

I. INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the background of the problem which includes the reason for conducting the research, the problems in teaching listening comprehension, and the suitable teaching method which is needed to improve the students' listening comprehension. This chapter also describes the formulation of the problem, objective of the research, uses of the research, scope of the research, and definition of terms.

1.1. Background of the Problem

Learning English cannot be separated from learning the four main of language skills, such as listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Thus, the four aspects of language skills are integrated one another which the students have learnt from elementary level, up to senior high school level. From the four aspects of language skills, according to Griffiee (1986), listening can be considered as the first step in learning a language. Besides that, according to Fisher and Terry (1980:138), listening is the first step of learning English. Moreover, listening as one of the aspects of language skills, according to McIntosh (1979:65), is one of the most important and fundamental of the four skills in language learning because

listening gives the students information from which to complete the learners' knowledge in using English.

In learning English, according to Krashen (1985), there are two processes called input which consists of listening and reading; and output which consists of speaking and writing. Listening input is all that is necessary to language acquisition. So long as the learner receives comprehensible input, he or she will automatically become competent in the target language. The learners learn the target language by understanding messages first by receiving comprehensible input first, before producing the output. Therefore, listening is an important aspect of learning and it should be introduced as early as possible to develop the students' listening comprehension in learning English; for example, by giving the students, as the beginners, lots of listening practice before asking them to speak is more beneficial than getting them to speak from the very first stage. By listening, the students will get the information as their first input for their knowledge, then start to produce words or sentences by speaking as the first output, learn to read as the second input and start to write as the second output and the advanced level. Listening as the input and speaking as the output are related each others; moreover, according to Alexander (1975:8), nothing should be spoken before it has been heard.

However, it was found that the students of junior or senior high school got difficulties to participate in the process of English teaching learning activity. Moreover, related to the previous research which was conducted by Apriani

(2012), it was found that, in the teaching-learning process, the students had difficulty in recognizing intonation pattern, sentence pattern, discourse marker, and getting the referential info. She found that most students only understood about half of what they listened, then after having ALM treatment three times, they retained less than twenty-five percent of comprehending the original message. As stated in Finocchiaro (1967:55), at the first time, the students seriously conflict with the production of the new language sounds because they do not immediately decode the sounds.

Even more, since listening skill affects the speaking skill, the students could not follow what their teacher was talking about. They were unable to speak English fluently because they lacked of listening skill. It seems the teaching learning method in the class preferred to use GTM (Grammar Translation Method) which did not frequently practice listening and was more concerned to grammatical structures for focusing on passing the national examination (UN). Thus, the students did not get much time to practice listening comprehension. As a result, they lacked of listening comprehension and often did not understand what the teacher said in English language.

Based on the facts that the students lacked of listening comprehension, the researcher is intended to use Audio Lingual Method (ALM) to improve the students' listening comprehension, especially in improving the students' micro skills of listening comprehension. ALM assumes that language learning is a process of habit formation. Since ALM focuses on listening and speaking ability,

thus, listening and speaking come first, and reading and writing come later. Drill techniques such as repetition drill, substitution drill, transformation drill, replacement drill, response drill, cued response drill, rejoinder drill, restatement drill, completion drill, expansion drill, contraction drill, and integration drill are used in the form of target language dialogue. By drilling the students, it will be easier for them to remember and learn; since the more often English is repeated, the stronger the habit and the greater learning will be achieved. As in the process of a child for example, who learns his/her mother tongue, a child always begins with hearing first what his/her parents speak, then he/she tries to speak afterward. Thus, ALM believes that learning a foreign language is the same as the acquisition of the native language (Larsen-Freeman, 2000:43).

Therefore, based on the explanation above, this research was conducted in the first grade students of SMPN 2 Bandar Lampung in order not only to improve their listening comprehension, but also to analyze the improvement of their listening comprehension through drill technique and to find out the problems the students face in learning micro skills of listening comprehension through drill technique.

1.2. Formulation of the Problem

Based on background of the problem mentioned previously, the formulation of the problem is as follow:

1. How significant is the improvement of the students' listening comprehension through drill technique?

2. What problems do the students face in learning micro skills of listening comprehension through drill technique?

1.3. Objective of the Research

The objectives of this research are:

1. to analyze the improvement of the students' listening comprehension through drill technique.
2. to find out the problems the students face in learning micro skills of listening comprehension through drill technique.

1.4. Uses of the Research

The uses of this research are:

1. Theoretically, the result of this research can be used as a reference for the next researcher who will concentrate in improving the students' listening comprehension through drill technique. In addition, the conclusion of this research can be used as a reflection to improve the students' listening comprehension through drill technique.
2. Practically, to inform the readers, English teachers, language researchers, other practitioners of how to improve the students' listening comprehension through drill technique.

1.5. Scope of the Research

This research is a quantitative research which was conducted by administrating the pre-test and post-test to analyze the improvement of the students' listening comprehension through drill technique. This research also was conducted through observation and interview to find out the problems the students face in learning micro skills of listening comprehension through drill technique.

The material was given in several kind of dialogues based on KTSP curriculum of junior high school, which considered suitable vocabulary, grammar, pronunciation, voice, and fluency for their level. For example, the dialogues were conducted in the topic of expressing likes and dislikes, asking for clarification, and making an arrangement. To suit the level of the students, the drills technique was taken from several kinds of ALM drills such as repetition drill, substitution drill, and transformation drill. The materials, which were given from KTSP based curriculum in the form of dialogues, were drilled by those drills had been chosen.

The data collection was collected from the students in the first grade students of SMPN 2 Bandar Lampung as the subject of the research. The reason for choosing junior high school students as the subject of this research was because of their beginning position which still needed much attention. Moreover, since they were in the beginning period in learning English, their listening comprehension should be more concern.

1.6. Definition of Terms

Definition of terms aims at avoiding misunderstanding about the terms in the research. The definitions of term are:

Audio Lingual Method (ALM)

This method was introduced in the United States of America (USA) in 1940s, in order to equip the learners with the knowledge and skill required for effective communication in a foreign language.

Listening Comprehension

Listening Comprehension is the ability to grasp general idea and to comprehend information from a spoken passage we hear.

Drill Technique

Drill technique is the technique in Audio Lingual Method (ALM) which requires the learners to repeat the sentences the teacher says; thus, it is easier for the students to remember and learn, since ALM believes that the stronger the habit is, the greater learning will be achieved.

Teaching Learning through Variety of Pattern Drills

Teaching learning through variety of pattern drills is the way of the teacher teaches the students by drilling or repeating the sentences in the target language dialogue several times through variety of pattern drills, such as repetition drill, substitution drill, and transformation drill.