

AN ANALYSIS OF THE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN USING ADVERB OF FREQUENCY IN SIMPLE PRESENT TENSE: A STUDY ON THE FIRST YEAR STUDENTS OF SMA N 7 PADANG IN ACADEMIC YEAR 2009/2010

Novi Riani*

Sekolah Tinggi Agama Islam (STAI) Yasni Muara Bungo
e-mail: riani.tazky@gmail.com

Abstract

The objective of this research was to describe the ability of the first year students of SMA N 7 Padang to use adverb of frequency in simple present tense. The population of this research was the first year students of SMA N 7 Padang in academic year 2009/2010. There were 305 students as members of population. In selecting the sample, the researcher used cluster random sampling. Finally, class X2 that consisted of 36 students was a sample of this research. In technique of collecting data, the researcher used structure test that consisted of 40 items as instrumenataion. Before giving the test to the sample, the test was tried out. Then, the researcher analyzed the data by counting standard deviation (SD) and mean (M). Generally, the result of this research showed that the ability of the first year students of SMA N 7 Padang to use adverb of frequency in simple present tense was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 6 students (16,7%) had high ability, 23 students (63,9%) had moderate ability, and 7 students (19,4%). Specifically, the ability of the students to use adverb of frequency in affirmative sentence of smple present tense was moderate since 25 students (69.4%) had moderate ability. The ability of students to use adverb of frequency in negative sentence of simple present tense was moderate. It was due to the fact that 22 students (61.1%) had moderate ability, the ability of students to use adverb of frequency in interrogative sntece of smple present tense was moderte. it was due to the fact that 16 students (44.4%) had moderate ability.

Keywords: Ability, Adverb of Frequency, Present Tense.

A. Introduction

1. The background of the Problem

English as an international language plays an important role in communication. Many countries use English as one the formal media for communication. People should master this language, so they can communicate each other. English has four language learning skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing) and some language components

such as grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation. Grammar as the one of the essential components that has great influence in learning English. There are several topics of English grammar that has to be mastered by the students. They are tenses, modal, noun ,verb, adjective, adverb etc. thus, one of these topics that has to be mastered by the students in adverbs. As one of the English grammatical rules, adverb is very important since it is a basic english and often used in daily communication. Moreover, based on the syllabus in SMA N, adverbs are studied when the students are in the first year of senior high school. There are many kinds of adverb of frequency. they are adverb of manner (quickly, neatly, etc), adverb of time (tomorrow, last night,etc), adverb of place (in Padang, here,etc), adverb of frequency (always, seldom,etc) and so on. one type of the adverbs of frequency in simple present tense, for example: always, usually, often, sometimes, seldom, never, etc. adverbs of frequency are those adverbs that answer question “how often?”.

In fact, based on the writer’s experience during practice teaching program at SMA N 7 Padang, many students had low grade and they had some troubles with the rules of English grammar. One of the trouble was the students got the difficulties to use adverb of frequency in simple present tense. Besides, the teachers explain the use of adverb of frequency in simple present tense but the learners seldom use them compared with adverb of time. They also find the difficulty in using adverb of frequency in simple present tense caused by poor mastery of the rules of using adverb of frequency in simple present tense. Based on existing problem, the writer wanted to analyze the students’ ability in using adverb of frequency in simple present tense. this study focused on the first year students of senior high school because they studied adverb of frequency.

b. Identification of the Problem

There are four kinds of adverb; adverb of frequency, manner, place, and time. Adverbs of frequency are those which say in an indefinite way of saying how often soething happens.adverb of

frequency can be used in simple present tense and past tense. Present tense is used for action and situations that are generally of permanently true and past tense is a tense which indicates an activity that happened in the past.

c. Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this research was to describe the students' ability in using adverb of frequency in simple present tense. the specific purposes were to describe:

- 1) The students' ability in using adverb of frequency in affirmative sentence of simple present tense?
- 2) The students' ability in using adverb of frequency in negative sentence of simple present tense?
- 3) The students' ability in using adverb of frequency in interrogative sentence of simple present tense?

B. Research Method

1. Design of the Study

The research is descriptive in nature. it was done to find out the students' ability to use adverb of frequency in simple present tense. descriptive research involves collecting the data in order to test hypothesis or answer question concerning the current status of the subject of the study.¹ The population of the research was the first year of students of SMA N 7 Padang. In this study of the population is was 305 students. they were distributed into eight classes: class X1, X2, X3, X³, X5, X6, X7, X8. Sampling is the process of selecting the number of individuals for a study in such a way that individuals represent the larger group from which they are selected. Each class consisted of 36 students. they were chosen as the population based on assumption that they had studied basic grammar such as adverb of frequency.

2. Population and Sample.

The writer decided sample by using cluster random sampling because the population had been grouped into classes. cluster random

¹ . L.R. Gay. *Educational Research*, (Florida: Merrill Publishing Company 1987) , h. 18.

sampling is smpling in which groups, not individuals, are randomly selected.² all members of selected groups have similar characteristics. The writer chose among the class X1,X2, X3, X³, X5, X6, X7, X8 as the sample. The writer chose the sample class randomly because these classess are homogeneous: They have same materials the writer wrote the names of classe on 8 pieces of papers, mixed them up, and chose one of them. finally, class X2 was a sample of this research. The number of sampe was 36 students about 12% of the population.

3. Instrumentation

The instrumentation that was used in this study was grammar test. the writer took the test items from english structure practices and communicative grammar that discuss about adverb of frequency in simple present tense. The test was in the form of multipe choice and completion because the writer wanted to know the function and position of adverb of frequency in simple present tense. The writer gave 40 minutes for the students to do the test. The test consisted of 40 items in try out test: they are 14 items for affirmative sentences, 13 for negative sentences, and 13 items for interrogative. The test was tried out to the students out of the sample to determie item difficulty and item determination of the test.

In selecting good items of the test, the writer analyzedd the item difficulties and item discrimination of the test. the writer used the following formula suggested by Arikunto.³

$$p = \frac{B}{JS}$$

Where:

P = Items difficulties.

B = Sum of the students who answered correctly.

JS = Sum of all students who followed the test.

² . *Ibid*, h. 110

³ . Arikunto. *Dasar-Dasar Evaluasi Pendidikan*. (Jakarta: Bumi Aksara, 2005), h.

The items difficulties range between 0.00- 1.00 and it is symbolized as P which refers to “proportion” in the evaluation term. The classification of item difficulty is as follow:

P 0.00 – 0.30	difficult
P 0.31 – 0.70	moderate
P 0.71 – 1.00	easy

Discrimination Power

Discrimination power was the test ability to separate the students who have high ability students and low ability.

The discrimination power formula:

$$D = \frac{BA}{JA} - \frac{BB}{JB} = P_A - P_B$$

Where:

D : Discrimination index

J : Number of participant

JA : Number of top group participants

JB : Number of bottom group participants

BA : Number of the top group participants who answer correctly

BB : Number of the bottom group participants who answer correctly

PA : Proportion of top group participants who answer correctly

PB : Proportion of bottom group participants who answer correctly

Discrimination index categories:

D : 0.00-0.20 : Poor

D : 0.20-0.40 : Satisfactory

D : 0.40-0.70 : Good

D : 0.70-1.00 : Excellent

D : Negative, all is poor. It means that it would be better to lose all of the items which have D negative value. A good item test is an item that has discrimination index between 0.40 - 0.69; however the discrimination index 0.20 - 0.39 can be accepted.⁴ From the ranges of item difficulty and discrimination above, the researcher used the items that had P 0.30 – 0.70 and D 0.20 - 1.00 as test items which were included in the instrument. as the result of the try out the writer got 30 items as good items. 10 items for affirmative sentence, 10 items for negative sentence, and 10 items for interrogative sentence. to determine the validity of the test, the writer used content validity. the test that the witer gave to the students was based on teaching materials that had been taught by the teacher.

To see the reliability of the test, the writer used split half method. the writer found the correlation coofecient by using a person product momet formula.⁵

$$r_{XY} = \frac{N \sum XY - (\sum X)(\sum Y)}{\sqrt{[N \sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2] [N \sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2]}}$$

Where:

r = the coefficient of correlation of two halves of the test
(Odd and even item)

x = the odd items score

y = the event items score

n = the number of student who take the rest

⁴ . *Ibid*, h. 218

⁵ . *Ibid*, h. 72

\sum_{xy} = the total score of cross product xy

Furthermore, to determine the total reliability of the test, the result was analyzed by using Spearman Brown formula.⁶

$$r_{\text{total test}} = \frac{2r_{xy}}{1 + r_{xy}}$$

Where:

$r_{\text{total test}}$ = the reliability coefficient for the total test

r_{xy} = the correlation coefficient of the two halves of the test

The degree of correlation coefficient of the test can be categorized as follows.⁷

0.800 – 1.000	very high
0.600 – 0.799	high
0.400 – 0.300	enough
0.200 - 0.300	low
0.000 – 0.119	very low

As the result of the try out the researcher got that the degree of coefficient correlation of the test was 0.866 and the reliability coefficient for total test was 0.928. It means that the degree of coefficient correlation of the test was very high and the test was reliable.

4. **Technique of Gathering Data**

The writer administered the grammar test and collected the data through the procedures as follows:

- a. The writer made the key answer in order to identify the correct answer.

⁶. L.R. Gay, *Op. Cit.*, 139

⁷. Arikunto, *Op. Cit.*, 64

- b. The writer identified the correct answer for affirmative, negative and interrogative.
- c. The writer gave 1 for each correct answer and 0 for the wrong answer.

5. **Technique of Analyzing Data**

To analyze data, the researcher used the descriptive analysis. In this technique, there are some steps that were followed:

a. **Calculating mean and standard deviation as follows:**

$$M = \frac{\sum x}{N}$$

Where:

M = Mean

$\sum x$ = total score of the students

N = Number of the sample

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum X^2}{N} - \left(\frac{\sum X}{N}\right)^2}$$

Where:

SD = Standard deviation

b. **Classifying the students' ability based on their group:**

High ability = > M + 1SD

Moderate ability = between (M - 1SD) and (M + 1SD)

Low ability = < M - 1SD

- c. Calculating the percentage of students who got high, moderate and low ability, by using the formula:

$$P = \frac{R}{T} \times 100\%$$

Where:

P = percentage of the students' ability

R = the sum of the students who got high, moderate or low ability

T = the sum of the students

Based on the percentage of the students who got high, moderate, and low ability, the students' ability to use adverb of frequency in simple present tense can be seen.

C. Discussion

1. Review of Related Literature

In this section will be discussed the concept of grammar, simple present tense, characters of simple present tense, adverb of frequency and the position of adverb of frequency.

a. Concept of Grammar

In learning a language, students may study grammar. They should know how to arrange words into sentences. In the process of arranging them, they should know the rules grammatically. English grammar can help the students to speak, read and write etc. According to Cook and Sutter "Grammar as a written description of the rules of language by which people speak and write".⁸ By studying grammar they can speak well and other persons can understand what they say if their sentences are arranged in good order and in writing, the

⁸ . Cook & Sutter, R.W. *The Scope of Grammar . A Study of Modern English*. (New York:Hill Publishing Company, 1980), h. 11

students can learn how to write essay correctly. Grammar is partly the study of what forms are possible in a language.⁹ Grammar is description of the rules that govern how language sentence are formed. Grammar can refer to the linguistic system that presumably exist in the mind of a speaker of a language.in addition, grammar can also mean a description of a language system. Based on explanation above, it cn be concluded that grammar is the framework of the language that organizes almost all parts of the language. Whatever the language skills to be mastered. Grammar is also very useful to facilitate people for express the ideas in listening, speaking, reading, and writing forms.

1) **Simple Present Tense**

Azar states that “the simple present tense is used for actions which are done habitually or happen regularly”.¹⁰ use the simple present tense to express the idea that an action is repeated or usual. the action can be a habit, a daily event and something that often happens. Simple present tense is used to show a truth or fact.¹¹ It means that simple present tense can also indicate the speakers belief that a fact was true before, is true now and will be true in the future. It is not important if the speaker is correct about the fact. Therefore, it is also used to make generalizations about people or things.

2) **Adverb of Frequency in Simple Present Tense**

⁹ . S. Thornbury. *How to Teach Grammar*. (Jakarta:Binarupa Aksara, 1999), h. 3

¹⁰ . B.S Azar. *Understanding and Using English Grammar* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall INC, 1989), h. 11

¹¹ . J.B Alter. *Essential English Usage and Grammar* .(Singapore: Preston Corporation ltd,1991), h. 35

Adverbs of frequency are used for those adverbial that answer the question "how often".¹² Adverbs of frequency are usually used with simple present tense for repeated actions. Some of them are always, usually, often, sometimes, seldom, rarely, never, etc. They are also called mid position adverbs because these adverbs are usually placed before the verbs. and they are often used in simple present tense.

3) The Functions of Adverbs of Frequency

The goal of communication is to express our thoughts, ideas, feeling clearly. When we speak english, we want to be understood by those to whom we are speaking. The best way we have to know the meaning and function of words that are used in writing and speaking. So, the functions of these adverbs and using adverbs of frequency regularly also will help us achieve this goal. Coe et al state that there are many functions of adverb of frequency:¹³ always usually often

sometimes seldom rarely never 100%,
90%, 90%-75%, 75%-25%, 25%-10%, 10%-1% and 0%. It means :

- a) Always is used to express capabilities about 100% of the time in daily activities.
- b) Usually is used to express capabilities about 90% of the time in daily activities.
- c) Often is used to express capabilities about 90%-75%of the time in daily activities.
- d) Sometimes is used to express capabilities about 75%-25% of the time in daily activities.
- e) Seldom is used to express capabilities about 25%-10%of the time in daily activities.
- f) Rarely is used to express capabilities about 10%-1%of the time in daily activities.

¹² . Martin Hewings. *Advanced Grammar in Use*. New York: (Cambridge University Press, 1999), h. 182.

¹³ . Coe et al. *Oxford Practice Grammar*. (London: Oxford University Express, 2006),h. 46.

- g) Never is used to express capabilities about 0% of the time in daily activities.

4) The Position of Adverb of frequency

Position of these adverbs is also important. These adverbs are called middle adverbs because they usually stay between subject and verb.

- a) If the sentence has one verb in it, we usually put the adverb in the middle of the sentence, after the subject and before the verb. Most adverbs of frequency come between the subject and verb of sentence.

Position A

Subject	Adverb	Verb	
Tom	Usually	Goes	to work by car
You	Seldom	Have	Dinner

Rule : never put an adverb between the main verb and its object

Wrong : I give always the cat a bone on Saturday

Correct : I always give the cat a bone on Saturday

- b) The adverb usually comes after the verb.¹⁴ Adverbs of frequency are placed after to be (am, is, are). In simple present tense, it happens to adjective sentence or adjective clause.

Position b

Subject	Verb	adverb	adjective
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¹⁴ . *Ibid.*, h. 16.

Tom	Is	often	late
Anne	Isn't	usually	late

- c) Using adverb of frequency in the question form, put the adverb before the main verb or adjective.¹⁵

Position c

Auxiliary verb	Subject	adverb	Verb	
Do	You	often	Go	to the cinema?
Does	She	usually	Go	to the cinema?
Is	He	always	busy?	

- d) Using adverbs of frequency in negative form, put the adverb before the main verb.

Position D

Subject	Auxiliary	adverb	Verb	
They	don't	often	Go	to the park

Examples:

I don't often enjoy bus trips

She doesn't leave my books in class.

2. Result and Discussion

a. Result

¹⁵ . Azar, B.S. *Understanding and Using English Grammar (Second Edition)*. (New Jersey: Prentice Hall INC, 1989), h. 3.

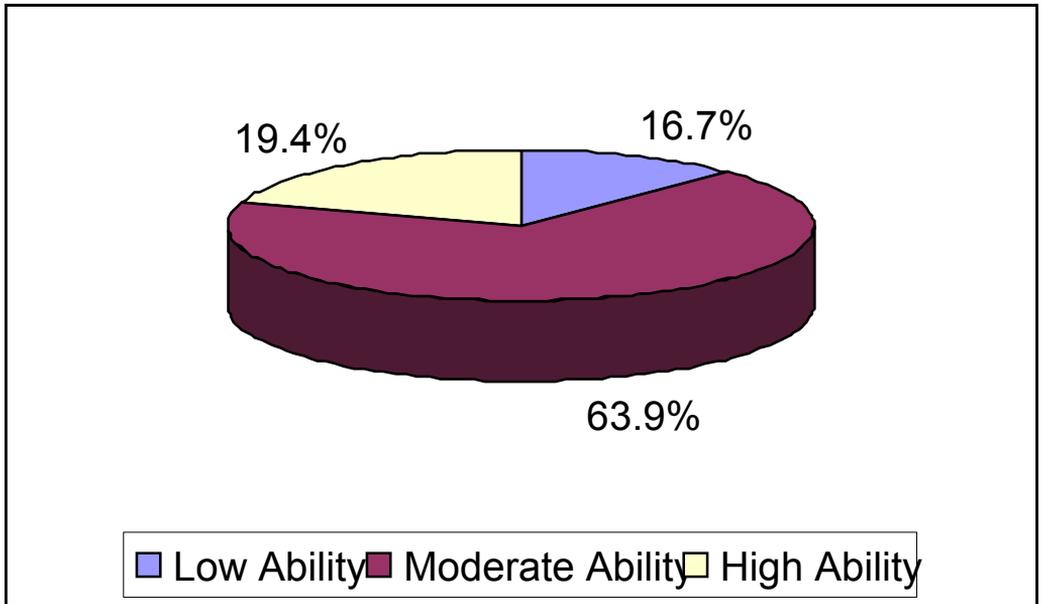
1) **Students' ability to use adverb of frequency**

In measuring the students' ability to use adverb of frequency in simple present tense, the students' score was counted. After the researcher checked and gave the scores for the students' answer, the researcher found that the lowest score of using adverb of frequency in affirmative sentence of simple present tense was 7 and the highest was 28. Then the researcher calculated the score and got 18.333 for mean and 5.073 for standard deviation. After that, the researcher classified the students' ability into three groups (high, moderate and low). Students' ability was categorized as high if their scores were higher than 23.4. It was categorized as moderate if their scores were in the range of 13.2 to 23.4 and it was categorized as low if their scores were lower than 13.2. Finally, she calculated the percentage of the students' ability. The result was that 6 students (16.7%) had high ability, 23 students (63.9%) had moderate ability, and 7 students (19.4%) had low ability.

It can be concluded that the students' ability to use adverb of frequency in affirmative of simple present tense was moderate. This statement was supported by the fact that the majority of the students' (63.9%) had moderate ability.

Diagram 1

The Percentage of Students' Ability to Use Adverb of Frequency in Simple Present Tense

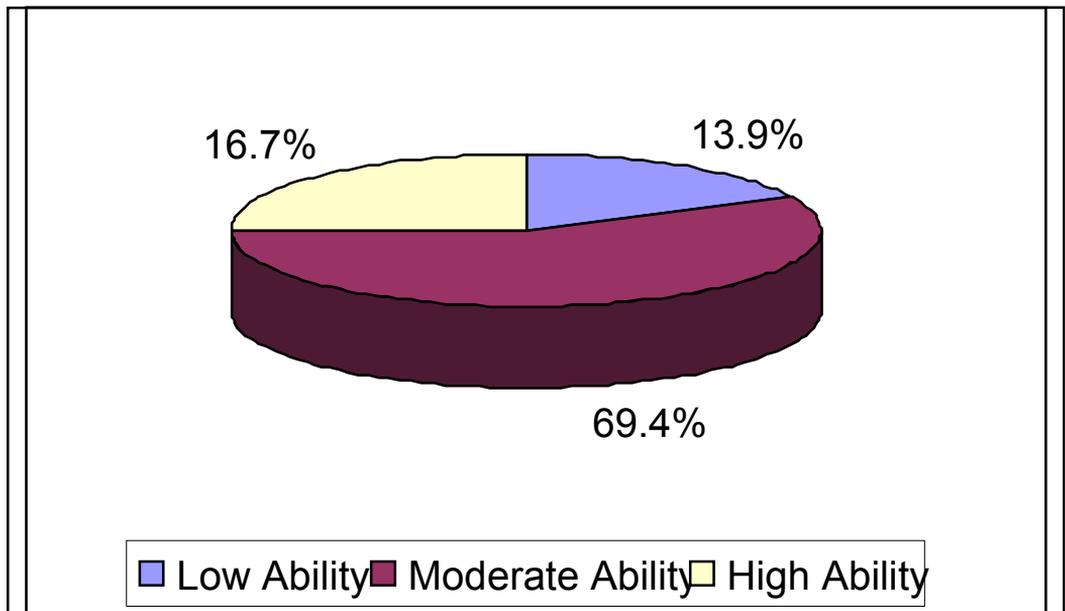


2) Students ability to use adverb of frequency in affirmative sentence of simple present tense

The researcher found that the lowest score of using adverb of frequency in affirmative sentence of simple present tense was 5 and the highest score was 10. Then the researcher calculated the score and got 7.028 for mean and 1.342 for standard deviation. Students' ability was categorized as high if their scores were higher than 13.9. It was categorized as moderate if their scores were in the range of 5.7 to 8.4 and it was categorized as low if their scores were lower than 5.7. After

that, the researcher classified the students' ability into three groups (high, moderate, and low). Finally, the researcher calculated the percentage of the student's ability. The result was that 5 students (13.9%) had high ability, 25 students (69.4%) had moderate ability, and 6 students (16.7%) had low ability. From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the students' ability to use adverb of frequency in affirmative sentence of simple present tense was moderate. This statement was supported by the fact that the majority of the students' (69.4%) had moderate ability.

Diagram 2
The Percentage of Students' Ability to Use Adverb of Frequency in Affirmative Sentence of Simple Present Tense.

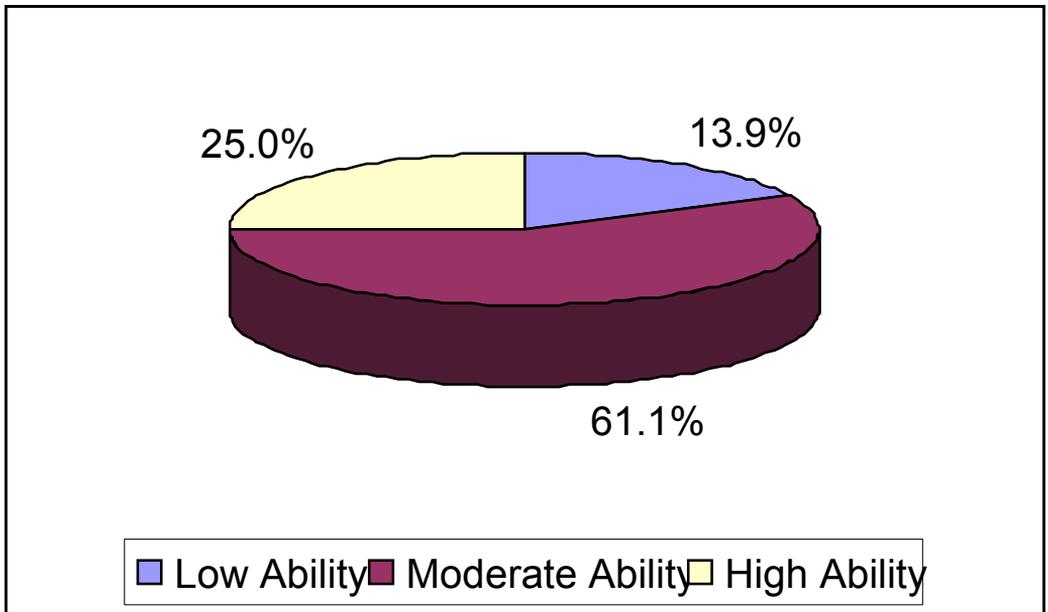


3) Students' ability to use adverb of frequency in negative sentence of simple present tense.

The researcher found that the lowest score of using adverb of frequency in negative sentence of simple present tense was 1 and the highest score was 10. Then the researcher calculated the score and got 3.39 for mean and 2.128 for standard deviation. Students' ability was categorized as high if their scores were higher than 6.5. It was categorized as moderate if their scores were in the range of 2.3 to 6.5 and it was categorized as low if their scores were lower than 2.3. After that, the researcher classified the students' ability into three groups (high, moderate, and low). Finally, the researcher calculated the percentage of the student's ability. The result was that 5 students (13.9%) had high ability, 22 students (61.1%) had moderate ability, and 9 students (25%) had low ability. from explanation above, it can be concluded that the students' ability to use adverb of frequency in negative sentence of simple present tense was moderate. this statement was supported by the fact that the majority of the students' (61.1%) had moderate ability.

Diagram 3

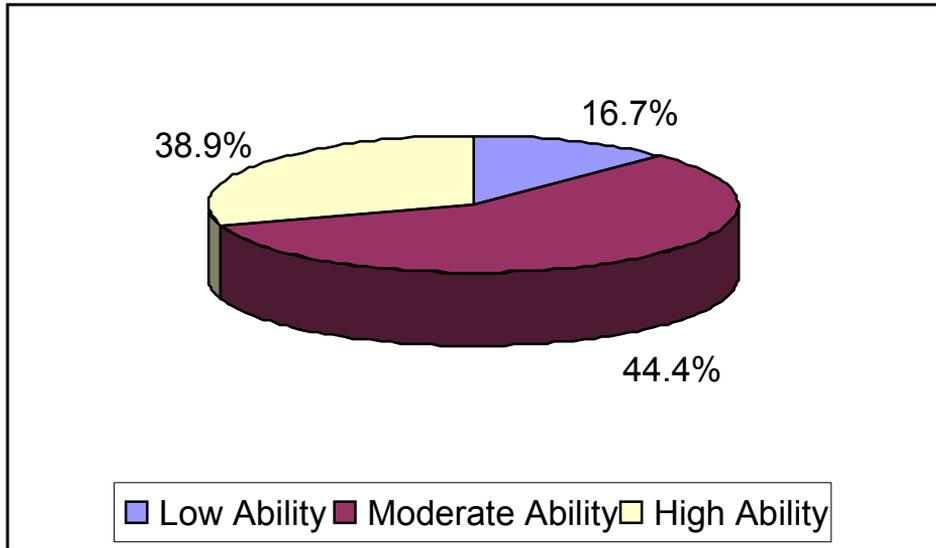
The Percentage of Students' Ability to Use Adverb of Frequency in Negative Sentence of Simple Present Tense.



4) Students' ability to use adverb of frequency in interrogative sentence of simple present tense.

The researcher found that the lowest score of using adverb of frequency in interrogative sentence of simple present tense was 1 and the highest score was 10. Then the researcher calculated the score and got 7.80 for mean and 2.993 for standard deviation. After that, the researcher classified the students' ability into three groups (high, moderate, and low). Finally, the researcher calculated the percentage of the student's ability. The result was that 14 students (38.9%) had high ability, 16 students (44.4%) had moderate ability, and 6 students (16.7%) had low ability. It can be concluded that the students' ability to use adverb of frequency in interrogative sentence of simple present tense was moderate. this statement was supposed by the fact that the majority of the students (44.4%) had moderate ability.

Diagram 4
The Percentage of Students' Ability to Use Adverb of Frequency in Interrogative Sentence of Simple Present Tense.



b. Discussions

Based on the result of the data analysis, the ability of the first year students of SMA N 7 Padang to use adverb of frequency in simple present tense was moderate. It was indicated by the fact that the majority of the students (63.9%) had moderate ability, only a few of students (16.7%) had high ability and a few of students (19.4%) had low ability. In specific, the ability of the students of SMA N 7 Padang to use adverb of frequency in simple present tense was moderate. By studying the result of the test given to the students, it can be discussed as follows:

1. Most students still did not understand about the use of adverb of frequency in affirmative, negative and interrogative sentence of simple present tense. It seemed that they did not know the rules of adverb of frequency in simple present tense yet.

Example:

- 1) Affirmative sentence
They walk often to work
The correct answer is:
They often walk to work
- 2) Negative sentence
They are usually not sad
The correct answer is:
They are not usually sad.
- 3) Interrogative sentence
Does rarely she go shopping?
The correct answer is:
Does she rarely go shopping?

2. Some students were still confused to put adverb of frequency in simple present tense. They did not understand that adverb of frequency in affirmative sentence of simple present tense is used after the subject. Besides, they did not understand that adverb of frequency in negative or interrogative sentence of simple present tense is used before the verb or adjective.
Examples:

- 1) Affirmative sentence
Often they walk to work
The correct answer is:
They often walk to work
- 2) Negative sentence
I am often not hungry
The correct answer is:
I am not often hungry.
- 3) Interrogative sentence
Do you come often to class on time?
The correct answer is:
Do you often come to class on time?

D. Conclusion

After interpreting the finding of the data analysis, it can be concluded that:

1. The ability of the first year students of SMA N 7 Padang to use adverb of frequency in simple present tense was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 23 out of 36 students (63.9%) of the students had moderate ability.
2. The ability of the first year students of SMA N 7 Padang to use adverb of frequency in affirmative sentence of simple present tense was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 25 out of 36 students (69.4%) of the students had moderate ability.
3. The ability of the first year students of SMA N 7 Padang to use adverb of frequency in negative sentence of simple present tense was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 22 out of 36 students (61.1%) of the students had moderate ability.
4. The ability of the first year students of SMA N 7 Padang to use adverb of frequency in interrogative sentence of simple present tense was moderate. It was proved by the fact that 16 out of 36 students (44.4%) of the students had moderate ability.

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