

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### A. Background of Study

Communication is a part of human's activities. Through communication by using language, we can share our ideas and thoughts with other people. In that way, a smooth interaction between people can take place. As Allah said in the holy Qur'an Al Hujurat verse 13:

يَأَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتَقْوَاهُ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ ﴿١٣﴾

Allah said that he created people from a man and a women and make them different nations in order to know each other, language can make them meet other people from different countries and everyone must use the language for communication.

One of the ways to get knowledge is learning language. Language and education have a very close relationship. Using language in teaching has a very important role for students' intellectuality and improvement. Language helps people in the world to communicate and express sense from one person to other. It is used to speak to each other, write, and text. According to Oxford dictionary

(2008:247), a language is system of communication in speech and writing used by people of particular country. Language is vital, not just to communicate but it is an essential skill, enabling individuals, not only to survive, but to participate and engage constructively in political, social, cultural, art and economic life. Especially for globalization era right now. The existence of languages makes people to be a “community of human being”. It is produced, built and developed by language as society unifier (Kruschwitz, 2011).

In this era of globalization, in order to be advanced people need to communicate with other people around the world who speak different languages. This international communication requires people to speak more than one language. Therefore, besides speaking in our own language, we need to be able to speak other languages that enable us to communicate with people whose language differs from our language. English as an International language around the world has an important role in communication, transferring information, science and technology.

One of the popular languages is English. English is an international language that is spoken by most people around the world. English is used as the language of communication between people who speak different languages. A Japanese and a Mexican will speak in English, an Arabian and a Chinese will also speak English even an Indonesian and Malaysian might also communicate in English. With good skill in English, a person can always communicate to anyone everywhere. As the result, English is one of the most important foreign languages that are being taught from elementary school up to university level in Indonesia.

Considering the importance of English language in developing the country, Indonesian government has included English language in the educational curriculum in the stages of education of high school level to university level. In informal education, some parents at home even also try to introduce English to their children as early as possible, and this makes some play-groups (day care) and kindergarten include English language to their features to attract parents' interest to their school. In non formal education, English is also one of the most wanted thing to master, as we can see there are many courses of English everywhere in the city.

In English, as well as other languages, there are four skills that should be mastered by its learners. Those important skills of language are listening, speaking, reading, and writing skill. In the foreign language classroom, listening becomes the important thing because it provides input for the learners. When considering interpersonal communication competence, listening is the first skill to master and also listening ability in English as a foreign language has important role in building communication skill, but when considering academic competence, Listening has an essential figure in teaching and learning English. As the first language skill, listening gives a big contribution to develop other language skills. Listening is the second skill to be mastered after the reading skill. In conclusion, whatever the purpose people have in English listening skill is very important to master.

As the first language skill, listening is a difficult skill in second language learning. The difficulty is caused by many factors varying from the difference of

sounds between first language and the second, lack of vocabulary, grammatical unawareness, to pragmatic differences between the two languages.

According to Nunan (2003) listening is a receptive skill that requires a listener to receive and understand incoming information. Listening is an active, purposeful process of making sense of what listeners hear. The ability to hear is a natural process that develops in normal infants. Listening is the absorption of the meaning of the words and sentences by brain. It is a skill in a sense that it is related but distinct process than hearing which involves merely perceiving sound in a passive way while listening occupies an active and immediate analysis of the streams of sound (Harmer, 1991).

In Islam, listening had deep meaning. It is not just listening to what people said, but also to the specific sign. It means we should think and learn from what we have listened. As mentioned in the holy Qur'an surah Ar Rum, verse 23

وَمِنَ آيَاتِهِ مَنَامُكُمْ بِاللَّيْلِ وَالنَّهَارِ وَابْتِغَاؤُكُمْ مِّنْ فَضْلِهِ ۗ إِنَّ فِي ذَٰلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ

لِقَوْمٍ يَسْمَعُونَ ﴿٢٣﴾

From the verse explanation the sense of hearing is the main instrument and the most important for human to absorb some information about our environment in the world. One of the miracle of the Holy Qur'an is it had been brought and preached by prophet that could not read and write, but he was able to listen. This

is the greatest argumentation of Qur'an that listening is important aspect in our life.

Students who learn English should be able to listen well. By listening they will be able to imitate the way a word is pronounced. Also by listening, they will be able to improve their ability in English. There are some ways that will help the students to improve their listening ability. They can listen to music, short conversation from native speaker, etc. in listening we can identify sounds which are nearly in same word.

Students in Senior High School must have ability on minimal pairs, because it is so difficult to identify which ones is a true word. Students must have ability to differentiate minimal pairs, because it is very important to improve their ability in English. Minimal pairs raise difficulties for the students who less in vocabularies or grammar.

Many students has difficulties to discriminated minimal pairs in listening, such as one is '*sleep*' in '*sleep,slip*'. In this case, students must have a good ability in vocabularies. Students need to have many vocabularies in their memories, because different word is different meaning. The writer assumed that minimal pairs is important to mastery because it will help students in their listening skill

Based on the background above, the writer is interested in this subject, the writer intends to do a research entitled: "THE TWELFTH GRADE STUDENTS' ABILITY TO DIFFERENTIATE CONSONANT AND VOWEL SOUNDS AT SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL 1 TAMBAN ACADEMIC YEAR 2015/2016".

## **B. Statement of Problem**

Based on the explanation above the writer investigates and focuses on the following question:

How is the twelfth grade students' ability in differentiating consonant and vowel sounds at Senior High School 1 Tamban academic year 2015/2016?

## **C. Objective of Study**

The objective of the study is to know the twelfth grade students' ability in differentiating consonant and vowel sounds at Senior High School 1 Tamban academic year 2015/2016.

## **D. Significance of Study**

This research is expected to give contribution to the field as follow:

1. For teacher, as a helpful effort to improve students' ability in differentiating consonant and vowel sounds.
2. For students, as self-assessment to improve their ability in differentiating consonant and vowel sounds.
3. For the writer, as an input for herself to enrich her knowledge and experience in scientific research.
4. For other researchers, as additional information in research about students' ability in differentiating consonant and vowel sounds.

5. For the libraries of Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies and Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teachers Training, so that this thesis can give a new contribution, especially for those who want to improve their English knowledge and their ability.

#### **E. Definition of Key Term**

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

1. Students is a person who is learning at a college or university. Or student is a learner, or who attends an educational institution. In this research students return to people who are learning in Senior High School 1 Tamban.
2. Ability is capacity of power (to do something physical or mental). (Hornby, 1987, p. 2). Or quality of being able to do something, especially the physical, mental, financial, or legal power to accomplish something. Ability here means skill or power that had by someone (Larsen, 1986). 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.
3. Differentiate is to identify the differences between things, to discriminate among them. Differentiate shows the difference between two or more things. It shows distinguish one thing from others. Thus, the writer will look for the students' ability in differentiating consonant and vowels.
4. The Consonant is a speech sound that is articulated with complete or partial closure of the vocal tract. Consonant is a speech sound that's not a vowel.

The sound of a consonant is produced by a partial or complete obstruction of the air stream by a constriction of the speech organs. In this research the test used consonant words. But the writer took only some of the whole consonants such as /p/b/, /t/d/, /k/g/, /f/ʒ/, /tʃ/dʒ/.

5. Vowel is a speech sound produced by humans when the breath flows out through the mouth without being blocked by the teeth, tongue, or lips. In this research the test used vowel words. The vowels are a speech sounds. They some letter that are produced by articulation that makes sounds. But the writer took only some of the whole vowels such as /i/I/, /e/ɛ/, /æ/a/, /u/ʊ/, /o/ɔ/.

Based on the terms above, the writer concludes that the meaning of the titile is the twelfth grade students' ability to differentiate consonant and vowel sounds at Senior High School 1 Tamban academic year 2015/2016.