



THE UNITED REPUBLIC OF TANZANIA
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY
NATIONAL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL OF TANZANIA



**STUDENTS' ITEM RESPONSE ANALYSIS
REPORT ON THE FORM TWO NATIONAL
ASSESSMENT (FTNA) 2023**

FRENCH LANGUAGE



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FOREWORD

This report presents Students' Items Response Analysis (SIRA) on Form Two French Language National Assessment which was conducted in November 2023. This report aims to provide feedback to all educational stakeholders on the factors that contributed to the students' performance in French Language.

The Form Two National Assessment (FTNA) is a formative evaluation which intends to monitor students' learning to provide feedback that teachers, students and other educational stakeholders can use to improve teaching and learning. This analysis shows the justification for the students' performance in the French Language subject. The students who attained high scores had adequate knowledge of tenses and grammatical rules, sufficient basic vocabulary to use in different contexts and the ability to interpret simple stories. Conversely, students who scored low marks faced difficulties in responding to the questions due to their insufficient knowledge of the tested concepts.

This report will help students to identify their strengths and weaknesses for them to improve learning before sitting for their Certificate of Secondary Education Examination (CSEE). It will help teachers to identify the challenging areas and take appropriate measures during teaching and learning.

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania (NECTA) expects that the feedback provided in this report will shed light on the challenges for which education stakeholders should take proper measures to improve teaching and learning of the French Language subject. Consequently, students will acquire knowledge, skills and competences indicated in the syllabus for better performance in future assessments and examinations.

The National Examinations Council of Tanzania appreciates the contribution of all those who prepared this report.



Dr. Said A. Mohamed
EXECUTIVE SECRETARY

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This report is an analysis of the performance of the students who sat for the Form Two National Assessment (FTNA) in French Language subject in November, 2023. The assessment was set according to the 2010 French Language syllabus.

The assessment paper had three sections, namely A, B and C with a total of 10 questions. The students were required to attempt all the questions. Section A had two questions with a total of 15 marks, whereby question 1 carried 10 marks and question 2 carried 5 marks. Section B had seven questions which were number 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9 where each of them carried 10 marks. Section C had one question which was number 10 that carried a total of 15 marks. The students were tested in four topics, namely Comprehension, Language Patterns/Structure, Language Use (Vocabulary) and Composition/Written Expression.

A total of 10,279 students sat for Form Two National Assessment in French Language subject in November 2023, out of whom 5,711 (55.61%) students passed, whereas in 2022, 4,699 (50.95) students passed. These results indicate an increase of 4.66 per cent in the students' performance.

The students' performance is categorised into three (3) groups, namely; good, average and poor. The performance ranging from 65 to 100 percent is considered as *good*, 30 to 64 percent as *average* and 0 to 29 percent as *poor*. Three basic colours have been used to represent this performance: *green* indicates good performance; *yellow* indicates average performance and *red* indicates poor performance. The Students' performance in each topic is summarised in the appendix.

The analysis shows the students' performance in each item by indicating the students' weaknesses and strengths in answering the questions. Also, it highlights the requirements of each question by indicating the expected responses, how the students answered the questions and the analysis of the students' responses. The focus is on the percentages of students with high, average and low marks. Extracts from the scripts of the students' responses have been used so as to provide a general overview on how the students responded to the questions in relation to the tasks of each question. The performance of students in each grade is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Students' Performance in French Language Subject in the FTNA-2023

SEX	GRADES					PASSED	
	A	B	C	D	F	Number	Percentage
M	347	260	917	1,177	1,867	2701	47.29
F	260	260	963	1,527	2691	3010	52.71
Total	607	520	1,880	2,704	4558	5711	55.61

2.0 ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN EACH QUESTION

The analysis of the students' performance in each question has been presented in this report. The analysis highlights the requirements of each question as well as the strengths and weaknesses of students' responses. The percentage of scores for each question is presented in graphs and charts. Furthermore, samples of good and poor responses extracted from the students' scripts are presented to illustrate some of the cases.

2.1 Question 1: Multiple Choice Items (Vocabulary, Language use and Expressions)

In this question, students were provided with ten multiple choice items and they were required to choose the correct answer from the four alternative responses given. Considering the competence-based curriculum, items in this question assessed the students' ability to use vocabulary and French language expressions. Each item carried 01 mark. The total marks for this question was 10.

This question was attempted by 100 per cent of the students, out of whom 9.7 per cent scored from 0 to 2.5 marks; 63.5 per cent scored from 3 to 6.5 marks and 26.8 per cent scored from 7.0 to 10 marks. Figure 1 shows the students' performance in this question.

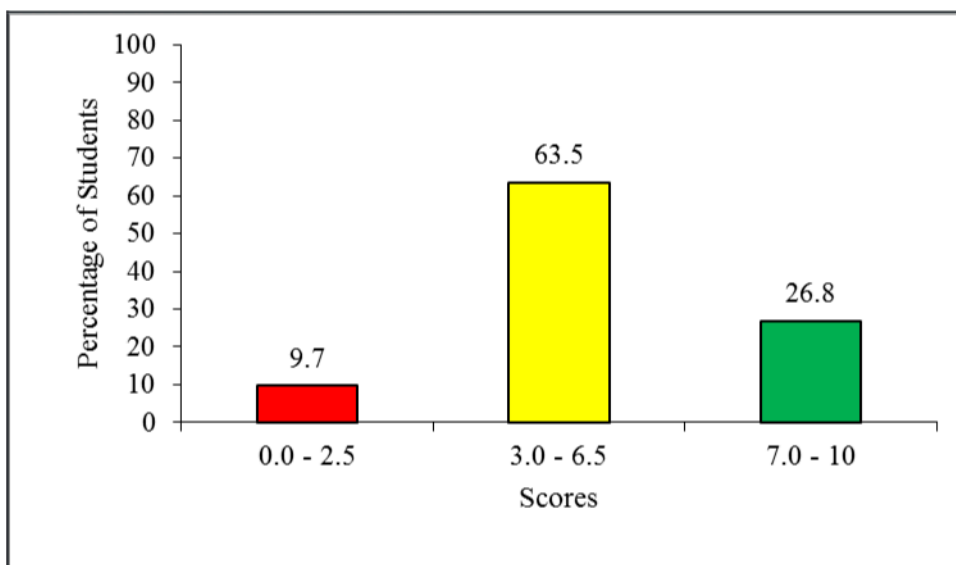


Figure 1: Percentages of the Students' Performance in Question 1

The general performance of the students in this question was good, since 90.3 percent of the students scored from 3 to 10 marks. The analysis shows that 26.8 per cent of the students (2,750) had high performance in this question as they got right from 6 to 10 items. The responses of students who scored high marks were as analysed bellow:

In item (i), students were required to choose the correct vocabulary from the four given alternative responses regarding the requirement of the item. The item intended to assess the students' ability to use the correct preposition before a noun. The item was: *Monsieur Dupond organise les élèves pour aller* (Mr. Dupond organises pupils to go).

The students' responses analysis indicates that, those who got the item right had adequate knowledge on the use of prepositions. Therefore, these students selected the correct alternative C *à la gare* (to the bus stand). This alternative is correct because the noun *gare* (bus stand) belongs to a group of nouns which are feminine in gender. Thus, it must be preceded by the definite article *la* (the). Again, the verb *aller* (to go) which was in the question asked must be followed by the preposition *à* (to). The verb *aller à* (to go to) is connected to the noun *gare* (bust station) which must be preceded by the article *la* (the.). As a result, the right answer was *à la gare* (to the bus stand).

In item (ii), students were required to choose the correct form of comparison applicable in the given context. The item intended to assess the students' ability to use comparative expressions in French language. The question was: *Lawama est né en 1983 et Neema est née en 1990, donc Neema est.....*: (Lawama was born in 1983 and Neema was born in 1990, therefore Neema is.....;)

The students' responses analysis shows that the students who scored high marks chose the correct answer which was alternative B *moins âgée que Lawama* (is less aged than Lawama). These students understood that Neema is younger than Lawama because Neema was born in 1990 while Lawama was born in 1983.

In item (iii), the students were examined on how they can effectively listen and respond to salutations and wishes to adults. The question was: *Supposons que tu es un enfant, comment tu salues les adultes à 18 heures ?* (Suppose you are a child; how would you greet the adults at 18 hours?)

The students who scored high marks were able to identify the correct response which was A *bonne soirée* (good evening). The alternative A was correct because the students understood that eighteen hours exists only during the evening. So, *bonne soirée* (good evening) is the greeting which is used in the evening.

In item (iv), the question required the students to identify the series of colours as they appear in the Tanzanian national flag. The question was : *Le professeur d'Education civique a demandé aux élèves de dessiner le drapeau de Tanzanie. Parmi les séries de couleurs ci-dessous, lesquelles montrent les couleurs correctes ?* (The civic Education teacher demanded the students to draw the Tanzania National flag. Among the series of colours below, which colours are found in the Tanzanian National flag? Only the students who selected item C. *jaune* (yellow), *noire* (black), *bleue* (blue) *et verte* (green) got the item right because these are the only four colours which are found on the Tanzanian flag.

In item (v), the students were examined on the use of numbers and time. The question was as follows: *Il y a combien de minutes dans une heure?* (How many minutes are there in an hour?). The correct response in this question was A. *Soixante* (sixty). The students who got it correctly understood that an hour has only sixty minutes. They were also aware of

writing figures into words. In this case, they understood that 60 is written as *Soixante* (sixty) in French language.

In item (vi), students were required to choose the correct comparative expression that agreed with the given context. The item intended to assess the students' ability to use comparative expressions in French language. The item was: *Si Dar es Salaam a six millions d'habitants et Arusha a quatre millions d'habitants, comment peut-on comparer ces deux villes ?* (If Dar es Salaam has six million habitants and Arusha has four million habitants how can we compare these two cities?)

The students' responses analysis shows that those who scored high marks chose the correct alternative which was B *Arusha a moins d'habitants que Dar es Salaam* (Arusha has less habitants than Dar es Salaam). These students were able to understand that four million habitants in Arusha is less compared to the population of six millions of Dar es Salaam.

In item (vii), the students were required to express needs and desires. The question in this item was as follows: *Comment signifie si Oscar aime beaucoup la musique classique?* (What does it means if Oscar likes much classical music?). The correct answer was A *Il adore* (he admires/adores). The verb *adorer* (to admire) signifies the situation of loving something or someone more than normal. So, the students selected the alternative that has the verb *adorer* (to admire/adore) because it was more appropriate to the context given compared to other verbs.

In item (viii), the examiner tested the students' ability to express their feelings and to ask for permission from the adults when they are in need of doing something. The question was *Comment on dit quand on a besoins d'aller aux toilettes ?* (How do we say when we need to go to toilets?) The correct alternative was D. *Je voudrais aller aux toilettes* (I would like to go the toilet).

The students who scored high marks understood that asking for permission to go to toilets needs the use of polite language. So, they were able to identify that the proper expression to use in this context was verb *vouloir* (to want) in its conditional tense as in *Je voudrais* (I would like). Apart from that, students who chose A. *je peux aller aux toilettes* (Can i go to the toilet) got the item right because this option has the same uses as the item D above.

In item (ix) the examiner tested the students' ability to tell their nationalities. The item was set as follows: *Suppossez que François est Italien, il est né en Italie tandis que Jeannette est née en Tanzanie, donc elle est:* (Imagine that François is an Italian, he was born in Italy while Jeannette was born in Tanzania, then she is...:). The students who scored high marks selected the correct answer B. *tanzanienne* (a female Tanzanian). These students understood well that adjective of nationality *tanzanienne* (a female Tanzanian) is only used for a female who comes from Tanzania.

In item (x), the examiner assessed the ability of students to identify the gender of the French language colour adjectives basing on female and male gender in both singular and plural forms. The question was: *Quelle est la couleur de lunette de Madame Kiungulia?* (What is the colour of Madame Kiungulia's spectacles?)

The correct answer was B. *noire* (black). In order to change the masculine adjective to feminine adjective, the suffix–e is added at the end of a masculine adjective. Therefore, the students who scored high marks were aware of this grammatical rule and as a result, they managed to select the correct response. They also related the feminine word *lunette* (a pair of glasses) with the feminine adjective *noire* (black). Extract 1.1 shows the students' good responses to question 1.

1. Choisissez la bonne réponse et écrivez sa lettre dans l'espace donnée.

(i) Monsieur Dupond organise les élèves pour aller

- A au gare B à gare
C à la gare D de la gare

C

(ii) Lawama est né en 1983 et Neema est née en 1990, donc Neema est

- A aussi plus âgée que Lawama B moins âgée que Lawama
C aussi âgée que Lawama D âgée que Lawama

B

(iii) Supposons que tu es un enfant, comment tu salues les adultes à 18 heures ?

- A bonne soirée B bonne nuit
C bonne journée D bon après-midi

A

(iv) Le professeur d'Éducation civique a demandé aux élèves de dessiner le drapeau de Tanzanie. Parmi les séries de couleurs ci-dessous, lesquelles montrent les couleurs correctes ?

- A jaune, bleue, blanc et noire B jaune, orange, verte et rouge
C jaune, noire, bleue et verte D jaune, noire, verte et grise

C

(v) Il y a combien de minutes dans une heure ?

- A Soixante B Cinquante
C Trente D Quinze

A

(vi) Si Dar es Salaam a six millions d'habitants et Arusha a quatre millions d'habitants. Comment peut-on comparer ces deux villes ?

- A Arusha a beaucoup d'habitants.
B Arusha a moins d'habitants que Dar es Salaam.
C Arusha a plus d'habitants que Dar es Salaam.
D Arusha a autant d'habitants que Dar es Salaam.

B

(vii) Comment signifie si Oscar aime beaucoup la musique classique ?

- A Il adore B Il chante
C Il déteste D Il joue

A

(viii) Comment on dit quand on a besoins d'aller aux toilettes ?

- A Je peux aller aux toilettes ?
B Je dois aller aux toilettes ?
C J'aimais aller aux toilettes ?
D Je voudrais aller aux toilettes ?

A

(ix) Supposez que François est Italien, il est né en Italie tandis que Jeannette est née en Tanzanie, donc elle est

- A tanzanien B tanzanienne
C tanzanie D tanzaniens

B

(x) Quelle est la couleur de lunette de Madame Kiungulia ?

- A noirs B noire
C noir D noires

B

Extract 1.1: A Sample of the Correct Responses to Question 1

Extract 1.1 is a sample response from a student who chose correctly the letters of the correct responses in all ten items in question one.

Furthermore, the analysis shows that 9.7 per cent of the students (1,001) failed to provide the correct response as indicated below.

In item (i), students failed to understand that the noun *gare* (bus station) belongs to feminine gender. As a result, most of the students selected alternative A. *au gare* (to the bus station). *Au* (to the) is the contraction of *à* and *le* which is used before a masculine noun. Students who selected alternative B. *à gare* (to bus station) failed to understand that the feminine noun *gare* has to be preceded by the definite article *la* (the). Lastly, students who opted for alternative D. *de la gare* failed to understand that the verb *aller* which is found in item (i) is supposed to be used with the preposition *à* (to).

In item (ii), students who did not score high marks failed to understand the correct use of comparative expressions. For example, some of them were unable to distinguish between the age of Lawama and Neema. Consequently, they opted for alternatives A and D which were incorrect. Alternatives A and D indicated that Neema is older than Lawama and is as aged as Lawama, respectively. Other students indicated that both Lawama and Neema have the same age as they selected alternative D which was also incorrect.

In item (iii), some students with low marks did not understand that 18 hours is only used during the evening. As a result, they selected other alternatives which were incorrect. For example, some students selected alternative B. *bonne nuit* (good night) which is only used during the night when people want to go to bed. Also, others selected alternative C *bonne journée* (good day) and D *bon après-midi* (good afternoon) which are only used as wishes during the day and afternoon, respectively.

Item (iv) was also incorrectly answered by some students as they selected alternatives A, B and D. All these distracters did not show the actual series of colours which are found on the Tanzanian national flag. For example, A had *jaune* (yellow), *bleue* (blue), *blanc* (white) and *noire* (black). Among these four colours, the white colour is not part of the national flag colours.

Alternative B had two incorrect colours which were *orange* (orange) and *rouge* (red) while alternative D had one incorrect colour, *grise* (grey).

In item (v), it is obvious that an hour has only sixty minutes. However, some of the students with poor performance failed to understand the demand of the question due to lack of vocabulary related to time. This resulted to selecting some of the incorrect responses found in this item. For example, some students chose alternatives B, C and D which were *Cinquante* (fifty), *Trente* (thirty) and *Quinze* (fifteen) minutes, respectively.

In item (vi), some of the students who failed to write the correct alternative chose alternative A *Arusha a beaucoup d'habitants* (Arusha has many residents); they failed to understand that *six million* (six millions) residents is larger in number than four million which is *quatre million*. The students who selected C, *Arusha a plus d'habitants que Dar es Salaam* (Arusha has more residents than Dar-es-salaam) failed to understand the expression *plus* (more) et *que* (than) which means *more*. In fact, Arusha has a smaller number of residents compared to Dar es Salaam as expressed in the item.

The students who selected D *Arusha a autant d'habitants que Dar es Salaam* (Arusha has the same number of residents as Dar es Salaam) failed to understand that, the word *autant* (same number) compares things of the same number. However, Dar es Salaam's number of residents is high compared to that of Arusha. The correct answer was therefore B *Arusha a moins d'habitants que Dar es Salaam* (Arusha has less population than Dar es Salaam).

In item (vii), some of the students who scored poorly wrote B *il chante* as the correct answer (he sings). These students failed to understand that the verb *chante* (*sing*) is the present simple of the infinitive form of the verb *chanter* (to sing) which means to sing and not to like much as it is in the question *Oscar aime beaucoup la musique classique*. So, they failed to get the right answer which was A, *il adore* which means he adores. The students who selected C, *il déteste* (*He dislikes*) failed to understand that, the word *déteste* is the present simple form of the infinitive *détester* which means to dislike. The students who selected B, *il joue*, (he plays) failed to understand that this word means to play. Thus, the right answer was A, *Il adore* (he admires/adores).

In item (viii), those who selected B, *Je dois aller aux toilettes* (I must to go to the toilet) failed to understand that, the verb *devoir* (must) has been conjugated into simple present with the subject *je*. They did not understand that, it cannot be used to ask for permission in polite language as the question itself demands *Comment on dit quand on besoins d'aller aux toilettes?* The students who selected C, *J' aimais aller aux toilettes* failed to understand that the verb *aimer* was in past continuous tense (*à l'imparfait de l'indicatif*) – *j'aimais* which could not be used to express polite language when a person asks to do something.

In item (ix), the students who selected A, *tanzanien* failed to understand that, the given answer was in masculine form, while Jeanette was a feminine noun. The students who selected C, *tanzanie* (Tanzania) failed to understand that the word *tanzanie* is not an adjective describing Jeannette, but rather the name of the country. And lastly, students who selected D *tanzaniens* failed to understand that the word *tanzaniens* is a plural masculine adjective of nationality.

In item (x), the students who selected A *noirs* (black) as the right answer failed to understand that the word *noirs* is in the plural colour adjective while the colour of the spectacles is in singular *la couleur de lunette de Madame Kiungulia* (the colour of spectacles of madam Kiungulia). Some students selected C *noir* but got it wrong due to the fact that they did not understand that the colour adjective *noir* qualifies a singular masculine noun. So with that answer, they did not get it right. Extract 1.2 shows students' poor responses to question 1.

1. Choisissez la bonne réponse et écrivez sa lettre dans l'espace donnée.

- (i) Monsieur Dupond organise les élèves pour aller
A au gare B à gare
C à la gare D de la gare
- (ii) Lawama est né en 1983 et Neema est née en 1990, donc Neema est
A aussi plus âgée que Lawama B moins âgée que Lawama
C aussi âgée que Lawama D âgée que Lawama
- (iii) Supposons que tu es un enfant, comment tu salues les adultes à 18 heures ?
A bonne soirée B bonne nuit
C bonne journée D bon après-midi
- (iv) Le professeur d'Éducation civique a demandé aux élèves de dessiner le drapeau de Tanzanie. Parmi les séries de couleurs ci-dessous, lesquelles montrent les couleurs correctes ?
A jaune, bleue, blanc et noire B jaune, orange, verte et rouge
C jaune, noire, bleue et verte D jaune, noire, verte et gris
- (v) Il y a combien de minutes dans une heure ?
A Soixante B Cinquante
C Trente D Quinze
- (vi) Si Dar es Salaam a six millions d'habitants et Arusha a quatre millions d'habitants. Comment peut-on comparer ces deux villes ?
A Arusha a beaucoup d'habitants.
B Arusha a moins d'habitants que Dar es Salaam.
C Arusha a plus d'habitants que Dar es Salaam.
D Arusha a autant d'habitants que Dar es Salaam.
- (vii) Comment signifie si Oscar aime beaucoup la musique classique ?
A Il adore B Il chante
C Il déteste D Il joue
- (viii) Comment on dit quand on a besoins d'aller aux toilettes ?
A Je peux aller aux toilettes ?
B Je dois aller aux toilettes ?
C J'aimais aller aux toilettes ?
D Je voudrais aller aux toilettes ?
- (ix) Supposez que François est Italien, il est né en Italie tandis que Jeannette est née en Tanzanie, donc elle est
A tanzanien B tanzanienne
C tanzanie D tanzaniens
- (x) Quelle est la couleur de lunette de Madame Kiungulia ?
A noirs B noire
C noir D noires

Extract 1.2: A Sample of the Incorrect Responses to Question 1

Extract 1.2 is a sample response from a student who failed to choose the correct responses for some items in question 1.

Generally, the analysis shows that 63.5 per cent of the students (6,528) had an average performance as they were able to choose correctly some of the items ranging from 4 to 5. Such responses indicate that these students had partial knowledge of some topics which were asked in the given items in question 1.

2.2 Question 2: Matching Items (Vocabulary)

This question had two columns with list A and list B. In list A, students were given six items in the form of questions where the first one was given as an example. In list B, there were responses of different forms such as affirmative and negative sentences. The question aimed to test students' ability to answer various questions in different forms.

This question was attempted by 100 percent of the students, out of whom 51.3 per cent scored from 0.0 to 1.0 mark; 37.1 percent scored from 2.0 to 3.0 marks and 11.6 per cent scored from 4 to 5.0 marks. Figure 2 shows the students' performance in this question.

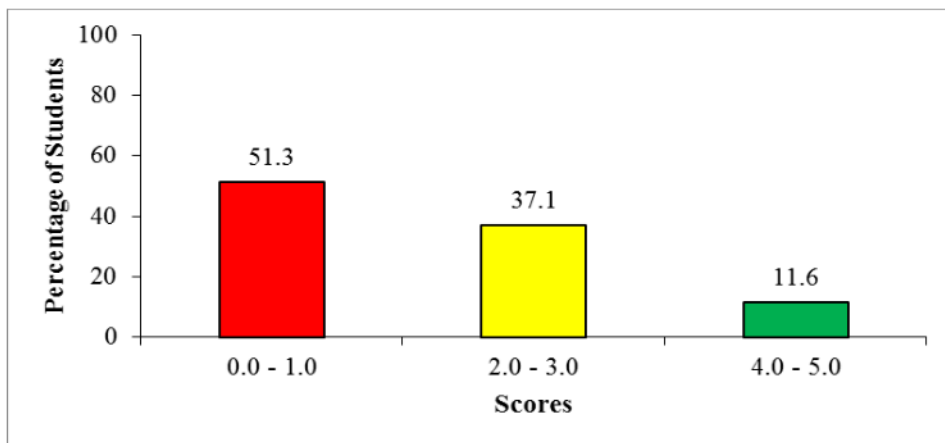


Figure 2: Percentages of the Students' Performance in Question 2

The general performance of the students in this question was average, since 48.7 per cent of the students scored from 2.0 to 5.0 marks. The students' responses analysis indicates that 11.6 per cent of the students (1,190) scored from 4.0 to 5 marks. The students who scored high marks

were able to correctly match all of the five questions in list A with their corresponding answers in list B.

For example, in item (ii), the correct answer was alternative F *Tu veux quelque chose à boire?* (Do you want something to drink?). The students managed to match *Tu veux quelque chose à boire ?* (Do you want something to drink?) with the correct response F *Non, j'ai déjà bu de l'eau* (No, I have already drunk some water). The students who correctly attempted this item were able to understand the correct transformation of the personal pronoun *tu* (you) to *je* (I) in answering the question because it also refers to a singular pronoun. Again, the students were able to understand the related infinitive verb *boire* (to drink) found in list A with its past participle *bu* (drunk) found in the list B.

In item (iii), the students who managed to score high marks were able to match the sentence *Tu as vu Aminata?* (Have you seen Aminata?) with the correct response in List B which was A. *Non, elle n'est pas rentrée depuis hier* (No, she has not yet returned since yesterday). So, the students managed to identify the feminine noun, Aminata in List A which turned into pronoun *Elle* (she) in List B.

Similarly, in item (iv), the students who got it right were able to match *Vous êtes déjà partis?* (Have you already left?) with the correct answer which was H. *Oui, nous sommes partis!* (Yes, we have left) in list B. The students managed to transform the pronoun *vous* (you) as used in List A to pronoun *nous* (we) as used in the response in list B. Also, the students were able to understand the correct form of auxiliary verb *être* (to be) before the subject *vous, vous êtes* (you are) to the subject *nous, nous sommes* (we are) and the past participle of the verb *partir* (to leave) which is *partis* (left).

Further analysis indicates that in item (v), the students were able to match this item which read *Où est-ce qu'elle a fait ses études?* (Where did she do her studies?) with the correct response D, *en Allemagne* (In Germany). So, the students were able to identify the interrogative adverb of place *où* (where) and concluded that *Allemagne* (Germany) is the name of the country where she might have studied.

In item (vi), the students with high marks were able to match the question which read *Qu'est-ce que tu as fait pendant le week-end?* (What did you

do during the week-end?). The right response was E, *J'ai aidé ma grand-mère et nous avons même travaillé aux champs* (I helped my grandmother and we worked in the farm). Some students correctly responded to the question in List A with the corresponding answer in List B. The students were able to identify the changes of the subject and its verb in the question form in relation to its answer in List B. Also, the students were able to know that if a question is asked by using past tense, then the possible answer must be in past tense too.

The students who managed to match the five questions in list A with the five correct answers from list B had adequate knowledge of asking and answering questions. Extract 2.1 shows the student's correct responses to question 2.

Réponses						
Liste A	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
Liste B	B	F	A	H	D	E

Extract 2.1: *A Sample of the Correct Responses to Question 2*

Extract 2.1 is a sample response from a student who matched correctly the items in list A to their corresponding answers in List B.

Further analysis indicates that 51.3 per cent of the students (5,271) had weak performance in this question. These students were able to match 0 to 1 item. For example, some of the students provided the following responses.

In item (ii), some candidates failed to realise that the possible answer for a question which is asked by using pronoun *tu* (you) was *je* (I). Again in the same item, some students failed to understand that the past tense of the infinitive verb *boire* (to drink) was *j'ai bu* (I drunk). This led them to select other items in list B which were incorrect.

In item (iii) of list A, some students failed to understand the use of past tense and that in some cases, when one replies to a question, s/he can use a pronoun that relates to the gender of a noun used in the question. In this case, the noun Aminata was to be replaced by *elle* (she). Again, some students failed to make a logical relationship between the action of seeing someone and that of not returning. This means that the item (iii) required students to select an item that explains reasons of not seeing Aminata which was she did not return from where she had gone.

In item (iv), some students failed to discover that if the question is asked using the relative pronoun *vous* (you), the possible pronoun to replace it is *nous* (we). Again, such students failed to understand that the past tense of *partir* (to leave) is *sommes partis* (have left) when it is used with the pronoun *nous* (we). Lastly, the students who scored low marks failed to understand that the question was asked in positive form as *Vous êtes déjà partis?* (Have you already left?) If the question is positive, then the response should start with *Oui*. Both *Oui* and *Si* in French language mean “Yes” in a context of answering a question, but *Si* is used when the question is asked in a negative form but the answer is in positive form.

Item (v) was wrongly attempted by some students because they failed to understand the uses of the relative pronoun *où* (where) and the preposition *en* (in) which are both used to show a place. Also, some students had inadequate vocabulary; that is why they failed to understand the meaning of the word *Allemagne* (German). Consequently, they opted for other alternatives such as A, B, C which were all incorrect responses.

In item (vi), students with poor scores failed to understand that if a question is asked using pronoun *tu* (you), then the possible answer will most likely start with *je* (I). Also, another reason for the low performance in this item was some students had insufficient vocabulary in French language; that is why they failed to understand the meaning of some words in the sentence. Vocabulary knowledge would have helped them in selecting the correct answer from list B. For example, in *Qu'est-ce que tu as fait?* (What did you do?), students were supposed to select a response that explains an action done by the subject such as *j'ai aidé ma grand-mère....* (I helped my grandmother.....) which was the correct answer. Extract 2.2 shows a student's poor responses in question 2.

Réponses						
Liste A	(i)	(ii)	(iii)	(iv)	(v)	(vi)
Liste B	B	C	D	E	A	H

Extract 2.2: A Sample of the Incorrect Responses to Question 2

Extract 2.2 is a sample response from a student who failed to match correctly the questions in list A with their corresponding answers in list B.

On the other hand, the analysis shows that, there were students who had an average performance as they were able to match correctly some of the items ranging from 2 to 3. For example, one of the students matched correctly items (iii) and (v) and provided incorrect responses in items (ii), (iv) and (vi). Such responses indicate that these students had partial knowledge in the topic.

2.3 Question 3: Singular and Plural Forms

In this question, students were given five sentences and were required to write words in the brackets in plural forms. The question aimed to test students' ability to transform different grammatical items such as articles, nouns and adjectives from singular to plural.

This question was attempted by 100 per cent of the students, out of whom 26.6 per cent scored from 0.0 to 2.5 marks, 35.6 per cent scored from 3.0 to 6.0 marks and 37.8 per cent scored from 6.5 to 10 marks. The students' general performance in this question was good, since 73.4 per cent of the students scored from 3.0 to 10 marks. Figure 3 shows the students' performance in this question.

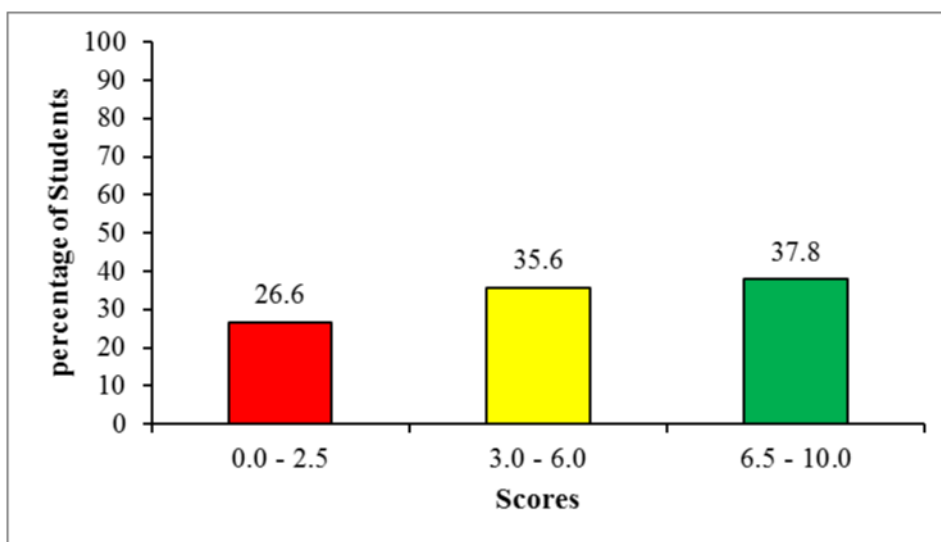


Figure 3: Percentages of the Students' Performance in Question 3

The analysis of the students' responses indicates that 37.8 per cent of the students (3,881) had good performance as they managed to change the words in the brackets from singular to plural forms. Their responses were as described below.

In item (a), students with good performance changed the words into plural forms as follows: *Mariam va visiter (une amie française)*. (Mariam is going to visit a (French friend). Some of the students with high scores managed to transform the indefinite article *une* (a), noun *amie* (friend) and the adjective *française* (French friend) into *des amies françaises* (French friends).

In item (b), the students changed the words in brackets into plural form as follows: *Ma mère a acheté (un gâteau) pour moi* (My mother bought a cake for me). The correct response provided by some students with high marks was *Ma mère a acheté des gâteaux pour moi* (My mother bought cakes for me). So, it is evident that these students demonstrated a good understanding of singular and plural forms in French language.

In item (c), students were asked to write into plural form the words in brackets in the sentence *Le père aime beaucoup (son fils)* (The father loves so much his son). The students were able to correctly transform these words into plural form by providing the correct responses which was *Le père aime beaucoup ses fils*. (The father loves so much his sons).

In item (d), the students transformed singular words *la fenêtre* (the window) into plural form as used in the sentence, *Il fait très chaud ici. Fermez la porte et (la fenêtre) s'il vous plaît*, (It is very hot here. Close the door and (the window) please). In this sentence, the students managed to change the definite article *la* (*the*) and noun *fenêtre* (window) into plural form. Therefore, the correct response was *Il fait très chaud ici. Fermez la porte et les fenêtres s'il vous plaît* (It is very hot here. Close the door and the windows please).

In item (e), the students were supposed to write in plural form the words *ce corbeau* in the sentence *Regardez (ce corbeau) sur l'arbre* (Look at (the crow) on the tree). The students with high scores managed to change the demonstrative adjective *ce* (this) to *ces* (these) and also the noun *corbeau* (crow) to *corbeaux* (crows) which is the correct form of plural of the respective noun. These students provided the following correct sentence: *Regardez ces corbeaux sur l'arbre* (Look at the crows on the tree). Extract 3.1 shows a good response to question 3.

3. Écrivez les mots entre parenthèses comme dans l'exemple.

Exemple : Elle a emprunté (un livre) à la bibliothèque.
Elle a emprunté **des livres** à la bibliothèque.

(a) Mariam va visiter (une amie française).
.....
Mariam va visiter des amies françaises.

(b) Ma mère a acheté (un gâteau) pour moi.
.....
Ma mère a acheté des gâteaux pour moi.

(c) Le père aime beaucoup (son fils).
.....
Le père aime beaucoup ses fils.

(d) Il fait très chaud ici. Fermez la porte et (la fenêtre) s'il vous plaît.
.....
Il fait très chaud ici. Fermez la porte et les fenêtres s'il vous plaît.

(e) Regardez (ce corbeau) sur l'arbre.
.....
Regardez ces corbeaux sur l'arbre.

Extract 3.1: A Sample of the Correct Responses to Question 3

Extract 3.1 is a sample response from a student who managed to change the words which were in the brackets into plural form in the given sentences.

Further analysis shows that 26.6 per cent of the students (2,733) had weak performance as they were able to respond correctly to only one out of the five items.

In item (a) students were required to write in plural form the words in brackets *une amie française* (a female French friend). Some of the students who performed poorly failed to understand the plural form of the indefinite article *une* (a) which is *des* (some), the plural form of the feminine noun *amie* (friend) which is *amies* (friends) and the plural form of the female nationality adjective which is *françaises*. For example, one of the students wrote *de amie français* (of French friend). In this incorrect sentence, the words *de* and *amie* must have –s to form plural *des amies* (the friends) and the word *français* must have –es to form plural form as *françaises* because it is a feminine plural adjective. In another incorrect sentence, one of the students added the definite article *les* (the) which made the sentence to lose its meaning. For example, the student wrote *Mariam va visiter des amies les françaises* (Mariam is going to visit the friends the French people). In addition to that, another student wrote an incorrect sentence as *Mariam va visiter un amie françaisoz*. In this sentence, the student failed to change the indefinite article *un* (a) and the noun *amie* (friend) into *des* (the) and *amies* (friends), respectively. In the same sentence, the word *françaisoz* does not exist in French language, as a result the student got low marks.

In item (b), the students were supposed to write the plural form of the words *un gâteau* (a cake). Those who failed this item did not understand the plural form of the indefinite article *un* (a) which is *des* (some) and the suffix –x is required to be added to form the plural form of the noun *gâteau* (cake) to make it *gâteaux* (cakes) and not *gâteaux* as some students wrote. There were some students who added -s, -es at the end of the word *gâteau* to form the incorrect words as *gateaus* and *gateaues*. All these words do not exist in French language. These students did not have adequate knowledge of transforming singular words into plural form.

In item (c), the students were required to write the plural form of words *son fils* (his son). Some of the students who got this item wrong didn't understand the use of possessive adjectives, particularly in the third person singular and plural. The sentence was *Le père aime beaucoup (son fils)*

(The father likes so much his son). These students failed to understand that the person who possesses is *le père* (the father) and is in the third person singular and *son fils* (his son) is in the singular form. *Son fils* (his son) need to be transformed to the plural form to give *ses fils* (his sons). The noun *fils* (sons) doesn't require an -s as it has got it in its singular form. Writing *filss* or otherwise as some students did was wrong. For example, some students wrote *un files, son filles, sa fils, de fills, sons fils, sonne fils, son filnent*. All students who wrote such words failed to transform the given singular noun phrase *son fils* (his son) into the correct plural form *ses fils* (his sons) hence scored weak marks.

In item (d), students were supposed to write in plural form the words in brackets *la fenêtre* (the window). Some of the students who gave wrong answer failed to understand that *la* (the) is the singular form whose plural form is *les* (the) and the noun *fenêtre* (window) was a singular feminine noun that needed an addition of an s to give *les fenêtres* (the windows). One of the examples of wrong answers given by students were: *la fenêtres* (the windows). The student didn't transform the article *la* (the) before the noun *fenêtres* (windows) into plural form *les* (the) so as to concord it with the plural form of the noun *fenêtres* (windows). Some students got low marks because they failed to change both the definite article *la* (the) and the noun *fenêtre* (window). Instead some of them wrote the same noun phrase as *la fenêtre* (the window), others wrote the preposition *de* (of) with a singular noun as in *de fenêtre* (of window) while others students wrote feminine and masculine definite articles with words which do not exist in French such as *la franetres*, and *le fenetrent*. Again, there were students who managed to change into plural only one part of the noun phrase as *ce fenêtres, la fenêtres, des fenêtres*. In these noun phrases, only the word *fenêtres* (windows) is a correct plural form while other words before it were incorrectly written by students. As a result, they got low marks.

In item (e), the students were required to write the plural form of words *ce corbeau* (this crow). Some of the students who scored poor marks failed to understand that the word *ce* (this) is a singular demonstrative adjective that is required to be changed into plural form *ces* (these). Again, they failed to understand that the singular noun *corbeau* (crow) was supposed to be changed into plural form by adding a suffix -x. As a rule, words that end with *eau* in French language should take an -x in order to form a plural form. One of the students decided to totally omit the part of sentence that

he/she was required to change into plural. The student wrote *Regardez a beaucoup sur l'arbre*. Some other students got incorrect answers because they wrote possessive adjectives and singular nouns as *son corbeau, ton corbeau* which were irrelevant. Other students wrote the singular subject pronoun and singular noun as *il corbeau, elle corbeau*, both of which were incorrect because the subject pronouns are not used before nouns. There were students who managed to change into plural form only one part of the noun phrase as follows: *ces corbeaus, and ces corbeaues*. In these noun phrases only the word *ces* (these) is a correct plural form while other words after it were incorrectly written by students. Moreover, some students, at the place of demonstrative adjective *ces* (these), wrote forms of the verb être (to be) as *est corbeaus, c'est corbeaus*. Meanwhile, the addition of an s at the end of the word *corbeau* (crow) was also incorrect. Lastly but not the least, others students used singular article before the noun *corbeau* (crow) as *la corbeau, une corbeau*. Extract 3.2 shows poor responses to question 3.

3. Écrivez les mots entre parenthèses comme dans l'exemple.
Exemple : Elle a emprunté (un livre) à la bibliothèque.
 Elle a emprunté **des livres** à la bibliothèque.

(a) Mariam va visiter (une amie française).
Mariam va visiter des amie français

(b) Ma mère a acheté (un gâteau) pour moi.
Ma mère a acheté des gâteaux pour moi

(c) Le père aime beaucoup (son fils).
Le père aime beaucoup son fils

(d) Il fait très chaud ici. Fermez la porte et (la fenêtre) s'il vous plaît.
Il fait très chaud ici. fermez la porte et la fenetre s'il vous plaît

(e) Regardez (ce corbeau) sur l'arbre.
Regardez de corbeau sur l'arbre

Extract 3.2: A Sample of the Incorrect Responses to Question 3

Extract 3.2 is a sample response from a student who failed to correctly transform into plural form the words in brackets in items (a), (c), (d) and (e).

Furthermore, the analysis shows that, there were some students who had an average performance in question 3 as they were able to correctly transform some of the items ranging from 2 to 3. For example, some students transformed one part of the noun phrase from singular to plural, but failed to change the other part, hence they scored average marks.

2.4 Question 4: Short Answers (Near Future tense)

This question required students to transform verbs from simple present tense to near future tense. The question assessed the students' ability to use near future tense in daily life.

The question was attempted by 100 per cent of the students, out of whom 78.9 per cent scored from 0 to 2.5 marks; 11.1 percent scored from 3.0 to 6.0 marks and 10.0 per cent scored from 6.5 to 10 marks. Figure 4 shows the students' performance in this question.

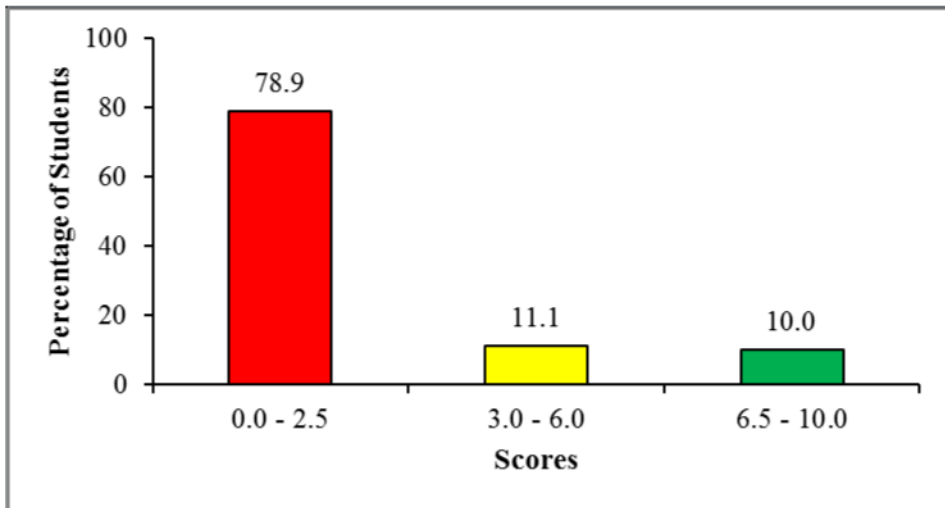


Figure 4: Percentages of the Students' Performance in Question 4

The general performance of the students in this question was weak, since 21.1 per cent of the students scored from 3.0 to 10.0 marks. The analysis of the students' responses indicates that 10.0 per cent of the students (1,030) scored high marks in this question indicating that they had sufficient knowledge of transforming verbs from simple present tense to near future tense.

In item (a), students were given the sentence *Il marche vite vers son père.* (He walks quickly towards his father). Students with high scores wrote this

sentence correctly as *Il va marcher vite vers son père* (He is going to walk quickly towards his father). Such students identified the use of the helping verb *aller* (to go) in the indicative present tense with the addition of the infinitive form of the given verb *marcher* (to walk).

The sentence given in item (b) was *Nous changeons la classe l'année prochaine* (We are changing the class next year). Some students managed to correctly transform the verb *changeons* (change) from simple present tense into near future tense by writing *Nous allons changer la classe l'année prochaine* (We are going to change the class next year). This indicates that students had sufficient knowledge of the topic.

In item (c), the students were given the sentence *Ma mère fait la cuisine ce matin*. (My mother is cooking this morning). In this sentence, some students scored high marks because they managed to correctly identify the third person singular, *ma mère* (my mother) and they accommodated all the necessary changes of the verbs in the near future tense. As a result, the students wrote the correct response *Ma mère va faire la cuisine ce matin*. (My mother is going to cook this morning)

In item (d), the students were given the sentence *Les professeurs viennent dans notre classe* (Teachers come in our class). The correct answer was *Les professeurs vont venir dans notre classe*, (Teachers are going to come in our class). In this sentence, students with high scores managed to write correctly the near future tense because they were able to identify the third person plural *les professeurs* (teachers) which was the subject of the sentence. As a result, they wrote the verbs *vont venir* (are going to come) according to the nature of subject.

In item (e), students were given the sentence, *Vous connaissez mon pays natal* (You know my country of origin). Some of the students who got high marks were able to identify the subject of the sentence which was *vous* (you). Due to this reason, these students decided to make proper changes of the verb *aller* (to go) in relation to subject of the sentence. As a result, they came up with the correct answer which was *Vous allez connaître mon pays natal* (You are going to know my country of origin). These responses show that these students had a good mastery of the topic. Extract 4.1 shows a good response to question 4.

4. Observez et faites comme dans le modèle.

Exemple : Je mets mon stylo sur le pupitre.

Je **vais mettre** mon stylo sur le pupitre.

(a) Il marche vite vers son père.

il va marcher vite vers son père

(b) Nous changeons la classe l'année prochaine.

Nous allons changer la classe l'année prochaine.

(c) Ma mère fait la cuisine ce matin.

Ma mère va faire la cuisine ce matin

(d) Les professeurs viennent dans notre classe.

Les professeurs vont venir dans notre classe.

(e) Vous connaissez mon pays natal.

Vous allez connaître mon pays natal.

Extract 4.1: A Sample of the Correct Responses to Question 4

Extract 4.1 is a sample response from a student who managed to write correctly the sentences into near future tense.

Further analysis shows that 78.9 per cent of the students (8,114) had weak performance as they were able to correctly respond to only one to two out of the five items. The answers they gave were as analysed below.

In item (a), some of the students who failed to write correct response did not understand that the verb *marche* (walk) was in the present simple tense and its infinitive is *marcher* (to walk). Therefore, some students failed to conjugate the verb *aller* (to go) into the present tense by using the subject pronoun *il* (he). For example, some students wrote *il vais marcher*, *il vais marche*... In these two examples, students conjugated the verb *aller* (to go) as it is conjugated with the pronoun *je* (I) as *je vais* (I am going) instead of

il va (he is going). Other students failed to change the verb *marcher* (to walk) into its infinitive form. For example, one of the students wrote *il va marcha*. In addition to that, there were students who wrote different incorrect forms of words which do not exist in the French language such as *Il a vittre ver son pere; il avoit marchent*. In these two examples, the words *vittre, ver* and *avoit* are not French language words. In the second example, the verb *marchent* exists but it was not in the required infinitive form “*marcher*” (to walk).

In item (b), some of the students who responded poorly failed to understand that the verb *changeons* which is in simple present tense, originates from the infinitive verb *changer* (to change). Some students wrote it but failed to relate it with the verb *aller* (to go) in present time as an auxiliary with regards to the subject *nous* in order to get the right answer which was *Nous allons changer la classe l'année prochaine*. For example, some of the incorrect responses were: *Nous avons changeons..., nous avons change..., nous venons change....* In these examples, students wrote ungrammatical sentences. Again, they conjugated the main verb *changer* (to change) in the present simple tense while it was supposed to remain in its infinitive form.

Other incorrect examples were: *nous vont changeont... and nous avez changeont.....* In these examples, students conjugated the verb *changer* (to change) in the simple present tense instead of leaving it in its infinitive form *changer* (to change) so as to form the near future tense.

Furthermore, some students wrote: *nous vais changeont., nous vais changer...* They conjugated the auxiliary verb *aller* (to go) in a wrong form. Before the subject *nous* (we), the verb was supposed to be *allons* (go) which is in the first person plural and not *vais* (go) of the first person singular.

Apart from that, another example of an incorrect answer was *Nous vons changeons.....* The sentence had a word *vons* which does not even exist in French language.

In item (c), some of the students who performed poorly failed to understand the infinitive form of the simple present *fait* which is *faire*. Therefore, some students failed to write it with its precedent verb *aller* in the simple present form in relation to the subject in order to get the right answer which was

Ma mère va faire la cuisine ce matin (My mother is going to look this morning). Some examples of incorrect responses were: *Ma mere va fait...*; *ma mere vais fait...* where in the first example, the students conjugated the auxiliary verb *aller* (to go) in the correct form while in the second example, the students conjugated the auxiliary in an incorrect form. Also, in both examples, the students conjugated the main verb *fait* (does) instead of leaving it in its infinitive form *faire* (to do). Some other students wrote incorrect responses such as: *ma mere va faitre.....* and *ma mere vais faittre...* The students failed to write the infinitive verb *faire* (to do) and wrote the words which do not exist in French language. Those words were *faittre* and *faitre*.

Also, some other incorrect responses were: *ma est mere fait..* and *ma mere a fait...* These students wrote wrong auxiliaries *est* and *a* instead of the verb *aller* (to go). They conjugated the main verb *fait* (does) instead of leaving it in its infinitive form *faire* (to do). On the other hand, in the first example, the student wrote the incorrect sentence *ma est mere* which has no meaning in French language.

In item (d), some of the students who failed to perform well failed to transform the verb *viennent* into its infinitive form of the verb which is *venir* (to come). Some managed to write it but failed to link it with the auxiliary verb *aller* (to go) conjugated in the present simple form. So, they failed to get the correct answer *Les professeurs vont venir dans notre classe* (The teachers are going to come in our class). Some examples of the incorrect responses were: *Les professeurs ont dans...* and *il a professeurs viennent*. In these examples, students wrote sentences with wrong auxiliaries *ont* and *a*. moreover, the students did not write the infinitives, hence left the sentences uncompleted. Also, other examples of incorrect responses written by students were *Les tous professeurs viennent...*, and *il professeurs viennent...*, where the students wrote the sentence with wrong structures.

In item (e), some of the students who had poor performance failed to write the infinitive form of the verb *connaissez*, which is *connaître*. They managed to write the auxiliary verb *aller* in line with the subject, but failed to write the infinitive *connaître* (to know). Consequently, they failed to respond to the question correctly. Some more examples of incorrect responses were: *Vous allez connaitser...* In this example, the student did

not understand the correct infinitive form of the verb *connaître*. Another student wrote the unknown word *vez* as an auxiliary verb. Extract 4.2 shows a poor response to question 4.

4. Observez et faites comme dans le modèle.
Exemple : Je mets mon stylo sur le pupitre.
Je vais mettre mon stylo sur le pupitre.

(a) Il marche vite vers son père.
 Il va marcher vite vers son père.....

(b) Nous changeons la classe l'année prochaine.
 Nous allons changer la classe l'année prochaine.....

(c) Ma mère fait la cuisine ce matin.
 Ma mère va faire la cuisine ce matin.....

(d) Les professeurs viennent dans notre classe.
 Les professeurs vont viennent dans notre classe.....

(e) Vous connaissez mon pays natal.
 Vous allez connaissez mon pays natal.....

Extract 4.2: A Sample of the Incorrect Response to Question 4

Extract 4.2 is a sample of responses from a student who failed to transform the given sentences into the near future.

Moreover, the analysis of the students' responses indicates that 78.9 per cent of the students (8,114) scored average marks in this question as they had partial knowledge of transforming verbs from simple present tense to near future tense. These students scored from 4 to 6 marks.

2.5 Question 5: Comprehension: Expressing Ones' Family (Vocabulary)

In this question, students were given a short text explaining about Nancy's life with her family, school and her friends. The students were required to read the whole passage and answer the questions that follow. The questions

intended to assess students' comprehension skills and ability to respond to various questions from the passage.

The question was attempted by 100 per cent of the students, out of whom 3.3 per cent scored from 0 to 2.5 marks; 24.0 per cent scored from 3.0 to 6.0 marks and 72.7 per cent scored from 6.5 to 10.0 marks. Figure 5 shows the students' performance in this question.

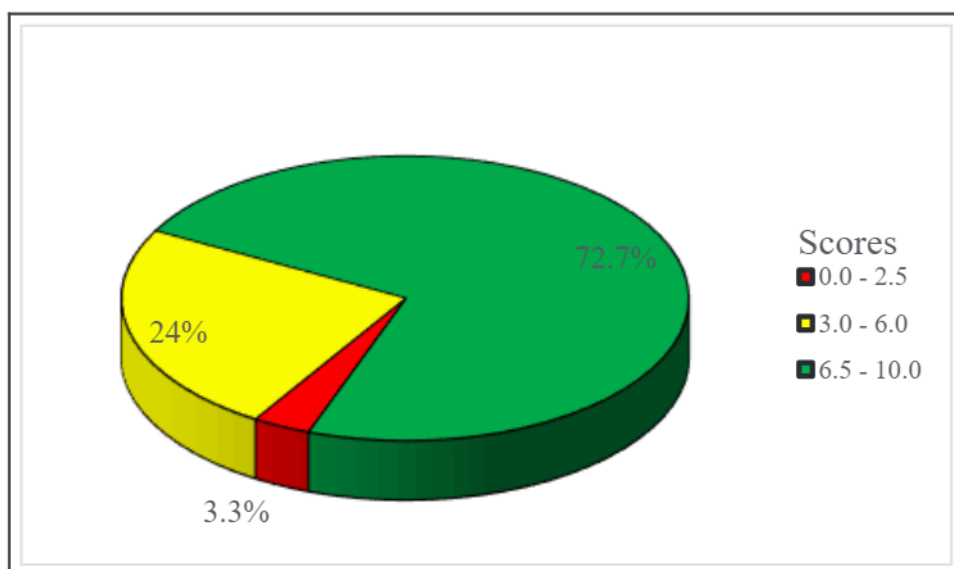


Figure 5: Percentages of the Students' Performance in Question 5

The general performance of the students in this question was good, since 96.7 per cent of the students scored from 3.0 to 10.0 marks. The students' responses analysis reveals that 72.7 per cent of the students (7,474) performed well in this question because they managed to correctly answer from 4 to 5 items. The students' responses analysis indicates that these students understood well the text.

In item (a), the question asked about the age of Nancy and it read; *Nancy a quel âge?* (How old is Nancy?). Some students were able to respond to this question which required them to write the age of Nancy. Some of the students with high marks managed to answer this question correctly as follows: *Nancy a quinze ans* (Nancy is fifteen years old), because it was openly stated in the text provided.

In item (b), the students were asked Nancy's about nationality. The question was as follows: *De quelle nationalité est Nancy?* (What is Nancy's nationality?). The students responded to the question with the correct answer by writing *Nancy est tanzanienne* (Nancy is a Tanzanian) or, *Elle est tanzanienne* (She is Tanzanian). These students read and understood the passage.

In item (c), the students were required to talk about what Nancy does during the weekend: *Qu'est-ce que Nancy fait pendant le weekend?* (What does Nancy do on weekends?). Students who attempted the question correctly answered as follows: *Pendant le weekend Nancy/ Elle aide sa tante à préparer la nourriture,* (On weekends Nancy/ She helps her aunt to prepare some food). The students told what Nancy does on weekend using proper French language because they read and understood the passage.

In item (d), the students were asked to express the reason why Nancy has many friends: The question was as follows: *Pour quoi elle a beaucoup d'amies?* (Why does she have many friends?). Those who responded correctly provided the following answer: *Nancy a beaucoup d'amies parcequ'elle est gentile* (Nancy has many friends because she is kind) or *Elle a beaucoup d'amies parce qu'elle est gentile* (She has many friends because she is kind). The students were able to tell the reason that made Nancy to have many friends because it was clearly indicated in the text.

Item (e) required students to explain the relationship which exists between Nancy and her friends *Comment est-elle avec ses amies?* (How is she with her friends?). The students who got it right responded by writing *Elle est toujours contente avec ses amies* (She is always happy with her friends). The students managed to tell the relationship between Nancy and her friends because they had sufficient comprehension skills.

The analysis indicates that the students who scored high marks had good mastery of the French language vocabulary and good understanding of the passage as they managed to give 3 to 4 correct responses. Extract 5.1 shows a good response to question 5.

Questions:

(a) Nancy a quel âge ?

Nancy a quinze ans.

(b) De quelle nationalité est Nancy ?

Nancy est tanzanienne.

(c) Qu'est-ce que Nancy fait pendant le weekend ?

Pendant le weekend elle aide sa tante à préparer la nourriture.

(d) Pourquoi elle a beaucoup d'amies ?

Elle a beaucoup d'amies parce qu'elle est gentille.

(e) Comment est-elle avec ses amis ?

Elle est toujours contente avec ses amis.

Extract 5.1: A Sample of the Correct Response to Question 5

Extract 5.1 is a sample response from a student who managed to answer correctly all comprehension questions.

Further analysis shows that 3.3 per cent of the students (338) with poor performance provided incorrect responses to almost all items. This indicates that these students had poor mastery of the French language and lacked adequate vocabulary in relation to the questions asked. The following are samples of incorrect responses provided by students who had poor performance.

In item (a) some of the students with poor scores failed to write the correct answer because they did not understand the meaning of words *quinze ans* (fifteen years) and *quel âge* (how old). As a result, one of the students wrote his/her answer as *16 ans* (16 years old). Another student wrote *Nancy est vingt trois ans* (Nancy is twenty-three years old). Another student scored low marks because instead of answering this question by using either the noun Nancy or the third person singular *elle* (she), the student used *je* (I) which is the first-person pronoun. The student wrote: *j'ai quinze ans* (I am

fifteen years old). Another student failed to answer correctly this item because of grammatical errors. The student answered: *Nancy a quel age quinze ans* (Nancy is how old fifteen years old) which was ungrammatical.

In item (b), although many of the students understood the demand of the question, some of them failed to respond to it correctly. The item required students to write the nationality of Nancy. Some of the students wrote *elle habite à Lushoto* (she lives at Lushoto). Such students failed to write the nationality of Nancy by writing a place where Nancy lives. Another student made grammatical errors, consequently, the sentence lost its proper meaning. The answer provided by this student was: *Elle nationalite est tanzanienne* (She nationality is Tanzanian). Another student used the second person singular *tu* (you) instead of the third person singular *elle* (She) or proper noun Nancy. She/he wrote *Tu as tanzanienne* (you have Tanzanian) which was meaningless. Some of the students wrote the name of the country where Nancy comes from: *elle est Tanzanie* (She is Tanzania). This sentence is completely illogical, resulting to the student to score low marks.

In item (c), students were required to tell the things that Nancy does during the week-end. Here, some of the students gave incomplete responses. For example, one wrote the following: *Elle aide sa tante à preparer...* (She helps her aunt to prepare...). The response was incomplete because the student did not specify the things that Nancy helps her aunt to prepare. Other students wrote only a single word *tante* (aunt) which was not correct. Also, there were some students who wrote correctly only the end part of the answer but the beginning of the answer was incorrectly written. For example: *je suis à préparer la nourriture* (I am to prepare the food). Some students incorrectly wrote the final part of the sentence: *sa tante à préparer la nourriture* (her aunt to prepare the food). Consequently, the sentence lost its meaning and hence the student scored low marks. In another case, the students asked the examiner a question instead of giving the answer by writing the following example, *Qui Nancy fait pendant le week-end* (Who Nancy does during the week-end).

In item (d), the students were required to explain the reason why Nancy has many friends. Some of the students started their sentences correctly as *Elle a beaucoup d'amies parce que...* (She has many friends because...) but

they failed to finish their answers. As a result, their answers missed the key word which was the correct part of the answer. Due to that reason, the student scored low marks. In another case, instead of explaining the reason which made Nancy to have many friends, students explained the class that Nancy studies as *Deuxième année à l'école secondaire de Mtakuja* (Form two at Mtakuja secondary school). Others explained Nancy's behaviour, *contente avec ses amies* (happy with her friends), *elle est toujours active* (she is always active).

In the item (e), the students did not understand the question. Some of these students provided incorrect responses by writing the answers which did not relate to the question asked. For example, some students wrote the following incorrect responses; *pendant le weekend* (during the weekend), *un grand appartement avec son oncle* (a big appartement with his uncle), *Elle aime le français et l'anglais* (She likes French and English), *le français* (French language). They explained the things that Nancy does during the week-end as *Pendant le week-end elle aide sa tante à préparer la nourriture*. (During the week-end she helps her aunt to prepare some food). Also, some students wrote incorrect responses such as: *Elle s'appelle Nancy* (Her name is Nancy), *Elle aime le français et l'anglais*) instead of explaining the relationship that Nancy has with her friends. Extract 5.2 is a poor response in question 5.

Questions:

(a) Nancy a quel âge ?

Nancy est quinze ans

(b) De quelle nationalité est Nancy ?

Nancy est Tanzanienne

(c) Qu'est-ce que Nancy fait pendant le weekend ?

Nancy aide sa tante à préparer la nourriture.

(d) Pourquoi elle a beaucoup d'amies ?

Elle aime le française et l'anglais.

(e) Comment est-elle avec ses amies ?

Elle aime le français et l'anglais.

Extract 5.2: A Sample of the Incorrect Responses to Question 5

Extract 5.2 shows responses from a student who failed to use the correct verb in (a), and failed to respond to the question in (d) which asked why Nancy has many friends. In (e), the student also failed to respond correctly to the question which asked about Nancy's relationship with her friends.

On the other hand, the analysis of the students' responses indicates that there were students who had an average performance. These students were able to score 2 to 3 items. Most of them provided correct responses which had some grammatical errors that hindered them from scoring high marks.

2.5.1 Question 6: Short Answer Questions (Negative responses to affirmative questions)

In this question, students were required to respond negatively to the questions asked.

The question was attempted by 100 per cent of the students, out of whom 57.8 per cent scored from 0 to 2.5 marks, 21.9 per cent scored from 3.0 to 6.0 marks and 20.3 per cent scored from 6.5 to 10.0 marks. Figure 5 shows the students' performance in this question.

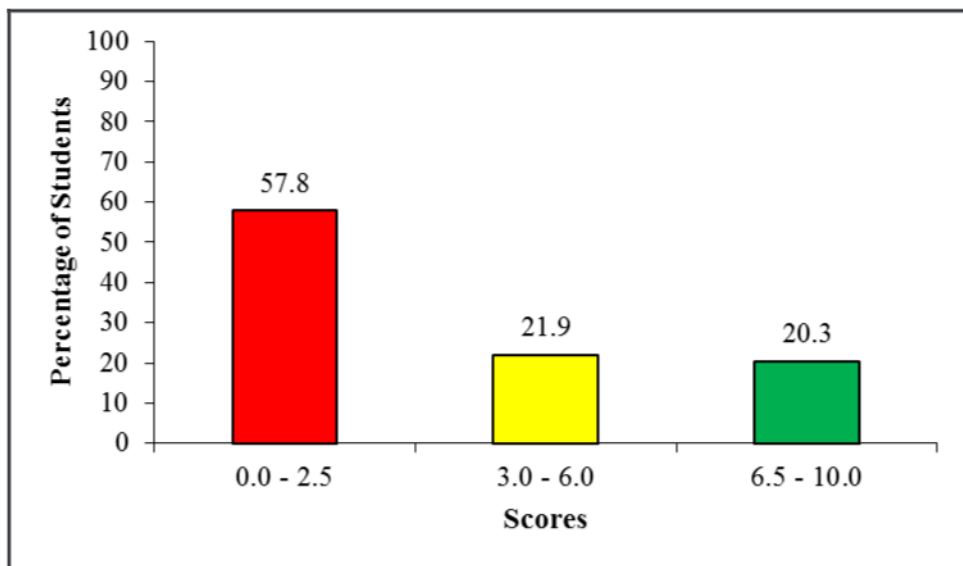


Figure 6: Percentages of the Students' Performance in Question 6

The general performance of the students in this question was average, since only 42.2 per cent of the students scored from 3.0 to 10.0 marks. The analysis in this question shows that 20.3 per cent of the students (2,086) who attempted this question scored high marks. These students had good mastery of French language and good understanding of the topic as they gave 3 to 5 correct responses in this question. Their responses were as analysed hereunder.

In item (i), the question was: *Vous avez regardé les films anglais?* (Have you watched the English film) The answer had to begin with *Non, nous.....* (No, we.....) and they answered correctly by writing: *Non,*

nous n'avons pas regardé les films anglais (No, we did not watch the English film). So the students who responded well were able to use the negative expression *ne...pas* and managed to put the auxiliary verb between them followed by the past participle of the main verb.

In item (ii), the question was as follows: *Elles sont allées au marché?* (Did they go to market?). The students who scored high marks in this particular question responded: *Non, Elles ne sont pas allées au marché* (No, they did not go to market). This shows that, these students were able to place the auxiliary verb between the negation and the past participle in the right position because they had sufficient knowledge on answering questions in negative forms using the expression *ne...pas* (don't).

In item (iii), the students were asked the following question: *Tu as tué le mouton?* (Have you killed the sheep?). The students who responded correctly wrote: *Non, je n'ai pas tué le mouton* (No, I did not kill the sheep). The students managed to change the verb concordant to their subject as well as placing negative words appropriately, and the sentences they gave were readable and meaningful.

In item (iv), the students were required to answer the question *Vous avez acheté les livres de français?* (Have you bought French Books?). One of the students who answered correctly this item wrote as follows: *Non, je n'ai pas acheté les livres de français* (No, I haven't bought French books).

In item (v), the question was : *Ils sont arrivés hier soir ?* (Did they arrive yesterday evening?). Those who answered correctly wrote the following response: *Non, ils ne sont pas arrivés hier soir* (No, they did not arrive yesterday evening). Extract 6.1 shows a correct response to question 6.

6. Répondez négativement aux questions suivantes.

Exemple : Vous avez mangé ?

Non, je n'ai pas mangé.

(i) Vous avez regardé les films anglais ?

Non, nous n'avons pas regardé les films anglais.

(ii) Elles sont allées au marché ?

Non, elles ne sont pas allées au marché.

(iii) Tu as tué le mouton ?

Non, je n'ai pas tué le mouton.

(iv) Vous avez acheté les livres de français ?

Non, je n'ai pas acheté les livres de français.

(v) Ils sont arrivés hier soir ?

Non, ils ne sont pas arrivés hier soir.

Extract 6.1: A Sample of the Correct Response to Question 6

Extract 6.1 is a sample response from a student who managed to respond negatively to the question asked.

Moreover, the analysis indicates that 57.8 per cent of the students (5,943) who had low performance in this question had insufficient knowledge of transforming sentences from positive to negative form. The following are samples of incorrect responses provided by some of the students in this question.

In item (i), the question was as follows: *Vous avez regardé les films anglais?* (Have you watched the English films?). The student who failed in this item did not manage to change the verb in relation to the subject, consequently, they ended up by scoring poor marks. The correct answer is *Non, Nous n'avons pas regardé.* Most of the students failed to place the auxiliary verb between the negation *ne....pas* instead they put the auxiliary verb and the past participle together between the negations *ne.....pas*. For

example, one of the students responded as follows: *None, nous n'avons regardé pas le film anglais*; instead of writing the correct response which is *non, nous n'avons pas regardé le film anglais*.

In item (ii), the students failed to place well the negation *ne.....pas* (don't) in their position as the French grammar rules require. For example, some students answered the question *Elles sont allées au marché?* by writing *Non, elles ne sont allées pas au marché/ elles ne pas sont allées au marché* instead of writing *Non, elles ne sont pas allées au marché*. They misplaced the negation sign. Others wrote double auxiliaries in answering the question. For example, one student wrote *Elles n'ai sommes pas regardé les films anglais*.

In item (iii), the students who got it wrong failed to observe some grammatical rules. For example, the change of the subject requires the change of the verb too. So, some students failed to adhere to these changes as required. For example, in the question *Tu as tué le mouton?* (Have you killed the sheep?) *Non, je n'ai pas tué le mouton* (No, I haven't killed the sheep). The subject in the question is concordant to the structure of the auxiliary verb, the change of the subject in the answer leads to the change of the structure of the auxiliary verb.

In item (iv), some of the students failed to accommodate the necessary changes in the sentence when answering the question. For example, the subject *vous* (you) changes to the subject *nous* (we) or *je* (I) when answering the question. The changes of the subject which is a doer of the action leads to the change of the verb form. In the question *Vous avez acheté les livres de français?* (Have you bought a French book?). For example, the correct answer was *Non, Je n'ai pas acheté les livres de français* (No, I haven't bought a French book). The change of the subject *Vous* to *Je*, automatically change the verb from *avez* to *ai*. The students who failed to answer this question did not manage to accommodate these changes.

In item (v), most of the students who scored low marks failed to discover that the subject *ils* (they) remains unchanged as per the instructions given. The question was *Ils sont arrivés hier soir?* (Did they arrive yesterday evening?) required students to write as follows: *Non, ils ne sont pas arrivés*

hier soir (No, they haven't arrived yesterday evening). However, some of the students who scored low marks responded by writing *Non, ils es n'ai pas arrivés hier soir*. Extract 6.2 shows a poor response to question 6.

6. Répondez négativement aux questions suivantes.

Exemple : Vous avez mangé ?
Non, je n'ai pas mangé.

(i) Vous avez regardé les films anglais ?
Non, nous a nous ne pas regardé les films anglais.

(ii) Elles sont allées au marché ?
Non, elles sont ne pas allées au marché.

(iii) Tu as tué le mouton ?
Non, je n'a tué pas le mouton.

(iv) Vous avez acheté les livres de français ?
Non, je n'ai achete' les livres de français.

(v) Ils sont arrivés hier soir ?
Non, ils sont ne pas arrivés hier soir.

Extract 6.2: A Sample of the Incorrect Responses to Question 6

Extract 6.2 is a sample response from a student who failed to respond negatively to the given questions.

The analysis of the students' responses further indicates that there were some students who scored 2 to 3 items out of 5 as a result, they had average performance. Most of them provided correct responses which had some grammatical errors. For example, some students failed to place the negation or accents at their correct positions. Such errors hindered them from scoring high marks.

2.6 Question 7: Short Answer Questions (Days of the Week)

In this question, students were required to fill in the blanks with the correct day of the week. The question tested students' knowledge of the days of the week.

The question was attempted by 100 percent of the students, out of whom 84.6 per cent scored from 0.0 to 2.5 marks; 9.6 per cent scored from 3.0 to 6.0 marks and 5.8 per cent scored from 6.5 to 10.0 marks. Figure 7 shows the students' performance in this question.

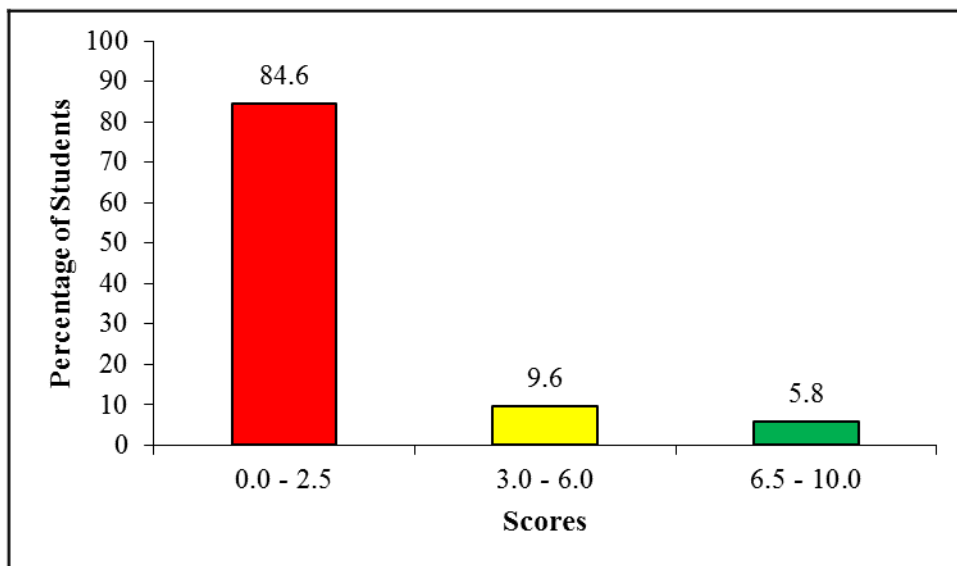


Figure 7: Percentages of the Students' Performance in Question 7

The general performance of the students in this question was poor, since only 15.4 per cent of the students scored from 3.0 to 10.0 marks. The students' response analysis indicates that 5.8 per cent of the students (599) scored high marks in this question. They were able to fill in the blanks with the appropriate days of the week. This is because they read the dialogue carefully and understood it well. They were also able to understand the different contexts in which these days of the week are used.

In item (a), the students were able to provide the days of the week because they understood the sentence provided before the blank space in (a) which is *Aujourd'hui c'est mercredi* (Today is Wednesday) as well as *le jour après demain* (the day after tomorrow). Therefore, the correct response in

this item was *vendredi* (Friday). ... *Aujourd'hui c'est mercredi, on a le cours de français, le jour après demain va être quel jour en français?* (...today is Wednesday, we have a French lesson, what will be the day after tomorrow in French?). The correct answer is Friday since it's the day that comes after Thursday which is the next day from Wednesday.

In item (b), the students with high scores were able to understand the meaning of the words *mais hier c'était* (but yesterday was) ... This part of the sentence helped them to fill in the correct day of the week in this item which was *mardi* (Tuesday). This is due to the fact that, if today is Wednesday, it means yesterday was Tuesday.

In item (c), the students managed to understand today's name which is *mercredi* (Wednesday) as provided in the text, and it was easy for them to recognise the day of tomorrow which is *jeudi* (Thursday).

In item (d) and (e), the students were required to write two days that come before yesterday. The students with high scores were able to reply correctly to this item because they were aware of today's day as given in the dialogue. They also understood the meaning of *les deux jours avant-hier*, (the two days before yesterday). If today is Wednesday, then it can be concluded that, the two days before yesterday are Sunday and Monday. Therefore, the correct answers in this item were *dimanche* (Sunday) and *lundi* (Monday). Extract 7.1 shows a sample of the correct responses provided by a student in this question.

7. Complétez les espaces vides dans ce dialogue en utilisant les jours de la semaine.

Adeline : Bonjour Sarah !

Sarah : Bonjour Adeline ! Aujourd'hui c'est mercredi, on a un cours de Français, le jour après demain va être quel jour en français ?

Adeline : Va être (a).....*vendredi*.....Mais hier c'était (b)*mardi*..... et demain va être (c)*jeudi*.....

Sarah : Oh ! C'est bien, et quels sont les deux jours avant-hier?

Adeline : Les deux jours avant-hier sont (d)*lundi*..... et (e)*dimanche*.....

Sarah : Merci beaucoup mon amie ! Au revoir !

Adeline : Au revoir Sarah.

Extract 7.1: A Sample of the Correct Responses to Question 7

Extract 7.1 is a sample of responses from a student who managed to write the days of the week as they were required in the given dialogue.

Further analysis shows that 84.6 per cent of the students (8,700) had poor performance because they provided incorrect names of the days which did not relate to the context of the dialogue provided.

In item (a), some students failed to fill in the correct day of the week due to lack of knowledge of both the scenario and the usage of the adverb of time *le jour après demain* (the day after tomorrow). As a result, they wrote *jeudi* (Thursday) which is tomorrow instead of writing *vendredi* (Friday). Additionally, other students failed to understand today's day in relation to the context which was *mercredi* (Wednesday). Consequently, they provided

different incorrect names of the days such as *lundi* (Monday) and *Mardi* (Tuesday).

In item (b), one of the students who scored low marks failed to understand the adverb of time *hier* (yesterday). Since Wednesday was today's day then yesterday was *mardi* (Tuesday). Therefore, due to the failure of understanding the adverb of time, many incorrect days of the week were given by students. Thus, they scored low marks.

Likewise, in item (c), there was an adverb of time *demain* (tomorrow). Students failed to understand this adverb of time which led them to write incorrect days. As a result, they wrote different wrong answers like *lundi* (Monday), *samedi* (Saturday) e.t.c.

Some of the wrong answers provided in items (d) and (e) were *jours* (days), *semaine* (week), and *mois* (month). These incorrect responses were due to the fact that some of the students failed to understand the meaning of the adverb of time *les deux jours avant-hier* (two days before yesterday). Since today is Wednesday as indicated in the text and yesterday was Tuesday, then two days before yesterday should be *lundi* (Monday) and *dimanche* (Sunday). Extract 7.2 shows a poor response to question 7.

7. Complétez les espaces vides dans ce dialogue en utilisant les jours de la semaine.

Adeline : Bonjour Sarah !

Sarah : Bonjour Adeline ! Aujourd'hui c'est mercredi, on a un cours de Français, le jour après demain va être quel jour en français ?

Adeline : Va être (a).....*Lundi*.....Mais hier c'était (b)*Mardi*..... et demain va être (c) ...*Mardi*.....

Sarah : Oh ! C'est bien, et quels sont les deux jours avant-hier?

Adeline : Les deux jours avant-hier sont (d) ...*Vendredi*..... et (e) ...*Samedi*.....

Sarah : Merci beaucoup mon amie ! Au revoir !

Adeline : Au revoir Sarah.

Extract 7.2: A Sample of the Incorrect Responses to Question 6

Extract 7.2 is a sample response from a student who failed to write the correct days of the week.

On the other hand, the analysis of the students' responses indicates that there was 9.6 per cent of the students (980) who had an average performance. These students were able to write two to three correct days of the week while the rest of the days of the week were incorrect. Consequently, such students scored averagely.

2.7 Question 8: Self Introduction

In this question, students were required to answer to questions about self-introduction. In this question, there were five unfilled gaps in which students were required to write either a question or a response depending on the context. The question was in a dialogue form which was a conversation between Pilimina and Juliana. The question assessed the students' ability to introduce themselves.

The question was attempted by 100% of the students, out of whom 30.7 per cent scored from 0.0 to 2.5 marks; 41.8 per cent scored from 3.0 to 6.0 marks and 27.5 per cent scored from 6.5 to 10.0 marks. Figure 8 shows students' performance in this question.

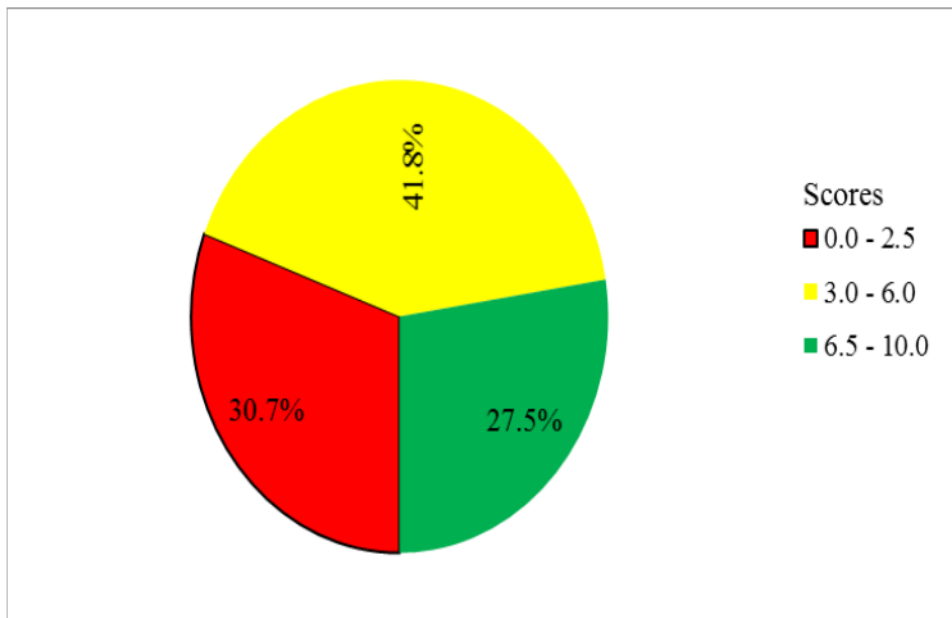


Figure 8: Percentages of the Students' Performance in Question 8

The general performance of the students in this question was average, since only 69.3% of the students scored from 3.0 to 10.0 marks. The students' responses analysis in this question shows that 27.5 per cent of the students (2,822) scored high marks. These students were understood the sentences and expressions used in the dialogue as they were able to provide the correct responses which resulted to scoring high marks as shown below:

In item (a), students were required to ask a question because the first sentence in the text was a statement that introduces a speaker. The question was *Pilimina: Bonjour, je m'appelle Pilimina, et toi, (a).....?* (Good morning, my name is Pilimina, and you (a)..... ?) The possible responses were *comment tu t'appelles/ tu t'appelles comment ? ou comment t'appelles-tu ?* (What is your name?). Knowledgeable students demonstrated ability to respond to the question asked in item (a). They completed the dialogue by writing the appropriate response (question).

In item (b), the students were required to provide the response to the following question: *Pilimina: Tu habites où?* (Where do you live?) (b) *Juliana:à Njombe*. The students who scored high marks responded by writing the following: *J'habite à Njombe* (I live in Njombe).

In item (c) the question was as follows: *Pilimina: Tu as quel âge?* (How old are you?). Students answered it correctly by writing (c) *J'ai...ans*. (I am...years old) or *J'ai dix-huit ans* (I am eighteen years old).

Item (d) required students to tell when they would go home and the question was constructed as: *Quand est-ce que tu vas à la maison?* (When are you going home?). Students were supposed to say that they would go home the next Wednesday. The correct response was: *Je vais aller à la maison mercredi prochain* (I am going to go home next Wednesday) *ou j'irai à la maison mercredi prochain* or *Je vais à la maison mercredi prochaine* (I will go home next Wednesday or Simply, I am going home next wednesday).

In item (e), students with high scores managed to make a wish to someone taking a leave. The sentence given was as follows: *Juliana: Au revoir* (good bye) *Pilimina.*the correct answer was *Au revoir* (good bye)

or *au revoir Juliana* (Good bye Juliana). Extract 8.1 shows a sample of the correct response to question 8.

8. Vous êtes un(e) élève de français à l'école secondaire. Vous rencontrez un autre élève qui apprend le français. Complétez le dialogue en répondant aux questions.

Pilimina : Bonjour, je m'appelle Pilimina.
Et toi, (a) *Comment tu t'appelles* ?

Juliana : Moi, je m'appelle Juliana.
Pilimina : Tu habites où ?
Juliana : (b) *J'habite* à Njombe.

Pilimina : Tu as quel âge ?
Juliana : (c) *J'ai quinze ans*
Quand est-ce que tu vas aller à la maison ?
Pilimina : (d) *Je vais aller* mercredi prochain.

Juliana : Au revoir Pilimina.
Pilimina : (e) *Au revoir Juliana*

Extract 8.1: A Sample of the Correct Responses to Question 8

Extract 8.1 is a sample of correct responses from a student who managed to make a self-introduction in the form of questions and answers. These students had sufficient knowledge on self-expression.

Moreover, the analysis of the students' responses in this question indicates that 30.7 per cent of the students had poor performance. The students provided 1 to 2 correct responses out of 5 given items. The following are samples of the responses from some of the students who had poor performance in this question.

In item (a), students were required to ask a question on someone's name such as *comment tu t'appelles?* (What is your name?). However, some students wrote a declarative sentence such as *Je m'appelle Juliana* (My name is Juliana). These students copied the third sentence in the dialogue. In addition to that, some students composed questions related to greeting someone instead of asking someone's name. For example, one of the

students wrote: *comment ça va* (How are you?), *Bonjour Juliana* (Good morning Juliana), *Bonjour Pilimina* (Good morning Pilimina).

In item (b), the question asked about the place where Juliana lives. The question was: *Pilimina: Tu habites où?* (Where do you live?) In responding to this question, students who scored low marks wrote different incorrect responses. For example, some students wrote incorrect responses such as *J'ai habité à Njombe* (I lived in Njombe). Other students wrongly used the verb *être* (to be) before the main verb by writing *je suis habité à Njombe* (I am lived in Njombe). This sentence is incorrect in French language. There were students who did not understand the requirement of the question. These students used incorrect grammatical structures like *il y a habite à Njombe* (There is live in Njombe). Furthermore, instead of writing a correct declarative sentence, some students wrote questions such as *Elle habite où à Njombe?* (Where does she live? in Njombe).

Item (c) required the students to provide an answer to the following questions: *Tu as quel âge?* (How old are you?). In answering this question, various incorrect responses were written by the students who scored low marks. For instance, one of the students wrote the following ungrammatical sentence *c'est de quinze ans* (This is from 15 years old). The correct answer was *j'ai 10 ans* (I am 10 years old). However, one of the students who scored low marks answered this question by using the third person singular as *elle ai a treize ans* (She have has 13 years old). Another student answered this item by translating the sentence from English language to French language. This student wrote the following: *Je suis treize ans* instead of *J'ai treize ans* (I am thirteen years old).

In item (d), some students did not understand the question : *Quand est-ce que tu vas aller à la maison ?* (When are you going home?) For example, the response from one of the students was *Je suis mercredi prochain* (I am next Wednesday). Another student wrote *moi à la maison mercredi prochain* (me to home next Wednesday). Some other incorrect responses were such as: *moi et aime mercredi prochain* (me and like next Wednesday).

In addition to that, there were ungrammatical sentences from some of the students who scored low marks. For example, one of the students wrote: *à la maison vas mercredi prochain* (to home go next Wednesday), *Aujourd'hui c'est mercredi prochain* (Today is next Wednesday).

Item (e) required the students to write a sentence saying goodbye to someone. Some students wrote to thank someone instead of saying *Au revoir* (goodbye). Such incorrect responses were: *Merci* (Thanks), *Merci beaucoup* (Thanks a lot). Other students wrote meaningless words such as *vemeses*, *vien* and *veni*. Extract 8.2 shows a sample of the incorrect response.

8. Vous êtes un(e) élève de français à l'école secondaire. Vous rencontrez un autre élève qui apprend le français. Complétez le dialogue en répondant aux questions.

Pilimina : Bonjour, je m'appelle Pilimina.
 Et toi, (a) ... *je m'appelle tu*

Juliana : Moi, je m'appelle Juliana.
 Pilimina : Tu habites où ?
 Juliana : (b) ... *Elle habite* à Njombe.

Pilimina : Tu as quel âge ?
 Juliana : (c) ... *Ette de quel soixante ans*

Quand est-ce que tu vas aller à la maison ?
 Pilimina : (d) ... *Tu est-ce que tu vas* mercredi prochain.

Juliana : Au revoir Pilimina.
 Pilimina : (e) ... *Au revoir Juliana*

Extract 8.2: A Sample of the Incorrect Responses to Question 8

Extract 8.2 is a sample of incorrect responses from a student who failed to make a self-introduction in the form of questions or declarative sentences.

Apart from that, the analysis of the students' responses indicates that there were students who had an average performance. These students had partial conversation skills. They managed to score 2 to 3 items. Most of them provided correct responses which had some grammatical errors that hindered them from scoring high marks.

2.8 Question 9: Jumbled Words

In this question, students were required to rearrange the given jumbled words to form correct and well-structured sentences. The question intended to assess students' ability to form clear and meaningful sentences in the French language. In order to rearrange the jumbled words to form

meaningful sentence, students must be aware of different French grammatical rules and structures such as the formation of noun phrase, position of the subjects, verbs, adjectives and other related grammatical items in a sentence.

The question was attempted by 100 percent of the students, out of whom 57.4 per cent scored from 0.0 to 2.5 marks, 25.1 per cent scored from 3.0 to 6.0 marks and 17.5 per cent scored from 6.5 to 10.0 marks. Figure 9 shows the students' performance in this question.

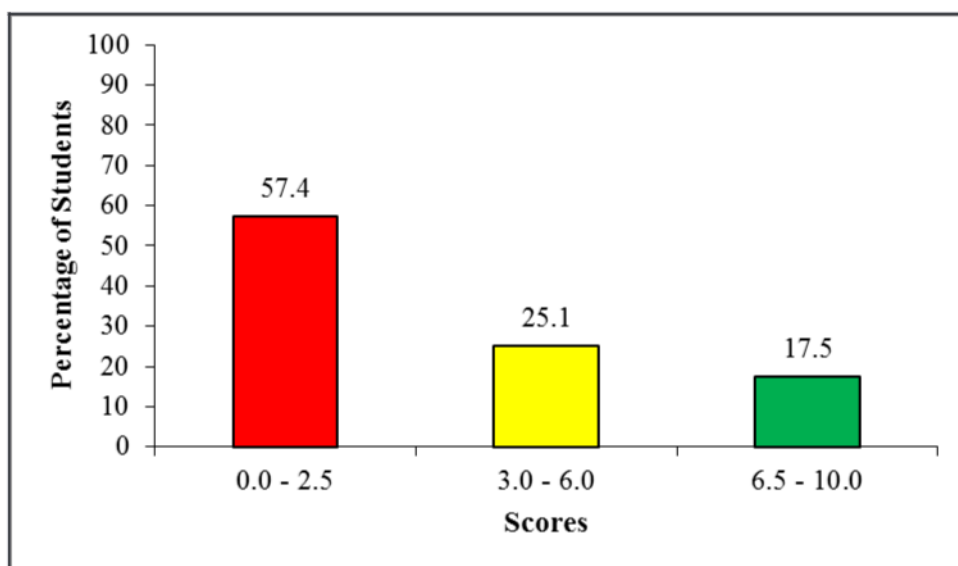


Figure 9: *Percentages of the Students' Performance in Question 9*

The students' general performance in this question was average since 42.6 per cent of the students scored from 3.0 to 10.0 marks. The students' responses analysis indicates that 17.5 per cent of the students (1,797) had good performance as they were able to rearrange correctly 3 to 5 sentences. This indicates that these students had good mastery of the French language, adequate vocabulary and knowledge of different grammatical rules. They also had knowledge of the words given as they managed to rearrange them correctly albeit with minor grammatical errors. Others provided correct sentences to all five items given.

In item (a), the students were required to identify the position of subject, verb and object. The jumbled words provided in this question were *le chat/mangent /de la/ le chien/viande. /et* (the cat/ eat/some/the dog/meat/and). The students with high scores were able to rearrange these words by writing a correct sentence *Le chat et le chien mangent de la viande* (The cat and the dog are eating some meat or the cat and the dog eat some meat). These students were able to connect the two nouns *le chat* (the cat) and *le chien* (the dog) by using the conjunction *et* (and). Also, they managed to place the subject before the verb *mangent* (eat) followed by the object *de la viande* (meat).

In item (b), the jumbled words provided were *éléphants. /Le parc national/ beaucoup / d' a / de Serengeti* (elephants/the national park/many/of/has/of Serengeti). The students with high scores constructed a meaningful sentence by identifying the position of the subject, verb and object of the sentence. The correct answer in this item was *Le parc national de Serengeti a beaucoup d' éléphants* (The national park of Serengeti has many elephants).

In item (c), the students were required to rearrange various grammatical items such as subject, verb, conjunction, preposition, object and adverbial phrase of time. The provided jumbled words in this question were: *au mois de décembre/les élèves/ en /partent/ et/ vacances/ les professeurs* (in the month of December/pupils/in/leave/and/holidays/teachers). Some of the students who scored high marks managed to identify the position of the subject of the sentence which was: *Les élèves et les professeurs* (The pupils and teachers). In addition to that, these students managed to identify the verb of the sentence and its respective position. The verb was *partent* (leave for). Finally, these students successfully identified the position of the prepositional phrase as well as the adverb of time of the sentence. Therefore, the correct response provided by the students who scored high marks was: *les élèves et les professeurs partent en vacances au mois de décembre* (The pupils and the teachers go for holidays in the month of December) or *Au mois de décembre, les élèves et les professeurs partent en vacances* (In the month of December, the pupils and the teachers go for holidays).

In item (d) the students were asked to rearrange the following jumbled words: *Portent/ Les joueurs de notre école/rouges/ les maillots* (wear/our

school players/red/the jersey). In this item, the students were required to place correctly the noun phrase *les joueurs de notre école* (Our school players), followed by the verb in plural form *portent* (wear), ending up with object of the sentence *les maillots rouges* (the red jersey). Some of the students with high scores managed to identify the positions of all provided words. As a result, they came out with the following correct response: *Les joueurs de notre école portent les maillots rouges* (Our school players wear the red jersey).

In item (e) the students were required to identify the position of the subject, verb and object. The jumbled words given in this item were: *La petite/ de Musa/ les robes blanche / fille/ déteste* (the young/ of Musa/ the white dresses/daughter/dislikes). The students who scored high marks had adequate knowledge about the grammatical structure of a sentence. In this case, there were two noun phrases which were formed by different grammatical elements. The first one was *La petite fille de Musa* (Musa's young daughter). This was formed by an article, adjective, noun, preposition and another noun. The second was: *les robes blanches* (the white dresses) which was formed by an article, noun and adjective. Therefore, students with high marks managed to rearrange correctly all the jumbled words. The correct sentence in this item was *La petite fille de Musa déteste les robes blanches*. (Musa's young daughter dislikes the white dresses). Another alternative answer was *la petite fille déteste les robes blanches de Musa*. (the young daughter dislikes Musa's white dresses)

Extract 9.1 shows a sample of the correct response to this question.

9. Mettez les mots suivants en ordre pour constituer une phrase correcte.

Exemple : français. / frère / parle / mon / bien

Mon frère parle bien français.

(a) le chat/mangent/de la/le chien/viande. /et

Le chien et le chat mangent de la viande.....

(b) éléphants. /Le parc national/beaucoup/d'a /de Serengeti

Le parc national de Serengeti a beaucoup d'éléphants.....

(c) au mois de décembre. /Les élèves/en/partent/et/vacances/les professeurs

Les élèves et les professeurs partent en vacances au mois de décembre.....

(d) portent/Les joueurs de notre école/rouges./les maillots

Les joueurs de notre école portent les maillots rouges.....

(e) La petite/de Musa/les robes blanches. /fillo/d'écrite

La petite fille de Musa déteste les robes blanches.....

Extract 9.1: A Sample of the Correct Responses to Question 9

Extract 9.1 is a sample of correct responses from a student who managed to rearrange all the jumbled words correctly.

Apart from that, the analysis shows that 57.4 per cent of the students (5,903) performed poorly in this question because they had insufficient knowledge about rearranging jumbled words in French language. They also had poor grammatical skills and insufficient vocabulary. Some of the students' responses were as follows:

In item (a) for example, instead of writing *le chien et le chat* (the dog and the cat), some students wrote incorrect responses such as *le chien de la mangent* (the dog of the eat), *le chien mangent le chat* (the dog eats the cat), *de la mangent et viande le chat le chien* (of the eat and meat the cat the dog). Other students failed to understand that when a verb takes suffix-ent in simple present tense it indicates that the noun before it must be in third

person plural form. Also, there were students who failed to identify the correct position of the subject, verb and object of the sentence. Consequently, they scored poor marks in this item. For example, one of the students wrote a meaningless sentence *de la mangent et viande le chat le chien* (of the eat and meat the cat the dog).

In item (b), some students failed to rearrange the jumbled words as they were not able to place the verb at its appropriate position. For example, one of the students wrote the following: *le parc national de Serengeti beaucoup d'a éléphants* (The national park of Serengeti many has elephants). Another student failed to identify the subject, verb and object of the sentence and wrote a wrong sentence which read *d'éléphants a beaucoup de Serengeti le parc national* (elephants has many Serengeti the national park). Another example of an incorrect sentence is: *le parc national d'a éléphants de Serengeti beaucoup* (The national park of has elephants of Serengeti many). In addition to that, some students failed to connect the two noun phrases by using preposition *de* (of). For example, one of the students wrote *de Serengeti le parc national* (of Serengeti the national park) instead of writing *le parc national de Serengeti*, (the Serengeti national park).

In item (c), the students were expected to provide the following answer *les élèves et les professeurs partent en vacances au mois de décembre*. (The pupils and the teachers leave for holidays in the month of December). However, instead of responding to this item as shown above, some students wrote different incorrect answers as indicated below.

Firstly, some of them failed to connect the two noun phrases by using the conjunction *et* (and) to get the following structure of words: *les élèves et les professeurs* (the pupils and the teachers). As a result, they wrote the following incorrect structures: *les élèves en vacances les professeurs*, (the pupils in holidays teachers) *les professeurs en vacances partent* (the teachers in holidays leave).

Secondly, others failed to place the verb *partent* (leave for) in its correct position. For example, instead of writing *les élèves et les professeurs partent* (students and teachers leave for) one of the students wrote: *les professeurs vacance les élèves et partent* (teachers holidays students and leave); *les professeurs en vacances partent* (the teachers in holidays leave).

Some students also failed to rearrange well the jumbled words in item (d) to get the correct sentence: *les joueurs de notre école portent les maillots rouges*. (The players of our school wear red jersey). Firstly, there were students who failed to place the subject, verb and object of the sentence in their proper positions. For example, one of them wrote *les maillots portent rouges les joueurs de notre école* (The jersey wear red football players of our school). Another student wrote meaningless sentence : *les joueurs de notre école les maillots portent rouges*. (The players of our school jersey wear red). In this sentence, the student failed to place the verb *portent* (wear) in its proper position. The verb was supposed to be placed between the nouns *école* (school) and *les maillots* (jersey). Secondly, there were students who failed to identify the correct position of some of the adjectives used in the sentences. For example, instead of placing the adjective *rouges* (red) after the noun, one of the students placed it before the article and noun by writing as follows: *les joueurs de notre école portent rouges les maillots* (The players of our school wear red jersey). Thirdly, other students omitted some of the jumbled words. For example, one of the students provided the following response: *élèves les rouges portent maillots* (The pupils the red wear jersey). This student omitted the words such as *joueurs de notre* (players of our).

In item (e), students who scored low marks failed to adhere to the French language sentence structure. For example, instead of *la petite fille de Musa déteste les robes blanches* (Musa's young daughter dislikes the white dresses), one of the students provided the following incorrect response: *de Musa déteste fille la petite les robes blanches* (Musa's dislikes daughter the young the white dresses). With reference to this sentence, it is obvious that this student failed to place the subject, verb and object in their correct positions. Other students placed three nouns at the same place without using conjunctions by writing as follows: *la petite les robes blanche fille* (the young the dresses white daughter). Extract 9.2 shows a sample of incorrect responses provided by one of the students to this question.

9. Mettez les mots suivants en ordre pour constituer une phrase correcte.

Exemple : français. / frère / parle / mon / bien

Mon frère parle bien français.

(a) le chat/mangent/de la/le chien/viande. /et

de de la mangent et viande. le chat le chien.

(b) éléphants. /Le parc national/beaucoup/d' /a /de Serengeti

Le parc national de serengeti beaucoup d' a éléphants

(c) au mois de décembre. /Les élèves/en/partent/et/vacances/les professeurs

Les élèves au mois de décembre en vacances et partent les professeurs

(d) portent/Les joueurs de notre école/rouges./les maillots

Les joueurs de notre école les maillots portent rouges.

(e) La petite/de Musa/les robes blanches. /fille/déteste

La petite de Musa fille déteste les robes blanches.

Extract 9.2: A Sample of the Incorrect Responses to Question 9

Extract 9.2 is a sample of incorrect responses from a student who failed to rearrange the words in a correct order to form meaningful sentences.

On the other hand, students who had average performance had partial understanding of the given words and the correct sentence structures. They failed to rearrange correctly some of the words to form meaningful sentences. Some of these students provided incorrect arrangement of some of the grammatical elements such as subjects, verbs, conjunctions, prepositions, object as well as the adverbs. For example, one student failed to rearrange one of the words in a sentence by writing *la petite de Musa fille déteste les robes blanches* (The young of Musa's daughter dislikes the white dresses) *Instead of la petite fille de Musa déteste les robes blanches* (The Musa's young daughter dislikes the white dresses).

2.9 Question 10: Written Expression/Composition

In this question, the students were required to write a composition by using the given guiding questions. The question intended to test students' ability to express themselves in written form (self-expression). These guiding questions were as follows:

- a) *Comment tu t'appelles?* (What is your name?)
- b) *Comment s'appelle ton professeur d'anglais ?* (What is your English teacher's name?)
- c) *Où se trouve ton école ?* (Where is your school found?)
- d) *Quel cours aimes-tu?* (What subject do you like?)
- e) *Quelle est ta nationalité?* (What is your nationality?)
- f) *Qui est ton ami (e) à l'école ?* (Who is your friend at school?)
- g) *Ton école est loin ou près de la maison ?* (Is your school far or near your home?)
- h) *Comment vous allez à l'école ? (moyens de transport)* (How do you go to school? (the means of transport))
- i) *Qui est le directeur de ton école ?* (Who is your school Headmaster's name?)
- j) *Qui t'accompagne au moment d'aller à l'école et au moment de rentrer à la maison ?* (Who accompanies you when you go to school and when you come back home?)

The question was attempted by 100 percent of the students, out of whom 72.9 per cent scored from 0.0 to 4.5 marks; 20.4 per cent scored from 5.0 to 10.0 marks and 6.7 percent scored from 10.5 to 15.0 marks. Figure 10 shows the students' performance in this question.

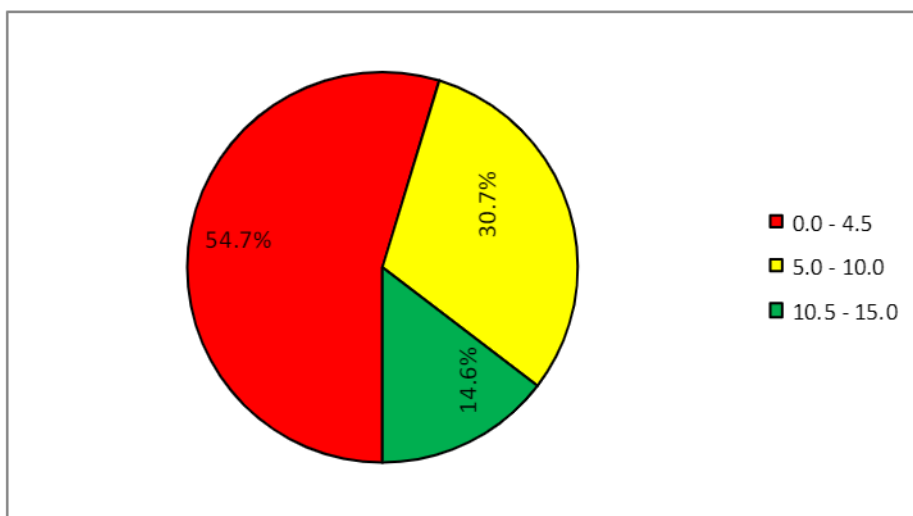


Figure 10: Percentages of the Students' Performance in Question 10

The general performance of the students in this question was poor, since only 27.1 percent of the students scored from 4.5 to 15.0 marks. The analysis of the students' responses shows that there were few students (684) who performed well in this question. These students had good composition writing skills, and good command of the French language in terms of vocabulary and grammar. They were aware of all the principles that govern composition writing. They knew that a comprehensive composition should have good organization of ideas and logical flow of information.

Some of the students with high marks divided their composition into well-arranged paragraphs. Also, they observed most of the French grammatical rules such as the use of conjunctions, accents and appropriate vocabulary related to the context of the question. Furthermore, the students organised their ideas sequentially. They also followed almost all of the composition writing procedures such as introduction, main body as well as conclusion. However, their essays had some few errors including improper use of punctuation marks, conjugations of verbs and some grammatical errors.

The analysis shows that, the students who answered correctly in respect to the given guidelines observed all French grammatical rules. For example, in the introduction part, students responded well to the question *Comment tu t'appelles?* (What is your name?) where they provided the answer such as *Je m'appelle....* (My name is....). Also, these students answered well to the question which required them to tell their nationality. They also provided

correct responses to question such as: *Comment s'appelle ton professeur d'anglais?* (What is your English teacher's name?). They answered *mon professeur d'anglais s'appelle* (My english teacher is called.....). Another question was *Où se trouve ton école?* (Where is your school found?). One of the correct responses provided by students was *Mon école se trouve à Songea/Mwanza* (My school is found in Songea/Mwanza). Another question was *Quel cours aimes-tu?* (What subject do you like?). Here, some of the students with high scores answered by telling the subject they like. Some of the correct answers were *J'aime le cours de français, j'aime l'anglais*, among others. These students also provided the correct response to the guiding question which asked *Ton école est loin ou près de la maison?* (is your school far or near to your home?). Some of their answers were : *Mon école se trouve loin/ près de la maison*. Students were also required to answer the question *Comment vous allez à l'école ? (moyens de transport)* (How do you go to school? (The means of transport)). Some of the students correctly wrote their responses such as: *Je vais à l'école à pied/ je vais à l'école en bus*. Moreover, the students provided a good conclusion by answering to the question *Qui t'accompagne au moment d'aller à l'école et au moment de rentrer à la maison ?* (Who accompanies you the moment when you go to school or the moment when you back home?)

Extract 10.1 is a sample of response from a student who provided correct responses by adhering to composition writing rules but with some

few errors.

SE PRESENTATION PERSONELLE:
Je m'appelle Simon Star. Mon professeur
d'anglais s'appelle Monsieur Ricardo Alexandra. Mon
école se trouve à Nyahinghi dans la région de
Mwanza. J'aime le cours de Français parce qu'il
n'est pas difficile. Ma nationalité est tanzanien. Mon
ami à l'école est Barasa Gura. Mon école est très
loin de la maison. Je vais à l'école à pied.
Mon le directeur de mon école s'appelle Monsieur
Pora Sikitu. Mon amie, Sofia m'accompagne au
moment d'aller à l'école ~~du matin~~ à 7.30 heures
du matin.
Merci. Au revoir.

Extract 10.1: A Sample of a Correct Response to Question 10

Extract 10.1 is a sample of correct responses from a student who wrote a good essay on self-expression by adhering to the composition writing rules. However, there were some few grammatical and structural errors.

Furthermore, there were some students (7490) who had poor performance in this question. They wrote compositions of poor quality due to inappropriate use of vocabulary and grammatical rules. Some of them copied randomly some words from the question paper while others just listed their answers. This shows that they were incompetent in expressing themselves in writing.

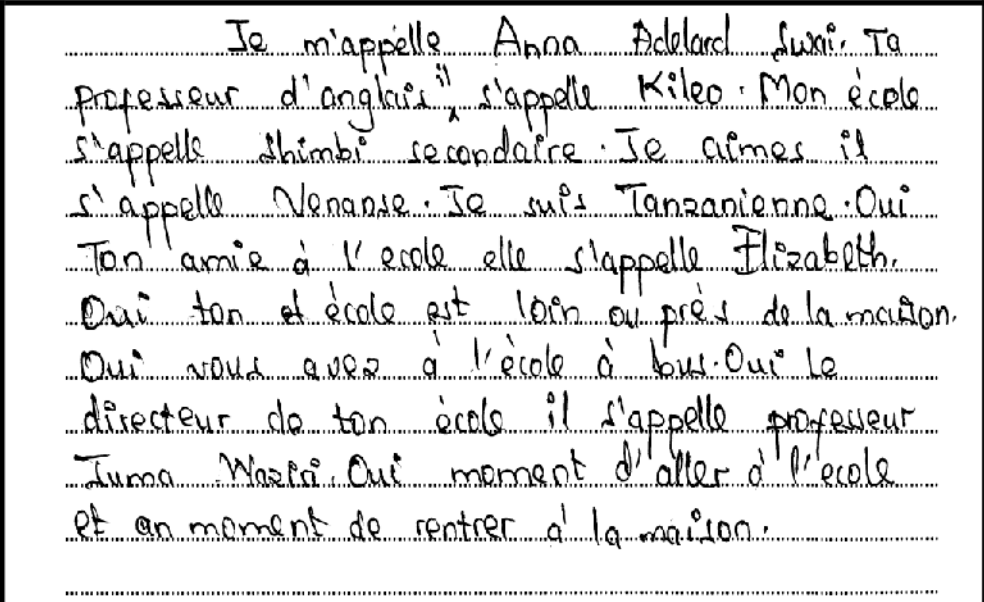
The analysis shows that, some students failed to understand the guiding questions, resulting to the failure to provide correct responses, hence scoring low marks. For example, in the question *comment tu t'appelles?* (What is your name?), one of the students just mentioned his/her name and used wrong statements as follows: *comment t'appelles Jean* (what is your name John).

Other students code switched the language from French language to English language. For example, one student answered the question *Quel est le directeur de ton école ?* (Who is the Headmaster of your school?) by writing *Le directeur de ton école is Mpendawatu.* (The headmaster of your school is Mpendawatu). On the other hand, some students misinterpreted the requirement of the question. Consequently, they provided incorrect responses such as : *ton école est loin ou près de la maison ?* (Is your school far or near you home?) *Mon école s'appelle Igawilo.* (My school is called Igawilo).

Students amounting to 35 % did not follow the instructions of the question. Instead of answering the question in the form of composition, they listed the answers without adhering to the instructions given. This led to total failure in the question and scored zero mark.

Some students just copied questions and wrote them as answers in the blank spaces provided. For example, one of them wrote *Quel est ton ami (e) à l'école?* (Who is your friend at the school?), they just answered *Quel est ton ami (e) à l'école? Juma.* (Who is your friend at the school? Juma).

One of the students wrote the following response in extract 10.2.



Je m'appelle Anna Adlard Luni. Ta
professeur d'anglais", s'appelle Kileo. Mon école
s'appelle Shimbi secondaire. Je aime il
s'appelle Venante. Je suis Tanzanienne. Oui
Ton amie à l'école elle s'appelle Elizabeth.
Oui ton école est loin ou près de la maison.
Oui vous avez à l'école à lui. Oui le
directeur de ton école il s'appelle professeur
Juma Wasia. Oui moment d'aller à l'école
et au moment de rentrer à la maison.

Extract 10.2: A Sample of the Student's Incorrect Responses to Question 10

Extract 10.2 is a sample of a poor response from a student who answered differently to the guiding questions. Furthermore, the student used inappropriate vocabulary and poor grammatical structure.

Further analysis indicates that, some students with average performance had partial skills of writing compositions. For example, one of them wrote a composition in the form of answering short answer questions instead of using paragraphs. Other students responded to few guiding question while leaving other questions unanswered. This hindered them from scoring high marks. Likewise, some students wrote full essays but with some grammatical errors. This made them to be penalised, hence ended up scoring averagely.

3.0 STUDENTS' PERFORMANCE IN EACH TOPIC

The analysis of the students' performance indicates that out of the 4 topics that were assessed in the French Language, there was good performance in the topic of *Vocabulary and Expressions* (in questions number 1 and 2). Students performed well in the topic of *Vocabulary and Expressions* compared to other topics because they had sufficient vocabulary and grammatical skills. The performance in this topic has increased by 7.2 percent when compared to that of 2022. In 2023, the performance was 69.5 percent whereas in 2022 it was 62.3 percent as indicated in appendix B.

Further analysis shows that there was an average performance in the topics of *Language Pattern/Structure* (in questions 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7) and *Language Use* (in questions number 8 and 9). The performance in these two topics shows that there was an increase of performance in the topic of *Language Use*. The performance increased by 12.4 percent whereas in 2023 the performance was 55.9 per cent as opposed to 43.5 per cent of last year 2022.

Also, there was an increase of performance in the topic of *Language Pattern/Structure*. In 2022, the performance was 44.1 percent whereas in 2023 it was 49.8 percent, showing an increase of 5.7 percent. The students had average performance in this topic because they had partial knowledge on grammar and principles governing the transformation of some elements in a sentence.

In contrast, the students performed poorly in *written expression* (question number 10). The students' poor performance in this topic was due to inadequate knowledge on the principles of writing a composition. Most students were unable to express themselves in writing as they had inadequate knowledge of grammatical rules and insufficient vocabulary to use in different contexts.

Appendix A indicates the students' performance which is grouped into three categories; good, average and poor. This analysis is based on the average percentage of students who scored 30 percent and above of the marks allocated to each question.

4.0 CONCLUSION

The students' general performance in the 2023 Form Two National Assessment in the French Language subject was average, since 55.61% percent of the students passed. This is because most of the students lacked competences and the required knowledge in some of the topics taught in forms I and II. The analysis of the responses in this report further reveals that the students had average performance due to lack of adequate knowledge and skills in Vocabulary and Expressions, principles and grammatical rules, particularly in constructing sentences from jumbled words, transforming sentences from singular to plural forms and changing words from infinitive to different tenses.

Moreover, the students lacked adequate knowledge of key concepts related to the topics covered in the assessment. Some students had poor command of the French Language which hindered them from choosing appropriate vocabulary in their composition and so could not express themselves well in their responses. Also, there were students who code-switched from French Language to English Language.

5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

Considering the analysis of the students' responses, the following recommendations are given so as to improve students' performance in the French Language subject:

- (a) Teachers should be encouraged to use a variety of interactive teaching methods (rich environment) which will motivate students to learn the language. Teaching of certain concepts can be done

through role plays, group work, imitation and tours to different places.

- (b) Students should be encouraged to read short stories, books and other educative French language materials so that they can acquire enough vocabulary. This will enable them to express themselves fluently in French Language, particularly in writing composition.
- (c) French Language subject clubs should be strengthened to assist students in practicing the spoken language.
- (d) Students should be encouraged to study hard and make all the necessary revisions so as to master various topics, particularly those that appear to be so demanding, for example, jumbled words, transforming sentences from singular to plural and the use of tenses.

Appendix A: Summary of Students' Performance in Each Topic in 2023

S/N	Topic	Question number	Percentages of students who scored 30% or above	Average performance by topic (%)	Remarks
1	Vocabulary and Expressions	2	48.7	69.5	Good
		1	90.3		
2	Language use	8	69.3	55.9	Average
		9	42.6		
3	Language Patterns/Structure	3	73.4	49.8	Average
		4	21.1		
		5	96.7		
		6	42.2		
		7	15.4		
4	Written Expression/Composition	10	27.1	27.1	Poor

Appendix B: Comparison of the Students' Performance per Topic between the FTNA 2022 and 2023

