

Chapter VI: Students' Questionnaire Results and Analysis

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Introduction

This chapter deals with the analysis of the students questionnaire. The aim of the learners' questionnaire is to obtain data regarding the students' learning preferences, and their motivation for studying English as well as their attitudes towards its culture.

The data gathered will be presented in the form of tables including the number and percentage of respondents followed by a discussion of the findings for each item.

IV.1. Administration of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was administered to second year literary stream learners at three secondary schools in Kais during May 2007. Their exact number is 132 divided out to four groups. During the administration of the questionnaire 12 students were absent; thus, the number of copies collected was 120.

The questionnaires were directly distributed to students by the researcher and were filled in during both English and French classes.

The students received oral instructions from the author about how to complete the questionnaire, and were provided with clarification of any items they did not understand.

The task took 45 minutes for the students to complete the questionnaire in addition to 15 minutes for initial explanation, which was the length of one class time.

VI.2. Description of Students Questionnaire

The students questionnaire is designed to obtain data concerning the students opinions about the learning situation, their attitudes towards studying English as well as its culture.

The questionnaire is made of eighteen items . The types of questions are mainly closed ended (either yes/no questions or multiple choice questions) , only two open ended questions were included. The reason behind this is to facilitate the task for students using a pre-formulated responses because students may fail to express themselves using the target language as well as to elicit more precise responses.

The items in the questionnaire were organized in three sections .

Each section is intended to elicit a set of information . Students' questionnaire includes some common items with the teachers . The aim is to compare both opinions concerning given facts that should be dealt with from both sides (teachers and students ones).

Section one: Background Information

This section provides background information about second year literary stream students, their age, their sex, as well as their choice of literary stream .

Section Two : Learning English as a Foreign Language in the Secondary School

This section is made of ten items numbered from one to ten. It seeks to investigate the learners' opinions about the current situation of teaching/learning English as a foreign language .

The focus in this section is made on the following :

- Whether students like English (item one) .
- How important students think about the learning of English for them. (item two) , students are asked also to justify their answers .
- What are the skills students think most important for them to use in the future (item three) .
- What they prefer doing in the class (item four).

- When it is difficult for them to express themselves in the target language whether orally in writing (item five). Students are asked to justify their answer.
- How they prefer contacting a friend from an English speaking country: by calling him on the phone or writing for him e-mails (item six).
- What are the activities currently used during English lessons(item seven).
- Whether they find it important to communicate in English (item eight) and what extent current classroom activities help them to communicate in real-life situation (item nine)
- The difficulties they face when communicating (item ten).

Section Three : Learning English Language Culture in the Secondary School

This section contains five items numbered from one to five .It is set to find out the learners' opinions about the teaching/learning of culture in English lessons.

The focus is made on the following :

- How important students consider the learning of culture during English lessons (item one) .
- Whether they are interested to know more about English speaking countries (item two) .
- To what extent the current classroom activities offer them opportunities to learn about the English culture (item three).
- The activities they consider most useful for them to understand the target culture (item four) .
- In item five students are asked to suggest any activities or topics they think useful for learning more about English culture.

VI.4Data Collection and Analysis

Data obtained from the students' questionnaire is presented in tables including the number and percentage of respondents for each item .All the tables are presented by a number and a title representing the questions in order.

VI.5. Analysis of the Results

Item One : Age

Age	Number of students	Percentage
16	10	8,33%
17	75	62,5%
18	35	29,17%
total	120	100%

Table n° 27: Students' Age Distribution.

From the table above , students' age ranges between 16, 17 and 18 years old. The majority of them (62,5%) are 17 years old which is the expected age of second year secondary school students . However, 35 (29,17%) students are 18 years old which means they have repeated the year. This reflects a considerable rate of students with a low level . Only (8,33%) of students are 16 years old which is under the expected age of second year students .

Item Two : Gender

	Number of students	Percentage
Male	18	15%
Female	102	85%
total	120	100%

Table n°28: Students' Gender

The investigated population is characterized by a female over representation This is clearly apparent from the table above only (15%) of students are males and the remaining respondents are females 102 (85%). Generally speaking , girls are more interested to be enrolled in literary stream classes than boys who prefer technical branches . This is may be due to the subject matters dealt with in the literary stream .

Item Three : Your choice to be enrolled In the literary stream was

Responses	Participants	Percentage
Personal	75	62,5%
Imposed by parents	12	10%
Imposed by the administration	33	27,5%
Total	120	100%

Table n° 29: Students' Choice to be Enrolled in the Literary Stream.

Overwhelmingly , a high rate of students (62,5%) preferred studying in the literary stream arguing that their choice was personal . On the other hand, (37,5 %) of students declared that they were obliged to be enrolled in the literary stream either by the administration (27,5 %) because of having low marks in scientific matters or by parental obligation (10%).

Section II : Learning English at secondary school .**Item One: Do you like learning English ?**

	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	108	90%
No	12	10%
total	120	100%

Table n° 30: Students' Attitudes Towards Learning English .

Nearly the majority of students have positive attitude towards the question, this is quietly apparent from table n° 29, where (90%) of students declared they like English. Only (10%) of respondents said “no” and revealed their dislike to learn the language .

Item Two: Do you think learning English is important for you ? Would you explain why ?

	Number of students	Percentage
Very important	21	17,5%
Important	87	72,5%
Not important	10	8,33%
Don't know	2	1,66%
total	120	100%

Table n° 31: Students' Evaluation of Learning English in Terms of Importance .

A high proportion of students (72,5%) are interested in learning English and think it is “ important ”. Furthermore, (17,5%) of students mention that it is “very important” , this was expected from their responses to the previous question . The (9,99%) remaining students responses range between those who see it is not important at all (8,33 %) and those who have adopted “ don't know response”.

Students' Justifications

Students' reasons		Number of students	Percentage
Very important	-Because I think it will be useful in getting a good job in the future . -It will be useful to access more information on the net.	21	17,5%
Important	-It is useful in doing my research. -It helps me to appreciate and understand movies and songs. -Because I need it for my future career .	87	72,5%
Not important	-I don't use it in my daily life. -I find it difficult.	10	8,33%
Don't know	No reasons are given.	2	1,66%
Total		120	100%

Table n° 32: Students' Justifications of their Responses Concerning the Importance to Learn English.

Item Tree: Rank the skills you think most important for you (put n° 1-4)

Rank	First	Second	Third	Fourth
Skill	Writing	speaking	reading	Listening
Participants	60	25	20	15
Percentage	50%	20,83%	16,66%	12,5%

Table n° 33: Students' Ranking of Language Four Skills in Terms of Importance

Not far from the teachers' responses, half of the students (50%) agreed that the writing skill is the most important and classified it in the first position . This was expected as students rely on this skill to perform in their exams .

According to (20,83%) of students speaking comes in the second rank , which is not the case for teachers who classified it in the third position after reading.

Reading comes next with a proportion of (16,66%). However , listening is classified by both students and teachers in the fourth position.

Item Four: In the classroom do you :

Responses	Participants	Percentage
Participate a lot	07	5,83%
Participate only when the teacher asks you	73	60,83%
Prefer listening to others(teacher/classmates)	40	33,33%
Total	120	100%

Table n° 34: Students Real Participation in the Classroom.

Students' responses to this item vary to include (60,83%) of them who declared their participation in classroom only when asked by the teacher. Moreover, (33,33%) of students prefer listening either to their teacher or to their classmates than speaking. Only (5,83%) of students like to participate a lot during English lessons. This indicates that the majority of students adopt a passive learning style.

Item Five: When is it difficult for you to express yourself in English ?Justify .

	Number of students	Percentage
Orally	48	40%
In writing	35	29,17%
Both	37	30,83%
Total	120	100%

Table n° 35: Students' Area of Difficulty in Expressing Themselves Using English

The table above indicates that a high proportion of respondents find it difficult to express themselves orally (40%) .

(29,17%) of students revealed facing difficulty to use the writing skill for expressing themselves in English. Still a considerable proposition (30,83%) maintained facing difficulties to use the language in both written as well as spoken modes . As responses to the second part of the item, students gave the following justifications :

Students' Justifications

Modes	Student' justifications
Orally	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> _ My pronunciation is bad . _ I make a lot of grammatical mistakes . _ I don't find words . _ I'm afraid of being criticized by the teacher or my classmates .
In writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> _ Sometimes I have the idea but I can't express it in English . _ It is difficult to find vocabulary to speak about a specific topic . _ Punctuation problems / spelling problems . _ Bad hand writing .
Both of them	Students have justified their choice of this response by combining the different difficulties cited earlier .

Table n° 36: Students' Justification of their Inabilities to use English for Self expression .

Item Six: If you have a friend from an English speaking country. Do you prefer :

Options	Number of students	Percentage
Calling him on the phone	20	16,66%
Writing from him an e-mail /letter	89	74,17%
No answer	11	9,16%
Total	120	100%

Table n° 37: Students Preferred Way to Contact their Friend from an English Speaking Country.

According to the results shown above, nearly the majority of students (74,17%) prefer to contact their English friends through e-mails or letters. The reason behind this choice is probably due to the fact that students will have more time to express themselves, to check the appropriate words, and correct their mistakes, besides writing e-mails is cheaper than using the phone.

On the other hand, 20 students (16,66%) declared preferring contacting their English friends through the phone, may be due to their curiosity to experience direct contact with a native speaker.

The remaining 11 students (9,16%) have provided no answer probably, the idea of having a friend from an English speaking country seems to them out of their reach, in some cases they don't care

Item Seven: Do you find it important to communicate using English?

	Number of students	Percentage
Very important	45	37,5%
Important	65	54,17%
Not important	10	8,33%
Total	120	100%

Table n°38: Students' Evaluation of Communication Using English in Terms of Importance .

The above table reveals that a high rate of students (91,67%) find it important to use English for communication where (37,5%) among them see it very important .

The 10 remaining students (8,33%) responded negatively to the question as they see it not important at all .

Item Eight: Mark the activities usually used in your English lessons (students may choose more than one item .)

Activities	Number of students
Pair work dialogues	25
Listening to texts and comprehension check	39
Reading texts and comprehension check	57
Reading aloud dialogues, or texts in the text books .	35
Paragraph writing	42
Games: grammatical and vocabulary	00
Role plays	00
Telling a story	10
Group discussion and debating	00

Table n°39: Classroom Frequent Activities.

It is clearly apparent from the table n°38 results that the frequent classroom activities usually used in English lessons tend to develop the learners' four skills :

Writing : the main activity dealt with is : paragraph writing revealed to be used by 42 students .

Reading : its main activities are:

-Reading texts and comprehension check..

Listening: -Listening to texts and comprehension check.

Speaking: -Dialogues.

Item Nine: Do current classroom activities help you to communicate using English in real- life situation.

	Number of students	Percentage
Not at all	11	9,17%
Very little	52	43,33%
To some extent	47	39,17%
Very much	10	8,33%
Total	120	100%

Table n° 40: Students' Evaluation of Current Classroom Activities in Terms of Developing their Communicative Abilities.

Out of 120 students, 52 (43,33%) declared that current classroom activities do not contribute 'very much' in developing their communicative abilities. Moreover, (39,17%) of the respondents maintain that those activities do help them but just 'to a some extent'. Only 10 students (8,33%) see these activities as very useful in improving their communicative abilities .

A total negative reaction was presented by (9,17%) of students who adapted "not at all " response and expressed the usefulness of the current activities in dealing with communication.

Item Ten: Mark the difficulties you face in learning English as a foreign language at the secondary school. .

The students' responses to this item indicate that the most frequently faced difficulties by students are :

Psychological ones, where students declared their fear of making mistakes and being criticized .

Another type of difficulties faced by students is the limited knowledge of both vocabulary and grammar rules .

The third type of difficulties revealed by students is facing the problem of language misunderstanding due to the lack of exposure to the language outside the classroom .

Section Three : Learning Culture at Secondary School

Item One: Do you think learning culture is important while learning English.

	Number of students	Percentage
Very important	20	16,66%
Important	73	60,83%
Not important	07	5,83%
Don't know	20	16,66%
Total	120	100%

Table n° 41 : Students Opinion about the Importance of Learning Culture.

According to the results shown in the table above, more than two thirds of the respondents (77,49%) claimed the importance of learning culture while learning English; furthermore, (16,66%) among them see it very important. On the other hand, (5,83%) deny its importance and (16,66) of students seem to be undecided as they adopt "Don't know" response .

Item Two: If important /very important do you want to know more about English speaking countries culture?

	Number of students	Percentage
Yes	82	88,17%
No	11	11,82
total	93	100%

Table n° 42: Students Interest to Learn about English Speaking Countries Culture .

The aim of this question is to know students' interest and motivation towards learning about the target language culture in different English speaking countries. Being related to the previous question, only 93 of respondents are concerned by this item out of 93 respondents 82 (88,17%) show their interest towards learning the target culture the remaining (11,82%)ones; although, they revealed the importance of culture in the previous items, they reacted negatively expressing their lack of interest in learning about English speaking countries cultures.

Item Three: Do the activities included in English lessons help you learn about the English language culture

	Number of students	Percentage
Not at all	07	5,83%
Very little	85	70,83%
To some extent	28	23,33%
Very much	00	00%
Total	120	100%

Table n° 43 : Students Opinions about the Role of Classroom Activities in Learning the Target Culture.

Almost two thirds of the respondents claim that the currently used activities in English lesson help them “very little ” to learn about the target culture. (23,33%) others think that these activities contribute “To some extent” in learning about culture .However, (5,83%) remaining students claim the total uselessness of these activities in learning the target culture.

Item Four: Rank the activities you think would be most useful for you to learn and understand the English language culture.

Rank	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth
Activity	Discussions on cultural differences and similarities	Doing projects	Reading authentic materials	Role plays	Listening to songs
Participants	51	33	19	11	06
Percentage	42,5%	27,5%	15,83%	9,17%	05%

Table n° 44 : Students Classification of the Activities most Useful for them to Learn about the Target Culture.

According to students, the activity that helps them more in learning the English language culture is “Discussions on cultural differences and similarities”, this activity receives the highest percentage being represented by (42,5%) of students. “Doing projects on cultural topics” as a classroom activity comes at the second rank presented by (27,5%). Reading authentic texts such as: short stories, poems, literary texts is classified by students in the third position by a proportion of (15,83%). Where as, “Role plays and listening to songs” are left in the fourth and fifth rank represented by (9,17%) and (5%) respectively.

Item Five : What do you suggest for your teachers to include in English lessons to learn more about English language culture ?

The data obtained from this item demonstrate that the great majority of students show their interest towards learning the target culture. Responses to the present item vary to include the following suggestions:

- The choice of the topics should be related to the students' interest, age, and level of language proficiency such as including topics that they meet in their daily life.
- Raising students' attention to elements of the target culture which may be included implicitly by giving their corresponding ones in the student's own culture.
- Do not limit the teaching of culture to the information included in the textbook and introducing further materials and activities.
- Translating the difficult items related to the foreign culture such idiomatic expressions and proverbs.

Conclusion

The students' questionnaire was designed with the purpose to explore the students' perceptions of the learning situation, their attitudes' towards studying English and its related culture.

The analysis of the questionnaire allowed the researcher to come out with the following findings:

_ The population estimated is characterised by a female overrepresentation (85%). Their average age is 17 years old. These learners show a positive attitude towards learning English and see it is very important to develop their communicative abilities in English. However, they seemed dissatisfied with the current classroom activities since they qualify them as offering little opportunities for real- life communication.

_ Students revealed facing many difficulties in communication either orally or in writing such as their limited knowledge of grammatical rules and vocabulary items, their bad pronunciation as well as their fear of making mistakes and being criticised.

_ As far as the learning of culture is concerned students revealed their positive attitudes towards the issue and showed their interest to learn more about English speaking countries culture .

_ Students classified “ discussing cultural differences” as the most useful activity to learn about the target culture.

The abovementioned reveals a necessity for teachers to give more importance to teaching culture and spending more time on including culture related activities so as to satisfy the student's interest.