

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents: (1) background, (2) research problems, (3) research objective, (4) significance of the study

1.1 Background

In this era, English becomes a crucial language which is studied by many people around the world. It is due to several reasons. First, Richard (2007) emphasizes that it is important for people to learn English because it is the language of globalization, commerce and trade media, pop culture, different motivation for learning (as cited in Herlina & Holandyah, 2014, p. 107). Moreover, Jackson and Stockwell (1996) explain that English is important because it is used in every corner of the world in doing interaction among each other that has different cultural, ethnic, and social backgrounds (as cited in Abrar, Mukminin, Habibi, Makmur, & Marzulina, 2018, p. 129). It proves that English is useful in the society life for every aspect and many fields as the important language to be learned by many people.

In learning English, students have to master four skills especially listening. Listening gives influence in people's interaction. It is proved from some facts. Firstly, Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011) state that among four skills, listening has a big influence in communication. It showed that listening takes up 40-50%, speaking 25-30%, reading 11-16% and writing 9%. Additionally, Miller (2003) reported that more than 50 percent of our daily communications was spent on listening (as cited in Lestari, 2017, p.1). It means that listening gives impact in

communication because it consumes more time in daily communication than other forms of verbal communication.

As one of language skills, listening is important. There are some reasons why it is an important skill. First, Hamouda (2013) says that everyone believes that listening skill is important in foreign language learning because the key to acquire a language is to receive language input. When people communicate, they can get information what the speaker is talking about (input process) and then respond it with the appropriate response to the speaker (output process). Then, Renukadevi (2014) adds that listening plays a vital role, as it helps the learner to acquire pronunciation, word stress, vocabulary and the comprehension of messages conveyed can be based solely on tone of voice, pitch and accent. It can be realized that the sound, rhythm, intonation and stress of the language can only be perfectly adapted through listening. Therefore, listening is important for students because it can help the students improve their academic capability.

Students who have good listening ability will be able to enhance their comprehension level of spoken language as well. It can support the students for language acquisition and development of other language skills. According to Richards and Platt (2000); Gilakjani and Ahmadi (2011), listening comprehension is the process of understanding speech and it concentrates on role of linguistic units such as phonemes, words, and grammatical structures and the role of listener's anticipations, the situation and context, previous knowledge, and the subject (as cited in Gilakjini & Sabouri, 2016, p. 124). Therefore, the important

process in listening refers to students' ability for getting and understanding the message of the spoken language.

In fact, EFL learners still face problems in English listening comprehension. It can be proved from several facts. Firstly, according to Adnan (2012), in teaching English in Indonesia, listening is a skill that is considered difficult but neglected when compared to other skills. This is because listening skills are not important parts of many course books or curricula and teachers do not seem to pay attention to these skills while designing their lessons. Additionally, Mandarani (2016) state that based on previous related study which had been done to the students in finding out students' listening comprehension problems, it showed that they had difficulties in comprehending native speakers' talk or doing questions from audio. It means that students haven't learn much about listening skill so that they still faced problems in listening comprehension.

There are other reasons why listening skill causes problems to the students. First, listening skill is not given serious attention by the students. Students sometimes hide their misunderstanding of speakers' talk through nodding and shaking of the head even they don't understand the materials. Second, audio-lingual courses give the impression that they are teaching listening when in fact they are teaching other skills. According to Osada (2004), listening has not drawn much attention of both teachers and learners, they are generally less aware of its importance. In teaching and learning process in the classroom, teachers seem to test, not to teach listening. Thus, listening skill causes some problems to the students in comprehending listening material.

Moreover, in comprehending speech of a foreign language, it is a difficult task for language learners. The reason is that because this is a complex mental process that involves perception, attention, cognition, and memory. Goh (2000) reports that learners' difficulty in perception is students faced problems on recognition of familiar words, although they were familiar with some words but they were unable to remember their meaning immediately. As a result, in order to help students improve their listening comprehension ability, language teachers have to know and understand students' listening difficulties in comprehending spoken texts, and give some suggestions to help students solve their listening difficulties.

English Education Study Program of State Islamic University of Raden Fatah also provides listening course which consist of three levels for the students to be taken. It is learned during three semesters, start from second semester to fifth semester. The students learn listening English for specific purposes in each semester. Because this skill is related to understand what speaker are saying through the spoken text directly, this course becomes a quite difficult subject for the students.

Before doing this research, I did the preliminary study to make sure that this case happened to the students. Through the informal interview, I asked some students about their perceptions towards listening skill and how listening skill affects their comprehension. Based on students' opinion, it can be concluded that EFL students of English Educations Study Program of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang were difficult to understand the listening material because they had

not learnt much about listening skills and they could not be able to solve the problems. Hence, I did an investigation to know more about students' listening comprehension problems and provided some solutions from the lecturer to help the students overcome their listening comprehension problems.

There are two researchers who had conducted a research related to this study. First, a research from Ismail (2015) which had conducted an investigation of listening problems at UKMO. The result of this study showed that there were 50% students poor in listening and students faced different listening problems. The second research study which has been done by Hamouda (2013) investigated the listening problems encountered by a group of first year English major students of Qassim University. The result of the study showed that the students encountered various kinds of listening problems and the teachers had to improve their listening strategies in the classroom.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Based on the discussions in the background above, the problems of the study are formulated as follows:

1. What were the listening problems encountered by the third semester students of English education study program at UIN Raden Fatah Palembang?
2. How did the lecturer help the students to overcome their listening comprehension problems?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

Based on the problems formulated above, the objectives of this study are as followings:

1. To find out the listening problems encountered by the third semester students of English education study program at UIN Raden Fatah Palembang
2. To know how the lecturer helped the students to overcome their listening comprehension problems

1.4 Significance of the Study

By doing this research, it was expected that the result of this study to be useful information and positive contribution to the English foreign language learners especially third semester students of UIN Raden Fatah Palembang. The students were expected to solve their listening comprehension problems and to be more confident in listening to achieve higher scores in listening comprehension. For the English lecturers, it was hoped that the results of this study can give meaningful contributions such as help the students overcome their problems in listening skill and to know students' needs in learning listening skill. Next, for other researchers, the result of this study was expected to give more information or knowledge as a source for further research, especially in investigating listening comprehension problems encountered by EFL students. The last for me as the researcher, this study gives valuable experiences because I could enlarge my knowledge about how to master listening comprehension and to find the way how to solve the problems.