

# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background of the Research

Humans experience love as a pure emotion. Love is a strong, positive emotion of attachment and affection. It is a feeling of affection and care for someone (Ajmal 43). People who experience the emotion of love have a want to express it through caring for others and wanting to make them happy. A person's contentment and sincere concern for their loved ones fosters a sense of security and attachment.

The feeling of love is born from a feeling of being attracted and curious to someone and accompanied by a strong curiosity to get to know someone deeper. It is a feeling that grows slowly and is felt by someone gradually. Everyone must have felt the feeling of attraction to someone. When someone feels an attraction to another person, curiosity arises that encourages someone to get to know them more. From there comes the feeling to fight for love; to be close to the person you love and get to know them further, and make any struggle to get that love.

Many people start to know love from a young age, so did Quentin Jacobsen, the main male character of *Paper Towns*, who likes his childhood friend and neighbor, Margo Roth Spiegelman, the main female character. *Paper Towns* is the third young adult novel written by John Green which was published on October 16, 2008 by Dutton Books. This novel tells about the search for identity of teenagers by the two main characters, Quentin Jacobsen and Margo Roth Spiegelman. Initially,

Quentin and Margo were two very different people. Quentin is a normal kid with an ordinary life, while Margo is an adventurous, eccentric and brave girl. One night Quentin and Margo go out on an adventure to help Margo avenge her ex-boyfriend and friend. Right after their adventure that night, Margo disappeared in the blink of an eye. Quentin, who has been spending his teenage life in his own comfort zone, suddenly goes out into a journey thousands of kilometers away from his hometown to find Margo, his childhood friend. The writer believes that Margo has a special meaning in Quentin's heart that he does not mind spending his time and effort to find her.

The struggle of a teenager who goes out of his comfort zone to pursue his love is the issue that the writer wants to present in this thesis. Is it going to be a simple love story between two teenagers? Or, is it going to be complicated and life changing experience? From the story, it seems that love is not easy to find and sometimes the reality is not what they expect.

Love is surely a common issue in the reader's life, yet it cannot be presented as a tasteless topic in a novel. New criticism is used by many researchers to analyze intrinsic elements in a literary work. In this case, the writer uses New Criticism to analyze the irony that John Green uses to convey his message in his novel, especially in the love side of this novel which is quite dominant. The writer finds that Green uses irony to convey aspects of romance in this novel that do not end happily as expected and are not worth the struggle. The writer is interested in analyzing how Green utilizes the intrinsic elements of a fiction to depict the struggle made by

Quentin to gain the love that he desires so that the struggle for love would not be a tacky theme.

## 1.2 Identification of the Problems

As a teenager in love, Quentin has done everything to pursue his love. His love for Margo grows since they were very young and he decides to fight for his love when Margo disappears after spending a night with him. His struggle to pursue love is not easy since he travels thousands of kilometers to find Margo in hopes that Margo wants to be found by him and they can be together afterwards but ironically, reality is much different from what he has pictured in his mind. Through the narratives, Green seems to create many ironies while presenting Quentin's struggle for love. Therefore, The writer believes Green uses irony to explain the story of the struggle for love in this novel, which is also the main issue in this novel.

## 1.3 Review of Related Literature

In order to analyzing this thesis, the writer has reviewed several articles, thesis and other scholarly writings from some experts related to the topic. The first related study is a thesis written by Kasih Ratnaningtyas entitled "The True Meaning of Margo Roth Spiegleman's Big Decision to Leave the Town as Seen in John Green's *Paper Towns*" from Universitas Sanata Dharma Yogyakarta. In this thesis, Ratnaningtyas declare the goal of this analysis focuses on how Margo Roth Spieglemen described in the novel and to analyze what is the true meaning of Margo's decision to leave her town using psychological approach. Ratnaningtyas explained

two findings in her analysis. First, she explained Margo's personality, which are an introvert, fearless, smart, loves to taking-risk and a stereotypical person. Next, Ratnaningtyas found the real reason behind Margo's decision to leave her town. She explained that Margo's ex boyfriend was cheating on her is one of the reason and after that Margo did the revenge to her ex and her friends. After the revenge, Margo realized that she never wants to live there, in her home town. Ratnaningtyas states that the true meaning of Margo's decision is that she tries to escape from her inner problems. At the end, Ratnaningtyas expected the analysis can be continued to conduct studies using metaphor in *Paper Towns*.

Ratnaningtyas explained well her ideas about the true meaning behind Margo's decision to leave the town from psychological perspective. This study helps the writer to get to know Margo Roth Spiegelman especially about the reasons that made her leave her hometown. However, this study only limited to Margo's side about her decision leaving the town but every story has two sides so Ratnaningtyas need to consider other aspect such as Margo's family, people around her and her relationship with Quentin, the main character in this novel.

The next related studies is an article written by Yuli Eka Purnia Sari, Singih Daru Kuncara, and Setya Ariani with title "Feminity as Potrait in Quentin Jacobsen The Main male character in *Paper Towns* Novel" . This article provides the analysis of Quentin Jacobsen, the main male character in *Paper Towns*, based on his behavior shows his feminine sides. In analyzing the feminines sides of Quentin in this research, the writers used Sex Role Inventory theory by Sandra L. Bem which

categorize based on Gender-Pattern Chart by James L. Park. The Theory Correlated Factors of Gender Variance by Veale et.al was used on this research to analyze the influencing factor of Quentin's feminine side. As the result of this article, there are nineteen feminine traits such as childish, feminine, shy, sympathetic, cheerful, affectionate, easy to seduce, eager to soothe hurt feelings, loves children, sensitive, loyal, sensitive to others, soft spoken, tender, gentle, understanding, warm, obedient and easy to fool. The factor that influencer those behavior were abuse factor and parental. This article helps the writer to get to know the main character, Quentin Jacobsen, more deeply through an analysis of his feminine traits. This provides insight for the writer about the factors that might influence Quentin in his journey to fight for his love for Margo. However, this journal is only limited to the feminine side of a Quentin Jacobsen. It is hoped that there will be further research that analyzes Quentin Jacobsen's overall character so that the depiction of Quentin's character will be clearer in the future.

In terms of the theory used, which is New Criticism, the next related studies is a thesis entitled Irony in Parenthood and Friendship in Roald Dahl's Novel *Matilda & Charlie and Chocolate Factory* : A New Critical Analysis written by Muthiara Sukma Sonitha. This study analyze the parenthood and friendship from intrinsic elements depicted in two children's novels by Roald Dahl entitled *Matilda and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. The Thesis used New Criticism approach by Cleanth Brooks to analyze irony as the formal elements that is used in those two novels. Sonitha explained ironies that presented in both *Matilda* and *Charlie and the*

Chocolate Factory. First in *Matilda*, irony found involves the role as a parent for Matilda who does not show the attitude that parents should show in terms of bad treatment. The irony is that Matilda got her teachings about kindness from other people, not from her parents. Meanwhile, in the novel *Charlie and The Chocolate Factory*, there is irony that is experienced by the supporting characters. In this case it is reflected in children from the upper class who have everything but do not have ethics and manners so they cannot make friends with other children. This is called the result of parental education whose role cannot be felt by their children.

From this thesis, the writer learned how to use New Criticism theory which was applied by Sonitha which really helped the writer's understanding in using the same theory for the writer's own thesis. Sonitha groups the ironies that she finds clearly to help the writer in doing her research. However, Sonitha does not explain parenthood and friendship through other elements of organic unity. This research is only limited to examining the irony in the novel. It would be better if Sonitha explained parenthood and friendship based on other intrinsic elements included in the study of New Criticism.

The next related study is an essay entitled *Book Review of Paper Towns* written by John Green by Raden Indra Sukmana. In this research, Sukmana explained the novel *Paper Towns* through a review of the story and focused on the strengths and weaknesses in the novel. Sukmana also explained the message depicted in the novel. Apart from that, Sukmana also explained the themes, perceptions, and several other elements depicted in the novel such as friendship, identity, and the depiction of the

two main characters in the novel, namely Quentin Jacobsen and Margo Roth Spiegelman. This review helps the writer to read another perspective from the novel *Paper Towns*. the weakness of this novel is that it does not describe the theory used by Sukmana in his analysis. He only explained his analysis in outline without focusing on one thing.

Various scholarly works that the author read helps the author in conducting research on the author's topic. Muthiara Sukma Sonitha's thesis helps the writer study the use of New Criticism theory by Cleanth Brooks in analyzing irony in novels. Apart from that, Ratnaningtyas's thesis and articles written by Sari et.al also an essay by Sukmana helped the writer to see another point of view of the novel *Paper Towns* from writers who have discussed this novel.

#### **1.4 Research Questions**

*Paper towns* is about Quentin's searching for Margo, which, presumably, indicates his true love to her. Unfortunately, Quentin's love story is not a happy ending but a sad one full of ironies.

- 1.4.1 How does Green utilize irony as one significant formal element in the story?
- 1.4.2 How does the novel show organic unity between the form and the content (irony of struggle for love) of the story?

#### **1.5 Scope of the Research**

This thesis analyzes the use of irony as one of the most striking formal elements in the novel. The writer also analyzes the role of "irony of struggle for love" in the novel and finds out how organic unity is formed between the content and the theme.

### **1.6 Objectives of the Research**

The main objective of this research is to explain how Green uses irony as the most prominent formal element to convey ideas about the struggle for love in the novel. The second objective is to explain how the novel show organic unity between the form and the content of the story. This study uses New Criticism to find out how irony works to create a unified whole called organic unity.

