CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

The analysis is about the juvenile delinquency in *The Last Song* novel that written by Nicholas Sparks. This novel expresses social phenomenon and human feeling in certain society, so it fits the definition given by Welleck. Welleck (1981:2) says, “Literature is identical with word through the expression of human feeling, imaginative process, and creativity.” Literature is made to express and communicate the feeling of the author through imaginative process which needs creativity.

A literary work exists because of society. In other words, the existence of literary work is influenced by the condition and phenomenon in society either in politic, social, religion, economy, and culture. Therefore, literary work is the reflection of the real life. It can describe the events in our life, and also contains the cultural and social background which indicates that literature and society is closely related because literature expresses the situations and problems exist in society.

Roberts and Jacobs (1995:2) say, “Literature is classified into four genres: prose fiction, drama, and nonfiction prose.” From the four genres, the writer chooses to discuss the prose fiction, exactly on novel. Fiction is distinguished from the works it imitates, such as historical accounts, reports, biographies, autobiographies, letters, and personal memoirs and meditations. Novel is an extended work of prose fiction, longer than a short story or a medium-length fiction, called a novelette or novela.

Peck and Coyle (1998:102) say, “Most people are concerned with ordinary people and their problems in the societies in which they find themselves. Some of novels are fictions and some based on true stories.” That novels are entertained and also
give messages to the readers. It can also impress the readers. In recent times, novel is not only as a reading material to spend time or to entertain. Novel as a reading material contains full of knowledge and stories. The content can be analyzed from literary works or structure. Watson (1979: 3) says, “Novel is the name of a literary kind, and there is a story to tell about how, over the centuries, its substance has widened and its conventions changed.”

Social problem novel, also called problem novel or social novel, work of fiction in which a prevailing social problem, such as gender, race, or class prejudice, is dramatized through its effect on the characters of a novel. There are many kinds of social problems: juvenile delinquency, violence, crime and criminals, mental illness, poverty, discrimination, the changing family, and many more. In this analysis, the writer will discuss about social problems, especially juvenile delinquency.

Juvenile delinquency is offenses that are done by young people, whether it is intentional or unconsciously by teenagers. It increases anxiety in adolescence, because of this, many young people fall into negative actions. World Youth Report (2003:189) says, “Juvenile delinquency is criminal behaviours among young people, as they negotiate the transition from childhood to adulthood in an increasingly complex and confusing world.”

Juvenile delinquency is prevalent in any society. There are so many causes which enable the teenagers do the negative things or inappropriate from the rules that exist in society. In developing country such as Indonesia, delinquency can occur due to lack of attention from family, unfavorable environment, bad economy, lack of knowledge about social life and many more.

Novels have significant elements: character, plot, structure, and theme. This analysis will focus on the characters in The Last Song. Characters in novel can affect the
reader and can give positive or negative impacts. Karl (1976:238) says, “Character is of interest for the personal reason that we want to see how other people live, how they make decision and react to responsibility, how they pursue their goal. We measure ourselves by them. Think of characters in stories and novels as real people, and then your imagination go.”

In *The Last Song*, the main character, Veronica “Ronnie” Miller, became bad since her parents’ divorce, her life was turned upside down; she did many bad things. Ronnie lived with her mother and a younger brother, Jonah. Her father moved to Wrightsville Beach, North Carolina. She lost a father figure. Three years later, she remains alienated from her parents, particularly her father, Steve Miller.

Then, her mother decides it would be in everyone's best interest if she and her brother spent the summer with Steve. Resentful and rebelious, Ronnie rejects her father’s attempts to reach out to her and threatens to return to New York before the summer’s end. But soon Ronnie meets Will, the last person she thought she would ever be attracted to, and finds herself falling for him, opening herself up to greatest happiness and pain that she has ever known. Juvenile delinquency is happened because of many factors that influence a person. It also can be prevented. So it is important to be known and learned.

The writer is interested to analyze the juvenile delinquency of a novel that written by Nicholas Sparks, because the writer likes reading his novels. His novels have great story that contains values of daily life. The readers can take the lessons about juvenile delinquency from the experience of the characters in *The Last Song*. The writer will give explanation about that through the Nicholas Sparks’ novel that young generation may learn from other experience.
Nicholas Sparks is a famous author. He was born on December 31, 1965, in Omaha, Nebraska. He is an internationally bestseller American novelist and screenwriter. *The Last Song* is one of his best novels. He has published 16 novels, with theme including cancer, death pirates, and love. Six of his novels have been made into films. Most people in all over the world have read it or seen it in the cinema.

There are two common ways to analyze a literary work, they are intrinsic approach and extrinsic approach. The intrinsic approach is an approach which analyze literary work based on the text and structural and points of literary work which consisted theme, setting, plot, character, style, and point of view. The focus in analysis is the character. Person’s character can be seen from three aspects, namely through: character dialogue, character description, and depiction of physical character. Element that are outside of literature, but it doesn’t directly affect the structure or organism system literature is extrinsic elements. They are include the values in the story (religious, cultural, political, economic), background of the author’s life, and the social situation when the story was invented). The focus of this analysis is the social problems.

In analyzing the topic, the writer uses a theory as the basic of research, that is sociology of literature. Sociology of literature is the way of understanding literature through society. By using the theory, we can understand the element of society in the novel, then we can relate them with the realities in the real world. Swingewood (1972:12) says, “Nevertheless, they caution that, as art, literature goes beyond a purely descriptive and scientific analysis of society, penetrating the surface of social life to show the ways in which men and women experience society as feeling.”

The writer uses descriptive qualitative method in this analysis. This method is used to outline and describe the symptoms found in the research object. Based on the
method that have been choosen, then the results of this study will be a qualitative
descriptive, it means that the data only obtained in the words form not as numbers.

1.2 Problem of the Study

In this thesis, the writer wants to analyze the juvenile delinquencies that done
by the characters and its causes. There are two problems that need to be solved.
The problems are:
1. What are the kinds of juvenile delinquency that found in *The Last Song*
   through the characters?
2. What is the cause of the juvenile delinquency?

1.3 Objective of the Study

The objectives that are intended to be stated are:
1. To explain and analyze the kinds of juvenile delinquency in *The Last Song*
   through the characters.
2. To explain the cause of the juvenile delinquency.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The writer is interested to discuss about juvenile delinquency, because it is
often happened these days. The writer limits the topic by only disscusing about juvenile
delinquency in a novel *The Last Song* written by Nicholas Sparks through its characters,
such as drugs use, theft, and violence.
1.5 Significance of the Study

This thesis could give some information and explanation about juvenile delinquency, especially the juvenile delinquency that are contained in *The Last Song* novel. It is important to learned, so that, the reader can take lessons from the experience of the characters in this novel. The writer hope that this thesis can be useful for the readers, especially for those who are interested in this subject.