



THE HONG KONG
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Assessing programme intended learning outcomes: the first year of an undergraduate programme

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Definition of OBE

- ◆ [a process] clearly focusing and organizing everything in an educational system around what is essential for all students to be able to do successfully at the end of their learning experiences.
- ◆ This means starting with a clear picture of what is important for students to be able to do, then organizing the curriculum, instruction and assessment to make sure this learning ultimately happens (Spady, 1994, p. 1).

Fundamental principles were identified in Spady's guiding text, *Paradigm Lost* (1998):

- ◆ begin with the end (outcome) in mind
- ◆ individual schools design a curriculum around predetermined outcomes
- ◆ comparing students' performances is educationally counter-productive
- ◆ all learning should be calibrated so as to allow for individual success
- ◆ process is at least as (if not more) important as product
- ◆ the importance of 'me' is emphasized in the process...

Features of OBE

- ◆ DeJager and Nieuwenhuis (2005) defined outcome-based education as a **learner-centred, results-oriented approach** to education premised on the expectation that **all learners can learn and succeed**.
- ◆ It is a method of curriculum design and teaching that focuses on **what students can actually do after they are taught**

What to ask when we design OBE?

- ◆ Four key questions are formulated for implementing OBE (Acharya, 2003):
 - ◆ What do you want the students to learn?
 - ◆ Why do you want them to learn it?
 - ◆ How can you best help students learn it?
 - ◆ How will you know what they have learnt?

Content-based education	Outcomes-based education
Passive learners	Active learners
Examination driven	Continuous assessment
Content-based syllabus	An integration of knowledge
Textbook and lecturer centred	Learner centred
Syllabus is rigid	Lecturers can be innovative and creative
Lecturers responsible for learning	Learners responsible for their own learning
Emphasis on what lecturer hopes to achieve	Emphasis on outcomes
Content placed into rigid time frames	Flexible time frames; learner determines pace
Rote learning	Critical thinking, reasoning and action

Table1 Comparison between a traditional content-based education system and an outcomes-based education system (National Department of Education, 1997)

Three types of OBE

- ◆ Three broad types of OBE were categorized by Spady and Marshall (1991) and summarised by Forster (1996):
 1. The **'traditional'** outcome-based education builds on... the development of desired learning outcomes **within pre-existing subject content** (p.90).

Three types of OBE

2. The **'transitional approach'** ...sets out the outcomes that will be required by students when they graduate (exit outcomes) and stresses higher-level competencies such as critical thinking and complex problem solving (p.90).
3. The **'transformational'** outcome-based education [is]... also concerned with exit outcomes of students but defines these in terms of complex role performances that are grounded in real-world contexts (p.91).

Three types of OBE

- ◆ If schools and systems only apply the first two types of OBE, little will be changed (Alderson and Martin, 2007)



OBE experiences in other countries

- ◆ OBE has been adopted by education and training systems in a number of countries around the world, including the Australia, United Kingdom, New Zealand, South Africa and United States (Aldridge et al., 2006).
- ◆ **USA:** since late 1970s, implemented in some states and abandoned in other states
- ◆ **Australia:** starts working with OBE in 1994
- ◆ Commonality of USA & Australia: standardized tests

OBE experiences in other countries

- ◆ **New Zealand:** The curriculum included the OBE approach in 1993 (Ministry of Education, 1993)
- ◆ **UK:** moved to outcome-based education in 1997 (Harden et al.1999)
- ◆ **Singapore:** the new Singapore Syllabus (2001) adopted the concept of OBE
- ◆ **South Africa:** An OBE-based curriculum was launched in 2005 with high expectations.

The Undergraduate Programme Concerned

- ◆ **BA (Hons) in English Studies for the Professions**
 - ◆ **(BAESP)**

◆ **Department of English**

- ◆ **The Hong Kong Polytechnic University**



Programme ILOs: Category A

Professional/academic knowledge and skills

The programme aims to produce graduates:

- ◆ who possess a high level of professional communicative competence in English;
- ◆ who have a firm grounding in language studies which can be critically and creatively applied in a variety of business and management contexts;
- ◆ who have an awareness and understanding of intercultural communication in multilingual settings that enhances their global outlook and cultural appreciation;
- ◆ who are able to apply their strong communication skills to solving real-world problems effectively in local and global multilingual professional/business settings.

Programme ILOs: Category B

Attributes for all-roundedness

- ◆ who are capable of exercising **judgment** and developing **intellectual curiosity** to work both **independently** and as part of a **team**;
- ◆ whose understanding of the language situation in Hong Kong and the rest of China enhances their sense of **social and national responsibility**;
- ◆ who are aware of the benefits afforded by **information technology** both to their studies and their future careers;
- ◆ who are aware of the need for and are committed to **life-long learning**;
- ◆ who will have the potential to become **future leaders** and **entrepreneurs** excelling in **communication for professional purposes**.

Types of OBA in the BAESP LOAP

Direct Evidence

1. Course-embedded assessments
2. Capstone projects
3. Graduating Students' Language Proficiency Assessments (Spoken English, Written English, Written Chinese and Putonghua)

Indirect Evidence

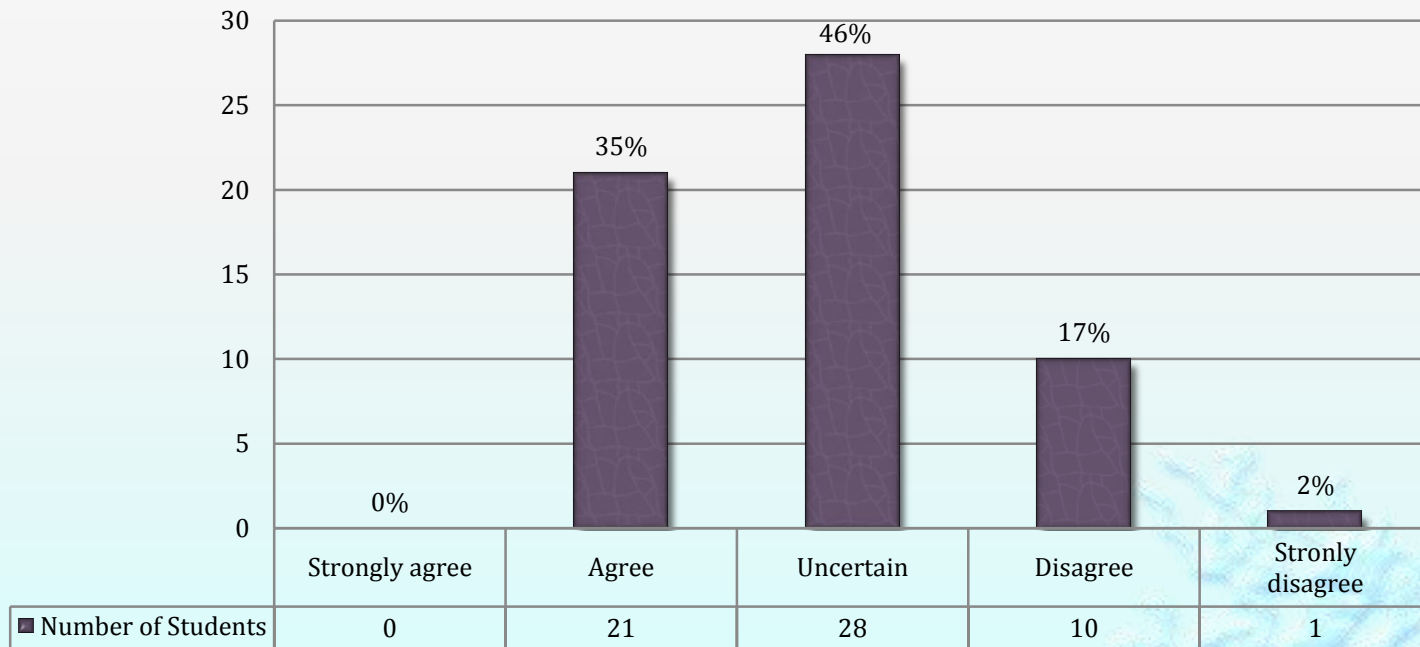
1. Entry and exit surveys
2. Alumni surveys

Today's Sharing: Entry Survey

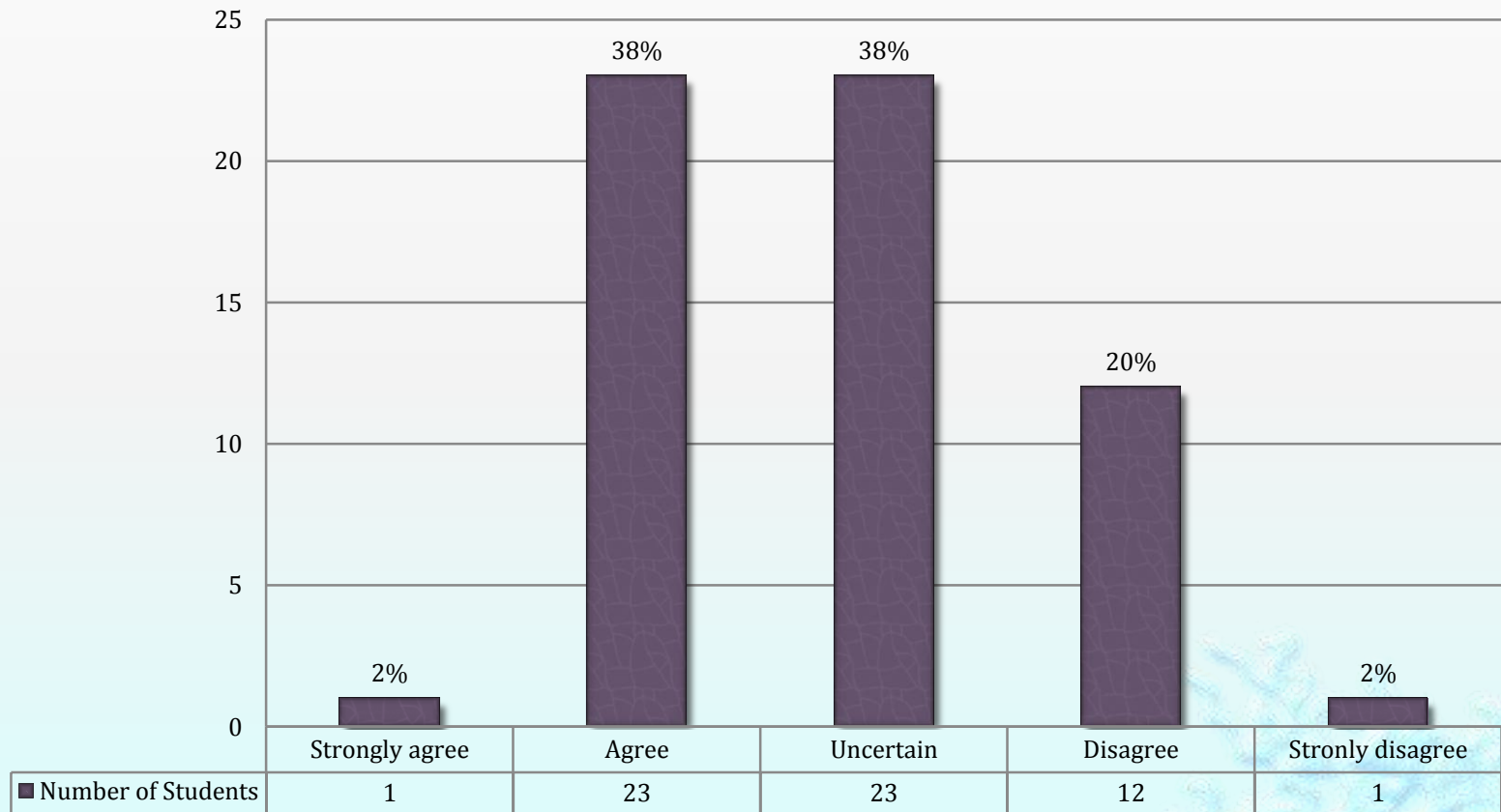
- ◆ Online questionnaire survey administered at the beginning of Semester 1
- ◆ Purposes:
 - ◆ To collect baseline data upon students' entry into the programme
 - ◆ To understand our students better
 - ◆ For future comparisons with exit survey data

Results for Category A ILOs

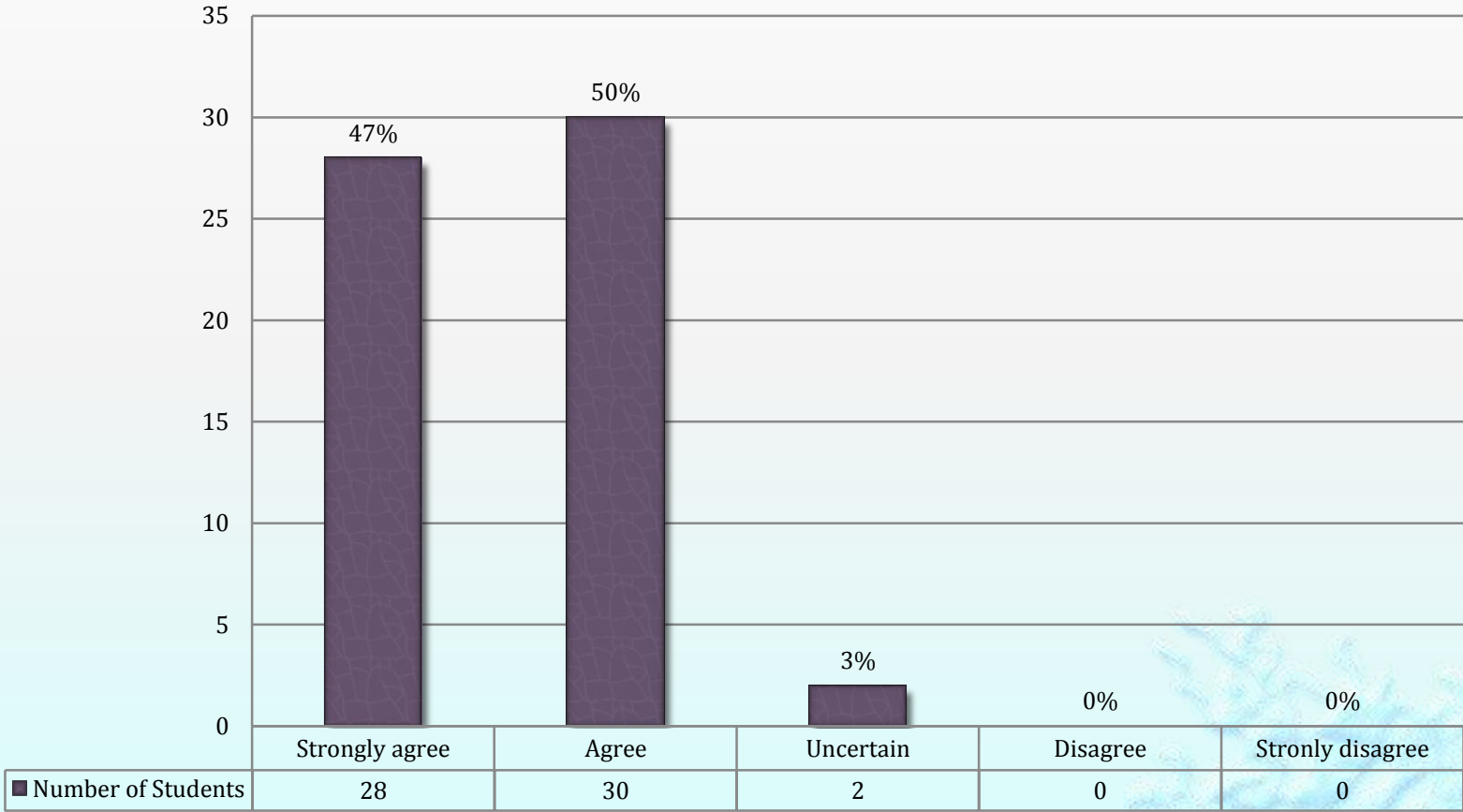
Q1. I have sufficient knowledge foundation in language studies which can be critically applied in a variety of business and management contexts.



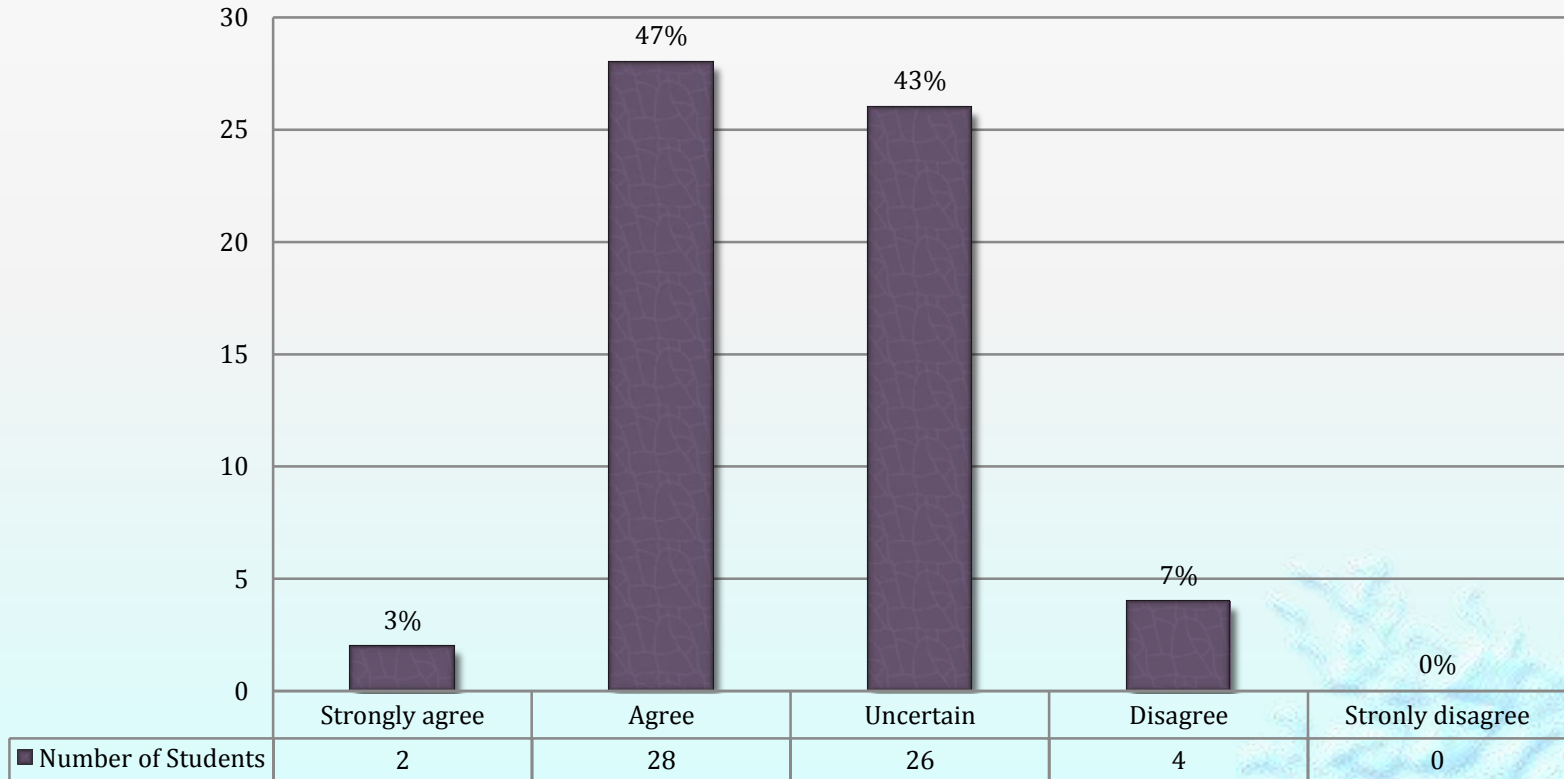
Q2.I have sufficient knowledge foundation in language studies which can be creatively applied in a variety of business and management contexts.



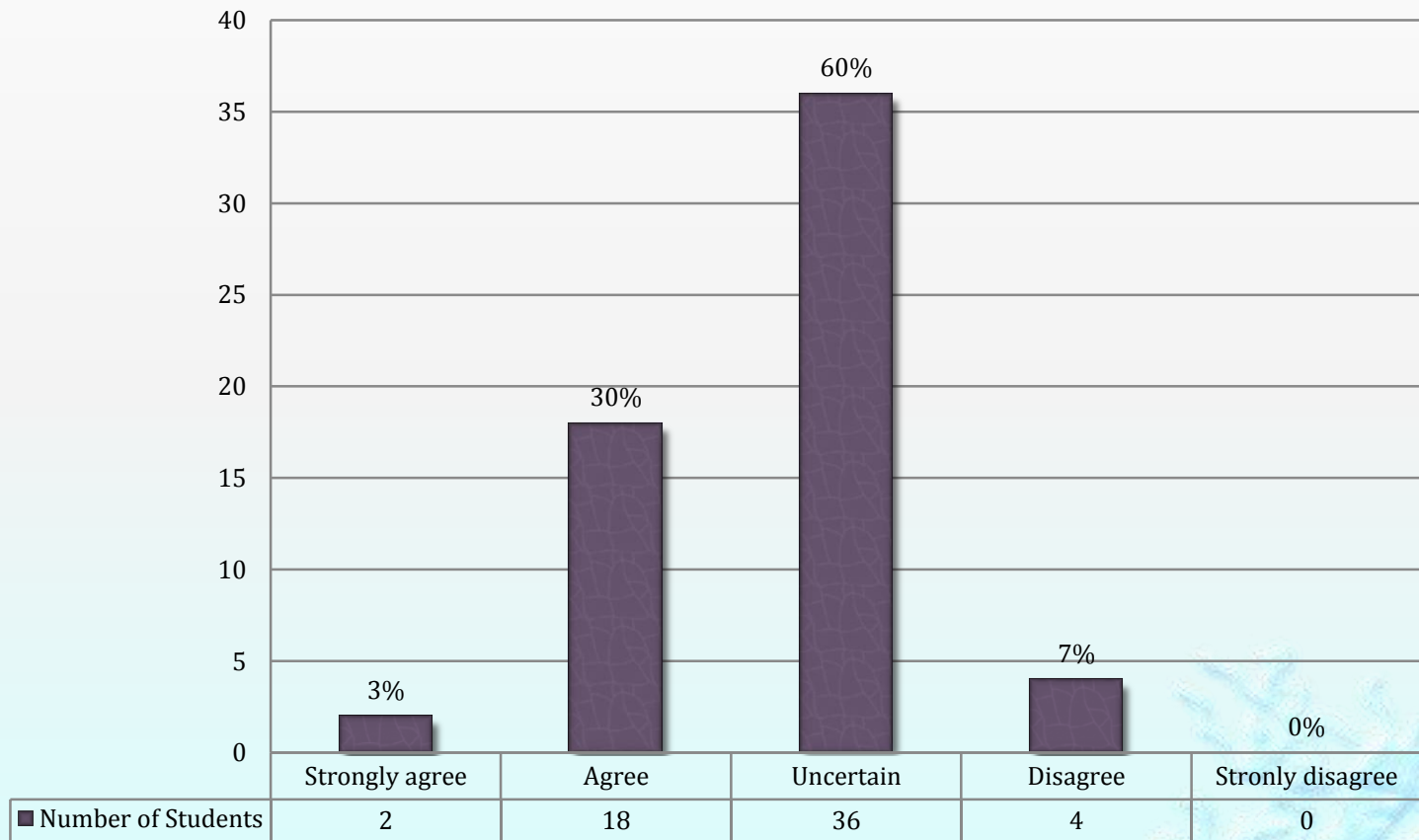
Q3. Intercultural communication in multilingual settings can enhance our global outlook and cultural appreciation.



Q4. I am able to apply my communication skills to solving real world problems in local professional/business settings.



Q5. I am able to apply my communication skills to solving real world problems in global multilingual professional/business settings.

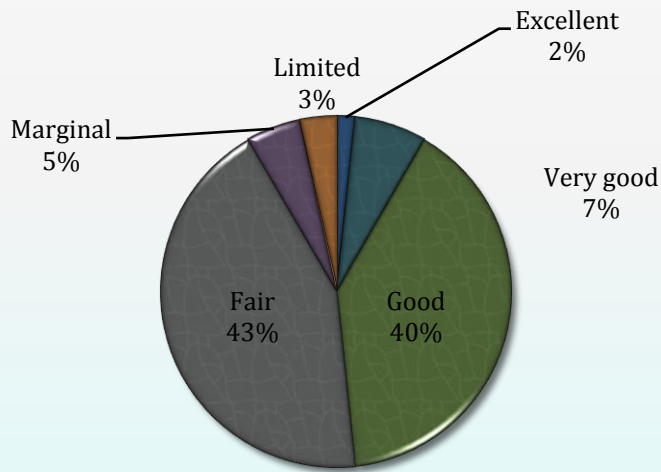


Q6. What is your understanding of professional communicative competence in English?

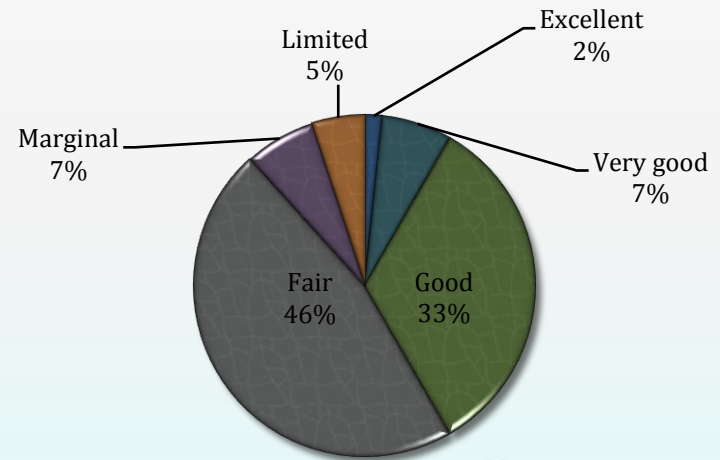
- ◆ *Very fluent English in both writing and speaking. With only little grammatical mistakes. Feel Confident when speaking English in front of others.*
- ◆ *A speaker's internalized knowledge both of the grammatical rules of a language and of the rules for appropriate use in social contexts.*
- ◆ *As a global lingua franca, English is an important tool for us in communicating with others and dealing with all kinds of situations.*

Q7. How would you rate your level of professional communicative competence in English?

Written:



Oral:



Q20 What do you expect to get from the BAESP programme when you graduate?

- ◆ *I expect to have good ability in written and spoken English. I want to be well-equipped with some business knowledge and the quality of leadership.*
- ◆ *I hope I can be a language professional and acquire sufficient knowledge to deal with the problems I will face.*
- ◆ *The ability to use English as a tool in my career where it can help me to get further from where I stand.*
- ◆ *I hope I will be able to utilize most of the theories and knowledge I acquire from BAESP in my working area.*

Implications

- ◆ Implication for understanding the profile of our students
- ◆ Implication for designing the exit survey
- ◆ Same or different types of question?

Thank You.

