CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

The study begins by providing an overview of general study of the research. It consists of the research background, research problem, research objective, scope and limitation, research significances, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Research Background

Teaching English to children has been growing very rapidly all over the world, as well as in Indonesia. It is essential to teach English for children since young age that will be useful and valuable for their future career. However, teaching English to young learner is a bit challenging instead of teaching adult students. Harmer (2001) states that children are very energetic and enthusiastic but they easily get bored and lose their interest in short period of time during the learning process. So, the teachers should give more effort to teach them creatively.

It is widely reported that teaching profession has been largely dominated by women. According to Ministry of Education and Culture data and statistics center 2015/2016, the biggest gap between female and male teacher is found in kindergarten, the ratio is 95:5 and the ratio for elementary level is 65:34 (Arifin, 2016). According to the National Education Association for Elementary Teachers, only 13 percent of elementary school teachers are men, and these men mostly teach in grades 5 and 6 (Cunningham & Dorsey, 2004). The reasons why male avoid teaching profession because of low wages, lack of prestige, social prejudice against men, feminization of the field, and social stigma (Watson & Woods, 2011).
In this notion, English for Young Learners (EYL) is given as an elective course – other than Business English, Translation, and American Studies – at English Language Education Department (ELED) University of Muhammadiyah Malang (UMM). EYL is offered in two terms, EYL I and EYL II. EYL I is given to sixth-semester students aiming at learning its theory, such as learning strategies and designing a lesson plan. While EYL II is given to seventh-semester students which aims for teaching practice.

Throughout the years, EYL course is always dominated by female students instead of the male ones. Regarding to the data in the last three years, a majority of male students who join EYL course had a noticeably decrease. It is based on the data gained from English Language Education Department in 2015 until 2018. The number of students who join EYL course in 2015 was sixteen male students and it decreased into nine students in 2016, then there was only male student in 2017 as well as in 2018. As a result, it is recorded in 2018, the male student did not continue the course into EYL II.

Previous research has noted that the reasons of male students do not take EYL course as their elective course because of friends’ suggestion, they do not like teaching and dealing with children, they think that they have no passion teaching young learner. They also assume that EYL is the busiest course and only suitable for woman (Febrianto, 2017).

Since many males avoid teaching profession and considering that male students who join EYL course significantly decreased in the period of time, the researcher intends to find out more about the perception of male students toward
EYL course. As known these perceptions can influence someone in doing something, even in making decision in choosing elective course.

1.2 Research Problem

Regarding to the research background that has already been justified above, this is the problem of the study:

1. What are male students’ perception toward EYL course in the academic year 2015 at English Language Education Department University of Muhammadiyah Malang?

1.3 Research Objective

To answer the research problem question, the researcher states the objective of the study as follow:

1. To investigate male students’ perception toward EYL course in the academic year 2015 at English Language Education Department University of Muhammadiyah Malang.

1.4 Scope and Limitation

The scope of the study focuses on the male students’ perception toward EYL course. The participants will be limited to the male students who took elective courses - Business English, English for Young Learner and Translation course in the academic year 2015 at ELED of UMM.
1.5 Research Significances

The significance of this research is divided into two categories: theoretically and practically.

Theoretically, this study is intended to give more information to the readers about the perception of male students’ toward EYL course. In addition, this study can be additional references for the other researchers who are interested in conducting the same study.

Practically, this research will hopefully give description to the English Language Education Department about male students’ perception toward EYL course. These perceptions might be very important for the department to take the necessary steps to increase the number of male students in EYL course. According to McGrath and Sinclair (2013), gender plays an important role within a primary classroom environment especially in English language classroom. It is perceived when the children have teachers that they can relate to, so they can learn best. In other word, boys relate to male teachers best and girls to female practitioners. It is considered that the number of male teachers should be increased because it would give different role models for young children. Taqi, Al-Darwish, Akbar, & Al-Gharabali (2015) asserts that the issue of teachers’ gender and its influences not only affects teaching methods and the learning process, but also influences students’ attitudes and learning assumptions. However, in order to encourage more men to become an English teacher for young learner, the principle of department should provide the necessary support whether it comes from the lecturers, classmates, and society.
1.6 Definition of Key Terms

In order to avoid misunderstanding of the concept that is used in this study, there are several key terms that must be clarified:

1. **Perception** is “a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment” (Robin and Judge, 2017).

2. **Male students’ perception** is an interpretation about something regarding their sensory from point of view of male students toward EYL subject.

3. **EYL** stands for English for Young Learner which is one of elective courses for sixth and seventh semester students of ELED UMM.