



AN ANALYSIS ON THE STUDENTS DIFFICULTIES OF USING SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE

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ABSTRACT

This objectives of the study was to describe the students difficulties of using simple present tense by the tenth grade and their ability level of using simple present tense. The method that was used in this study was descriptive study with 20 likert scale questionnaires to be answered based on the opinion and attitude of the 20 students of tenth grade students at secondary school. The result of data analysis which has been described that very difficult to use simple present tense.

INTRODUCTION

Language is the most important in human life as a tool of communicate among each other in the social structures as a reciprocal interaction in the differences level of the society. Brown (1987;p.5) agreed that language is the basic thing needed by the people to communicate with each other. English as an international language that has an important language role in the world to be used as a medium to interact each other in international standard communication. This is why, learning English nowadays has become essential subject to all around the world to be taught in every native and non-native speakers' schools.

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English has become the most commonly spoken language in the world as a language of science and the media industry. As one of the previous studies which was conducted by the Larsen & Freeman (1986) considered that language is primary speech to make relationship between or among the people for a business, economy, education, politic in sociocultural aspects.

The sub-skills of English grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary are taught to support the develop four skills. Therefore, grammar is also one of the components that become a basic of learning English because it has the important role to improve students ability in English. One of the aspects that include in grammar is tenses which is the series of verb forms used to express a time relation and indicates an action, activity or state is past, present or future and it may also indicate whether it *is*, *was*, or *will* be in progress over a period of time. Beside that, tense is something to express activity that needs time relation. There are six tenses which are taught in the senior high school include simple present tense is used when someone want to express themselves in everyday activities or say something habitually or regularly action.

In Timor-Leste, English is considered as an important skills to be learnt because it gives several benefits such as getting a scholarship to study overseas, getting new information to access for international standard of jobs, however, based on the Constitution of RDTL (2002) in section 13 approved that the official language are tetum and portugues language while in article 159 considered Indonesian and English areworking languages. Therefore, English is a compulsory subject that has been taught and learnt by timorenses from the elementary school up to university level.

Among those various types of Grammar, the Simple present tense is one tense which is considered difficult for the foreign language learners to speak and write with grammar and structure correctly. The tense is mostly used to expresses that something was true in the past, is true in the present ,and will be true in the future. Other words, it is also to expresse general statement of fact and timeless, truths, and habitual action in everyday activities.

Azar, B.S. (1989) stated that simple present tense is used when someone expresses something that happen in the present in the past and in the future. It is also related to talk about facts, opinion and habits or schedules and then in this tense has a time expressions that included everyday, every week, always and sometimes. Therefore, the simple present tense could be define as an expression habitual activity with time expression such as every morning, always and sometimes.

The student of the 10th grade Huiso-Laraiso Nu.1 Liquiça in school year 2024 are expected to be able to use Simple Present Tense both in oral and written form but learning simple present tense is difficult for students because the learning atmosphere is influenced by the Tetum as a teaching introduction in the classroom and it is caused in Tetum does not have tense as a rule for people when they want to say or to write something, however, in English, tense has rules to change verb based on time indicator.

English has tenses to change the verb form based on the time indicator. This conclusion shows that students cannot understand tense in English because both languages have contrastive meaning while Tetum is Tenseless. However, the Timorese' students still have Tetum paradigm to understand English that causes to confusing to use the form of simple present tense and it gives the bad effect that they find many difficulties in using simple present tense. The difficulties that they face is in terms affixation *-s/es* to be used for third person singular or they add suffix *-s/es* from verb of other subject.

Finally, the writer is very interesting in analyzing the students' difficulties especially in using Simple Present Tense at the Tenth grade students of Secondary school Nu.1 Huiso-Laraiso in Liquiça school year 2024. In this study the writer formulate the problems based on the background of study above which has been described as the following question:

1. Are the Tenth grade students of Secondary school Nu.1 Huiso-Laraiso in Liquiça school year 2024 difficult to use Simple present Tense?
2. What is their level of ability using Simple present Tense?
3. What are the Types of difficulties faced by the students 10 grade of Escola secundario Huiso-Laraiso when they use Simple Present Tense?
4. What are the causes or factors of the difficulties?

METHOD

This chapter presents the research methodology includes the subject of the study, the instrument of the study and technique of data collection and analysis. In this research, the writer used Descriptive Research with one class of students was administered 40 numbers of multiple choice test of Simple Present Tense. Then, score was low the writer wanted to know the difficulties that they faced and the causes of it by using likert scale questionnaires to be answered based on their opinion and attitude. The research was conducted from 2nd of September 2024 until 20th of September 2024 at Escola Secundario Nu.1 Huiso-Laraiso in Liquiça.

The study was conducted at the Escola secundario Hu Iso Lara Iso NU. 1 Liquica in the school year 2024. There are 20 students of the Tenth grade of Escola Secundario Hu Iso Lara Nu.1 Liquica in school years 2024. First, the test item that used to test in order to know the students' ability of using simple present tense are 30 numbers of multiple choice, 10 numbers of completion sentences. So, the total test item is 40 numbers. Then, test item that used to measure the students' difficulties 20 number of likers scale questionnaires. The likert scale questionnaires is used to analyze the types of difficulties in using simple present tense that faced by the students.

Through this study, the write analyzed the types of students' difficulties in using simple present tense and the factors that caused as well as the level of difficulties will be measured through the standard of measurement in table 1 below;

No	Range	Categories
1	81-100	Always
2	61-80	Often
3	41-60	Sometimes
4	21-40	Rarely
5	0-20	Never

Table 1

The data was collected through the following tests;

- 1) The students were administered the test of simple present tense such as; 30 numbers of multiple choice, 10 numbers of completion sentences. So, the total test item is 40 numbers. This test is used to know the level of understanding using simple present tense and what is the classification students's ability. If the students' ability of using simple present tense based standard of measurement on the test item will be 5.9 below is considered difficulty.
- 2) Then, the test item that used to measure the students' difficulties are 20 numbers of likert scale questionnaires.
- 3) The worksheet of students' test were collected and checked in order to mark the score for each of students in the tabulation. To classify the students' scores base on the standard measurement that is being used in the local school refers.
- 4) The 20 Questionnaires likert scale were used to be answered by the respondents based on their opinion, attitude that they had previously. The questionnaires will be analyzed to

discover the factors that caused the difficulties in students' ability of using simple present tense.

The procedures of data analysis might be based on the tests that was conducted by the researcher to analyze the following two types of tests;

- 1) Firstly, it is to measure the students ability of using simple present tense by 10th grade at Eskola Secundario Geral Hu Iso Lara-iso NU.1 liquica in 2024 will be analyzed based Suhararimi Arikunto (1987) as the following formula;

$$P = \frac{\text{total correct answer}}{\text{Total correct and incorrect answer}} \times 100$$

Secondly, Analysis of students Difficulties of using simple present tense by the 10th grade at Eskola Secundario Publico Hu Iso-Lara-iso NU.1 Liquica in school years 2024 through the 20 numbers of Likert Scale questionires; 1=*Never* 2=*Rarely* 3=*Sometimes* 4=*Often* 5=*Always* based on Likert, R. (1932).

RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

The field research was conducted in Escola Secundário Geral Hu-Iso Lara-Iso nu-1 in Liquica, the test was conducted from 2nd of September 2024 until 4th of September 2024. The test has 30 multiple-choice questions; 10 completion sentences total items is 40 numbers and 20 questionnaires, then the teacher gives them 60 minutes to do the test.

Table 2 presents the students score of Test Result by the 10th grade at Escola Secundário Geral Hu-Iso Lara-Iso nu-1 in Liquica iso lara-iso nu-1 in liquica.

NU	NAME OF STUDENTS	SCORE
1	E.V	5
2	B.G.S	5,8
3	J.C.D.J	3
4	E.D.S	5
5	D.L.D.O	6,4
6	L.D.S.C	6
7	O.M.D.S	5,2
8	J.F.D.J	2,6
9	N.D.C.A	5,8
10	G.C.D.S	8,4
11	E.M.D.S	7
12	R.D.S	4
13	D.B.G	3,8
14	R.D.C	2,8
15	E.D.J.D.S	5,6
16	O.A.C	5
17	C.B.P	5
18	J.D.S	4
19	S.P.M	5

20	J.S.D.C	6
Total		97
Score		4,9

Table 2

$$\frac{\text{Total score}}{\text{total of respondents}}$$

$$\frac{97}{20}$$

$$= 4.9$$

The standard of measurement that used for the students of 10th grade at Escola Secundario Geral Hu-iso Lara-iso nu 1 Liquica in the school year 2024. Based on the standard of measurement on the total of students' correct answer 97 divided by 20 students, The Level of simple present test is 4,9 which is classified at **VERY LOW** level.

Nu	Standard of measurement	Frequency	%	Level
1	8,1- 10	1	5	Very good
2	7,1 - 8	0	0	Good
3	6 - 7	4	20	Average
4	5,1 - 5,9	4	20	Low
5	0-5	11	55	Very low
		20	100%	

Table 3: The Distribution of students' Level of simple present test

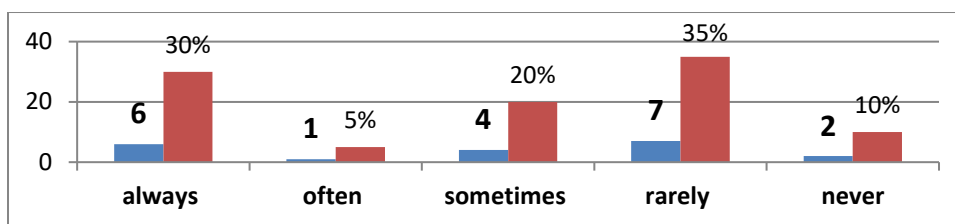
Based on The Table Distribution above to determine the 20 students level of ability of using simple present tense test as follow;

- ❖ 1 Student or 5% Who gained the score 8,1 – 10 which is classified at **very good** level.
- ❖ 4 Students or 20% Who gained the score 6 – 7 which is classified at **average** level.
- ❖ 4 Students or 20% Who gained the score 5,1 – 5,9 which is classified at **low** level.
- ❖ 11 Students or 55% Who gained the score 0 – 5 which is classified at **very low** level.

Analysis the students' difficulties through 20 likert scale questionires

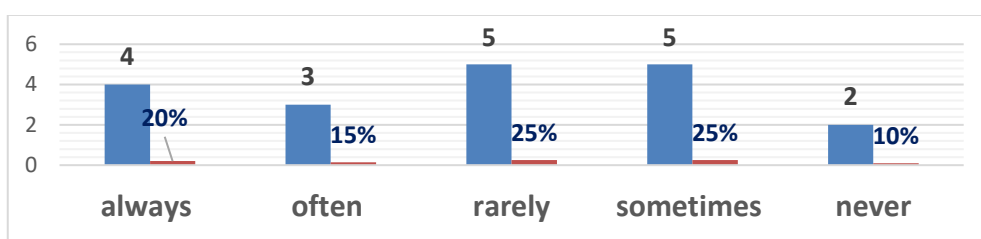
Answer Q1: DO you study and memorize regular and irregular verbs?

In relation to the first question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the 6 **students (30%)** *always*, 1 students (5%) *often*, 4 students (20%) *sometimes*, 7 students (35%) *rarely* and 2 students (10%) *never*. see in the graphic below;



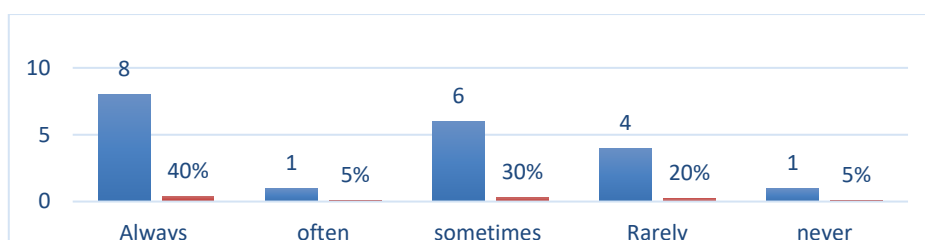
Answer Q 2: Do you understand the difference between regular and irregular verbs

In relation to the second question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **4 students (20%)** *always*, 3 students (15%) *often*, 5 students (25%) *rarely*, 5 students (25%) *sometimes* and 2 students (10%) *never*. It could be seen in the graphic below;



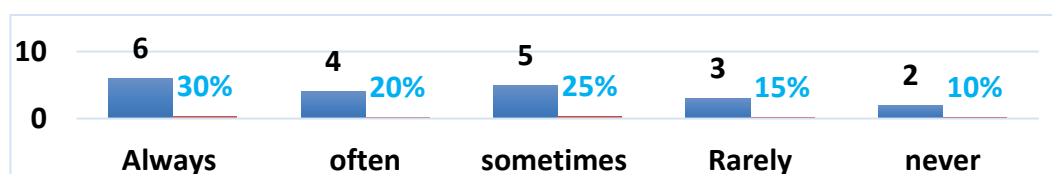
Answer Q3: Do you know the formula of simple present tense in affirmative sentences

In relation to the third question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **8 students (40%)** *always*, 1 student (5%) *often*, 6 students (30%) *rarely*, 1 student (5%) *sometimes* and 6 students (30%) *never*. It could be seen in the graphic below;



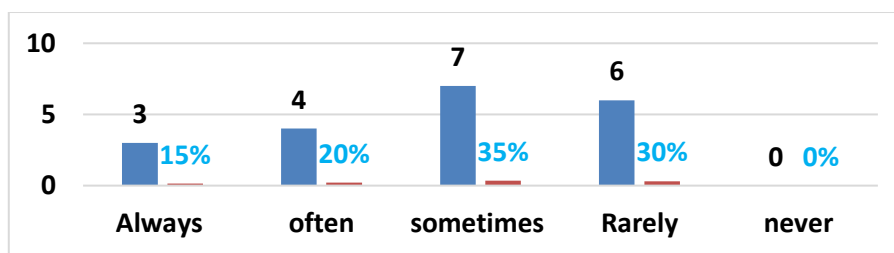
Answers Q4: Do you know the formula of simple present tense in negative form?

In relation to the fourth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **6 students (30%)** *always*, 4 students (20%) *often*, 5 students (25%) *sometimes*, 3 students (15%) *rarely* and 2 students (10%) *never*. It could be seen graphic below;



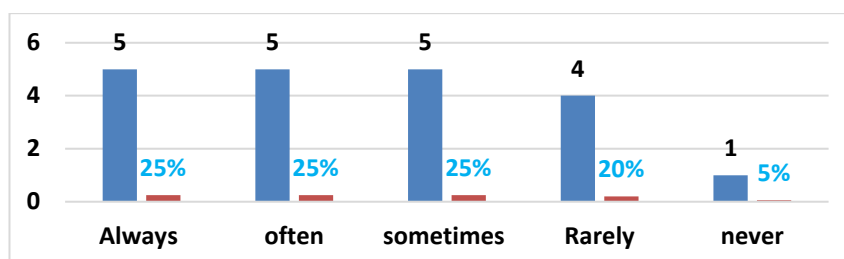
Answer Q5: Do you know the form of interrogative Simple Present Tense?

In relation to the fifth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **3 students (15%)** *always*, 4 students (20%) *often*, 7 students (35%) *sometimes*, 6 students (30%) *rarely* and none of students (0%) *never*. It could be seen graphic below;



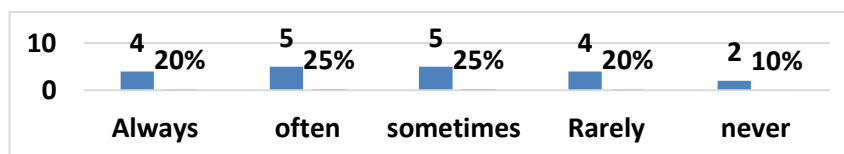
Answer Q6: Do you know how to construct the verbal sentences of simple present tense?

In relation to the sixth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **5 students (25%) always**, 5 students (25%) **often**, 5 students (25%) **sometimes**, 4 students (20%) **rarely** and 1 student (5%) **never**. It could be seen graphic below;



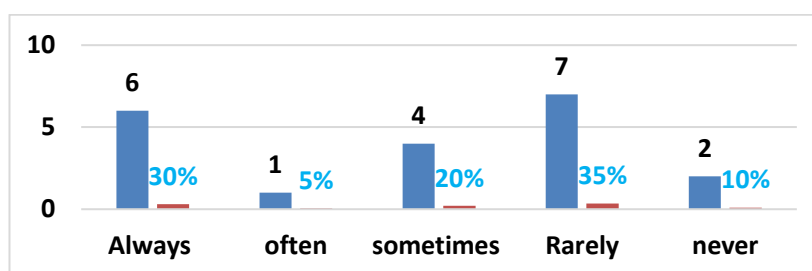
Answer Q7: Do you know how to construct the nominal sentences in Simple Present Tense in positive, negative, interrogative sentences?

In relation to the seventh question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **4 students (20%) always**, 5 students (25%) **often**, 5 students (25%) **sometimes**, 4 students (20%) **rarely** and 2 students (10%) **never**. It could be seen graphic below;



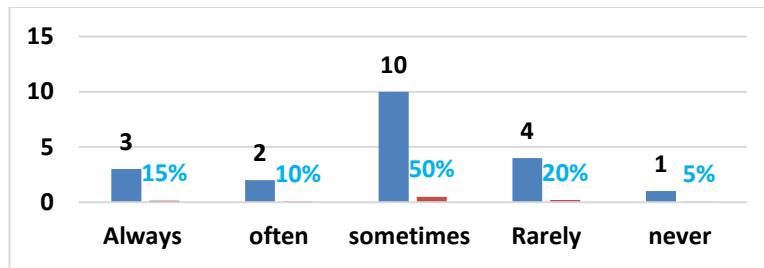
Answer Q8: Do you know nominal sentences in (adjective and adverb)?

In relation to the eighth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **6 students (30%) always**, 1 student (5%) **often**, 4 students (20%) **sometimes**, 7 students (35%) **rarely** and 2 students (10%) **never**. see graphic below;



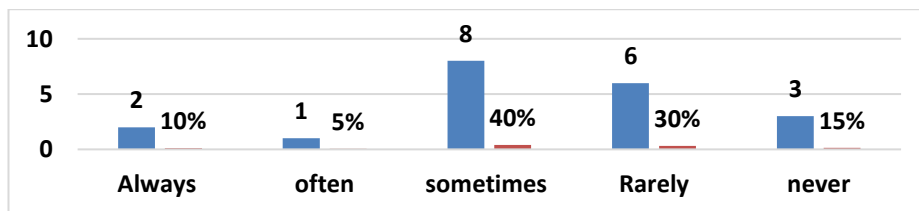
Answer Q9: Do you know main verbs?

In relation to the ninth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **3 students (15%) always**, 2 students (10%) **often**, 10 students (50%) **sometimes**, 4 students (20%) **rarely** and 1 student (5%) **never**. see graphic below;



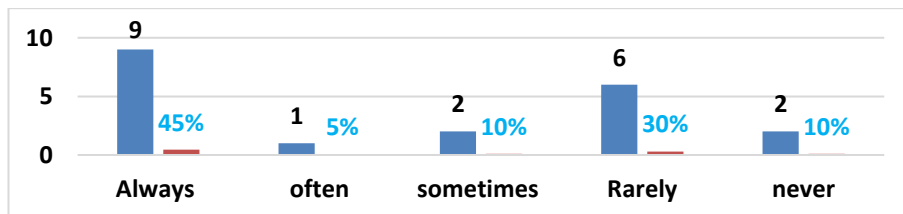
Answer Q10: Do you know auxiliary verbs?

In relation to the tenth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the 2 students (10%) *always*, 1 student (5%) *often*, 8 students (40%) *sometimes*, 6 students (30%) *rarely* and 3 students (15%) *never*. see graphic below;



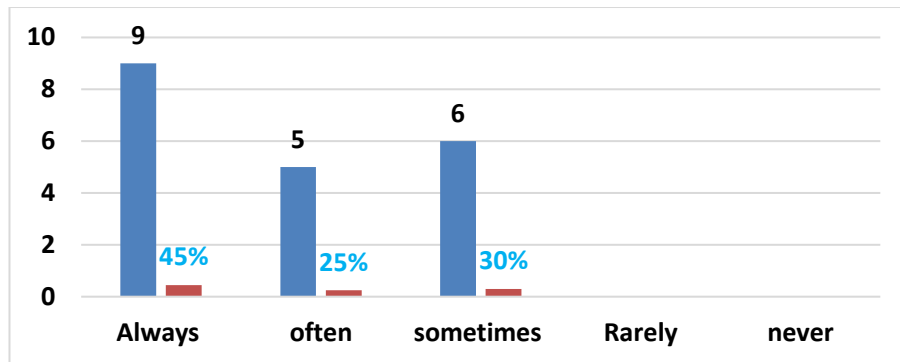
Answer Q11: Do you know how to use the differences grammar among; -s, -es, -ies to construct the sentences with the 3rd person singular pronoun?

In relation to the eleventh question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the 9 students (45%) *always*, 1 students (5%) *often*, 2 students (10%) *sometimes*, 6 students (30%) *rarely* and 2 students (10%) *never*. see graphic below;



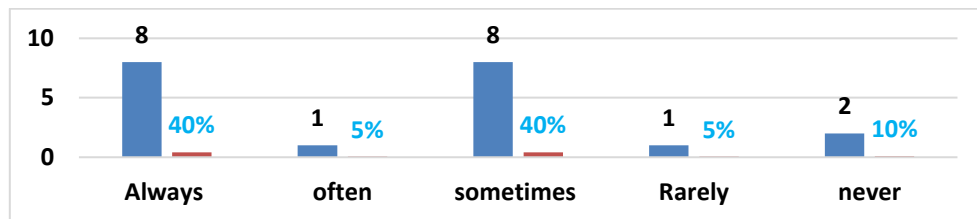
Answer Q12: Do you know how to use auxiliary verbs; Do, Does?

In relation to the twelveth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the 9 students (45%) *always*, 5 students (25%) *often*, 0 students (0%) *sometimes*, 0 students (0%) *rarely* and 0 student (0%) *never*. see graphic below;



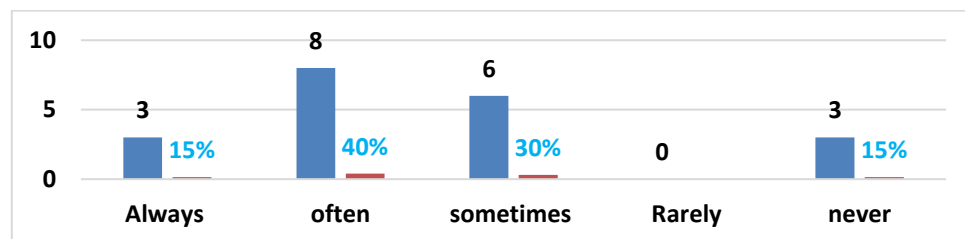
Answer Q13: Do you know how to use verb 'to-be'; (am, is, are) to construct the sentences?

In relation to the thirteenth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the 8 **students (40%) always**, 1 student (5%) **often**, 8 students (40%) **sometimes**, 1 student (5%) **rarely** and 2 students (10%) **never**. see graphic below;



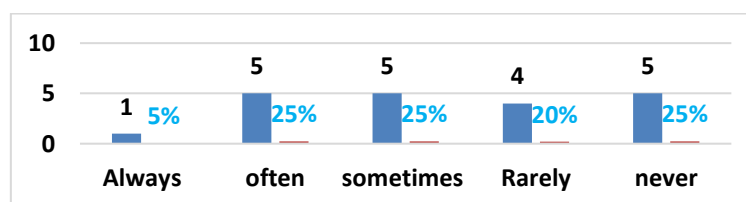
Answer Q14: Are you happy with English teacher in the classroom?

In relation to the fourteenth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the 3 **students (15%) always**, 8 students (40%) **often**, 6 students (30%) **sometimes**, 0 student (0%) **rarely** and 3 students (15%) **never**. see graphic below;



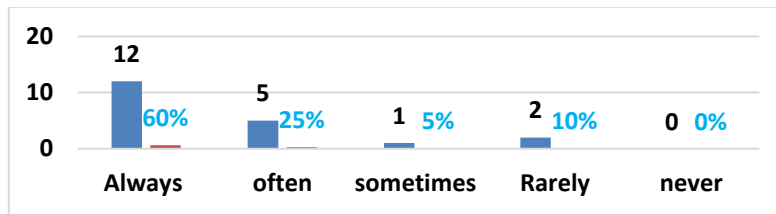
Answer Q15: Do you take any English course?

In relation to the fifteenth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the 1 **students (5%) always**, 5 students (25%) **often**, 5 students (25%) **sometimes**, 4 students (20%) **rarely** and 5 students (25%) **never**. see graphic below;



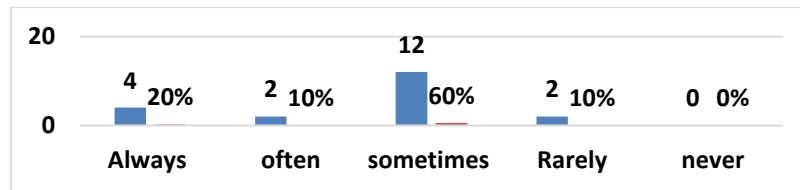
Answer Q16: Is your English teacher degree in English major?

In relation to the sixteenth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **12 students (60%) *always***, 5 students (25%) ***often***, 1 student (5%) ***sometimes***, 2 student (10%) ***rarely*** and 0 students (0%) ***never***. see graphic below;



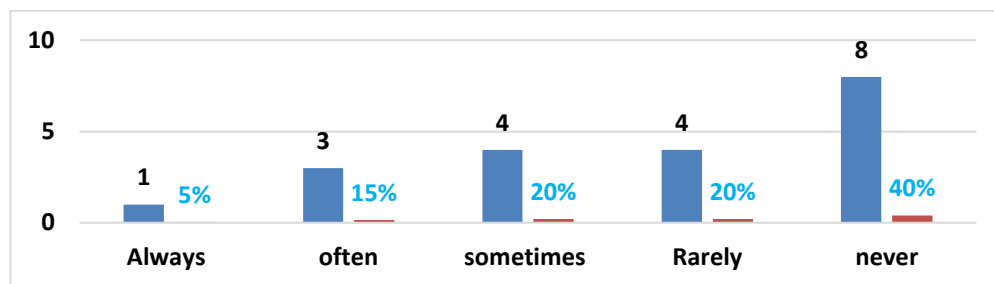
Answers Q17: Does your English teacher teach you in English Language?

In relation to the seventeenth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **4 students (20%) *always***, 2 students (10%) ***often***, 12 students (60%) ***sometimes***, 2 student (10%) ***rarely*** and 0 students (0%) ***never***. see graphic below;



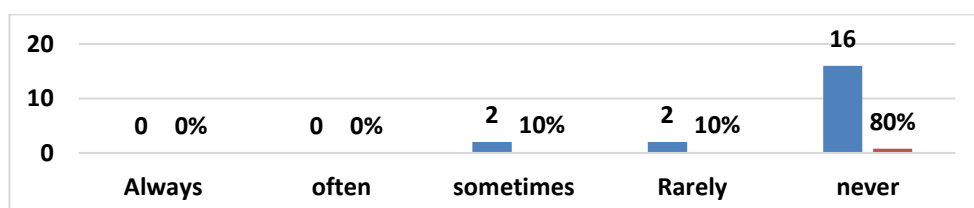
Answer Q18: Do you usually speak English in the class every meeting with your English teacher?

In relation to the eighteenth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **1 student (5%) *always***, 3 students (15%) ***often***, 4 students (20%) ***sometimes***, 4 students (20%) ***rarely*** and 8 students (40%) ***never***. see graphic below;



Answer Q19: Are you usually assigned by english teacher to tell you daily activities in front of your friends in the class?

In relation to the nineteenth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the **0 students (0%) *always***, 0 students (0%) ***often***, 2 students (10%) ***sometimes***, 2 student (10%) ***rarely*** and 16 students (80%) ***never***. see graphic below;



Answers Q20: Have you ever met any English natives speaker to talk English?

In relation to the twentieth question, the result shows that among the 20 students, the 0 student (0%) *always*, 0 student (0%) *often*, 0 student (0%) *sometimes*, 1 student (5%) *rarely* and 19 students (95%) *never*. see graphic below;



NU	always	often	sometimes	rarely	never
Q1	6	1	4	7	2
Q2	4	3	5	5	3
Q3	8	1	6	4	1
Q4	6	4	5	3	2
Q5	3	4	7	6	0
Q6	5	5	5	4	1
Q7	4	5	5	4	2
Q8	6	1	4	7	2
Q9	3	2	10	4	1
Q10	2	1	8	6	3
Q11	9	1	2	6	2
Q12	9	5	6	0	0
Q13	8	1	8	1	2
Q14	3	8	6	0	3
Q15	1	5	5	4	5
Q16	12	5	1	2	0
Q17	4	2	12	2	0
Q18	1	3	4	4	8
Q19	0	0	2	2	16
Q20	0	0	0	1	19
Σ	94	57	105	72	72
%	24%	14%	26%	18%	18%

Table 4: Presents the Distribution the 20 Liker Scale Questionires

So, the table shows that, to identify the cause and factor from among the 20 students answered the 20 likert scale questions were classified as the following categories;

1. **94** answers or **24%** were **ALWAYS**
2. **57** answers or **14%** were **OFTEN**
3. **105** answers or **26%** were **SOMETIMES**
4. **72** answers or **18 %** were **RARELY**

5. **72** answers or **18%** were **NEVER**

Table 2 present the total the level ability using simple present tense by Tenth grade students of Secondary school Nu.1 Hu-iso Lara-iso in liquica school year 2024 was **97** correct score was divided to 20 students in **4.9** which classified **very low**.

Table 3 presents the Distribution of students' Level Ability of of simple present tense.

Based on The Table Distribution above to determine the 20 students' level of ability of using simple present tense test as follows.

- ❖ 1 Student or 5% who got 8,1 – 10 which is classified at **very good** level.
- ❖ 4 Students or 20% got 6 – 7 which is classified at **average** level.
- ❖ 4 Students or 20% got 5.1 – 5.9 which is classified at **low** level.
- ❖ 11 Students or 55% Who got 0 – 5 which is classified at **very low** level.

It is indicated that the majority of students 11 or 55% ability to use simple present tense was **very low**. So, the simple present tense ws very difficult for the students Tenth grade of Secondary school Nu.1 Hu-iso Lara-iso in liquica school year 2024.

CONCLUSIONS

As the result of data analysis has been described that The 10th grade at Escola Secundário Geral Hu-Iso Lara-Iso nu-1 in Liquica iso lara-iso nu-1 in liquica 2024 were considered very diifficult to use simple present tense. It is because their level ability of diagnostic test was 4.9 which is classified **very low level**.

The types of difficulties is being faced by the 10th grade at Escola Secundário Geral Hu-Iso Lara-Iso nu-1 in Liquica iso lara-iso nu-1 in liquica 2024 through Likert scale.

- 1) Students rarely study and memorize regular and irregular verbs and they never know the formula of sentences pattern of simple present tense.
- 2) They did lack exercises of changing sentences positive, negative and interrogative senetnces. Ability to construct the nominal sentences is rarely to distinguish verbs between nominal and verbal sentnces is rarely.
- 3) Using **Do/does** often not understand and sometimes the students are not happy with the teacher in the class.
- 4) And they don't often take English course and they sometime don't teach English language in the classroom.
- 5) The teacher never spoke English in the class every.

The caused or factor that affected the students 10th grade at Escola Secundário Geral Hu-Iso Lara-Iso nu-1 in Liquica iso lara-iso nu-1 in liquica 2024. It is based on the students' opinion, and itttitude that relected the the causes of factor that affected the ability of using Simple presets tense were classified as several categories; **94** answers or **24%** were **always**, **57** answers or **14%** were **often**, **105** answers or **26%** were **sometimes**, **72** answers or **18 %** were **rarely**, **72** answers or **18%** were **never**.

Based on the data analysis, the writer would like to suggest that the English teacher must do exercises of changing sentences positive, negative and interrogative senetnces. construct the nominal sentences verbal sentnces of English is prioritized.

- 1) Using verbs **Do/does** for constructing sentences is a must and the presence of teache in the class encourage and motivate to make the students happy before teaching the subject.
- 2) The students are requested to take English course and the English teacher must speak English with the students in the classroom.

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