THE IMPORTANCE OF ALTRUISM FOR HAPPINESS OF OTHERS IN NICHOLAS SPARKS DEAR JOHN NOVEL (2006) : A PSYCHOANALYTIC APPROACH

Submitted as a Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Getting Bachelor Degree in English Education Department

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ABSTRAK

Kata Kunci: Dear John, Pengorbanan, Psikoanalitik

ABSTRACT
This study deals with the importance altruism in Dear John novel. This study aims at finding the indicators of altruism, describing how the altruism was depicted in the novel, and the reason why the major character was willing to sacrifice himself for the sake of others. This research is qualitative research. This research employed psychoanalytic approach. The primary data source was Dear John novel by Nicholas Sparks. The secondary data source was other sources related to the primary data. The result of the study showed the following conclusions: (1) there were three indicators of altruism, namely giving attention to others, helping others, and prioritizing the interests of others, (2) altruism was depicted in the novel through characters, setting of place and through events.

Keywords: Dear John, Altruism, Psychoanalytic perspective

1. INTRODUCTION
Today, altruism is rare as people become more selfish and tend to think of only themselves, giving little or no care to others. Altruism is a voluntary act of helping others, selflessness, or doing good deeds. The people, who are willing to do altruism usually think that altruism is useful to those who receive the altruistic deed, although he has to sacrifice himself. Altruism involves providing a positive benefit for other people. Among others, parents sacrifice many things, including time and sleep, to take care of their children. In short, altruism is the act of sacrificing something precious for others because it may help the people change their lives for the better.
Dear John novel is a romantic novel which shows the author’s concern in altruism. The novel tells about the love between John and Savannah. John and Savannah’s story was quick, intense and care-free at the beginning but as the relationship grew, circumstances unraveled which tested their love to each other. Since John’s mother died. Richard Jenkins (John’s father) must take care John with his own. Richard Jenkins became afraid of people and more interested in his coin collection. According to Savannah, John’s father was autistic. In a summer vacation, John met Savannah Lynn Curtis, a student looking attractive. John was in his hometown of Wilmington, North Carolina for two weeks leave from his job in Germany. While Savannah spent her vacation by joining a group of volunteers to help build house for poor families. The group was led by a friend of Savannah, Tim Wheddon.

In a short time, love grew in the hearts of John and Savannah. Their relationship was a kind of long distance relationship. John still had to finish his duty in the army before he was able to get married with Savannah. When separated, John promised that he would soon return to marry Savannah and that She should wait until John returned. They decided to write to each other. Savannah was the one who first wrote and decided to communicate by letters. When the tenure of John had ended, there was a tragic events of 11 September that made John feel that his energy was still needed and he decided to go on duty even though he really wanted to go home to see Savannah. John re-applied for a two-year term and was sent to Iraq. He believed Savannah understood and could accept his decision. Since his service in Iraq, the letters that Savannah sent to John no longer began with “Dear John”. John getting problem and a letter from Savannah will not come again. Since John and Savannah were broken, Savannah began to have a relationship with Tim. When John returned from Iraq, John was disappointed to find Savannah and Tim were married. Savannah married Tim because she wanted to help Tim to take care of Alan who was an autist. Savannah care for Alan because she was the only one besides Tim.

The research of Dear John is important due to the following reasons. First, Dear John was written in the first-person perspective. The novel told about the love story of John Tyree, a member of the US army. The story was beautifully told from the well-rounded characters. It was full of surprise and the illustrations of the book was exciting.

The second, the other main character, Savannah, was also beautifully presented. When reading the synopsis of the novel, the readers may think that Savannah
was an antagonist character because she made John broken-hearted. However, after reading through the novel, it turned out that Savannah was the kindest character. Savannah married with Tim because she wanted to help him take care of Alan. She sacrificed herself for others.

The third, this novel had a clear moral message related to altruism. It was interesting to explore the importance of altruism of sacrificing one’s interest for the sake of the happiness of others. The study, then, aimed at analyzing the importance of altruism in the novel. The approach employed was psychoanalytic approach developed by Freud.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

Type of this study was qualitative research which did not use statistics to collect, analyze and interpret the data. The data sources were classified into two, namely the primary and secondary data sources. The primary data source was the novel Dear John written by Nicholas Sparks which was published by Grand Central Publishing in 2006. The secondary data sources were other references, such as the author’s biography, the website from internet about this novel and the other resources that support the analysis. The method of collecting data that the writer was library research.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

In this research finding, the research analyzed some points in order to analyze Dear John Novel (2006) using Psychoanalytic Approach.

3.1 Motivation of Altruism

3.1.1 Giving Attention to Others

Giving attention to others; it is shown when several characters in the novel invite other people to do kinds of altruism to other people or even other creatures in which their motivation is only to feel serene and make others be happy.

3.1.2 Helping Others

Help others; it is only shown by several characters in this novel. As a human being, they personally let themselves to be involved in a very needed situation of someone. It is an urgent of others, but the motivation of helping
3.1.3 Prioritizing the Interests of Others

In this novel, it means that one character pours him/herself to the world where they have never been in before. They try to like other interest with letting themselves involve in just to make other selves be happy. They do that voluntarily without being enforced by other sides. That is why the result got later is the happiness.

3.2 How is altruism portrayed in the novel

3.2.1 By Creating Characters

a. Willing to Sacrifice to Others

Altruism in the novel was showed by characters of John and Savannah. They had different background. The first was from Savannah. She was a kind and beautiful girl who cares other people.

b. Unlucky Characters

Character of Tim and Alan are unlucky characters, because in the novel Tim was infected cancer, he really needs help from Savannah. She decides to sacrifice her love to marry Tim because for helping Tim and Alan.

3.2.2 Setting of Place

Setting of place among others are in Wilmington City is the John’s home and meeting with Savannah, Lenoir City, Chapel Hill City is a Savannah apartment and hospital when treated to Tim, in Germany is training John, and in Iraq.

3.2.3 Events

a. Handling of Savannah’s Bag

Handling of Savannah’s bag in the novel was showed when John John decides to jump into the sea to take Savannah’s bag. Even the condition of the sea at that time is rather danger, John does not notice it. In his mind is only how to take that bag back to her belonging.

b. Moment of Tim’s Being Sick

Tim sick in in the novel was showed when Tim was infected cancer. Here, John sold all of his coins to help Tim, because he needs much money to his therapy. Other side, Tim really need help from Savannah because he began to overwhelmed with Alan’s condition.
c. Savannah Marriage

The event of Savannah married in the novel is was showed when John has to re-enlist in the army to defend her country. Savannah has to make a decision whether waiting for John or stay married with Tim. Finally, Savannah choose to marry with Tim, although she felt guilty because she has sacrifice her love, he is John the men who her loves. Savannah decides to sacrifice her love to marry Tim because Tim really needs her.

3.3 The importance of Altruism Depicted in the Novel

On website Nicholas Sparks’s, he explained the importance of altruism in his novel. He argued that “I finally understood what true love meant, love meant that you care for another person’s happiness more than your own, no matter how painful the choices you face might be”. The importance of altruism obviously represented in this novel. To whatever Jhon already done, mainly for Savannah as the one he loves for most, it is very important to him by then seeing Savannah be happy. Even in fact he can not unite with Savannah as spouse, at least they can be best friends for each other. Remembering that Tim is also a good man and he does know about it, then Jhon feels alright to let Savannah be with him. He does everything as he can be to make Savannah be happy with her current life, even there is no him beside her.

All of motivations and types of altruism can be found in this novel. By then, what makes this novel becomes unique is that many kinds of altruism experienced by the whole characters. The motivation of those characters are merely to please others and realizing that they are social creature that has nothing unless themselves which can be useful for others.

Started from John’s father as the one who never stops caring about his son, sincerely being an altruistic due to the gene and his daily routines. John, as the main character here, doing several altruism, such as: helping Savannah to take her bag from sea, nurturing his father until his last day, being a good friend during his bond in military, and at the last, donating all of his father’s coin for Tim’s recovery, the one that becomes her ex-girlfriend husband. In the other hand, Savannah, a girl whose kind heart being a volunteer to help poor people build up their house from disasters. She also concerns about retarded children, that is auutism. She even wants to spend her life to nurture them. Even it is not
easy for her, later she realizes that it has been her destiny. After being married by Tim, Savannah also nurtures Alan, Tim’s young brother who is also autist. It becomes harder since Tim had serious disease that enforces Savannah to nurture Alan lonely. but she is still a good wife and sister for them because she never gives up to give her love to them.

There is Tim, that in the beginning of the story becomes Savannah’s best friend, eventually becomes her husband. Tim, from his very first appearance, has done many altruism. As the example, when he picked Savannah up after being rapped by his man. Next, doing everything Savannah asks for during their voluntary time especially for Jhon’s importance, and the last, to take care of his only brother Alan, that has special need as an autist. He does everything sincerely and never be in a wrong way as long as he lives. That’s why it shocked Savannah when she knows that Tim has rare-serious disease on his skin.

In addition, The parents of Savannah also do altruism. Since the very beginning of the story, Savannah tells Jhon that they are a good one. Loving to help others even it is not in the same creature. When Savannah gets trial in her life, her mother also never leaves her. They keep supporting and nurturing Savannah from the far even she has got married.

Finally, what John already done to Savannah is a great issue. He let himself be sad just for seeing his love be happy. This what is called true love. That someone sincerely does all efforts he can be just to see someone else’s happiness even she does not belong to him afterward.

The altruism is very important as well as portrayed in this novel. How all characters try to please others. They intentionally sacrifice themselves for the sake of others happiness. It is such an innateness that everyone, since he was born, given a sense to be care to other creatures to make themselves happy at the end.

4. CONCLUSION

Based on analysis in the previous chapter, the researcher will make conclusions. Firstly, there are three motivations of altruism found in this novel, they are: Giving attention to others; it is shown when several characters in the novel invite other people to do kinds of altruism to other people or even other creatures in which their motivation is only to feel serene and make others be happy. Help others; it is
only shown by several characters in this novel. As a human being, they personally let themselves to be involved in a very needed situation of someone. It is an urgent of others, but the motivation of helping others experienced by several characters here even in some case it endangers their own selves and prioritizing the interests of others. In this novel, it means that one character pour him/herself to the world where they have never been in before. They try to like other interest with letting themselves involve in just to make other selves be happy. They do that voluntary without being enforced by other sides. That is why the result got later is the happiness.

Secondly, the altruism portrayed in the novel through creating characters, setting of place and events. Creating characters consists of willing to sacrifice to others and unlucky characters. Willing to sacrifice to others done by the father of John, that has nurtured him since he was kid. It is also done by Tim whose unordinary brother so he nurtures him with a full of love. The parents of Savannah that always take care of her until she got married, and the love of a wife shown by Savannah to Tim during his hospitality of the serious sickness. Unlucky characters that is done by John to his friends in his military, and to Savannah during their separation that still caring each other. Savannah also does it to Tim. Tim ever helped her in her worst situation, and later, as his wife, Savannah helps Tim to nurture Alan and him when he is sick. Setting of place is done by both John and Savannah. John does it to his friends in military field, as well as they often have war and get isolated far away from their each family. So that they have to help one another. In the other hand, Savannah, also does this altruism to her community during their togetherness in building up poor people house that later impacting to their each life importance that still caring one another even not in a voluntary field. Events in this novel, happen when John handling of Savannah’s bag, Savannah marriage, moments of Tim’s being sick. As a human being, it is a must to help one another, and it represents in this novel on how people in life have their own problem but others sincerely want to help without expecting anything because it is a natural value that God has given since people were born.

Thirdly, the importance of altruism obviously represented in this novel. To whatever John already done, mainly for Savannah as the one he loves for most, it is very important to him by then seeing Savannah be happy. Even in fact he cannot unite with Savannah as spouse at least they can be best friends for each other. Remembering that Tim is also a good man and he does know about it, then John feels
alright to let Savannah be with him. He does everything as he can be to make Savannah be happy with her current life, even there is no him beside her.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


