

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of Study

Language is an important communication instrument for human beings, by using language they can communicate to each other easily. Language is used to deliver messages, express ideas, thought and feelings to others. Beside that, people use language not for communication only, but also for developing science and technology, art and culture.

There are many languages in the world. Each race has its own language, so does a country. They have the same aim that is to communicate.

The variety of language is one of Allah's greatness as His words in the Holy Qur'an surah Ar-Ruum: 22 as follows:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتَلَفُ اللَّسَانَاتِ وَاللَّوْنَاتِ إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ  
لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

Based on the verse above, God has given us many kinds of language as a mercy for human to communicate to each other. With the long process, language always gets the implication from the places or communities that use the language.

As one of the languages that exist in the world, English is considered as the most important language in the world for it is spoken by many people all around the

world. It is also learned by most people in many countries either as mother tongue, second or as a foreign language. English is an international language that is spoken by people all over six continents. Therefore, speaking English is the easiest way to communicate with people from other countries. In Indonesia, English has become one of the major subjects in school which is learned from elementary school as a foreign language.

In learning a language, there are four skills that have to be mastered by the learners, they are: listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Listening is one of the important skills in language learning, listening has an essential figure in teaching and learning a language. As the first language skill, listening gives a big contribution to develop other language skills. In a foreign language classroom, listening is important because it provides input for the learners.

Troike (2010, p.137) said that when considering interpersonal communication competence, listening is the first skill that has to be mastered, but when considering academic competence, listening is the second skill that has to be mastered after reading skill.

According to Nunan (2003, p.24), listening is another critical and important part of communication. Listening is a receptive skill that requires a listener to receive and understand incoming information. In other words, listening is the process to understand what we hear. Therefore, if we want to get the main point of what someone says, we should be active when we are listening. In conclusion, whatever purpose we have in learning English, listening skill is very important to be mastered.

Listening is also considered more difficult to be mastered than the other skills especially when listening to an English native speaker. It is a challenging thing for most people who have just learned English. The pronunciation, speech rate, intonation and the unfamiliar vocabularies are mostly the most problematic thing in understanding to an English native speakers' speaking.

Brown and Smith (2007, p.2) stated many students find listening to be the one of the most difficult skills in English. Listening is the absorption of the meaning of words and sentences by the brain, listening leads to the understanding of facts and ideas. But listening takes attention or sticking to the task at hand in spite of distractions. It requires concentration; focusing the thought upon one particular problem. A person who incorporates listening with concentration is actively listening to details at anytime. Listening is a hard work, and deserves to more analysis and support.

Learning English listening is a need. It is very crucial so that we can communicate to each other well, but in the same time it is very difficult because we who learn it as a foreign language are not familiar with the sound of the language, lack of vocabulary, bad grammatical and the speech rate, etc. Moreover, in language there is a term called as accent and/or dialect. Accent and dialect cause differences in how a language is used or spoken and it happens mostly because of the difference of the region where the users of the language live. Therefore, each regions have their own version of a language and this phenomenon also happens in English.

There are some varieties of English in the world that quite different with each other like Australian English, Indian English, Malaysian English, etc. Among these varieties of English, there are two kinds of English that are widely used by two different countries; American English and British English. These two varieties of English also have some differences in some aspects of language like pronunciation, intonation, speech rate and lexical choice, etc.

There is a previous study written by Giuseppina (2013) , entitled “Lexical Differences Between American And British English” where the research focuses only in the lexical difference between the two varieties. Whereas, this research does not only talk about the difference of lexical choice but also in some other aspects of linguistics.

Another previous study written by Gholamabbas (1997), entitled, “American English Vs. British English” where the research is aimed to find out subjects’ attitudes towards American and British English and also to find out whether the subjects’ preference of certain variety corresponds to their performance or proficiency. Whereas, this research does not have any concern about the subjects’ attitudes towards the two varieties of English.

Based on the explanation above, the writer is interested in comparing students’ achievement between listening to American English and British English with the title “ **A Comparative Study of Students’ Achievement Between Listening to American English and British English of the Fourth Semester**”

**Students of English Department at Antasari State Islamic University  
Banjarmasin Academic Year 2017/2018”.**

**B. Statement of Problems**

Concerning the topic, the problems of this research are:

1. How is the students' listening achievement in American English?
2. How is the students' listening achievement in British English?
3. Is there any significant difference of the students' achievement in listening to American English and British English?

**C. Objectives of Study**

In line with what has been stated in statement of problems, the objectives of study are as follow:

1. To find out the students' listening achievement in American English.
2. To find out the students' listening achievement in British English.
3. To find out if there is or there is not any significant difference of the students' achievement in listening to American English and British English.

**D. Hypothesis**

A quantitative research approach needs a prediction about the answers of statement of problem which is known as hypothesis. Hypothesis is just a prediction about the problem of the research. It must be tested to know the answer empirically.

The purposes of hypothesis are to give direction and also give limit for the variable that is used. Thus, hypothesis is needed as problem explanation to look for the problem solving (Azwar, 2001, p.141). According to Narbuko and Achmadi (2009), comparative study has two hypothesis; Ho (Zero Hypothesis) and Ha (Alternative Hypothesis).

In this research, there are two hypotheses that are made:

1. Zero hypothesis (Ho)

There is no significant difference in students' achievement in listening to American English and British English.

2. Alternative hypothesis (Ha)

There is significant difference in students' achievement in listening to American English and British English.

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

In order to avoid any misunderstanding about the title of the research, the definition of key terms are made as follow:

1. Comparative Study is connected with studying things to find out how similar or different they are (Oxford Dictionary, 1995, p.82). Comparative is also known as a study between two objects or subjects that we want to know about the ability or achievement in each other by conducting some test or research. Based on that statement, the writer is intended to compare the students' achievement in listening to American English and British English.

2. Achievement refers to the recognition granted to a learner when all required learning outcomes have been successfully demonstrated (Janisch, 2009, p.4)
3. Listening is the ability to identify and understand what others say. This involves understanding a speakers' accent or pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary and grasping the meaning (Thomas Kral, 1993, p.189). Listening is also one of the four basic skills in English that students need to master.
4. American English or United States (U.S.) English, is a set of dialects of English language native to the United States (Crystal, 1997).
5. British English is the English language as spoken and written in Great Britain or more broadly, throughout the British Isles.

Thus, the title of this thesis means that the researcher compares the students' achievement in listening to American and British English.