CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter presents the review of related literatures which are used as the foundation and references related to this study. The review consists of two discussions, theoretical framework and previous studies.

A. Theoretical Framework

1. Vocabulary

a. Definition of Vocabulary

Vocabulary is the series of words that make up a language. It includes where the words come from, how they change, how they relate to each other and how to use them to view the world.[1] Vocabulary is important to English language teaching because without sufficient vocabulary students cannot understand other utterances or express their own ideas. Helping learners to improve their vocabularies is a project with great benefits. When students improve their vocabularies, they feel smarter. They find themselves having more understanding about what they read and what they hear. They find it easier to express themselves because

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[1] Laurie Bauer, *Vocabulary* (London: Routledge, 2001), VIII.

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they have a better command of their language. Therefore, vocabulary can be an indication of how well a learner can comprehend the language.[2]

b. Ways to count English words

This study deals with the vocabulary size measurement. Therefore, first of all it is important to understand the ways to count the English words. According to Nation, there are several ways of counting words in English language, they are:

1) Tokens

Tokens are total number of words. Every word form in a sentence is counted although the same word form occurs more than once. For example, the sentence "It is not easy to say it correctly" contains eight tokens.

2) Types

In this method of counting words, if there is a word which occurs more than once then it will not be counted again. All identically spelled words are one type. So the sentence of eight tokens "It is not easy to say it correctly" consists of seven types.

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[2] Amy Rider, *More AbraVocabra: The Amazingly Sensible Approach to Teaching Vocabulary* (Colorado: Cottonwood Press, Inc, 2001), 5.

3) Lemmas

Lemmas are root forms in each word class. It consists of a headword and some of its inflected forms. The English inflections consist of plural, present tense, past tense, past participle, present participle, comparative, superlative, and possessive. For example, [verb: jump, jumps, jumped, jumping], [noun: jump, jumps], [noun: jumper, jumpers] consist of 3 lemmas, 6 types, 8 tokens.

4) Word family

Word families are root forms. All regularly inflected and derived words sharing a root form. The meaning of the derived word must be closely related to the meaning of the base word. For example, [jump, jumps, jumped, jumping, jumper, jumpers], [do, doing, undo, redo, doable] consist of 2 word families, 7 lemmas, 11 types, 11 tokens.[3] In order to measure the students' vocabulary size by Vocabulary Levels Test, word families are used as the method of counting words. This test measures students' knowledge of the most basic form of a word and assumes that they can recognize the other forms of that word.

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[3] I. S. P. Nation, *Learning Vocabulary in another Language* …10-11.

c. Types of vocabulary

Differentiating the types of vocabulary can help teachers to decide how much effort to put into teaching particular words, as well as determine the most effective strategy to teach the words. According to Nation, vocabulary can be divided into three types, they are:

1) High frequency words

High frequency is a small group of words which are very important because these words cover a very large proportion of the running words in spoken and written texts. The most commonly used list of high frequency words is General Service List of English Words (GSL) by Michael West which includes around 2,000 word families. About 165 word families in this list are function words such as: a, some, two, because and to. The rest are content words; nouns, verbs, adjectives and adverbs, for example: government, introduce, and popular. High frequency words cover almost 80% of the running words in the academic text and it will give a lexical coverage of around 85% in written text and 90% in unscripted spoken discourse.[4]

2) Specialized vocabulary

Specialized vocabulary is the words used for talking about particular subject. These words are a way of extending the high

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[4] I. S. P. Nation, *Learning Vocabulary in another Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 21.

frequency words for special purposes. There are two kinds of specialized vocabulary, they are:

a) **Academic words**

Academic vocabulary is the vocabulary used across all academic disciplines but it is not the technical vocabulary of a particular academic discipline. Academic words are based on more Latin and Greek roots than most everyday spoken words. It consists of 570 word families which are not in the most frequent 2,000 word families of English but they occur frequently over a very wide range of academic texts. The words in the academic vocabulary are useful for learners studying humanities, science or commerce.Academic vocabularies cover about 10% of the running words in an academic text. This means that knowing the 2,000 high frequency words plus academic words will give about 90% coverage of the running words in academic texts.[5] Some examples of academic words are: policy, phase, adjusted, and sustained.

b) **Technical words**

Technical words refer to types of words that usually occur in a specific subject area. They differ from subject area to subject area and cover about 5% of the running words in a text. There has been no survey done of the size of technical vocabularies, but a

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[5] I. S. P. Nation, *Learning Vocabulary in another Language* …24-25

rough guess from looking at dictionaries of technical vocabulary, such as a dictionary of biology, a dictionary of geography, and a dictionary of applied linguistics, indicates that they each contain less than a thousand technical words. Some examples of technical words are: indigenous, regeneration, beech, timber. In the text technical words are marked in italics like the low frequency words.

3) Low frequency words

The last category is low frequency words. In the text they are marked in italics. They are the biggest groups of words but only cover about 5% of the running words in an academic text. The low frequency words are including:

a) Proper noun. It refers to the special word which is used for a person, place or organization. Proper noun always begins with a capital letter no matter where it occurs in a sentence, for example: John, Indonesia, McDonalds. Proper nouns are like technical words, they are of high frequency in particular texts but not in other texts, their meaning is closely related to the message of the text.

b) Words of moderate frequency that did not manage to get into the high frequency list. The words from 3000 and 5000 levels of Vocabulary Levels Test are included in this category, for example: gown, herd, adequate, and mansion.

c) One person's technical vocabulary is another person's low frequency word. This means beyond the high frequency words of the language, people' s vocabulary grows partly as a result of their jobs, interests and specializations. The technical vocabulary of our personal interests is important to us. To others, however, it is not important and from their point of view is just a collection of low frequency words.

d) Some low frequency words are simply low frequency words. That is, they are words that almost every language user rarely uses, for example: eponymous, gibbous, bifurcate, plummet, ploy. These words represent a rarely expressed idea. They may be similar in meaning with the more frequent word or phrase, yet they may be marked as being old-fashioned, very formal, belonging to a particular dialect, or vulgar, or they may be foreign words.[6]

d. Vocabulary knowledge

In language teaching and learning contexts, vocabulary knowledge is an important aspect because it includes all the words which have to be known by the learners to access the background knowledge, express ideas,

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[6] I. S. P. Nation, *Learning Vocabulary in another Language* …28-29

communicate as well as possible, and learn about new concepts.[7] According to Nation, knowing a word involves knowing the *form*, *meaning* and *use* of that word[8]. The *form* of a word involves its pronunciation (spoken form), spelling (written form), and the word parts that make up this particular item (such as a prefix, root, and suffix). *Meaning* involves the concept and what items the word refers to. Meanwhile, *use* involves the grammatical functions of the word or phrase and collocations that normally go with it.

Learners' word knowledge is largely related to their academic success. It is because learners who have large vocabulary knowledge can understand new ideas and concepts more quickly than learners with limited vocabulary knowledge.[9] Vocabulary knowledge itself contains four dimensions, including: receptive and productive knowledge, breadth or size of vocabulary knowledge and depth of vocabulary knowledge. Each of them is explained in details below:

1) **Receptive and productive knowledge**

The terms receptive and productive apply to many kinds of language use. When they are applied to vocabulary, these terms cover

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[7] Gholum-Ali Tahmasebi et.al, "The Relationship between Language Proficiency and Iranian EFL Learners' Knowledge of Vocabulary Depth versus Vocabulary Breadth". *Latin American Journal of Content and Language Integrated Learning.* Vol. 6 No. 2, 2013, 97

[8] I. S. P. Nation, *Learning Vocabulary in another Language* …39-40

[9] Gholum-Ali Tahmasebi et.al, "The Relationship between Language Proficiency…97

all of the aspects which are involved in knowing a word.[10] Being able to understand a word is known as receptive or passive knowledge and it is normally connected with listening and reading. Productive or active knowledge involves being able to produce language forms by speaking and writing.[11] Learners' passive vocabulary is always larger than their active vocabulary.[12] This indicates that many words are first acquired passively and active knowledge is a more advanced type of vocabulary knowledge. Vocabulary Levels Test used in this study aims to measure the receptive vocabulary, so it does not provide direct information about the ability to use the target language productively.

2) **Breadth or size of vocabulary knowledge**

Vocabulary size, also known as vocabulary breadth, refers to the quantity or number of words learners know at a particular level of language proficiency.[13] Knowing a word in a vocabulary size is defined as being able to recognize a word form and have at least some understanding of its meaning.

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[10] I. S. P. Nation, *Learning Vocabulary in another Language …*38-39

[11] Norbert Schmitt – Jack C. Richards (Eds.), *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000, 4.

[12] Batia Laufer et al, "Size and Strength: Do We Need Both to Measure Vocabulary Knowledge?" *Language Testing*. Vol. 21 No. 2, 2004, 208

[13] I. S. P. Nation, *Learning Vocabulary in another Language …*573

Nation states that there are two major methods of measuring vocabulary size, they are:

a) **Dictionary-based sampling**

This method is based on the sampling from a dictionary. The spaced sampling method (for example: the first word on every 10th page in dictionary) is commonly used to choose the words. Then, the learners are tested on those representative samples. The amount of words known in the sample is converted to the amount of words likely to be known in the whole dictionary.[14] So, if the sample consisted of one of every 100 words in the dictionary, the learners' scores on the test would be multiplied by 100 to get the total vocabulary size. Yet, there are some problems related to this method, including:

(1) **The sampling problem**

This problem occurs because in high-frequency words have more entries and occupy more space in a dictionary than low-frequency words. If a spaced sampling method is used to choose words, then there will be more high frequency words in the sample than there should be.[15] Learners' vocabulary size will be over-estimated if the sample contains too many high

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[14] I. S. P. Nation, *Learning Vocabulary in another Language* …583-584

[15] I. S. P. Nation, "Measuring Vocabulary Size in an Uncommonly Taught Language". *Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand*, 1990, 3

frequency words. It is because high frequency words are more likely to be known than low frequency words. As a result, the test-takers will get more correct words than they should have because of the biased sample.

(2) The selection of dictionary

The number of words in the dictionary used will have a major effect on the vocabulary size calculation. Some researchers simply accepted the dictionary makers' claims for the number of words their dictionaries contained. These claims frequently did not give indication of the unit of counting (the word type, the lemma, or the word family) which was used. [16]

b) Frequency-based sampling

This is an alternative method to avoid the problem occurred in dictionary-based sampling. This method is a proficiency test based on list of words grouped by frequency. These words are grouped together into the first 1,000 most frequent words, the second 1,000 most frequent words, and so on. This method can act as an indicator of the level of learner's overall vocabulary knowledge based on sample words from the frequency lists.

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[16] I. S. P. Nation, "Measuring Vocabulary Size in an Uncommonly Taught Language"…4

There are currently two well-known vocabulary size measurement based on the word frequency, they are:

(1) The Eurocentres Vocabulary Size Test (EVST) developed by Meara and Jones. This test is a Yes/No vocabulary test in a computer application consisting of words and non-words, with examinees having to choose the words they know the meaning of.

(2) The Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) developed by Paul Nation. This test samples words from the 2,000, 3,000, 5,000 and 10,000 word frequency levels and a level from an academic register. There are 18 words sampled from each of the five frequency levels. The test is presented in multiple choice formats and test-takers are required to match a word with its definition.

Although both of the Vocabulary Levels Test and the Eurocentres test serve the function of measuring vocabulary size, there is a difference between the two types of test because of their different formats and requirements. The Vocabulary Levels Test requires a clear focus on meaning while the Eurocentres test only requires some reflective recognition of the word form. In other words, the Vocabulary Levels Test measures more depth of lexical

knowledge than the Eurocentres tests.[17] Therefore, this study uses the Vocabulary Levels Test instead of the Eurocentres test.

3) Depth of vocabulary knowledge

Vocabulary depth focuses on the idea that learners need to have more than just an understanding of the meaning. The depth dimension should cover some components, they are: pronunciation, spelling, meaning, register, frequency, and morphological, syntactic, and collocational properties. For example: a learners who has depth of word knowledge for the word "table", is aware that someone sits at a table, but, in reading a science text or conducting an experiment, someone also creates, reads, and interprets a table. Furthermore, while table is a noun, its derivation, tabulate, is a verb, and they are used in a different context.[18] This example shows that in vocabulary depth someone understands not only the meaning of certain word but also the deeper knowledge about it.

There are two main approaches for measuring depth of vocabulary knowledge: a developmental approach and a dimensional

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[17] Norbert Schmitt – Jack C. Richards (Eds.), *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*…175

[18] C. Patrick Proctor, et al, "The Role of Vocabulary Depth in Predicting Reading Comprehension among English Monolingual and Spanish–English Bilingual Children in Elementary School", *Springer Science*, 3

approach.[19] The developmental approach uses scale to describe the stages of acquisition such as the Vocabulary Knowledge Scale which has five levels. Meanwhile, the dimensional approach describes the level of mastery of the various component types of word knowledge.

e. Testing Vocabulary Size

In order to assess vocabulary size in a valid and reliable way, Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) is used as a test based on the word frequency. Vocabulary Levels Test is originally devised by Nation, but then revised by Schmitt et.al. Therefore, this study uses the Vocabulary Levels Test version 2 developed by Schmitt et.al. The Vocabulary Levels Test is designed to give an estimate of vocabulary size for second language learners of general or academic English.[20] This test provides an estimate of vocabulary size at four frequency levels and one level of the academic vocabulary.

The four frequency levels consist of the 2,000, 3,000, 5,000 and 10,000-word frequency levels. Words were taken from Thorndike and Lorge list with reference to frequency data from Kucera and Francis and

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[19] Zhifa Shen, "The Roles of Depth and Breadth of Vocabulary Knowledge in EFL Reading Performance". *Asian Social Science*. Vol. 4 No. 12, December 2008, 136-137
[20] Norbert Schmitt, et.al, "Developing and Exploring the Behavior of Two New Versions of the Vocabulary Levels Test". *SAGE Publications*. Vol. 18 No. 1, 2001, 55

the General Service List (GSL).[21] The 2000 word level includes high-frequency words in English, the 3000 and 5000-word levels are the boundary level between the high frequency level and low frequency level, while, the 10,000 word level include the low frequency words.[22] Then, the academic vocabularies are taken from the Academic Word List. Academic Word List contains 570 word families that occur frequently across a wide range of academic texts.

According to Schmitt et.al, those four frequency levels and the academic vocabulary is directly related to the ability to use English in various ways. Knowledge of the most frequent 2000 words in English provides the lexical resources required for basic everyday oral communication. The next 1000 words provide additional material for spoken discourse. Besides, knowledge of around 3000 words is the threshold which allows learners to begin to read authentic texts. Then, knowledge of the most frequent 5000 words provide enough vocabulary to enable learners to read authentic texts, to infer the meaning of the novel words from context, and to understand most of the communicative content of the text. Knowledge of the most frequent 10000 words in English is required to cope with the challenges of university study in a second language. Additionally, for second language learners of English who

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[21] Norbert Schmitt, et al, "Developing and Exploring the Behavior…58
[22] Gholum-Ali Tahmasebi et al, "The Relationship between Language Proficiency…104

engaged in an English-medium academic environment, knowledge of the vocabulary that occurs across a range of academic disciplines is also necessary.[23]

In this test, words are classified into 10 clusters for each vocabulary level. Each cluster contained six words and three definitions, so this test has 30 items in every frequency level. Each cluster was written with the following consideration[24]:

a) The options in this format are words instead of definitions.

b) The options are kept short, so that there is a minimum of reading, allowing for more items to be taken within a given period of time.

c) The clusters are designed to minimize aids guessing. The target words are in alphabetical order, and the definitions are in order of length.

d) The words used in the definitions are always more frequent than the target words. The 2000 level words are defined with 1000 level words, and, whenever possible, the target words at other levels are defined with words from the GSL.

Schmitt et.al also has conducted the reliability test of this Vocabulary Levels Test. It was found that the reliability indices

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[23] Norbert Schmitt, et al, "Developing and Exploring the Behavior…55-56
[24] Norbert Schmitt, et al, "Developing and Exploring the Behavior….59

(Cronbach's alpha) for all of the Levels sections are high, as presented in the table below[25]:

Table 2.1 Reliability of Vocabulary Levels Test' Sections (Cronbach's Alpha)

Level	Number of items per version	Version 1	Version 2
2000	30	.920	.922
3000	30	.929	.927
5000	30	.927	.927
10000	30	.915	.924
Academic	30	.958	.960

The table above shows that 30 items per level provides good reliability, because a reliability level of 0.90 is considered satisfactory. This indicates that this test is a reliable test to measure the vocabulary size.

2. Listening

a. Definition of Listening

Listening is an active process in which listeners select and interpret information which comes from auditory and visual clues in order to define what is going on and what the speakers are trying to express.[26] Active means that the listener is doing more than simply decoding what is heard. Listeners get information (from visual and auditory clues) and relate this information to what they already know. According to Nation,

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[25] Norbert Schmitt, et al, "Developing and Exploring the Behavior………..71
[26] Michael Rost, *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 3

learners would need at least 95% coverage of the running words in order to gain comprehension and success in guessing the words from context. Studies of spoken language, especially colloquial spoken language used in informal situations indicate that a vocabulary of around 2,000 word families can provide over 95% coverage.[27] Yet, it would be better if learners have a higher coverage of around 98% (1 unknown word in every 50 words, or about 2 or 3 unknown words per minute). English language learners would need a vocabulary size of 6000-7000 word families to reach text coverage of 98% and to cope with authentic spoken discourse.[28] However, Schmitt mentions that 2.000 word families is the most common initial goal for second language learners. This number of words allows learners to cope with the basic conversation and provides a solid basis for moving into more advanced study.

b. **The Process of Listening**

The process of listening performance is the invisible and inaudible process of recognizing meaning from the auditory signals being transmitted to the ear and brain.[29] Recognizing the spoken words in

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[27] I. S. P. Nation, *Learning Vocabulary in another Language* …188

[28] Norbert Schmitt, *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*… 142

[29] H. Douglas Brown, Language *Assessment: Principle and Classroom Practices* (England: Longman, 2004) 118

listening is a challenging task for most language learners.[30] It is because learners have limited control over the rate of input, unlike reading where learners can read more slowly or even reread the whole passages. Segmenting the natural flow of continuous speech into the individual word is not an easy task, because, in contrast to written discourse, spoken language does not have clear word boundaries. In spoken discourse, the words are blended together into a speech, so if someone does not actually know a language, it is very difficult to pick out the individual words.[31] The process of spoken word recognition in listening breaks down into three phases[32]:

1) **Activate**. In this phase, listeners get information (from visual and auditory clues) and relate this information to what they already know.

2) **Select**. This phase includes the selection of the best-fitting matches to the input.

3) **Interpret**. Interpret means that in trying to make sense of the input, listeners use their background knowledge as well as the new information to understand what is going on and to figure out what speakers intend.

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[30] Norbert Schmitt, *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*…53-54
[31] Norbert Schmitt, *Vocabulary in Language Teaching*…54
[32] Michael Rost, *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language*…3

c. **Types of listening**

There are three types of listening which are taught in English Teacher Education Department of Sunan Ampel State Islamic University, they are:

1) **Literal Listening**

Literal Listening course is designed to develop students' skills in listening detailed information and understanding the main ideas. Literal Listening involves listening only to the content level of meaning and ignoring the relationship level of meaning. The students' ability in listening to the detailed information is needed to measure the spoken word recognition skill, therefore, Literal Listening is chosen because this course designed to develop students' skills on understanding the details.

2) **Interpretive Listening**

In interpretive listening, listeners have to explain and understand the meaning of what is being said by the speaker. It involves both the content and the relationship levels of meaning. Listeners have to make judgments about what the speakers are saying.

3) **Critical Listening**

Critical listening is listening in order to weigh up whether the speaker is credible, whether the message being given is logical and

whether they are being manipulated by the speaker. It requires listeners to judge, evaluate and forming opinion about what is being said. This form of listening requires more effort because as the listener is listening to the ongoing words from the speaker, they also have to analyze what is being said and relating it to their background knowledge at the same time.

d. Testing listening

According to Rost, there are some major types of listening tests, they are[33]:

1) Discrete-item tests

a) Multiple-choice questions following a listening text (responses scored right or wrong)

b) Open questions following presentation of a listening text (questions scored on a scale of correctness and completeness)

c) Standardized test scores (e.g. TOEFL or TOEIC)

2) Integrative tests

a) Open summarizing of a listening text (scored on scales of accuracy and inclusion of facts and ideas)

b) Cloze summarizing of a text (scored on correct completions of blanks)

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[33] Michael Rost, *Teaching English to Speakers of Other Language*… 19-20

    c) Dictation, complete or partial (score based on supplying the correct missing words)

3) Communicative tests

    a) Written communicative tasks involving listening (scored on the basis of successful completion of a task, such as writing a complaint letter after hearing a description of a problem).

4) Interview tests

    a) Face-to-face performances with the teacher or another student (scored based on a checklist of items, such as appropriate response to questions, appropriate use of clarification questions)

    b) Extended oral interview (scoring based on a scale of native-like behaviors, such as the Foreign Service Institute scale).

5) Self-assessment

    a) Learner rates self on given criteria via questionnaire.

    b) Learner provides holistic assessment of own abilities via oral or written journal entries.

6) Portfolio assessment

    a) Learner is observed and evaluated periodically throughout the course on behavior in tasks and other class activities, the observations may be audio or videotaped.

    b) Portfolio may include any or all of the above types of objective and subjective measures.

B. Review of Previous Studies

1. Relevant Studies in Sunan Ampel State Islamic University

In this university, the listening researches are mostly about the teaching techniques and strategies to improve the students' listening ability, some of them are: first, a study written by Novella Wati at 2015 entitled "*The Effectiveness of Cornell Note-Taking Method in Listening Comprehension of 10th Grade Students at SMA Muhammadiyah 2 Sidoarjo*". This quantitative research is conducted in order to know whether Cornell note-taking method improves students' listening comprehension achievement or not. It also examines the students' responses related to the application of this method. The result of this study states that Cornell note-taking method effectively improves students listening comprehension achievement which is proven by the difference between pre and post test score.

Second, a study written by Mohamad Dwi Maulidan at 2013 entitled "*Use of Paired Dialog as a Follow-up Activity to Improve Students' Activeness in Listening Skill at the Eleventh Grade of MA Bustanul Ulum Dlanggu Mojokerto*". This descriptive qualitative research aims to describe the implementation of paired dialog strategy to improve the students' activeness in listening and to examine the students' responses of this strategy. The result of this study shows that paired-dialog strategy can become a strategy which is able to improve students' activeness in listening skill

because students become active to perform dialogue and find new vocabularies by opening the dictionary or asking to friends or teacher.

Third, a study written by Nur Fajrin at 2013 entitled "*The Use of English by Radio in Teaching Listening Skill to Year Eleventh of MA Banu Hasyim Waru, Sidoarjo*". This descriptive quantitative study attempts to investigate the use of English by Radio Program which is used by the eleventh grade English teacher in MA Banu Hasyim to teach listening. The results of the study show that the students' listening mastery is increased after using English by Radio Program in learning listening. Moreover, the students' responses toward the use of English by radio as their media in learning listening are good. Yet, the accent, pronunciation, speed of speech, insufficient vocabulary, different accent of speakers, lack of concentration, anxiety, and bad quality of radio interferences become the major listening problems of implementing this teaching technique.

Fourth, a study written by Ika Listiana at 2013 entitled "*A Study of the Techniques of Teaching Listening at Year Two Students of SMA I Grati*". This descriptive qualitative study examines the teaching techniques which are implemented in teaching listening at year two students and the problems faced by the teacher during the implementation of those techniques. The findings of the study show that there are six techniques used by two English teachers, those are: listening cassette, telling story, repetition words, whispering, guessing meaning, dictation and games. Then, there are several problems

faced by the teacher in implementing the techniques, they are: teacher is unconfident during the learning process and lack of listening equipment.

There has been no research done to examine the role of vocabulary size in listening. Yet, there is one study concerning the role of vocabulary achievement in reading ability. The study is written by Abdurrachman at 2011 entitled *"The Correlation between Students' Achievement in Vocabulary and Reading Ability at Second Grade of SMAN 16 Surabaya"*. This study examines the correlation between students' achievement in vocabulary and reading ability at second grade of SMAN 16 Surabaya. This study takes 80 students as the sample. The research instruments consist of 20 multiple-choice items of vocabulary test and also 20 items of reading comprehension test. The result of this study finds that there is a moderate correlation (r=0.46) between the scores of vocabulary test and the students' achievement in reading comprehension. This previous study is different with this present study because this previous study uses a self-developed vocabulary test, while this present study uses a Vocabulary Levels Test which is developed by Schmitt et.al.

2. **Relevant Studies Overseas**

There have been some studies overseas exploring the role of vocabulary size in language proficiency and skills, they are: first, a study written by Gholum-Ali Tahmasebi, Mehdi Ghaedrahmat & Hamidreza

Haqverdi at 2013 entitled "*The Relationship between Language Proficiency and Iranian EFL Learners' Knowledge of Vocabulary Depth versus Vocabulary Breadth*". This study examines the relationship between language proficiency, vocabulary depth, and vocabulary breadth of Iranian EFL learners. The subject is 80 students at upper and lower intermediate levels which are randomly chosen from the population of *ShahidBeheshti* School in *Khoramabad* as participants of this study. The instruments of this study are: Oxford Placement Test (OPT) to determine students' proficiency levels, the original Vocabulary Levels Test devised by Nation to assess the vocabulary size, and Vocabulary Knowledge Scale to measure the depth of vocabulary. The result of this study finds that vocabulary size is positively correlated with language proficiency, producing a correlation coefficient of 0.874 for upper-intermediate group and 0.812 for lower-intermediate group. Furthermore, the result also shows that 59% of the variation in language proficiency is affected by the depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge. The difference between this previous study and this present study is on the object of the study. This previous study focuses on overall language proficiency and both of breadth and depth of vocabulary knowledge. Meanwhile, this present study only focuses on listening skill and breadth or size of the vocabulary knowledge. The instrument used to measure the vocabulary size is also different, this previous study uses original Vocabulary Levels Test designed by Nation,

meanwhile, this present study uses improved version of Vocabulary Levels Test developed by Schmitt et.al.

Second, a study written by Nasser Rashidi & Negar Khosravi at 2010 entitled "*Assessing the Role of Depth and Breadth of Vocabulary Knowledge in Reading Comprehension of Iranian EFL Learners*". This study is conducted to investigate the extent of association between vocabulary depth, vocabulary breadth and EFL learners' reading performance. The subject is 38 Iranian senior university students. The instruments of this study are Word-Associate Test to measure depth of vocabulary knowledge, Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) version 2 developed by Schmitt et.al to measure Vocabulary size, and Reading Comprehension Test. The result shows that depth of vocabulary knowledge accounts for about 69% of the variance in reading comprehension scores, while the vocabulary size affects the variance for 55%. It shows that depth and breadth of vocabulary knowledge are strongly related to the reader's comprehension. The difference between this previous study and this present study is on the object of the study. This previous study focuses on reading skill, while, this present study focuses on listening skill. Besides, this present study only focuses to examine the students' breadth or size of the vocabulary knowledge.

Third, a study by Azadeh Nemati at 2010 entitled "*Proficiency and Size of Receptive Vocabulary: Comparing EFL and ESL Environments*". This previous study focuses on the relationship between language proficiency and

vocabulary size of 80 freshmen students majoring in English Language and Literature both in Iran and India as representative of ESL/EFL contexts. The instruments used in this study are Nelson proficiency test and Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) designed by Nation. The result of this study shows that there is a higher correlation between English proficiency and Vocabulary Levels Test for Indian students, producing a correlation of 0.514. Meanwhile, the correlation for Iranian students is 0.484. There are some differences between this previous study and this present study: firstly, this previous study focuses on overall English language proficiency, meanwhile, this present study only focuses on listening. Secondly, this previous study uses original Vocabulary Level Test developed by Nation but this present study uses an improved version of Vocabulary Level Test revised by Schmitt et.al.

Fourth, a study by Lars Stenius Stæhr at 2008 entitled "*Vocabulary size and the skills of listening, reading and writing*". This previous study examines the relationship between vocabulary size and the skills of listening, reading and writing in 88 EFL learners from lower secondary education. The instrument used to examine the participants' vocabulary size is Vocabulary Levels Test (VLT) version 2 developed by Schmitt et.al. Then, some tests of listening, reading and writing are used to examine the participants' score of those language skills. The reading test contains 25 multiple-choice and multiple-matching questions. The listening test contains 16 multiple-choice questions, and the writing test consists of one task in which the participants

have to write a letter to a job agency applying for one of four jobs presented in the task. The result of this study finds that reading is highly correlated with vocabulary size, producing a correlation of 0.83. Then, writing produces a correlation of 0.73 with vocabulary size. In contrast, listening shows the weakest association with vocabulary size, producing a correlation of 0.69. There are some differences between this previous study and present study; this previous study only focuses on low-level learners, while this present study deals with mixed-level learners. Then, this previous study excludes the academic word level, but this present study includes academic word level as the part of vocabulary size measurement. Furthermore, words are likely to have varying degree of difficulty for learners from different first languages even if they take the same Vocabulary Levels Test.