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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### A. The Background of the Research

Interest has an important role in readers' text processing, the writer focuses on gaining a better understanding of the concept of interest and the ways in which it has been investigated. Following the review of the available literature on interest e.g., Anderson (1982); Asher (1979); Dewey (1913); Kintsch (1980); Renninger and Wozniak (1985); Schank (1979), other research also suggests that providing high ability readers with materials that interests them is vital in order to encourage and maintain their love of reading.

Tobias (1994) said that one of the major problem with the construct of interest is often confounded with prior knowledge. Both of those factors play really important role in learning Alexander, Kulikowich, & Jetton said that both prior knowledge and interest play roles in learning, research into conjunctions of these two factors has not clarified completely how or to what extent they are correlated in specific domains and interact to contribute to human development.

Senior High School 3 Pekanbaru is one of the schools in Pekanbaru. Similar to other schools in Indonesia, this school uses School Based Curriculum (KTSP) as guidance in teaching and learning process. English has a compulsory to be taught there. It is taught to the students twice a week by the English teacher. In



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the School Based Curriculum (KTSP), reading is taught to all grades, from the first grade to the third grade.

Some students face difficulties in reading. The difficulties can come from self-esteem, motivation, anxiety and prior knowledge. prior knowledge is an important aspect to a successful reading. In the second language research, Lee (1986) had studied the effects of background knowledge in reading, understanding and recalling the text in the second language learners and found that the learners' ability to recall was enhanced when they were presented with one of the three components of background knowledge, context, transparency, and familiarity.

Before conducting this research, the writer had done a pre observation in a school where the writer conducted this research and did an interview with an English teacher named Yulianti Utami on Thursday, 12<sup>th</sup> of February 2015. Based on the observation and the interview with the teacher, the students' problem was that they were not interested in English, especially in reading. When the teacher gave them a reading text to read and several questions to answer, the students seldom read the text and tried to find answer by cheating their friend. It happened because the reading text was not interesting for them and they also did not have the prior knowledge of the text given. Sometimes, the teacher gave them long reading text and the teacher only asked them to read the text without giving any tips to easily find the answer from the long reading text. It was supported by the



students' score of achievement that most of them did not pass the minimum score (KKM = 80). This problem can be caused by the teacher or the students. It can be itemized into some of these phenomena as follows:

1. Most of the students are grueling to recognize the topic
2. Most of the students are difficult to accept the new topic
3. Most of the students are difficult to grasp the content of the topic
4. Most of the students are lack of comprehension about the topic
5. Most of students are difficult to make the inference what they read about

Based on the phenomena depicted above, some of the second year students are still have problem in term of their reading in learning English, the writer is interested in investigating the phenomena into a research entitled: **“The Correlation between Students’ Prior Knowledge and Their Reading Interest at Senior High School 3 Pekanbaru”**.

## **B. The Problems of the Research**

### **1. The identification of the Problems**

- a. The students get problem in long reading text

When the students are given the short text, most of them try to read the text before answering the questions given. But it is different when the students are given the long reading text, they will be lazy to read the text and try to answer the question given after reading the text by cheating their friend.

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- b. The students have less attention to read the topic

Some students do not know what the topic of the text given is. When the teacher gives them the text, they only read and answer the questions given without trying to give any attention of the topic of the text.

- c. The students get trouble to connect the topic to their prior knowledge

It is shown by how hard the students read the text. They have no idea of what the text they read about for, they also seldom read at home.

- d. The students still have score under the minimum standard for reading

Most of the students with all the problems depicted above get the score under the minimum standard for reading.

## 2. The Limitation of the Problems

Based the identification of the problems depicted above, it will be sincerely better for the writer to restrict the problem in order to pay more attention to specific problem. This research merely focuses on the problem of students' prior knowledge in reading activities that the students get trouble to connect the topic to their prior knowledge in obtaining the reading interest.

## 3. The Formulation of the Problems

Based on the limitation of the problem stated above, thus, the research questions are formulated in the following questions:

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- a. How is students' prior knowledge at Senior High School 3 Pekanbaru?
- b. How is students' interest in reading at Senior High School 3 Pekanbaru?
- c. Is there any correlation between students' prior knowledge and students' reading interest at Senior High School 3 Pekanbaru?

## **C. The Objective and the Significance of the Research**

### **1. Objective of the Research**

Based on the research question formulated above thus, the objectives of this research are as follows:

- a. To find out the information about the students' prior knowledge
- b. To find out the information about the students' reading interest
- c. To find out the significant correlation between students' prior knowledge and reading interest

### **2. Significance of the Research**

The significance of this research is as follows:

- a. To the teacher and the students: to give information and contribution for students and teacher that the activating of prior knowledge will be important to be done in pre-listening to improve the students' reading interest.
- b. These research findings are also expected to be practices in order to develop the theories on teaching and learning English as a foreign language and for

those who are concerned in the world of language teaching and learning in general.

- c. To the writer; this research is relevant to the writer's status as a student of English Education Department of Education and Teacher Training Faculty, State Islamic University of Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau

#### **D. The Definition of Terms**

This thesis is the correlation between students' prior knowledge and their reading interest at Senior High School 3 Pekanbaru. It needs to define the term used to avoid misunderstanding and misinterpreting.

##### 1. Correlation

According to Richard (1992, p.89), Correlation is a measure of the strength of the relationship between two sets of data. In this research, correlation is defined as the correlation between prior knowledge and reading interest in learning English.

##### 2. Prior Knowledge

According to Strangman and Hall, Prior knowledge is what one already knows about a subject or all knowledge learners have, entering a learning environment that is potentially relevant for acquiring new knowledge. And the prior knowledge meant by the writer here is the particular prior knowledge related to one topic of what students learn based on the syllabus. The writer

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would like to take the analytical exposition text about flood as the reading material that will be related to the students' prior knowledge.

3. interest

According to Silvia (2006), interest is an emotion in which this research means that the students' feeling in learning English especially in reading.

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