

Conference Paper

Components of Love in Ika Natassa's Novel *Critical Eleven*

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Abstract

This study is concerned with the analysis of the components of love depicted in the novel *Critical Eleven* written by Ika Natassa in 2016. This study was conducted by applying qualitative research method (Creswel, 2009: 4). The analysis is based on the theory proposed by Sternberg (1986). There are three components of love portrayed in the novel covering *intimacy*, *passion*, and *commitment*. The result shows that all the three components of love mentioned above are vividly reflected in the novel. Intimacy is depicted through the characters named Ale and Anya, passion is also portrayed through Ale and Anya when they are going to have the first child but it died in the womb, and commitment is also illustrated through the same characters who make up their mind to declare a commitment that they will live together till the end of their life, regardless whatever might happen to them.

Keywords: components of love, intimacy, passion, commitment.

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1. Introduction

Love is a natural feeling of all living beings. All human beings must have such a tender feeling which is called love. Love is the greatest gift from the Almighty God. Love should be maintained for harmonious relationships which require some features including honesty, respect, care, affection, and trust. Love is very essential for human life as it may stimulate peaceful mind and tranquil heart and even it provides oxygen to the brain to work brilliantly.

The power of love proves effective and very strong like electrical energy. Someone who is in love will be ready to sacrifice and to do anything for the lover. He will have extra energy to do anything for the lover and even he will have extra power in terms of bravery, confidence, responsibility, and thoroughness to do anything for the happiness of the one he loves. In a family the love between husband and wife will protect each other to lead a harmonious life. The husband will do anything for the happiness of the

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spouse and the wife will also do her best to make the husband serene at home with her.

Love is generally based on such components as intimacy, passion and commitment. (Strenberg, 2006: 395). Based on Strenberg's idea about love it is very interesting to conduct a research on this subject matter. Thus, the present research is going to dig a thorough study on love with reference to the main theme of Ika Natassa's novel entitled *Critical Eleven*. This novel talks about the love of husband and wife to solve their problems regarding their first child miscarriage. Love is chosen as the topic of the analysis since it is a never ending topic of discussion. Besides, it also constitutes the main theme of the novel, and is believed to be much use for the reader especially for those who are interested in the study of love.

This study mainly focuses on the components of love including intimacy, passion and commitment as illustrated through the main characters in the novel mentioned above based on the theory of love proposed by Sternberg (1986). It is illustrated that love has proved successful to maintain the harmony of the main characters' families. Thus, the result of this research is expected to provide significance both theoretically and practically. Theoretically, this research is expected to provide additional literature on the theory of love and components of love. Practically, the research results would be significant to elaborate and establish an understanding about the components of love that they can put into practice in their daily life to maintain the harmony of their family.

2. Literature Review

Love may be defined as an eternal feeling between two or more people who have affection or responsibility towards others. Love is an emotional reaction that seems as anger, sadness, happiness, and fear. Sternberg (2006) describes love as having three primary components: intimacy, passion, and commitment, pictorially represented as a triangle. Intimacy is the emotional or affective component and refers to warmth, understanding, caring, support, and connection. Passion represents a motivation characterized by physical attraction and arousal. Commitment is cognitive and refers to the decision to stay in relationship and maintain it. Although Sternberg describes intimacy as the emotional component, both intimacy and passion have emotional dimensions, as reflected in the content of the scale items to measure these different components.

Sternberg (1986) in the context of the triangular theory, the intimacy component refers to those feelings in a relationship that promote closeness, fondness, and con-

nectedness. It includes among other things, feelings of (a) desire to promote the welfare of the love done, (b) experienced happiness with the love done, (c) high regard for the love done, (d) being able to count on the love done in times of need, (e) mutual understanding with the love done, (f) sharing of one's self and one's possessions with the love done, (g) receipt of emotional support from the love done, (h) giving of emotional support to the love done, (i) intimate communication with the love done, and (j) valuing the love done in one's life.

2.1. Components of love

The triangular theory of love holds that love can be understood in terms of three components that together can be viewed as forming the vertices of a triangle. These three components are intimacy (the top vertex of the triangle), passion (the left-hand vertex of the triangle), and decision/commitment (the right-hand vertex of the triangle). Each of these three terms can be used in many different ways, so it is important at the outset to clarify their meanings in the context of the present theory.

2.2. Intimacy

Sternberg (2006) describes that intimacy is the emotional or affective component and refers to warmth, understanding, caring, support, and connection. The intimacy component refers to feelings of closeness, connectedness, and bondedness in loving relationships. It thus includes within its purview those feelings that give rise, essentially, to the experience of warmth in a loving relationship.

2.3. Passion

Passion represents a motivation characterized by physical attraction and arousal. The passion component refers to the drives that lead to romance, physical attraction, sexual consummation, and related phenomena in loving relationships. The passion component thus includes within its purview those sources of motivational and other forms of arousal that lead to the experience of passion in a loving relationship. The passion component of love comprises those motivational and other sources of arousal that lead to the experience of passion. The passion component of love will almost certainly be highly and reciprocally interactive with intimacy. One will feel, for example, intimacy in a relationship in large part as a function of the extent to which the relationship

meets one's needs for passion. Conversely, passion may be aroused by intimacy. The intimacy and passion components need not always cover positively.

2.4. Commitment

Commitment is cognitive and refers to the decision to stay in relationship and maintain it. Although Sternberg describes intimacy as the emotional component, both intimacy and passion have emotional dimensions, as reflected in the content of the scale items to measure these different components. The commitment component refers to, in the short term, the decision that one loves someone else, and in the long term, the commitment to maintain that love. The decision/commitment component thus includes within its purview the cognitive elements that are involved in decision making about the existence of and potential long-term commitment to a loving relationship.

The commitment component of love consists of two aspects, a short-term one and a long-term one. The short-term one is the decision that one loves a certain other. The long-term aspect is the commitment to maintain that love. These two aspects of the decision/commitment component of love do not necessarily go together. The decision to love does not necessarily imply a commitment to love. Oddly enough, commitment does not necessarily imply decision. Many people are committed to the love of another without necessarily even admitting that they love or are in love with the other. Most often, however, decision will precede commitment both temporally and logically. Indeed, the institution of marriage represents a legalization of the commitment to a decision to love another throughout one's life.

In a relationship there must be problems; therefore commitment is needed in the relationship. Unlike intimacy and passion, commitment increases slowly at the beginning of the relationship. The three components are all important parts of loving relationships, although their importance differs from one relationship to another. Moreover, the importance of these components of love may differ over time within a relationship as well as across relationships at a given time.

3. Research Method

The research method applied in this research is qualitative research by which a research applies procedures that are made use of the qualitative method. Moleong (2014: 6) states qualitative research is a research that aims to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects, e.g. behavior, perception, motivation, action, etc. holistically and with a form of word in the specific context.

Moleong (2014) further claims that qualitative research is an attempt to present social perspective in the world, in terms of concepts, behaviors, perceptions, and the detail issues of human. There are two main sources of data used in this research: primary and secondary sources. The primary source of research data was taken from the novel *Critical Eleven* by Ika Natassa written in 2016, and the secondary source of data was taken from references including textual books, journal, and internet-handouts which give information about love and the components of love. The collection of the data was done through the following procedures: 1) reading the novel *Critical Eleven* as the primary data, 2) selecting the data from the novel which are related to the components of love including intimacy, passion and commitment, and analyzing the data. The analysis was done through the following steps: 1) classifying the data according to the components of love namely intimacy, passion, and commitment, 2) jotting down some important lines related to the topic, and 3) providing arguments which give evidence related to the components of love.

4. Discussion

As the topic of this study is concerned about the components of love based on the theory proposed by Sternberg (1986), the discussion is oriented at three aspects: intimacy, passion, and commitment.

4.1. Intimacy

Intimacy refers to feelings of closeness, connectedness, and bondedness in a love relationship. It thus includes within its purview of those feelings that give rise, essentially to the experience of warmth in a love relationship. The component of love, intimacy is clearly seen in the relationship between the main characters of the novel named Anya and Ale. They have become intimate since their meeting on the plane on the way to Jakarta from their home town. After the trip Anya and Ale always communicate with each other and finally Ale tell Anya frankly that he loves her and she accepts his love. She always feels happy whenever and wherever she is besides him because Ale has a rare quality compared to other men. He is quite smart to change awkward situations into something fun. In the next meeting both of them express their love to each other. Anya's beauty always makes Ale want to be closer to her. Ale can make Anya believe his love and he always wants to give happiness to her at any time. Actually, they have long distance relations because Ale works in the middle of the sea in England and it is impossible for them to always meet each other. They can communicate only when

they meet. Despite they live in different places, their intimacy is reflected vividly i their communication through email and when they meet directly.

4.2. Passion

Passion refers to the drives that lead to romance, physical attraction, sexual consummation, and related phenomena in love affairs. Passion constitutes the source of motivation to arouse longing and it can maintain the strength of love affairs. In the novel *Critical Eleven*, it is depicted that Ale has love affairs with Anya and he starts dating her just a month after their meeting in the plane. As soon as they arrive in Jakarta they arrange a meeting. He waits for her at the office lobby and they go to restaurant. They coincidentally like the same food called *ketoprak* 'traditional food indigenous in Jakarta'. While having the food they talk and joke about various things which make the situation romantic and affectionate.

Passion as the component of love between Ale and Anya is also reflected when Ale hugged her tightly to release her longing as soon as he arrives at her house. Anya is such a beautiful girl that he cannot stand not hugging her when he meets her. His passion for her is due to her physical attraction that she performs. Passion is an effective component of love which leads someone to have a desire to get married. But, when someone does not have religious norms, passion may lead to a catastrophe as it may lead to illegal relationships or adultery.

4.3. Commitment

Commitment as the component of love refers to, in short term, the decision that one loves someone else, and in the long term, the decision to maintain love affairs and to build a new family together. Commitment reflected in the novel *Critical Eleven* is portrayed when Ale proposes Anya to get married after one year they build love affairs.

The first step that Ale does is to invite Anya to come to his parents to introduce her to them. They expect the consent of both their parents so that their relations will get blessings from the Almighty. After the parents of both sides agree to their plan, then they can proceed to the next step; that is to the celebration of their marriage. Ale has done his best to cherish his love and it indicates his seriousness that he plans to live together with her to share happiness and sadness in a new family.

Another commitment as the component of love depicted in the novel is indicated from their plan to build bigger family by having children. It is true that after they have been married for three years, Anya gets a fetus in her womb indicating that they are

going to have their first baby. Knowing this condition, both of them are very happy because they will soon become a father and a mother. They spend their time in waiting for the happy day to welcome the birth of their first child.

However, man may propose but God will dispose. The happiness that they have long been waiting ends in disappointment. The new family must face an ordeal. There is a problem with Anya's womb and she gives birth to her baby in the seventh month of her pregnancy. The baby that has long been dreamt of as acute one is adopted by the owner, Allah the Almighty. They have to face God's decree. They have lost their first baby.

The catastrophe of the miscarriage of their baby leads to another catastrophe. The commitment of their love is tested by the ordeal. Ale blames Anya for the failure of giving birth to her first baby. Their relationship becomes inharmonious. Anya gets angry with her husband for blaming her and she decides to leave him. But, their parents prevent her decision while telling them that Ale actually has an elder brother who has also been miscarried. Finally, Ale realizes his fault for blaming her. He does his best to improve their relationship. Ale becomes open-minded and he decides to come back to his commitment to build his family.

Six months after the problem, Anya is still cool to Ale but tries his best to persuade her. Finally she can change her mind to forgive her husband. Both of them have the same commitment to rebuild their family. They yearn to have a harmonious family as they had before. Anya finally realizes the good memories that they had together with Ale. They remain committed to their former purpose to live together. She has a commitment to maintain their love and to rebuild their family. In her heart, Anya's love for her husband is so strong that she cannot at all forget him. She also realizes how deep her husband's love for her. Their commitment of their love can calm their feelings of remorse and their love will not be affected by the catastrophe. Finally the critical stage in the family can be solved by their commitment to maintain their love and to continue building the family until the end of their life.

5. Conclusion

The conclusion deduced in this study is concerned with the components of love revealed from the novel *Critical Eleven* written by Natassa in 2016. Based on the theory proposed by Sternberg (1986), the components of love depicted in the novel cover three aspects: intimacy, passion, and commitment. The main characters Anya and Ale have become intimate lovers after their first sight at the airplane when they are by chance in the same plane to Jakarta. They cherish their relationship until finally they

get married and build a new family. Anya who works as a management consultant always travels from one plane to another to find clients. Ale who works as a petroleum engineer in the Gulf of Mexico also always goes to many parts of the world. They have the same hobby, travelling. Their intimacy is going on through email and also when they meet. The intimacy is realized in their marriage. Intimacy is one of the components of love which generally happens to someone who falls in love with a person of the opposite sex.

Passion is another component of love illustrated in the novel between the main characters Ale and Anya. They feel passionate after they express their feelings that they love each other. Passion in love affairs often leads to bad impact if they cannot control themselves as it drives strong desire to commit sexual relationship which is restricted by law and religion before marriage. However, passion leads to good impact to the married couple as it is one of the aspects which is required to maintain happiness and harmony in the marriage.

The last component of love depicted in the novel is commitment which is portrayed through the main characters Ale and Anya. Commitment reflected in the novel *Critical Eleven* is portrayed when Ale proposes Anya to get married after one year they build love affairs. Another commitment as the component of love depicted in the novel is indicated from their plan to build bigger family by having children. It is true that after they have been married for three years, Anya gets a fetus in her womb indicating that they are going to have their first baby. Knowing this condition, both of them are very happy because they will soon become a father and a mother. They spend their time in waiting for the happy day to welcome the birth of their first child. However, the happiness that they have long been waiting ends in disappointment. They have lost their first baby as there is a problem with Anya's womb. The commitment of their love is again tested by the ordeal that Ale blames Anya for the failure of giving birth to her first baby so that their relation becomes inharmonious. But, due to their commitment to succumb, they can overcome the crisis and finally they become open-minded and they decide to come back to their first commitment to build a harmonious happy family.

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