CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter explores some literature related to the study which is needed to give the theories and previous research findings. This includes teaching English to young learners, gender gap in teaching profession, reasons why male avoid teaching young children, the importance of the presence of male teachers for young children, English for Young Learner course, and the concept of perception.

2.1 Teaching English to Young Learners

Young learners are usually considered to be pupils between the ages of six to eleven which is elementary education level (Santrock, 2010). Learners of different ages have different needs, competencies, and cognitive skills. They also have different characteristics between adult learners in learning process. Harmer (2001) states that young children are really enthusiastic and energetic, but they easily get bored and lose their interest in short period of time during the learning process. Whereas, when the students learn language, they are easier to learn that relate to their daily life or based on context of situations. They are also more engaged in learning by doing some physical and outdoor activities rather than just sit on the chair (Musthafa, 2010).

Besides that, in teaching English to young learner especially as a foreign language could be a challenge for the teacher because of the motivation of the children in learning English particularly in Indonesia is still low. There are several requirements for teaching English to young learner by Musthafa (2010); the teacher
should know the characteristics of the children, how the children learn language, and how the children learn English as a foreign language.

Considering the characteristics of young learners, the teachers should be able to grasp the needs of their students. Hence, young learners’ teachers have to be creative in making an effective teaching strategies in a fun way in order to make the students stay motivated in learning language. Because children love discovery things, they may well be involved in making things, drawing, games, physical movements or songs. A good primary classroom combines play and learning in a cheerful and supportive atmosphere.

2.2 Gender Gap in The Teaching Profession

Teaching profession has long been dominated by women. Society belief that teaching profession as a “women’s work” especially in low level grade such as kindergarten and elementary school. This global event has a strong roots in issues relating to economic development, the position of women in society, urbanization, the cultural definition of masculinity and the value of children and childcare (Drudy, Martin, Wood, & O’flyn, 2005).

It can be seen from the statistical data that there is gender imbalance in teaching of young children. 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). In addition, Garcia (2014) asserts that students in grades 1-3 have less of a chance of having male teacher than students in grades 4-6. In other words, the lower the level of grade, the lower the number of male teachers. However, the
gap of male and female teachers in low level grades is bigger than the higher level grades.

2.3 Perceptions and Reasons of Male avoiding Teaching Children

Most of men avoid teaching children is because of some reasons. A study conducted by Drudy et al. (2005) about school leavers and student teachers’ perceptions and reasons why the number of men going into teaching children fell continuously. Women’s job / female domination, woman better with children, low payment, attraction of other jobs, primary teaching unattractive, men dislike working with children, fear of abuse allegations, and young children difficulty are the reasons why lack of male primary teachers.

Another reason is because of lack of support from the society. Men have to deal with other social views such as coping with disapproval from family, friends, and the society for choosing what has traditionally been a female domain (Carrington, 2002; Szwed, 2010). Cushman (2005) discovered that parents, particularly fathers, considered teaching to be an unsuitable career for their sons. Additionally, Anliak and Beyazkurk (2008) encountered male teachers have low esteem to admit their profession working with children and avoid the topic of career when talking with other people due to fear of negative reactions. It shows that the society perceived that teaching is neither an appropriate nor valuable career choice for man.

The research literature on the lack of male teachers also cites several common reasons for the gender disparity in the young children teacher workforce. Cited from Johnson (2008), there are three common reasons why male do not
choose teaching young children as a career. First, low salary becomes one of the reasons why male decide to not choose teaching as a career. Low salary may have a differential effect on men because of the perception that they need to be a family’s primary wage earner. Second, lack of prestige or low status of teaching profession may affect male teachers more negatively than female teachers. Third, fear of physical contact with children is also argued to be part of men avoid teaching young children. Research has identified that a negative stigma and stereotype exist when referring to men who choose to work in a socially considered female profession. Men who express a desire to work with children are stereotyped as child abuser or pedophile (Wiest, 2008), meanwhile, women are stereotyped more patient, motherly or caring, or simply ‘better with young children’ (Drudy, Martin, Woods, & O'flynn, 2005).

Furthermore, Skelton (2003) also investigated about the attitudes of male student teachers toward a career in primary school and how gender influences perceptions of primary teaching. The first findings indicated that the student teachers perceived that primary teaching is intellectually demanding and a stressful occupation. Second, they stated that the better qualified to teach young children is female than male because female better work with children and male are more suitable teach in secondary level. Third, they are worry if they go into the primary school the society will perceive them as being child abuser. Such perceptions can cause males to feel stress and has potential to significantly impact on their personal and career choices (Smith, 2004). Moreover, male teachers often receive criticism for their career choice when in social situations (Weaver-Hightower, 2011).
2.4 The Importance of The Presence of Male Teacher for Young Children

Some male primary teachers are discouraged by negative stigma of males working with young children. At this point, many researchers or even the government point out to increase number of more male teachers in primary sector to provide role models for children. While many male teachers have stated that being a positive role model and want to make a difference in children’s live as one of their motivations for becoming a teacher (Cruickshank, 2012).

Another common concern for increasing more male teachers that male teacher as the discipliner role for children. Male teachers are assertive but fair disciplinarians, good at and interested in sports, and have a good sense of humor (Cruickshank, 2014). Additionally, the importance of recruiting more men into primary appears at a strong level of agreement with the statements that male teachers are necessary in fostering positive attitudes to study among boys and they are needed as role models (Skelton, 2003). Rice and Goessling (2005) believe that schools need more male teachers to provide a balanced educational experience for their students.

2.5 English for Young Learners Course

EYL course is one of an elective courses other than Business English, Translation, and American Studies at English department of 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 lesson plans.
Meanwhile, EYL II is given to seventh-semester students which aims for teaching practice.

For the students who take EYL II, they have to teach the students in every Sunday morning during one semester. The students who join EYL come from elementary schools around Malang. The teacher students are divided into six groups which consist of six until seven people. Each group teach one class regarding to the grade that has already been divided by the lecturer. Not only that, the teacher students should prepare the class by decorating the class as interesting as possible on every Saturday.

Throughout the years, EYL course is always dominated by female students instead of the male ones. The percentage of male students who take EYL course has noticeably decreased in the past three years. In 2015, the number of male students who join EYL course was sixteen male students and it declined into nine students in 2016, then there was only one male student in 2017 as well as in 2018.

Febrianto (2017) investigated about the reasons why ELED students did not take EYL course as their elective course in academic year 2013. He found that there are eight reasons of male students who did not take EYL course: 1) They do not like teaching; 2) They do not like dealing with children; 3) They did not take EYL because of friend’s suggestion; 4) They think that they have no passion teaching young learner; 5) They think EYL course is the busiest course; 6) They just follow their friends to take another elective course; 7) They think EYL is less challenging for them; and 8) They think EYL course is only suitable for woman. From those reasons, there are two dominant reasons of male students for not taking EYL course,
namely they do not like dealing with children and they think that EYL course is the busiest course among other courses.

2.6 The Concept of Perception

Perception is a psychological process occurs to a person which involves the way one sees the world. Every individuals is different and unique, so do their perception. As stated by Robin and Judge (2017), “Perception is a process by which individuals organize and interpret their sensory impressions in order to give meaning to their environment”. Same as Wood (2010) definition, perception is the process of gaining information by selecting, organizing, and interpreting people, objects, events, situation or other phenomena. Meanwhile, according to Herrera (2015), in defining perception depends on the focus of the research and the field. She notes that perception is related to the feelings, experiences, beliefs, values, concepts, preferences, heuristics, stereotypes, and knowledge.

In addition, Da Silva (2015) mentions that the definition of perception is “a physical and intellectual ability used in mental processes to recognize, interpret, and understand events”. She adds that perception as an intuitive cognition or judgment, the way to express opinion or belief, insight, a set of understanding, interpretation, and way of knowing.

Furthermore, Irwanto (as cited in Poedjiastutie, 2005) classified the perception into two types; positive and negative perception. Positive perception is an interpretation that expresses all feelings, opinions, and judgments positively that includes giving positive meanings of something surround them, it can be people, objects, or events. Thus, individuals who have positive perception will support and
perceive the phenomena that is perceived. On the other hand, negative perception is an interpretation that describes the feelings and opinions negatively which are not suitable with them. Thus, individuals who have negative perception will refuse and against the object that is perceived.

Departing from some definitions above, the researcher sums up the term of perception that is how the way people perceive about something and then elaborate, interpret, and assign meaning related to the feelings, experiences, belief, preferences and knowledge which classified into positive and negative perception.

2.6.1 Factors that Influenced Perception

In this section, the researcher elaborates on several factors that influences human perceptions. According to Robbins & Judge (2017), there are several factors shape perception, namely the perceiever, target, and context.

1. Perceiver

Person who observes or tries to interpret an object is called perceiver. The interpretation that the perceiver create is influenced by personal characteristics – personality, attitude, interest, motives, past experience, and expectation.

2. Target

The charcteristics of the target/object also affect what we perceive. The relationship of a target to its background also influences perception, as does the tendency to group close things and similar things together.
3. Situation

The interaction between the preceiver and the target in which the situation takes place has an influence on the perceiver’s impression of the target, including influenced by the time, social setting, and environment. Individuals behave differently in different situation.

In addition, Wood (2015) also asserts some factors that influenced on human perception, namely physiology, age, culture, cognitive abilities and personal characteristics. It can be concluded that perception is influenced by some factors. These factors can appear from the outside or within the individual.

2.6.2 Perception and Individual Decision Making

Perception is an understanding of individuals in determining and interpreting something based on information received, while decision is the end of the thought process. Perception plays a role in making decision because perception becomes the basis for individuals to arrange identification, analysis, and conclude an object that being perceived (Rahardian, 2017).

Making decision occurs when people need to select between two or more options. Decision making would be an objective process, but the way individuals make decisions and the quality of their choices are largely influenced by their perceptions (Robbins & Judge, 2017). He adds that every decision requires to interpret and evaluate some information. People typically receive data from multiple sources that need to screen, process, and interpret. It also needs to develop alternatives and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses. Again, individual’s
perceptual process will affect the outcome, and consider how the perceptions of the object influence the decisions. Furthermore, the perceptions of male students of ELED UMM also can influence them in choosing the elective courses.