



Language Needs of Syrians for Higher Education: Barriers and Hindrance

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Survey

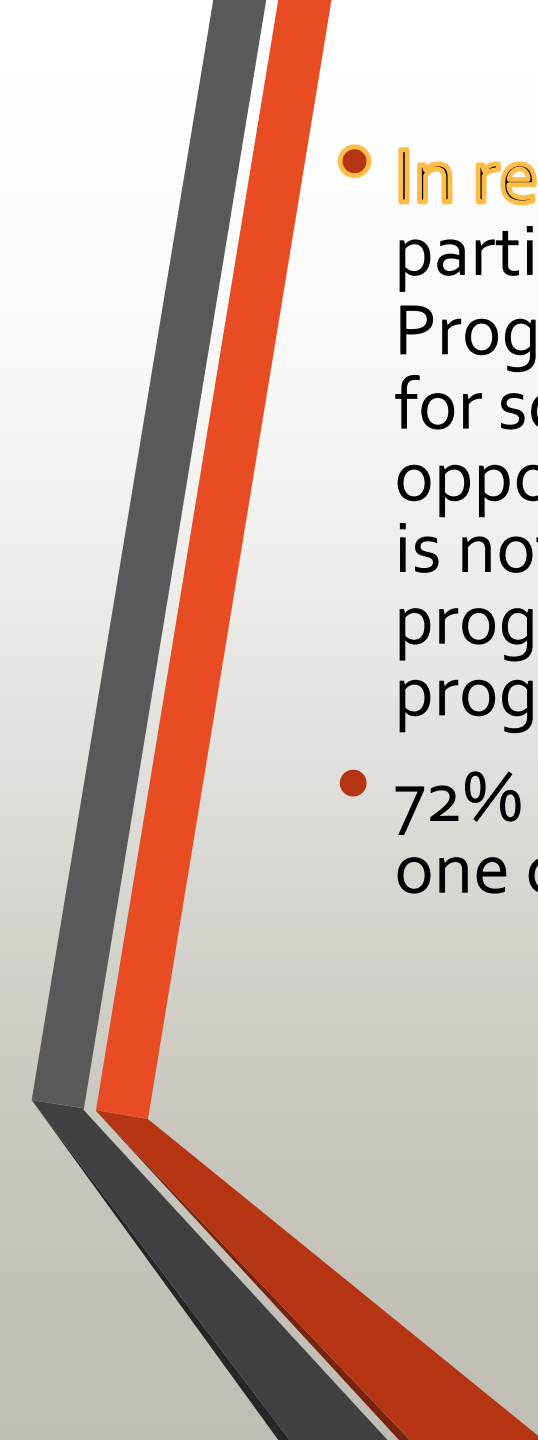
- This report draws on the findings of authentic data collected from a short open-ended questionnaire directed to 494 Syrian refugee students divided into four WhatsApp groups. The aim of the questionnaire is to reach a better understanding of how English language helps the Syrian students have a voice, build resilience, secure better job opportunities, and better education.

Survey Questions

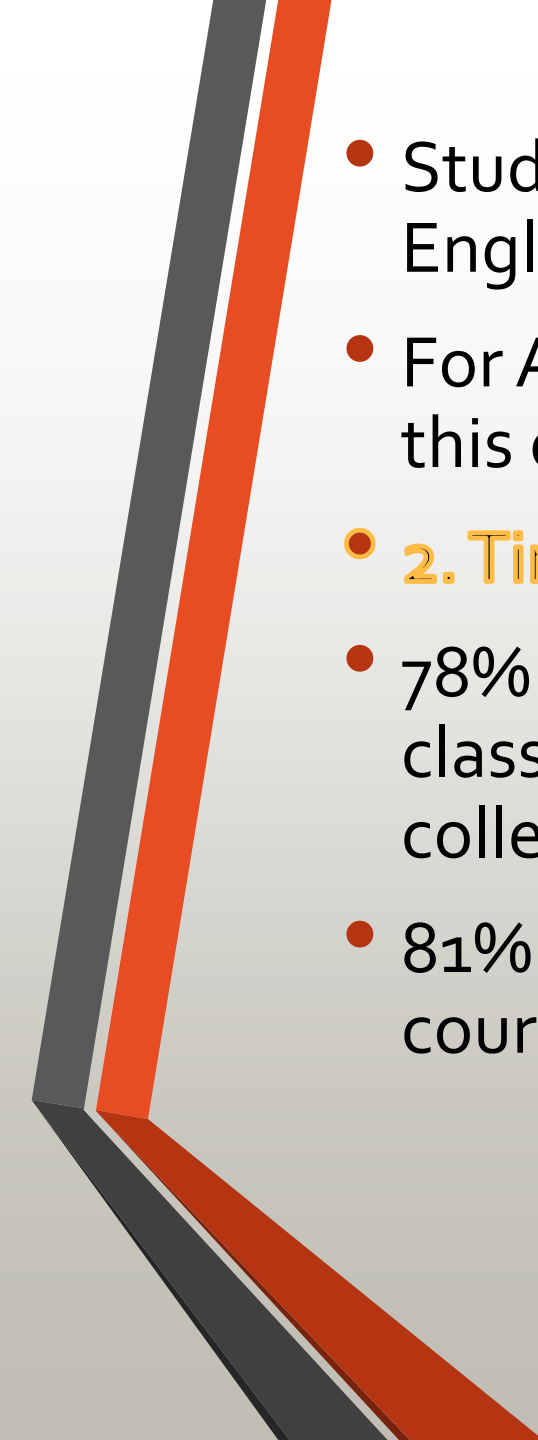
- The participants replied to three important questions followed by sub-questions and discussions:
- 1st Q. Is it important to learn English Language and why?
- 2nd Q. What is your opinion of HOPES English Language Programme?
- 3rd Q. What are the other things you would like to mention?

Key Findings

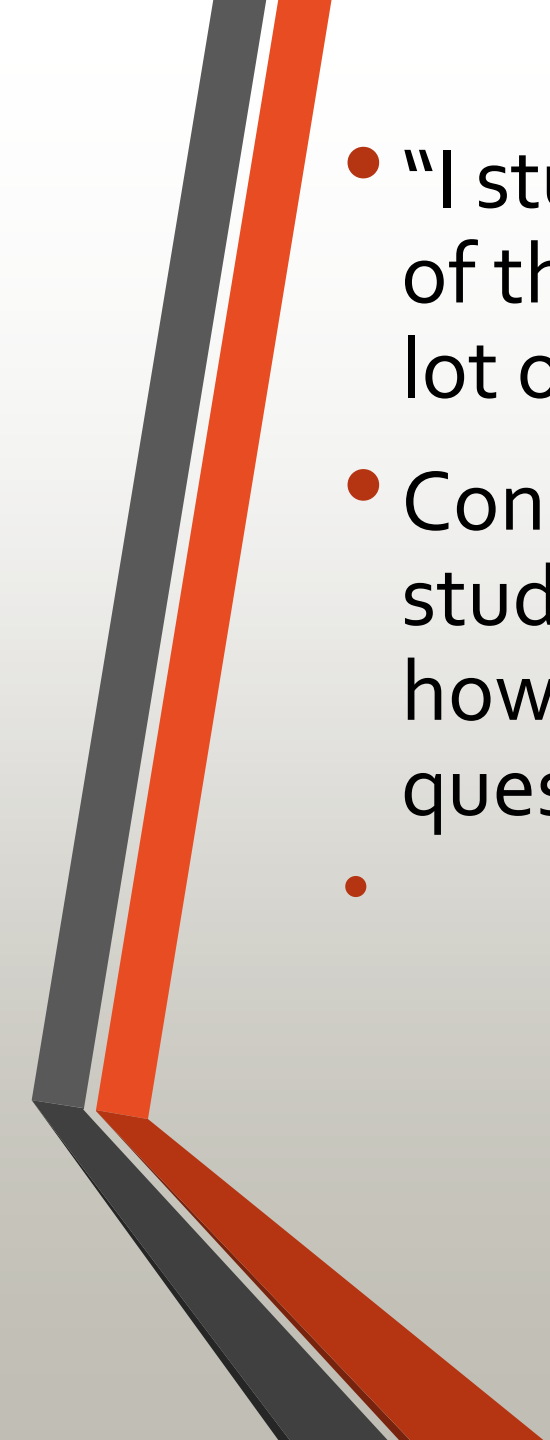
- Due to the current freeze in Edu-Syria programme, I expected that the students would show less interest in taking English courses. However, the results were contrary to the expected. 90% of the participants mentioned that learning English can bolster their education, employment, and internet communication. In fact, it is a life-line for them.
- 10% mentioned that getting a certificate is what matters as most of scholarships & employment places require it.

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- In responding to the second question, most of the participants confirmed that HOPES English Language Programme is very useful. It helped them apply successfully for scholarships, study online, and find better job opportunities. However, 80% mentioned that APTIS Certificate is not a curable solution because postgraduate study programmes, international scholarships, and immigration programmes require IELTS/TOFEL certificate.
 - 72% requested longer English Language courses, or more than one course for successful candidates.

- Answers to the third question provided important data about reasons to drop out. The results should be taken on board:
- **Reasons to drop out:**
- **1. Transportation & Location**
- Some of the locations of HOPES English Language Courses are not suitable for the majority of students due to distance, and transportation difficulties.
- For Amman city, the students suggested locations near the University of Jordan, Marka, or the 7th or 8th Circles where transportation can be available.
- For Irbid city, students suggested running APTIS/IELTS courses at
- Al quds college.

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- Students at Al Zarqa city and University, requested running English language courses in Alzarqa.
 - For Al Zatari camp, students requested not depriving them of this opportunity.
 - **2. Timing of the English Courses**
 - 78% of the students have mentioned that morning or midday classes are not suitable for those who study at university, college, or are employed.
 - 81% of the participants preferred affordable Intensive English courses where they study English *two to three days per week*.

- **3. Teachers, Teaching Materials, and APTIS/IELTS Exam**
- All the students confirmed that English native-speaker teachers are better than
- non-native speakers, who use Arabic most of the time.
- When taught by an English native speaker, they were forced to study and prepare
- in advance to keep pace during the class as the mechanism of translation into
- Arabic is not there. Their spoken English improved dramatically when taught by English native speakers. However, this finding cannot be generalised.

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- “I studied 100 English language hours, and at the end of the course, I came out with very little English, and a lot of Arabic stories and moral lessons” Omar.
 - Concerning the teaching material, most of the students mentioned that it is very interesting, however, they highlighted the fact that the exam questions are not derived from the teaching material.

Innovative solutions

- ❖ Promoting blended learning to deliver English courses to a wider range of students including camps.
- ❖ Create more innovative teaching approaches and methods to help students
- ❖ Practice the language rather than describing and memorizing the rules.

**More than 100.000 Syrian students are waiting for educational opportunities;
Investment in education means investment in the future.**