

## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This chapter consists of background of the study, research question, limitation of the study, purpose of the study and benefit of the study. The explanation of each part is presented below.

#### **1.1 Background of The Study**

In the context of general education and language education, the term assessment undoubtedly cannot be separated from teaching and learning activities. These three activities are bound together to support each other. Assessment becomes an important source for teachers to get information about students' progress and achievement based on the learning objectives. As Cohen stated (1994:1), "The assessment activities are nonthreatening and are developmental in nature, allowing the learners ample opportunities to demonstrate what they know and they don't know, and providing useful feedback both for the learners and for their teachers. In addition, assessment is useful to inform the teachers about the effectiveness of approaches used in giving instruction. Sugiharto believed assessment also assists teachers in diagnostic students' specific strength and weakness (2007: 1). The term assessment is closely related to the learning materials and learning activities conducted in the classroom. The assessment held in a classroom should be on the basis of the learning materials and learning

activities given during the learning process. A test should test what the students have learned during the learning process.

Second language learning divides English skills into listening, speaking, reading and writing. Those four skills can be classified into two main language skills, receptive skills and productive skills. Harmer (2002:199) defined receptive skills as the language users' access to get the message from the text they hear and see. They get the meaning from by hearing and seeing the language. While productive skills, as Harmer also stated (2002: 246), are the language users' means to communicate and express their idea to be understood by their listeners and readers. Listening and reading play a key role in foreign language learning. The adequate input of learning may be end up with an excellent output. Through listening, students in foreign language learning can form an awareness of the language system at various levels and also set up a base for more intelligible productive skills, and so does the reading comprehension. Because of these uniqueness of listening and reading as receptive skills, and also its importances, it is needed for teachers to create an appropriate learning process and well designed assessment process. In the context of language assessment itself, Brown claimed that it will be more authentic when those skills are integratedly assessed (2004: 116). But they can also be assessed independently in order to determine principles, test types, task, and issues combined with each other.

In English Department of State University of Jakarta, the four basic English skills used to be taught integratedly in the subject content courses, but in the last two years the department have decided to serve it separately. There are

now Listening 1, Listening 2, Listening 3, Speaking 1, Speaking 2, Speaking 3, Reading 1, Reading 2, Reading 3, Writing 1, Writing 2 and Writing 3 used to fulfilling the need of English basic skills mastery. Before doing the study, the researcher found that the parallel class of those six courses had different activities at the same time. This situation rises up her curiosity to know how listening and reading courses conducted in the classrooms. Besides, there is also found that only little research on assessment done by students of English Department of State University of Jakarta, especially the ones conducted in the English Department of State University of Jakarta. With this consideration, the researcher is enthusiastic to conduct a research on how the receptive skills are assessed in the English Department of State University of Jakarta.

## **1.2 Research Questions**

Based on the background stated above, the writer proposes three main problems as follow:

1. How is listening assessed at English Department of State University of Jakarta?
2. How is reading assessed at English Department of State University of Jakarta?
3. How do students respond to the listening assessment?
4. How do students respond to the reading assessment?

### **1.3 Limitation of The Study**

Due to the limited time and technicalities to analyze the receptive skills assessment of second year students of English Department of State University of Jakarta, the researcher limited the study only on the basis of the types of task used by the teachers to assess the students. And for the students' responses, the researcher limited only on the suitability between learning materials and learning activities in the classroom and learning materials and learning activities stated in the course outline; and also between learning materials and learning activities in the classroom and learning materials and learning activities in the assessment process.

### **1.4 Purposes of The Study**

The purposes of this study are:

1. To describe how listening skill is assessed at English Department of State University of Jakarta
2. To describe how reading skill is assessed at English Department of State University of Jakarta
3. To investigate how the students respond to the listening assessment
4. To investigate how the students respond to the reading assessment

### **1.5 Benefit of The Study**

This study is beneficial in adding reaserch in the field of case study especially on the assessment. New findings are gained by covering the aspects of course outline (Satuan Acara Perkuliahan) implementations in the six courses listed. It also enriches studies in English skills focuses on how listening and reading skills are conducted in the classrooms.