

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This study attempts to investigate teacher's strategies and students' responses in teaching listening skill in the language laboratory. This chapter presents the background of the research, statement of the problems, the objectives of the study, scope and limitation of the study, research method, and thesis organization.

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

In line with development in the approach of the teaching English as a foreign language (TEFL) in Indonesia, English language teachers are faced with new challenges as well as dilemmas and confusions. The recent English competency-based curriculum demands new perspective in teaching the language, which includes the shift from "let's talk about something with language" into "let's do something with language" (Departemen Pendidikan Nasional, 2006). It means that the students are expected to use English in written and spoken form as one of the communication tool in their daily life.

This curriculum emphasizes the need to develop learners' listening and speaking skills to promote spoken communication prior to the written one. As, naturally listening skills initiate language development, it is necessary to

develop these skills prior to the other skills. Relevant to the issue Philip (1993:5) states that in a primary school, listening tasks are important because it provides a rich source of language data from which the children begin to build up their own idea of how the language work.

In teaching and learning process, the learners are expected to have life skills by doing acts such as initiate and respond conversation, close conversation, ask assist etc. "Those overall life skills should be realized into the lexical-grammar or the grammar and vocabulary" (Kurikulum, 2006). However, it must be remembered that teachers should not spend much their time only to teach grammar and vocabulary.

Pinter (2006:45) mentions that listening is an active skill and many factors that contribute to its difficulties. They are the type and the length of the text the children listen to and familiarity of the person who they are listening to. It is easier for students to listen to their teacher than to recordings because teachers can adjust their speed and modify their language. The teacher can also repeat message, use gestures, and facial expressions to help children to work out the meaning.

The overall success of teaching listening depends on the teachers as the major sources of language. In relation to this view Richard and Rodgers (2001:28) explain that the teacher roles are similarly related ultimately both to assumption about language and language learning at the level of approach. Some methods and strategies are totally dependent upon the teacher as a source of knowledge and direction, consultant, guide, and model for learning.

There are some variety of materials available to learners and teachers, such as in the form of video and audio tapes or language laboratory media. According to Lie (2004) there are only few teachers who use the media of language laboratory or tape-deck in a classroom. By using the media of language laboratory, the teachers are expected to be able to help students master English through listening and to train them listen to their teacher's voice or the native-speaker. Unfortunately, not all schools are able to use this media to develop students' ability in listening skills because it is very expensive to construct.

Harmer (2001:141) affirms the idea in the above paragraph that the language laboratory helps to train some students to really listen to what they say and how they say it. When they compare their pronunciation with correct version on the tape, they begin to notice the differences, and this awareness over period helps them to hear and pronounce English better as hearing sound.

Furthermore, Harmer (2001:142) mentions that the modern language laboratory has ten or twenty booths, each equipped with a tape deck, headphones, microphone, and now computer. Students can work on their own, can be paired or grouped with other students, or can interact on a one-to-one basis with the teacher. The teacher can broadcast the same work with different material. Students can interact with each other, and written texts can be sent to each computer screen.

It must be remembered that teaching listening in the language laboratory is not an easy job for junior high school English teacher to grade VII because it

is new medium of instruction for them. Teachers should be the facilitator who provides significant guidance in the students' use of language laboratory tools and support weaker students. Teachers should identify the problems faced by students in teaching listening in language laboratory such as the level of listening material, the use of native-based cassette or VCD, students' limited grammatical and vocabulary, inability to interpret, etc. Underwood (1989) mentions that these problems as being related to students' different background such as their culture and education. The students whose culture and education includes a strong storytelling and oral communication tradition are generally better at listening comprehension.

Therefore, teachers should be able to design, prepare, and apply the appropriate strategies related to the students' problems in teaching listening.

Based on the description above, the study examines the strategies used by the English teacher in teaching listening to grade VII of a junior high school in the language laboratory. Furthermore, it attempts to find out the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies used by the English teacher and the students' responses toward the strategies used by the English teacher.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problems**

This study explores an English teacher's strategies used in teaching listening to grade VII in a junior high school in Tanjung Pinang. Furthermore, it observes the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies used by the English

teacher, and also the students' responses toward the strategies used by the English teacher in teaching listening in the language laboratory.

Related to the situation above, this study formulates the problem in the following research questions:

1. What strategies does the English teacher use in teaching listening skill to grade VII of a junior high school in the language laboratory?
2. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies used by the English teacher?
3. What are the students' responses toward the strategies used by the English teacher?

### **1.3 The objectives of the Study**

Based on the problem mentioned above, the present study aims:

- 1 to find the English teacher's strategies in teaching listening to grade VII of a junior high school in the language laboratory,
- 2 to find the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies used by the English teacher,
- 3 To find the students' responses toward the strategies used by the English teacher.

### **1.4 Scope and Limitation of the Study**

This study attempts to investigate an English teacher who used language laboratory in teaching listening to grade VII in junior high school in Tanjung

Pinang. More specifically, this study describes the English teacher's strategies, the strengths and weaknesses of the strategies, and the students' responses toward the English teacher's strategies used in teaching listening in the language laboratory.

### **1.5 Research Method**

Three main aspects of the research are discussed: first, research design; second, data collection method, and third data analysis method. This study employed both qualitative and descriptive quantitative design by employing a case study. The study employed three instruments to collect data: observation, interview, and questionnaire. To support collecting data, the study used document analysis such as lesson plans, subject materials, and achievement of students in learning English. Detail elaboration of research method is presented in chapter III.

### **1.6 Thesis Organization**

This thesis is organized in five chapters. The current chapter I is a general introduction. Chapter II describes the theory of teaching listening in the language lab. Chapter III describes the research methodology which comprises research design, data collection, and data analysis method. Chapter IV elaborates findings and discussion. Chapter V conclusion the thesis and offers suggestions.