**The Pupils' Questionnaire**

**Introduction**

The weak performance of our pupils urges us to step further to get to know the sources of these weaknesses. Writing, as already mentioned, cannot develop in a vacuum. It is a skill that needs a special care from both teachers and pupils. We find it useful to elicit the pupils' concepts about writing, their strategies and their attitudes towards their teachers' performance regarding this skill. In addition , it is important to trace their instructors' views, the kind of directions and feedback they provide. This is done through two questionnaires: one destined to learners and the other to the teachers.

**6.1- The Pupils' Questionnaire**

The pupils' questionnaire aims at finding out learners' views about the writing skill and the strategies they use to accomplish a writing task.

**6.1.1-Description of the Questionnaire**

The questionnaire (see appendix 3) consists of 34 questions in five different sections. Most questions are close-ended : pupils are invited to tick the correct answer. There are a few open-ended questions where the informants are asked to provide explanations or further alternatives.

Section I: General Information (Q 1 to Q4)

The first section concerns background information about the informants: their level (Q1), their age (Q2) , if they study English as a first foreign language (LV1) or second foreign language (LV2) (Q3) and how long they have been studying English (Q4).

Section II: The Writing Skill (Q 5 to Q 13)

This section' s aim is to elicit pupils' views about the writing skill : if it is a necessary skill to develop (Q5 to Q6) , whether they find it easy to learn ( Q7 to Q8), their attitudes towards it (Q9 to Q10) and if they do practise any type of writing (Q11) , and in what language they do that (Q12).

Section III : The Writing Procedure ( Q 14 to Q 20)

The questions of this section explore the writing procedure and the strategies pupils adopt to do a writing task. The questions tackle the pre-writing activities trying to elicit what pupils do first when they read the topic of their writing assignment (Q14), the in-writing activities aiming at finding out pupils' strategies when they do not find words in English(Q15) and how often they write their essays in Arabic and then translate them into English (Q16). Post-writing is the topic of the rest of the questions through which, we attempt to find out if the pupils do revise their essays after completing them (Q17), the number of revisions (Q18 to Q19) and what they concentrate on while revising (Q20).

Section IV : The Teacher's Role in Writing (Q 21 to Q 33)

This is the longest section. The questions aim to find out the role teachers play in the classrooms: if they help their pupils to learn writing or not (Q21), and what kind of help they provide (Q22). We try to elicit where the writing tasks are assigned (Q23), the frequency of the teacher's feedback (Q24) and the pupils' first interest when handed their corrected essays (Q25). This section also attempts to find out the techniques adopted by teachers in correcting the written work of their pupils; if they provide the correct form or just show the mistaken parts (Q26) and whether the pupils prefer the first or the second technique (Q27). Question 28 ,however, elicits what teachers really do in correction; whether they correct every kind of mistake or specify one kind each time. Which one pupils would prefer is the topic of (Q29). The next question (Q30) tries to find out if the pupils cooperate with their teacher in case they do not understand a remark on their written work, whether they like correcting their classmates' mistakes (Q31) and if they like their mates' correcting their mistakes (Q31). The last question of the section tries to elicit if the pupils rewrite their essays taking into account their teacher's remarks (Q33).

Section V: Further Suggestions( Q 33)

The fifth section is left for any further suggestions the pupils might want to add.

**6.1.2- The Questionnaire Administration**

The case study consists of the two Third Year classes of Literature and Human Sciences in Hali Abdelkerim Secondary School in Guemar- El Oued. Each class consists of 37 pupils.

The questionnaire was handed in by the researcher. The objective of the questionnaire was discussed with the pupils after they had read the introduction . The pupils were allowed to answer in Arabic whenever they could not express themselves in English since the aim is to get information, not to test their ability to express themselves in English.

We administered 57 questionnaires -33 in one class, 24 in the other one- and not the 74 originally planned because some pupils were absent.

**6.1.3 -Analysis of the Results**

**Section One : General Information**

**1- In what level are you ?**

…………………………..

**2- How old are you?**

…………………………..

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Age | N | % |
| 16 | 01 | 01.75 |
| 17 | 14 | 24.57 |
| 18 | 15 | 26.32 |
| 19 | 14 | 24.57 |
| 20 | 11 | 19.29 |
| 21 | 01 | 01.75 |
| No answer | 01 | 01.75 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 35: Age Distribution of the Respondents.**

Table 35 shows that the surveyed pupils' range in age between16 and 21 years old.

**3- You study English as:**

**a- LV 1.**

**b- LV 2.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 12 | 21.05 |
| b | 43 | 75.44 |
| No answer. | 02 | 03.51 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 36 : English as LV 1 or LV2.**

A few of these pupils study English as their first foreign language(LV1) while the majority study it as the second foreign language (LV2).

**4-How long have you been studying English?**

**…………………………………….**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| N of years. | N | % |
| 05 | 26 | 45.62 |
| 06 | 12 | 21.05 |
| 07 | 06 | 10.53 |
| 09 | 02 | 03.50 |
| 10 | 02 | 03.50 |
| 11. | 03 | 05.27 |
| No answer. | 06 | 10.53 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 37 : Number of Years of Studying English**

More than half of the surveyed pupils have been studying English for more than five years

**Section Two : The Writing Skill**

**5- Writing is a necessary skill for you to develop**

**a- Yes.**

**b- No.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| Yes | 51 | 89.47 |
| No | 06 | 10.53 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 38 :Writing is a Necessary Skill to Develop.**

Table 38 shows that the vast majority ,89.47 %, of the respondents think that writing is a necessary skill for them to develop.

**6- If "No", please explain why.**

**…………………………………**

Five only of those who believe that writing is not necessary gave explanations. We can summarize as follows:

* "I don't consider it important to learn in our society like Arabic." (01 pupil)
* Because they do not understand it and they do not like it.(01 pupil)
* It is difficult and they do not know words in English.( 02 pupils).

- Teachers do not know how to teach it.(01 pupil)

**7- Writing is an easy skill to learn.**

**a- Yes.**

**b- No.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| Yes | 39 | 68.42 |
| No | 18 | 31.58 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 % |

**Table 39 : Difficulty of Writing.**

Table 39 shows that 68.42 % of the surveyed pupils claim that writing is an easy skill to learn.

**8- If "No." ,please explain why.**

**………………………………**

Here too, 15 out of the eighteen (18) pupils who responded "No" to Q7 gave explanations.

* "because I don't have the language" , "It needs a rich linguistic luggage. I

have only a little.(08 pupils)

* Spelling is different from pronunciation and adjectives are placed before the nouns they qualify.(02)

- It is difficult. (03 pupils)

- "I do not have only writing in my head." (01 pupil)

- "Because writing requires, linguistic ability and it takes time in preparing

ideas and finding them." (01 pupil)

**9-Do you like writing?**

**a- Yes.**

**b- No.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| Yes | 46 | 80.70 |
| No | 11 | 19.30 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 40 : Pupils' Attitude Towards Writing.**

We can see from table 40 that 80.70 % of the surveyed pupils say they like writing.

**10- If "No.", please, explain why.**

**……………………………………..**

Only eight (08) out of the eleven who do not like writing provided explanations. It is simply because

* they do not understand it.(02 pupils).
* they do not know how to express themselves since they do not find words.(02 pupils)
* some words are written differently from their pronunciation.(04 pupils)

**11 – Do you practise writing ?**

**a- Yes.**

**b- No.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| Yes | 25 | 43.86 |
| No | 31 | 54.39 |
| No answer. | 01 | 01.75 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 41 : Pupils' Practice of Writing.**

We can see from table 41 that 54.39 % of the respondents say they do not practise any writing.

**12- If "Yes.", what do you write?**

…………………………………

In response to what they write , twenty pupils out of those who responded "Yes" to Q12 said they write

- essays in Arabic and philosophy. (07 pupils)

- poems, stories, songs, thoughts. (05)

- composition. (03 pupils)

- letters. (02)

- "every thing that comes to my mind." (02 pupils)

One pupil said ,"I feel well when I write and it improves my writing capacity."

**13- You write in:**

a- Arabic

b- English.

c- Both.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| A | 29 | 50.88 |
| B | 01 | 01.75 |
| C | 23 | 40.36 |
| No answer. | 04 | 07.01 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 42 : The Language of Pupils' Writing.**

As can be seen from table 42, more than half of the respondents said they write in Arabic, while 40.36% of them write in both languages.

**Section Three: The Writing Procedure**

**14- When you read the topic of your writing assignment, you**

a-Take your pen and start writing your essay.

b- Start thinking and collecting ideas related to the topic.

c-Other: Please , specify……………………………

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| A | 04 | 07.01 |
| B | 46 | 80.71 |
| C | 05 | 08.78 |
| No answer. | 02 | 03.50 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 43 :Pupils First Act in Writing.**

80.71% of the respondents said they start thinking and collecting ideas related to the topic. Five pupils chose "c" and specified

- referring to exam and test situations, one says that if the text talks about

the same topic, s /he takes some information from it or copy from

friends.(01pupils)

- they do not write because they do not know the rules and the words.(03

pupils)

- the choice of "a" or "b" depends on the topic. (01 pupil)

**15- If you do not know a word in English , you:**

a- Write it in Arabic and continue your paragraph.

b- Keep its place blank and continue writing.

c- Stop to look it up in the dictionary.

d- Other: Please, specify. ……………………….

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| A | 07 | 12.28 |
| B | 03 | 05.26 |
| C | 38 | 66.67 |
| D | 08 | 14.04 |
| No answer | 01 | 01.75 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 44 : Pupils' Strategies in Dealing with Unknown Words.**

The majority of the pupils stop writing and look the word up in the dictionary. 14.04 % of them specified that

- write the unknown word in French and continue writing.(04 pupils)

- they do not write. (03 pupils)

- all ideas go away and s/he stops writing.(01 pupil)

**16- You write your paragraph in Arabic then translate it into English.**

a-Always.

b- Sometimes.

c- Never.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| A | 05 | 08.77 |
| B | 31 | 54.39 |
| C | 21 | 36.84 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 45 : Pupils' Use of Translation.**

Concerning the strategy of writing the paragraph in the native language and translating , more than half of the respondents sometimes do it while only 36.84% say they never translate.

**17- Do you revise your essay after completing it?**

**a- Yes.**

**b- No.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| Yes | 45 | 78.95 |
| No | 12 | 21.05 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 46 : Essay Revision.**

78.95 % of our pupils, as table 46 shows, said they revise their essays before handing them in to their teacher.

**18 - If "yes", how many times do you revise your essay before handing it to your teacher.**

a- Once.

b- More than once.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 26 | 57.78 |
| b | 18 | 40.00 |
| No answer. | 01 | 02.22 |
| Total | 45 | 100 |

**Table 47: Number of Revisions.**

Among the pupils who revise their writings, 57.78 % said they revise only once. The rest revise more than once, they revise either twice or three to four times.

**19- If "More than once", please , specify the average**

**number…………………………**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| Twice | 04 | 22.23 |
| 02 or 03 | 03 | 16.66 |
| 03 | 06 | 33.33 |
| 04 | 01 | 05,55 |
| No answer | 04 | 22.23 |
| Total | 18 | 100 |

**Table 48 : Number of Revisions.**

**20- While revising , you concentrate first on:**

a- Ideas.

b- Grammar.

c- Spelling.

d- Style.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 13 | 22.81 |
| b | 08 | 14.04 |
| c | 08 | 14.04 |
| d | 14 | 24.57 |
| a b | 06 | 10.52 |
| a d | 02 | 03.50 |
| a b c d | 03 | 05.26 |
| No answer. | 03 | 05.26 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 49 : Priority in Revision.**

24.57 % of the pupils say they concentrate on style first in revising their written work while 22.81 % revise for ideas. Very few pupils regard spelling and grammar.

This may explain the large amount of spelling mistakes the pupils made.

**21 – Does your teacher help you to learn writing?**

**a- Yes.**

**b- No.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| Yes | 18 | 31.58 |
| No | 39 | 68.42 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 50: Teachers' Help in Writing.**

As shown in table 50 , 68.42 % of the respondents say that their teacher does not help them in writing.

**22- If "Yes.", explain how.**

**…………………………….**

The 18 pupils who responded that their teacher helps them explain that s/he assists by

- answering their questions.(04 pupils)

- writing words on the black board and giving important examples. (10 pupils)

- giving them notes and they participate in collecting ideas and writing the

paragraph. (02 pupils)

- correcting the mistakes they make. (02pupils)

**23- S/he assigns the writing work:**

a- For home.

b-In class.

c-Both.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 08 | 14.03 |
| b | 09 | 15.79 |
| c | 39 | 68.43 |
| No answer. | 01 | 01.75 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 51 : Condition for Writing.**

The majority of respondents ,68.43 %, say that their writing is assigned both in class and for home which shows that teachers are aware that this skill needs guidance but at the same time , pupils have to do some individual work because writing is an individual activity by nature.

**24- When your teacher corrects, s/he gives feedback.**

a- Usually.

b- Sometimes.

c- Never.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 03 | 05.26 |
| b | 30 | 52.63 |
| c | 24 | 42.11 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 52 : Frequency of Teacher's Correction and Feedback.**

We can see from the above table that 52.63 % of the respondents said that their teacher sometimes corrects, but only 05.26 % answered that s/he usually does. 42.10 % claim s/he never corrects.

**25- When your teacher returns your corrected essay , you are interested in:**

a- The mark only.

b- The mark then the mistakes.

c- The mistakes then the mark.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 12 | 21.05 |
| b | 29 | 50.88 |
| c | 16 | 28.07 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 53 : Pupils' First Interest when Corrected Writing is Returned.**

Q25 aimed to elicit the pupils major interest when handed their corrected essays. More than half of them see the mark then their mistakes while, 28.07% of these respondents claim they care to know their mistakes, first, then the mark.

**26-When your teacher corrects your essay , s/he:**

a- Provides the correct forms.

b- Shows the mistakes using symbols.

c- Crosses the mistaken parts.

d- Other: Please, specify……………….

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 03 | 05.27 |
| b | 15 | 26.32 |
| c | 27 | 47.37 |
| a b | 02 | 03.50 |
| d | 09 | 15.79 |
| No answer. | 01 | 01.75 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 54 : Techniques Used for Giving Feedback.**

47.37 % of the pupils say their teacher just crosses the mistaken parts, 26.32 % claim s/he shows the mistakes using symbols. Nine (09) informants specified that their teacher

- does not correct neither inside nor outside the classroom.( 05 pupils)

- just puts a mark "arbitrarily" without touching the answer.(04 pupils)

**27- You would like your teacher to:**

a- Correct your mistakes.

b- Show you how to correct your mistakes.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 26 | 45.61 |
| b | 31 | 54.39 |
| Total. | 57 | 100 |

**Table 55: Pupils' Preferences of Teacher's Feedback.**

Asked about their preferences, 54.39% of the pupils would prefer that their teacher shows them how to correct their mistakes while 41.61% of them say they would like him/ her to correct their mistakes.

**28-When your teacher corrects your essays, s/he:**

a-Corrects every kind of mistake.

b-Concentrates on one kind of mistake each time.

c- Other: Please , specify………………………

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 17 | 29.83 |
| b | 29 | 50.88 |
| c | 06 | 10.52 |
| No answer. | 05 | 08.77 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 56 : Teacher's Feedback.**

As shown in table 56 ,half of the respondents replied that their teacher concentrates on one kind of mistake each time while 29.83% of them claim that s/he corrects every kind of mistake. Six (06) pupils specified that their teacher does not correct any mistakes:

* S/he never corrects any work. (05 pupils)
* "I have never seen my sheet again." (01 pupil).

**29-Would you like your teacher to:**

a- Note every mistake you make.

b-Concentrate on one type of mistakes each time.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 38 | 66.67 |
| b | 18 | 31.58 |
| No answer | 01 | 01.75 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 57 : Pupils' Preferences in Feedback.**

66.67% of these pupils say they would like their teacher to note every mistake they make while 31.58% would like him/her to concentrate on one type of mistakes each time.

**30- When you do not understand a remark on your writing, do you ask for your teacher's help?**

**a-Yes.**

**b-No.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| Yes | 44 | 77.19 |
| No | 13 | 22.81 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 58: Pupils' Asking for their Teacher's Help to Understand Remarks.**

Table 58 shows that the majority , 77.19 %, of the respondents said they ask for their teacher's help to understand his/her remarks on their writings.

**31- Do you like correcting your classmates' mistakes?**

**a- Yes.**

**b- No.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| Yes | 18 | 31.58 |
| No | 38 | 66.67 |
| No answer. | 01 | 01.75 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 59: Pupils' Attitudes towards Correcting their Classmates' Mistakes.**

Regarding peer correction, 66.67 % of our pupils say they do not like correcting their mates' mistakes.

**32-Do you like your classmates correcting your mistakes?**

**a- Yes.**

**b- No.**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| Yes | 25 | 43.86 |
| No | 32 | 56.14 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 60 : Pupils' Attitude towards their Classmates'**

**Correcting their Mistakes.**

As shown in table 60 ,56.14% of the pupils do not like their classmates correcting their mistakes. 43.86%, however, do not mind.

**33- When you go home, you rewrite your essay taking into account your teacher' remarks.**

a- Always.

b-Sometimes.

c-Never.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | N | % |
| a | 10 | 17.54 |
| b | 27 | 47.37 |
| c | 20 | 35.09 |
| Total | 57 | 100 |

**Table 61 : Rewriting Essays after Teacher's Feedback..**

We can see from table 61 ,more than half of the surveyed pupils said they rewrite their essays but only

17.54 % always do.

**Section Five: Further Suggestions**

**34 - Is there any comment you would like to add?**

**…………………………………………………….**

The fifth section is a space for the pupils' comments. The great majority of the pupils, 94.73 %, provided comments. But only one pupil wrote in English. Two pupils only did not provide any comments. These two pupils are studying English as (LV1). The comments made can be categorized into three major topics:

1 - Giving a fact sheet, summarizing their attitudes towards English, English

sessions and towards their teacher, pupils said that:

- "English is a necessity." ,especially that "we need it for exams" (12

pupils)

- "English is extra. It is preferable to take it out from the programmes."

(01 pupil).

- English sessions are sessions for leisure and lack of discipline (10

pupils).

2- Stating the causes of their weakness in English, some informants

mentioned:

- The timing of the English sessions in the afternoon or the last sessions

in the morning when the pupils are burnt out.(05 pupils).

- the lack of care as weak pupils are neglected; the teacher cares only to

those sitting in the front.(04 pupils).

- the lack of motivation ; "Nothing encourages to write unless it is a

hobby."(04 pupils).

* because of the class environment and the lack of discipline, the

teacher gets fed up and assigns writing for home work without any

explanations.(02 pupils).

3 – Suggesting that:

- The teacher should respect their mental capacity and use the easiest way

to explain.(08 pupils).

- Correction should be deep and serious.(05 pupils).

- The teacher should respect the critical period of age we are undergoing ,

be patient and not laugh at our mistakes.(03 pupils).

One pupil concludes , "If we practise more ,we will be better.".

**6.1.4- Interpretation Of the Results**

The questionnaire results show that there is a significant age difference among the pupils of this level that reaches five (05) years which means that more than half of the pupils have repeated one year at least. This is shown in 54,38 % of the informants who have studied English at least one extra years for LV1. The pupils' response to Q1 also shows their inability to write the name of their level correctly.

For the writing skill, most of pupils are aware of the necessity of the writing skill for them to develop. But when 68.42% of them say that writing is easy to learn, it shows that they are just escaping the "No" alternative which requires an explanation that they cannot provide since it was not easy to learn written expression. The majority of them like writing . Some of them practise it. Except for a few pupils who mentioned they write some poems, songs, put down thought; the rest of these writings concern assignments in other subjects in Arabic.

The majority of the informants are aware of the importance of the pre-writing activity of collecting ideas. But the strategy that most of them use when dealing with unknown or "lost" words is not suitable because when you stop and look a word up in a dictionary, the flow of ideas also stops. In addition, more than half of them write their essays in Arabic and translate them into English either sometimes or always. An important number 21.05 % do not revise and 57,78 % of those who do, revise only once, which is not enough. Most of the revision deals first with the ideas and style.

The teacher's role in writing, according to the pupils, seems minimal since 68.42 % say s/he does not help and even those who say s/he does mention help only in providing words and answering their questions. Pupils do writing in both class and home. Concerning correction and feedback, an important rate ,42.11 %, say s/he never corrects; this is demotivating to the pupils. More than 70 % are interested to see their mistakes and not only the mark. But, the teacher, as 47.37 % of them said, just crosses the mistaken parts while 54.39 % would like him /her to show them how to correct their mistakes. Moreover, s/he concentrates on one kind of mistake each time, whereas they would prefer if s/he notes every mistake they make. Most of the pupils cooperate with their teacher to understand his/her remarks. Most of the pupils like neither correcting their mates' mistakes nor having their mistakes corrected by mates. The survey shows that the majority of the respondents rewrite their essays after teacher's feedback.

The comments that the pupils provide show that our pupils like to express their ideas and they really do have ideas, but they lack the means of expression in English.