

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes a frame of the study. There will be a shorter explanation of background of the study, research questions, research purposes, the significance of the study, limitation of the study, research framework, and the previous studies.

#### A. Background

This research is intended to find out teacher's strategy in activating students' prior knowledge in online listening lessons. The contribution of listening is to support other language skills in English such as speaking writing, and reading. Listening skill is important because it can affect the speaking skill level. By improving listening skills, students can respond well to the interlocutor. Ferris (1998), Murphy (1991), Vogely (1998), and Hamouda (2013) in (Abbas Pourhosein Gilakjani & Sabouri, 2016) stated that listening is a skill that is often used in language classrooms. Therefore, it is clear that listening plays an important role in students' lives because it is used as a learning tool in all phases of teaching.

Listening skills can become the most challenging skill to learn for EFL learners. It is because the portion of learning English in Indonesia is limited. Wilson (2009) in Prastiyowati, S. (2016) explains the difficulties into four general categories: the delivery, characteristics of the message, the listener, and the environment. As Hamouda (2013) stated factors that cause students' listening comprehension problems are categorized into various sources, including problems related to listening texts, listening problems related to tasks and activities, listener problems related to listeners, and teacher methodology.

Limited observation at English Education Departement of UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung indicate that in the process of learning listening, students need to repeat to play the audio three times to identify the necessary information, while in normal listening test the recording is just played once. It is because students have limited knowledge about the topic. To make students easy to understand and interested in listening lessons, the teacher must use the appropriate strategy. The appropriate strategy is defined as the teacher's own creativity so that students are motivated and think that listening lessons are easy to do. From this situation there is a great interest for the researcher in knowing and deeply investigate the teachers' strategy in helping students to overcome their problem in listening comprehension skill.

One of strategies in improving listening comprehension is prior knowledge strategy. According to Brown (2006), there is one important idea for teaching listening, it is that listening lessons have to make use of students' prior knowledge in order to improve listening comprehension. Prior knowledge can optimize the clarity of subject matter and increase the efficiency of using learning time. If students have strong prior knowledge, then they will have high problem solving abilities.

There are several researches regarding prior knowledge strategy. First, a research by Nurpahmi (2015) reveals that after students giving treatment, there was a significant progress toward students' listening skill. Second, a research by Hasan et al (2018) indicates that there is a significant influence of prior knowledge on students' listening and reading comprehension. Third, a research by Dastjerdi (2012) reveals that activating students' prior knowledge with culturally-oriented listening material can improve their listening comprehension skill. However, this study is different from the previous researches. While the previous studies apply quantitative method, this research uses qualitative method instead. Moreover, in the previous study, the researcher uses specific topic in activating students' prior knowledge. In this research, there is no specific topic for material in building students' prior knowledge.

#### B. Research Questions

Referring to the background above, there are some problems which can be identified as follows:

1. How does the teacher activate students' prior knowledge in online listening lessons?
2. What are the students' responses on the teacher's strategies in activating prior knowledge in online listening lessons?

#### C. Research Purposes

Based on the background of the research above, the research is supposed:

1. To find out how the teacher activates students' prior knowledge in online listening lessons
2. To find out the students' responses on the teacher's strategies in activating prior knowledge in online listening lessons

#### D. The Significances of the Research

In this research, the author expects that by applying activating students' prior knowledge as a strategy of learning, students become more motivated and enthusiastic with listening in EFL classroom and expected to give English teachers some creative ideas about activating prior knowledge as a learning strategy in the listening process. Practically, this research gives significance to:

##### 1. Students

The result of this research is expected to develop students' listening comprehension through activating students' prior knowledge.

##### 2. Teachers

This study can contribute to all English teachers to consider listening ability of students and determine the best strategies in the teaching and learning process to maximize their potential in learning English, especially in online listening lessons.

Theoretically, the results of this study is expected to be meaningful for curriculum planners as an evaluation material to increase the quality of English language teaching programs in order to obtain better result.

#### E. Research Framework

Listening is considered an important ability that has to be mastered. Listening skill is a communication technique where listeners can understand, interpret and evaluate what they are hear. The ability to listen actively can improve personal relationships, reduce conflict, and strengthen cooperation. According to Tarigan (1994) cited in Mesi Pradrya Br Silalahi (2019) listening is a process listening to spoken symbols attentively, appreciation and interpretation to obtain information, capture the content or messages and understand the meaning of communication that has been conveyed by the speaker through spoken language utterances. So it can be concluded that listening is attentive activity to derive meaning from what we hear.

Listening comprehension is defined as a person's ability to understand spoken language at the discourse level including conversations, stories (i.e., narrative), and informational oral texts that involve the process of extracting and constructing meaning. (Kim & Pilcher, 2016). Students may find listening comprehension skill difficult to learn, and this can also allow teachers to turn their listening exercise into more effective. (Rost, 2011). Developing listening comprehension skills can help learners succeed in language learning, thereby enhancing comprehensible input. Since learners' self-

reliance on listening comprehension will be improved, they will be motivated to use spoken English, such as conversations with native speakers. (Kurita, 2012).

One way to make listening easier is to apply our understanding of activation prior knowledge and help students organize their learning by considering their listening purpose (Richards, n.d.). Prior knowledge is organized in schemas (the plural form of schemas): the abstract, broad mental representation of our experience, which can be used to help us understand new experiences (Brown, 2006). Prior knowledge helps listeners gain understanding of spoken language. A person can easily understand the utterance they have stored vocabulary related to the topic they are listening to. The idea of prior knowledge is one part of the cognitive model of language processing. The model said that when people listen or read, we process the information we hear both top-down and bottom-up. Top-down means using our prior knowledge and experience; we know certain things about certain topics and situations and use that information to comprehend. Bottom-up processing means using the information we have about sounds, word meanings and discourse markers such as first, then, and after that to gather our understanding of what we read or hear step by step (Brown, 2006).

#### F. Previous Research

There are several researches that discuss prior knowledge. First, a research by Dastjerdi (2012) investigates the relationship between prior knowledge and EFL learners' listening comprehension: cultural knowledge in focus. This research explores the impact of cultural familiarity on improving Iranian EFL learners' listening comprehension. Two types of instruments were used in this study as follows: First, FCE test containing 50 recognition items was used for selecting forty homogenous participants. Second, there were materials selected from sources such as New Interchanges and Top Notch Series to use for treatment. The research shows activating students' prior knowledge with culturally-oriented listening material can improve their listening comprehension skill. To be contrasted, the current research focuses on exploring prior knowledge in general while in previous research, the researcher focus on culture knowledge.

Second, the research about improving listening skills by activating students' prior knowledge conducted by Nurpahmi, (2015) discusses the implementation of prior knowledge towards students can improved students' ability in listening comprehension or not. The researcher used quantitative research method, to collect the data the

researcher used listening test. This research found that the experimental group was higher than the control group, it means there was an improvement in listening comprehension skills after used prior knowledge. While this previous research focuses on improving students' listening skill using experimental research design, the current research focuses on analyzing teachers' strategy in activating students' prior knowledge in listening uses a case study.

Third, the research conducted by Hasan et al (2018) about the influence of prior knowledge on students' listening and reading comprehension investigates the influence of prior knowledge for the tenth year of science class. Using quantitative method, this study collects and analyses the data by using a simple random sampling technique and pearson product moment correlation. The finding shows that there was a significant improvement in both students' reading and listening comprehension used prior knowledge as a strategy of learning. To be contrasted, the current research focuses on exploring prior knowledge in listening comprehension, while in previous research, the researcher focus on reading and listening comprehension.

