

# **CHAPTER I**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **A. Background of Study**

Humans are social creatures that cannot live alone in fulfilling their necessities in life. They need to communicate with their fellow members of societies or other group. Language is used to receive and transfer messages and knowledge; it is also used to express ideas, minds, opinions, wishes, and feelings to others. Thus, language is very important in life and must be learnt particularly to ease communication.

Language is the component of communication that is used by people of the world to tell what are in their minds to the others such as opinions, ideas, information etc. By using language; we can easily communicate with other people in getting the best interaction. Badudu said that language is “interest, opinion, intelligence, mind, spoken, speech, and babbling” (Badudu, 1996, p. 180).

English is an international language that is spoken by people all over six continents and in so many areas. Therefore, speaking English is the easiest way to communicate with people from the other countries about any aspects in human life, such as technology, economy, social and politics. English is also a media to communicate with people and learned by most people in many countries, such as a mother tongue (first), second, or foreign language.

English is the most important foreign language not only in Indonesia, but also in almost every country in the world. English is one of school subjects which function as an instrument in developing students' knowledge, technology, art and culture. Consequently, modern science and technology devices and also most literary books are written in English.

The teaching and learning of English as a foreign language consists of four skills listening, speaking, reading and writing. Out of those four skills, the teaching of listening skills has been neglected for many years. The relationship between receptive and productive skills was poorly understood. Listening is most difficult. Many students find listening to be one of the most difficult skills in English (Brown and Smith, 2007, p. 2). Listening is the absorption of the meanings of words and sentences by the brain. Listening leads to the understanding of facts and ideas.

Listening is a communicative behavior, in which listeners try to construct a reasonable interpretation of a text for some communicative purposes. Listening is an active, purposeful process of making sense of what people hear (Nunan, 2003, p. 24). Listening is very important for people to know information in their environment. Allah said in the holy Qur'an surah Al-Mulk Verse 23.

قُلْ هُوَ الَّذِي أَنْشَأَكُمْ وَجَعَلَ لَكُمُ السَّمْعَ وَالْأَبْصَارَ وَالْأَفْئِدَةَ ۖ قَلِيلًا مَّا

تَشْكُرُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

From that verse above, it can be concluded that Allah has created auditory system for humans that use it to hear good things. Children always learn from listening, because they can understand what her or his mother said. When adult, he or she can give more attention with what they hear. They will think about anything from listening process and understand what they should do.

It was often assumed that listening skills could be acquired through exposure but not really taught. And as one of the important skills, listening actually should be learnt systematically. Rost points out, "Listening is vital in the language classroom because it provides input for the learner. Without understanding input at the right level, any learning simply cannot begin (Rost, 1994, p. 141-142).

Although listening is vital, materials for teaching often tend to test listening rather than teaching it and do not practice the kind of listening that takes place in real life (Field, 2002, p. 230). Listening in a glance is very easy, but in fact it is not as easy as expected ( Andriani, 2008, p. 1).

Listening to dialogues is one of the materials that are often given by the teacher to the student. For students, listening to dialogues well is very important that students are able to identify and understand what the message is conveyed by the speaker. Besides listening to dialogues well can also help students to improve listening comprehension and increase vocabulary.

The purpose of teaching listening itself based on the syllabus of MTsN Banjar Selatan 1 Banjarmasin is understanding and responding the

meaning in the transactional and interpersonal conversational to interact in the context of daily life (Syllabus, 2014:1).

When the writer did her pre-observation to research location, the writer asked to the teacher about the English listening material. From the information obtained, the teacher said that students often faced difficulty in understanding toward listening material given. One of the problems identified is listening to dialogues.

The reason why the writer chooses this title is because the ability in listening to dialogues well is very important. The writer thinks, human is a social creature that always requires interaction with other people, always do conversation in daily life, it is therefore very important for the listener to understand what is said by the speaker and what is the purpose of the talks so that do not occur misunderstandings. Dialogue refers to a form of conversation: talking or conversing with one's self or another toward a search for meaning and understanding. The writer chooses the eighth grade because they listen a lot to dialogues as English listening material. The writer also really wants to know how far the students' ability in listening to dialogues.

Based on the reason above, the writer is interested in doing a research entitled "THE STUDENTS' ABILITY IN LISTENING TO DIALOGUES AT THE EIGHTH GRADE OF MTSN BANJAR SELATAN 1 SCHOOL YEAR 2014/2015".

## **B. Statement of Problems**

Based on the background of the study above, the problem is formulated as follows: “How is the eighth grade students’ ability in listening to dialogues at MTsN Banjar Selatan 1 in School Year 2014/2015?”

## **C. Objective of Study**

In line with the research question above, the objective of this research is to describe the students’ ability in listening to dialogues at MTsN Banjar Selatan 1 in School Year 2014/2015.

## **D. Significance of Study**

Practically, this research is expected to be able to contribute some benefits to both the teacher as well as to the students.

1. For the teacher, the findings would be a good contribution for developing and expanding alternative technique of teaching listening by using dialogues.
2. For the students the findings would give a basic information about their ability, so that they can build up and increase their ability in listening.
3. For the next researches, the result of this research can be used as an input and reference to conduct further research on similar topic or other topics.

## **E. Definition of Key Terms**

Definition of key terms, which is necessary to clarify briefly in order to avoid misunderstanding, can be mentioned as follow:

1. Ability: skill or power that had by someone (Larsen, 1986, p. 14). Based on the writer opinions, the ability means that someone is able to master something. In this case, ability means the power of the students to listen well in listening activities.
2. Listening: the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. It involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his grammar, and his vocabulary and grasping his meaning" (Howatt and Dakin, 1974). By listening we can also know where someone comes from based on her accent. Listening is also the basic skill that every normal person has to develop. Good listener could be a good person.
3. Dialogues: in reality, when the learners listen to a dialogue in a conversation, they listen to sounds unlike those of their own language. In other words, the listener perceives the new sounds in terms of the nearest equivalent in their own language (Subyakto, 1986).
4. Listening to Dialogues: it is the ability to listen to the conversations of others then identifies and understands what the message contained in the conversation.
5. MTsN Banjar Selatan 1: it is a state Islamic Junior High School which is located on Jln. Bakti Pemurus Dalam Rt 05 Number 04, South Banjarmasin District, Banjarmasin.

Based on the definitions of key terms above, this research is intended to know the skill of listening to English dialogues in listening test at the eighth grade of MTsN Banjar Selatan 1.