

LEARNING IN A LANGUAGE OTHER THAN THE MOTHER TONGUE IN IB PROGRAMMES

Natascha Thomson

Language Coordinator/EAL Teacher

Kongsberg International School, Norway

Do you agree or disagree?

The earlier a second language is introduced in school programmes the greater the likelihood of success in learning.

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Agree

- Those who begin learning an additional language at a young age are more likely to have a native like proficiency of the language Lightbown and Spada (2006)

Disagree

- An early start may mean less time for a learner to develop their conceptual knowledge and understanding in their first language and literacy skills Lightbown and Spada (2006)
- It can take up to seven years for some learners learning through an additional language to attain the same levels of academic proficiency as those expected for learners learning in a mother tongue IBO (2008)

What challenges are we facing?

Educators

- Learners with varying experiences, language levels and conceptual understanding
- Implementing a sophisticated programme with learners who may not be able to fully access content and terminology
- Almost all education is language education Postman (1996)
- Finding resources at varying levels to cater for the diverse language and knowledge needs of learners

Learners

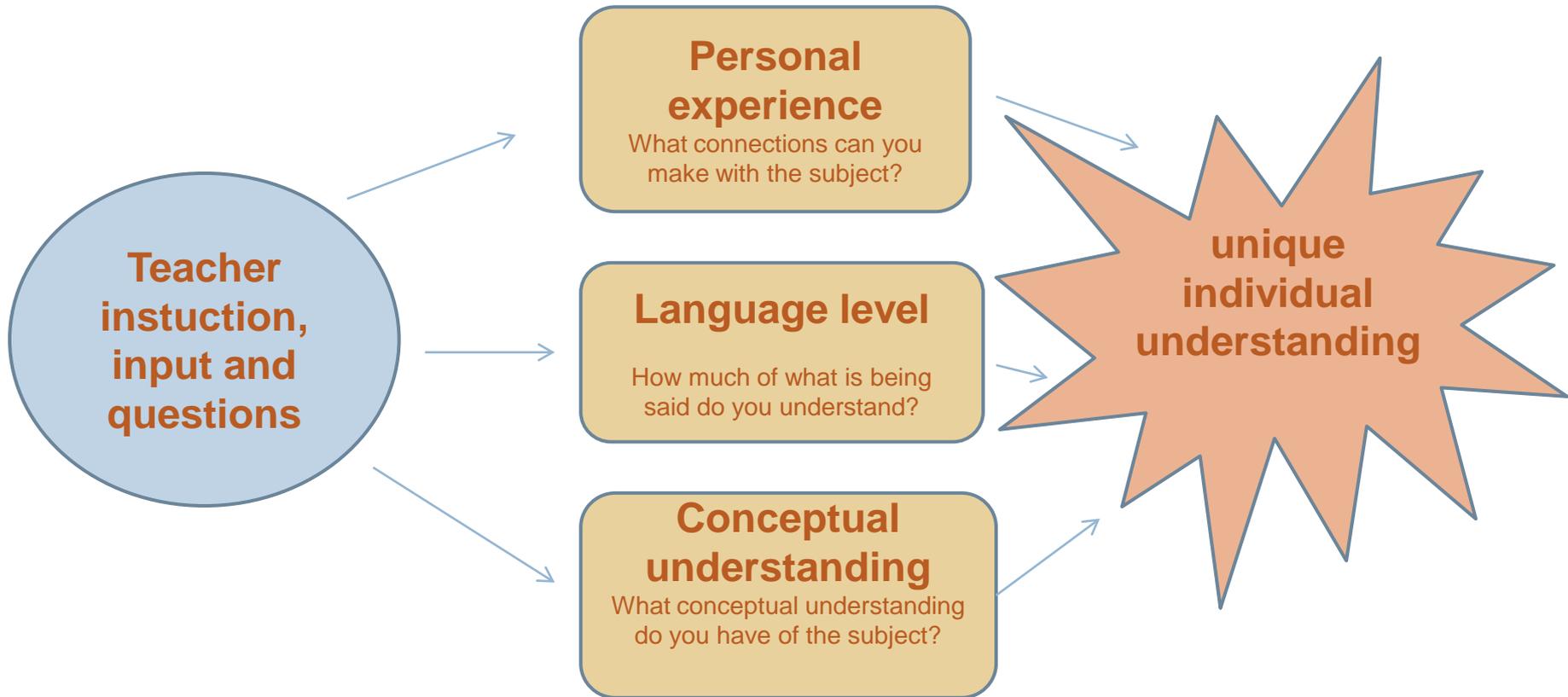
- Developing *basic interpersonal communicative skills (BICS)* in conjunction with *cognitive academic language proficiency (CALP)* Cummins (1979)
- Not having a grounding in literacy in their mother tongue or additional language e.g. A student who can speak multiple languages but cannot read or write in any of these effectively.

CAT

You have
**three
minutes**
to think
and note
ideas
about
these
questions

- What does it look like?
- How does it feel?
- What can it do?

The Role of Prior Knowledge





Jeff Thompson Research Award
2010

***Language Teaching Strategies and
Techniques used to Support
Students Learning in a Language
other than their Mother Tongue.***

Research Objectives

- To observe, record and analyse the strategies and techniques PYP teachers use to implement their unit of inquiry to children learning English as an additional language.
- To create a resource bank of language teaching strategies, ideas and techniques for teachers to use when implementing units of inquiry.
- To help raise teacher awareness of language learning through the programme of inquiry.

The Participants

Teacher	Gender	Age Range	Number of years teaching	Language Teacher Training	Number of Students in Class	Number of Nationalities in Class	Number of Languages Spoken by Students
Teacher 1	Male	20-30	2	No	13	11	6
Teacher 2	Female	20-30	6	No	18	11	10
Teacher 3	Female	51-60	26	Yes	14	11	8
Teacher 4	Female	31-40	14	Yes	12	12	8
Teacher 5	Female	31-40	8	No	15	10	10
Teacher 6	Male	61+	38	Yes	14	10	7
Teacher 7	Female	31-40	6	No	16	11	9
Teacher 8	Female	20-30	8	Yes	16	9	6
Teacher 9	Female	31-40	9	No	15	9	8
Teacher 10	Female	51-60	30	Yes	19	12	11

Data Collection Methods

- One thirty minute lesson observation
 - ▣ *What types of language are teachers using to help students negotiate meaning and understand their environment?*
 - ▣ *How are teachers modeling language and helping young learners to acquire the language of instruction?*
 - ▣ *How are teachers making learning experiences meaningful and comprehensible for children in the classroom?*
- Teacher interview
- PYP Coordinator interview
- Field notes

Categories of Language Used in Observation Tally Chart

- *Instructions*
- *Open Questions*
- *Closed Question.*
- *Unclassifiable*
- *Activity Related Language*
- *Eliciting*
- *Error Correction*
- *Praise*
- *Discipline and Control*
- *Asking a Student a Specific Question*
- *Response to or Repetition of Student Answers*
- *Pause*
- *Prompt and Probe*
- *Think Alouds*

The Findings

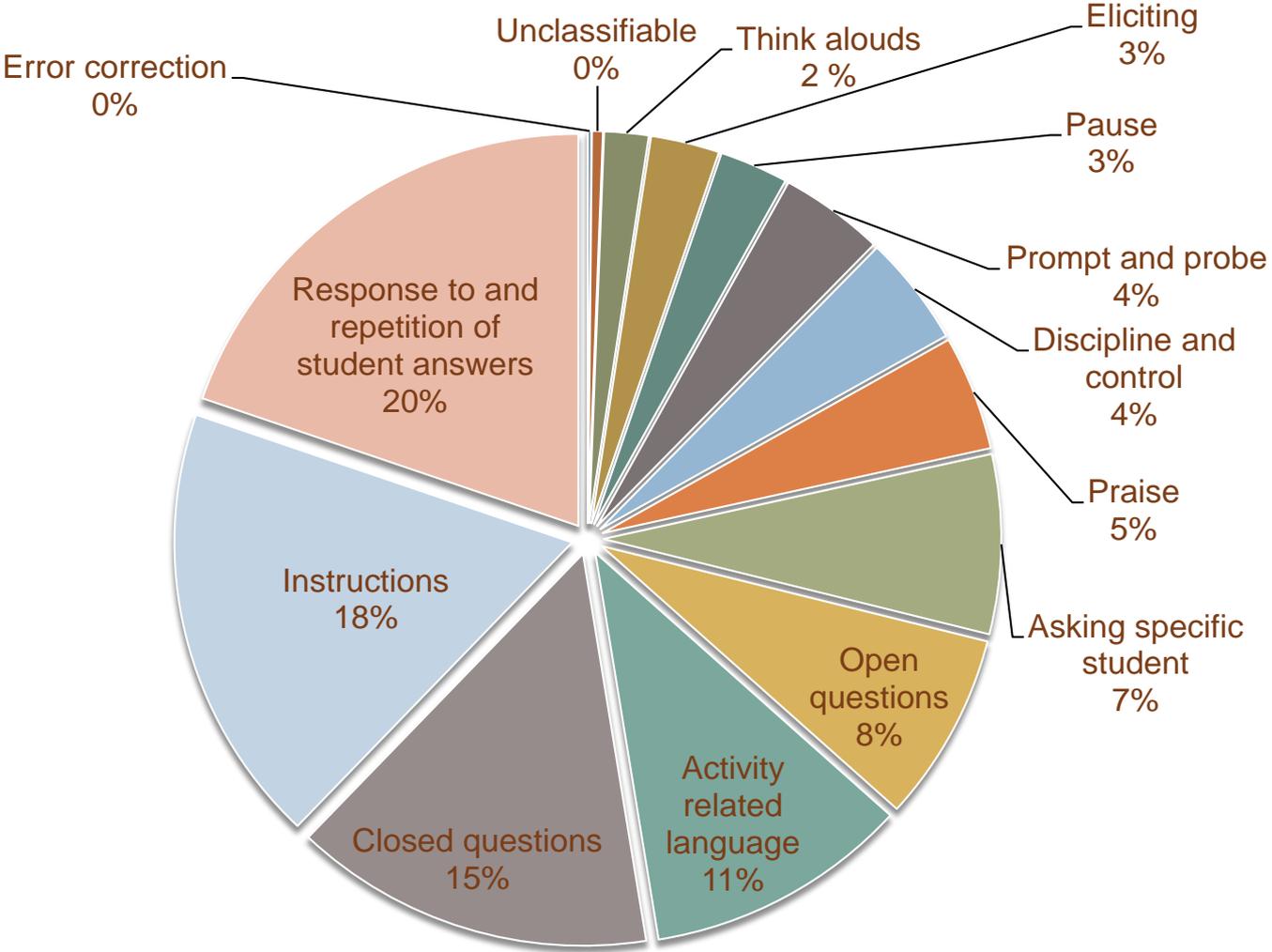
What types of language, strategies and techniques were seen during lesson observations?

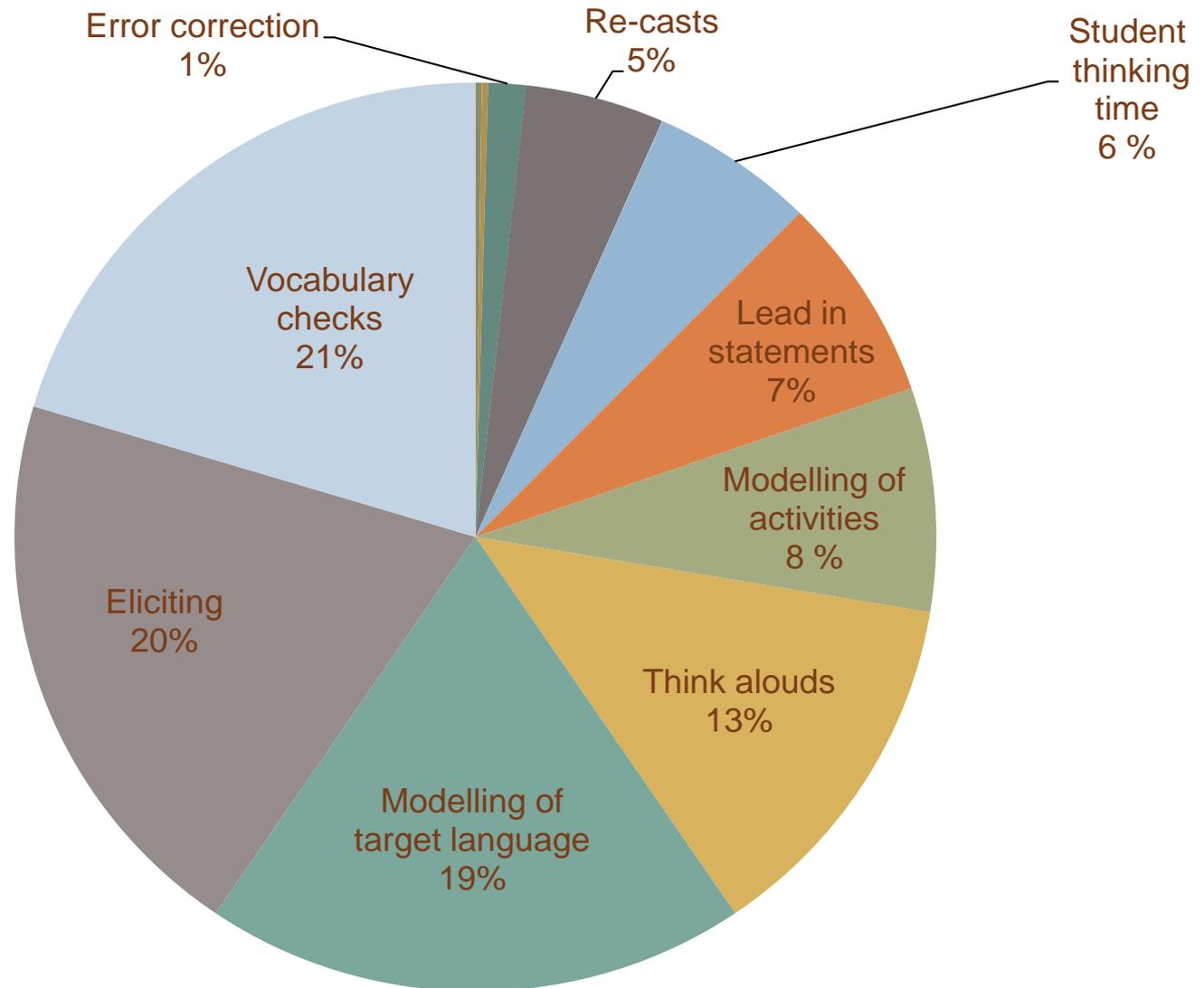
Types of Language Used During Lesson Observations

What do you see?

What do you think is going on?

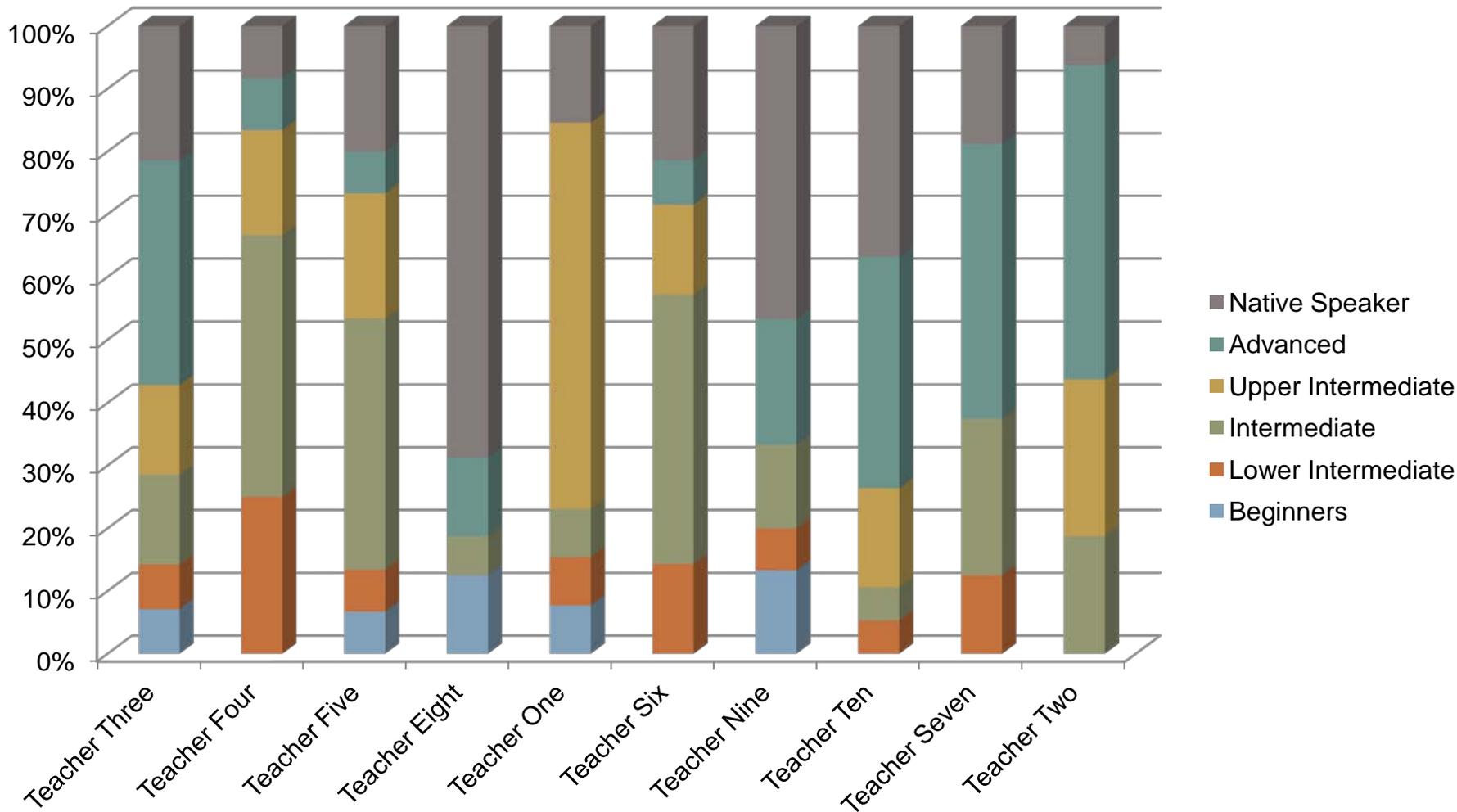
What does it make you wonder?





Language Teaching Strategies and Techniques Used During Lesson Observation

Levels of Student Language in the Language of Instruction in Participant's Classes



Strategies and Techniques for Aiding Comprehension

Finding out what students know

Enables teachers to see what prior knowledge students have and their conceptual understanding. Teachers used these strategies:

- ✓ Graphic organisers
- ✓ Questions
- ✓ Discussion

Content, vocabulary and instruction checks

Helps a teacher to see how much learners have recalled from discussion, instructions or previous lessons. Teachers used:

- ✓ questions
- ✓ Checklists
- ✓ discussion
- ✓ bilingual dictionaries
- ✓ Pictures, diagrams, and realia

Vocabulary Check Example

- 8.52 Teacher Six Impressive. What does that actually mean?
- 8.55 Student 1 Like incredible.
- 8.57 Teacher Six Impressive
- 9.04 Student 1 Like it's incredible. It's very, very impressive. If it was very cool, if it was...
- 9.10 Student 2 (interrupting)...and ah, and ah, and impressive also means um incredible.
- 9.16 Teacher Six Okay, I think the real, the real meaning of that word, it means, it makes a very big impact on you. It really makes you think about it.

(Impressive: if something is impressive you admire it, for example because it is very good, or large or shows great skill)

Strategies and Techniques for Aiding Comprehension

Modelling Activities

The use of live demonstrations and the presentation of examples of other student's work.

Thinking Time

Providing opportunities for students to think about questions after they have been asked before attempting to answer them.

Negotiating Meaning

This is a strategy between speakers who adjust their speech and use other techniques to repair a breakdown in communication (Lightbown and Spada 2006).

23.46 Student Three That he used <8 more understanding words.

23.58 Teacher Two Okay. I think I understand what you mean. The bit that Student Three is pointing out is this bit... So the words that the words he has used, he has obviously thought about and it makes it um, I think, do you mean it is better for the reader? (Looks at Student Three who nods)

What did participants identify as language teacher training?

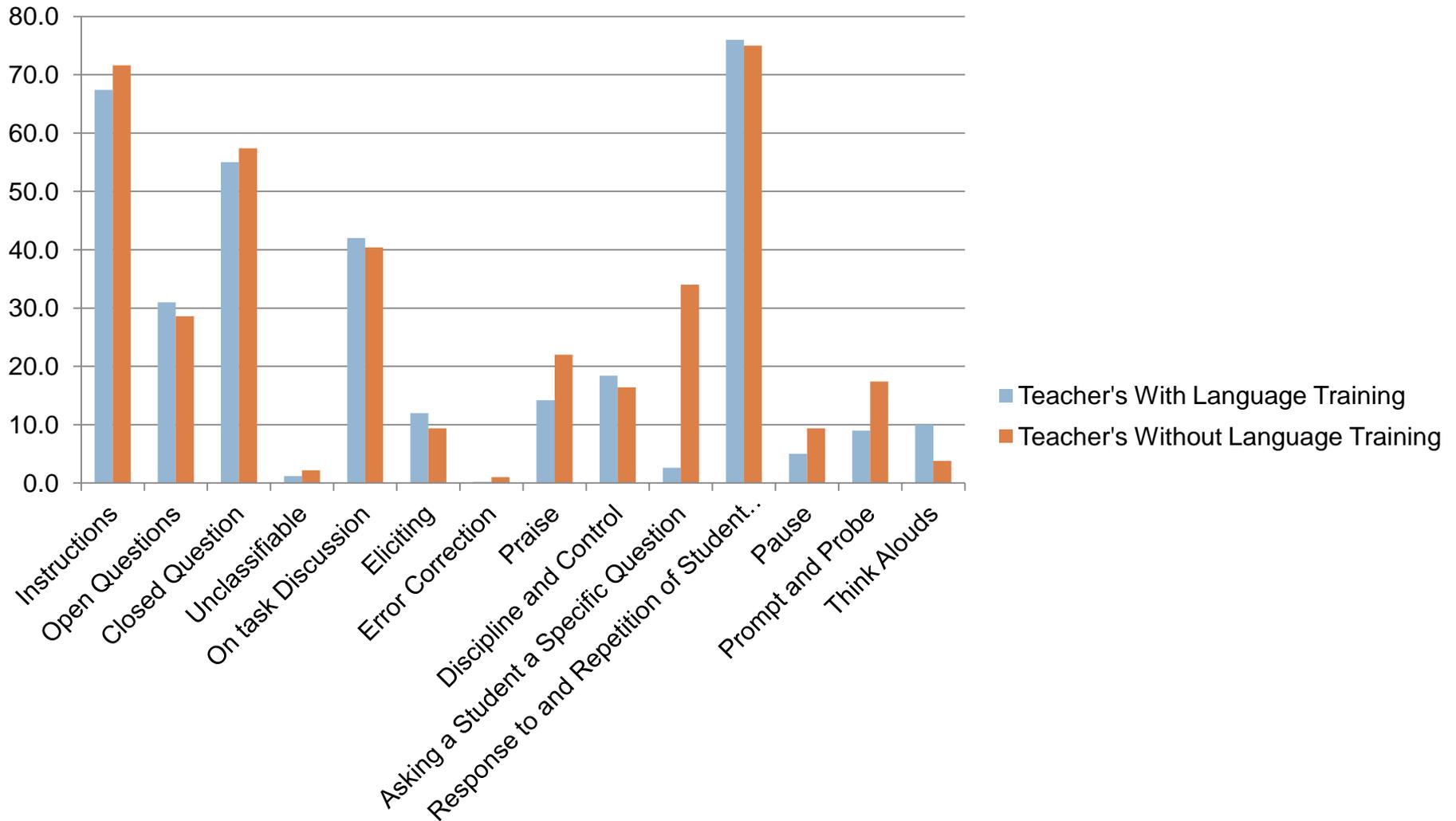
Teaching of English Courses

- English in the Mainstream
- Certificate in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (CELTA)
- English as a Second Language paper at University
- Reading and Writing through Inquiry Workshop

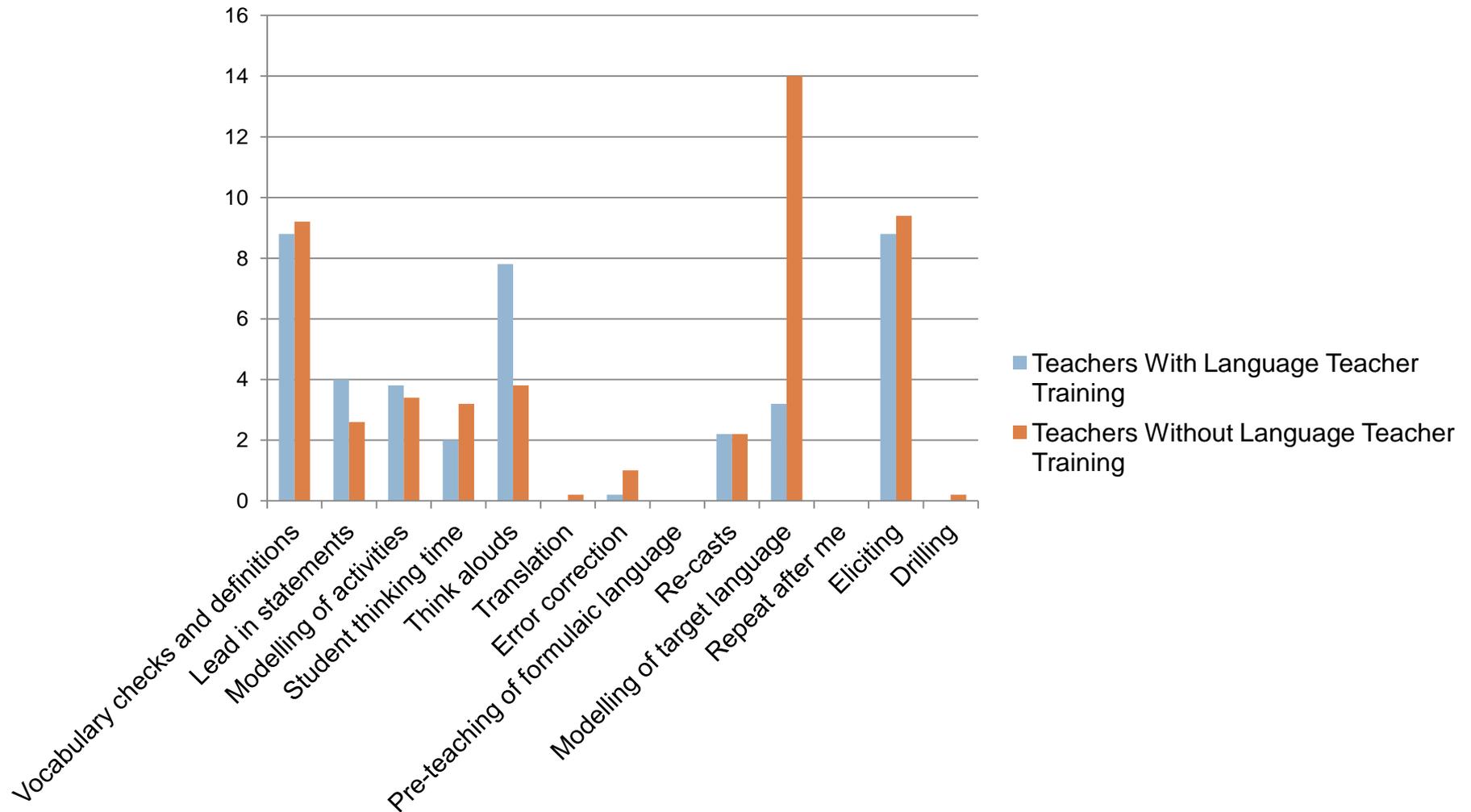
Language Training Courses

- First Steps

Comparison of Averages of Teacher Language Use Between Teacher's with Language Training and Teacher's Without



Comparison of Average Language Teaching Strategy and Technique Use Between Teachers with/without Language Teacher Training



Techniques and Strategies for Modelling Language

Elaborated Input

Elaborated input contains redundant information, the redundancy being achieved through:

- ✓ Repetition
- ✓ Paraphrasing
- ✓ Slower speech

Think Alouds

The offering of a teacher's inner dialogue or opinions out loud for students to hear their thoughts, ideas and to model the world as we understand it in words.

Questions and statements to use might be:

- ✓ What am I going to do now?
- ✓ What is my problem?
- ✓ I wonder what would happen if...

Think Aloud Example

- 16.12 Teacher Four I just wrote all the things that I could see. Boom, boom, boom, boom and then I thought about what I could hear. I could see that the man has got this big saw, do you know those saws that cut down the trees, it's an electric saw. And have you ever heard an electric saw?
- 16.30 Class Yeah
- 16.31 Teacher Four They're really noisy, so I thought I should write down that I could hear the electric saw. I think that the birds, I thought...
- 16.38 Student ? Screech!
- 16.38 Teacher Four Yes, I think that they are screeching because they are scared of the noise of the saw so they go, agh, agh, agh! And screech is a good word to describe that so I thought the birds are screeching and the river, there is actually a river there...
- 16.51 Student ? Bubbling, bubbling..
- 16.52 Teacher Four And I thought it was bubbling.

Techniques and Strategies for Modelling Language

Response to and Repetition of Student Answers

Responding to and repeating a student answer can provide a teacher with the opportunity to model pronunciation, stress of language and extend student answers beyond one or two words.

Example:

Teacher One has asked the class, *The third unit, does anybody remember what it was about?*

2.37 Teacher One Student Eleven?

2.38 Student Eleven Landforms.

2.39 Teacher One It was about landforms but a little more. Student Nine?

2.43 Student Nine Mountains.

2.44 Teacher One It was about mountains. That's a kind of landform. Student Twelve?

2.46 Student Twelve It was about how our Earth works.

Techniques and Strategies for Modelling Language

Error Correction

Corrective feedback of grammar or pronunciation errors should be provided in a clear and precise way without overtly calling attention to the error.

For example:

23.04	Student Two	I did choose caring.
23.06	Teacher One	Pardon, pardon?
23.08	Student Two	I did caring either.
23.09	Teacher One	You did caring as well .
23.11	Student Two	Ah ha.

Techniques and Strategies for Modelling Language

Recasts

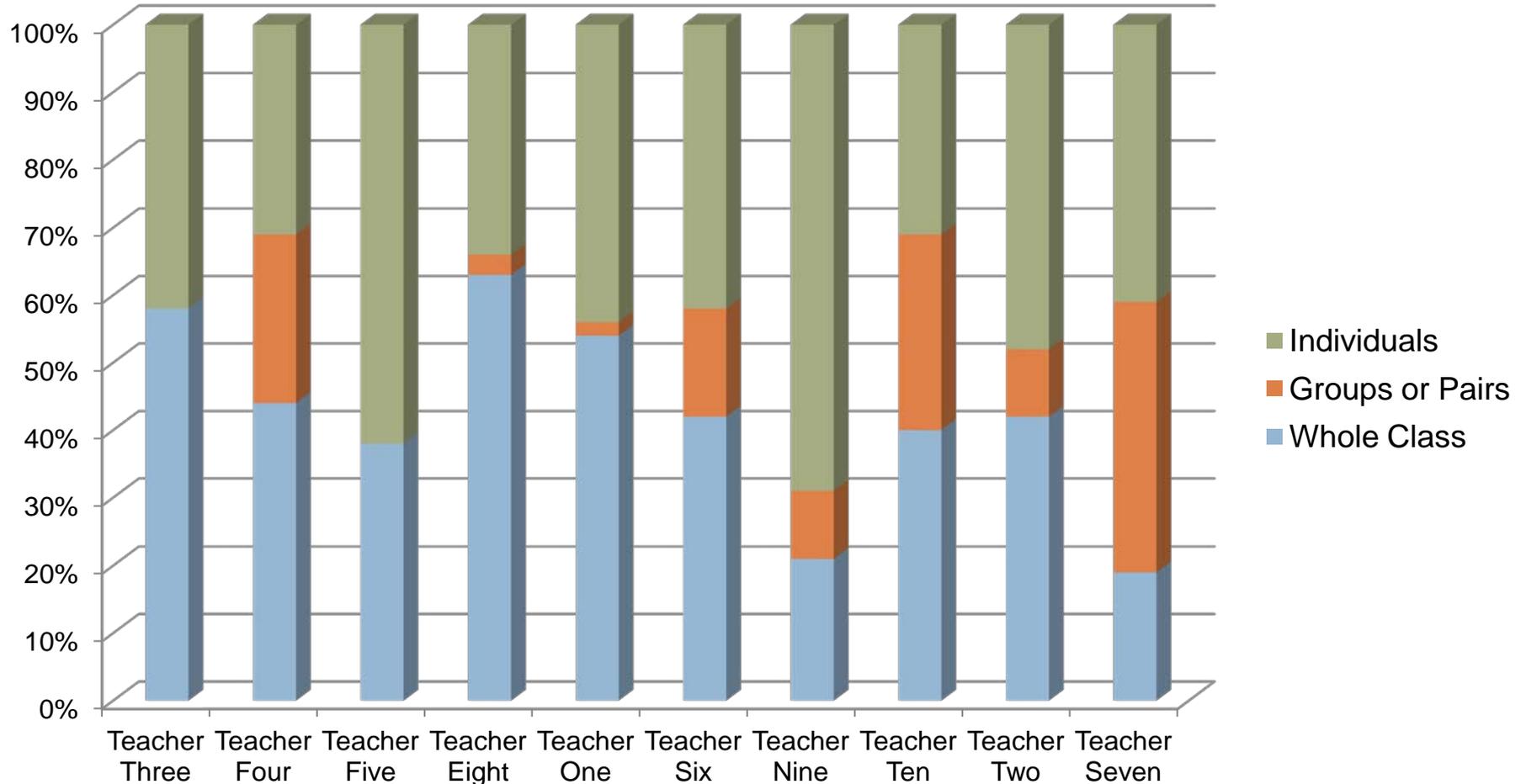
A recast is the repetition of a student's utterance making changes to convert it to a correct phrase or sentence (Lightbown and Spada 2006).

For example:

18:44 Student Eight The trees are cutting down and ah, for another house.

18:47 Teacher Four Excellent, Student Eight. They're cutting down the trees and they are going to build a new house.

Types of Interactions during the Lesson between the Teacher and Students



Strategies for Increasing Student Talk Time

Directing Specific Questions to Individual Students

Asking questions directed to individual students helps to:

- ✓ Develop an individual's language skills
- ✓ Ensure all learners are given the opportunity to respond
- ✓ Keep learners alert and tuned in
- ✓ Distribute responses in teacher fronted interactions

Incorporate Small Group and Pair Work in Lessons

Provides students with opportunities to:

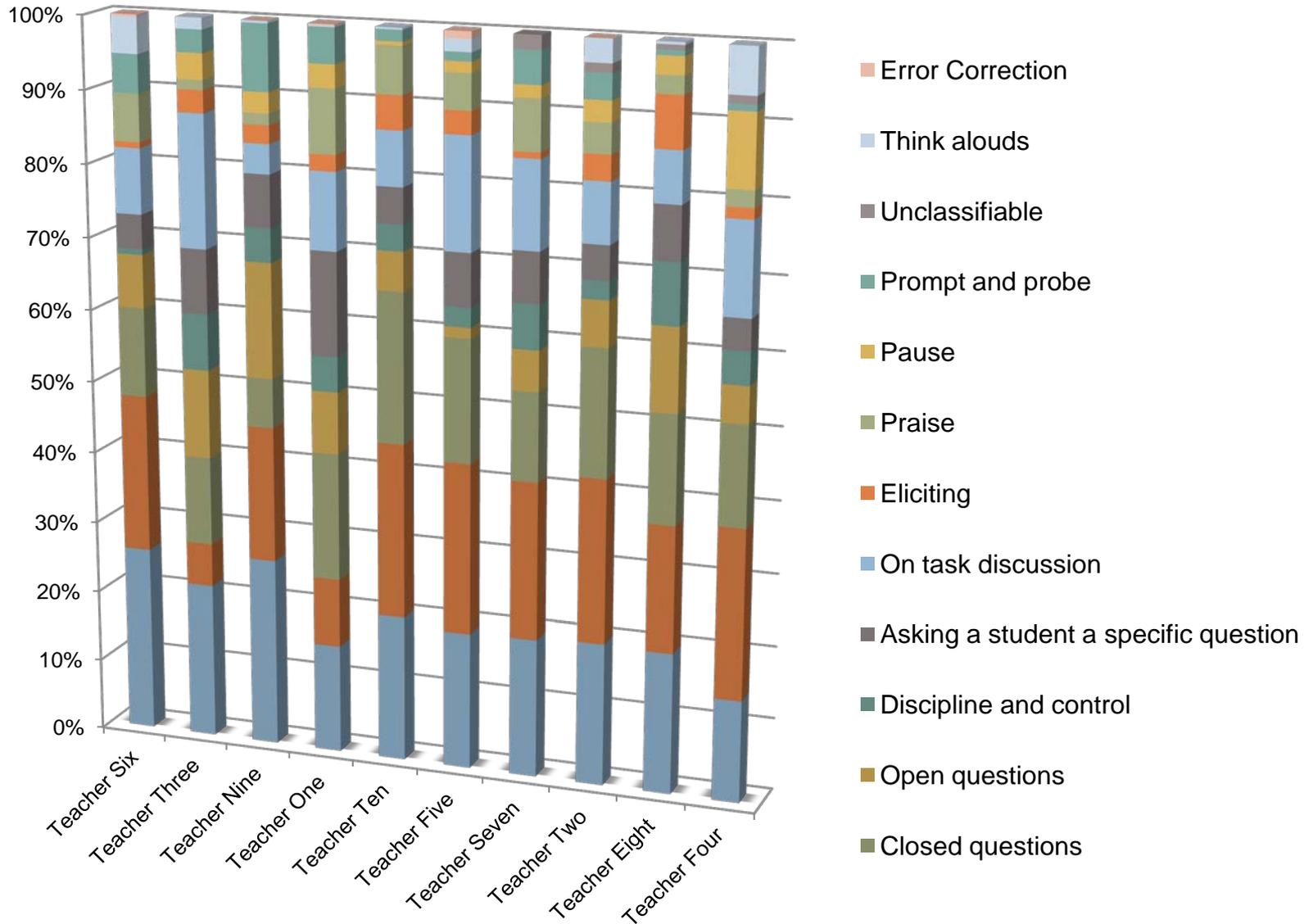
- ✓ Use considerably more language
- ✓ Exploit a greater range of language functions
- ✓ Hear language from different sources i.e. Not just the teacher
- ✓ Possibly reduce learner anxiety related to attempting the target language

Think, Pair, Share

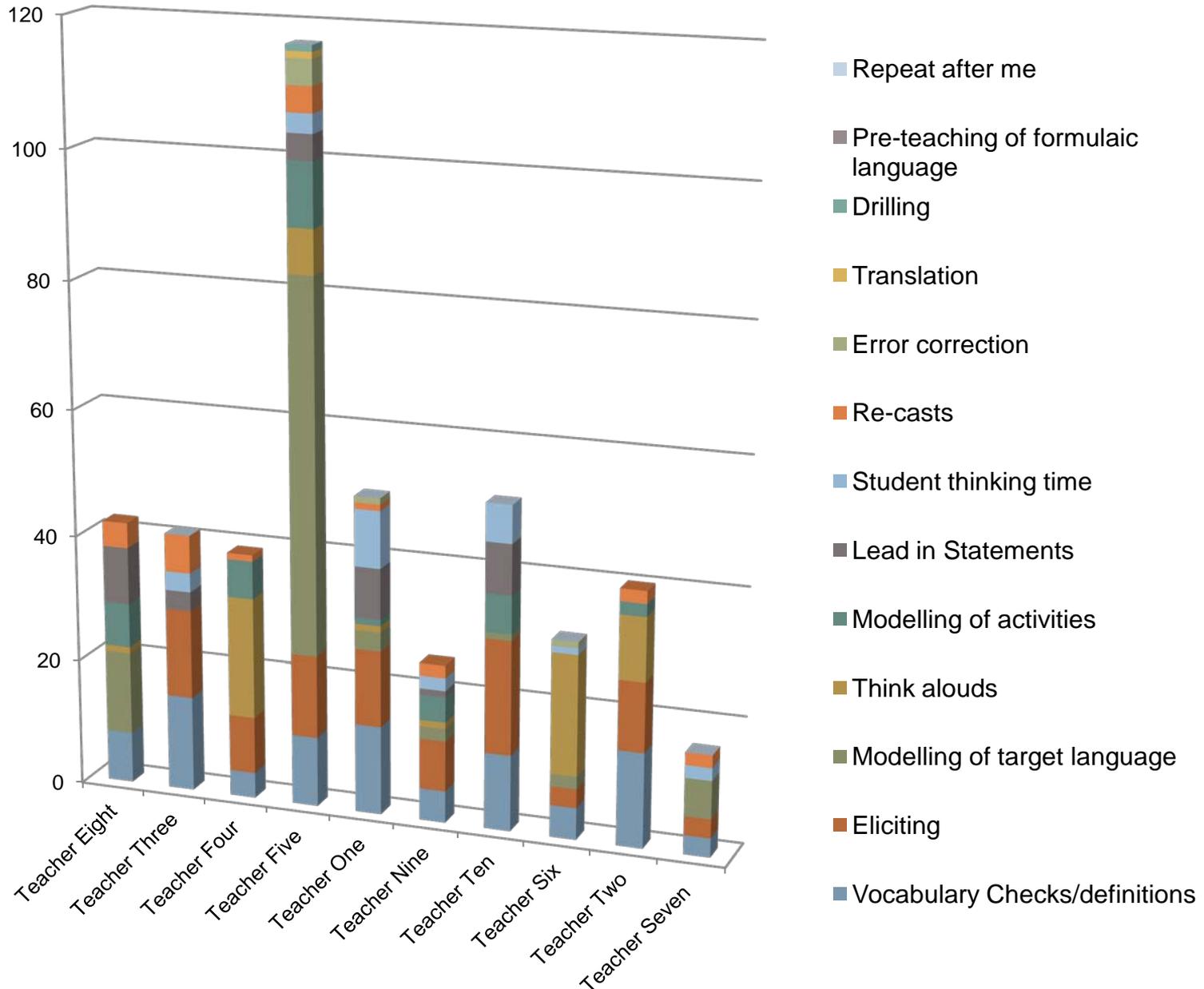
Analysis

Possible Factors for Specific Types of Language Use and Choice of Strategy and Techniques Employed By Teachers

Types of Language Used - Teacher Comparisons of the number of instances observed during lesson observations



Strategies and Techniques Used - Teacher Comparisons of the number of instances observed during lesson observations



***Meaningful and real
life contexts should
be used***

***Language needs to be
modelled and reinforced
by the teacher***

Teacher Belief's

***Language needs to
be scaffolded and
ideas elicited from
students***

***Students need to be
exposed to a variety
of activities***

Recommendations

The following strategies and techniques could be incorporated more into lessons by teachers to further improve the language support given to learners:

- ***Thinking Time***
- ***Elaborated input***
- ***Re-casts***
- ***Questioning***
- ***Increase of student to student verbal interaction***

Headline

Pausing after asking a question improves quality of answers.

Further Reading

- International Baccalaureate Organization (2008) *Learning in a Language other than Mother Tongue in IB Programmes*
- Fisher, R. (2005) *Teaching Children to Learn*
- Herrell, A. and Jordan, M. (2004) *Fifty Strategies for Teaching English Language Learners.*
- Hill, J. and Flynn, K. (2006) *Classroom Instruction that Works with English Language Learners.*
- Lightbown, P. and Spada, N. (2006) *How Languages are Learned.*
- Ritchhart, R., Church, M. and Morrison, K (2011) *Making Thinking Visible- How to Promote Engagement, Understanding, and Independence for All Learners.*

Further Information

- Jeff Thompson Award Completed Studies

<http://www.ibo.org/research/resources/jeffthompon/jtwinners/index.cfm>

- natascha.hoff@kischool.org