

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the description of this study. The chapter is arranged as follows: (A) background of the study, (B) statement of the problem, (C) objectives of the study, (D) research questions, (E) significance of the study, (F) outline of the research.

### **A. Background of the Research**

Language skills are categorized into two major categories namely receptive skills and productive skills (Brown, 2007). Receptive skills are language skills which are used by people to receive messages. Two types of receptive skills are listening and reading. Another category of language skill is productive skills. Productive skills are language skills which are used by people to convey messages. They are speaking and writing. Receptive skills and productive skills are integrated skills which are taught to language learners in language learning. However, from the four language skills, little attention is paid to the listening in formal instruction. In line with the statement, Brownell (1996) reviews that although listening is frequently used in learning and communication, listening is the least taught in the classroom compared to writing, reading, and speaking. This is due to an assumption that language learners have mastered a target language when they are able to speak and write in the target language (Nunan, 1999). Therefore, the focus of

language and learning instruction is on improving learners' speaking and writing skills rather than the listening skill.

In spite of the least focus in language learning, listening skill is important in the daily life and classroom instruction. In the daily life, a good listening skill is important to create an effective communication. As a result, a good listener can develop his professionalism at work and build relationship as well (Brownell, 1996). In addition to its role in daily life, Rost (2002) emphasizes that listening skill is important in the classroom because it is widely used by learners in language learning. Moreover, Richards (2008) states listening ability can be used to facilitate comprehension and language acquisition.

In regard to listening comprehension, some scholars (Brown and Yule, 1989; Ur, 1984) have noted that it is challenging for language learners to comprehend English spoken language because there are some potential problems that they will encounter in listening process. The problems are dealing with speaker, listener, content, support, hearing the sound, understanding intonation and stress, coping with redundancy and noise, predicting, understanding colloquial vocabulary, fatigue, understanding different accent, and using visual and aural environmental clues. Similarly, some students of English Education Department (EED) of UMY academic year 2010/2011 reported that they find it difficult to understand English spoken language even though they have been learning English in the English

Education Department formore than four years and most of classroom activities are conducted in English.

Based on the above facts, the researcher is interested in investigating listening problems faced by the students of EED UMY academic year 2010/2011, and the strategies employed by the students to overcome their listening problems.

## **B. Statement of the Problem**

This research aims at finding out listening problems encountered by students of EED UMY academic year 2010/2011 and the strategies employed by the students to overcome the problems in listening. There is a need to explain these issues better in order to improve students' listening skill because they still find it difficult to understand spoken language although they have been learning English since 2010 at the English Education Department of UMY. Furthermore, during the time, learning instructions were mostly conducted in English. It means that they had a great opportunity to be exposed to the target language, in which they get language input and interaction. According to Rost (2011), language input and interaction are critically important because they are the first stage to develop learners' listening skill. Thus, thestudents of EED are exposed to the target language since the beginning of their studies in the English Education Department. In conclusion, some students of the English Education Department reported that listening skill is one of difficult skills because, as they noted, they find it difficult to understand spoken language. This initial finding suggests a need

to explore listening comprehension problems encountered by the students of EED as well as the strategies employed by the students to overcome the problems in listening.

### **C. Objective of the Research**

Based on the background of the study above, the objectives of the study are:

1. To reveal listening comprehension problems encountered by students of the English Education Department of UMY academic year 2010/2011.
2. To investigate listening strategies employed by students of the English Education Department of UMY academic year 2010/2011 when they encounter listening comprehension problems.

### **D. Research Question**

1. What listening comprehension problems are encountered by students of the English Education Department of UMY academic year 2010/2011?
2. What listening strategies are employed by students of the English Education Department of UMY academic year 2010/2011 to solve their listening comprehension problems?

### **E. Significance of the Research**

1. The English teachers or lecturers

The result of the study will benefit English teachers or lecturers in which they will get better insights on students' listening comprehension problems and listening comprehension strategies. These insights can be used as considerations for the English teachers or lecturers in conducting teaching and learning process particularly in teaching listening skill.

2. The students

The students will know and become more aware on their problems in listening comprehension. Therefore, they can find and apply the strategies to solve the problems. Besides, by having self-awareness, it will develop their sense of responsibility to improve their listening skill.

3. The English Education Department (EED) of UMY

The result of this study might be used as evaluation for the institution, English Education Department of UMY, to improve their students' listening skill.

4. Other researchers

Other researchers who are interested in the same area of study can use these research findings to conduct further research related to listening comprehension.

5. The researcher

The researcher as a prospective English teacher will get benefit from the research findings because these findings will give insight about students' listening comprehension problems and their listening strategies. Therefore, she will become more aware on teaching in terms of improving students' listening skill.

## **F. Outline of the Research**

Chapter I discusses background of the research, statement of the problem, objectives of the research, research questions, and significances of the research. Some review of literatures related to listening skill, listening

comprehension problems, and listening strategies will be discussed in chapter II. Furthermore, this chapter provides the reader with related studies on listening comprehension problems encountered by language learners in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Next, chapter III discusses research method including research design, nature and sources of the data, research setting and participant, data collection method, and data analysis. In the following chapter, chapter IV presents finding and discussion of the research, in which the chapter focuses on answering two research questions which are posed by the researcher in this study including listening comprehension problems and listening comprehension strategies. Finally, chapter V presents the conclusion and the suggestions of the research.