CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses background of the study, statements of the problem, purposes of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and the definition of the key terms.

1.1 Background of Study

English is a language used by a large number of people in the world. English has increasingly become the medium of communication around the world both in local and global contexts. The realization of the importance of English makes every country want its people become better equipped with English. Absolutely, this necessity is also applicable to Indonesia. In Indonesia, English is not only learned by adult but also young learners. English is taught even before children enter the kindergarten, there is a special class for children who are still around two or three years old, Indonesian calls this as playgroup.

There has been an “English-for-Young Learners-fever” among Indonesian, especially those living in big cities. Parents are ambitiously bringing their children by sending them to play groups, kindergarten or courses offering English designed especially for children. Moreover, schools which offer bilingual classes are also being parent’s concern. Many parents think that having children who are able to use English seems to be considered a necessity in this current age of globalization.
This phenomenon has made Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL) increasingly famous.

A large number of young learners have been given English in the early age. According to Harmer (2001: 37), ‘some people say that children learn languages faster than adults do. They talk of children who appear to pick up new languages effortlessly. Perhaps this has something to do with the plasticity of a young brain.’ It means that children learn languages easily and their ages are the best period for acquiring the languages, and make teaching English very important to conduct in the early age.

The learners especially young learners in Indonesia usually have difficulties in learning English, so that the most challenging tasks faced by English to young learner’s teacher is how to catch the students’ interest and decide the suitable strategy and material of teaching. Those are required to stimulate the students’ imagination and make students more motivated to learn. In addition, in the practice, there is a lack of materials and strategy for teaching English to young learners. A number of teachers who teach English to young learners have difficulty in finding appropriate materials for their students. Some teachers may designed materials that are often produced in house and implement those materials into the classroom day-by-day lesson plans. They do not teach beyond the book and try to teach in creative way.

Moreover, in reality based on the writer’s experiences teaching English to young learners is not as simple as teaching English to adult. It requires the knowledge of knowing children’s characteristics. Sabilah (2004) has stated that young learners are still learning about their environment. They like to talk about themselves, their
parents, their pets, toys and friends. They like to move around and like to learn something by doing singing, playing games, coloring and cutting pictures. The way of teaching young learners is different from others. By understanding their characteristics, it can help teacher to develop the teaching strategies and materials that are appropriate in the teaching learning process. Besides, understanding children’s characteristics, English to Young learners’ teachers should know that young learners are suggested to have a good learning environment in making them more attracted to learn. It is supported by Harmer (2007: 38), ‘young learner’s classroom should be bright and colorful with windows the children can see out of, and be spacious enough for different activities.’

English has four basic skills, they are reading, speaking, writing, and listening. That is why in teaching and learning practice, it should be more associated with the way learners use that skills to communicate compared with the language component, vocabulary, pronunciation, and spelling (Mas’udi: 2011). There are some kinds of material used in teaching and learning practice, one of them is authentic material. It can work on the four skills; Gebhard (1996) has stated that there are four kinds of authentic material, such as authentic listening/viewing materials, authentic visual materials, authentic printed materials, and realia.

A study conducted by Baniabdelrahman (2006) entitled The Effect of Using Authentic English Language Materials on EFL Students’ Achievement in Reading Comprehension found that the use of authentic materials had a significantly greater positive effect on the eleventh grade EFL students’ reading comprehension achievement scores than the effect of the use of the non-authentic material. That was
a study which was conducted in eleventh grade EFL students. Another study about authentic material which was conducted by Pinsonneault (2008) about Authentic Input in Early Second Language Learning found that authentic materials were a viable choice to provide input of a second language for a young L2 learner. The result of those research motivated the writer to conduct the study about the use of authentic material given to the young learner. In addition, the writer wanted to know the implementation and the students’ responses for the use of authentic material.

Teacher has a big role to support the students in receiving the knowledge, so that the teacher must comprehend the material that will be delivered before they teach it in class. The success of using authentic material was shown by the responses of the learners. If the responses of the learners indicated that they enjoyed the class and there was a learning process in terms of behavior changing, it meant that the material was suitable with the students’ needs. However, the learners would not focus and get enough motivation of support to study if the material was not suitable with learners’ needs and characteristics, unattractive and uninteresting.

The teacher must be able to use various materials to make students more interested in learning English. Considering the background, the writer is interested in conducting a study at English for Young Learner course. English for Young Learner course was the course undertaken by English department students for ten weeks in odd semester. After having some general knowledge of the background, the writer decided to investigate the use of authentic materials in English for Young Learner course by 6th grade teachers in their practice teaching.
1.2 Statement of Study

1.2.1 What kinds of authentic material were used by the 6th grade teachers of EYL course at UMM - 2012?

1.2.2 How were the authentic materials implemented by the 6th grade teachers of EYL course at UMM - 2012?

1.2.3 How was the students’ response toward the authentic materials was used by the 6th grade teachers of EYL course at UMM - 2012?

1.3 Purpose of Study

1.3.1 To find out the kinds of authentic material used by the 6th grade teachers of EYL course at UMM - 2012.

1.3.2 To describe the implementation of the authentic materials used by the 6th grade teachers of EYL course at UMM - 2012.

1.3.3 To know the students’ response toward the authentic materials used by the 6th grade teachers of EYL course at UMM - 2012.

1.4 Significance of Study

The writer hoped that the result of this research can contribute some ideas, concept and information to the young learner’s teacher in term of creating variation of teaching English using authentic material. It will give information on the use of material which is appropriate in teaching English to young learners.

The study also expected to give significance improvement to the students in term of developing their skills in English. Through the implementation of authentic material, the students can use English as a mean communication naturally.
The last, the result of this study can be used as a reference for the next researcher. This study is expected to be used as a strategy of the follow up research in teaching English for young learners.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

This study intends to explain about authentic materials used by EYL students’ practice teacher and the way how to apply those materials in the classroom. Besides, the writer also explains about young learners’ response toward those materials used by students’ practice teaching. Moreover, this study did not discuss all kinds of authentic material but only on the using of authentic visual materials, authentic printed materials, and authentic authentic listening/viewing materials.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

1.6.1 Authentic Material

Authentic materials is a material that refers to the use of spoken and written material that has been produced for the purposes of communication not for the purposes of language teaching (Nunan, 2004).

1.6.2 English for Young Learner course

English for Young Learners course is a course conducted by English Department of University of Muhammadiyah Malang in the odd semester. This is a program in which every student should practice teaching young learner students.
1.6.3 Young Learners

Young learners are defined as children between the ages 5-12 (Caroline, 2005).

1.6.4 Response

Response is a kind of reaction in form of feeling, opinion, or act that occurs because of certain stimulation from an object.