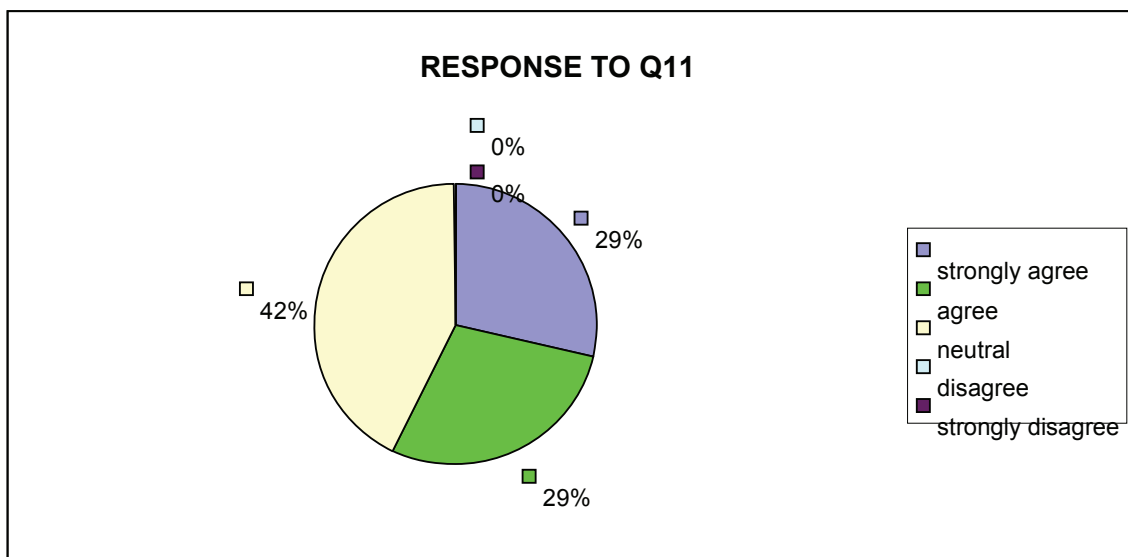Chart 9. Response to question number 9

Chart 10. Response to question number 10

Chart 11. Response to question number 11