

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the Problem

Listening is an activity that people usually do in their life. Through listening, we can get much knowledge and information about what we want and we hear. According to Underwood, listening is paying attention to and trying to get meaning from something we hear.¹ To listen successfully to spoken language, the listener needs to be able to work out what speakers mean when they use particular words in particular ways on particular occasion. Thus, Listening Comprehension is needed very much in communication and understanding what the speaker or native speaker said.

Listening is not easy to be mastered, because the listeners should have ability to comprehend the message, many students are failing in listening class because they cannot catch the point of the message. Listening can be defined as the process of understanding speech in a second or foreign language. It is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, understanding his grammar, recognizing his vocabulary and being able to grasp the meaning of what he says.

Listening in everyday life is a real time skill. Unlike reading, students don't have the chance to adjust the pace of speech, listen again or check an unknown word. The need to understand what they hear on the spot makes it even more crucial that they develop the ability to listen well.

¹ Mary Underwood. *Teaching Listening*; Longman Handbooks for Language Teachers. New York: Longman Inc. 1989, P.1

Teaching listening is not separated from transactional conversation, interpersonal conversation, and short functional text. It is proper that students did not have difficulties in comprehend their listening. The teaching of listening relies on the use of tape – recorders or language labs because most teachers are non-native speakers who may lack proficiency in English. In order to enhance our students' competence, they must have sufficient language input. Yet in fact, the students still find difficulties in comprehend this skill. The difficulties and the obstacles in listening are faced by the second year students of SMA N 2 Bangkinang, Kampar Regency.

The aim of English learning in senior high school is to achieve the literacy level of informational. Informational level is the level of literacy where the students can access their knowledge with the medium of English. SMA N 2 Bangkinang is one of the school in Kampar Regency, this school also uses school based curriculum in learning process of English. English is taught 2 periods in a week with duration 45 minutes per period. This curriculum also gives priority for listening skill by applying the four basic competences as explained above. The competence standard for listening is “ The students are able to understand a simple short functional text and simple monologue text in recount, narrative and procedure in daily life context.”²

Based on the preliminary research at SMA N 2 Bangkinang, the writer founds that the students' ability in comprehending listening English was lowed. In SMA N 2 Bangkinang, the passing score for English course is 70 and the basic competence stated in the syllabus of this school for second grade is that students were be able comprehend the meaning of passage orally, But, in reality, there were some of the students have

² Badan Standar Nasional Pendidikan, *Standar Isi untuk Satuan Pendidikan Dasar dan Menengah*, Jakarta: BSNP, 2006, P.127

difficulties in comprehend the meaning of listening text. They do not understand clearly what they hear although they have been taught by their English teacher. Some of the students were not able to listened well. They felt bored in listening. They were lazy to listened. They spend much time to understand of monologue text listened. They also were not able to answered the questions that given after listened a monologue text. Finally, they were not be able to get The Target Score Minimum (KKM) that is 70.

Based on the writer's preliminary observation at SMA N 2 Bangkinang, the writer finds that the students' ability in comprehending listening English monologue text is low. It can be seen from the result of the students' quiz and examination in answer listening text. In the examination, the English teacher gave multiple choice tests 20 question. They are about main idea, the meaning of vocabulary and idioms. The result of examination showed that there was not students' could reach good level to excellent level. There were 9 students' or 20% of the students' could reach good level, 25 students' or 55 % of the students' reach average level. In addition, there was no students' at the poor level. The average score of examination was 50.87 (Average level).³

In the other word, the result of examination did not achievement the minimum criteria of English subject at SMA N 2 Bangkinang. Based on phenomenon above, the writer knows that students have low ability in listening comprehension, listening achievement test some of them get low score in listening comprehension exercise. The teacher found many students who still do not understand and get difficulties in listening. The problem faced by the students will be outlined in the following phenomena:

1. Some of the students get low score in their listening task.

³ Observation of English Teacher at SMA N 2 Bangkinang, Retrieved on July 2013.

2. Some of the students are not able to get the point from what they hear.
3. Some of the students are not able to comprehend the context of listening task.
4. Some of the students are not able to identify what the speaker means.
5. Some of the students are difficult to comprehend the grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of the speaker.
6. Some of the students cannot catch the keyword from the listening comprehension.

Based on some problems that the writers explain above, so it is clear that some of the second year students at SMA N 2 Bangkinang still have problems. Because of that, the writer would like to applicate inference strategy which is the focus of this strategy should be on understanding, not writing. Inference strategy is the techniques that provide information and thought for understand. It is a powerful technique to create comprehension to fill the gaps and guess the general meaning of the text. In accordance with the idea stated above, Chamot, explain “inference involves guessing the meaning of unfamiliar language based on what you know”⁴.

In the inference activity, the students use their prior knowledge of the speaker and topic to help them make inferences. And then think about the speaker’s tone and what his/her expressions, posture, or gestures tell the students about that tone. The students ask theirself, What emotion can I identify in his/her voice?, What does that tell me about the speaker’s mood or about the meaning of the text?. Next use clues, like the speaker’s tone or word choice, to identify the implicit message. Finally as students listen, think about the inferences their have made. Confirm, change, or disregard inferences as you get more information.

⁴ Anna Uhl Chamot, and Sarah Barnhardt, et al. *The Learning Strategies Hand Book*. New York: Longman. 1990, p.19

By using this strategy, the writer hopes that the students are easier to understand and develop their listening comprehension. Especially, in comprehending what the speakers say in the tape recorder or video. Based on the symptoms depicted above, therefore, the writer is interested in investigating these problems by conducting a research entitled : **The Effect of Using Inference Strategy Towards Listening Comprehension of the Eleventh Grade Students at SMA N 2 Bangkinang, Kampar Regency.**

B. Definition of the Term

To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation about some terms used in this research, the writer defines them as follows:

1. Inference Strategy

Chamot, explains inference involves guessing the meaning of unfamiliar language based on what you know⁵. The student will learn that inferences are a thinking strategy that requires that they use text clues and background knowledge in order to draw conclusion. Inferencing helps the listeners expand on their current background knowledge through listening. Inferential strategies helps the listeners learn how to think critically and ask questions about texts that they listen. All of these activities help students reflect on their listening, which will help students make inferences.

2. Listening Comprehension

Jack C. Richard stated that listening as comprehension is the traditional way of thinking about the nature of listening. Indeed, in most methodology manuals listening and listening comprehension are synonymous. This view of listening is based on the

⁵ Anna Uhl Chamot, and Sarah Barnhardt, et al. *The Learning Strategies Hand Book*. New York: Longman. 1990, p.19

assumption that the main function of listening in second language learning is to facilitate understanding of spoken discourse.⁶ However, in this research, the term of Listening Comprehension refers to effect of using Inference Strategy towards listening comprehension of the second grade students at SMA N 2 Bangkinang.

C. The Problem

1. Identification of the problems :

Based on the explanation above, the writer identified the problems as follow:

- a. What factors make some of the students get low score in thier listening task?
- b. What factors make some of the students are not able to get the point from what they hear?
- c. How make students be able in getting and understanding information of the topic that listened by the teacher?
- d. Why some of students can not write down or shared their ideas?
- e. Why some of students are difficult to comprehend the grammar, vocabulary and pronunciation of the speaker?

2. Limitation of the Problem

Based on the identification of the problems stated above, it is clear that there are many problems in this research, thus the problem discussed in this research are focused on the students listening comprehension and the new strategy that will used for the second grade students of SMA N 2 Bangkinang. That new strategy is Inference strategy. Therefore, the writer limits the problem in this research focus on the students' listening comprehension on narrative text and the Inference strategy.

⁶ Jack C. Richards, "*Teaching listening and speaking from theory to Practice.*" Cambridge University Press 2008, p. 3

3. Formulation of The Problem

Based on the problems of this research, it can be formulated in these following questions:

- a. How is the students' Listening Comprehension taught by using Inference Strategy at the second grade of SMA N 2 Bangkinang?
- b. How is students' Listening Comprehension taught by using Conventional Strategy at the second grade of SMA N 2 Bangkinang?
- c. Is there any significant effect of using Inference Strategy towards students' Listening Comprehension at the second grade of SMA N 2 Bangkinang?

D. Objective and Significance of the Research

1. Objective of the Research

- a. To find out students' listening comprehension that is taught by using Inference strategy.
- b. To find out students' listening comprehension that is not taught by using Inference strategy.
- c. To find out whether there is any significant effect of students' listening comprehension that is taught by using Inference strategy.

2. Significance of the Research

Related to the objectives of the research above, the significance of the research are as follows:

- a. To fulfil of requirements for the writer to complete undergraduate degree program at English education department of education and teacher training faculty of state Islamic university of sultan Syarif Kasim Riau.

- b. The findings of this study can give some contributions for students, especially for students who study at the second grade of SMA N 2 Bangkinang on how important their strategies to influence their listening comprehension
- c. Motivating students to improve their proficiency in listening comprehension, in order to give chance for students to be master of English.

E. Reason of Choosing the Title

The reason why the writer is interested in carrying out the topic above based on several considerations :

1. The writer is interested in carrying out this research in order to know the effect of using Inference strategy toward students listening comprehension.
2. The topic is relevant to the writer as an English student of English department of state Islamic university of Sultan Syarif kasim Riau.
3. The writer wants to prove the ability of the students in listening skill.
4. As far as the writer concerned, this research title has never been investigated by any other research yet.