

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of Study

Nowadays, English is the most important language used across world. The use of English is in accordance with the aim of creating language as stated in the Holy Qur'an in the Al-hujarat verse 13 as follows :

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا وَقَبَائِلَ  
لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٌ

In Indonesia, English as a foreign language which is only taught in school or language courses. English is used for communicating to foreigners and comprehending science in English language. English becomes compulsory subject at schools and universities so that the students of Indonesia will use this language not only in the classroom for studying, but also for comprehending all fields of study used in English.

Also, across the world, world competition uses English as universal language. Therefore, English language is becoming one of important subjects material in Indonesia.

Learning language covers four skills in it: listening, speaking, reading and writing. Linse (2005) classifies them into oral skills that consist of listening and speaking written skills with reading and writing. Based on their aims and focus, listening and reading are classified into receptive skills since the focus is on receiving input from an outside source. Meanwhile, speaking and reading are productive skills that focus on producing information or output. It is no doubt that listening is the first skill that learners acquire. They use listening as receptive skill before being able to produce the language.

The significance of listening skill in effective communication has been recognized for a century. Rankin conducted a study and found that listening skill was the most dominant skill for the mode of human communication (Bozorgian, 2012, p. 658). Many people think that listening is passive skill since students cannot produce words when they are listening. Listening is not passive skills at all. In speaking and

writing, it is obvious that we produce the language in written and oral form. The activation of the language itself takes place in our brain. When the students are listening the spoken language, they focus how they decode the sounds until they can comprehend the meaning. Therefore, when teachers give students activity or task to do, students can be engaged in this activity. This means that there is some activeness in listening activities. Brewster (2002) says that it is not good if we always ask students to “listen and remember” since it will make students feel anxious, place great strain on their memory and tend not to develop listening skill.

In English, students do not only learn four skills but also learn the component of English such as grammar, spelling, vocabulary and so on. Grammar, spelling, vocabulary and so on included into those four skills. Those four skills certainly contain grammar in it. To master English people might learn about grammar. They should know more about vocabulary, how they put it into a sentence and use it to express their thought and feeling. Fromkin and Rodman (1983, p. 12) once stated in their book that to understand the nature of language learner

must understand the nature of this internalized, unconscious set of rules which is part of every grammar of every language. That's why grammar plays very important roles for people who want to learn another language (Darmono, 2013, p. 25). To learn and be able to communicate in English we have to know how people usually use this language put words into sentences and then use them in communication. First of all, we have to know what we mean with grammar itself. Nunan (2005, p. 3) in his book describes grammar as the ways in which units of language (principally, but not exclusively, words) combine together to form sentences. If the learners understand the description, the researcher only knew that grammar is a mean to combine words into sentences. But, how about tools to combine it happen? To answer this question N Chomsky and N Halle in Fromkin and Rodman (1983, p. 11) have another description about grammar. They states that we use the term "grammar" with a systematic ambiguity. On the one hand, the term refers to explicit theory constructed by the linguist and proposed as the description of the speaker's competence. On other hand, [it refers] to this competence itself. Based on this description we know that grammar

has some rules that we can use it to form a sentence from some words. People who can use grammar properly can be called as people that have good English.

Grammar has important role in learning English, so it also has a big influence to English, especially in speaking and writing. At English Department of UIN Antasari Banjarmasin, there is a listening skill subject which divide into Listening I, Listening II, and Listening III.

At Listening II in the third semester of English Department students, there is a material about narrative text which must use a part of grammar itself; simple past tense. On the pre-observation, the researcher found that some students are still confusing to answer the question (fill-in blank test) of narrative text which provide a space that must be filled with verb whether it is in present or past form. The last thing that students can do when they could not answer or fill the certain verb since they did not hear clearly what are the speakers saying is guessing. But in fact, the students are still confusing and could not differentiate verbs in past and present form despite narrative must use verb in past form.

Because of that case, the researcher then will conduct this study at the fourth semester of English Department UIN Antasari Banjarmasin where the researcher found this case. However, they have already passed Grammar I at the second semester in which past and present tense had been already taught and Listening II subject had already been taught in the third semester. Based on the description of the case, then the researcher would like to find out whether there is a correlation between their grammar and listening ability on past tense.

In previous study which was conducted by Darmono, 2013 entitled "*A correlation between Grammar Achievement and Reading Comprehension Achievement*" could be concluded that there is very weak correlation between grammar achievement and reading comprehension at the first semester of English Department of Islamic University of Malang.

Also, the second previous study was conducted by Dewi Nurani entitled "*The Correlation between Vocabulary Mastery and Listening Skill of the Students at the Fourth Semester in English Department of UIN Antasari Academic Year 2012/2013*" could be concluded that there is a

significant correlation between students' vocabulary mastery and listening skill. Based on the explanation above the researcher will conduct a study entitled "*The Correlation between Students' Grammar and Listening Ability of Simple Past Tense at the Fourth Semester of English Department Students UIN Antasari Banjarmasin*".

## **B. Research Question**

This research is designed to answer these questions:

1. What level is students' grammar ability of Simple Past Tense at the fourth semester of English Department UIN Antasari Banjarmasin?
2. What level is students' Listening ability of Simple Past Tense (narrative text) at the fourth semester of English Department UIN Antasari Banjarmasin?
3. Is there any correlation between students' Grammar and Listening ability of Simple Past Tense at the fourth semester of English Department UIN Antasari Banjarmasin?

## **C. Objective of Study**

Objectives of this study are:

1. To know the students' Grammar ability of Simple Past Tense at the fourth semester of English Department students UIN Antasari Banjarmasin.
2. To know the students' Listening ability of Simple Past Tense (narrative text) at the fourth semester of English Department students UIN Antasari Banjarmasin.
3. To know whether there is a correlation between students' Grammar and Listening ability of Simple Past Tense at the fourth semester of English Department UIN Antasari Banjarmasin.

#### **D. Significance of Study**

The researcher hopes this research will be useful for:

1. For the lecturers who has taught the Listening II and Grammar I :  
The result of this study can be used as information for lecturers that students who are good in grammar, might not always be good in listening ability. So, it can make them more creative in teaching learning process, especially in grammar on Simple Past Tense and listening on Simple Past Tense (narrative text).

2. For students: The result of this study will be useful for them to improve and develop their Grammar and Listening ability.
  
3. For other researchers: The procedures and outcomes of this research hopefully will inspire other interested researchers to conduct studies with similar themes.

#### **E. Hypothesis**

The hypothesis of this study was prepared as a tentative answer for the research problem stated previously. In this case, the hypothesis can be formulated for this research:

$H_a : \rho \neq 0$  There is a correlation between students' Grammar and Listening ability of Simple Past Tense at the fourth semester of English Department students UIN Antasari Banjarmasin.

$H_0 : \rho = 0$  There is not a correlation between students' Grammar and Listening ability of Simple Past Tense at the fourth semester of English Department students UIN Antasari Banjarmasin.

## **F. Definition of Key Term**

To avoid misunderstanding towards the title of this research, the researcher will describe the key terms as follows:

1. Correlation : Correlation means relationship, in this study means that the relationship between two variables in this research that is grammar and listening ability.
2. Ability : is an ability to do something is interpreted or understood well (Hornby, 1995). In this research, the researcher would like to know about students' ability in grammar and listening the simple past tense measuring with objective test.
3. Simple Past Tense : Past tense expresses or indicates a time that is in

the past. The simple past indicates that an activity or situation began and ended at a particular time in the past (Azar. P.24). In this research, the researcher focuses on Simple Past Tense verb form.

#### 4. Listening

: Nunan (2002, p. 15) defines the listening as a matter of decoding the individual sound to derive the meaning of word and change utterance. In this research, the researcher focuses on Simple Past Tense verb form using the narrative text.