

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. Background of Study

Language is an arbitrary system of symbolic relationship that permits the encoding of ideas into utterances and decoding of utterances into their meanings. Language is manifested in speech and writing. Speech is manifestation (Mackay, 1987: 29-30). Language comprises a set of vocabularies from our thinking of manifestation to our speaking. Language is a set of rules.

Language is also the God's gift for human. He created different languages, as written in the Holy Koran in the Ar-Rum Verse 22, as follows:

وَمِنْ آيَاتِهِ خَلْقُ السَّمَوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضِ وَأَخْتِلَافُ أَلْسِنَتِكُمْ وَالْوَأْيِكُمْ  
إِنَّ فِي ذَلِكَ لَآيَاتٍ لِّلْعَالَمِينَ ﴿٢٢﴾

The verse above explains that God created many languages in this world. One of the important languages that is used and learned by most people in the world is English.

In Indonesia, English is the foreign language that is included in compulsory subject at formal schooling. It is taught and learned from elementary to university levels. The skill that are emphasized in the language teaching and learning process including listening, speaking, reading and writing. The position of English at school is very important since it becomes one of the four subjects that are examined in *UAN* (Nation Examination).

Linguistic study involves a search for patterns in the way speakers use language. Linguists aim to describe these patterns by reducing them to a set of rules called a grammar. Over time linguists came to recognize a growing number of language components.

The study of how sound are organized and used in natural languages is called phonology(Wingate,2012).Phonology is essential description of the systems and patterns of speech sound in a language.The sounds of human language are special because they are produced by a set of organs, the speech organs that belong only to the human species. Phonology is the features of sound in a language are systematically structured. It has branch of segmental features including consonant and vowels.

Consonants are opposite of vowel and the meaning of consonants here does not refer to the consonants found in English alphabet, but the word consonant is phonemic. In other word, the consonant are produced orally as sound.Vowels are some letter that is produced by articulation that makes sounds, and the number of vowels are about fourteen that arranges in point of articulation in the mouth and it is pointed to chart of vowels namely: 1. front, central, back, high, mid and low refer to the position of the tongue in the mouth, 2. rounded and rounded refer to shape of the lips and, 2. close and open refer to relative opening of the jaw.

Morphology is the study of how words are put together, developed as a subfield of linguistics as soon as linguists realized that the rules they had devised to explain sound patterns in language could not explain the structure of words.A third component of language is Syntax, or sentence structure. Linguists began to study

syntax when they discovered that morphological rules alone could not account for certain patterns of morpheme use. The last component is Semantics. It is the study of the meaning of linguistic expressions. The language can be a natural language, such as English or an artificial language, like a computer programming language. Meaning in natural languages is mainly studied by linguists.

Indonesian language has six phonemes of vowels. They are /i/, /e/, /ə /, /a/, /u/, and /o/. Although the shape of the lip gives influences to the vowels quality, in Indonesian language, this is not hold an important role(Akmajian, 1979, p. 75-76).

Since many words of English vocabulary include vowel phonemes, then aspect of vowels has many effects on listening skills. When students do not really understand vowels, it will make their listening skill become low, and then becomes lower if they do not practice much in listening lesson. In some campus, listening laboratory is not really proper for using in teaching learning process.

Based on a factual of the situation in the one of department in IAIN (English). As we know that the students who fourth semesters of English department academic year 2012/2013, they are already learned about pronunciation, but the researcher want to know how far the students understanding about vowel sound especially to differentiate /ə/ and /ɜ:/ sounds and proof that with the test. The researcher thinks that they are good for using English, but we still don't know how about their listening. So the reseacher is interesting to do reseach about listening that releted to fonem between words.

Based on contradiction above, the researcher is interested in doing a systematic research with the title: THE ABILITY OF ENGLISH DEPARTMENT STUDENTS OF ANTASARI STATE INSTITUTE FOR ISLAMIC STUDIES TO DIFFERENTIATE SOME ENGLISH VOWEL SOUNDS

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

Based on the statement above, the researcher formulates the problem as follows:

1. How is the ability of English Department Students of Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies to Differentiate Some English Vowel Sounds at Fourth Semester in Academic Year 2012/2013?.
2. What factor influence the ability of theseStudents to Differentiate Some English Vowel Sounds at Fourth Semester in Academic Year 2012/2013?.

### **C. Objective of Study**

Regarding the questions above, the purpose of this Research is as follows:

1. To know the ability of English Department Students of Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies to Differentiate Some English Vowel Sounds.
2. To find out factor influence the ability of these students to differentiate some English vowelsounds.

### **D. Significance of Research**

The results achieved in this reseacrh will provide:

1. Clear information for lecturer who wants to know about the ability of students to differentiate vowel sounds.

2. Student's ability to improve their ability in listening to English words and vowel.
3. To enrich knowledge for research and other readers
4. This research presents information to the reader about the ability of students to differentiate vowel sound.

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

To avoid any misinterpretation regarding the title, the researcher needs to explain some terms in the title as follows:

1. Ability according to oxford dictionary means "The quality of being able to do something, power or skill required to do something (AS, Horby. 1987: P. 2). "The ability" that discussed in this study related to students' ability of students to differentiate vowel /ə/ and /ɜ:/sounds.
2. Differentiate shows the difference between two or more things. It shows distinguish one thing from others. Thus, the researcher will look for differentiating vowel /ə/ and /ɜ:/ sounds by listening.
3. The vowel is a speech sound. It is some letter that is produced by articulation that makes sounds.
4. Students refer to the fourth semester of English Department of Antasari State Institute for Islamic Studies Banjarmasin in academic year 2012/2013.