## CHAPTER II

## REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

### A.    Listening Comprehension

Listening is one of the four skills besides writing, speaking, and reading, which should be mastered by the students when they are learning English. According to Michael Rost, Listening is a channel in which we process language in real time – employing pacing, units of encoding and pausing that are unique to spoken language.[1] Listening consists of the process of receiving, constructing and responding to spoken information or nonverbal messages which the listener gets from visual and auditory clues in order to define what is going on and what the speakers are trying to express.

In addition, foreign learners really need to be able to have the comprehension when they hear native speakers' conversation or even they have the native speakers as the interlocutor in the real situations as Chastain defined the listening comprehension as the ability to understand the speech of native speakers at normal speed in listening situations.[2]In similar token, Saricoban noted that listening comprehension is the ability to identify and understand what others are saying.[3] The students can be said that they have good comprehension in listening, if they understand what their interlocutors say to them and it can be showed by giving the appropriate respond in accordance with what interlocutors order.

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[1] Michael Rost, 'Listening', Ronald Carter & David Nunan, (ed.), *The Cambridge Guide to Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2001, p. 7

[2]K, Chastain,'The Development of Modern Language Skills: Theory to Practice', in KingkanSupornisirin, Thesis, *The Effects of Pre-Listening Question and Post-Listening Question Techniques on English Listening Acjievement of the Third Year English Majors of Prince of Songkla University*, Pattani, 2007, p. 9

[3]Arif Saricoban," The Teaching of Listening". *The Internet TESL Journal*, Vol V, No 12, (December 1999). p. 19-29

Furthermore, listening comprehension can also be defined as a process of decoding the sounds from the smallest meaningful units to complete texts.[4] Besides the perception of sounds; it includes comprehension of words, phrases, clauses, sentences and connected discourse. Learners will build the meaning from lower level sounds to words to the grammatical relationships to lexical meaning and lastly get the final message.

Morley made a conclusion by stating that "listening comprehension is not only concerned with basic discrimination of the sound, but also involves extracting information, remembering it, and processing it or mediating between sound and meaning".[5] This premise argues the fact that listening comprehension was assumed to be a passive activity. Comprehensive listening is listening for an understanding of a message. It goes beyond discrimination to include comprehension of the message. This is essentially listening without being critical or evaluating the message, but simply listening to learn. According to Weir, listening comprehension has several purposes as follows[6]:

1. Listening for gist

2. Listening for the main idea or important information

3. Listening for distinguishing the main idea from supporting details

4. Listening for specifics, including recall the important details

5. Listening for determining a speaker's attitude.

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[4]David Nunan, 'Listening in Language Learning', *Japan Association for Language Teachin,* Vol.21.9, 1997

[5]J. Morley, 'Improving Aural Comprehension', in AtefehGhaedsharafi, 'Evaluation of the simple View of Reading in an EFL Context: An Additive or Product Model?', *International Journal of English Linguistics*, Vol. 1, No. 2, 2011, p.196

[6]Kingkan, Suporsirisin. "The Effect of Pre-Listening Question and Post-Listening Question Techniques on Listening Achievement of the Third Year English Major of Prince of Songkla University, Pattani" *Thesis*. In C, Weir. Understanding and developing language test. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall. 2007. p.28

The foreign language students still experience the difficulties in the process of listening comprehension. Amber Bloomfeld et al. concluded the factor can cause the difficulties for listener in listening comprehension:

1. Characteristic of the listener: including the memory capacity, metacognitive strategy, and experience.

2. Characteristic of the passage: it is about the length of the passage, complexity, organization, and auditory of the passage.

3. Characteristic of the testing conditions: when the listeners should listen in the limited time, they also should listen to multiple hearing at the same time without any note.

## B. Prior Knowledge in Listening Comprehension

Prior knowledge is one of the vital necessary components of learning. The terms of background knowledge and prior knowledge are generally used interchangeably. Prior knowledge is also called as relevant background knowledge, or just plain experience, when students make connections to what they are reading as well as listening, their comprehension increases. Prior knowledge of the learners or also known as the mental schemata is one aspect of language processing which enhance the comprehension in learning a language.

Brown stated that prior knowledge is organized in schemata, generalized mental representations of our experience that are available to help us understand new experience.[7] Steven defined background knowledge simply as "…what one already knows about a subject…".[8]Biemans and Simon, then, defined background knowledge more complex that background knowledge is all knowledge learners have when entering a learning environment that is potentially relevant for

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[7] Steven Brown. *Teaching Listening*.(Cambridge: Cambridge UniversityPress. 2006), p.2

[8]K.C .Stevens."The Effect of Background Knowledge on the Reading Comprehension of Ninth Graders". *Journal of ReadingBehavior*, Vol. XII, No. 2. (1980), p.151-154. http://www.aim.cast.org/learn/historyarchive/backgroundpapers/background_knowledge (Retrieved on June 2013)

acquiring new knowledge."[9] Knuth and Jones also described prior knowledge as some life experience, either real or vicarious; previous works; and experience with language. [10] Strongman and Hill contended prior knowledge is a term for more specific knowledge dimensions such as metacognition, subject matter, strategy, personality, self-knowledge, and conceptual knowledge. L*earners construct meaning out of their prior understanding. Any new learning must, in some fashion, connect with what learners already know, learners construct their sense of the world by applying their older understanding to new experiences and ideas because Jeremy said that new knowledge is constructed from old.*[11]

In communicative interactions with nonnative speakers of English, native speakers of English often adjust or modify their speech, in their attempt to make it comprehensible to the second or foreign language listener. On the other hand, what the nonnative listeners need is not the speech modification of native speaker because Parker and Chaudron found that the form of simplified syntax failed to have a significantly positive effect on comprehension of information.[12] The EFL and ESL students tend to have difficulty understanding and recalling information contained in spoken and written discourse when they lack familiarity with the topic while language learners do really need to be familiar with and attend to some features of spoken English because if they do not do so, their listening processes will be negatively influenced and their comprehension much hindered.

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[9] H. J. A. Biemans& Simons, P. R. Contact-2, 'A computer-assissted Instructional Strategy for Promoting Conceptual Change'in Nicole Strangman& Tracey Hall , 'Background Knowledge',*Curriculum Enhancement Report,* p. 2

[10] R.A Knuth and Jones B. F. 'What Does Research Say about Reading?' in Ismail Yuksel, Activating Students; Prior Knowledge: The Core Strategies', *World Applied Sciences Journal*, Vol. 20(8), 2012, p.1197

[11]Jeremy Roschelle, 'Learning in Interactive Environments: Prior Knowledge and New Experience', *Instiue for Inquiry*, (http://www.exploratorium.edu/ifi/resources/museumeducation/priorknowledge.html), Retrieved on March, 5th2013, at 03.50 PM

[12]K. Parker &Chaudron, C, 'The Effects of Linguistic Simplification and Elaborative Modifications in L2 Comprehension', *University of Hawai'I Working Papers in ESL*. 1987. 6, 10-133Tesol quarterly p.348

According to Clark in educational psychology: understanding students' thingking, the issues of prior knowledge is derived in the conceptions about learning and about knowledge.[13] This conception is about the nature of knowledge (such as how complex or how certain knowledge) and how students know that their knowledge is true. Conceptions about how the students know that their knowledge is true includes ideas that something is true only if they have some personal experience that proves it to them or they know because the textbook says so, it means that the students' personal experience will always be involved in the process of making a judgment whether something is true or wrong. By using their prior knowledge, the students are easier to examine and accept the new topic or information.

In general, background knowledge can be built in two ways: through direct experiences or through indirect experiences.[14] Direct experiences are included field trips, labs, simulations, and guest speakers. On the other hand, indirect experiences build the background knowledge by using teacher modeling, which shows students how teachers think aloud about content or even during the productive group work when the students discuss their knowledge that they will share their understanding of the world and get a glimpse into the understanding of others. Activating relevant prior knowledge by expressing in some form what one already knows about a topic has been demonstrated to be more effective that activating irrelevant background knowledge or not activating any background knowledge at improving text recall/ or comprehensions.

Here, there are several ways to activate the students' prior knowledge[15]:

1. Prior knowledge activation through reflection and recording.

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[13] Clark. A. Chin, *Educational Psychology: Understanding Students'* Thingking. Rutgers University, 2011, p. 108

[14] R. J. Marzano, 'Building Background Knowledge for Academic Achievement', Research on *What Works in Scholls*. Alexandria, VA: ASCD. http://www.nassp.org/Content.aspx?topic=Building_and_Activating_Background_Knowledge(Retrieved on May4th 2013, at 3:24).

[15] Nicole Strangman& Tracey Hall, *Background Knowledge*, p. 5

The teacher can do this kind of activation by asking the students to answer a simple question such as, "what do I already know about this topic" orally or on paper is a straightforward way to do this.

2. Prior knowledge activation through interactive discussion.

This is where students' reflection on prior knowledge is supplemented with interactive discussion. The teacher can have students in groups that the students can ask one another about what they already know about the topic or they even can share about their friends' prior knowledge.

3. Prior knowledge activation through answering questions.

The teacher can facilitate students' activation of background knowledge by having them answer questions before and/or while they listen new materials.

4. Activating students' prior knowledge through the K-W-L strategy.

The K-W-L strategy (accessing what I Know determining what I Want to find out, recalling what I did Learn) combines several elements. The students will begin by reflecting on their knowledge about the topic, brainstorming a group list of ideas about the topic, and identifying categories of information. For the next, the teacher helps highlight gaps in students' knowledge and students create individual list of things that they want to learn or they want to answer about the topic and the last, students will read new material and share what they have learned.

## C.   The Relevant Research

In this research, there are several researches relevant to this research as follows :

1. A research by Juarsih, in 2012 alumnus of State Islamic University of Sultan Syarif Kasim Riau, conducted "The Correlation between Prior Knowledge and Reading Comprehension of The Second Year Students

of SMPN 21 Siak". The design was correlational research. She found that the mean of prior knowledge was 67, 8000 and mean of reading comprehension was 64, 4000, and the score of correlation coefficient $0.473 > 0.361$. The result of this research $H_{o(Hypothesis\ Null)}$ was rejected and $H_{a(Hypothesis\ Alternative)}$ was accepted in other words, prior knowledge has the significant correlation with reading comprehension at the second year students of SMPN 21 Siak. It can be seen that the sig.( 2- tailed) is $0.008 < 0.05$.[16]

2. The Influence of prior knowledge to the listening comprehension of ESL Learner by Tracy Vianney Ano.[17] She had the quantitative research and the students of vocational high school in BestariJaya, Selangor was her sample and population. She gave 50 listening questions which were aimed to measure students' listening comprehension. Then, she used the correlation analysis of pearson product moment. Finally, she found that background knowledge and familiarity would improve students' performance in listening comprehension.

## D. The Operational Concepts of the Research

The operational concept is the concept used in accordance with literature reviewed in order to avoid misunderstanding in carrying out a research. In the research planning, we must interpret the concept into particular words to ease the measurement of the research operation.

1. The indicators of Prior Knowledge  (variable X) are as follows:[18]

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[16]Juarsih."The Correlation Between Prior Knowledge and Reading Comprehension at the Second Year Students of SMPN 21 Siak". (Unpublished Undergraduate Thesis, Pekanbaru: UIN Suska Riau, 2012).

[17] Tracy VianneyAno, "The Influence of Prior Knowledge to the Listening Comprehension of ESL Learner". (Thesis, Malaysia, 2009).

[18]Rona Flippo. Assesing Readers: *Qualitative Diagnosis and Instruction, Second Edition.* (New York: Routledge. 2003), P.126

a. The students are able to identify the familiarity of the question in a sentence

b. The students are able to analyze the context of the question in a sentence

2. Based on the syllabus the indicators of listening comprehension (variable Y) are as follows:

a. The students are able to identify the topic in monologue text listened accurately

b. The students are able to identify supporting details in monologue text listened accurately

c. The students are able to identify specific information in monologue text listened accurately

d. The students are able to make inference in monologue text listened accurately

e. The students are able to detect the key word in monologue text listened accurately

## E. The Assumptions and the Hypothesis of the Research

### 1. The Assumptions

In this research, by considering a lot of explanation and relevant research about students' prior knowledge stated above, the researcher assumes that the better student's prior knowledge is the better listening comprehension of the second year students at MAN 02 Model Pekanbaru will be.

### 1. The Hypothesis

1. Null Hypothesis (Ho):

There is no significant contribution between prior knowledge and listening comprehension of the second grade students at MAN 02 Model Pekanbaru.

2. Alternative Hypothesis (Ha):

There is significant contribution between prior knowledge and listening comprehension of the second grade students at MAN 02 Model Pekanbaru.