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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of the problem

Listening is a complex, active process of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they have already known. Defining listening, as a process of receiving what the speaker actually says (receptive orientation); constructing and representing meaning (constructive orientation); negotiating meaning with the speaker and responding (collaborative orientation); and, creating meaning through involvement, imagination and empathy (transformative orientation). Listening is a complex, active process of interpretation in which listeners match what they hear with what they have already known. In other words, students have to be inherited to listening in order to master their listening task.

Listening has an important place in learning as it is one of the four major skills in language acquisition. Eventhough, the other skills such as reading, speaking and writing are essential to develop language proficiency, listening contributes primarily for language expertise. Listening awakens awareness of the language as it is a receptive skill that first develops in a human being. Learning to listen to the target language improves language ability. The sound, rhythm, intonation, and stress of the language can only be perfectly adapted through listening. To understand the nuances in a particular



language, one must be able to listen. As we get to understand spoken language by listening it is easier to improve the other skills and gain confidence.

Vandergrift and Goh (2012:58) stated that prior knowledge is one of the important factors in listening comprehension. Prior knowledge is what we already know about a topic before learning. The students who have a prior knowledge, they will be easy in completing listening task. Therefore, prior knowledge is a crucial thing for students in completing any listening tasks.

According to Anderson & Lynch's in Alidoost (2014:152) successful comprehension in listening takes place when the listener has prior knowledge. If listeners are familiar with the given topic they are listening to, their prior knowledge (schemata) can be activated too, consequently, comprehension becomes much easier. So, the students need to have prior knowledge in order to be successful in listening comprehension.

Senior High School 5 Pekanbaru is one of schools that applies School-Based Curriculum as their guidance in teaching learning process. English is one of the subjects that students have to learn. In that school, English is taught twice a week. In the School-Based Curriculum, there are some competence for listening skill. The competence of listening for the second year students are understanding the meaning of formal and sustained transactional and interpersonal conversations in the daily life context, and understanding the meaning of short functional text and monologue in the form of narrative, spoof and hortatory exposition in the daily life context. In addition, the passing grade for listening in that school is 78.



Furthermore, I had implemented a preliminary research by interviewing an English teacher named Mrs. Wiwik Rahayu, S.Pd. According to her, she always taught the students by using a recorded material in listening class. The teacher distributed to the students a listening task that they already knew such as listening to a narrative story and listening to a dialogue about expressing sadness. The students could listen to the dialogues or monologues focusing on the actual sound and aural practices. In this case, of a non-native English class, recording may provide opportunities for students to hear a native speaker. Then, the audio would be repeated three times.

Based on the explanation above, what teacher had done is useful to develop the students' listening comprehension. However, the students still had difficulties in listening class. The students' difficulties in listening could be seen from the following symptoms:

1. Some of the students were frequently wrong in answering the listening comprehension questions.
2. Some of the students had limited knowledge to the topic of the listening task given.
3. Some of the students did not comprehend the message of the speaker in listening task.
4. Some of the students were difficult to conclude the information and ideas from the listening task.

The students' difficulty in listening could be based on the several factors. According to Vandergrift and Goh (2012: 58), the factors that can



affect students' listening comprehension include: (1) cognitive factors, (2) affective factors and (3) contextual factors. One of the cognitive factors is prior knowledge. Therefore, the researcher assumed that students' problem in listening is because of their prior knowledge.

Based on the symptoms explained by the researcher above, the researcher was interested in conducting a research entitled: **“The Correlation between Prior Knowledge and Listening Comprehension of The Second Year Students at SMAN 5 Pekanbaru”**.

B. The Reason of Choosing the Title

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

1. The researcher wants to analyze how far prior knowledge of the students in listening.
2. The topic is relevant to the status of researcher as one of the students of English Education Department.
3. As far as the researcher has concerned, this research is never investigated yet.

C. Definition of the Term

The topic of this research is the correlation between prior knowledge and listening comprehension of the second year students at State Senior High School 5 Pekanbaru. To avoid misunderstanding and misinterpretation, it is necessary to define some terms used in this research, they are:



1. **Prior knowledge.** According to Jonassen and Gabrowski (1968; in Yuksel, 2012:1198) prior knowledge is defined as the knowledge, skills, or ability that students bring to the learning process. Prior knowledge can be knowledge of the topic, the listening context, the text-type, the culture or other information stored in long-term memory as schemata.
2. **Listening comprehension.** According to Howatt and Dakin in Saricoban (1999:1) is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying. This involves understanding a speaker's accent or pronunciation, his grammar and his vocabulary, and grasping his meaning. An able listener is capable of doing these four things simultaneously.

D. The Problems

1. Identification of the Problems

Based on the symptoms that are explained by the researcher above, so the problems in this research will be identified as following questions:

- a. What were the factors that made some of the students wrong in answering the listening questions?
- b. What were the factors that made some of the students have limited knowledge to the topic of listening task given?
- c. What were the causes of some of the students difficulty to comprehend the message of the speaker in listening task?
- d. What were the causes of some of the students difficulty to conclude information and ideas from the listening task?

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2. Limitation of the Problems

Because of some of the consideration of find, capabilities and limited time, this research was limited to the correlation between prior knowledge and listening comprehension.

3. Formulation of the Problems

Based on the problems limited above, the problems formulated into following research questions:

- a. How is students' prior knowledge of the second year students at SMAN 5 Pekanbaru?
- b. How is students' listening comprehension of the second year students at SMAN 5 Pekanbaru?
- c. Is there any significant correlation between students' prior knowledge and their listening comprehension of the second year students at SMAN 5 Pekanbaru?

E. Objectives and Significance of the Research

1. Objectives of the Research

- a. To know how students' prior knowledge of the second year students at SMAN 5 Pekanbaru
- b. To know how students' listening comprehension of the second year students at SMAN 5 Pekanbaru
- c. To know the significant correlation between students' prior knowledge and their listening comprehension of the second year students at SMAN 5 Pekanbaru

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2. Significances of the Research

The significances of the research were:

- a. Hopefully, this research was able to benefit the researcher as a novice researcher especially in learning how to conduct a research.
- b. These research findings were also hopefully useful and valuable especially for students and the teachers of English of the second year students at State Senior High School 5 Pekanbaru.
- c. Besides, these research findings were also expected to be positive information especially for those who are concerned in the field of teaching and learning English as a foreign or second language and those who are concerned with the field of language teaching in general.
- d. Finally, these research findings were also expected to be the practical and theoretical information to the development of the theories in the field of language teaching.