

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study:

Regret is something that has been ever felt by almost everyone, especially regret of love, because when love is present, regret also will usually come. Many people seem to experience with the case of regret. Regret of love is a condition where the love felt by someone and he or she becomes regretful due to love which is gathered by some problems that happen. When remorse due to love comes to human life, they can only say with the word "if only" because all the expected events have occurred and cannot be changed.

Regret felt by someone will make him or her feels sorrow. Sometimes someone only realizes after he or she grows old. Any thing experienced during the youth is unforgettable, especially in love, and it causes regret in the future. Regret can make people feel sorrow or disappointed with a problem. In general, regret can be caused by several factors such as disappointment, sadness, deep feelings of sadness (grief), dissatisfaction, and wistful regret (Blakeslee 2014, 89).

According to dictionary regret is a feeling of sadness, repentance or disappointment over something that has to happen or has been done especially a loss or missed opportunity. According to *Webster's Unabridged Third New Internal Dictionary*, regret has meaning to remember with sorrow or grief and

also of emphasizing unfavorable, dissatisfaction, misgiving or distress of mind concerning the mistake.

Regret experienced by someone can result in feeling unhappy, difficult, disappointed, and so on. Regret can be described as a person's emotional reaction to actions that have ever been done in the past so that sometimes it can be a negative perspective because the results obtained at this time are not in accordance with expectations or expectations in the past. Thus, a person can judge about true or not an action after it happens.

Generally, regret is painful and always comes at the end of the problem without knowing it before. Regret can make people feel powerless and even experience anger. Regret is also able to bring everyone to feeling of self-doubt, selflessness, misery, and when something is pushed very hard, it will make people feel pain. Regret can make people feel sick as if they wounds and possibly can not heal because of regret for something that has effect on human life. Regret describes emotional term as sorrow, grief, and pain and non emotional terms as remembering and as having misgivings in human experience and impact in depression, guilt, and shame in human life (Janet 1986, 135).

Regret happens in daily life, it does not only experienced by both men and women but it is also experienced by almost all human life in the world. Regret begins when a problem arises which is experienced by everyone. Regret does not only happen in real life but it also happens in literary work. A novel *The Sense of*

*an Ending* created by Julian Barnes which is used as an object of research also talks about regret.

Julian Barnes was born in Leicester on 19 January 1946 and was educated at the City of London School and Magdalen College, Oxford. He lived in London and as a novelist. There are many works that he had created such as; *Nothing To Be Frightened Of* (2008), a memoir; *Pulse* (2011), a collection of short stories; and the novels, *The Sense of an Ending* (2011), shortlisted for the 2011 Costa Novel Award and winner of the 2011 Man Booker Prize for Fiction, *The Noise of Time* (2016) and *The Only Story* (2018), and etc. Generally, many works are made to get awards, so that it makes the reader interesting to read. Not only the story but also the author of the novel is very nice when writing the novel *The Sense of an Ending* so there are many awards that he found. He got many awards like; the Man Booker Prize-*Flaubert's Parrot* (1984), *England* (1998), and *Arthur & George* (2005), and won the prize for *The Sense of an Ending* (2011), and his works were worthy of many awards because all of the stories that he created are able to make the reader always think deeply about the story and also make curious with the story and the works are interesting. That is why, the main character named Tony Webster who experiences the regret of love in *The Sense of an Ending* by Julian Barnes is very interesting to discuss in this study.

*The Sense of an Ending* is a novel that tells about the regret of love experienced by Tony Webster character. Regret appears as something painful experienced by Tony Webster as the main character related to her love in the past that always imprints in her life. Context behind the story of the novel *The Sense of*

*an Ending* is about of depicting regret that shows how humans live by storing past wounds with wrong perceptions of love until old age. When humans feel loss of something they care about, it is able to make people feel misery so that they cannot enjoy life to be happy in the future, therefore sometimes they feel that what is experienced in life is tiring routine (Hershfield 2011, 35). The main character has the happiest days in the youth with a friend and a girlfriend, although in the old, there is any regret in the youth and it brings till old, so the character does not feel happy in the old and have regret in the life until he life alone.

The research here is conducted with the issue that mostly happens in the real life because there are many people living with wrong perceptions until old age so that they do not enjoy their happiness in the future related to something that has happened in the youth. There are many related studies that discuss around the issue. The first study is taken from the paper entitled *Bad Romance: Women Regret Love Failures More than Men* written by Brownstein (2011). The second study is entitled *The Portrayal of Regret as seen in Adele's Hello: A New Critic Reading* by Fauziah (2017). The third study is entitled Indecisiveness in "*The Road Not Taken*" by Robert Frost: *An Expressive Critical Analysis* written by Candilas (2017). The last study is entitled *Regret in Decision Making* written by Connolly (2002). From these related studies mention above, besides the writer finds the gaps between related studies she also finds the benefit which can be useful to complete this study. By comparing the related studies, she finds additional information that helps to analyze the novel.

The object of this study is the novel entitled *The Sense of an Ending* where the writer finds an interesting issue to discuss in this study. However, the writer will base the discussion on using a new criticism approach to elaborate the issue of regret of love in the past which is experienced by Tony Webster character. New Criticism comes into general use to describe this approach to understand literature with the 1941 publication of John Crowe Ransom's *The New Criticism*, which includes Ransom's personal analysis of several of his contemporary theorists and critics (Bressler 2007, 55). New Criticism itself is an approach to literary analysis that affords readers with a formula for arriving at the correct interpretation of a text using only the text itself. Tyson has stated that close reading as a detailed examination of the interwoven relationship between formal elements of the text that construct the text's final theme (Tyson 2015, 131). New criticism focuses on the text as a result of understanding the work of art as an eternal and self-comprise artifact and the materiality of the text also questions concerning text and the applying of New Critical methodology connected literature from its social context (Edgar 2008, 46). Definitely, this research is the aim of analyzing the formal element in the story related to characterization, conflict, setting, and symbols in the story to support the theme about regret of love that is experienced by the main character. In this study, the analysis of the novel *The Sense of an Ending* will focus on the formal elements of the novel, particularly characterizations, conflict, setting, and symbols as well as the cultural tradition that influences the development of those formal elements. Formally, there have been made various studies that revolve around Tony Webster, the protagonist in *The Sense of an*

*Ending*. On the other hand, the topic discussed depicts people living with wrong perceptions of love until old age, so that they do not enjoy their happiness in the future. The character have the problems in the youth, but unfortunately there is any regret in the old that is always imagined in the mind and it causes him do not enjoy with life in the future.

Therefore, in this study, the writer wants to know about the regret of love experienced by Tony Webster as the main character in the novel that causes him feel suffering even though the problem and many experience regret due to many problems such as injustice, betrayal, etc., as well as regrets about love. The regret experienced by Tony seems to be exception because even though the regret is painful but he is able to create the meaning of life that life is not alone even though he has experienced of regret for love, but he still makes a good relationship or friendship.

## **1.2 Statements of the Problem**

After reading *The Sense of an Ending* and based on the background above the study comes up with this following research question:

- How do the characterization, conflict, setting, and symbol support the theme regret of love experienced by Tony Webster character in Julian Barnes *The Sense of an Ending*?

### 1.3 Objective of the Study

The study aims to search for the objective that is expected. The following objective will be intended to answer the question mention in the statement of the problem. The objective is:

-To give explanation about the characterization, conflict, setting, and symbols in supporting the theme about regret of love experienced by Tony Webster character in Julian Barnes *The Sense of an Ending*.

### 1.4 Significance of the Study

The study provides discussion related issue of regret. The result of this study is expected to help both the researcher and readers to understand the issue concerning the regret of love which is experienced by Tony Webster character. The issue that happen it is still important to be discussed because it can be known as reason people living with wrong perceptions until old age with their love in the past, so that people do not enjoy their happiness in the future. People should choose what or which they want to believe in because choosing what to believe in life is important for each individual in order to progress in their own life. Furthermore, the aim of the study is to make the readers realize and think about the regret of love in the past which is experienced by Tony Webster is painful especially in life. This study also hopes to attract the future researchers, especially in the English Department of Universitas Airlangga who would like to conduct research in this area of discussion, and also to increase the study and reader's knowledge about the issue as an object to discuss it.

### 1.5 Definition of Key Terms

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| The justification of life | the only justification and redemption of life and its suffering, without this key element of life in the world, life and suffering would be a complete and utter absurdity. Life is only justified by and through love (Cline 2011, 28).    |
| New Criticism             | an approach to literary analysis affords readers with a formula for arriving at the correct interpretation of a text using only on the text itself (Bressler 2007, 55).   |
| Reflection                | is an act of each individual; teachers, counselors only have access to whatever aspect of thought and feeling the individual chooses to disclose (Redmond 2006, 40).  |
| Regret                    | one of the kind emotions related to sorrow caused by disappointment, dissatisfaction (Landman 1986, 136).   |
| Love                      | a deep feeling of affection and care that involves intimacy, commitment, and passion, that nourishes like air, food, water, words, and touch and has a behavioral, physiological and biochemical signature and universal (Field 2016, 184). |